

## **EXAM, FEEDBACK AND THEIR IMPORTANCE IN THE PROCESS OF TEACHING-LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN/SECOND LANGUAGE IN IRAQI SECONDARY SCHOOLS (ISS)**

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**Abstract:** The main goal of the present paper is to define the importance of exam and feedback during the process of teaching-learning English as a foreign/ second language in Iraqi Secondary Schools (ISS). The process of teaching-learning English is an important, a useful and a challenging task as it is applied by non-native speakers. For that reason, it requires a high proficiency, a concentration, a previous knowledge and a planning before joining the class to meet teaching process requirements, such as: lesson plan, textbook, blackboard, content, and classroom management. Finally, it discusses oral and written exam, and also the feedback's advantages.

**Keywords:** exam and feedback; teaching-learning process; Iraqi secondary schools; teaching process requirements; oral and written exam; feedback's advantages.

### **1. Introduction**

The process of teaching-learning English, in Iraqi Educational System (IES), as a foreign/ second language in Iraqi secondary schools is an important, a useful and a challenging task as it is applied by non-native speakers. For that reason, it requires a high proficiency, a concentration, previous knowledge and planning before joining the class. These requirements depend on the teacher and the teaching method that he/she can be practised with reference to class activities. In addition, the teaching-learning process can be defined as a conveying process of knowledge from teacher to student.

Exam and feedback are one of the main class activities that the teacher applies during teaching and learning processes. The exam and the feedback are considered as the educational process pillars in the Iraqi classroom as they can provide learners with a knowledge that enables them how taking other exams. In addition to that, they are considered in such a perspective because evaluating the teaching-learning process can be measured on the basis of the exam results followed by the feedback. The exam and feedback play an important role in teaching-learning process as they provide the two processes with more information regarding the content that teachers and learners are dealing with as well as support the two methods. Attention to them makes the teaching-learning process become more effective and interesting.

Besides, the exam and the feedback are integral parts of teaching and learning processes. They play an active role in the process of language acquisition. They improve and enhance the learning process, and even the teaching process. Why the teaching process as well? The answer is that teachers even if they do a lesson plan, there must be gaps in applying the teaching method. These gaps can be controlled during taking the exam followed by feedback. Finally, the exam, during the teaching-learning process,

creates a competitive environment between students, followed by feedback that makes alternations to their knowledge in learning process.

## 2. Teaching process

Teaching process is a complex teacher's career as it involves various tasks, such as: the subject matter knowledge, decisions related to the purpose of learning experience and its nature, the interaction between teacher and students during presenting the content, and full management of the educational event (Rozenfeld, 2017; Dejica, 2022). Furthermore, the teaching process in Iraqi secondary schools is a complex and challenging task that depends on an effective approach. This approach is used to be helpful for students to come out with valuable results. It is the "Communicative Approach" which is considered, according to Harmer (2015: 69), as the first original term - that the Iraqi Secondary English Textbooks (ISET) adopt it in teaching process- which is termed into various terms, such as: "Communicative Approach (CA)" or simply as "Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)" by Richards and Rodgers (2001: 153), Harmer (Ibid: 69), Al Tuhafi (2017: 45), and Sherwani and Kiliç (2017: 191); or as "Communicative Teaching Method" by Liu and Shi (2007: 71). The principal goal of this approach is the "communicative competence". In spite of there are different methods that can be applied in the teaching process, the "Communicative Approach (CA)" is more effective since it works as a link between the teacher and students. It creates a positive and suitable atmosphere with a more acceptable learning environment. It encourages students to interact with the teacher and the content. Generally, the CA works as a motivator and facilitator because, through communication, it can motivate students to learn as well as facilitates the learning process. This can make students eager to learn about the target language which can reflect positively on students' learning process. (Grigorss & Dejica, 2023; Toma & Dejica, 2023; Rozenfeld, J & S. Tomaščíková, 2023).

One of the most prominent characteristics in the teaching process is classroom management. Classroom management plays a crucial role in teaching process where the teaching process's success depends on the classroom management whether through the organization or controlling. It depends on the management of the teacher himself/herself. Regarding this perspective, Scrivener (2012: 1) addresses the teacher saying that "your classroom management is the way that you manage students' learning by organising and controlling what happens in your classroom."

Additionally, the teaching process will have an impact factor if it is achieved in communicative methodology. Within this methodology, a large assortment of strategies can be used. One of the important strategies is the "cognitive abilities". These abilities are related to mental functions. Robinson (2012: 17) defines these abilities as "aspects of mental functioning, such as memorizing and remembering; inhibiting and focusing attention; speed of information processing; and spatial and causal reasoning."

Applying the CA in the Iraqi secondary classes includes the primary aim in teaching process which is to develop the "Communicative Competence (CC)", De Messieres et al., (2013: 2). The term "Communicative Competence" refers to the ability that enables learners to use the language with a goal of conveying and interpreting the meaning. In other words, Savignon (1972) defines it as "the ability to function in a truly communicative setting, that is, in a dynamic exchange in which linguistic competence must adapt itself to the total informational input, both linguistic and paralinguistic, of one or more interlocutors." The interlocutors here are the teacher and learners who exchange the

information during introducing the content. Exchanging the information can be described as a give-and-take process.

To increase the students' achievement, the school administration should take part in teaching process. There should be a collaboration between the teachers and school management to achieve an ideal success for both teaching and learning processes. Goodwin (2015: 41) states that "to increase student achievement, district leaders and school personnel must collaborate to foster learning environments that encourage the development of high levels of self-efficacy in students." So, the school management must work jointly with the teacher to achieve high levels in learning process which is considered the main point of the teaching process.

Finally, any process must have some requirements to be achieved effectively. Undoubtedly, the teaching process encompasses different requirements used as supporters to increase the teaching process effectiveness. This will be discussed through the following section.

## **2.1. Teaching process requirements**

Teaching process requirements are the strategies that teachers apply during the teaching process. In other words, they are considered as pillars that teachers can lay on during presenting a content. Before starting to teach the class, each stage has a specific guide book which includes a variety of advices of how to deal with the class and the classroom management. The purpose of these advices is to meet the teaching-learning requirements regarding the content. These requirements are as follows:

### **2.1.1. Lesson plan**

Lesson plan, in teaching English as a foreign/ second language in Iraqi secondary schools, is the teacher's road map that helps the teacher to meet the students' needs during the process of learning. It plays a prominent role in teaching process. It is used to save the class time which can be done effectively. Before beginning to teach, the teacher has some advices of how he/she should teach. These advices are used as a guide that support him/her to teach. One of these advices is the lesson plan. In this respect, De Messieres et al. (2013: 5-6), Johnston and Farrell (2013: 6) and De Messieres (2014: 5-6) affirm that:

"It is advisable to read the Unit summary and teaching notes for each unit before beginning to teach it. This will give a clear idea of the content and activity types in the unit well in advance. It is also a good idea to plan blocks of lessons at a time, for example, a week's classes [...] Planning a lesson in advance will also result in greater confidence during the lesson. This confidence will facilitate appropriate decisions during a lesson. It will also be easier to manage time; for example, knowing which activities can be left out if time is short, or when to stop an activity if it seems to be taking up a disproportionate amount of time."

Here, it could be said that planning the lesson in advance facilitates the method in taking appropriate decisions about the class time management. This technique helps to decide the activities that can be done within the class time.

In other words, the lesson plan works as a saver for the time of the classroom. Generally, if the lesson is well-organized, learners will respond to it, time will not be wasted, and the teaching method will be easier. In this respect, O'Neill and Snow (2015: 13-14) and (2016: 16-17) state, as a recommendation, that:

“Good lesson planning in efficient use of classroom time. Students respond to a well-organized lesson where no time is wasted, and your job is made less difficult. [...] Make sure that your plan allows adequate time for student-to-student interaction. Make sure also that there is a variety of activities in the lesson. The general pattern of a lesson should be: (i) short teacher-led introduction, (ii) presentation; (iii) practice; (iv) short teacher-led conclusion.”

Here, the four patterns of the lesson plan make the lesson more enjoyable and effective as well as saves time to practise a variety of things.

Besides, by using the lesson plan, the teacher can identify the objectives of learning that help him/her to design activities supporting in evolve the strategies that could go with the pupils' learning. In order to be a successful lesson plan, it should address the following three important constituents:

- The students' learning objectives
- Teaching-learning activities
- Using practical strategies to verify learners' understanding

Here, if these three key constituents are achieved within the class time, the teaching process will be successful and result in useful learning achievements.

Moreover, the lesson plan should be prepared already and include some steps that help teachers to manage the lesson in a method that suits the students' learning levels. Milkova (ND) identifies six steps to guide the teacher in his/her lesson plan. They are as follows:

- Outlining the learning objectives: this step is to determine what the students want to learn as well as to help the teacher to specify the objectives for students' learning. This includes firstly the “topic of the lesson”.
- Developing the introduction: where it should be creative in order to catalyze learners to be interested with the topic as well as encourage their thinking towards that topic. This can be achieved by using different approaches to get the students involved in the class, such as: “real-world example, short video clip, practical application, probing question, etc.”.
- Planning particular learning activities which contain the main body of the class: this includes different examples of real-life, visual aids, analogies and the ways that explain the material, meanwhile to attract the learners' attention to be engaged with the lesson attentively. In addition, planning specific activities for learning help to estimate the time that each activity needs to be presented and explained.
- Planning to check students' understanding: to check students' understanding, there should be specified questions addressed to the students randomly in different ways. The purpose of these different ways is to extend the learners' thinking about the lesson topic.
- Determining the conclusions and making a review: this step can be done by summarizing the key points of the lesson. Also, it stimulates students' interest in the next lessons.
- Setting a realistic schedule: this step is used to fill the left gaps of the lesson.

Hence, teachers should recognize what the students need to learn. Finally, preparing the lesson plan plays a prominent and valuable role which helps teachers to come out with an effective teaching process.

### 2.1.2. Textbook

Generally, in Iraqi schools and particularly in secondary schools, the textbook is very essential in teaching process. It is of such importance because it is regarded as the main factor that teachers can depend on in introducing the content. The textbook is an educational source used to introduce the materials and facts that develop a learner's knowledge about an indefinite topic. This knowledge enables students to communicate with the Outside World.

Additionally, the textbook has a prominent role in the process of teaching and learning in (ISS). It supports the educational process for both teachers and learners. Even if it doesn't include all the teaching-learning aids, it is still the basic tool and includes a vital part in the Iraqi educational system. The teachers use the textbook as a main source in teaching process, particularly the secondary schools. Most teachers don't use other materials, such as: pictures, videos, coloured cards, coloured pens, coloured chalk, etc. These materials support the teaching process and introducing the textbook's content for students is easy to understand. This situation depends on the teacher who creates various methods of teaching to present the course. Swan (1992: 1) preaches teachers to "reject the textbooks and produce their own custom-made courses for their students." Here, Swan urges teachers not to depend on the textbook because there are some textbooks that are "unsuitable textbooks", as he stated. He adds (Ibid: 2) that:

"The danger with ready-made textbooks is that they seem to absolve teachers of responsibility. Instead of participating in the day-to-day decisions that have to be made about what to teach and how to teach it, it is easy to just sit back and operate the system, secure in the knowledge that the wise and virtuous people who produced the textbook knew what was good for us. Unfortunately this is rarely the case. Even with the best teaching materials it is an inefficient approach-no coursebook contains exactly what is required for a particular individual or class. And textbooks are sometimes a very long way indeed from reflecting the needs and interests of one's students."

In these sentences, Swan wants to explain that teachers should not depend only on the textbook materials, but they should use other materials in teaching process that help students in learning the contents more easily. The teacher is considered as the controller of the class and his/her responsibility should not be left aside. So, using other materials is an efficient approach for teaching and the teacher's responsibility will be effective.

On the contrary, Hutchinson and Torres (1994: 315) argue that "the textbook has a vital and positive part to play in the everyday job of teaching and learning English, and that the importance of the textbook becomes even greater in periods of change."

Again, the textbook has an active role in teaching process where it is considered as the core of education system in general and the content of subject in particular. It has the importance that is irreplaceable. According to UNESCO and MGIEP (2017: 23), "the importance of textbooks is indisputable." In this case, referring to the textbook during the teaching process has a vital role and the need to use it inside the classroom is necessary. As a final point, Elsner (2018: 27) states that "textbooks are a great time-saver for teachers, as they provide a great variety of texts and activities" that are more beneficial for learners than other learning materials in learning the English language throughout using the blackboard. From my perspective, it is considered the main technology in teaching process, in addition to blackboard.

### **2.1.3. Blackboard**

Blackboard is an essential tool in addition to the textbook in the teaching-learning process of English as a foreign/second language in Iraqi secondary schools' system. It is important as it facilitates the learners' skills development and their knowledge in learning the English structures, as well. In this case, according to Ahmed and Mohammed (2020: 19), "teachers may use a variety of teaching techniques and methods to provide learners with better learning opportunities." This view improves the importance of the blackboard available during the teaching-learning process.

Additionally, it helps both teachers and students to exchange the content information successfully. The purpose of using the board, as Muttappallymyalil et al., (2016: 589) state, is to provide the whole class with the information at one time. One can conclude that, the blackboard has its prominent role in teaching process as it shows the information of the content for the whole class.

### **2.2. Content**

Content is considered as the main pillar in the teaching process because it is the core of the teaching process effectiveness. In teaching process, introducing the content whether orally or in written form requires knowledge, i.e., the teacher should study the content beforehand that he/she plans to introduce effectively. The purpose of this technique is to manage the class in a methodological process that motivates the students to learn. Additionally, UNESCO-IIEP (2022:1) describes the content knowledge as "the body of knowledge- facts, theories, principles, ideas, vocabulary- which teachers must master to be effective. Teachers should have a deep understanding of the subject they teach and corresponding curriculum." Thus, the knowledge basis for students is the content that teachers should master to enable them to manage the classroom actively.

### **2.3. Classroom management**

Classroom management is one of the essential teaching process requirements that contributes in succeeding the educational process. It is one of the teacher responsibilities and the students as well. In classroom management, the students are included because there should be a cooperation and an interaction between teacher and students to achieve the educational process whether the teaching process or the learning process.

Moreover, it requires special importance because it comprises all the class necessities. These necessities form a constant worry for teachers. Teachers should manage the classroom behaviorally, then educationally. If the teacher manages the classroom in an effective behaviour way, the teaching process will achieve actual and satisfactory results for teacher and the school management. It is considered as a challenging task that composes enduring disquiet for teachers, especially the beginners. Evertson and Weinstein (2011: 3) postulate that "beginning teachers consistently perceive student discipline as their most serious challenge." In this case, the classroom management is regarded as a topic of constant worry for teachers, particularly those who are beginners. Evertson and Weinstein add that teachers perform in the classroom concerning the management specified tasks where they must:

"(i) develop caring, supportive relationships with and among students; (ii) organize and implement instruction in ways that optimize students' access to learning; (iii) use group

management methods that encourage students' engagement in academic tasks; (iv) promote the development of students' social skills and self-regulation; and (v) use appropriate interventions to assist students with behavior problems." (Ibid: 5)

At this point, one can notice that effective classroom management depends not only on the teacher's effectiveness, but also on the social skills that contribute significantly in managing the classroom. Finally, the classroom management requires professional and experienced teachers. For beginning teachers, it requires more experience and effort.

The conclusions that we reached so far are that teaching process is a challenging task and requires to include expertise, skilfulness, self-evident, resolute in making decisions, controlling, interaction, sharing the information, inserting the students in the class, motivation, stimulation, and testing, whether oral or written, by asking different questions. The aim of the test is to measure the learners' knowledge regarding what they learned. Finally, the teaching process is considered as the leader for learning process because the effective learning process achievements reflect positively on the teaching process.

#### **2.4. Learning process**

Learning process for English as a foreign/second language in Iraqi Secondary Schools (ISS) is considered as a challenging task for most learners. In learning process, learners' performance depends completely on the "communicative competence", i.e., the communication between teacher and students during presenting the class. According to Hymes (1972: 65), the performance concept will gain a great importance in terms of the "communicative competence". Here, through these speeches, one can infer that the students' positive performance during the learning process depends on the communicative competence.

Learning process is basically based on teaching process and the techniques that the teaching process follows. One of these techniques is applying some activities that relate to some content where learners can acquire the presented content by applying these activities. Applying the activities during teaching-learning process has a vital role as students' knowledge about this content cannot be developed unless there are some activities. Regarding the importance of activities, Allwright (1981: 9) states that the activities include the central tasks that the learning process should adopt.

Also, practicing the communicative competence during the learning process enables teachers to manage the classroom effectively as well as the class time. The class time is the main constraint in teaching-learning process in Iraqi secondary schools. As Johnston and Farrell (2013: 2) mention that "lack of time means that lessons can only provide a framework within which language can develop."

Language learning process is viewed as a process of habit formation that depends on strengthening the links between motivation and response which are done by reinforcement, Ghaith (2012: 9).

What is more, learning processes, as Niedderer et al. (2007: 160) state, are processes that "can be represented as a sequence of conceptions developed by students during instruction. These conceptions do not exclude each other; a student can have more than one conception in parallel at the same time." In this case, the learning process means different conceptions that students develop while teaching process. Additionally, as cited in Niedderer et al. (Ibid: 161), Givry (2003) defines the learning process in a different way by using the paradigm of "expressed idea" with less generalizations than "conceptions". This paradigm deems the process of learning as

“evolution of students’ ideas” which distinguishes three types of developments to describe some learning aspects. These ideas are such as: “(i) a student expresses a new idea; (ii) a student increases the domain of validity of an idea; and (iii) a student establishes a link between several ideas and develops a network.” Thus, these three types of evolutions form new concepts on behalf of learning.

In learning process, there is a vital technique inside the classroom. This technique is known as *motivation*. The motivation technique is considered as the central method for the teaching process. Psychologically, the motivation process encourages students to engage with the class and learn the content in a way that makes the teaching method results being effective. Additionally, it generates the interaction between the teacher and students as well as between students themselves. In addition to that, the motivation process, for Feldman (2004), is as “factors that directs and energizes the behaviour of humans and other organisms”.

Moreover, the motivation activity is considered as the central area in teaching-learning process. Seven (2020: 62) states that the “motivation is a central topic in the field of education”, in which all the activities that the teacher and students practise in teaching and learning depend on the motivation. In other words, Fernald and Fernald (2021) point out that motivation is as “inner influence on behaviour as represented by psychological condition, interests, attitudes, and aspirations”. And also, Loganathan and Zafar (2016: 7) point out “motivation in learning is a psychological process that leads to achieving certain goal [...] plays a significant role in successful second language learning, particularly in a classroom.” Here, the certain goal is the learning process. So, from a psychological perspective, the motivation process results in various advantages that make the learning process becomes easier to acquire.

From the viewpoint of teaching and learning, motivation plays an important role for both. According to Dörnyei (2014: 518), it is “a word that both teachers and learners use widely when they speak about language learning success or failure”. In accordance with, Guerrero (2015: 95) states that the motivation process plays an important role in the language learning and teaching processes. So, most educational studies confirm that the process of motivation in learning and teaching English as a foreign language has a fundamental role, especially during the class.

Additionally, the learning process is the key element that teachers should consider during teaching process (Munna and Abul Kalam, 2021: 1). In this case, the learning process is the teacher’s responsibility as the teacher is considered as the guide and controller inside the classroom, especially during introducing the content.

As a result, learning process depends basically on the teacher as he/she is considered as the first person who is responsible for managing the class and the students. He/ she is required to do every effort to make the lesson be successful in a manner that suits the level of learners. The goal of this strategy is to obtain learning results that encourage students to continue learning. Finally, the effort should be achieved from both: the learners and their teacher because success depends on both parties. This success will undoubtedly achieve high scores in taking the exam.

## **2.5. Exam**

Exam is a systematic process that is designed to measure the students’ progress in education. In other words, it is used to measure the students’ competence during the learning process. In other words, it is an approach used to collect information and draw conclusions about a learner’s ability, quality or success of an educational course on the



basis of different sources of proof. In addition, it is adopted to assess or check the students' knowledge and performance regarding an educational content. In terms of knowledge and performance during the exam, Richards and Schmidt (2010: 207) define the exam, or as they termed as "examination" as "any procedure for measuring ability, knowledge, or performance." All these three factors prove the effectiveness range of teaching and learning processes. In the Iraqi educational system, there are two types of exams: oral and written.

### 2.5.1. Oral exam

Oral exam is an approved assessment/test method that is practised in education in general and in the Iraqi Educational System (IES) in particular. Where the examinee poses a number of questions in a spoken form and the answers should be in the same form, as well. In this case, the learner has to answer these questions in a verbal way. This way demonstrates adequate knowledge of the intended content to enable him/her to pass the exam. The purpose of the oral exam is to assess the learner's knowledge regarding some subject.

Generally, the oral exam is shorter than the written ones, why? The answer depends on the question amount where it should be little and no need to provide much explanation. The answer is short that the student is restricted to mention summarized expressions. The time to answer is also abridged so that the other learners can take part in doing the test, where the students cannot take a long to think to provide the response. In this case, the oral exam becomes more difficult to be done. The oral exam has some advantages and disadvantages.

#### Advantages:

- Saving time
- Including a large number of testee
- Limited answers
- Quick evaluation

#### Disadvantages:

- No enough time to think about the answer
- No enough time to think about the evaluation by the examiner
- Making the student tense
- Facing a difficulty in speech

The oral exam is done face-to-face. As mentioned above, it has some advantages and some disadvantages. In addition, it needs more adequacy, high concentration, tact, courtesy, management, etc. The area between the testee and the examiner is very short. It is unlike the written exam where the testee answers freely: no stress, no nervousness, no anxiety, etc. Even if there is a smile, the inner feeling is tense. For that reason, in Iraqi secondary schools the oral exam is considered harder than the written exam. The following photograph represents taking the oral exam:



**Figure 1. The Oral Exam**

<https://examenexam.com/es/en/blog/tips-to-prepare-for-the-oral-exam-of-a-foreign-language>

As a conclusion, the oral exam is administered to assess the learner's knowledge towards a specified subject. It is a form of short questions posed by the examiner to the examinee in verbal forms. It can save time, having a number of students in a short time, and the evaluation is done at the same time. Meanwhile, it forms a difficulty for students while they are answering as they don't have enough time to think about the answer which affects them to be tense and facing a difficulty in speech. It is unlike the written exam.

### **2.5.2. Written exam**

Written exam is an activity performed to assess and evaluate the learner's knowledge, understanding, skills, or mental abilities by using a sheet of paper based on written questions posed by the teacher. In Iraqi Secondary Schools Exam System (ISSES), the written exam is divided into various parts and covers different areas of the identified syllabus, such as: the reading comprehension, textbook passages, grammatical structures and functions, vocabularies, spellings, literature focuses, and writings. It takes time and answers more than the oral exam.



**Figure 2. The Written Exam**

<https://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/19032021>

In addition, as with the oral exam, the written exam includes some advantages and disadvantages. They are as following:

#### **Advantages:**

- Granting the students the enough time to think about the answers
- Its notes are more than the oral one

- Learners have to show how much they know
- It can help students to explain their thinking
- Teachers have the time to provide suitable feedback on answers

**Disadvantages:**

- The written exam takes more time to answer
- The questions take a long time by the teacher to be done
- It does take also more time to be graded

Thus, although the written exam includes some advantages and disadvantages, it is different from the oral one in some points, such as: time, evaluation, performance, using some stationaries- for example: paper, pen, pencil, eraser, sharpener, ruler, etc.- that help the students to take the questions' content easily. In addition, the advantages are useful for the learning process while the disadvantages are not useful for the teaching process. So, each activity includes merits and demerits that, at the same time, goes with and doesn't go with the teaching-learning process during the educational process.

Finally, the exam, whether oral or written, has a prominent importance during the teaching-learning process in the Iraqi educational system. It supports the teaching-learning process whether in primary or secondary schools as it identifies the real level for students during the educational process with reference to feedback process.

**2.6. Feedback process**

Feedback is a process provided to learners about their performance in doing an assessment, answering a question, taking a test during teaching process. Richards and Schmidt (2010: 217) emphasize that "in teaching, feedback refers to comments or other information that learners receive concerning their success on learning tasks or tests, either from the teacher or other persons." Here, we could say that the feedback process is information given to students as notes about their performance in an exam or a test by the teacher.

Furthermore, the feedback activity is provided to learners as information whether during the class or after to guide the students' behaviour. In this respect, Ambrose et al., (2010: 125) affirm that the concept of feedback is "as information given to students about their performance that guides future behavior." According to CTL (2022: 1), feedback can help to put a path for learners by directing their attention to fields of "growth and improvement", and binding them with "future learning opportunities." In this case, the feedback is useful for students in the present and future time.

The purpose of feedback is as follows:

- A constructive criticism
- A technique for an advice
- Areas using for students' knowledge development
- Identifying the areas of weakness
- What the student gets on, whether wrong or right
- A comparison of what the student did with what was required
- Improvement for students' learning situation
- Students' evaluation
- An identification for strong and weak points

- Enhancement for students' performance
- Encouragement for learners. (Stockwell, 2010: 6)

These standards go in line with the students' learning requirements that aim at raising the students' knowledge level, identifying their mistaken gaps, guiding them how to deal with such mistakes in the future, increasing their determination and encouraging them for learning.

Additionally, the feedback is effective when it tells learners "*what* they are or are not understanding, *where* their performance is going well or poorly, and *how* they should direct their subsequent efforts" Ambrose et al., (2010: 137). In accordance with, according to Douglas et al., (2016: 1) the feedback process is information provided to students by the academics about their performance for an activity, expressing some opinions or when answering some questions. Hence, the feedback is given to learners as a gift because it provides them additional information that they need. So, the feedback procedure is useful for students to improve their performance in learning process.

The process of feedback is provided to learners on any assessed works whether during introducing the content or after doing a test enhances and develops the student's learning process where, according to Rust (2002: 152), the feedback process "promotes learning and facilitates improvements."

Besides, the process of feedback makes the learning activities more effective. This effectiveness enables students to make clear rules and active decisions about their performance regarding the presented content as well as their learning process. UniSA (2022: 8) states that: "feedback is one of the most important aspects of the learning process. It enables students to make timely and informed judgements about their performance, so that subsequent assessment can be undertaken with improved likelihood of success."

In this case, the feedback process helps the students to be able to make judgements concerning their act during the learning process. These judgements enable them to achieve crucial success and improvement in the future.

Additionally, the process of feedback is valued for learners. It includes some important advantages:

- It is "an important mechanism in student engagement with learning." Goel and Ellis (2011: 98)
- It has an emotional effect on learners as the emotion domain includes a positive impact on student's learning progress
- It is effective, especially when it is positive
- It removes the fear and stress in taking other exam tasks in the future
- It could motivate learners to have better performance
- It leads to encouragement, especially when the note is announced and being positive
- It is the stuff that learners can refer back to, especially the written form
- It is useful for next exams
- It helps students to be aware of taking other exams.

As a result, the feedback, the oral form in general and the written form in particular, is fruitful as it provides students with valued knowledge about the content that they studied. And also, it has crucial advantages in taking other assessments in different fields of the educational domain.

process whether in primary or secondary schools as it identifies the real level for students during the educational process with reference to feedback process.

### 3. Conclusion

The conclusion that we reached to is that the exam, the feedback and their importance in the process of teaching-learning English as a foreign/ second language in Iraqi secondary schools (ISS) are an integral part of the teaching-learning process. The exam, the feedback and their importance are significant activities that their positive results are closely related to the teaching-learning process. As a rule, if the teaching-learning process is managed successfully, the exam and the feedback are managed positively, as well. This strategy results in effective advantages. These advantages motivate both teachers and students to an educational interaction leads to teaching-learning process being fruitful.

Generally, the teaching process is the central pillar in the educational system, and especially in Iraqi educational programmes. At the present time, the teaching method depends on the communicative approach (CA). The main goal of this approach is to keep communication with learners as it is, according to Doff (2018: 4), "as a multidimensional concept" that includes "the ways a teacher proceeds to handle content in foreign language teaching and thus to achieve certain goals." The key goal of this approach is to activate the "Communicative Competence". Here, the importance of teaching process lies in the importance of method's principles which contain meaningful techniques that the learning process depends on.

Learning the foreign language in the Iraqi Secondary Classrooms (ISC) can mean various things, such as: learners' communication with the teacher, learners' communication among them, learners' communication with people who are outside the school, etc. The learning process is based on the teaching process and the procedures that are used by the teacher to achieve different activities, such as the exam and the feedback.

The exam is very important for both teaching and learning processes as it can evaluate the two processes through the marks that learners get on. Using the feedback during taking an exam in the Iraqi educational system is very significant because it is considered as the main pillar in teaching-learning process. In addition, it can reformulate the students' knowledge regarding the content. It may provide more information about how to deal with other contents in other exams that lead to achieve acceptable teaching-learning results. So, the exam and the feedback are considered as supporters for education and include a vital importance in the teaching-learning process in Iraqi secondary schools.

Finally, the exam and feedback contribute in boosting the teaching-learning process in different factors. They grow the four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In addition to that, they develop mental skills in general that enable students to cooperate and interact with the teacher while introducing content in the classroom.

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