

**An-Najah National University  
Faculty of Graduate Studies**

**The Impact of Using Information Gap Strategy  
on Improving Advanced English Students'  
Construction of Information Questions in the  
Arab American University-Jenin**

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**This Thesis is submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
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## **Dedication**

I dedicate my work:

To the Compassionate the Merciful for all.

To the first and eternal teacher Muhammad peace be upon him.

To my parents, Inshirah and Ismael, for their instant confidence in me.

To Suzan, Haneen, and Noor who are my sisters, best friends and my light.

To my brothers.

To Michael Capurso, my friend and teacher, for his support and assistance.

To Dr. Graham Stott's soul, May he rest in peace.

To all my friends, Ahkam Assaf, Amal Maraabeh, Rahma Kmail, Sabreen Khmour, Muna Zaiter, Samah Khalaf, Islam Fayed, Maysa Musleh, Salwa Abu Ghali, and Safa Jaber, for their support and belief in me.

To my Arabic teacher at high school Ms. Layla Jarrar for her precious words of wisdom which still rings in my memory.

To the world.

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## الإقرار

أنا الموقعة أدناه مقدمة الرسالة التي تحمل العنوان:

أثر استخدام استراتيجية الثغرة المعلوماتية على تحسين تكوين  
الاسئلة الاستقصائية لدى طلاب الجامعة العربية الامريكية في  
مدينة جنين ذوو المستوى المتقدم في اللغة الانجليزية

**The Impact of Using Information Gap Strategy  
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أقر بأن ما اشتملت عليه هذه الرسالة إنما هي نتاج جهدي الخاص، باستثناء ما تمت  
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## Declaration

The work provided in this thesis unless otherwise referenced, is the  
researcher's own work, and has not been submitted elsewhere for any other  
degree or qualification.

Student's Name: **Fardous Ismael Jarrar** اسم الطالب:

Signature: ..... التوقيع:

Date: **02/03/2017** التاريخ:

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**Abstract**

This quasi-experimental study, conducted in the summer semester of the academic year 2015/2016 at Arab American University-Jenin (AAUJ), Palestine aimed at investigating the impact of using information gap instructional strategy on improving advanced English students' construction of information questions. Students' gender, academic level, and specialization were taken into consideration in the data analysis.

To assess the outcomes of this study, pre and post oral tests were given to students of the control and the experimental groups. A class observation was employed on the experimental group as a supplementary tool of the study to help explain the use of the information gap strategy in action. Fifty-four students taking Advanced English course in the English Language Center (ELC) at AAUJ, twenty-seven in each group, comprise the sample of the study.

A significant improvement of the experimental group results in their formation of information questions was apparent, as compared to the results of the control group who was taught in a traditional method without

information gap instructional strategy. Moreover, there was no statistically significant difference in the pre-test results of the experimental group regarding gender or specialization but third year students did not show any significant improvement in the post-test, unlike first and second year students.

The researcher recommends the Ministry of Education to train English teachers to use information gap strategy in their classes. A further recommendation is that teachers adapt parts of their textbooks to use information gap exercises. Suggestions are offered for researchers to further investigate EFL/ESL students' formation and use of information questions. A last recommendation was made to researchers to apply a similar research on child students.

# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction and Theoretical Background**

### **1.1. Introduction**

### **1.2. Theoretical background**

#### **1.2.1. What is information gap strategy?**

#### **1.2.2. What is the importance of information gap strategy?**

#### **1.2.3. What are information questions?**

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### **1.3. Statement of the problem**

### **1.4. Purpose of the study**

### **1.5. Questions of the study**

### **1.6. Hypotheses of the study**

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### **1.8. Limitations of the study**

### **1.9. Definition of terms**

### **1.10. Summary**

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction and Theoretical Background**

#### **1.1. Introduction:**

Challenges faced by English language teachers are associated with students accustomed to ineffective, mechanistic instructional practices. The need to integrate strategies for developing systematic and autonomous learning skills is one essential way to establish a degree of sense and stability in higher education and in English language instruction. As a former student and as an English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher, the researcher observed over the past sixteen years students unable to express themselves in English even though they usually start learning the language from early grades. This leads to most of them later engaging in undergraduate studies in English as silent recipients of information who are basically unable to communicate in the target language or ask questions about what they do not understand. Information gap strategy, as one of the strategies of the communicative language teaching approach (CLT), is based on creating situations that require and enable students to communicate and ask questions to fill information gaps she or he have, while also satisfying other interlocutors' information gaps by answering their questions. This strategy's exercises provide students with valuable opportunities to practice spoken language and polish their questioning skills.

Because it is important to make the foundations of this study clear from the outset, the next subtitle and the two most important key terms of the research, information gap and information questions, and their importance, are explained in details.

## **1.2. Theoretical background:**

### **1.2.1. What is information gap strategy?**

Information gap strategy is included among the strategies of the CLT approach. However, it does not just refer to this method of teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) and teaching English as a second language (TESL); it is related to tasks or activities designed to create an information gap between participants in the learning experience. The participants are supposed to fill or overcome this gap to reach a particular goal. Information gap is considered one of the strategies of the CLT approach. The characteristics of the communicative approach or the CLT approach are as follows:

- "The language should be a means to an end, i.e. the focus should be on the meaning and not on the form.
- The content should be determined by the learner who is speaking or writing. The learner has to formulate and produce ideas, information, opinions, etc.
- There must be a negotiation of meaning between the speakers, i.e. students must be involved in interpreting a meaning from what they hear and construct what to say as a response. In other words, they should not be reliant on the teacher or materials to provide the language. This criterion clearly brings into play pragmatic and discourse competence as well as fluency.
- For the previous criterion to function, what a learner hears should not be predictable, i.e. there should be an information or opinion gap. "(Hedge, 2014: p. 57)

The final characteristic of the CLT approach is that every communicative strategy should include an information gap. Given this, the communicative purpose of language may be better realized. In other words, to paraphrase Littlewood (2002), all communicative activities are based on two main principles: first, a situation in which students need to communicate and second to fill an information gap or to solve a problem.

Littlewood (2002) adds that information gap activities are one of the so-called "functional communicative activities" such as bargaining while shopping, ordering food, asking about the time... etc. This kind of activities is based on two principles: sharing and processing the needed information to achieve the pre-determined goals. This kind of activity requires both participants in the interaction to listen, comprehend, ask for comprehension checks, speak, deliver information, and initiate communication. Moreover, since participants will be curious, they will be repeating and asking for repetition, and they will be making confirmations. Clearly, information gap considers competency the aim needs to be achieved in language learning. Competency in language learning is not just a matter of understanding or knowing the language; it is also ultimately a matter of producing the language in active communicative interactions (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010).

This student-centered communicative strategy directs students to engage in real life situations where they have to handle different kinds of conversations and negotiate meaning to deliver and receive communicative

messages (Brown, 2003). Examples of kinds of situations are phone calls, booking a table in a restaurant, reserving a room in a hotel, bargaining to buy clothes or any kinds of good, doing a job interview, renting a new apartment, asking the teacher in class or outside the class, talking to a friend, going on a date, ... etc.

All kinds of questions, especially information questions, are part of information gap strategy's application and consequently mastering them effectively is practiced and taught creatively by the students themselves. Therefore, learning here is communicatively and actively achieved. Information gap activities can be designed to practice any functional objectives, but are especially conducive to real communication such as information questions. The communicative, student-centered, active learning and natural approaches form the underlying framework for this study. They are all manifested and embodied in the basis of information gap strategy design and application.

In the literature written in TEFL and TESL, information gap strategy is identified as one of the CLT strategies. Larsen-Freeman (2000) maintains "being able to communicate requires more than linguistic competence; it needs communicative competence" (p. 121). This approach to language learning and teaching defines itself in accordance with how its name and characteristics are managed, and is frequently referenced by many English as a foreign language (EFL) and TEFL researchers.



A study in the late twentieth century has shown a strong emphasis on the role of the learner in the learning process. Students attributed their language learning success to the use of five general strategies, one of which is an active learning approach (Neiman et al. 1975 as cited in Skehan, 1998). This notion has been supported by many scholars in the field, including Petty (2004) who described and emphasized the importance of an active element as being essential to the nature of the learning process.

Active learning is also one of the humanistic approaches such as Piaget's cognitive development and Bruner's constructivism which value the student as a productive, intelligent individual. These approaches base methods and techniques of teaching on the learner as the center of the learning process (Breznak & Scott, 2003). In learning situations characterized by this approach to instruction, the student is responsible for her or his own learning. This approach has led to many innovations in language teaching and learning, such as self-directed or autonomous learning (Petty, 2004).

### **1.2.2. What is the importance of information gap strategy?**

Pica (2005) emphasized the importance of language classrooms as places for meaningful and purposeful communication as an alternative to rote formal instruction. Effective speaking entails not just producing English but mastering the ability to communicate and converse in it. It aims at teaching the language to help students become independent in using the language in their daily life activities outside the tutoring environment as

asserted by (Larsen-Freeman, 2003), and questioning is hugely important for it.

Active learning is an umbrella term for a broad range of methods and activities that have been designed to promote students' construction of their knowledge and encourage a more autonomous sense of responsibility for their progress in learning English (Dolya, 2010). To achieve a more acquisition-oriented classroom environment,

"Students must do more than just listen: they must read, write, discuss, or be engaged in solving problems. Most important, to be actively involved, students must engage in such higher-order thinking tasks as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation." (Checkerning & Gamson, 1987 as cited in Bonwell & Eison 1991: p.2)

Information gap strategy was chosen to be applied in this study because of its capacity for promoting genuine interaction between students with little interference from the teacher as clarified by (Neu & Reeser, 1997).

This approach of teaching allows the teacher, who acts as a facilitator, to coach her or his students in mastering independent learning skills. It runs contrary to teacher-centered traditional teaching which tends to perpetuate students' role as passive learners. Skilled teachers following this approach in their teaching can increase their students' motivation, recall of knowledge, and understanding (Collins & O'Brien, 2011).

Information gap strategy exemplifies some aspects of constructivism. Bruner maintains that learning is a process of connecting previous knowledge with the new things to be learned. Furthermore, he also

emphasizes that using this knowledge is the only way of learning it. This same idea is at the core of information gap strategy since students do almost all the work themselves, so they use their prior knowledge of the language to be able to keep successful conversations going. The teacher's role here is not one of instructing but rather of facilitating in which she or he speaks less and assists only when needed. Constructivism also believes that learners "construct" knowledge when interacting with others (Bruner, 1966).

Takaya (2008) relates constructivism to the pedagogy of Socrates, who made dialogues a way of learning when he found it difficult to transmit knowledge to his students by direct instruction. Dialogues or purposive conversations are the process students engage in when information gap teaching strategy is properly implemented.

Davydov and Kerr (1995) explain that learning only can be achieved through interaction. What happens is that existing knowledge is scaffolded with the information that they do not know. This scaffolding can be achieved by any person who the student has interaction with and knows something the student does not know. This person can be the teacher, a parent, a brother, a sister, or another student. The teacher and peers of the learner in a class taught using information gap strategy do the same role of scaffolding in Vygotsky's socio-cultural development theory and what he terms as the zone of proximal development. The teacher as a facilitator and peer students who correct, lead and add things when trying to fill her own

and her partners' information gaps are scaffolding the learners' use of whatever language form is meant to be mastered.

It is important to stress that the kind of interaction that occurs while students are engaged in information gap activities can affect students' motivation. Du (2009) has shown that Krashen's hypothesis about motivation is applicable to predicting the amount of input involved in the process of language learning. When students are motivated, their affective filter is low, so their learning outcomes will improve, which in turn further lowers the filter (Krashen & Terrell, 1983).

### **1.2.3. What are information questions?**

Syntactic competence is essential for language learners in order to be able to communicate effectively in a language. One syntactic function critical to language development is question formation. Information questions are requests for specific information. Also known as wh-questions, they typically begin with one of the wh-words, each of which is associated with a distinct cognitive process and all of which invite complex responses. It is important to note, however, that declarative sentences also sometimes function as questions without the use of wh- words in oral communicative interactions (Biber, Conrad, & Leech, 2002).

The skills involved in forming and asking wh-questions are not easy to master. One important reason for this, as Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1983) demonstrate, is that the learner needs a functional

knowledge of the semantic and syntactic areas of the target language. Those are the meanings of words and the rules governing how they are to be used. Language development may be hindered when learners are unable to ask questions (Cole and Hermon, 1998). Questions have many important functions in conversations, arguments, and many other kinds of communication. As listed by Das (2010), questions can function as conversation initiators, requests, situational observations, imperatives, or comprehension checks. Questions are an indispensable communicative tool. Mastering question-asking is important in social interactions that provide opportunities for the development of linguistic skills (Nation & Newton, 2009).

#### **1.2.4. What is the importance of information questions?**

Students' effective language learning is achieved in communicative activities when their engagement becomes active rather than accepting passively what the teacher says, as shown by Snow (1996) and Brown (2007). Moreover, no communication can be complete without bridging misunderstandings between the interlocutors. This can be done only when students can ask properly about what they may have missed or did not understand. They also need to ask other participants in the conversation to repeat or paraphrase.

One of the most important elements in engaging in successful communication is the ability to ask questions (Hedge, 2014). English is the language of science and as well as of education taught in almost all

undergraduate and graduate studies in Palestine and internationally. Responsibility lies with teachers of EFL to promote such communicative, active learning among their students in class since it is almost the only place they can realistically be expected to practice their English (McGrath, 2002).

Active learning is a broad term which might be interpreted in different ways. Bonwell and Eison (1991) usefully suggest several beginning with strategies based on the problem-solving model, which can be of great use in creating a genuine need to ask questions in class. Others include in-class writing, debates, drama, role playing and simulation, peer teaching, and visual based instructions (Oxford, 1990). Most of these models look like natural activities we use in our everyday interactions as emphasized for providing genuine practice, as (Harmer, 2007) asserts.

### **1.3. Statement of the problem:**

This study compares students' learning of information questions when taught by two different strategies. One is exclusively following the lesson in an assigned textbook and the other is supplementing that textbook lesson by using an information gap teaching strategy. The researcher, as an English teacher, believes that most English as foreign language learners in Palestine experience difficulty in asking specific, precise questions. Though they have some degree of competence in comprehending spoken or written English, they are unable to engage in successful communication to obtain information for attaining realistic objectives. Achieving these

objectives require asking questions. This proficiency profile is descriptive of the majority of English learners enrolled in compulsory English courses at the ELC at AAUJ, a private university in Palestine where a large portion of instruction in all specializations is conducted in English.

#### **1.4. Objectives of the study:**

First, this study aims to offer evidence of the impact of using information gap teaching strategy on advanced English students' formation of information question in the ELC at the AAUJ.

Second, the study aims to promote consideration of using information gap strategy in EFL instruction in Palestine.

Third, it also aims at evaluating research effectiveness so teachers may be empowered to use it in their work, and possibly conduct similar studies of their own.

#### **1.5. Questions of the study:**

1. What is the impact of using information gap strategy on improving advanced English students' formation of information questions?
2. Is there any significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the impact of using information gap strategy on improving students' formation of informative questions between the pre-tests of the experimental group and the control group?

3. Is there any significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the impact of using information gap strategy on improving students' formation of informative questions between the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group?
4. Is there any significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) of the textbook-only method on improving students' formation of information questions between the pre-test and the post-test of the control group?
5. Is there any significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the impact of using information gap strategy on improving students' formation of information questions between the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group due to gender?
6. Is there any significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the impact of using information gap strategy on improving students' formation of information questions between the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group due to academic level?
7. Is there any significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the impact of using information gap strategy on improving students' formation of information questions between the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group due to students' specialization?



## 1.6. Hypotheses of the study

The following are the null hypotheses derived from the questions of the study presented under the previous subtitle:

**One:** There is no statistical significant difference between the control group and the experimental group grade means in the post-test results at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ).

**Two:** There is no statistical significant difference between the control group and the experimental group grade means in the pre-test results at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ).

**Three:** There is no statistical significant difference between the grade means of the pre-test and the post-test results of the experimental group at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ).

**Four:** There is no statistical significant difference between the grade means of the pre-test and the post-test results of the control group at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ).

**Five:** There is no statistical significant difference between the grade means of the pre-test and the post-test results of the experimental group according to gender at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ).

**Six:** There is no statistical significant difference between the grade means of the pre-test and the post-test results of the experimental group according to academic level at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ).

**Seven:** There is no statistical significant difference between the grade means of the pre-test and the post-test results of the experimental group according students' specialization at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ).

### **1.7. Significance of the study:**

The researcher hopes to improve the students' formation of information questions due to this language form importance for them. EFL students are poor in using difficult form of language in their English spoken communications especially information questions. Information questions are the kind of questions that are essential in all kinds of communication. The case is critical for students who learn all other subjects in English. They have to be able to ask proper question about the things they do not understand not just in English classes but in all other subjects.

Therefore, information gap strategy offers enjoyable and intensive practice of this specific language form. The pillars of the application of this strategy are in asking and answering all kinds of question. So, the researcher hopes to prove this strategies impact on students' formation of information questions.

As languages are meant to be communicated, learning to negotiate meaning through language is essential. Speaking is not emphasized either by teachers or by students of EFL in Palestinian schools and universities though it is the language they receive their learning through. So students

need to be able to ask information questions to advance their understanding of the subjects they are learning.

It's hoped to bring a proven communicative teaching strategy which is both active and open-ended to the Palestinian context of TEFL. The researcher hopes that using this strategy in teaching has the potential to improve students' readiness and willingness to speak, and specifically to ask questions, due to the underlying designing activities based on a communicative learning strategy as implemented by teachers in lessons.

### **1.8. Theoretical and operational definition of terms:**

- Active learning: As it has been conceptually identified by Farrell (2009) in an overview of the literature in which he formulate it as the kind of learning where the students are the constructors of their knowledge and the formulators of meanings. She adds that this can only be achieved by the students going through analytical and deep learning processes.

On the other hand, this study defines active learning as the process in which the students are the most important part of the learning process and the teachers of themselves. They are to actively participate in classwork.

- Information gap:  
 "(in communication between two or more people) A situation where information is known by only one of those present, in Communicative Language Teaching, it is said that to promote real communication

between students, there must be an information gap between them, or between them and their teacher. Without such a gap the classroom activities and exercises will be more mechanical and artificial.

In an information gap task or activity, such as SPOT THE DIFFERENCE, each learner has some information, and they can solve the problem or accomplish the prescribed task cooperatively." (Platt & Platt, 1992: p. 282)

This research defines information gap strategy as a teaching strategy in which students work in pairs and in groups each having a worksheet with missing information and different from others. The students are supposed to interact orally to fill the missing information in their papers where they can find with other students. Each student has to ask and answer his or her mate's questions to be able to accomplish this work.

- Information question is: "a question that asks for information by using a question word." (Azar, 1999) and other scholars add that an implied question word shown by the sentence intonation is applicable also.

The previous definitions is the same as the operational definition of information question. They are questions that ask for specific information not just for a yes or no answer. However, the form of wh-questions is taken into considerations except in informal spoken communications.

### **1.9. Limitations of the study:**

This study considers the following limitations:

1. Topical limitations: the study was designed only to investigate the impact of information gap teaching strategy on improving advanced students' formation of information questions at the Arab American University-Jenin.
2. Human limitations: the study was conducted with fifty-four advanced English students of both genders.
3. Locative limitations: the English Language Center at the Arab American University- Jenin.
4. Temporal limitations: the study was carried out during the summer 2016 academic semester.

### **1.10. Summary:**

This chapter gave a general overview of the thesis. Information gap strategy, information questions and their importance were explained. A statement of the research problem, purpose, questions, hypotheses, significance and limitations of the study were listed. Finally, key terms used in the research were defined.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of Related Literature**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

#### **2.2. Information gap strategy and active learning**

#### **2.3. The importance of information gap strategy**

#### **2.4. Information gap strategy and language learning**

#### **2.5. Information gap strategy and questioning**

#### **2.6. Information questions**

#### **2.7. Summary**

## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of Related Literature**

#### **2.1. Introduction:**

A review of the related literature to the main terminology of the study was collected, summarized and presented in this section. As information gap strategy can be included under any approach that applies its basic instructional values and premises, it can be considered as one of the communicative approach teaching strategies and thus can be considered one of the strategies under the umbrella of the active learning approach. Therefore, this chapter considered studies that directly and indirectly investigate information gap strategy and students' formation of information questions.

#### **2.2. Information gap strategy and active learning:**

Information gap strategy was investigated and it was found that it exemplifies all the characteristics of the active learning approach. No previous studies in the existing literature specifically combined these two concepts together as done in this research. All information gap strategy studies emphasized, in their literature reviews and their different parts, the important role played by active learning skills. Previous studies written on the topic are represented below in terms of their relevance to this study.

After reviewing the literature, the researcher found few previous studies concerning the use of the active learning approach and its effect on English Language learning. However, the effectiveness of active learning was well documented in almost all disciplines of education and science. Fayombo (2012) showed a positive correlation between active learning strategies and students' learning outcomes in general. In another study specifically related to language learning, nine benefits of active learning were mentioned as the following:

"1) High level of participation, 2) use of prior experience or knowledge, 3) adoption of new perspectives and positions, 4) contestation of values and assumptions from other disciplines, 5) openness with respect to learning outcomes, 6) peer support and peer learning, 7) critical reflection on action and experience, 8) greater ownership of and responsibility for learning, and 9) development of generic communicative skills." (Alizadeh, 2011: p.6)

While surveying the literature on active learning, Farell (2009) provided conceptual foundations for it. She reviewed the history of active learning and presented an overview of the methods and research applications for practitioners motivated by the necessity of improving students' learning outcomes and promoting advancement of the quality of education.

### **2.3. The importance of information gap strategy:**

Most studies written on the use of information gap strategy in TEFL were concerned with their effect on learners' speaking skills in general because of their spoken nature and for their potential for improving students' performance in the target language. This teaching learning



activity is an old but continually renewing one. This proved that teachers, scholars, and researchers in the field of TEFL foreseen and sensed the usefulness of information gap strategy in language teaching in general. Prior to this one, no studies specified their effect on the construction of information questions.

Pica, Kang & Sauro (2006) indicated in their study that information gap strategy directed students' attention to the difficult forms of the second or the foreign language. Students while learning in class did not usually notice these forms because, as they explained, information gap tasks are described and characterized as purposeful and results-oriented tasks that direct students' communication towards form and precise meaning. It also, they maintained, led students to correct their own errors. One of the characteristics of information gap strategy, as their research concluded, is that it captures students' attention while working in pairs or groups.

In their experimental study, Doughty & Pica (1986) compared "teacher-fronted" and group work interaction. This article was one of the earliest papers investigated the effectiveness of the communicative activities which began to be used in schools in the United States of America in the 1980s. Information gap strategy was used by experienced English-speaking teachers with intermediate adult ESL students in six classes containing eleven to fifteen students each. By analyzing the audio-taped classes, the researchers found that students were less embarrassed when enquiring about missing information when working in groups with

peers. They became more productive, inquisitive, and active when working in pairs. The researchers' conclusion differentiated between "optional exchange tasks," such as student-teacher interaction, and "required information exchange tasks," such as information gap tasks, which obligated interlocutors to engage in "modified interaction". By "modified interaction", the researchers mean students in information gap activities had no choice but to communicate in the target language, and had to adjust their communication to deliver the message to interlocutors successfully.

#### **2.4. Information gap strategy and language learning:**

Ismaili and Bajrami (2016) investigated the effect of teaching EFL students speaking skills through using information gap strategy. The target group was elementary level English students at a university. A description of the target students' attitudes was also made clear. Improved motivation was one of the main issues emphasized as a possible benefit to be achieved by using this teaching strategy. After conducting a questionnaire and analyzing the results, the researchers concluded that students had more opportunities to speak and practice their English when put in pairs or groups and obliged to communicate real life information. Another result was that students' comprehension of spoken English improved. Finally, this strategy led to better student-student interaction which created a better learning environment in the classroom.

Another observation-based action research study by KaU (2016) also tested the use of information gap strategy in teaching and measured its effect on students' development of speaking skills among forty students in a tourism study program. The results the researcher arrived at included reaffirmation of the need to use an interactive method of teaching to enhance students' speaking skills. As planned and conducted with the help of another teacher, information gap strategy was used in teaching an experimental group resulting in clear improvements in those students' speaking abilities. Improvement in the results did not become apparent until the second cycle of the research. The researcher also concluded that information gap strategy could be well adapted in teaching different curricula.

Fuqaha (2015) conducted a collaborative action research with a colleague who served as the observer. Data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The research problem identified arose from noticing the inadequate amount and ineffectiveness of alternative methods in language teaching and learning in heterogeneous classes. The forty-one third graders of the class were taught by the new strategy scored seventy-five percent and above on an oral exam, again confirming that using information gap teaching strategy improves students' oral skills.

In a similar study conducted in an action research design in the English department at AL Muslim University, a positive effect of using

information gap strategy was apparent on students' general speaking skills (Afrizal, 2015).

Idek & Fong (2015) conducted a very precise study investigating information gap strategy on students' correct formation and spelling of regular simple past verbs. The researchers reviewed the literature to document that the approach most teachers used to teach English spelling was pure memorization. The researcher chose thirty four college students from the University of Malaysia and divided them into experimental and control groups. The experimental group was taught the spelling of past tense regular verbs' spelling through the use of Dictogloss adapted into three information gap exercises; matching, ordering and listing. The control group was taught through the previously mentioned traditional way of teaching. A statistically significant difference in learning outcomes for the experimental over the control group was evident.

Derakhshan, Tahery, and Mirarab (2015) reviewed the literature on what they call the long-forgotten activities needed for improving what they assert is the underemphasized language skill, speaking. Information gap strategy was repeatedly mentioned in discussions of the large amount of communication practice needed for students to improve their speaking skills, and were also characterized as one of the most effective strategies to enhance confidence and motivation for EFL students. In their review of the literature, the researchers shone a spotlight on many forgotten methods and activities which enhance students' speaking skills.

Putri (2014) investigated the effect of using information gap strategy on Malaysian eighth grade students' speaking skills. Both quantitative and qualitative means of interpretation were used. The quantitative part of the study collected data through oral pre and post-tests, and their results were analyzed statistically. The statistics showed that the mean results of the post-test were significantly higher than in the pre-test, leading him to conclude that the use of information gap strategy improves students' oral skills. The qualitative method of interpretation was conducted through observations of classes and interviews with students. The students' fluency improved since they were able to easily retell stories they had previously heard. The research also concluded that students' confidence and motivation improved.

Fatemipour and Nourmohammadi (2014) studied sixty Iranian students over thirteen years old who had only an elementary level of English. They examined jigsaw activities, find-the-differences and missing-information activities which are similar to information gap strategy. The students were divided into three similar groups, each one of which was taught using one of the three kinds of activities previously mentioned. All the students took a standardized test before starting their course of study. Their willingness to communicate was the study's primary area of investigation. Participants in the study completed a questionnaire regarding the issue, and the results were statistically analyzed. The results were positive in favor of using information gap strategy to improve students' willingness to communicate in English.

Another experimental study was conducted by Asrobi, Seken and Suarnajaya (2013). It was done on the tenth grade English students, investigated the use of information gap activities on students' motivation and involvement in the learning process. They found that using this strategy improved students' motivation as well as their speaking abilities. Moreover, they demonstrated a correlation between high motivation and high achievement.

Oradee (2012), in her mixed quantitative and qualitative study, showed positive effects on student attitudes associated with three communicative activities. One of which, called problem solving, is very close to information gap strategy. The positive attitude of students towards a communicative instructional strategy affected their language learning positively, as seen in the difference between the pre-test post-test results. The researcher recommended communicative activities be used in EFL classes because they encourage students' interaction, which is necessary for spoken language comprehension. She also proved that working in small groups created a more secure environment that enhanced students' readiness to work together actively.

Watamni and Gholami (2012) emphasized the student-centered nature of classes using information gap teaching strategy in class. It is a study on information gap strategy and its effect on L2 learners' speaking ability was conducted in Iran. The target group was fifty female

elementary students. The instrument for collecting data was an oral interview exam. The results of this long –termed research were:

- "1. Information Gap Activities can better improve the students' interaction with the teacher and other students.
2. Information Gap Activities maximize students' opportunities to speak during the English lesson and provide potential benefits of student-student interaction.
3. Information Gap Activities encourage students' practice opportunities of the target language respectively in the lesson as a result of presenting various tasks." ( p. 277)

Ha E. et al. (2012) conducted a study, whom were a group of researchers from North Carolina State University, and examined teacher-centered and student-centered interaction models. This study proposed that the two kinds of instructional approaches can complement each other in conveying messages and delivering ideas in a conversation. An information gap between interlocutors can be filled with spoken interaction and can be supported by nonverbal actions such as facial expressions and body gestures. The research resulted that conversations that were facilitated by a task to be done were by their nature challenging. These challenges prompted participants to use their nonlinguistic as well as linguistic strategies to complete the task to be accomplished.

The study most closely similar to this one was conducted in Gaza. Jondeya (2011) explored the effect of information gap strategy on English speaking skills in general rather than on students' formation of information questions. Jondeya conducted her experiment on seventy students divided into an experimental and a control group. The thirty-five students in the experimental group were taught by adapting the eighth grade English for

Palestine textbook to include information gap strategy. The equivalent control group was taught using the unaltered text. The four-month experiment showed that the experimental group students' results improved significantly while the control group students' results did not. The spoken tests' rubric included five assessment fields; vocabulary, grammar, fluency, comprehension, and pronunciation.

Yuniarti (2009) tried not just to determine if information gap teaching strategy can improve students' speaking skills but also sought to identify the advantages and disadvantages of using this technique in TEFL. This two-cycle action research study was conducted with forty-two students through a process of planning, teaching using information gap strategy, observing and modifying as needed to achieve better communicative skills. The research's results clearly showed that among the advantages of games, jigsaw and missing information group and pair work activities were students' feelings of comfort, joy and a high level of motivation to participate. On the other hand, using information gap strategy in teaching comparatively needed long time for preparation and conduction and students became confused and did not know what to do. Consequently, the technique required careful structuring before and during the activities.

Dufficy's (2004) study was one of a group of studies that aimed at enlarging children's speaking opportunities in a multi-lingual environment. Information gap strategy was used in teaching children to learn English as an additional language. Each of these six groups was audio-taped, and the



corpora of each were written down and analyzed. The researcher noticed the progress in students' use of language forms. He also considered information gaps as a bridge between students' speaking and writing skills. These learned transferences can be of enormous influence on students' written production, since language is first spoken, and then written.

Nakahama, Tyler and Van Lier (2001) showed that negotiating meaning in information gap activities is a must. Negotiating meaning here can immensely improve students' second language (L2) fluency because this kind of interaction is "controlled and goal-convergent". The researchers' tool was an observation to the kind and quantity of students' language in two exercises: an open-ended conversation and an information gap exercise. This research was different from others because the target group was native and non-native speakers working in pairs, so the use of the target language in an expressive and comprehensible way was obligatory.

Raptou (2001) demonstrated that students involved in information gap activities were motivated to speak French for longer periods of time than when engaged in more typical lessons. Even when they did not receive additional credit for their participation, their motivation to speak more often increased. She also found that vocabulary and grammatical functional forms are used more often for longer periods. Consequently, their spoken fluency showed improvement. This small-scale action study was conducted

with the researcher's elementary-grade students in Canada who were learning French as a foreign language.

## **2.5. Information gap strategy and questioning:**

Andrade (2011) conducted an action research with secondary school students in Germany. He arrived at the following findings: First, information gap strategy was useful for different age groups. Second, peer participation in pair work in information gap activities let the student speak, interact, ask and answer with ease and without fear of making mistakes. Third, students' sentence structures were not carefully said, but the ideas were conveyed successfully. This is the only study the researcher could find which specifically mentioned the effect of using information gap strategy on students' formation of information questions.

## **2.6. Information questions:**

Most studies concerning the formation of information questions were conducted to examine purely linguistic functions of the language without any relation to a particular teaching strategy. Information questions are a core interest of many linguists who aim to understand how they are acquired by children, and how children manage the form and function of questions in their native language. Almost all the studies on information questions and other kinds of questions were concerned with the acquisition process and the constraints children and learners of English face while learning to produce and use wh-questions.

In their paper, Avdic, Wissa, and Hatakka (2016) observed in a flipped classroom the effect of using various types of questioning on students' overall learning. Socratic questioning was the term referred to by the researchers to indicate deep questions looking for true and reasonable answers and the ability to keep a logical conversation going. Target students were given specific group assignments and guidelines for what kind of questions they were supposed to use while practicing their task. The assessment tool designated was seminars presented by each group. The assignments and the seminars were videotaped and analyzed. The researchers found that asking information gap questions enhanced learning because they made students look deeply into the questions and answers. They found that learning occurred when the students heard and understood the answers to the questions asked.

De Villiers and Roeper (2011) in their analytical research entitled "Wh-questions: Moving beyond the first phase," discussed three major issues related to the main topic. One was the rules of movement of sentences which are considered as simple. Others were the logical characteristics of wh-questions, and the causes preventing movement of clauses. All were seeking a perfect grammatical question formation and referring to the case constraints as phonological, syntactic and semantic ones.

Many other researchers investigated students' production of all kinds of questions including yes/no and wh- questions. They found out that students faced two major problems while composing questions: word order

of the question being different and sometimes quite the opposite of that in the sentence (Rice, Hoffman & Wexler, 2009), and the possible change of the form of the auxiliary in the question (van der Lely & Battell, 2003).

There are also many studies concerning learners' production of wh-questions. Hamann (2006) conducted one with fourteen French students between the ages of eight and ten to investigate their preferred way of formulating the syntax of wh-questions. The results showed that the target group did not prefer wh-word fronting and interrogative forms of spontaneously spoken French. She also showed in her literature review the flexibility of English in the formation of information questions because many speakers of the language do not restrict themselves to wh- fronted questions, especially in the spoken form.

## **2.7. Summary:**

Studies conducted by linguists, teachers and scholars of EFL/ESL were outlined in this chapter and were classified into categories for maximum clarity in their relatedness to aspects of the present study. All the studies mentioned investigated the impact of using information gap strategy in TEFL/TESL consistently indicate that practice improves students' speaking skills. Some of these studies convinced researchers of the effectiveness of information gap strategy in bringing improvement of students' spoken production in the target language. Others looked at the psychological and sociological effects of this practice on students' attitudes toward learning. In short, the results of their studies showed that students'

motivation toward participation improves as a result of information gap strategy. Other studies showed that students had less hesitation and showed reduced fear of making mistakes while practicing information gap exercises. On the other hand, studies concerning information questions are typically purely linguistic analytical and descriptive research reemphasizing the importance of information questions and their usefulness for improving learning outcomes.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology and Procedure**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

#### **3.2. Methodology and design**

#### **3.3. Instrumentation**

#### **3.4. Pre & post speaking tests**

#### **3.5. Validity of the tests**

#### **3.6. Reliability of the tests**

#### **3.7. Class observation**

#### **3.8. Population**

#### **3.9. Sample**

#### **3.10. Variables**

#### **3.11. Ethics of the study**

#### **3.12. Summary**

## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology and Procedure**

#### **3.1. Introduction:**

This chapter includes the methodologies and procedures used to test the impact of using information gap teaching strategy to prompt students' formation of information questions. Along with methodology and design, questions, and hypotheses of the study, instrumentation, pre and post-tests, and their validity are presented. Details regarding class observation, population and sample, and variables of the study are also provided.

#### **3.2. Methodology and design:**

The experimental group was taught using information gap strategy. On the other hand, the control group was taught using the traditional method of teaching.

Two methods of data collection were used in this quasi-experimental study; one a pre and post-test of spoken English fluency, and the other was class observation.

Both groups did the pretest, which has been taken from Moodie (2008) then adapted and designed by the researcher and approved by a group of judges in the field of TEFL. The pre-test was administered in the first three days of the summer semester of 2015/2016. It was conducted before any of the groups had started the teaching. The test evaluates

students' degree of comprehensibility and ease while interacting with the other communicator in a simulated real-life situation according to the test directions. These directions facilitate students' conversation by prompting five information questions. The length of each conversation ranged between seven to ten minutes. Each conversation was audio recorded and evaluated by the researcher and another teacher. A standardized oral evaluation form was used for all students. A widely used rubric (Trotta, 2017) was used after being adapted by the researcher for evaluation process too, see appendix (8). Another equivalent oral post-test was given to both groups forty days after teaching the lessons as described. A quantitative mean of interpretation was used to test the results of the pre and post oral tests.

An experimental formula suitable for representing this study is as follows:

EG:  $O_2XO^1O_2$ , CG:  $O_2X O^1 O_2$ , where EG stands for the experimental group and CG stands for the control group. The symbol  $O^1$  indicates pre-test;  $O_2$  means post-test and X stands for treatment.

A qualitative way of interpretation was used to analyze the results of the class observation, which was conducted by an EFL teacher during the experimental group's interaction when taught using information gap strategy.



### **3.3. Instrumentation:**

Instrumentation proceeded not just by drawing on the implications of previous studies conducted by researchers around the world investigating similar questions, but also by adapting a trusted tool used in a previous study as mentioned earlier. Using classroom observation for the experimental group added an element of data to supplement test results. Using both instruments offered a potentially more complete picture of the effect of using information gap strategy on advanced English students' formation of information questions.

The form used in assessing students' oral production is based on five criteria: planning, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. A scale of five levels (poor, fair, good, very good, or excellent) was used for assessing students' performance. The total score of the exam was thirty; each part had five marks except planning which had ten marks. (Firth, 2014) The Speaking Test: Assessment Sheet is included in Appendix (3). The assessment criteria used as follows:

**Planning:** Students were assessed on how well they understood the topic, the questions asked, acted and spoke accordingly.

**Fluency:** was the message communicated well? Was the message understood? Did the communicator proved their ability to asking proper questions and an overall good speaking ability?

**Vocabulary:** did the student use a good range of vocabulary in an accurate way? Risk-taking in using fixed expressions and collocations was awarded.

Grammar: range and accuracy of grammatical structures were the basis for the assessment. Complex sentences and using subordinate clauses were a plus.

Pronunciation: are students pronouncing the words and sentences in a clear way taking into consideration intonation and stress?

### **3.4. Pre and post speaking test:**

"A systemic method of eliciting performance which is intended to be the basis for some decision making" (Skehan, 1998: p. 153), a pre and post-tests were used as data collection technique. The fifty-four participating students were given an oral pre-test aimed at measuring their construction of information questions. After that, the experimental group was taught using information gap strategy by a teacher in the ELC at the AAUJ. The control group was taught by the same teacher but by the textbook only method. The last step was giving both the control and experimental group an equivalent oral test measuring construction of information questions.

### **3.5. Validity of the speaking test:**

Four judges who are experts of TEFL have reviewed the oral tests and approved its validity for assessing the target language skill of producing English information questions. The consulted TEFL experts' group is identified in Appendix (5).

### **3.6. Reliability of the speaking test:**

The assessment form used in assessing students' performance in the pre and post-test was the same. Moreover, this evaluation form has been taken from a reliable resource which is Cambridge Unlock Listening and Speaking Skills 3 Teacher's End of Level Notes (Firth, 2014), and it has been designed by experts in the field and used specifically for the purpose of oral exams.

### **3.7. Class observation:**

An EFL teacher with MA in English observed one of the experimental group lessons. The observer completed an observation form used by the Ministry of Education, and also wrote supplementary notes explaining what happened in details. The form has been scanned and is attached, see appendix (4). The aim of observing the class was to see to what extent the students are engaged in the learning process, their reaction to the application of information gap teaching strategy, and to what extent the strategy was effectively facilitated by the teacher and successfully completed by the students.

### **3.8. Population:**

The targeted population was five hundred and ten advanced English students in the English Language Centre at the Arab American University in Jenin, in the summer semester of the academic year 2015/2016.

### 3.9. Sample:

The study sample was selected randomly and consisted of fifty-four male and female advanced English students at the ELC at the AAUJ. They were divided into two classes of twenty-seven students each; one served as the experimental group, and the other as the control group.

A description of the sample and its details and variables depended on in the analyses are illustrated in the following table:

**Table (1): Distribution of the students according to (gender, academic level, and major) in the control and the experimental groups.**

		Group	
		control group	experimental group
Gender	Male	11	11
	Female	16	16
Academic level	First	19	15
	Second	5	10
	Third	3	2
Major	Sciences	16	21
	Humanities	11	6

It is apparent from the preceding table that the control group and experimental group were selected randomly but with the same number of students in each. Both have the same number of students who have achieved similar English proficiency levels according to the placement examination administered by the ELC at the AAUJ.

As shown in the table above, each group consisted of sixteen female and eleven male students, giving both groups the same gender distribution.

With regard to the academic level, which is divided into freshmen, sophomores, and juniors, the numbers of the three groups did not have a huge difference between the control and the experimental groups. The first-year students were nineteen in the control group and fifteen in the experimental one. The second-year students were five in the control group and ten in the experimental group. The third-year students were three in the control group and two in the experimental one.

Another similar distribution of students is to be found in the balance of general areas of academic specialization among students of the science majors and students of the humanities majors. Sixteen students in the control group and twenty-one students in the experimental group were majoring in one of the sciences, while eleven students of the control group and six students of the experimental group were majoring in one of the humanities.

### **3.10. Variables:**

There are two kinds of variables in this study.

**First**, independent variables which are:

1. Gender
2. Academic year (first, second, or third-year students)
3. Specialization (either science or humanities majors)

4. Strategy used in teaching, whether by use of information gap strategy, or by textbook only.

**Second:** Dependent variable: students' formation of information questions in spoken discourse.

### **3.11. Summary:**

This chapter detailed the methodologies used for the experimental procedure and for data collection and analysis. It also presented a description of the population and the sample of the research.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Results**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

#### **4.2. Results of the first question**

#### **4.3. Results of the second question**

#### **4.4. Results of the third question**

#### **4.5. Results of the fourth question**

#### **4.6. Results of the fifth question**

#### **4.7. Results of the sixth question**

#### **4.8. Results of the seventh question**

#### **4.9. Class observation**

#### **4.10. Summary**

## **Chapter Four**

### **Results**

#### **4.1 Introduction:**

This chapter presents the results of the study that aims at investigating the impact of information gap teaching strategy on students' formation of information questions. The target population was students of the advanced English lab in the AAUJ. The following is a presentation of the statistics of the pre and post-test results. The tables below contain indications of answers to the central question of the study.

Hypothesis two was formulated to guarantee the equivalence of the pre-test results of the control and experimental groups. This was essential in order to integrate the information gap strategy and test its effects, if there are any.

The evaluation of students' spoken production of information questions was based on five domains: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and planning with double weight. The total grade of the conducted exams is the one presented in the tables answering the research questions.

#### **4.2 Results of the first question:**

Question 1: What is the impact of using information gap strategy on improving advanced English students' formation of information questions? Hypothesis one was formulated according to the first question which is the main question of the research.



An independent sample t-test was used to determine if there is any statistical significance difference between the two groups. A summary of the results of this analysis is presented in table (2).

**Table (2): Results of the independent sample t-test of the means of the control group and the experimental group in the post-test exam.**

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Post-test grade	control group	27	21.18	3.55	-2.91	52	0.005
	experimental group	27	23.96	3.44			

As table (2) shows, the significance equals (sig.=0.005) which is less than ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). Hence, we reject the hypothesis and conclude that there is a statistical significance difference between students' grades in the control and experimental groups in the post-tests in favor of the experimental group. The mean of the experimental group is 23.96 which is greater than 21.19 for the control group. The result just presented shows that there is a positive effect of using information gap strategy on students' formation of information questions.

#### **4.3. Results of the second question:**

Question 2: Is there any significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the impact of using information gap strategy on improving students' formation of informative questions between the pre-tests of the experimental group and the control group? Hypothesis two was derived from the second

question and to make sure that the experimental and control groups were equivalent before conducting information gap teaching strategy.

An independent sample t-test was used to determine if there is any statistical significant difference between the two groups. A summary of the results of this analysis is presented in table (3).

**Table (3): Results of the independent samples t-test of the means of the control group and the experimental group pre-tests.**

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre-test grade	control group	27	20.81	3.81	1.88	52	0.07
	experimental group	27	18.66	4.54			

The results in table (3) indicate that (sig.=0.07) which is greater than ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), hence we accept the first hypothesis and conclude that there is no statistical significance difference in students' grades for both control and experimental groups in the pre-test results. It is understood from the results that the two groups are equivalent since the mean of the control group pre-test results is 20.81 which is close to the mean of the experimental group's pre-test results. The result of testing this hypothesis enabled the researcher to proceed with the process of applying information gap strategy and to continue the study.

#### 4.4. Results of the third question:

Question 3: Is there any significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the impact of using information gap strategy on improving students' formation of informative questions between the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group? Hypothesis three was derived from the third question.

A paired sample t-test was used to determine if there is any statistical significance difference between the results of the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group. The result of this analysis is presented in table (4).

**Table (4): Results of the paired sample t-test of the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group.**

Test	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre-test grade	18.66	27	4.54	-11.17	26	0.000
Post-test grade	23.96	27	3.44			

The results obtained, as shown in table (4) indicate that the significance (Sig.= 0.000) is less than ( $\alpha= 0.05$ ). Hence, we reject the hypothesis and conclude that there is a statistical significance difference between the experimental group students' grades of the pre-test and post-test in favor of the post-test. The mean of the post-test is 23.96 which is greater than the mean of the pre-test which is 18.67.

#### 4.5. Results of the fourth question:

Question 4: Is there any significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) of the textbook-only method on improving students' formation of information questions between the pre-test and the post-test of the control group? Hypothesis four was derived from the fourth question.

A paired sample t-test was used to determine if there is any statistical significance difference between the results of the pre-test and the post-test of the control group. A summary of the result of this analysis is presented in table (5).

**Table (5): Results of the paired sample t-test of the pre-test and the post-test of the control group.**

Test	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre-test grade	20.81	27	3.81	-1.99	26	.057
Post-test grade	21.18	27	3.55			

Table (5) shows that the significance is (sig.=0.057) which is greater than ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). Hence, we accept the hypothesis and conclude that there is no statistical significance difference between students' grades for pre-test and post-test results of the control group. We conclude that the textbook-only method doesn't significantly affect students' formation of information questions.

#### 4.6. Results of the fifth question:

Question 5: Is there any significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the impact of using information gap strategy on improving students' formation of information questions between the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group due to gender? The fifth hypothesis was derived from the fifth question.

A paired sample t-test was used to determine if there is any statistical significant difference between the results of the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group due to gender. A summary of the result of this analysis is presented in table (6).

**Table (6): The results of the paired sample t-test of the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group according to gender.**

Gender	Test	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Male	Pre-test grade	17.81	11	5.56	-7.17	10	.000
	Post-test grade	24.09	11	4.18			
Female	Pre-test grade	19.25	16	3.78	-9.59	15	.000
	Post-test grade	23.87	16	2.98			

Table (6) shows that the significance is (sig.= 0.000) which is less than ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). Hence we reject the hypothesis and conclude that there is a statistical significance difference between experimental group students' pre-test and post-test grades in favor of the post-test results for both male and female students. The mean of the results of the post-test for the female

group is (23.87) which is greater than the pre-test (19.25). The mean of the results of the post-test for the male group is (24.09) which is higher than the pre-test (17.81).

#### 4.7. Results of the sixth question:

Question 6: Is there any significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the impact of using information gap strategy on improving students' formation of information questions between the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group due to academic level? The sixth hypothesis was formulated from the sixth question.

A paired sample t-test was used to determine if there is any statistical significant difference between the results of the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group due to the academic level. A summary of the result of this analysis is presented in table (7).

**Table (7): Results of paired samples t-test of the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group according to the academic level.**

academic level	Test	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
First	Pre-test grade	19.06	15	3.80	-8.55	14	0.000
	Post-test grade	24.46	15	2.97			
Second	Pre-test grade	19.00	10	5.14	-5.83	9	0.000
	Post-test grade	24.20	10	3.32			
Third	Pre-test grade	14.00	2	7.07	-5.0	1	0.126
	Post-test grade	19.00	2	5.65			

As shown in table (7), and regarding first year students' group, the results indicate that significance ( $\text{sig.} = 0.000$ ) is less than ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). Hence, we reject the hypothesis and conclude that there is a statistical significance difference between the pre-test and post-test results of the first year students of the experimental group.

Regarding second year students' group, results also indicate that significance ( $\text{sig.} = 0.000$ ) is less than ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). Hence, we reject the hypothesis and conclude that there is a statistical significance difference between the pre-test and post-test results of the second year students of the experimental group.

Regarding third year students' group, results also indicate that significance ( $\text{sig.} = 0.126$ ) is more than ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). Hence, we accept the hypothesis and conclude that there is no statistical significance difference between the pre-test and post-test results of the third year students of the experimental group.

In conclusion, results of first-year students and sophomores' post-tests have improved after learning in a class which applied information gap, but results of third-year students did not improve.

#### **4.8. Results of the seventh question:**

Question 7: Is there any significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the impact of using information gap strategy on improving students' formation of information questions between the pre-test and the post-test of the

experimental group due to students' specialization? The seventh hypothesis was derived from the seventh question.

A paired sample t-test was used to determine if there is any statistical significant difference between the results of the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group due to students' specialization. A summary of the results of this analysis is presented in table (8).

**Table (8): Results of the paired sample t-test of the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group according to students' specialization.**

Specialization	Test	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Science	Pre-test grade	19.38	21	4.46	-8.93	20	0.000
	Post-test grade	24.33	21	3.24			
Humanities	Pre-test grade	16.16	6	4.26	-8.51	5	0.000
	Post-test grade	22.66	6	4.13			

As shown in table (8), the results indicate that the significant differences between the pre-test and the post-test results of science and humanities students in the experimental group (sig.=0.000) for both which is smaller than ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). Hence, we reject the hypothesis and conclude that there is a statistical significance difference between experimental group students' grades of pre-test and post-test in favor of the post-test results of both sciences and humanities students. Mean results of sciences students' post-test are (24.33) which is greater than the mean results of their



pre-test (19.38). Mean results of humanities students' of the post-test are (22.66) which exceed the mean results of their pre-test results (16.16).

#### **4.9. Class observation:**

The observer's main notes of the experimental group concerning the lesson taught with an information gap strategy in class were referred to the students' roles, the teacher's role, and the role of the subject matter being taught. Overviews of this observation are as follows.

The lecture started with usual greetings and a two minute warming up conversation between the students and the teacher. The teacher's role at the beginning of the lesson was as an instructor; clarifying to students the task needing to be accomplished. Students were supposed to work in pairs sitting back to back. The teacher gave an example by modeling the procedure with one of the students. The class of twenty seven students consequently moved their chairs to sit back to back. The activity began after the teacher distributed worksheets to each pair. Students had sufficient time to read the instructions carefully and ask questions about anything they did not understand.

Students at that stage were the center of the learning process and the teachers of their own learning; the teacher's job was a facilitator. For about twenty minutes students were trying to answer each other's questions to be able to fill in missing information in a conference brochure chart. They were asking each other questions like "who is the German guy arriving on

the 3rd of September?” “How can you spell her name?” “When does Anne arrive?”, and so on. At the end of the class, the students and the teacher checked to see if they filled their tables with the correct information and had correctly completed their charts. They summarized the ways they were able to ask about this or that. Students asked questions about the forms of questions they used and about any errors they made.

In short, students' interaction time was maximized when communicating in an information gap activity. Self and peer correction were common. Comfortable learning environment was apparent. Students were motivated throughout and enjoyed the class and its time. Students were not hesitant to ask about the forms they used incorrectly.

#### **4.10. Summary:**

An interpretation of the analysis of the data collected in this research was presented with tables and explained in words in this chapter, including the main result of the study. The researcher found significant improvement in the students' formation of information questions when taught using information gap strategy.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

#### **5.2. Discussion**

##### **5.2.1. Discussion of the results of the major question**

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##### **5.2.2.1. Discussion of the results of the second question**

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##### **5.2.2.4. Discussion of the results of the fifth question**

##### **5.2.2.5. Discussion of the results of the sixth question**

##### **5.2.2.6. Discussion of the results of the seventh question**

##### **5.2.3. Discussion of the class observation**

#### **5.3. Conclusion**

#### **5.4. Recommendations**

## **Chapter Five**

### **Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **5.1. Introduction:**

A discussion of the results of this study is made by the researcher in this chapter. Precisely, the results of the oral pre and post-test will be analyzed based on the quantitative results. On the other hand, the class observation was analyzed by the researcher qualitatively. After that, the conclusion of the whole research is formulated in words. Finally, recommendations for the different related groups concerned in TEFL are formulated.

#### **5.2. Discussion:**

##### **5.2.1. Discussion of the results of the major question:**

The major question this study (question 1) aims to answer is the following:

“What is the impact of using information gap strategy on improving advanced English students’ formation of information questions?”

An independent samples t-test was used to determine if there is any statistical significant difference between the two groups.

The results obtained, as shown the previous chapter in details, indicate that the significance equals (sig.=0.005) which is less than (  $\alpha$  =

0.05). Hence, we reject the hypothesis and conclude that there is a statistical significance difference between students' grades in the control and experimental groups in the post-tests in favor of the experimental group. The mean of the experimental group is 23.96 which is greater than 21.19 for the control group. The result just presented shows that there is a positive effect of using information gap strategy on students' formation of information questions.

After analyzing the results of the post-test for both the control and the experimental group, the result of this question demonstrates a positive effect of using information gap strategy to promote students' formation of information questions. In simpler words, students who were taught using information gap strategy have improved significantly in their production and use of information questions in spoken discourse unlike students who were taught by the traditional, textbook only teaching strategy. This proves the worth and importance of using information gap teaching strategy as a beneficial teaching strategy that improves the students' oral production specifically their production and use of information questions in spoken communications. This suggests that adapting curricula to integrate an information gap strategy requiring students to communicate information with their peers is a beneficial instructional practice.

This research has shown that information gap strategy is not just a beneficial teaching strategy for improving students' spoken and communicative abilities but it is specifically important for the students use

and production of information questions which are essential for their long time questioning and learning process.

This research agrees with the results of the following previous researches which show that information gap strategy promote development of students' speaking skills in general, as confirmed by (Alizadeh, (2011); Alizadeh, (2011); Pica, Kang & Sauro (2006); Oradee (2012); Tyler and Van Lier (2001); Raptou (2001); Watamni and Gholami (2012); Afrizal (2015); Ismaili and Bajrami (2016); Asrobi, Seken and Suarnajaya (2013); Jondeya (2011); Ha E. et al. (2012); Dufficy (2004); Putri (2014); Fatemipour and Nourmohammadi (2014); Yuniarti (2009); KaU (2012); and Fuqaha (2015)).

The only research that contained in its minor results the specific issue of the same strategies effect of information question and agrees with the results of this research is Andrade, (2011). This study mentions, as one of its minor findings that information gap helps students interact more easily and ask questions with less hesitation. Another more general study which investigated the impact of using communicative language teaching techniques agrees with the results of this research where it found that students are less embarrassed when asking about the missing information when working in groups or pairs (Alizadeh, 2011).

Alizadeh (2011) also investigated the effect of facilitating active learning strategies with EFL students and arrived at many results that are similar and agree to those found in this study, including an improvement in

productive communicative skills. This reaffirms this study results since producing information questions are considered generative communicative patterns.

One of the most important and earliest studies addressing information gap strategy was written by Doughty & Pica (1986). This study's results confirmed from early times the usefulness of information gap strategy in teaching. However, their study was conducted on native English-speaking teenagers. They included information gap strategy as one kind of communicative language teaching strategy. The study found positive results of using communicative language teaching strategies on students learning in general. Despite the difference in the students studied, it also mentioned an important contribution that information gap strategy offers to the learning environment, which is its potential for obligating students to modify their interaction to be able to deliver messages.

Two decades later, Pica, Kang & Sauro (2006) has conducted another study the results of which were similar to those Pica arrived at twenty years earlier and both researches agree with the results of this research. However, the later study also found results specifically related to the formation of information questions. The researchers concluded that information gap teaching strategy leads students to more effective learning of difficult forms in the target language. This result is a precedent for the findings of this study since information questions are not considered an easy form to learn in English.

The researcher proved that information gap teaching strategy benefits students' learning and promotes better production of information questions. The researcher draws this conclusion to the difference between using the traditional way of teaching exclusively and integrating information gap strategy, as has been demonstrated in the results of the main question.

Linguistic and nonlinguistic factors in the implementation of information gap strategy might have positively affected students' formation of information questions. Nonlinguistic aspects of engagement in information gap strategy include the psychological and sociological aspects of the learner and the environment which affect students' learning. Oradee (2012) proved that working in small groups creates a much more secure environment which enhances students' readiness to work actively. Asrobi, Seken and Suarnajaya (2013) concluded in their study that using this strategy improves students' motivation as well as their speaking abilities. Many previous researches concentrated on the nonlinguistic side of learning especially motivation in the application of information gap teaching strategy found a positive effect of this strategy on students' psychological reflections hence on their linguistic production. The aforementioned results of previous research agree with the results of this research.

The researcher attributes the result of the research to motivation, too. Motivation plays an important role in students' learning. Motivation



towards language learning can be achieved by using an activity which arises or awakes one or more of the several kinds of motivation for learning. Dörnyei & Schmidt (2001) identified four kinds of motivation: intrinsic, extrinsic, instrumental, and integrative motivation. The researcher explains this contribution to the fact that one kind of extrinsic motivation is peer motivation. Peer motivation is intensive in information gap strategy application since students work in pairs and groups. In interactive activities where students must exchange information to complete the assigned task, both interlocutors need to be cooperative. Such cooperation promotes students' motivation to share and learn new forms and information.

This research also agrees with Raptou (2001) who asserts that the study's target students, who got involved in information gap strategy, were motivated to speak French for more extended periods than usual. In his research, Putri (2014) also concluded that students' confidence and motivation improved because of his use of information gap teaching strategy. Yuniarti (2009) in his action research also found advantages of games, jigsaw and missing information activities including students' feelings of comfort, enjoyment, and motivation to participate.

As information questions are considered one of the forms of the English language, these forms were produced in better shapes and functioned better by learners who were taught by information gap strategy. This fact agrees with other language components as presented in other researches as follows. Other language components are identified as

having been learned as a result of information gap teaching strategy in other studies. Nakahama, Tyler and Van Lier (2001) concluded that students focused better on definite forms and functions. Raptou (2001) also proved that vocabulary and grammatical functional forms were used more often and for a lengthier period. Idek & Fong's (2015) result was better English past tense verbs spelling when writing. Dufficy (2004) concluded that students' started producing better forms of the language, and that students' written production improved.

Learning is a social activity; people cannot learn languages by themselves because of the social human nature. Consequently, we need parents, friends, peers, brothers, sisters and everyone to be able to learn according to (Vygotskii, 1962). The researcher believes that this idea supports the result of this research. In information gap strategy, students practice real life situations and functional interactions such as answering the phone, planning for a trip with friends, asking a foreigner about the directions of a specific place, organizing meeting or a conference ...etc. This situation in class is, in fact, a microcosm of the society. Peers and the teacher are the members of the class society; they do the scaffolding in which they help each other to reach the zone of proximal development to be able to creatively reproduce what they have learned. Creative reproduction here is the optimal outcome learning. Forms of language used in spoken communication between partners and group members are replicated and practiced and assessed through information gap interactions by the interlocutors themselves. Consequently, the use of information

questions is a must to complete the task and progress in their mastery.

The idea of constructivism agrees with positive results of practicing information gap exercises and the production of information questions. The researcher relates this to the fact that information questions, the instructional objective of this study, are an integral part of the process of application of information gap strategy. Bruner (1966) says that constructing knowledge is based on two main processes. One is relating the new information to the learner's previous knowledge in using and practicing that information. The researcher believes that information questions cannot be avoided in information gap activities since spoken interaction to exchange information is essential to the task.

### **5.2.2. Discussion of the results of the sub questions:**

#### **5.2.2.1. Discussion of the results of the second question:**

The second question was formulated to make sure that the experimental and the control groups are equivalent before starting the application of information gap teaching strategy. This aim was achieved successfully by conducting a pre-test for both groups and the results showed that there is no statistical significance difference between the pre-test results of the control and experimental group.

#### **5.2.2.2. Discussion of the results of the third question:**

The result of the third question shows that there is a statistical significance difference between the experimental group students' pre-and post-test grades in favor of the post-test. The post-test mean 23.96 is greater than the pre-test mean 18.67. It suggests a positive influence of information gap teaching strategy on students' production of information questions. This strategy has proved its influential effect on EFL students' oral production of questions in English.

#### **5.2.2.3. Discussion of the results of the fourth question:**

Complementary with the third question results, the fourth question results show that there is no difference between control group students' pre-test and post-test results. The control group which was taught by textbook only did not gain significant improvement in the formation of information questions, unlike the experimental group as shown above.

The researcher attributes this difference, between the results of the group which was taught by using information gap teaching strategy and the group taught by the textbook only method in favor of the first groups, to many factors.

First, the center of the learning experience in the experimental group is the student not the teacher unlike the control group. Students in the textbook only are passive recipients of information in which the teacher provide them with all the information and they are to receive the so called

information and keep them in their memory. However, speaking and producing information questions are productive skills that need to be practiced.

This leads to the second point, in the textbook only method, the time students practice the learnt task is very limited to answering the exercises in the textbook and saying the answers aloud for the teacher and other students to make sure of their correctness. The case in information gap strategy is quite the contrary. Time devoted to learner is almost the full time of class because the tasks done in this teaching strategy is the students own doing and responsibility. Students have to ask and answer information questions and other kinds of communicative techniques to fill the information gaps in their worksheets.

#### **5.2.2.4. Discussion of the results of the fifth question:**

The fifth question's results show that there is a difference between experimental group students' pre- and post-test grades in favor of the post-test for both male and female students. The mean of the results of the post-test for the female sub-group 23.87 which is greater than in the pre-test which is 19.25. The mean of the results of the post-test for the male group is 24.09 which is higher than in the pre-test which is 17.81. The researcher concludes that both female and male students' formation of information questions improved significantly because of the information gap teaching strategy they were exposed to.

The researcher attributes this to the inefficiency of the traditional way of teaching and its results on students' formation of information questions regardless of students' gender. The traditional method's inefficiency refers to the same reasons mentioned in the discussion of the second and third questions.

#### **5.2.2.5. Discussion of the results of the sixth question:**

The sixth question's results show that there is a difference between the pre-test and post-test results of the first and second but not for the third year students of the experimental group. The significance for second-year students is (sig. = 0.000) which is less than ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). Results for first-year students were the same. The researcher understands that both first and second year students improved after leaning in a class taught by information gap teaching strategy. In contrast, the third year students did not show any improvement in their performance.

The researcher might assign causes contributing to this exception to several reasons. One is that students who postponed taking the obligatory English courses at AAUJ's English Language Center are more likely to have a negative attitude towards learning English. Another reason might be associated with the age difference between them and the majority of the other members of the class as a result of which interaction might be hindered. Also, only specializations such as nursing, physiotherapy and occupational therapy require field practice which results in frequent

absences. Some of the older students might also have previously failed the course, and are repeating it, sometimes for more than the second time.

#### **5.2.2.6. Discussion of the results of the seventh question:**

Results of the seventh question show that there is a statistical significance difference between experimental group students' grades for pre-test and post-test exams in favor of the post-test results for both science and humanities students. Science students' mean result of the post-test is (24.33) which is greater than the mean results of their pre-test result (19.38). The humanities students' mean result of the post-test is (22.66) which exceeds the mean result of their pre-test results (16.16). The researcher conclude that both students specializing in science and humanities improved significantly. This suggests that using information gap teaching strategy is effective for students regardless of major.

The researcher attributes both science and humanities students' improvement in the formation of information questions in the experimental group to the information gap strategy's communicative nature. All human beings are communicative by nature, not in the same degree though. Still, in information gap practices students are forced to use their communicative spoken skills to fill these information gaps given to them and this has nothing to do with the students' specialization at university.

### **5.2.3. Discussion of the class observation:**

What was observed in the class taught by information gap strategy is not but confirmation of the results of the research questions and the interpretations of the researcher. Time devoted to learner, the student is the center of the learning process, the teacher's role as facilitator, maximizing the practice time for students and students' motivation are all points the researcher attributed the results of the research questions to. All these points were measured by the observer.

After a short introduction about the task to be done in class, the students started communicating. This communication, which was mostly asking and answering questions, lasted for about the end of the class time. The class ended with a short discussion and a summary. Information questions were used and assessed and modified by the students for almost a whole class period. In an Arab speaking country students will not have a similar chance to practice this specific kind of language forms outside the tutoring environment.

The activity the students worked in the class observed was designed to force students to do an assigned task. This assigned task weighted all the responsibility on the students themselves to fill the information gaps they have. Students were being the masters of the game and the ones who acted. As the center of the learning process, they had to find their own ways of leaning as in natural situations and they had to experience that not have it ready from the teacher to memorize.



The class observation has documented the benefits of information gap teaching strategy in which students engaged actively in the learning and the assessment process. Information questions, as shown in the class observation, were impossible to avoid. Active participation of students was unlocked, and they started inquiring about wrong forms which cause wrong answers and misunderstandings.

### **5.3. Conclusion:**

Results of the study showed that using information gap strategy in teaching English as a Foreign Language to students in this representative sample improved their production of information questions as distinct from the use of the traditional method of teaching alone, which resulted in no significance difference on students' production of information questions.

Information gap strategy had a positive effect on promoting mastery of information questions, one of the most important functional forms of English. First and second-year students were able to ask questions in the conversations they had with their peers during the experiment as well as afterwards in an oral exam with the teacher. The researcher believes that students who are capable of asking about what they do not know, what they have missed in a conversation or a class, and about others' opinions will be better learners in all other disciplines which are taught mostly in English. Language is one of these disciplines they are still studying, and they will continue to need in their future work or higher education.

Information gap strategy improved students' formation of information questions regardless of their gender and the subject they are majoring at the university. It is thus potentially beneficial for all students at the university level, since it creates an interactional context where the students do most of the work and the teacher primarily facilitates their conversations. Communication is an essential human activity, so all students have a common foundation for information gap strategy's interaction which is a desire to communicate. Even if they are not willing to communicate, information gap strategy, by virtue of peer influence, obligates students to communicate in order to achieve their shared goals.

#### **5.4. Recommendations:**

In the light of the results of this study, the researcher offers the following recommendations for consideration that stems out from the results of the study:

1. The researcher recommends to the Ministry of Education to develop and provide in-service training programs for EFL teachers to empower and support them to adapt whatever curricula or textbooks they use to incorporate information gap strategy in teaching speaking skills.
2. As teachers are the foremost creators of the small societies that exist in their classes, information gap strategy can be customized to fit students' different interests and nurture an enjoyable environment in the English classroom. The researcher advises teachers to

independently or collaboratively adapt their textbooks for the use of information gap strategy. The researcher recommends to teachers to shed light on students' formation of information questions as they are considered an important form of English. Students' willingness and ability to ask questions must be taken into consideration from the early stages to facilitate healthy learning and professional preparedness among our students.

3. The researcher urges EFL/ESL educational researchers to conduct further studies on students' formation information questions. Students at all stages of language learning must be able to ask all kind of questions.
4. The researcher recommends that such a research can be more beneficial if implemented on child students because of their quick learning of all domains especially language. Further research such as the hence suggested can get clearer and bigger results of students' improvement of their formation of information questions as the researcher believe. Moreover, child students will enjoy information gap strategy more because it has game-like activities and children learn more when having fun unlike adult students whom sometimes consider doing such a thing is childish of them.

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## **Appendices**

## Appendix 1

### ENGLISH CONVERSATION EXAM

**The purpose of this test is to examine the impact of using Information Gap Strategy on improving advanced English students' construction of Information Questions in the Arab American University-Jenin**

#### Pre-Test

Total Marks:(30)

Date .....

Name:.....Time: 10 m

-----

**Note:** The test consists of 2 questions. You need to choose one of them:

Read the instructions carefully, You'll Play A's role.

#### **Question 1 (What's in your room):**

Students A and B:

1st. step: Greet each other

2nd. step: Have a conversation about weather, sports, interests, exams etc.

Student B and A:

3rd. step: B – Describe your room to A. Then,  
A ask some questions about B's room.

4th. step: A – Describe your room to B. Then  
B ask some questions about A's room.

You're supposed to ask 5 Information Questions using the following Wh-words (what, when, where, why, how)

**Question 2 (Daily Routines):**

Students A and B:

1st. step: Greet each other

2nd. step: Have a conversation about weather, sports, interests, exams etc.

Students A and B:

1st. step: A – Tell B about your daily routines. Then,

B ask questions to A.

2nd. step: B – Tell A about your daily routines. Then,

A ask questions to B.

You're supposed to ask 5 Information Questions using the following Wh-words (what, when, where, why, how)



## Appendix 2

### ENGLISH CONVERSATION EXAM

**The purpose of this test is to examine the impact of using Information Gap Strategy on improving advanced English students' construction of Information Questions in the Arab American University-Jenin**

#### Post-Test

Total Marks: (30)

Date .....

Name:.....Time: 10 m

-----

**Note:** The test consists of 2 questions. You need to choose one of them:

Read the instructions carefully, You'll Play A's role.

#### **Question 1 (Favorite festival):**

\* Students A and B:

1st. step: Greet each other

2nd. step: Have a conversation about weather, sports, interests, exams etc.

\* Student B and A:

3rd. step: B – Describe your favorite festival to A. Then,

A ask some questions about B's favorite festival.

4th. step: A – Describe your favorite festival to B. Then

B ask some questions about A's favorite festival.

You're supposed to ask 5 Information Questions using the following Wh-words (what, when, where, why, how)

**Question 2 (A place to visit):**

\* Students A and B:

1st. step: Greet each other

2nd. step: Have a conversation about weather, sports, interests, exams etc.

\* Students A and B:

1st. step: A – Tell B about a place you'd like to visit. Then,

B ask questions to A about a place he/she would like to visit.

2nd. step: B – Tell A about a place you'd like to visit. Then,

A ask questions to B about a place he/she would like to visit.

You're supposed to ask 5 Information Questions using the following Wh-words (what, when, where, why, how)

## Appendix 3

### Speaking Test: Assessment Sheet

#### SPEAKING TEST: ASSESSMENT SHEET

NAME ..... DATE .....

TEST .....

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent
Planning	2	4	6	8	10
Fluency	1	2	3	4	5
Vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5
Grammar	1	2	3	4	5
Pronunciation	1	2	3	4	5

Comments

Total: \_\_\_\_/30



#### SPEAKING TEST: ASSESSMENT SHEET

NAME ..... DATE .....

TEST .....

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent
Planning	2	4	6	8	10
Fluency	1	2	3	4	5
Vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5
Grammar	1	2	3	4	5
Pronunciation	1	2	3	4	5

Comments

Total: \_\_\_\_/30

## Appendix 4

### Class Observation

#### Class Observation Form

Course Title: Advanced English Lab Instructor: Raf Fardous Jarrar  
 Length of Observation: 50 min. Observer: Rahma Kmail  
 Date: 22nd August Subject Matter Treated in Lesson: Attending a conference

#### I. Learning Organization and Management

1. During the observed class to what extent did the teacher demonstrate the following behaviors?

a. Started and ended class on time

NO The class starts at 2:40  
The teacher arrives at 12:46

b. Was prepared to conduct class

yes

c. Responded adequately to student questions

yes

d. Noticed when a student or students were not engaged and took action to

yes

e. Clearly explained the learning objectives for the class session

NO

- f. Summarized the major points at the end of the lesson

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II. Knowledge of Subject Matter

2. during the observed class, to what extent did the instructor demonstrate the following behaviors?

- a. Explain concepts clearly

NO Concepts included

---

---

---

- b. Gave real world examples to illustrate concepts

yes How much?  
How many?

---

---

---

- c. Responded adequately to students questions

yes

---

---

---

III. Learning Style

3. During the observed class to what extent did the teacher demonstrate the following behaviors?

- a. Spoke clearly and audibly

yes

---

---

---

b. Showed enthusiasm for the subject matter and teaching

NO - Normal

c. Treated all students in an equitable manner

yes

d. Encouraged questions and students participation

yes

e. Gave students an adequate amount of time to respond to questions

yes

f. Provided feedback that gave students direction for improvement

yes

g. Interacted with individual students during the class session

yes

h. Interacted with students working in small groups during the class session

✓ yes

i. Elicited feedback validation of student understanding of material

yes

j. Used techniques that reflect and awareness of different learning styles

I don't know

k. Appropriately used web-based resources, PowerPoint or other technological tools

The Subject doesn't require Technology

l. Encouraged or required students' engagement in out-of class activities related to the course (e.g., work with other students, participation in campus events, service learning, email communication with instructor/other students, etc.)

No

## IV. Instructional Techniques

4. During the observed class to what extent did the teacher demonstrate the following behaviors?

a. Lecture

at the beginning of the class  
Instructions

b. Teacher-led discussion

c. Teacher-student shared responsibility (seminar, discussion)

Shared responsibility  
assessment / feedback

d. Student computer use

No

e. Small group activities

→ Yes

f. Student presentation

No



g. Hands-on practice

yes

h. In-class writing

No

i. Performance

yes

j. Experiential learning (labs, fieldwork, internships, etc)

yes

k. Assessment activities

yes

V. Encouragement to Engage in Critical Thinking

5. During the observed class session(s), to what extent did the learning process designed by the instructor encourage students to engage in the following cognitive processes?

- a. Memorizing facts, ideas, methods so that they can be repeated in pretty much the same form

No

- b. Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, theory

Yes / Induction. They managed to give the rule for making "Wh" questions out of the ones they encountered in the exercise.

- c. Synthesizing and organizing of ideas, information or experiences in new ways.

No

- d. Judging value or soundness of information, arguments or methods.

No

- e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems in new situations

Yes / She asked the students to apply what they've learned in real new situations. "questions for the University president"

6. Overall, did the instructor create an engaging learning experience during the observed class session?

yes, the students were highly engaged in the activity the teacher did. They shared interest and they shared answers.

7. Additional Observer Comments:

- \* Teacher didn't start on time.
- \* Some students were late.
- \* The teacher reminded them of previous tasks. She gave them some questions to motivate them to speak.
- \* The teacher responded to students' questions.
- \* She used "pair work" and she took attendance.
- \* The teacher <sup>got the students</sup> engaged in the revision of the previous class.
- \* She gave them instructions for the tasks she asked them to do.
- \* She used "Information gap".
- \* The teacher gave the students time to read and ask questions about the task.
- \* The teacher encouraged students to participate.
- \* The teacher moved among students to help them.
- \* The teacher gave her students feedback.

Observer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 22nd August 2016

**Appendix 5****Jury****Validity of the Pre and Post-test**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Rank</b>
<b>Dr. Musaddaq Barahmeh</b>	<b>Assistant professor of methods of TEFL in AAUJ</b>
<b>Dr. Tareq Fakhouri</b>	<b>Assistant professor of EFL in AAUJ</b>
<b>Dr. Ahmad Awad</b>	<b>Assistant professor of EFL in AN-Najah University</b>
<b>Mr. Hasan Naqeeb</b>	<b>Lecturer of EFL in AAUJ</b>

## Appendix 6

### Worksheets

#### 10 FILL IN THE MISSING INFORMATION (1)

**Student A**

By asking Student B questions, fill in the missing information in the tables below. (Student B will also ask you questions.)

Before starting, work out the type of questions you will need to ask. For example:

Who is arriving on ... (say date)?  
 What nationality is ... (say name)?  
 When is ... (say name) ... arriving at the conference?  
 How long is ... (say name) ... staying?  
 At which hotel is ... (say name) ... staying?  
 At what time is ... (say name) ... giving a lecture?  
 On what date is the lecture on ... (say subject)?  
 etc.

When you have both finished, compare your tables to check that you have filled in the missing information correctly.

(Note: If, in answer to one of your questions, Student B says he/she doesn't know the answer, then try another sort of question to get the same information, since it may be that Student B has not yet filled in the information you based your first question on.)

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PSYCHIC RESEARCH				London, 6 June–20 June
List and details of participants				
Name	Nationality	Date of arrival	Length of stay	Hotel
1	American	5 June		The Hilton
2 Sven Borg			10 days	Central Park
3 Dr Marina Rossi	Italian	7 June	4 days	
4		6 June	a week	The Dorchester
5 Dr Klaus von Braun	German	10 June	5 days	Royal Kensington
6 Sir Roger Bloom	English		2 weeks	The Dorchester
7 Viktor Pavlova	Russian	3 June		Cen

Date and time of lecture		Subject of lecture
1 10 June	2.30 p.m.	In Search of UFOs
2 8 June	9.30 a.m.	The Secret of Dreams
3 9 June	3.15 p.m.	
4 11 June	10 a.m.	Psychic Healing
5 12 June		
6	10.15 a.m.	The Secret Life of Plants
7 15 June		The Great Tele

## 10 FILL IN THE MISSING INFORMATION (1)

**Student B**

By asking Student A questions, fill in the missing information in the tables below. (Student A will also ask you questions.)

Before starting, work out the type of questions you will need to ask. For example:

Who is arriving on ... (say date)?  
 What nationality is ... (say name)?  
 When is ... (say name) ... arriving at the conference?  
 How long is ... (say name) ... staying?  
 At which hotel is ... (say name) ... staying?  
 At what time is ... (say name) ... giving a lecture?  
 On what date is the lecture on ... (say subject)?

When you have both finished, compare your tables to check that you have filled in the missing information correctly.

(Note: If, in answer to one of your questions, Student A says he/she doesn't know the answer, then try another sort of question to get the same information, since it may be that Student A has not yet filled in the information you based your first question on.)

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PSYCHIC RESEARCH				London, 6 June–20 June
List and details of participants				
Name	Nationality	Date of arrival	Length of stay	Hotel
1 Janet Hoover	American	5 June	a fortnight	The Hilton
2 Sven Borg	Swedish	3 June	10 days	
3		7 June	4 days	The Winston Churchill
4 Brigitte Dubois	French	6 June	a week	The Dorchester
5	German		5 days	Royal Kensington
6 Sir Roger Bloom	English	5 June		The Dorchester
7 Viktor Pavlova	Russian	3 June	8	Cen

Date and time of lecture	Subject of lecture
1	In Search of UFOs
2 8 June 9.30 a.m.	
3 9 June 3.15 p.m.	E.S.P. – The Sixth Sense?
4 11 June	
5 12 June 1.30 p.m.	The Mystery of Atlantis
6 6 June 10.15 a.m.	The Secret Life of Plants
7 15 June	The Great Tele

## Appendix 7

An-Najah  
National University  
Faculty of Graduate Studies



جامعة  
النجاح الوطنية  
كلية الدراسات العليا

التاريخ: 2016/7/28

حضرة السيدة مديرة مركز اللغات المحترمة  
الجامعة العربية الأمريكية/جنين

الموضوع: تسهيل مهمة الطالبة / فريوس اسماعيل محمد جزار ، رقم تسجيل 11457824 ، تخصص  
ماجستير اساليب تدريس اللغة الانجليزية.

تحية طيبة وبعد،،

تسهيل مهمة الطلبة / ثرويس اسماعيل محمد جرار ، رقم تسجيل 11457824 ، تخصص ماجستير اساليب تدريس اللغة الانجليزية ، وهي بصدد اعداد الأطروحة الخاصة بها والتي عنوانها:

(The impact of using information gap strategy on improving advanced English students' construction of information questions in the Arab American university-Jenin)

يرجى من حضرتكم تسهيل مهمة الطلبة المذكورة اعلاه في تطبيق اداة الاختبار على منصة مركز اللغات، وذلك لاستكمال اجراءات الاطرحة الخاصة بها.

شاكرين لكم حسن تعاونكم.

مع والفر الاحترام ...

صح المواقفة

فصل ۲: مدیریت مالی

جميع الحقوق محفوظة

212/4/2

جامعة صنعاء  
كلية الدراسات العليا  
شعبه - فلسطيني

رئيس قسم الدراسات العليا والعلوم الانسانية

د. فاضل محمد



## Appendix 8

### Speaking exams Rubric

CATEGORY	5	4	3	2	Sector
Grammar	Grammar covered in class was used to communicate effectively.	A few minor difficulties arose from not using the grammar studied in class.	Grammatical errors led to many minor difficulties or one major breakdown in communication.	Grammatical errors severely hampered communication.	
Vocabulary	Vocabulary studied in class was used to express ideas eloquently.	A few minor difficulties arose from not using appropriate vocabulary.	Some difficulties arose due to limited vocabulary and/or bad diction.	Communication was severely hampered due to lack of vocabulary.	
Fluency	Student acted as a facilitator, helping the conversation flow and develop.	Some minor difficulties maintaining the conversation were evident.	Some effort was required to maintain the conversation. There may have been a few long pauses.	Much effort was required to maintain the conversation. There may have been many long pauses.	
Listening	Student responded to questions with appropriate answers, acknowledged all statements, and incorporated them into the discussion.	Student responded to most questions, acknowledged most statements, and incorporated many of these into the conversation.	Student failed to answer some questions appropriately OR failed to acknowledge some statements and incorporate these into the conversation.	Student didn't understand or ignored most questions and statements. Student may have been using notes.	
Voice and non-verbal communication	Pronunciation was clear and inflection and expressions were used to enhance communication.	No serious problems arose, but better pronunciation, inflection, and/or non-verbal communication could have made communication more efficient.	Some communication problems arose due to unclear pronunciation and/or lack of inflection and/or expression. Student may have been difficult to hear.	Pronunciation, inflection, and/or expression confused communication. Student may have been very difficult to hear.	

Points will be deducted from your final score if you speak for less than the assigned time.

- Trotta, J. (2017). *ESL go oral test evaluation grading rubric for TESOL TESL TEFL tests*. *Eslgo.com*. Retrieved 1 July 2017, from <http://eslgo.com/resources/sa/oral-evaluation.php>



جامعة النجاح الوطنية  
كلية الدراسات العليا

أثر استخدام استراتيجية الثغرة المعلوماتية على تحسين تكوين  
الاسئلة الاستقصائية لدى طلاب الجامعة العربية الأمريكية في  
مدينة جنين ذوو المستوى المتقدم في اللغة الانجليزية

إعداد

فردوس اسماعيل جرار

إشراف

د. أحمد عوض

د. سوزان عرفات

قدمت هذه الأطروحة استكمالاً للحصول على درجة الماجستير في برنامج اساليب  
تدريس اللغة الانجليزية، بكلية الدراسات العليا في جامعة النجاح الوطنية، نابلس،  
فلسطين.

2017

أثر استخدام استراتيجية الثغرة المعلوماتية على تحسين تكوين  
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اعداد

فردوس اسماعيل جرار

اشراف

د. أحمد عوض

د. سوزان عرفات

### المخلص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى فحص تأثير استخدام استراتيجية الثغرة المعلوماتية في تدريس اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية على تكوين الطلاب للأسئلة الإستقصائية في الفصل الصيفي للعام الدراسي 2016/2015 في الجامعة العربية الأمريكية - جنين، حيث تم اعتماد جنس الطالب وتخصصه والسنة الدراسية في الجامعة كمتغيرات هذه الدراسة.

تم أخضاع عينة البحث والمقسمة إلى مجموعتين (تجريبية وضابطة) إلى اختبار شفوي بعدي وقبلي وتم مراقبة إحدى المحاضرات التجريبية التي كانت تستخدم هذه الإستراتيجية التعليمية كأداة وصفية مساعدة، ولقد اختار الباحث 54 طالب وطالبة من مركز اللغات في الجامعة العربية الأمريكية كعينة للبحث مقسمة إلى مجموعتين متساويتين.

بعد إجراء التحليل الإحصائي ظهر الأثر الإيجابي لاستخدام استراتيجية الثغرة المعلوماتية على تكوين الطلاب للأسئلة الإستقصائية على المجموعة التجريبية بالخلاف مع نتائج المجموعة التي تم تدريسها بالطريقة التقليدية، حيث كان هنالك فروق ذات دلالة احصائية بين نتائج طلاب المجموعتين بناء على الجنس والتخصص والسنة الدراسية ما عدا طلاب السنة الدراسية الثالثة اللذين لم يكن هنالك تأثير للإستراتيجية السابق ذكرها على تكوينهم للإسئلة الإستقصائية.

خرج الباحث بتوصية لوزارة التربية والتعليم العالي تنص على تنظيم وإجراء دورات تطويرية لأساتذة اللغة الانجليزية ليستطيعوا استخدام استراتيجية الثغرة المعلوماتية في التدريس، كما وأوصى

الباحث المدرسين إجراء التعديلات اللازمة على المقررات الدراسية لتصبح تمارين المنهج جزء من الإستراتيجية، أوصى الكاتب أيضا للباحثين في مجال تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية لإجراء المزيد من الأبحاث بخصوص تكوين الطلاب للأسئلة الاستقصائية نظرا لاهميتها في مسيرتهم التعليمية.