

مجلة الذكوات البيض المحيطة

## الذكوات البيض

اسم مشتق من الذكوة وهي الجمرة الملتهبة والمراد بالذكوات  
الريوات البيض الصغيرة المحيطة بمقام أمير المؤمنين علي بن أبي  
طالب {عليه السلام}

شبهها لضياؤها وتوهجها عند شروق الشمس عليها لما فيها  
موضع قبر علي بن أبي طالب {عليه السلام}  
من النراري المضيئة

{**در النجف**} فكأنها جمرات ملتهبة وهي المرتفع من الأرض، وهي ثلاثة  
مرتفعات صغيرة لتعويات بارزة في أرض الغري وقد سميت الغري باسمها،  
وكلمة بيض لبروزها عن الأرض. وفي رواية إنَّها موضع خلوته أو إنَّها  
موضع عبادته وفي رواية أخرى في رواية المفضل عن الإمام الصادق  
{عليه السلام} قال: قلت: يا سيدي فإنَّ يكون دار المهدي ومجمع  
المؤمنين؟ قال: يكون ملكه بالكوفة، ومجلس حكمه جامعها وبيت  
ماله ومقسم غنائم المسلمين مسجد السهلة وموضع خلوته  
الذكوات البيض

تُعد بالبحوث والدراسات الإنسانية والفكرية والاجتماعية  
تصدر عن دائرة البحوث والدراسات  
ديوان الوقف الشيعي



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نيوان الوقف الشيعي / دائرة البحوث والدراسات

م/ مجلة الذكوات البيضاء

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته ...

إشارة إلى كتابكم المرقم ١٠٤٦ والمؤرخ ١٤/٢٨/ ٢٠٢١/ وبعثنا بكتابتنا المرقم ب-ت ٥٧٤٤/٤ في ٢٠٢١/١/٦  
والمتمسكين باستحداث مجلتكم التي تصدر عن الوقف المذكورة أعلاه ، وبعد التصديق على الرقم المعياري التولي  
المطبوع وإنشاء موقع الكتروني للمجلة تعتبر الموافقة الواردة في كتابتنا أعلاه موافقة نهائية على استحداث المجلة  
... مع وفاء التقدير

أ.م.د. هامين هسانح حسن

المدير العام لدائرة البحث والتطوير / وكالة

٢٠٢٢/١/١٧

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\* اسم الدورن العلمية / نسخة كتابت والشر والتمسة مع الوثائق.  
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مهند إبراهيم  
١٠ الذكوات الثاني

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# الذكوان البيضاء



مجلة علمية فكرية فصلية محكمة تصدر عن  
دائرة البحوث والدراسات في ديوان الوقف الشيعي



العدد ( ١٨ ) السنة الخامسة رمضان ١٤٤٧ هـ آذار ٢٠٢٦ م

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# الذِّكْرُ الْبَيْضُ



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# الذَّكْوَانُ الْبَيْضُ

مَجَلَّةٌ عِلْمِيَّةٌ فِكْرِيَّةٌ فَصَلِيَّةٌ مُحْكَمَةٌ تَصْدُرُ عَنْ  
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دائرة البحوث والدراسات

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البريد الإلكتروني

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## دليل المؤلف

- ١- أن يصم البحث بالأصالة والجدّة والقيمة العلمية والمعرفة الكيرة وسلامة اللغة ودقة التوليف.
- ٢- أن تحوي الصفحة الأولى من البحث على:  
أ- عنوان البحث باللغة العربية .  
ب- اسم الباحث باللغة العربي، ودرجته العلمية وشهادته.  
ت- بريد الباحث الإلكتروني.  
ث- ملخصات: أحدها باللغة العربية والآخر باللغة الإنكليزية.  
ج- تلويح مفاتيح الكلمات باللغة العربية بعد الملخص العربي.
- ٣- أن يكون مطبوعاً على الحاسوب بنظام (office Word ٢٠٠٧ أو ٢٠١٠) وعلى قرص ليزري منمّج (CD) على شكل ملف واحد فقط (أي لا يُجزأ البحث بأكثر من ملف على القرص) ويُزوّد هيئة التحرير بثلاث نسخ ورقية وتوضع الرسوم أو الأشكال، إن وجدت، في مكانها من البحث، على أن تكون صالحة من الناحية الفنية للطباعة.
- ٤- أن لا يزيد عدد صفحات البحث على (٢٥) خمس وعشرين صفحة من الحجم (A4) .
٥. يلتزم الباحث في ترتيب وتنسيق المصدر على الصيغة **APA**
- ٦- أن يلتزم الباحث ببلغ أجرة النشر المحددة باللفة (٧٥.٠٠٠) خمسة وسبعين ألف دينار عراقي، أو ما يعادلها بالعملة الأجنبية.
- ٧- أن يكون البحث خالياً من الأخطاء النحوية والنحوية والإملائية.
- ٨- أن يلتزم الباحث بالخطوط وأحجامها على النحو الآتي:  
أ- اللغة العربية: نوع الخط (Arabic Simplified) وحجم الخط (١٤) للمتن.  
ب- اللغة الإنكليزية: نوع الخط ( Times New Roman ) عنوانين البحث (١٦) . والملخصات (١٢) أما فقرات البحث الأخرى؛ فبحجم (١٤) .
- ٩- أن تكون هوامش البحث بالنظام الإلكتروني (تطبيقات ختامية) في غاية البحث. بحجم ١٢.
- ١٠- تكون مساحة الحواشي الجانبية (٢,٥٤) سم، والمسافة بين الأسطر (١) .
- ١١- في حال استعمال برنامج مصحف الملمية للآيات القرآنية يحمل الباحث ظهور هذه الآيات المباركة بالشكل الصحيح من عنده، لذا يفصل النسخ من المصحف الإلكتروني الحواش على شبكة الانترنت.
- ١٢- يبلغ الباحث بقرار صلاحية النشر أو علمها في مئة لا تتجاوز شهرين من تاريخ وصوله إلى هيئة التحرير.
- ١٣- يلتزم الباحث بإجراء تعديلات المحكمين على بحثه وفق التقارير المرسله إليه وموافقة المجلة بنسخة معدلة في مئة لا تتجاوز (١٥) خمسة عشر يوماً.
- ١٤- لا يحق للباحث المطالبة بتطلبات البحث كافة بعد مرور سنة من تاريخ النشر.
- ١٥- لا تعاد البحوث إلى أصحابها سواء قبلت أم لم تقبل.
- ١٦- تكون مصادر البحث وهومشه في غاية البحث، مع كتابة معلومات المصدر عندما يرد لأول مرة.
- ١٧- يتجمع البحث للنظوم السري من ثلاثة خيرة لبيان صلاحية النشر.
- ١٨- يشترط على طلبة الدراسات العليا فعلاً عن الشروط السابقة جلب ما يثبت موافقة الأستاذ المشرف على البحث وفق النموذج لتحدد في المجلة.
- ١٩- يحصل الباحث على حقل واحد لبحثه، ونسخة من المجلة، وإذا رغب في الحصول على نسخة أخرى فطبعها شرآؤها بسعر (١٥) ألف دينار.
- ٢٠- تصدر الأبحاث المنشورة في المجلة عن آراء أصحابها لا عن رأي المجلة.
- ٢١- ترسل البحوث إلى مقر المجلة - دفتر البحوث والدراسات في ديوان الوقف الشيعي بغداد - باب لتعلم )  
أو البريد الإلكتروني: (hms65in@Gmail.com) (offreserch@sed.gov.iq) بعد دفع الأجر في مقر المجلة
- ٢٢- لا يلتزم المجلة بنشر البحوث التي تُخلّ بشرط من هذه الشروط .

مجلة علمية فكرية فصلية محكمة تصدر عن  
دائرة البحوث والدراسات في ديوان الوقف الشيعي



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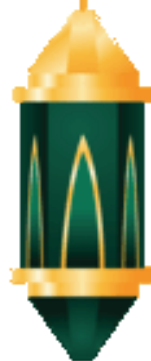
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## The Impact of Exploratory Practice on Improving Speaking Skills among Iraqi EFL Learners

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**Abstract:**

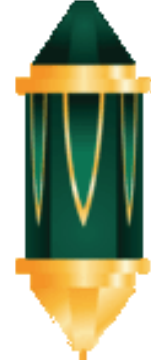
This study examines how Exploratory Practice (EP) enhances the speaking abilities of Iraqi learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The goal of this study was to investigate learners' perceptions of EP. And, to find out how far EP contributes to the learner's confidence, fluency, and communicative competence. The research utilized mixed methods such as a questionnaire administered to 30 EFL learners at university and open-ended responses. The learners, in general, expressed a highly positive attitude toward EP, as indicated by the mean score of the quantitative results reflecting largely positive attitudes toward using EP. The participants stated that they could better express ideas and interact with others. Additionally, they were able to respond more fluently. The qualitative findings confirmed the quantitative results, showing that EP helped learners identify what makes them difficult to speak, think about learning, and create a true working atmosphere. As claimed by the study, EP is an effective learner-centred approach that enhances Iraqi EFL learners' speaking skills through autonomy and motivation in the context of learner engagement. Thus, it is suggested that integrating the EFL EP into the EFL English programs can offer a more meaningful impact.

**Keywords:** Exploratory Practice, Speaking Skills, Iraqi EFL Learners, Oral Communication, Language Proficiency

**المستخلص:**

تبحث هذه الدراسة في تأثير الممارسة الاستكشافية (EP) على تحسين مهارات التحدث لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL) العراقيين. هدف البحث إلى فحص تصورات المتعلمين عن EP وتحديد مدى مساهمة EP في تطوير الثقة والطلاقة والكفاءة التواصلية. تم استخدام نهج مختلط، وذلك باستخدام استبيان تم تقديمه إلى ١٢٠ من متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بالجامعة، إلى جانب إجابات مفتوحة قدمت رؤى نوعية. وكشفت النتائج الكمية أن المتعلمين لديهم إيجابية عالية المواقف تجاه EP، حيث تشير الدرجات المتوسطة الإجمالية إلى تأثير قوي مدرك لـ EP على أداء التحدث. أبلغ المشاركون عن تحسن في التعبير عن الأفكار، والتفاعل مع الآخرين، والاستجابة بطلاقة أكبر أثناء المحادثة. ودعمت النتائج النوعية هذه كذلك النتائج، تبين أن EP عزز وعي المتعلمين بصعوبات التحدث لديهم، وشجع على التفكير، وعزز جواً أكثر تعاوناً وتحفيزاً في الفصل الدراسي. وخلصت الدراسة إلى أن EP هو نهج فعال يركز على المتعلم ويعزز بشكل كبير مهارات التحدث بين الطلاب متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من خلال تعزيز الاستقلالية والتحفيز والمشاركة بشكل أعمق في عملية التعلم. تشير النتائج إلى أن دمج اللغة الإنجليزية في برامج اللغة الإنجليزية يمكن أن يساهم في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بشكل أكثر وضوحاً وتواصلًا

الكلمات الافتتاحية: الممارسة الاستكشافية، مهارات التحدث، متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، التواصل الشفهي، إتقان اللغة

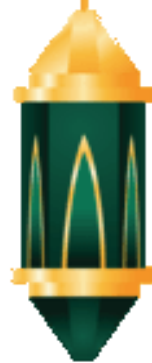


### 1.1 Background of the Study

Numerous studies have documented challenges faced by EFL students in their attempt to speak English. For instance, Chaima, M. The worry may inhibit one's ability to speak competently (2021). EFL students often experience difficulties with word pronunciation, limited vocabulary, and a nervous attitude. The challenges are intensified in the context of Iraq because the students' mother tongue, Arabic, affect their fluency while speaking. Both male and female students presented almost similar problems, earlier studies confirm. The importance of speaking for language acquisition effective communication through speaking is the fourth major language skill along with listening, reading and writing. As the most spontaneous form of communication between people, speaking is an essential aspect of language learning. People often think language proficiency is equivalent with speaking ability, however, this is not the case with Hindi.

Brown (2012) indicates that fluent second-language speakers generally possess more than just the knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. They are typically well-organized, may possess strong verbal and nonverbal communication skills, and can engage in lively discussions. The art of public speaking is the biggest challenge for many students of English as a foreign language. A common problem facing many countries, Iraq included, that don't use English as their primary language, is limited opportunities for students to practice their English outside the classroom in natural situations. Write my assignment According to Grieve and colleagues (2021), some learners may be proficient in reading and writing tasks yet struggle with public speaking. This might be due to a lack of familiarity with the language in context. Likewise, the level of the speaking skill positive correlation with the pupils' confidence and motivation to speak the language. When a student feels confident, he or she is more likely to start talking. This allows the other students to practice speaking (Oktari, N. F., 2024).

EFL students face a variety of difficulties which makes it a tough task to improve speaking skill. This is what the text is about. Here are some of the most common challenges. Pronunciation and accent tricks. Phonemic systems of English and non-English languages are different, making it difficult for non-English speakers to pronounce



words properly. Students from Iraq may not imitate English pronunciation successfully due to the unique Arabic sounds. (Sabti, A. A. et al., 2016). The difficulties affect their intonation, stressing patterns and diction negatively impairing their communication ability. Tiwari, H. P. (2024). The argument is that students are not understood during conversations due to their pronunciation problems. Anxiety refers to worry and fear. Fluency is the smooth and effortless communication without any hesitation. Many students of English as a foreign language face a lot of troubles because of anxiety and fluency issues. When students become anxious about making errors, they begin to speak too slowly and stop frequently which affects their fluency (Özdemir, O., et al., 2024) Foreign language students experience a lot of pressure to “speak right” and worry when they cannot express their thoughts clearly and quickly enough, especially in academia. Weak grammar and fewer words. It is difficult to master the skills required for speaking English. When faced with complex scenarios, students with limited vocabulary may have to either keep saying the same content or remain quiet. In the same manner, bad grammar can affect fluency and cloud communication.

Research done by Al Jumaily, R. A. towards learnt. Iraqi students often have difficulty in using correct grammar and vocabulary while speaking English. It is probably because we do not see the language often in daily life. The literature is replete with evidence regarding the challenges that EFL students experience while attempting to speak in English. For instance, Chaima, M. Worry can inhibit your ability to speak competently (Muller, 2021). EFL students often have difficulties in pronouncing words, restricted vocabulary, and feeling nervous. These challenges become more prominent within the Iraqi context. This is due to students’ Arabic mother tongue interfering with their fluency while speaking. The male and female students of the study faced similar problems as before. Training and experience lacking. Students don’t hear English outside of school, which is one of the biggest problems many students have. In Iraq, students might not have plenty of opportunities to speak English because they do not use the language in their daily life. You want to enhance your English speaking skills. An expert’s opinion is that you need to hear real English in

the media or with native speakers, says Oktari, N. F. (2024).

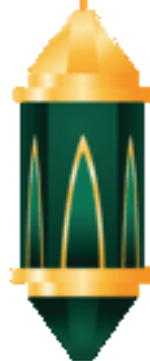
Frequent practice is essential for students to achieve self-confidence and fluent speaking skills. Cultural norms and values may also cause disparities in Cultural Values and Language acquisition. In Iraqi classrooms, as in many Middle Eastern countries, students are often discouraged from participating in class, and it is expected of them to take notes quietly. According to AlJuhani (2023), this situation limits their opportunities to practice public speaking. Gender-segregated classrooms allow students to skip modesty and public speaking expectations of their culture and mentally share freely.

### 1.2. Statement of the Problem

Many Iraqi learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) have been studying the language for many years but still face serious difficulties in speaking English. Recent research shows that speaking is one of the weakest skills among Iraqi EFL learners. There are various factors which are interrelated of this problem.

Having a high degree of speaking anxiety hinders the learners from speaking in English easily. Many students get nervous or embarrassed when they have to speak in front of other students. This anxiety often occurs due to fear of being assessed or judged by teachers and peers. In second place, there is often little vocabulary or common expressions available to students which does not allow them to create meaningful and fluent sentences. Students are likely to hesitate, excessively pause, or revert to their native language when they cannot find words. Weak pronunciation is yet another barrier. The mispronunciation of sounds will affect the students' intelligibility and lead to miscomprehension which will consequently reduce their confidence and eagerness to speak. Furthermore, EFL Iraqi learners do not have enough exposure to real use of English language. In-class activities mostly focus on grammar and reading, instead of communication practices outside the classroom, the language is rarely used. Hence, students have less opportunity to engage in spoken interaction. Ultimately, the fear of a mistake affects oral performance greatly. Many learners think that making mistakes means that they are failing to learn the language rather than the opposite. As a result they do not engage in speaking activities or risk taking. As such, these factors, as a whole, contribute





to the low speaking proficiency of Iraqi EFL learners. Moreover, the findings highlight the need for effective instructional strategies to reduce anxiety, encourage participation, and promote confident oral communication.

In many schools and universities, the teaching is based on grammar and leaves little room for oral practice. Thus, what is required is an approach that urges the students to investigate their challenges and identify their own learning needs in addition to helping students take steps to improve their speaking performance. Exploratory Practice could provide such a solution.

### 1.3. Significance of the Study

As an alternative to teacher-centered speaking approach, blessed is the first study that introduces Exploratory Practice in the Iraqi EFL context. The study enhances learner empowerment and understanding of speaking problems by invoking them as co-researchers. This study adds empirical evidence on Iraqi EFL speaking research; moreover, it also provides pedagogical suggestions that may benefit teachers in better addressing learners' needs and enhancing speaking instruction..

### 1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study aims to:

1. The study will determine whether applying Exploratory Practice (EP) improves speaking skills among Iraqi EFL learners.
2. Recognize the main speaking-related "puzzles" expressed by learners.
3. Analyze the learners' beliefs about EP as a learning in the classroom approach.
4. Assess the changes in speaking performance post-implementation EP..

### 1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the effects of Exploratory Practice on Iraqi EFL learners speaking performance?
2. What speaking-related problems do Iraqi learners see in EP activities?

### 1.6 Hypotheses

H1: Exploratory Practice has a positive impact on improving Iraqi EFL learners' speaking skills.

H2: Engaging in EP activities increases learners' confidence and reduces speaking anxiety.

### 1.7 Limits of the Study

- Location: Iraqi universities or secondary schools
- Participants: 25–30 EFL learners aged 17–22
- Skills: Speaking only (fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, confidence)
- Time: 4–6 weeks of EP implementation

### Literature review

The most used language in current international world is English and the one which promotes culture and business and fast and convenient communication. Many Iraqi EFL students face challenges in their fluent English oral comprehension because it is said to be related to language, culture and education (Ghafar, 2022). Most of the learners speak Iraqi Arabic and this language differs from English in phonetics, syntax and vocabularies. Apart from the fact that Arabic vowels do not sound anything like English's phonetics which implies that pronunciation is somewhat difficult; Arabic also has complex consonant clusters (Alah, 2024). According to the results, it is evident that Arabic has a reverse 'e' sound and an 'p' and 'v' sound shaping which are more preferable than the English. As a result, most times as noted in the reports Iraqi learners are likely to mispronounce the shapes especially in oral communication. Variations in pronunciation are first impediments that reduce intelligibility and fluency in speaking English (Yeaqub, 2018). Aside from language issues, cultural differences are another reason why students in Iraq learn spoken English poorly. According to Liu (2016) assertive communication behaviours, which are acceptable in western cultures impose limitations because of social expectations due to age-old respect and superiority hierarchical relations for elderly as well as elders. Iraqi students may have some politeness problems which could make it difficult for them to set the appropriate power dynamic. This occurs when they practice talking to one another using good English. Furthermore, in society and the learning context, written English is regarded important than spoken English which complicates the assessment of oral fluency. Younus (2020) stated that prior to effective communication the competence of grammar and writing skill have great importance. Students are not exposed to the lead-





ing global means of communication, which prevents the subsequent growth of their oral English. Effective and authentic practice is denied to students in the absence of English speaking environments (Yudintseva, 2023). This issue requires a total response that may be on.

**Kills Fish, Quite Fishy!** Based on Darcy (2018), selected phonetic emphasis through vocal drill and communicative practicing may enhance phonological accuracy and confidence. The ability of students to engage in communicative strategies and put them into action can be encouraged if they are immersed in contexts involving communicative tasks that are relevant to their autonomy. Through the inclusion of events to achieve objectives aided by strategizing multimedia availability, indeed it is the best setup to learn professional speaking. Consequently, English is used as a foreign language. a basic core requirement for Staff and Students in the faculties, the government and other diplomatic relations as Iraq moves towards globalization and commodifying. By doing so, this paper will be a huge step toward surfacing the linguistic, cultural and educational obstacles that prevent Iraqi EFL learners from achieving success and will contribute to the establishment of an effective generation and boosting of the L2 learning community to be set to give their best at global interaction.

In conclusion, it is possible to list the following difficulties that Iraqi EFL learners experience in their attempt to be fluent in spoken English because of language, cultural, and certainly instructional differences. With backing from IBLA, inclusive teaching methods, technology use and respect of other cultures, which are the common challenges among Iraqi students, can smooth over these barriers and open new opportunities for themselves, their studies, as well as their further professional activity within the globalization process. The main purpose of this paper is to raise awareness of some of the problems Iraqi EFL students encounter in learning fluent spoken English. It tries to comprehend some sensitive elements of foreign language communication along with some important dimensions of the processes that are involved in the attainment of efficiency in spoken English.

Iraqi educational institutions emphasized the writing skill more than the speaking skill, and the previous traditional teaching strategies also justified this view, as indicated by Martin (2022), and Algarawi (2022).

There are dozens of English language learning methods available in the academic environment. Some methods involve rote learning of rules but neglect the context of use. That is, they focus on grammatical modifications but do not consider communicative. If students feel nervous before speaking exercises, teachers should think about relaxation like deep breathing or mindfulness activities in the class. Enhanced Pronunciation: Both sexes frequently attempt to pronounce words but fail. If difficulty to produce certain sounds, teachers should aim the pronunciation activities at those sounds. In achieving that, this could use interactive exercises, audio materials, and tongue-twisters that would help improve the pronunciation of the learners. Another way to foster a more collaborative learning environment during group projects is for students to comment on one another's pronunciation. The male students faced more difficulty with vocabulary as compared to the female students who faced less difficulty and were more concerned with the correct usage of grammar. If teachers can balance the lesson plans with drills on accuracy and fluency this can be held. Students can do activities for spontaneous speaking to work on their fluency. Similarly, they can do monitored activities to work on the correctness of their grammar and vocabulary. In order to improve vocabulary of the learners, the speaking assignments should include vocabulary games, flash cards, and contextual exercises. Strategies that take account of gender

It is important to tackle gender disparities in language learning. Especially in classes with both boys and girls, it may be beneficial to create a comfortable environment for female students, due to their shyness. It is the duty of teachers to encourage the notion of equality among genders in the classroom by inducing confidence among females while they present before a mixed-gender audience comprising of males and females. Teachers should find ways to assist boys who struggle with vocabulary and fluency by increasing the chances for practice in informal, more peer-led situations.

Due to students' restricted contact with English outside of school, technological tools become increasingly crucial for supplementing their speaking practice. Students may also get more chances to take part in English listening and speaking activity outside the classroom





through online platforms, for instance, languages exchange websites, podcasts, and videos. You could set up online speaking clubs or virtual classrooms where. This research has revealed the difficulties faced by Iraqi EFL students in speaking competence, but there remains a multitude of unanswered questions that could inform future research in the area.:

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design

The study utilized a two-pronged experiment that incorporated quantitative and qualitative approaches. Pre- and post-speaking tests were used to obtain quantitative data that measured learners' speaking development, while qualitative data were captured through learners' puzzles, reflections, interviews, and class observations to explore their experiences with Exploratory Practice (EP).

#### 3.2 Participants

The study was conducted on the 30 Intermediate (B1) Iraqi EFL learners who were chosen randomly to ensure objectivity and representativeness..

#### 3.3 Instruments

The researcher used speaking pre-test and post-test, analytic speaking rubric measuring fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and interaction, EP puzzles notebook, semi-structured interview, and classroom observation checklist to collect the data..

#### 4.4 Procedures

It took six weeks for the study. In the first week, the learners did the pre-test and introduced EP and identified the first puzzle related to speaking. Various EP-based activities took place between weeks two and five, including pair and group speaking tasks, learner reflections, pronunciation and vocabulary focus, peer interviews, and weekly puzzle sharing. Final week included post-test, interview, and final reflection..

#### 3.5. Data Analysis

To assess improvement in speaking performance quantitative data were analyzed through the comparison of mean scores for pre-and post-test. Thematic analysis was done using learners' puzzles, interview answers, and classroom observation records on perceptions and

learning experiences concerning EP..

### 3.6. Theoretical Background

#### 3.6.1 Speaking Skills

Speaking is a productive and interactive speech skill which involves fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and communicative competence. As Brown explained in 2004, while processing and negotiating meaning in real time is key to speaking, it is difficult for EFL learners with limited exposure to experience..

#### 3.6.2 Exploratory Practice (EP)

The Exploratory Practice by Allwright (2003) is the classroom-based approach of understanding our learning and teaching processes that also allows us to maintain a high-quality pedagogy. EP considers learners as co-researchers communicating reflection and inquiry as normal classroom spaces (Allwright and Hanks, 2009).

### 4. Results:

#### 4.1 Quantitative Results

Mean scores across all domains were high, indicating a positive perception of EP by learners. The learners showed improvement in speaking, interaction in the classroom, and teacher-learner relationship while the overall mean indicates strong agreement on the efficacy of EP..

#### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics (Mean & Standard Deviation)

Table 1

Category	No. of Items	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)	Interpretation
Exploratory Practice	5	4.12	0.61	High
Speaking Skill Development	5	4.05	0.58	High
Classroom Interaction	4	4.18	0.63	High
Learner-Teacher Relationship	3	4.09	0.55	High
Overall Mean	17	4.11	0.59	High agreement

The exploratory practice received a significantly positive attitude from students. Domains Showed Strong Agreement with Mean Scores More than 4.0.

Table 2 indicate that Exploratory Practice

Item No.	Statement	Mean	Interpretation
1	Helps me understand difficulties	4.20	Strong agreement
6	More confident speaking	4.08	Agreement
11	Increased interaction	4.25	Strong agreement
15	Understand teacher expectations	4.05	Agreement





Table 2 shows the effects of Exploratory Practice (EP) which enhance learner's speaking and engagement inside the classroom. According to item 11, EP generates an increase in the level of interaction in the classroom, thus being regarded as a shared process of mutual understanding between teachers and learners, which has the highest mean score of 4.25. This evidence affirms past research that EP is good for getting learners engaged and meaningfully participating (Breen, 2006; Hanks, 2017).

The item 1 has a high mean score ( $M = 4.20$ ), suggesting that EP is agreed it assists learners to understand their learning difficulties. The reflective dimension of EP will be manifested by the active learners who will seek challenges. In the Iraqi EFL context, the ability to be aware of one's own shortcomings is quite valuable. In fact, EFL learners tend to suffer from anxiety due to the perceived lack of opportunity to express and work on such shortcomings.

Moreover, Item 6 ( $M = 4.08$ ) indicates that learner's self-assurance in speaking English increased after participating in EP-based tasks. Scientists began exploring the concept of epiphany as they take a personal experience to study a phenomenon. The concept was also applied to religious experiences people were found to have an epiphany about it. Even the moment of change takes place in a live show. Likewise, Item 15 ( $M=4.05$ ) suggests that EP helped learners understand what the teacher expected from them, which could suggest better teacher-student communication and less teacher-centered practices.

Ultimately, these findings show that EP enhances a more supportive, reflective and learner-centered learning environment. EP is beneficial for the Iraqi EFL Learners as it helps them speak and interact properly in class to deal with both cognitive and affective challenges through collaboration..

#### 4.1.1 Quantitative Questionnaire

- The use of exploratory practices enhanced students' speaking.
- The willingness of students to participate became more motivated.
- Classroom interaction improved a lot.
- It was reported that communication between a teacher and a student improved.
- In conclusion, exploratory practice significantly enhances speaking development, positively influencing it..

#### 4.2 Qualitative Results

Qualitative findings showed that learners valued EP for increasing awareness of speaking difficulties, enhancing interaction, and reducing anxiety. Students reported improved fluency, greater confidence, and more active participation, although challenges related to vocabulary and pronunciation persisted.

#### 4.2.1 Qualitative findings

Examples of what students might answer include. They may be used as sample data for thematic analysis.

1. What was your favorite part of the exploratory practice activities?

This was about how activities allowed students to reflect on their learning issues and discuss them during class.

2. What tasks helped you the most? For what reason?

Most helpful to me were group discussion tasks as they made me speak more. I also picked up new words through them.

3. How did exploratory practice influence your English speaking confidence?

It made me feel less stressed and more confident because I came to know that the other students struggle too.

4. What improvements did you observe in your fluency?

I'm better at speaking at length without stopping and pausing while thinking nowadays.

5. How did it affect interaction with classmates?

We requested info more frequently when Bush lost. I no longer felt embarrassed speaking in front of them.

6. Were you able to express yourself better through the activities? How? Yes, since we trained to give our opinions and explain them, it helped in speaking.

7. What obstacles did you encounter while carrying out the chores?

On some occasions, I didn't know the words to express my ideas and needed more time to prepare.

8. What do you suggest to make this better?

It would be great to have more speaking practice and more varied activities to help develop my fluency.

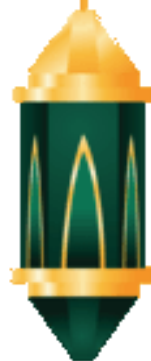
9. What is your general impression of exploratory practice?

This technique is useful as it helps students find their own learning problems and work on them.

10. Would you suggest to others? For what reason?

“Definitely, since participation increases, it makes speaking activities





more meaningful.”

### 5.1 Discussion

H1: Exploratory practice has a good role in improving Iraqi EFL learners' speaking skill.

Items related in the questionnaire.

- Item 1: Understanding speaking difficulties (4)
- Item 8: Fluency improved (4)
- Item 9: Express ideas clearly (4)
- Item 10: Participate more effectively (5)

### Discussion 1

• The majority of responses (mostly 4s and 5s) indicate that learners perceive improvements in fluency, clarity, and participation.

• This supports H1, showing that EP helps students identify their speaking difficulties and enhance their overall speaking performance.

The slightly lower scores in Item 4 (responsibility, 3) suggest that while EP improves speaking skills, not all learners immediately take full ownership of learning.

in Conclusion: H1 is supported by the data; learners perceive that EP positively impacts their speaking skills.

H2: Engaging in EP activities increases learners' confidence and reduces speaking anxiety.

Related items in the questionnaire:

- Item 6: Confidence in speaking (4)
- Item 7: Less fear of mistakes (3)
- Item 5: Motivation to speak (4)

### Discussion 2

• Item 6 and Item 5 had mostly a score of 4.

• The item of fear of mistakes (Item 7), scored slightly lower (3), meaning anxiety reduces, but does not eliminate it.

• The finding shows that EP likely enhances learners' confidence and lessens their speaking anxiety albeit there may still be some who do not take speaking risks.

in Conclusion: the H2 is partially accepted since the EP increases confidence and motivation, and anxiety reduces only moderately.

After using it, students will show positive perceptions toward EP.

Linked things in the questionnaire.

- Have fun with the exploratory activities.
- Lessons became more interactive.

- Increased interaction with classmates (4).
- Item 12: Having ability work well in group.
- More eager to get conversations going (Insert Mark)
- Item 15: Improves understanding of teacher expectations better.

This exploration sought to identify the impact of Exploratory Practice (EP) on the development of speaking skills in Iraqi EFL learners. Based on the findings, the participants have a very positive attitude towards EP and believe that it is an effective method of improving their spoken English in many aspects. The main findings of the study in relation to previous studies and the context of Iraqi EFL classrooms is discussed in this section.

### 1. the speech capabilities of students involving an ep

The study's findings indicated that the learners reported a reliable median rating of their speaking proficiency ranging from moderate to advanced with the highest ratings in high realising features. Despite achieving a certain level of success, the students still had issues with fluency and pronunciation as they were not an area of strength. The findings fit into previous studies that have shown Iraqi EFL learners often face fluency due to lack of exposure to real communication and anxiety during the oral tasks. Through EP, students may think about the problems facing them in learning grammar. In this way, they learn to identify why they may be having an issue. Allwright (2003) and Gieve & Miller (2006) suggest that EP enhances learner awareness and autonomy.

### 2. Learners' perceptions of exploratory practice.

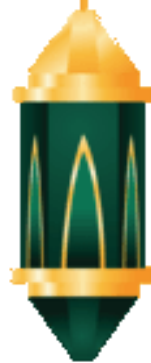
Learners' positive perception of EP was demonstrated by the study. They believed in EP.

- Helped them become aware of speaking weaknesses.
- Spoke up more often.
- Better interaction in classroom.
- Heightened desire and fun.
- Provided assistance in developing new learning strategies.

According to Hanks (2017), the results assists with prior studies that EP generates a powerful learning environment to reflect and co-construct. Iraqi students often have teacher-centered classrooms. Beginner teachers may be quite interested in being more participatory and learner-centered.

### 3. The Effectiveness of EP in Improving Speaking Proficiency





According to the overall result, EP was found to be strong on speaking skills. The learners agreed that EP improved the quality of their spoken English greatly. In addition, they indicated that more English classes should implement the EP.

This finding concurs with research suggesting that EP leads to increased learner participation, decreased speaking anxiety and greater awareness of learning impediments (Breen, 2006). That learner confidence boost suggests that EP may help alleviate the affective barriers that are often implicated in speaking performance in the Iraqi EFL context.

#### 4. Effect of EP on Learner Autonomy and Confidence.

An important finding was the improvement in learners' confidence and willingness to communicate. It may be attributed to the EP's focus on learner inquiry, collaborative problem solving, and reflection on personal learning difficulties. Students take ownership of their learning through such activities. This reinforces the belief that EP is a philosophy of classroom life as well as a pedagogical approach.

Participant responses also supported this idea, as students mentioned that EP helped them understand for the reason for their struggle to speak. It also encouraged them to take part more.

#### 5. Interacting with Classmates and Socializing

According to the findings, EP enhances learners' interactions. In Iraqi classrooms, for example, students are often reluctant to speak as they fear being criticized or making an error. EP- activities that try to get at the meaning instead of correcting seem to ensure a safer speaking environment.

This corroborates Allwright (2005) that EP can enhance classroom communities through mutual understanding, shared responsibility, and supportive dialogue.

#### 6. Challenges Noticed By EP.

Students have commented positively but they also reported challenges.

- The complications of anxiety and being afraid of making mistakes, remain.
- Your limited vocabulary hinders fluent expression.
- A major hindrance is pronunciation issues.
- Some students would rather work in smaller groups.

Many Arab EFL contexts face challenges that result from affective bar-

riers and lack of exposure to the English language. Effective Pedagogy might not solve these problems. But, it can sensitise learners to these problems and address them over time.

### 7. Impact on Teaching Practices

The results indicate that EP can be integrated into Iraqi EFL classrooms.

- Encouragement of learner independence.
- Less anxiety while speaking
- Boost in-class communication.
- Foster Significant Reflection.
- enhance speaking skills over the long term

It is important for teachers to design EP activities in such a way that students are allowed to explore their learning issues. Further, work with each other and reflect on their own progress as well. More staff training and awareness about EP could help facilitate better integration by users.

### 8. Conclusion of the Discussion in Totality.

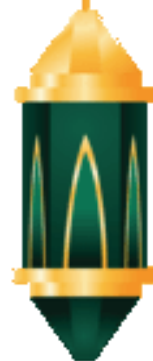
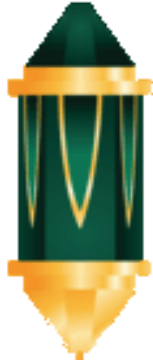
Research indicates that Exploratory Practice is an effective way of improving speaking skills of Iraqi EFL learners. Not only does it enhance learners' linguistic performance, but it also boosts their motivation, confidence, and learner autonomy. The findings suggest the benefits of reflective, inquiry-based approaches in EFL contexts and that using EP can be a strong alternative to teacher-centred approaches.

### 5.2. Conclusion

The study explored the potential of Exploratory Practice in developing the speaking skills of Iraqi EFL learners. Findings from the quantitative and qualitative data analysis show that EP plays a significant and positive role in improving the confidence, fluency and interactivity of learners' speaking ability in English. The learners' attitudes towards EP were highly positive, and they considered it a purposeful and motivating strategy which caters to their linguistic and psychological needs.

The results revealed that EP stimulates more profound learner awareness of speaking difficulties; it drives engagement and facilitates better interaction in classrooms. The process of engaging students in reflective questioning, collaborative discussions and challenges helps the learners to investigate what prevents them from learning and what they could do about it. These advantages, both cognitive and social in nature, positively affect performance in speaking. Specifically, they





enhance the expression of ideas, confidence and communication. Furthermore, this study shows that EP provides learner autonomy for the students when they take charge of their learning. In the context of Iraqi EFL where teacher-centered methods are still number one choice, the move towards collaboratively and reflectively is particularly valued. According to students, EP makes the learning process more enjoyable, meaningful and less stressful, which in turn motivates them to practice speaking with their peers in and outside the classroom. In sum, this work confirms Exploratory Practice is an effective learner-centred approach which significantly improves the speaking skills of the Iraqi EFL learners. EP develops not only the linguistic ability but also the learner's confidence, motivation and problem-solving skills. The study results suggest that EP can enhance the English language teaching program in a way that promotes participatory, interactive, engaging, and reflective learning; long after the end of the program. This is in line with the modern practice of communicative language teaching..

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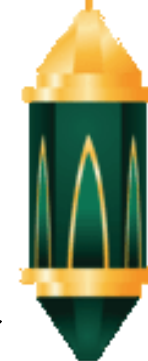
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### Exploratory Practice Questionnaire

#### Quantitative Questionnaire Tables

Table 1: Exploratory Practice

Table 2: Speaking Skill Development

Item No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	Exploratory practice helped me understand my speaking difficulties.					
2	I enjoy participating in exploratory activities during speaking lessons.					
3	Exploratory practice makes the lesson more interactive and engaging.					
4	Exploratory tasks encourage me to take responsibility for my own learning.					
5	I feel more motivated to speak English after engaging in exploratory tasks.					

Table 3: Classroom Interaction

Item No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
15	Exploratory practice helped me understand my teacher's expectations.					
16	I feel more connected to my teacher during speaking lessons.					
Item No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
6	I feel more confident when speaking English.					
7	Exploratory practice reduced my fear of making mistakes.					
8	My speaking fluency has improved.					
9	I can express my ideas more clearly in English now.					
10	I participate more effectively in speaking activities.					

**Table 4: Learner–Teacher Relationship**

Item No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
11	Exploratory practice increased my interaction with classmates.					
12	I feel more comfortable working in pairs or groups.					
13	I collaborate better with my classmates during speaking tasks.					
14	I am more willing to initiate conversations in English.					
17	I receive more support from the teacher when practicing speaking.					

**Table5: Qualitative Questionnaire**

Item No.	Question	Student Response
1	What did you like most about the exploratory practice activities?	
2	Which exploratory tasks were most helpful for improving your speaking skills? Why?	
3	How did exploratory practice affect your confidence in speaking English?	
4	What changes did you notice in your speaking fluency after the activities?	
5	How did exploratory practice influence your communication with classmates?	
6	Did the activities help you express yourself better in English? How?	
7	What challenges did you face during the exploratory practice tasks?	
8	What suggestions do you have for improving the activities in the future?	
9	What is your overall opinion about using exploratory practice to improve speaking skills?	
10	Would you recommend this approach to other EFL learners? Why or why not?	

**Responses for Quantitative Questionnaire:**

The table 6 below shows one student's responses using the Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree).

Item No.	Statement (Short)	Response
1	Exploratory practice helped me understand my speaking difficulties.	4
2	I enjoy exploratory activities.	5
3	Lessons became more interactive.	4
4	I take more responsibility for my learning.	3
5	I feel more motivated to speak.	4
6	I feel more confident speaking English.	4
7	Less fear of mistakes.	3
8	My fluency improved.	4
9	I express ideas more clearly.	4
10	I participate more effectively.	5
11	More interaction with classmates.	4
12	Comfortable working in groups.	5
13	Better collaboration.	4
14	More willing to initiate conversations.	3
15	I understand teacher expectations better.	4
16	I feel more connected to the teacher.	3
17	I receive more support from the teacher.	4



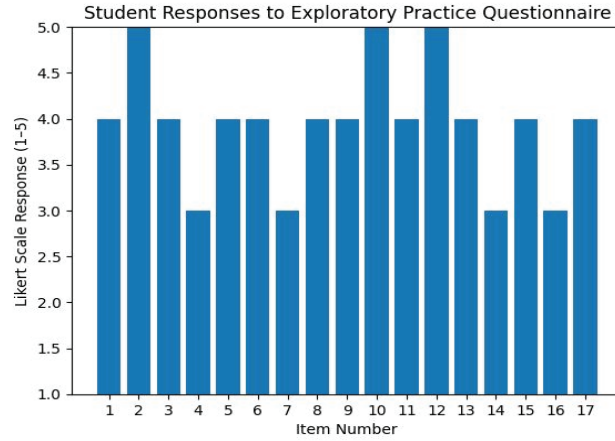
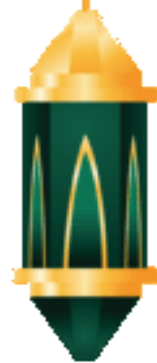


Figure 1

The chart illustrates that students' responses generally tend toward a positive direction, with most values ranging between 4 and 5. This indicates a notable impact of exploratory practices in enhancing engagement, confidence, and oral participation. Some aspects, however, remain at a relatively neutral level—around 3—such as responsibility-taking and initiative in speaking, which warrant deeper analytical discussion.

Likert Scale Responses Table 7

Item No.	Statement (Short)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral / Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Exploratory practice helped me understand learning difficulties	4	3	5	4	4
2	I enjoy exploratory activities	5	4	5	5	4
3	Lessons became more interactive	4	3	4	4	3
4	I take more responsibility for my learning	3	3	4	3	4
5	I feel more motivated to speak	4	4	5	4	3
6	I feel more confident speaking English	4	3	5	4	4
7	Less fear of mistakes	3	2	4	3	3
8	My fluency improved	4	3	5	4	4
9	I express ideas more clearly	4	3	4	4	4
10	I participate more effectively	5	4	5	5	4
11	More interaction with classmates	4	3	5	4	4
12	Comfortable working in groups	5	4	5	5	4
13	Better collaboration	4	3	5	4	4
14	More willing to initiate conversations	3	3	4	3	3
15	I understand teacher expectations better	4	3	5	4	4
16	I feel more connected to the teacher	3	2	4	3	3
17	I receive more support from the teacher	4	3	5	4	4
Average		3.94	3.35	4.65	4.0	3.71