

**Difficulties in Teaching the Iraqi *Opportunities*  
In Salladdin Governorate**

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“I dunno,” Jimmy said, “I forget what I was taught. I only remember what I’ve learnt”. (Patrick White)  
(Hall and Hewings, 2001: 27)

**Abstract**

Despite the widespread adoption of communicative language teaching in English second language countries, it has generally been difficult. The teachers' understanding of the communicative teaching is the central to its success. Therefore; this study is designed investigate the difficulties that are faced by the English language teachers in teaching the *Iraqi Opportunities* textbook by using the communicative approach at Salladdin Governorate. In addition to the reasons of these difficulties which the English language teachers encounter in the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching practices in the classroom. Furthermore, the study tackles the suggestions which are going to improve the teaching of the *Iraqi Opportunities* in Salladdin Governorate. A questionnaire is distributed among the teachers who teach the *Iraqi Opportunities* by using the communicative approach in the intermediate schools at this governorate.

## Section One

### 1. Introduction

Teaching English language at the Iraqi schools has a very significant position and it's relatively well established. It has a prominent place in the school curriculum for many years. English is taught in all the schools as a compulsory subject. Iraqi students study English language since third primary stage till the end of the secondary stage. As a result, they spend about ten years in studying English language.

Previously, teaching English language concentrates on grammar and rules of the sentence according to the structural approach. But in the recent years, the process of teaching focuses on the use of language according to the communicative approach. As, Johnson (1988: 36) assures that "traditionally, foreign language teaching placed emphasis on mastering grammar and translation. Since the early 1970s, however, increasing importance has been given to the acquisition of communicative competence in the foreign language. The goal of the course is to allow the students to use the foreign language for real communication".

In the Iraqi schools, the *Iraqi Opportunities* textbooks have been taught by using the communicative approach. Johnson (1988: 36) explains that the communicative approaches to foreign language learning are planned to:

"provide the language learner with language skills s/he needs to communicate in given situations and the opportunity to practise these skills in the classroom. Teaching students, language skills and/or desire to learn, increase their motivation to learn. This motivation can influence their success in speaking the foreign language".

This approach is designed to motivate the learner to perform different kinds of communicative acts by providing him/her with all the four language skills to communicate as the communicative approach “concentrates on getting learners to do things with language, to express concept and to carry out communicative acts of various kinds” (Widdowson, 1990: 159). In other words, this new approach concentrates on the language as a system of expressions of meaning and the main purpose of this system is communication and interaction (Brown, 2001: 34). Language and communication are considered as two sides for one coin; therefore language can be one necessary vehicle for communication and interaction.

The communicative methodology tries to gear language teaching to the rules that we need for communication appropriately in social situations rather than to the grammatical rules we need for producing correct sentences (Al-Mutawa and AlKailani, 1989: 22).

### **1.1 The Problem of the Study:**

The ultimate goal of learning a language according to the communicative approach is to be able to comprehend and produce it in spontaneous situations which stress both receptive and productive creativity. Most of the English language teachers ignore the revolutionary development that have taken place in foreign language learning methodology and still follow the traditional approaches in which the student is a listener who does nothing other than listen to what the teacher says who is the only speaker through the whole lesson.

The teachers of English language, who teach the *Iraqi Opportunities* textbooks by using the communicative approach, encounter some difficulties through their teaching for this new series. Some of these difficulties are related to the teachers such as their level in speaking English; their limited knowledge in strategic

and sociolinguistic aptitude in English; their inability to comprehend teaching English language by the communicative approach; the time management and overcrowded classrooms, in addition to the necessity of a lot of training courses. Furthermore, the teachers of English language lack the funding and adequate facilities and equipment which are not available for use to support their teaching. Others are related to the students such as their low level in English; using the Arabic language among them through pair/group activities; lack of motivation for developing communicative faculty in English language and their indifference of class participation.

English language teachers need to know ‘how to teach’ and use much more information in different areas of knowledge. As the difficulty lies not in the amount of information to be mastered, but in the arrangement and application of that knowledge to a practical situation.

### **1.2 Aims of the Study:**

This study aims at:

1. drawing attention to the misapprehension of CLT<sup>1</sup>.
2. shedding light on the importance of the teacher’s role in the success of CLT.
3. identifying the barriers that lead to inadequate CLT.

### **1.3 Hypotheses:**

The main goal of this approach is to lead the learner to the use of communicative processes as interaction and negotiation of meaning with others. So, it is hypothesized that:

A- concerning teachers:

1. teachers of English language may have unsatisfactory level in speaking English.

2. teachers of English language may have narrow knowledge in strategic and sociolinguistic aptitude in English language.
3. teachers of English language are unable to grasp how to teach by using the communicative approach.
4. the teachers of English language may need a lot of training courses and sample lessons in CLT.
5. there may be lacks in small classes, time management, deficient funding and efficient assessment instruments.
6. perhaps, examinations of English language are based on grammar.

B- concerning students:

1. the students' level in English language is probably low.
2. students may be deficient in motivation for developing communicative faculty in English language and insensitivity of class participation.
3. arabic may be used as an alternative of English language in pair/group work.

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CLT <sup>1</sup>: Communicative Language Teaching

#### **1.4 Procedures:**

The procedures to be followed in this study are as follows:

1. Presenting a general theoretical survey of the CLT and the significance of the teacher's role in teaching the *Iraqi Opportunities* by using the communicative approach.
2. Presenting three questionnaires to find out the difficulties that the teachers of English language face in their teaching to the *Iraqi Opportunities*.
3. Analyzing the results of the questionnaire in details.
4. Drawing conclusions based on the findings of the study and giving some recommendations.

#### **1.5 Value of the Study:**

Theoretically, this study is an attempt to clarify the CLT and the consequence of the teacher's role in the success of teaching English language communicatively.

Practically, the results of this study are supposed to be of practical value to the teachers who teach the *Iraqi Opportunities* using the communicative approach, hence it deals with the difficulties which encounter the teachers of English language through teaching the *Iraqi Opportunities*. Furthermore, this study provides a realistic and practical view about the difficulties that the teachers face in teaching the *Iraqi Opportunities* for General Directorate of Education at Salladdin.

#### **1.6 Limits of the Study:**

The present study deals with the difficulties that the English language teachers face in using the communicative approach through teaching the *Iraqi Opportunities* at the intermediate stage in Salladdin Governorate, in the academic year 2010-2011.

**Section Two**  
**Literature Review**

**2.1 Communicative Language Teaching:**

CLT is a new approach for teaching English as a foreign language in Iraq; it is a recognized theoretical model in English language teaching today. Despite many approaches and methodologies available to the language teacher, many applied linguists regard the communicative approach as one of the most effective approaches to English language teaching. The Communicative Approach initially prioritizes communicative competence over accurate grammar. Grammar is hidden within the body of a lesson and highlighted and focused upon once the context has been set. Since its setting up in Europe in early 1970s, CLT has served as a major source of influence on language teaching practice round the world. Kral (2004: 13) explains that CLT has been put forward the world as the ‘new’ or ‘innovation’ way to teach English as a second or foreign language through the last century.

McGroarty, 1984; Markee, 1997(cited in Ozsevik,2010: 27) show that “there is considerable debate as to appropriate ways of defining CLT, and no single model of CLT is universally accepted as authoritative”. Since, there are many interpretations for CLT; it is difficult to synthesize all the various definitions that have been offered about CLT, the following are some of these interpretations:

Carter& Nunan (2001: 219) define CLT as “an approach to the teaching of language which emphasizes the uses of language by the learner in a range of contexts and for a range of purposes; CLT emphasises speaking and doesn’t only prioritise the development of reading and writing skills; methodologies for CLT tend to encourage active learner involvement in a wide range of activities and tasks and strategies for communication”.

And Hamer, (2001: 84) expresses that “the communicative approach or CLT is the name which was given to a set of beliefs which included not only a re-examination of what aspects of language to teach, but also a shift in emphasis in how to teach”.

While Hejal (2007: 4) defines the communicative approach as “an approach to foreign or second language teaching which emphasises that the goal of language learning is communicative competence. The communicative approach has been developed by British applied linguistics as a reaction away from grammar-based approaches such as the aural-oral approach”.

Brown (2007: 24) offers the following four interconnected characteristics as a definition of communicative language teaching:

1. Classroom goals are focused on all of the components of CC<sup>2</sup> and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence.
2. Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus but rather aspects of language that enable the learner to accomplish those purposes.
3. Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying techniques. At times, fluency may have to take no more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.
4. In the communicative classroom students ultimately have to use language, productively and respectively, in unrehearsed contexts.

The Communicative Approach has proven one of the most successful in providing confident learners who are able to make themselves effectively understood in the shortest possible time. Among the above definitions, it is remarkable that Hamer concentrates on ‘how to teach’ the aspects of language which is a

very essential side for teaching English language with this approach. It is therefore the teacher's responsibility to create situations which are likely to promote communication, and provide an authentic background for language learning.

CLT aims largely to submit an application of the theoretical view of the Communicative Approach by making communicative competence the purpose of language teaching and by the interdependence of language and communication (Freeman, 2000: 122). It stresses the communicative activities as Widdowson (2003: 26) maintains that "the most distinctive feature of CLT is that it has, incidentally, extended the repertoire of practice exercise to include communication activities".

Generally, it can be said that the ultimate goal of learning a language is to be able to comprehend and produce it in unrehearsed situations which demands both receptive and productive creativity. According to Larsen Freeman (1986), the most obvious characteristic of CLT is that "almost everything, that is done, is done with communicative intent" (Hall and Hewings 2001: 150).

Throughout the above commentaries related to CLT, the teachers need to know how to grasp the features of this approach in their teaching. Hejal (2007: 4) clarifies that teaching English language materials concern with this new approach often:

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1. teach the language needed to express and understand different kinds of functions, such as, requesting, describing, expressing, likes and dislikes, etc.,
  2. are based on a notional syllabus or some other communicatively organized syllabus.
  3. emphasise the process of communication, such as using language appropriately in different types of situations using language to perform different types of tasks, e.g. to solve puzzles, to get information and using language for social interaction with the other people.

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## **2.2 Teacher's Role:**

Essentially, the question was, and still is how far pedagogic circumstances can validly give rise to general principles for a communicative approach to language teaching? Definitely, the teacher is the one who is going to break the ice and support his/ her students to learn the new language effectively. A teacher will be “the guide by the side” and not “the sage on the stage” <http://www.triond.com/users/Gill+Hart> (2011). The teacher has several roles in CLT as Hall and Hewings (2001: 17) show:

“The first role is to facilitate the communicative process between all participants in the classroom and between these participants and various activities and texts. The second role is to act as an independent participant within the learning teaching groups. This latter role is closely related to the objective of the first role and it

arises from it. These roles imply a set of secondary roles for the teacher: first, as an organiser of resources and as a resource himself; second, as a guide within the classroom procedures and activities”.

Richards and Rodgers (1986: 77 and 2001:167), Mudegankar and Pathak (2010:65) agree that other roles assumed for the English language teachers are needs analyst, counsellor, group process manager, a planner, a provider, a coordinator, co-communicator, and a diagnostician. What’s more, the teacher may be with the students as a group member as Ellis (2003: 271) state that “a teacher can function as a task participant, sitting with the students to do the task”. Briefly, these various roles “can be put together under the ‘umbrella’ ideas of the teacher as facilitator of learning” (Littlewood, cited in Mcdonough and Shaw, 2003: 245).

The teachers’ creative guiding for their classes, will lead to a successful language learning as Richards and Rodgers (1986: 24) clarify that the teacher’s role will ultimately reveal “both the objectives of the method and the learning theory on which the method predicated since the success of a method depend on the degree to which the teacher can provide the content or create the conditions for successful language learning”. Furthermore, Savignon (1987: 21) clarifies that “what language teachers today need, then more than a readymade method of teaching, is an appreciation both of language as an expression of self and of the way in which meanings are created and exchanged”. As the teacher is instrumental to create the circumstances for learning, how his skill is reflected in his understanding of the nature of foreign language teaching and learning, his information of teaching theories and methods and his proficiency in communicative practice (Al Mutawa and Kailani, 1989: 28). Nowadays language teachers must use much more information in numerous dissimilar areas of knowledge. As the difficulty lies not in the amount of information to

be mastered, but in the arrangement and application of that knowledge to a practical situation. That's to say, "how can she use her knowledge of linguistics, psychology, sociology, and pedagogy to help her students to learn English"? (De Lópes, cited in Kral, 2004: 11-12). The teachers need to enrich their knowledge and use it with attractive techniques and activities to improve the way of learning language.

Since the role of the teacher is so crucial in the methodology of teaching the communicative approach, the pedagogical skills that the good language teacher should have, are:

- Has a well-thought-out, informed approach to language teaching.
- Understanding and uses a wide variety of techniques.
- Efficiently designs and executes lesson plans.
- Monitor lessons as they unfold and make mid-lesson alterations.
- Effectively perceive students' linguistic needs.
- Give optimal feedback to students.
- Stimulate interaction, cooperation and team work in the classroom.
- Uses appropriate principles of classroom management.
- Uses effective clear, presentation skills.
- Creatively adapt textbook materials when needed.
- Uses interactive, intrinsically motivating techniques to create effective tests.

(Brown, 2001: 430)

Interaction is one of the main and significant techniques the teachers may use. It is an essential principle in English Language Teaching practice which pushes learners to provide input for other students by producing more and more accurate and suitable language (Hedge, 2000: 13). Through interaction, the students are equipping with tools for generating unrehearsed language

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performance. As teachers of English language, we try to make use of interactive activities of the communicative approach, which give students opportunities to use the target language. Also, we encourage students' participations to lesson planning and presentation, which got them involved in teaching the class. Finally, we want them to take more responsibility for their own learning (Altan and Trombly, 2001: 207).

Interaction inside the class will happen through many techniques which the teacher may practice such as: a pair/group work, role play, dialogue, language game, scrambled sentences and Hejal (2007: 6) adds "other techniques includes: picture-strip story, listening to stories, problem- solving task, jigsaw, slides, visual aids etc."

These numerous techniques provide the students with chances to express their own view, Johnaon (1988: 35) illustrates that these techniques will "give students the opportunity to state opinions, ask and answer questions, agree and disagree, describe, expand on ideas and so on, to help students learn how to communicate in the foreign language". To support this tendency Brumfit 1984a (cited in Carter and Nunan, 2001: 18) affirms that "this would encourage fluency . . . and lead learners to explore creatively ways of expressing themselves using their knowledge of the language".

Through interaction, the creative, smart teacher will enrich the imagination of his/her students, because "communication based on real-life situations is not enough; however, the teacher must energize the student's rich imagination" (Wang, 1990:37). What's more, in the course of interaction, the students are going to be supported "with encouragement and help from their teacher in developing the strategic competence they need to interpret, express, and negotiate meaning, learners express satisfaction and even

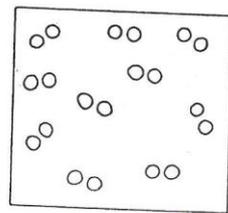
surprise” (Celce-Murcia, 2001: 21) . Furthermore, lamy and Hampel (2007: 61-62) assures that the teacher:

“Is a participant in the learning process, facilitates interaction among learners and guides them through their learning. Thus the teacher becomes a facilitator . . . by interacting, teaching, refocusing, questioning, clarifying, supporting, expanding, celebrating and empathising”.

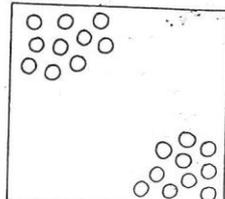
Basically, the students depend on the teacher, and it can be said that every eye and ear are focused on the teacher, but now with CLT the matter is in contrast as Yule (2010: 190) pinpoints that “the most fundamental change in the area of L2 learning in recent years has been a shift from concern with the teacher, the textbook and the method to an interest in the learner as the acquisition process”.

As a result, the teacher’s task is to keep the ‘ball rolling’ and using techniques such as pair or group work and role playing...etc. which are valuable techniques for taking the students’ focus off the teacher as the centre frame of mind ( Brown, 2001:99). When the students are practicing in pairs/group “the teacher cannot physically present or involved with each student. Because of this, much the control of and responsibility for carrying out a speaking task is entrusted to the students” (Kehe and Kehe, 1988: 31). In spite of the learner’s importance in the process of teaching Brown (2001:130) confirms that it should be kept in mind “that a modicum of teacher control, whether overt or covert, should always be presented in the classroom”.

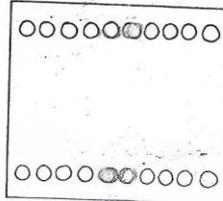
The teacher may arrange his/her class in pair/group work in many different seating possibilities. Scrivener (1994:95) explains the following ways:



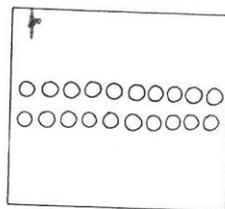
pairs



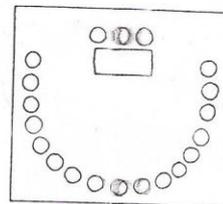
'enemy corners'



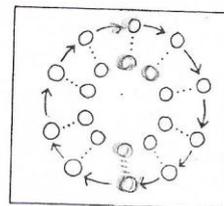
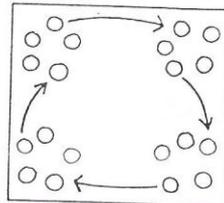
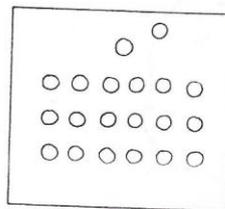
opposing teams



face to face  
(or back to back)



panel



### **Section Three**

#### **Procedures**

This section deals with the procedures of the study: the questionnaire, the pilot study, the face validity of the questionnaire, analyzing the items of the questionnaire: the item discrimination and the reliability, the statistical means, and the final forms of the questionnaire.

#### **3.1 The pilot Study:**

The study consists of a pilot study, a written questionnaire and interview, to develop an appropriate survey instrument for this study. In order to improve the effectiveness of the data that have been collected, and to find out the reliability of the questionnaire, the pilot study has been chosen. Sample of the teachers have been chosen randomly to participate in the pilot study. That is, (60) teachers who teach the *Iraqi Opportunities* in the intermediate stage at Salladdin Governorate are assigned to be members of the pilot study. The Sample of the pilot study expresses that some of the difficulties are concerned with teachers themselves and their knowledge about this new approach in this new series, others concerning with the students and their bad level. In this study, data related to the perceptions of the teachers gathered via the questionnaire was further reinforced via face-to-face interviews.

#### **3.2 The Face Validity:**

The face validity was obtained by presenting the first draft of the questionnaire to a jury of four experts in the field of English, linguistics and foreign language teaching. Members of the jury were handed copies of the questionnaire and they are requested to: give their opinions of modifying or changing anything they regard necessary; check the clarity and appropriateness of each item

included in the questionnaire. The final form of the questionnaire that has been considered is a result of all the valuable comments and directions are given by the jury members incorporated in the questionnaire. For this reason, the necessary measures are taken to improve the quality of some items in the questionnaire. The jury members are the following:

1. Dr. Nawfel Saeed Majeed, Assist. prof., College of Education, University of Tikrit.
2. Dr. Amra Ibraheem Sultan, Assist. prof., College of Education, University of Tikrit.
3. Dr. Madiha Saef Aldeen, Assist. prof., College of Education for Women, University of Tikrit.
4. Dr. Nagham Kadori: Instructor, College of Education, University of Tikrit.

### **3.3 Analyzing the items of the Questionnaire:**

The questionnaire was submitted to a pilot sample of (40) teachers who teach the *Iraqi Opportunities* in the intermediate stage at Salladdin Governorate. Then the following procedures have been applied:

#### **a. Item Discrimination:**

The discrimination power for each item of the questionnaire has been computed and it ranged between (0, 33) to (0, 67) and the previous studies state that the item is accepted if its discrimination power is (0, 20); therefore all the items are accepted.

#### **b. Reliability:**

Reliability of the questionnaire is obtained by using alpha-Cronbach coefficient and it is found that the reliability of the questionnaire is (0, 86) and it is good reliable means.

### **3.4 The Statistical Means:**

In the current study, the following statistical means are used:

1. Item discrimination
2. Alpha Cronbach coefficient

### **3.5 The final form of the questionnaire:**

The questionnaire consists of (14) questions concerning with the teachers who teach the *Iraqi Opportunities* textbooks at the intermediate stage in Salladdin Governorate. The questions are in four main parts: questions (1-5) represent personal information about the teachers; questions (6-9) represent the theoretical side for the process of teaching; while questions (10-11) represent the practical side for the process of teaching and, question (12) represents the difficulties they may encounter in their teaching English language by using the communicative approach; question (13) is to investigate their understanding of the possibilities for overcoming these difficulties. Finally, question (14) involves their opinions and suggestions for teaching the *Iraqi Opportunities* in the intermediate stage in Salladdin Governorate (See Appendix 1).

## **Section Four**

### **The Questionnaire: Results and Analyses**

This section lays out the results of the questionnaire, dealing with all the items of the questionnaire:

#### **4.1 Survey Participants:**

The participants in the questionnaire survey are (100) teachers who teach the *Iraqi Opportunities* in the intermediate stage at Salladdin Governorate. The ages of the participant are ranged between 24-42 years. The number of the teachers who are graduated from College of Education/ Department of English are (93), and (7)

from College of Arts/ Department of Translation. The certification of (96) is Bachelor and only (4) with master degree. Their services as English teachers are ranged (1-20) years.

#### **4.2 The Analysis of the Responses:**

The analysis of the responses to the questionnaire has revealed the following (see appendix No. 2):

- a. Responses to questions (4,5 and 6) show that 93% of the teachers were graduated from college of education/ Department of English and 7% from college of Arts/Department of Translation and 96% have Bachelor and only 4% with master degree. Question (3) states that 65% have (1-9) year services as English teachers while 35% have (10-20) years.
- b. Responses for question (6) affirm that 71% try to have CLT while 29% do not try.
- c. Responses to question (7) reveal that 70% do not have a training course before teaching the *Iraqi Opportunities*. And 30% have a training course. Through the responses of question (9), 85% assert that training courses are very important, 10% assert that training courses are important while only 5% believe that they are useful.
- d. Responses to question (10) express that 15% of the participant teachers use the CD through teaching, 60% do not use it and 25% use it to certain extent. 50% use the dictionary, 35% do not use and just 15% use it to certain extent. 92% use the teacher's book despite 90% of them have it, as question (8) reveal, 5% do not use it and 2% use it to certain extent. Finally, 20% use the Key Word Bank, 65% do not use it while 15% use it to certain extent.
- e. Responses to question (11) pinpoint that 10% practice pair/group work, 75% do not, and only 15% practices it to

certain extent. 23% practice role playing, 62% do not, and only 15% practice it to some extent. 75% practice the scrambled sentences, 15% do not, and only 10% practice it to certain extent, 30% practice the use of pictures to guess the meaning of the words, 50% do not, and only 15% practice it to certain extent. Finally 75% use Arabic language, 15% do not and only 10% practice it to e extent.

- f. Responses to question (12) reveal the kinds of the difficulties which the teacher may face through teaching the Iraqi Opportunities: 80% declare their deficiency in spoken English, 20% do not. 45% of the survey participants testify that their limited knowledge of the strategic, as well as sociolinguistic aspects of the language serve as barriers to implementing CLT in their classes. 55% do not. 60% of the responses do not know how to teach communicatively, 40% do. 40% of the responses have little time to write communicative materials, while 60% do not. 80% emphasise the students' low English proficiency, 20% do not. 60% stress students' passive styles in learning, 40% do not. 55% assure that grammar are based examination, 45% do not. 86% consider the large classes as a difficulty, 14% do not. 80% mark students switched from English to Arabic when they are in pairs / small groups, 20% do not. 90% score lack of effective and sufficient assessment instruments, 10% do not. Finally, 90% state the insufficient funding.
- g. Responses to question (13) reveal that 70% need CD to improve their process of teaching, 30% need not. And 100% need training courses, 95% need small classes, 5% need not. 95% need much time, and 5% needn't. Finally 97% need sample training lessons, 3% need not.

### **1.1 Discussion of the Results:**

The questionnaire reveals the following major difficulties related to the teachers themselves. These reported difficulties involved: 80% of the teachers declare their deficiency in spoken English and it can be considered as a major obstacle constraining their applying CLT in their classrooms. We think that one of the main reasons for the teachers' deficiency in spoken English can be attributed to the traditional ways of learning English and that they have few opportunities to practice English as they were students of English. 45% Lack of knowledge about the appropriate use of language in context as they teach something different from what they had studied. So, 60% of the teachers do not know how to teach communicatively. Few opportunities for teachers to get training in CLT since 70% of the participant teachers do not have training course before teaching the *Iraqi Opportunities* textbooks as 85% state that the training courses are very important and 10% state it as important and only 5% as useful; therefore, 100% of them affirm that they need more training courses. 90% of the participant teachers have the teachers book and they use it, but 97% of them still need for a training lesson to comprehend its implementation in teaching the *Iraqi Opportunities* textbooks; more than 40% assure that there is little time for developing materials for communicative classes which in turn become a constraint for them to use CLT; as a result only 20% use the Work Book Bank, 65% do not and 15% use it to some extent, also 30% practice using the pictures in the textbook to guess the meaning of the words, 50% do not and 15% to certain extent .

86% of the teachers confess that large classes make it hard for them to make use of pair/group work, especially in the classrooms, and 95% of them explain that they need small classes to

improve their teaching process. So, only 10% of the teachers use the pair/group work and 23% practice the role playing.

55% of the teachers state that grammar-based examinations are considered to be an important barrier that prevents the teachers to implement the CLT practices in teaching the Iraqi Opportunities. As a result, English teaching practices are shaped according to the skills tested in these exams, which are mainly: grammar, vocabulary knowledge, translation, and reading skills. Furthermore, lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments is identified by 90% of the teachers as one of the difficulties pertaining the teaching of the *Iraqi Opportunity*.

Li (1998), Li (cited in Hell and Hewings: 2001) and Ozsevik (2010) are researchers who wrote about the difficulties which the teachers of CLT in their countries encounter, in which they show that they have similar difficulties in the implementation of CLT. Such difficulties as highly-centralized grammar-based examinations, overloaded classes and fewer opportunities for teacher retraining, students' lack of motivation to develop communicative skills.

The other difficulty is associated with the lack of resources and funding which plays an important role in terms of the effective integration of CLT into English language teaching. 90% of the participant teachers state that they lack adequate facilities and equipment such as computer classrooms, LCD projectors, audio-visual resources, and photocopiers which are not available for use. Furthermore, 60% of the teachers do not use the CD in their teaching as 70% state that they need CD to improve their teaching.

The questionnaire reveals the following major difficulties associated with the students which are: the students' low of English proficiency, 80% emphasize that the students' level is very low and they suffer because of these difficulties which make it hard for them

to practice many activities inside the class; therefore, 75% of the teachers use the Arabic language a lot to let them understand and this in return makes the lesson lose the English flavour. In addition 60% of the participants found students' passive style of learning as a serious obstacle that prevents them from implementing CLT in their teaching the *Iraqi Opportunities*, Students are deficient in motivation for developing communicative faculty in English and insensitivity of class participation.

Several students switch from English to their native language when they are in pairs/small group, so, Arabic is used as an alternative of English in pair/group work. The students' low level and passive style of learning, the students' resistance to participate in communicative classroom activities, are due to their slow progress.

## **Section Five**

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

#### **5.1 Conclusions:**

It is remarkable that the majority of the questionnaire and interview participants seemed to share similar perceptions pertaining to the difficulties they face in teaching the *Iraqi Opportunities* textbook in the intermediate stage at Salladdin Governorate.

The English language teachers at Salladdin Governorate who teach the *Iraqi Opportunities* encounter many difficulties in implementing CLT in their classrooms. Their perceived difficulties in adopting CLT reveals that the difficulties have their source in: large classes; mismatch between curriculum and assessment and the time is an important obstacle. Furthermore, the necessity of a lot of training courses for the teachers to improve their ability to

comprehend teaching English language by using the communicative approach. Besides, the teachers of English lack the funding and adequate facilities and equipment to support their teaching.

All the participants demonstrate that the students' low English proficiency and their poor communicative abilities on the whole is one of the principal obstacles for the English teachers to use CLT in teaching the *Iraqi Opportunities* textbook. Moreover; some of the students use the Arabic language as an alternative to English through air/group activities. Because of their indifference of class participation, they lack the motivation for developing communicative faculty in English. The teachers of English language also have their own difficulties such as their level in speaking English and their limited knowledge in strategic and sociolinguistic aptitude in English language.

The questionnaire expresses that despite showing keen interest in the new series and being eager to identify with CLT, teachers are not rather optimistic about the complete adoption of CLT, and thus feel that only by remedying the difficulties they face and facilitating the conditions for the implementation of CLT can teachers truly benefit from CLT in their English classrooms. Also, the English language teachers need to know more about CLT.

As a result, we believe that the success of this approach, depends on the teacher's understanding and application for the principles of this approach; recognizing and resolving the difficulties inherent the process of teaching English also depend on the reconciliation of the claims of authority of the teacher on one hand, and the claims o the autonomy of learner on the other. The teacher's effort should be directed towards facilitating rather than instructing, and counselling rather than assessing. Finally, we wish that the students who study this new series, developed in the same level with what the series demand. Otherwise, they will not get what

is supposed to and encounter difficulties in the next level; especially in the last stage of this new series.

### **5.2 Recommendations:**

The teachers' opinions through the questionnaire reveal the following suggestions:

- It is essential to provide schools with ideal classes, i.e. the number of the students should be few in each class to give them the chance to practice CLT.
- They need adequate facilities and equipment such as computer classrooms, LCD projectors, audio-visual resources and the language laboratory.
- They need more practice, training courses and sample lessons in teaching this book; there is a suggestion from the teachers to have training courses abroad.
- They agree that the Iraqi Opportunities is an excellent series to learn English language, but it is not suitable or convenient with their students' abilities, and the students cannot understand the content of the book because of their insufficient capacity of their minds.
- All of the English language teachers affirm the students' low level.

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#### Appendix (1): The Questionnaire

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many years have you been a teacher of English?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Certification: B.A                      M.A.
4. College that you have graduated from : Art                      Education
5. Department : English                      Tr  lation
6. Have you tried Communicative Language Teaching? Yes  
No
7. Have you had a training course before teaching the *Iraqi Opportunities*?  
Yes                      No
8. Do you have the teacher’s book? Yes                      No
9. In your opinion training courses in English are:
  - very important
  - important

- useful
- unimportant

**10.** In your teaching do you use:

- |                       |     |    |                   |
|-----------------------|-----|----|-------------------|
| a) CD                 | Yes | No | To certain extent |
| b) Dictionary         | Yes | No | To certain extent |
| c) Teacher's book     | Yes | No | To certain extent |
| d) The key Work banks |     |    |                   |
|                       | Yes | No | To certain extent |

**11.** Do you practice through the lesson?

- |  |                   |     |    |
|--|-------------------|-----|----|
| a) Pair/Group work                             |                   | Yes | No |
|  | To certain extent |     |    |
| b) Role playing                                | Yes               | No  | To |
|  | certain extent    |     |    |
| c) Scrambled sentences                         |                   | Yes | No |
|  | To certain extent |     |    |
| d) Using the Arabic language                   | Yes               |     | No |
|  | To certain extent |     |    |
| e) Guessing the meaning of words with pictures |                   |     |    |
|  | Yes               | No  | To |
|  | certain extent    |     |    |

**12.** The following are some difficulties that you may encounter in teaching the *Iraqi*

*Opportunities:*

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| a) Teachers' deficiency in spoken English?                                      | Yes | No |
| b) Teachers' deficiency in strategic and sociolinguistic competence in English? |     |    |
|   | Yes | No |
| c) Teachers did not know how to teach communicatively?                          | Yes | No |
| d) Teachers' having little time to write communicative materials                | Yes | No |

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- 
- 
- e) Students'                      low                      English                      proficiency?  
Yes                      No
- f) Students'                      passive                      style                      in                      learning?  
Yes                      No
- g) Grammar                                      based                                      examination?  
Yes                      No
- h) Large    classes?  
Yes                      No
- i) Students switched from English to Arabic when they were in  
pairs                      /                                      small                                      groups?  
Yes                      No
- j) Lack of effective and sufficient assessment instruments?  
Yes                      No
- k) Insufficient    funding  
Yes                      No
- 13. What do you need to improve your teaching process?**
- a) CD**  
Yes                      No
- b) Training    courses**  
Yes                      No
- c) Small    classes**  
Yes                      No
- d) Much    time**  
Yes                      No
- e) Sample    lessons**  
Yes                      No

**14.** Your opinion (suggestions and difficulties) in teaching the  
*Iraqi Opportunities*

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*With Our Respect*

Istabraq Tariq Al-azzawi

Saleem Ibraheem Al-

Mawla

**Appendix (2) Responses of the questionnaire**

Question No.	Types of Responses	Percentage
2	1-9 years	65%
	10-20 years	35%
3	B.A	96%
	M.A	4%
4-5	Art/ Translation	7%
	Education/ English	93%
6	Yes	71%
	No	29%
7	Yes	70%
	No	30%
8	Yes	90%
	No	10%
9	Very important	85%
	Important	10%
	Useful	5%
	Unimportant	none

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<b>10</b>	<b>A</b>	Yes	15%
		No	60%
		To certain extent	25%
	<b>B</b>	Yes	50%
		No	35%
		To certain extent	15%
	<b>C</b>	Yes	92%
		No	5%
		To certain extent	2%
	<b>D</b>	Yes	20%
		No	65%
		To certain extent	15%
<b>11</b>	<b>A</b>	Yes	10%
		No	75%
		To certain extent	15%
	<b>B</b>	Yes	23%
		No	62%
		To certain extent	15%
	<b>C</b>	Yes	75%
		No	15%
		To certain extent	10%
	<b>D</b>	Yes	75%
		No	15%
		To certain extent	10%
	<b>E</b>	Yes	32%
		No	50%
		To certain extent	18%
<b>12</b>	<b>A</b>	Yes	80%

<b>B</b>	No	20%
	Yes	45%
<b>C</b>	No	55%
	Yes	60%
<b>D</b>	No	40%
	Yes	40%
<b>E</b>	No	60%
	Yes	80%
<b>F</b>	No	20%
	Yes	60%
<b>G</b>	No	40%
	Yes	55%
<b>H</b>	No	45%
	Yes	86%
<b>I</b>	No	14%
	Yes	80%
<b>J</b>	No	20%
	Yes	90%
<b>K</b>	No	10%
	Yes	90%
	No	10%
<b>13 A</b>	Yes	70%
	No	30%
<b>B</b>	Yes	100%
	No	None
<b>C</b>	Yes	95%
	No	5%
<b>D</b>	Yes	95%
	No	5%
<b>E</b>	Yes	97%
	No	3%

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