

**Exploring teachers' and students' efficacy in the teaching
and learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in
Saudi Arabia**

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Abstract

This qualitative case study explored teaching and learning practices of English-as-a- Foreign Language (EFL) in the school context in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). The study is underpinned by Bandura's (1977, 1986) triadic reciprocal causation model, derived from his Social Cognitive Theory. In particular, the research focused on the teacher-efficacy of Saudi EFL teachers and the self-efficacy of students learning the English language. The approach of the research explores self-efficacy through a qualitative method. Data were collected through individual semi-structured interviews with secondary school teachers and through focus group discussions with their students, through classroom observations, and through examination of teaching materials to comprehend the teaching and learning environment of EFL in Saudi schools.

As a background to this research, it is important to note that a new approach to education was introduced by King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz in 2007. The second phase of this model was the School Development Model (known as Tatweer) which had a focus on professional development of school principals and teachers, a focus on more engagement between school and families/communities, and on more innovative teaching approaches to replace traditional teacher-centred approaches. Despite the new reforms, the findings of the current research revealed that EFL teachers relied more on the grammar translation model (GTM) of teaching and learning. The GTM is a traditional authoritarian approach where students focus on grammar rules to learn English with little to no teacher-student interactions or learning activities beyond the activities in their workbooks attached to the prescribed textbook. However, there were some instances revealed in the research where teachers took on a more authoritative role using the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach. In this approach student were encouraged to use language beyond their workbooks to hold

conversations with peers and the teacher and to use other means to express themselves in English. Observations also revealed that the teachers in this research tended to use more Arabic than English in the EFL classes. They described this as a problem due to lack of class time for teaching and out-dated textbooks that were not relevant to the lives of Saudi students and revealed low teacher-efficacy to teach English. Teachers also described that without family and social support for EFL, students would remain unmotivated to learn. The school principal also described the need for more school-family-community connections to support EFL learning, a need for more student-centred learning, and for more modern and high-tech resources.

Student data revealed that students preferred the CLT activities but also appreciated that the GTM was a good approach to help them pass their exams. The students in the focus group discussion revealed high self-efficacy to learn English and created their own opportunities to practice English outside the classroom. They did, however, reveal that most students were not interested in learning English. It is hoped that the findings from this study will provide deeper insights into the role of efficacy for the teaching and learning of English in KSA.

Keywords

Culture, English-as-a foreign language (EFL), identity, institutional teacher efficacy, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), pedagogical practices, self-efficacy, social cognition, triadic reciprocal causation model (behavioural factors, environmental factors, personal factors), School Development Model (Tatweer), teacher efficacy.

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List of Abbreviations

CLT Communicative Language Teaching

EFL English as a Foreign Language

ESL English as a Second Language

GTM Grammar translation methods

KSA Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

L1 First language

L2 Second language

LMS. Learning Management System

SA Saudi Arabia

SCT Social cognitive theory

TL Target Language

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Statement of Originality

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. K. Hour', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

DATE:

11/04/2023

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to the study

1.1 Introduction

The importance of learning the English language cannot be overstated in today's world. As a result, English has become part of the curriculum and is taught as a second or foreign language in secondary schools in many non-English speaking countries, including in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). While English has been taught in KSA for many years, Saudi learners face many problems in the language acquisition of English. Elyas and Al Grigri (2014) found, for example, that even after learning English for many years, Saudi students achieve very little language proficiency, which represents an enormous loss of time and money for the government and the country. The literature suggests that there are three major areas of concern that challenge effective EFL teaching and learning. The first problem is EFL teachers' lack of confidence (efficacy) to teach English. Research suggests that teachers who lack confidence to teach English avoid using innovative teaching strategies to inspire students to learn (Choi & Lee; Eslami & Fatahi, 2008). Understanding how efficacy affected the teaching and learning of English in Saudi classrooms was fundamental to this research. This focus was particularly important in light of the educational reforms that are taking place in KSA (Tatweer). Traditionally teachers have had resources only produced in foreign countries (USA, Great Britain) so the content for learning was not relevant to the Saudi context. The impact of resources on EFL teaching and learning was a second focus area for this research. A third challenge to consider was the limited opportunities for students and their teachers to practice English outside their classrooms. To date, understanding teachers' efficacy to create interesting and dynamic learning experiences in the Saudi EFL classroom has been under researched.

This research explored English-as-a-Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning practices in the secondary school context in Saudi Arabia to gain an understanding of these three major issues that affect the teaching and learning of English. In particular, the study explored the self-efficacy of non-native English-speaking EFL teachers (this efficacy herein called teacher-efficacy) in their teaching of English and the efficacy of students (student self-efficacy) in learning English in KSA. Teacher-efficacy is described as teachers' confidence, beliefs, and skills in context-specific areas (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Bandura et al., 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk, 2001), which in the current research is the confidence to teach English. It has been described that teachers who have confidence in their skills as an EFL teacher use more effective and innovative teaching strategies, while those with low confidence in their skills use traditional, lower-level teaching strategies (Dimopoulou, 2012; Mojavezi & Tamiz, 2012). The researcher wanted to know what kind of EFL resources teachers were using to inspire young people to learn English and if there were alternative opportunities outside the classroom where teachers and students could practice learning and using English.

This chapter outlines the purpose of the research in relation to the identified problems for EFL teaching and learning in KSA and starts with a historical background to English language teaching and learning in Saudi Arabia (Section 1.2). It should be noted that ESL/EFL are terms used interchangeably in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and the effects of this are explored in Section 1.3. As will be described, this ambiguity adds to the complexity of teaching and learning English in the KSA. The chapter provides a review of literature describing the context for EFL in KSA (Section 1.4), The purpose of the research is outlined in Section 1.5, followed by the significance of the research (Section 1.6) and the research problem (Section 1.7). The research questions that guided the research are also provided (Section 1.8), as well as a brief overview of the research methods (Section 1.9). A section

positioning the researcher is provided in Section 1.10 with the thesis outline provided in Section 1.11 The chapter begins with a background description of the study.

1.2 Background of the Study

There is no clear agreement on when English was first introduced for study in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). According to Faruk (2013) the introduction of English occurred at a time when Saudi Arabia was still young and poor and, therefore, the expansion of English language teaching in the KSA occurred at a slow pace. Faruk (2013) noted that English was introduced in Saudi formal education to expedite the integration of the country with the wider world, mostly due to the support of the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Niblock (2006) suggested that English language teaching (ELT) was introduced before the emergence of KSA as a state in 1932. Al-Ghamdi and Al-Saadat (2002) described that the teaching of English was first introduced in the Kingdom in the Scholarship Preparation School, (SPS), founded in 1936 in Makkah to prepare Saudi locals to undertake overseas trips, generally for business, but also to acquire a Western education.

Al-Johani (2009) suggested that English was introduced in the 1930s in the wake of oil discovery and was made use of only in the context of business. In agreement, Al-Braik (2007) argued that by 1978 the KSA showed a heavy reliance on foreign companies, a development which impacted critically on the economic development of the nation and the need for learning English. Nearly 90% of the workers in key establishments, including hospitals, shopping malls, and restaurants were expats with a good command of English, while a meagre 10% of the workforce were Arab nationals who had good mastery of English (Al-Braik, 2007). One of the main aims for teaching English-as-a-foreign language (EFL) in KSA was to educate a mass group of students who could satisfactorily communicate in English with the community of expatriates working in the country. English has since become indispensable in the KSA as it has been adopted as a lingua franca of the globalised world and in the business context of KSA

and has helped to connect the kingdom to other countries for business and development. Students have accepted that English is a lingua franca, important for their future employment and/or for international study (Almegren, 2018).

The integration of English as a school subject in KSA was started by the Saudi government who realized the significance of having English in building KSA as a new nation and in communicating with the world. Five years after the foundation of the Saudi Ministry of Education (MOE) in 1923, the Saudi Arabian government decided to make English the main foreign language to be taught in public schools. A big change in the KSA occurred in 2003 with English being introduced at the primary level in schools. However, as Elyas (2008) noted, the addition of the English language to the primary curriculum was due to international pressure. Aleissa (2017) described that the primary aim of teaching English at the primary school level was to help students attain a standard which would permit them to make use of desired materials in English and enable them to communicate satisfactorily in the written and spoken forms. Furthermore, learning English was seen as an essential tool in spreading Islam to the world. As stated in the curriculum of secondary schools, as early as 1974, it is one of the goals of the Ministry of Education: *To help the pupil gain a reasonable command of English in order to be in a better position to defend Islam against adverse criticism and to participate in the dissemination of Islamic culture* (p. 316). Therefore, the importance of the English language was realised, and schools in Saudi started teaching English at all levels.

While English is now seen as an important subject in Saudi education it is proposed in this research that three essential problems needed to be considered to understand how it is positioned in secondary education. The first problem was whether teachers are confident in using effective strategies for teaching English which is a growing area of research in the region (see, for example, Dimopoulou, 2012 and Rozati, 2017) and whether students had high efficacy to learn English. Teacher efficacy is a self-judgement about one's capabilities to effectively do

things (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Lunenburg, 2011). It was important in the current research to understand EFL teachers' efficacy to teach English as such knowledge could provide some insights as to teachers' preferred teaching approaches and strategies. It was also important to understand students' efficacy to learn English as research suggests that many students leave secondary school without the ability to communicate effectively in English (Al-Shumaimeri (2003).

Additionally, it has been acknowledged that contextual literature and appropriate teaching strategies are very important for effectively teaching both ESL and EFL (Nunan, 2003). In Saudi Arabia, there is a scarcity of locally produced English literature and resources for teaching and learning EFL in the Saudi context. There have been attempts to address this problem (see Section 2.3 for more information on the *Flying High for Saudi Arabia* textbooks); however, most curriculum content is brought in from other contexts and used for teacher training, subsequently influencing the teaching and learning processes in the classroom. The focus for learning appears to be on students developing grammar and vocabulary rather than communication skills (Alshumaimeri & Alzyadi, 2015), which would suggest that both teachers' and students' efficacy in EFL are low. Therefore, the scarcity of local content and contextual teaching practices was the second problem to consider in this research.

The third problem was that English, being a foreign language, is used in a limited fashion in daily life in KSA, hence the classroom becomes the main space where students have an opportunity to use English. In the teaching-learning process EFL teachers are expected to play an important role in facilitating students to learn the new language (Assulaimani, 2019). In KSA schools, specific teachers are appointed and trained for teaching EFL by the education department. After training they are expected to implement appropriate and effective EFL learning in the classroom (Elyas & Ghamdi, 2018; Patalong, 2016) Teachers' attitudes and their teaching practice are seen as crucial in enhancing the opportunities for learning in

particular contexts (Dimopoulou, 2012). However, in KSA, teachers' practices and their views about the teaching of English as a second language have been under researched.

Keeping in view the above problems in teaching and learning English in the KSA, there was a clear need to investigate how teachers view themselves as EFL teachers. It was important to understand how confident teachers feel about teaching English and what their beliefs are about effective teaching strategies to teach EFL. It was also important to understand how receptive and confident students were to learning English. Hence, this research attempted to investigate these areas in order to close the gap in our understanding of EFL in Saudi schools. Before proceeding to discuss the context of research, it is necessary to explain the approach undertaken to the teaching of English in Saudi Arabia.

1.3 ESL or EFL?

Several scholars (e.g., see Freed, 1995; Huebner, 1995) have asserted that there is a perceived difference existing between learning a language as a second language (or SL) and learning it as a foreign language (or FL). English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) is usually taught to students who live in primarily English-speaking countries (Richards, 2022; Freed, 1995; Begum, 2022; Core Languages, n.d.; Freed, 1995; Lake, n.d.). An ESL classroom is found within a country in which English is the dominant language and the students are visitors or immigrants. Such classes often contain mixed nationalities, so students do not speak the same native language or share a common culture but are all there to learn English together. Outside the classroom, students have a specific practical need for the language and a good chance to use it as it is the dominant language of the country. Students have detailed exposure to English-speaking culture every day, though they may have a limited understanding until they have development their English language skills.

English-as-a-Foreign Language (EFL), on the other hand, is a term that describes English taught to students who live in a foreign, non-English speaking nation (Bell, 2011;

Begum, 2022). An example of EFL would be a Saudi student learning English in the KSA. While it might seem that all schools in the KSA would teach EFL, as English is not a dominant or even widely used language in the country, the English language policy from the Ministry of Education (MoE) (2003) describes the process as teaching ESL.

A main concern for teaching English is that ESL and EFL teachers often take a different approach to teaching English to cater to the different needs of ESL and EFL students (Begum, 2022; Bell, 2011). Generally, ESL students have a lot of daily exposure to an English-speaking culture, and so have many opportunities to use the language appropriately within context. In contrast, EFL students are not likely to have the same opportunities to speak or use the language; the teacher in an EFL class might be the only English speaker they have contact with (Alhawsawi, 2013; Alrashidi & Phan, 2015). Outside the classroom, EFL students do not have much exposure to English-speaking culture other than to observe it through a distorted lens, such as TV or music; therefore, for some students, learning English may not hold any obvious practical benefit. Limited opportunities for practicing English can be a barrier for students' development of English and can become a problem in demotivating them to learn English (Alrabai, 2018).

The researcher contends that it is important to acknowledge the differences in the student population (ESL and EFL) because effective lesson planning must take these differences into consideration. From his extensive background as an English teacher in KSA, the researcher suggests that it may be that a lack of clarity will lead teachers to use inappropriate teaching strategies, which may be the cause for the low-level efficacy for English language learning by Saudi students. It has been noted by researchers that teachers tend to default to the use of their established teaching practices or use Arabic to teach English rather than attempting to use innovative approaches to EFL teaching and learning if they do not feel confident in teaching English (Al-Nasser, 2015; Al-Seghayer, 2019). Research has found that teachers who

are not confident to implement innovative approaches (have low teacher-efficacy), avoided using them (Choi & Lee, 2016; Eslami & Fatahi, 2008). This context for teaching and learning leads us to the central problem for exploration in this research: What role does teacher-efficacy play in the teaching of EFL in a secondary school in KSA, and what role does self-efficacy play in students' learning of English? In summary, this thesis used the term EFL as it is an official term used by the MoE (2003) in the KSA, although it needs to be acknowledged that the term ESL is also used interchangeably in government documents in relation to teaching English.

1.4 Context of the Research

The context for this research was the teaching and learning practices of EFL in KSA secondary schools. The subject of teaching and learning English has become a major topic in the past few years because it has been recognised that English has global importance. Al-Seghayer (2012) described that it is necessary for students in KSA to communicate with other people in foreign languages, particularly in English. The MoE (2003) has given English priority for language learning, and it is the only foreign language given this status, because the government recognises that people need to work together and interact globally. A common language would therefore help people to understand and contact each other and attain external knowledge.

According to Khan (2011), the teaching of EFL has always been an arduous task, and in KSA it is serving a very limited but significant purpose in that it is vital for social and technological development. However, Khan (2011) asserted that “despite good overall planning, purposive curriculum, integrated textbooks, qualified teachers, achievement is below the expectations” (Khan, 2011, p. 1248). Despite the long commitment to teaching English in Saudi schools, Alshumaimeri, (2003) found that students often leave secondary school without the ability to carry out a short conversation. Elyas and Al Grigri (2014) elaborated that even after

learning English for so many years, Saudi students have achieved very little in terms of language proficiency, which is a huge loss of time and money.

Different efforts have been made by the government of KSA to enhance the learning opportunities for students in the schools. The current research was conducted against the third phase of the government's so-called Tatweer reform process (MoE, 2003). Tatweer is King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz's Public Education Development Project created to radically alter the Saudi education model, with the view of bringing it in line with the highest international standards (Alyami, 2014, 2016). Prior to the Tatweer reforms, the primary focus for education was on embedding religious and political practices within the curriculum. Education served as the means for the development of Islamic beliefs and knowledge and the students' duty to the political order of the nation.

In 2001, the MoE developed a ten-year plan that sought a change to shift the focus in education towards preparing the individual to operate effectively in a global environment. Education reforms commenced in 2007 and were limited to change in 50 Saudi Arabian secondary schools: 25 boys' schools and 25 girls' schools. In the first phase of Tatweer (from 2007 to 2011) technology was provided to the schools to enable the introduction of modern approaches to learning. Communicative language teaching (CLT) (Elyas & Al-Ghamdi, 2018) was to be one of these new approaches with an emphasis on students learning English communication skills rather than having a focus on learning grammar skills to pass their final English exams. The technology involved the provision of computers to the school, electronic whiteboards, and projectors. The school where this research was conducted was not one of the schools involved in the first phase of Tatweer.

The second phase of Tatweer involved the expansion of the programme to include more schools, and it included the decentralisation of the education system so that principals were responsible in the school, not the MoE. Greater authority was given to the teaching staff who

formed communities of practice to provide support and as a conduit for change. Leadership was distributed (Alyami, 2014). Principals engaged in professional development activities to develop leadership skills, set school achievement goals, develop teacher capacity to ensure that teachers use innovative teaching strategies that replaced a teacher-centred approach, build strong relationships with parents, families and the community, focus on academic excellence, and develop a positive school climate. The project also had a focus on implementing change in EFL teaching and learning (Assulaimani, 2019). Key changes to EFL were the need to construct a high quality EFL curriculum to national pedagogical standards, provide continuous up-to-date training for EFL teachers to support the development of students with skills needed for the 21st century, create teacher networks and professional communities and create online forums to share the latest teaching strategies and resources as well as provide training so teachers would know how to use these resources. The Tatweer reforms diminished the focus of education on upholding Islamic values and the Islamic state. The shift instead was towards developing global expertise using digital media and towards the development of the student as an individual. Such a shift required significant retraining of teachers and school administrators (Elyas & Al-Ghamdi, 2018). To date, \$ 293 million has been allocated for the Tatweer reforms. Rather than being the supreme source of information, teachers were to develop the capability of students and to leverage technology to access the information that they needed (Elyas & Al-Ghamdi, 2018). Thus, reforming teachers' roles from the source of all information to the facilitator of students learning new information has been a key aspect of Tatweer.

The third phase of the Tatweer reform process has been conducted under the Saudi policy *Vision 2030*. The purpose of this phase has been to improve the recruitment process and training for teachers, develop more innovation and creativity in the learning environment, and to improve the curriculum and teaching approaches (Patalong, 2016). Teachers are to engage in online forums in creating opportunities for students to communicate with native English-

speakers and to develop digital resources to assist both teachers and students in the EFL teaching-learning process (Assulaimani, 2019).

As indicated by the Alweeam online bulletin (Alweeam, 2012), the Tatweer project is about creating developed world curricula that can be transferred to the local context of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as well as designing quality training programs and modern global programs, and international accreditation for teachers teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). English has been an important component of these reform efforts. The shift from the grammar translation method (GTM) to the communication language teaching (CLT) method, accompanied by the use of modern technologies are the key to the Tatweer reforms (Al-Shehri, 2020). A further description of both GTM and CLT are given below.

While there was a significant shift in focus as to what and how students should be taught English, the Tatweer also clearly outlined the moral and cultural responsibilities of teachers and schools. The policy acknowledged that English has become one of most widely used languages in the world, so must be taught to prepare students for the resumption of the Muslims' role in human civilization through gaining knowledge in Arts and Science. The policy is displayed in English textbooks for all students with the general objectives for learning English, as prescribed by the MoE (2003) to ensure that students:

1. Develop their intellectual, personal, and professional abilities.
2. Acquire basic language skills to communicate with the speakers of English language.
3. Acquire the linguistic competence required in various life situations.
4. Acquire the linguistic competence required in different professions.
5. Develop their awareness of the importance of English as a means of international communication.
6. Develop positive attitudes toward learning English.

7. Develop the linguistic competence that enables them to be aware of the cultural, economic, and social issues of their society in order to contribute in giving solutions
8. Develop the linguistic competence that enables them, in the future, to present and explain the Islamic concepts and issues, and participate in spreading Islam
9. Develop the linguistic competence that enables them, in the future, to present the culture and civilization of their nation.
10. Benefit from English-speaking nations, in order to enhance the concepts of international cooperation that develop understanding and respect of cultural differences among nations.
11. Acquire the linguistic bases that enable them to participate in transferring the scientific and technological advances of other nations to their nation.
12. Develop the linguistic basis that enables them to present and explain the Islamic concepts and issues and participate in the dissemination of these.

It can be seen from Objectives 8, 9 and 12 that there remains a linkage in learning English as a means to promote Islamic beliefs and understanding internationally. It can also be seen from Objectives 1-3 that there is an expectation that Saudi students will be working in environments where English is the dominant language, which indicates that the learning goals for English through the Tatweer reforms are more aligned with the CLT approach than the grammar translation method (GTM) (Elyas & Al-Ghamdi, 2018).

It is important to note here, however, that the expected shift from GTM to CLT in the early stages of the Tatweer reforms have not occurred (Al-Mukhallafi, 2019). The teaching approach overall has remained outdated with a strong focus on reading and writing (e.g., GTM) (Al-Mukhallafi, 2019; Al-Seghayer, 2015). The English practices recommended by the MoE (2003) have not been transferred into actual classroom practices (Al-Seghayer, 2015) despite one of the foci in the *Vision 2030* policy reform to ensure that this transference does occur. The

impact of this compliance or lack of compliance with the Tatweer reforms was considered in the current research.

While there is growing support for English in Saudi schools, the language is taught through a ready-made curriculum from foreign-written textbooks provided by the KSA MoE (2003). There has been little research on how teachers and students relate to the contexts of these textbooks. In the KSA, the MoE provides the textbook series, *Flying High for Saudi Arabia*, which is published by Macmillan Education (2014). The publishing company provides a pupil's workbook and an audio CD for each student. An aspect of the current research was to consider how these mandated resources were used in EFL classrooms. Another consideration was that most EFL teachers in the KSA are non-native speakers of English (Moskovsky (2018). Alharbi (2015) described that most Saudi teachers prefer to use Arabic to teach English to save time and because it is easier for them to explain concepts in Arabic than in English. Rabab'ah (2005) suggested that many EFL teachers in the KSA do not feel confident in using English and so use Arabic instead. According to Khan (2011), the teaching of EFL has always been an arduous task and in KSA it is serving a very limited but significant purpose in that it is vital for social and technological development. However, Khan also asserted that "despite good overall planning, purposive curriculum, integrated textbooks, and qualified teachers, achievement is below the expectations" (Khan, 2011, p. 1248). In spite of the long commitment to teaching English in Saudi schools, students often leave secondary school without the ability to carry out a short conversation and appear to have achieved very little in terms of English language proficiency.

Another contextual element inherent in the context of EFL in KSA is that students have minimum exposure to English outside their classroom lessons, particularly in regional schools where there are unlikely to be many native English language contexts for learning the language (Al-Qahtani & Al Zumor, 2016; Al-Seghayer, 2019). This lack of opportunities to practice

English outside of school has been described as demotivating for students (Alharbi, 2015; Arabai, 2018). Arabai (2014) suggested that students experience high anxiety while learning English. One reason for this is because they find it difficult to relate to the context of what they are being taught. This is, in part, due to the use of foreign developed learning materials for EFL classrooms and teachers making the content relevant to students. Little research has explored the processes that either help or hinder the teaching and learning of English in Saudi schools. The current research aimed to fill this research gap.

1.5 Purpose of the Research (Aim and Objectives)

Based on the complexities of teaching and learning English, as described above, this qualitative study explored the teacher-efficacy of EFL teachers and the self-efficacy of EFL learners within the context of teaching and learning English in the KSA. The aim of the research was to understand the perceptions of EFL teachers in order to understand how their confidence to teach English affects their pedagogy in the classroom – which in turn affects students' efficacy in learning English. In particular, the research explored teacher-efficacy of teaching practices and what teachers view as possible enablers and barriers affecting their pedagogy for teaching EFL. The study also examined the views of learning English from students to see if there is a fit or a mismatch between teaching and learning. An objective of the study was to provide contextual examples of teaching practices in ESL from the local context that may be significant for the future policy making about teaching English and discern what the most effective practices of teacher education for EFL in the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia might be. The aims and objectives of the research are addressed in the research questions which are provided in the following section.

1.6 Research Questions

Main Question: *What factors contribute to the teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia?*

The research sub-questions for this chapter are:

- (a) What resources enable or hinder EFL teaching and learning in KSA classrooms?
- (b) What are the pedagogical practices that enable EFL teachers' efficacy within the context of schools in Saudi Arabia?
- (c) What pedagogical practices inhibit EFL teachers' efficacy?
- (d) What factors enable or hinder EFL students' efficacy to learn English effectively in the KSA?

1.7 Significance of the study

Saudi EFL teachers use audio-lingual, grammar-translation as the common method of teaching English, where the transfer of knowledge is fully controlled by the teacher and where EFL students are rarely involved in their classrooms beyond being passive recipients of content (Elyas & Picard, 2010; Fareh, 2010; Khan, 2011a, 2012; Natsir & Sanjaya, 2014).

The focus is on students' reading and writing skills with a teacher-delivery method and there are few interactions between students. The grammar-translation method (GTM) was first used to teach the classical languages, Latin and Greek (Chastain, 1988). However, though it was and still is in widespread use in KSA and other countries where English is a foreign language, the GTM is not advocated by all (Abduh & Algouzi, 2020; Albousaif, 2011; Alhawsawi, 2013; Mahmoud, 2012; MoE, 2003; Richards and Rodgers, 2014).

Fareh (2010) described that there are some obstacles that Arab learners (e.g., Saudi EFL students) may encounter in EFL learning; two of these are pedagogical approaches not

conducive for students to develop communication skills in English (e.g., GTM), and the lack of exposure to English. This view has been shared widely in the EFL community (Abduh & Algouzi, 2020; Albousaif, 2011; Alhawsawi, 2013; Alsaif & Milton, 2012; Alshahrani, 2016; Elyas & Picard, 2010; Fareh, 2010; Khan, 2011b, 2012; Khan, 2011). Other researchers have suggested that the continuation of an examination and assessment system that is orientated completely to grammar, historical and cultural influences, and the lack of teacher training have all contributed to the continuation of GMT as the dominant instructional method (Abduh & Algouzi, 2020; Albousaif, 2011; Alsaif & Milton, 2012). This approach to teaching and learning leads students to underestimate their own capabilities to learn English (Natsir & Sanjaya, 2014) and creates a disincentive for them to learn. However, while it seems ideal that only English should be taught in a EFL class, research (Copeland & Neokleous, 2011; Zulfikar, 2018) has found that the judicious use of a students' first language (L1) to explain new concepts, new vocabulary and new learning processes helps to support students learning a second language (L2).

The other approach in EFL teaching and learning is the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach (Nunan, 1991; Natsir & Sanjaya, 2014). This approach has a focus on helping students develop communication skills in the target language. In this approach, teachers use in-class conversations between the teacher and students and students with students, use authentic texts in the target language and encourage the use of the target language (English) both in class and outside of class. Other strategies used might include role plays, students interviewing each other, and group work where students can share their ideas and opinions. It should be noted that researchers (Choi & Lee, 2016; Hoang, 2018) have found that the GTM and CLT approaches are not mutually exclusive and that effective teachers may use one or the other at different times for different purposes. The GTM approach is teacher-centred while the CLT approach is student-centred. So, teachers who use both approaches for different reasons

could be providing students with greater access to learning English. The movement from GTM to CLT is part of the MoE's reform movement so it was important in the current research to understand what kind of EFL teaching and learning is happening in Saudi secondary classrooms and where further reforms need to happen.

1.8 Research Method

This research used a qualitative case study method. When teacher and student efficacy first gained interest for research worldwide it was mainly measured using the Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) teacher-efficacy scale or one of the many derivatives of this scale. Lately, however, there has been a movement away from a quantitative measure of teacher-efficacy to a qualitative interpretation, as researchers indicated a need to consider the impact of culture and context on efficacy (Choi & Lee, 2016; Hoang, 2018; Khanshan & Yousefi, 2020). As a teacher in KSA, the researcher acknowledges that it is impossible to separate the culture and religion from education in KSA; therefore, I chose to conduct this research through a qualitative methodology as my purpose is to gain the perceptions of both EFL teachers and their students about their experiences in the EFL classroom. Qualitative data collection was deemed the best fit for gaining the perspectives of the EFL teachers and students. It was through understanding teachers' and students' beliefs that their efficacy about EFL could be gained. Without such understanding, we cannot, as a profession, progress to improve EFL experiences in the Saudi classroom. This depth of understanding could not, I believe, be gained through a quantitative approach to the research. It must be done through interviews and observations connected to real world situations in Saudi classrooms.

The participants of this study were three EFL secondary school teachers, the principal of the school and 21 EFL students at the same school located in the AlQunfudhah district in Makkah AlMukarmah state, Saudi Arabia. There were four elements in the data collection. These were: document analysis, classroom observations, teacher individual interviews and

students' focus group interviews. The research design and methods are described in more depth in Chapter 4 of this thesis. It should be noted that I returned to KSA to collect data for this research at the beginning of 2020. At this time the COVID-19 pandemic was just overtaking the world. I had intended to collect data from three different school sites but when I learned that Australia was going to close its borders and not allow people back into the country after a certain date I had to quickly end my time in KSA and return to Australia to continue my PhD study. In addition, after I returned to Australia the schools in KSA were put into lockdown and I was not able to gather further data. Therefore, I was not able to collect the large data samples that I had originally planned. However, I feel that the data I have collected provides a realistic portrayal of EFL teaching and learning in KSA schools. However, as stated above, I was able to observe teaching and learning in EFL classrooms and did conduct one-on-one interviews with the teachers and principals as well as focus group interviews with the students. These data provided a rich understanding of how participants in the teaching and learning of EFL in Saudi schools was occurring which could not have been done with the same depth through gathering quantitative survey data.

1.9 Positioning the Researcher

This researcher has over ten years' experience as an EFL teacher and supervisor of teachers in KSA. In my experience as an EFL teacher in the KSA, I have found that the learning materials that are taken from other contexts (e.g., USA and UK) and used during teacher education are not always meaningful for Saudi teachers to help them understand the real teaching and learning issues involved in teaching EFL in Saudi schools. My observations and experiences align with those found in the literature (see Alshumaimeri & Alzyahi, 2015; Rahman & Alhaison, 2013) where it has been found that the content of textbooks written in the USA or Great Britain is not relevant to the Saudi context. With the introduction of the Tatweer reforms, which encourages Saudi textbook writers to produce Saudi context-specific resources,

it is important to understand how EFL teachers are using these resources and how (or if) these new resources make a difference for EFL learners in Saudi classes. As an EFL practitioner this understanding is important to me and my profession. English teachers face challenges in relating to the examples taken from other contexts during their teaching processes. Indeed, there is much evidence of resistance in EFL teaching and learning in Saudi classrooms reported in the literature (Al Dameg, 2011; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). Therefore, it was important for the current researcher to gain a clear understanding if this trend continues in light of the new reforms for EFL teaching and learning.

According to Alrabai (2014), Saudi learners experience moderate to high levels of anxiety while learning English. He concluded that less relevant contextual resources and teaching strategies are the main reasons that increase the anxiety levels of English learners, and as a result, teaching and learning processes are negatively affected. Teaching EFL is highly challenging, not only to the students but also to the highly trained teachers who have taught EFL in KSA for several years. I have been teaching EFL for ten years. Also, I have been working as an English language supervisor in the Educational Department in Al-Qunfudhah. During these times, I have found and noted a number of challenges for both students and teachers, including many which are described above. As a trained EFL teacher and supervisor it has been unsettling for me to know that there is training and support for teachers to improve and excel in this area but it seems these opportunities may be underutilised. As a result students do not receive the high quality EFL learning experiences that they should and is because of these challenges that the proposed research was needed.

1.10 Thesis Outline

Chapter One has provided an outline of the context of teaching and learning EFL in Saudi schools. In this chapter the problems in this area of teaching and learning were identified, with

a clearly stated purpose to explore this area through the research questions posed. The researcher has also positioned himself as a Saudi educator of English.

Chapter Two provides a review of the literature with specific reference to the role of context (culture and identity) in teaching and learning English as a foreign language, as well as the pedagogical practices that may either enable or inhibit EFL teaching.

Chapter Three describes the Conceptual Framework for the research: the triadic reciprocal causation model. The research explored EFL teaching through the specific lens of self-efficacy, with particular reference to teachers' self-efficacy (teacher-efficacy) to teach English in Saudi schools and students' self-efficacy to learn English.

Chapter Four outlines the Research Design, which was a qualitative case study design. Data collection techniques included semi-structured individual interviews with teachers and the school principal, focus group interviews with students, observations in Saudi classrooms and a document review of EFL resources (e.g., textbooks) used.

Chapter Five provides the data analysis from the EFL teachers' and the principal's data. The data were analysed through the framework of the triadic reciprocal causation model, with reference to the role of efficacy in teaching and learning English in KSA classrooms.

Chapter Six is divided into two sections. The first section provides the data analysis from EFL students' perspectives. The second section provides an analysis of the teaching and learning resources used in the observed EFL classrooms.

Chapter Seven provides the conclusion of the research with recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research was to explore the teaching and learning practices of English-as-a-foreign language (EFL) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). The perceptions of teachers and students about their experiences of EFL in Saudi classrooms was gathered. It was proposed that teachers' and students' efficacy about EFL contributed to their levels of interest and engagement in English language learning.

This chapter provides background information from the relevant literature on the various factors that contribute to the teaching and learning of EFL in Saudi classrooms. The chapter begins by describing elements of teaching policy that underpin EFL teaching practices (Section 2.2). Education policy strongly determines what will be taught in Saudi classrooms and, in some instances, how it is taught, so it is important to establish some of the conditions for teaching and learning EFL before exploring the challenges teachers might meet in teaching EFL and that learners may encounter in learning English. Section 2.3 describes some of the challenges that government mandated resources for EFL present. As described in Chapter 1, teachers in KSA have little say in the curriculum and/or teaching resources for EFL. Section 2.4 describes the context for EFL teaching and learning, including culture and religious beliefs and the role of Arab identity for English language learners. Section 2.5 looks specifically at the role of EFL teachers and how perceptions of these roles determine teachers' motivation to teach English. Section 2.6 examines the teaching strategies used in EFL classrooms, with Section 2.7 describing learners' needs and interest in learning English. A summary of the literature is presented in Section 2.8 of this chapter.

2.2 Teaching policies underpinning practices for EFL in Saudi Arabia

Elyas and Badawood (2016) presented a discourse analysis on a range of educational policies that have been pursued in KSA to explain why English is now important in schools. They began the paper with a review of general education policy considerations before moving onto EFL specific policy. In general education policy pre-2001, there was a strong focus on the centrality of the Islamic religion in every facet of life, including education. Elyas and Badawood suggested that this strong focus on Islamic religion, traditions, and values, with a strong emphasis on education for boys and little on education for girls, has possibly created difficulties for advocates of English in the Saudi curriculum. Traditionalists and those who are deeply religious, they described, would have little interest in introducing a new language and a new cultural perspective into the classroom. The teaching of EFL pre-2000 was for English to be used as a tool to spread the beliefs of the Islamic state, to be used for the acquisition and transfer of knowledge, particularly modern-day scientific knowledge, and to spread understanding of the Islamic religion around the world.

A radical change in EFL came in KSA after the event of 9/11 (the bombing of the twin towers of the Trade centre in New York, 2001). After this event, the Saudi government and the society at large gained more interest in the role of English in the world and therefore a real shift in teaching as well as learning English has occurred (Al-Seghayer, 2012). English has now become the most influential foreign language in KSA. The MoE (2002, 2003) in KSA has clearly outlined that a main objective of teaching English in secondary schools is to ensure that the community can achieve a standard which will allow citizens to communicate efficiently in both oral and written English. These objectives have set up a fundamental shift in reforming Saudi education (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020). It is thought that through their interactions with non-Arabic speaking people, the English-speaking Saudi population will be able to present

Islamic principles and interpret Islamic knowledge to assist English speakers who are interested in knowing about Islam, thus eradicating prevailing mistaken beliefs.

Post-2000 the Saudi government introduced Tatweer (see Chapter 1 for background information on Tatweer) which led to the development of an EFL curriculum that anticipated students would study English from an early age. In the *General Objectives of Teaching English (English Version)* (MoE, General Director of Curriculum, 2002), for example, the policy aims included development of students' intellectual, personal, and professional communication abilities. Here, there is a broader expectation for the development of English language learners, but the policy also continues to emphasise the need to spread the Islamic culture to the world, only now in English as well as in Arabic. Al-Seghayer (2012) revealed that "*article 50 of the Educational Policy states that: every student should learn at least one foreign language so that they can conveniently interact with people from other countries and culture and in doing so spreading the message of Islam and serving humanity* (<https://saudigazette.com.sa/article/24861>). According to Al-Seghayer (2012), it is a priority for students in Saudi schools to be able to communicate fluently with other people in foreign languages, like English, to learn how to share a range of ideas with others in the world, but also to do business and share the teachings of Islam with the world. Rahman and Alhaisoni (2013) described that the ultimate purpose of the government policy for teaching and learning EFL in KSA was to train students to understand and spread the values and ideals of Islam and to become contributing members of Saudi society. The government objectives for the teaching and learning of English was for students to develop adequate language skills and attitudes towards English to participate effectively in the international community, to develop the skills that will help in international cooperation and understanding of different cultures and to spread the values and beliefs of Islam to the world. Karmani and Pennycook (2005) suggested that English has become the second language in the country and, in being so, aligns with many

other countries in the world where English is the lingua franca. However, while many countries that have English as a second language because of British colonialism, KSA was not colonised by the English or any other country. However, it still needs to use the lingua franca of the world (English) to consider itself as a participant within the global community.

Rahman and Alhaisoni (2013) described that with the expansion of EFL in Saudi schools the government has established various committees and bodies to develop appropriate curriculum and resources to teach English. However, these authors have also stated that despite several years of teaching EFL, many students leave secondary school with little English language proficiency. These authors cite challenges to teaching and learning EFL and consider whether the curriculum is clear in its aims and objectives. They describe that the challenges of government mandated textbooks and other resources is that they fail to meet learners' needs. Another challenge is that many EFL teachers are not properly trained to teach EFL and/or do not speak competent English themselves and so are not qualified to teach a class of Saudi students English. These challenges are explored in more depth in this chapter.

Mitchell and Alfuriah (2017) described the English language initiatives from 2013-2015 resulting from the recommendations from the Tatweer reforms. Key reforms included an association with international publishers to develop EFL textbooks and resources, and the development of a standardised national curriculum that adheres to the Saudi culture and principles. Rather than importing textbooks, these resources are printed in the Kingdom, and this practice has improved the efficiency and logistics of resource distribution. Professional development seminars and workshops have been given to train ELF teachers on the effective use of the textbooks and resources, but there are still challenges to be met.

2.3 Challenges in EFL Teaching and Learning Resources

An aim of the current research was to explore what challenges EFL teachers and students faced in Saudi classrooms. It was contented that challenges to teaching and learning

affected the efficacy of teachers to teach EFL and for students to learn English. This section explores these challenges as they are described in the literature.

One challenge was the lack of context specific EFL material for teaching and learning EFL. As a global language, English is taught in KSA through a ready-made curriculum in the form of textbooks made available by the Saudi Arabia Ministry of Education (MoE, 2003). The MoE provides teachers and learners a three-part material package which includes: a textbook, a workbook for students, and a teaching manual for the teacher. The preferred textbook at the secondary school level at the time of writing this thesis was *Flying High for Saudi Arabia*. As described above, the ideal of the curriculum is to not only to teach English but to reflect the beliefs, customs, values, and traditions of the Saudi Arabian community. A key goal is to ensure that the English program develops students' awareness 'of the importance of English as a means of international communication' (MoE, 2002, p. 122). In EFL teaching and learning, the contextual teaching practices in local cultures are viewed as having an important place among other important factors in enhancing the learning of English. However, the mandated textbooks and accompanying resources have been criticised for being focused on building language skills such as grammar and vocabulary rather than communication skills for real life situations (Alshumaimeri & Alzyadi, 2015), and the context for building these skills are in other cultures (British or American) rather than Saudi. Therefore, the content of the material is not relevant to the lives of Saudi students. Teaching local content that students can relate to was a problem cited in the literature because most of the textbooks and workbooks used during English teacher training and in the classrooms in the KSA are from other contexts, particularly from English speaking countries such as the UK and USA. Therefore, students are learning about foreign cultures in a foreign language in spite of the materials being produced in KSA (Alharbi, 2014, 2015, 2018). In addition, these authors found that while the materials have the potential to promote genuine communications skills, the use of these textbooks and resources are generally

beyond the reading comprehension levels of the students, and, as a result, do not present real life authentic texts for understanding how to communicate effectively in English. Despite English being taught for decades in schools in the KSA, little research has explored how the practices of teaching English through textbooks that do not reflect the local context affects students' interest and engagement (efficacy) to learn English in the classroom (Zohoorian & Baghban, 2011). The current research explored this area by asking teachers and students what impact such resources have on their teaching and learning in English.

A key aim of the research was to explore teachers' and students' efficacy in Saudi EFL classrooms. As described above, the focus of teaching with the prescribed textbooks has been on grammar development, which is largely language taught without a context for learning (Mitchell & Alfuriah, 2017). The new Tatweer reforms mandate that EFL teachers employ more activity-based learning approaches (MoE, 2003). The government is providing training for teachers on how to adjust their pedagogy to meet the challenges of this new approach to teaching but little research to date has asked teachers how they are managing and how confident they are in meeting these new reforms.

Resources, such as textbooks, are mandated by the higher powers in the government. The research of Alshumaimeri and Alzyadi (2015) suggested that textbooks are often a 'comfort zone' for teachers that restrict their exploration of other teaching approaches. Therefore, teachers feel comfortable (more efficacious) limiting learning to the testing and evaluation regimes taught out of prescribed textbooks. In the classroom, it is the teacher who becomes the authoritarian figure complying with the requirements of the school system. This is not a surprising finding when it is known that, when teachers do not have proper training to be teachers, they fall back on what they know about schooling. For most teachers this would have been an approach where the teacher was in full control of the class (Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013). Anecdotally, in my experience as an EFL teacher and teacher trainer, literature and

resources that were taken from other contexts and used during teacher education were sometimes not meaningful for teachers to understand the real teaching and learning issues for teaching English. Therefore, it can be noted that English teachers face challenges in relating to the examples taken from other contexts during their teaching process. Such challenges affect the quality of teaching and learning processes. It was proposed in this research that while teachers might feel efficacious to teach within their 'comfort zones' using a traditional pedagogy, they feel less efficacy in meeting the expectations of the new reforms for teaching and learning EFL. There has been little research that has explored this area of EFL teaching and learning. The current research proposed to address this gap in our knowledge.

Adding to the complexities of meeting the new reforms for teaching EFL is the problem that teachers in KSA have a minimal role in designing the curriculum, and most are inexperienced on how to implement the curriculum of EFL. According to Khan (2011, p. 1248), "pedagogues and language masters have different views regarding the teaching/learning of English". They explained that while some teachers were of the opinion that the teaching of English can be done only if we translate the target language into the mother-tongue, others believe that English should be taught the same way as the first language, with a focus on developing language acquisition skills. This observation has been supported by other researchers (see Copeland & Neokleous, 2011; Zulfikar, 2018). Khan (2011) identified that another school of thought believes that teaching words, meaning, structure, and grammar, are more important than the skills of listening, reading, writing, and speaking. These views suggest that teacher might have high efficacy if they are allowed to continue to teach in ways most familiar to them (e.g., grammar translation). With the new Tatweer reforms working their way through the system, we do not yet have a clear understanding on the commitment EFL teachers have made to meet these reforms and, so we do not have a clear understanding of their efficacy in this area. It was important in this research to explore the different approaches teachers take

in teaching English, as their approaches have a bearing on students' interests in learning English, comprehending the culture reflected in textbooks, and being able to relate what they have learned back to their own context. It is contended that the teachers' approaches to teaching is dependent in some ways on their efficacy to teach which, in turn, affects the efficacy of students to learn.

Mitchell and Alfuriah (2017) conducted research using two different surveys. The first survey was focused on student attainment levels and was completed by 1200 teachers in government-run schools. The finding indicated that while over 90% of teachers reported using a variety of teaching strategies to motivate learners, only slightly more than 40% of students were achieving success at their grade level. Two contributing factors to low levels of student achievement were that, first, most students did not complete homework and did not access information beyond the classroom, and second, that more than 65% of teachers surveyed believed that students need more exposure to English to become more proficient in the language. These findings indicated that teachers adopted a stance of helplessness (low efficacy) in that they could not force students to use English outside the classroom or compel them to complete their homework if families did not value this aspect of their children's learning. In their second survey, Mitchell and Alfuriah (2017) had 2500 teachers respond to questions related to what more could be done to improve EFL in Saudi classrooms. A main priority for teachers was that they felt they needed more proficiency in English to teach EFL (expressing low efficacy in their English language proficiency), as well as more professional development to effectively use the prescribed textbooks and resources that students can relate to and be more motivated to learn. These findings indicated that teachers were aware of their role in limiting opportunities to encourage students to learn more English. If teachers have limited proficiency in English, they are likely to teach only what they feel confident in, which is focusing on strict

grammar rules and vocabulary. This aspect of teacher efficacy was explored in the current research.

The following section provides a background for teaching and learning EFL within the Saudi context. It considers EFL within the deeply held beliefs for the need to preserve Saudi culture and identity while also incorporating an understanding of the place for English language teaching and learning to occur in the country. As one of the challenges facing EFL teachers and students in the lack of opportunity to use English outside the classroom, it is important to understand how this challenge might affect the teaching and learning of EFL in Saudi classrooms.

2.4 Role of Culture and Identity in Learning

While there has been considerable research done in the area of EFL it is only recently that KSA has done work in this area. Therefore, it is important to understand the early thinking and research in EFL to better understand the pedagogical approaches taken by EFL teachers in Saudi schools today. Reichelt (2005) argued that teaching English in a non-English dominant context is influenced by multiple factors. In his study conducted in Poland, Reichelt interviewed 13 EFL teachers about the challenges to teaching writing in English to students and observed 10 classrooms where writing in English was the focus. As with studies done about teaching EFL in Saudi schools, Reichelt found that the interest in learning English has grown with the dominance of English in the world. As with the Saudi government, the education system in Poland has become standardised to ensure that a consistent quality of EFL teaching and learning is achieved throughout the country. However, because the focus for EFL is relatively new, as in KSA, there is a lack of trained and qualified English language teachers to meet the needs of the government and the population.

Al-Qahtani and Al Zumor (2016) stated that the place and use of English in a society as well as the instructional practices and the local attitudes towards English influence the

instructional practices of EFL. If, for example, people in the social context (e.g., parents, other family, and community members) convey that English is not a highly regarded skill to learn, it will not be a highly regarded subject by students to learn and for teachers to teach. Language teaching is affected by and affects the socio-political contexts where it is taught. Kramsch (1993) found in the early years of EFL research that ideologies and socio-cultural contexts are not static but are highly influential. People and places affect learning. When learning English is not valued as an achievement in a society, this attitude can have a negative effect on language teaching and learning.

Resistance to teaching and learning English in Saudi schools is well documented (Al Dameg, 2011; Alrashidi & Phan, 2010; Al-Seghayer, 2014; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). Such resistance results from the cultural identity that is preferred in the Saudi context and, as has been reported, most Saudis do not want to change. Alrashidi and Phan (2015), for example, described the societal concern that the 'spread of English use in the country might undermine the local culture, customs, and identity' (p. 40). Parents who see English as a foreign trait that could easily erode Saudi culture and customs pass these negative concerns on to their children, which contributes to demotivating some students' attempts to learn English. As Clarke (2009) observed, "the processes of identity formation are intimately related to the discourses and the communities that we work within" (p. 187). Therefore, the messages conveyed by parents to their children have a profound effect. In describing Saudi identity, Nevo indicated that "the collective identity of most Muslim Arabs of the Middle East incorporates three elements: the Islamic, the Arab and in the narrow, local sense, the national (which still consists of traditional factors such as tribe, extended family or geographical region)" (Nevo, 1998, p. 34). The foreignness of English does not fit into this vision.

Ochsenwald (1981) also described that the Saudi identity is more inclined to be religious rather than national, as the population of KSA is predominantly Muslim, with Islam

the official religion, and these factors have dominance over all aspects of culture, beliefs, and customs. In addition, Islam is central to the Saudi education system. Al-Haq and Smadi (1996) described that there is a two-pronged definition of national identity, which, in KSA, is nationalism at the national level, and nationalism at the Arab level. In the whole world, Saudi Arabia is among the few countries that has followed and adhered to their Islamic religion as well as their language and heritage in education and in everyday life. Individuals in the KSA are sensitive to their cultures and thus follow all Islamic rules to the letter. This approach to culture, language and religion has an impact on EFL teaching and learning in KSA.

Ahmad (2015) gathered data from over 1000 respondents, including EFL students, teachers, parents, and journalists to determine what traditional socio-cultural barriers affected EFL learning. An initial finding was that the traditional views of Saudi culture over English strongly influenced stakeholders to see English as an important subject to be taught in schools. A traditional view from parents in the study was that Arabic is seen as a 'divine' language closely aligned to Saudi culture, whereas English is not a divine language and so has less importance in Saudi culture. Shah et al. (2013) have also identified that EFL learning in the KSA is greatly influenced by the religious and conservative structures of society. It is through knowing and understanding Arabic that people gain prestige and prosperity. However, parents in Ahmad's (2015) study who were educated did not make this distinction but saw English as a means to gain prestige and prosperity in a global world. It was found in this study that the belief Saudi parents had that learning English is not a priority resulted in a lack of motivation for students to apply their learning in this area. In other words, parents' lack of ambition for their children to gain competency in English for their future learning and careers resulted in students' lack of motivation to learn English. Home attitudes, then, created a barrier for student learning of English.

Al-Qahtani and Al Zumor (2016) surveyed 100 parents at a primary school with varying levels of English language proficiency from poor (6%), to intermediate (46.3%) to advanced (32%) and found that there was a cultural concern that learning English would interfere with children's Arabic language learning. However, 67% indicated that learning English was necessary, and that children should begin learning English at an early age (between 4-5 years old). The majority of parents held generally positive views about their children learning English and this was a motivator for the school (and teachers) to provide a strong focus on teaching English. It should be noted also that this study was conducted in a private bilingual school of Arabic and English so these results would not be generalisable across government schools. What the study does convey, though, is that Saudi parents have a strong influence on the teaching and learning of English.

The relationship between a language learner and social context is a complex phenomenon. Darwin and Norton (2015) and Grave (2000) have stated that society needs to refine the lens through which second language acquisition is seen, and that language policy makers and teachers should examine the context in which language learning and teaching takes place. Similarly, Trofimovich and Turursva (2015) asserted that language learning is influenced by how a learner interprets cultural aspects of the language being taught. The fear of losing one's culture and identity can sometimes hinder the process of learning a foreign language. This fear can be passed on to students by their parents and by teachers who share similar concerns. Of particular interest in the current study was the teaching experiences of non-native English language teachers who are teaching English in a Saudi context to determine which aspects of these learning environments have an impact on their teaching practices and teacher efficacy, as well as the impact these have on students' efficacy as EFL learners.

As noted by Hamers et al. (2000), when one is learning a new language, one should understand the culture as well the roots of that language, as these eventually will affect the

learning of that language. They describe that language learning cannot be studied in isolation but must be understood within the cultural context of that learning. In their research, Hamers et al. (2000) found that people use language as a tool to internalize culture. Culture is generally defined as beliefs, values and customs shared by a group of people. Therefore, if there is a social belief that a language is important, it will be prioritised. If, on the other hand, the language is not seen as important, it will not be prioritised as important for children to learn.

According to Celce-Murcia (2001), culture can be seen in body language, gestures, concepts of time, hospitality customs, expressions of friendliness and, of course, in language. Understanding the need to include a foreign language into a culture takes time to evolve in thinking and acceptance, and sometimes it is due to the inevitability of the process. As English has now become a dominant language in the world, non-English speaking cultures need to consider its utility for them and their society. Culture has been identified as one of the many factors that affect EFL learning in Saudi Arabia (Nouraldeen & Elyas, 2014). These authors argued that, owing to the fact that Saudi Arabia was never colonised, the lack of foreign influence of European countries has led to the Saudi community publicly refusing to accept learning the English language when it was first introduced. However, as Alrashidi and Phan (2010) described, it has become more difficult for countries to remain isolated in today's world. The internet makes it possible for people to communicate across geographic borders, but that process is only possible if people share a common language. In the vast majority of instances worldwide this common language (*lingua franca*) is English.

Cultural values are important factors that also affect the process of decision making about teaching and learning preferences for EFL. Cultural values help to enhance collaboration among students, and at the same time, these strategies are helpful for developing their language skills. A potential problem is that education in KSA generally takes a traditional approach, where it is largely teacher-centred with students taking a passive role in the class (Al-Johani,

2009; Alrashidi & Phan, 2010; Shah et al., 2013). Teachers express concern that imposing Western style teaching and learning approaches may have a negative impact on students' cultural awareness and the development of cultural value, particularly to KSA. As described earlier in this thesis, the government of Saudi Arabia was reluctant to include teaching English at elementary schools because of their belief that learning English may affect a students' learning of Arabic (Alrashidi & Phan, 2010), and it was important in the current study to determine if these traditional views continue today. Remaining a distinct culture and adhering to the traditional value system is dependent on students speaking Arabic. It is only since recent events have occurred that the government has changed its approach where it is seen that Saudi students are able to learn both English and Arabic while also maintaining the cultural and social values of KSA.

Aldossari (2018) suggested that EFL teachers adopt a conservative and cautious approach as they try to take in the need to teach English but also take into account the cultural context for students. In doing so, they tend to resist using Western-style teaching practices and instead adhere to their traditional approaches to preserve cultural values. According to Al-Johani (2009), in a traditional EFL class in KSA, teachers spend most of the time either explaining the items of the new lesson verbally, and in many instances in Arabic, or writing on the board. In these classes, the role of the students is to copy the work from the board. When this is the case, students do not have an opportunity to learn and practice English (Mojavezi & Tamiz, 2012) or to explore how English works within an English-speaking context. The teacher takes on a custodial orientation to teaching which compromises not only language learning but, also, acting as a custodian of Arabic culture. However, it is not clear if teachers adopt this approach to preserve culture and cultural values or whether it is because of their limited English language proficiency.

Language is related to culture through several perspectives, as acknowledged by Kramersch & Widdowson (1998) and others (see for example, Elyas & Picard, 2010; Norton, 2013). Firstly, language helps to express cultural facts, ideas, and events through words which reflect people's attitudes, beliefs, and points of view. Secondly, language covers cultural reality. Voice, accent, conversational style, gestures, and facial expressions use different cultural modes to communicate information. Lastly, people express their language as a symbol of their cultural identity (Vygotsky, 1978). Elyas & Picard (2010) strongly believed that the teaching and learning of languages has a moral and ethical influence on a society. Norton (2013) suggested that identity goes beyond a person's relationship to the world adding that it has an impact on "...how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (p. 45). These different aspects of culture are represented in the many forms and branches of identity. An anomaly in relation to learning English for the KSA is that every year more than 11 million pilgrims from around the world visit Medina and Mecca. Language is a key tool of communication. Communicating to visitors only in Arabic would not be effective due to the fact that not all Muslims speak Arabic. Consequently, English has been found to be the key language of communication for pilgrims. The Saudi Arabian people are also able to interact with people from other regions, such as the West, through English. In brief, the learning of English takes precedence in present day KSA as a mode to advocate religion and, through it, identity.

According to Trofimovich and Turuseva (2015) some sociopsychological factors that affect language development include social status, political beliefs, learner background, and (un)willingness to sound like a native speaker. These factors have had an impact on and are impacted by identity. Identity can be individual within a society or can be a collective representation of a people. Identity is viewed as a social construct which refers to those dimensions of an individual that determine relations or memberships to his/her group or

community (Darvin and Norton, 2015; Deaux & Martin, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978). However, Norton (2013) stressed that identity is not only a person's relationship to the world, but, rather, as that relationship is constructed across time and space, it also leads a person to understand the possibilities for the future. According to Foucault (1986) there is no given self or identity, rather identity is constructed through a complex process of negotiation between the self and rules of the game in the society or institution. Identity is developed within self and is created in a context or historical and institutional context where it is formed by the practices and beliefs. Foucault (1991) is of the view that identity is not static; rather it changes and refines itself through discipline in a context where individuals are self-responsible. In this process the subject tries to seek positive meaning to build up their selfhood through communication between themselves and society. In the current research, the impact of learning a foreign language on developing identity was a focus for study. It was important to gain some understanding about the impact traditional Saudi culture had on EFL teaching and learning and what impact the global culture around EFL had on teaching and learning.

Pandey (2012) cautioned that every EFL situation has its own cultural and contextual dynamics, therefore, some standardised teaching approaches may not be fit for all students or teachers. The classroom dynamic has a profound effect on teaching and learning, and these dynamics are created by the teachers and students in the class. If teachers do not create a culturally relevant curriculum for student learning, students may become demotivated to learn, or their learning may not achieve as high a standard as it could. This follows the research by Richards and Lockhart (1994) who observed that, "there are often cultural differences between the belief systems of learners from different cultural backgrounds" (p.56), so what might be relevant for EFL learners in other countries might not be relevant in Saudi culture, and teachers need to keep this in mind when creating and delivering an EFL curriculum. It is important to

now consider in more detail what the role of an EFL teacher is conceived to be in a Saudi classroom.

2.5 The Role of a Teacher

Key to this research is understanding the role of teacher' efficacy to teach EFL in Saudi classrooms. As indicated already, language learners could encounter difficulties in communicating in the target language because the standard approach to language teaching does not correspond to the context of the target culture. Pandey (2012) recommended that in order to develop and identify relevant and effective teaching strategies it is important to investigate the teaching practices of EFL teachers in specific contexts or societies. As has been described already, when teachers feel confident in their pedagogy they have high efficacy, but when they are uncertain about their pedagogy they experience low efficacy (Bandura, 1977). Pajares (2002) identified that both high and low efficacy are predictors of actions taken so it can be suggested that when teachers have high efficacy they feel confident that they can meet the challenges of the classroom. However, if they have low efficacy, they lack that confidence and will take actions that work best for them in that situation, although it may not be the most conducive for effective student learning. Of importance in this section is understanding how Saudi culture and identity may influence teachers' decisions on their approach to teaching EFL in the classroom.

Alshahrani (2016) described that KSA is characterised by a rich and traditional Islamic culture with hierarchical notions of power that distances teachers and learners. Teachers are held in high esteem and the relationship between a teacher and a student is highly formal with no classroom interaction between the teacher and learners other than the teacher directing students on the content to learn. Therefore, the classroom discourse is most often unidirectional, from teacher to students. However, scholars have observed that teachers' dominance in the classroom is a factor that results in widespread underachievement in learning

English (Ahmad 2014; Alrabai 2014, 2017; Alrashidi & Phan 2015; Fareh 2010; Rajab 2013). Learners in this scenario assume a passive role in learning and this makes their participation in class low. So, while the teacher may feel confident to adopt a traditional role to teach English, it would appear that this approach is not supportive of students learning English.

In early research, Al-Asmari (2008), found that although teachers were aware of language and culture being intertwined, the focus on target culture in “language teaching was found (to be) minimal, incidental and inconsistent” (p.300) in EFL classrooms. This finding suggests that teachers were not placing value on the nexus between culture and language and so did not include this kind of information to students during lessons. It may be that teachers did not know about the different cultures conveyed in the textbook scenarios so would not be able to describe the connections between language and culture. The findings concluded that if EFL teachers did not fully understand the foreign culture of the language (EFL) as conveyed in prescribed textbooks they did not include this aspect of language in their lessons which suggest teachers had low efficacy in relation to incorporating cultural information into their lessons. As a result, students were not provided with a real-world context for learning English, which played a part in demotivating them to want to learn this subject. Al-Asmari’s (2008) work suggested that the subtle nuances of culture and language play a significant role in how students respond to teaching approaches. Traditionally, English has not influenced Saudi culture and religion (Richards & Lockhart, 1994), and this seems to have a bearing on teachers’ decision to include an understanding of culture as part of their lessons.

Al-Seghayer (2014) identified four main barriers affecting teaching EFL in KSA. These barriers included belief constraints, curriculum constraints, pedagogical constraints and administrative constraints. Belief constraints focused on the value teachers placed on teaching EFLA key problem here, as cited in the literature, was teachers’ lack of competence in the English language. It would stand that if teachers did not feel confident (efficacy) about their

own abilities in English they would not use it effectively to teach English and the literature seems to bear this out.

Among several factors that affect the learning of EFL in Saudi Arabia is the use of the learners' native language with or alongside English (Al-Arishi, 1991; Alhawsawi, 2013; Almutairi, 2008; Alrashidi & Phan 2015; Fareh 2010). According to Moskovsky (2018), most EFL teachers in KSA are usually Arab and so are non-native speakers of English. As a result of this, teachers' performance in the target language (TL) usually deals only with phonological features and grammar, rather than engaging in teaching students more complex conversational language, simply because teachers lack a high proficiency in the English language. Rabab'ah (2005) described that teachers choose to use Arabic language in Saudi EFL classes because of their low confidence in using English. This is widely evident in the research (Abduh & Algouzi, 2020; Alghanmi & Shukri, 2016; Alharbi, 2015; Mitchell & Alfuriah, 2017). Alshammari (2011) noted that most Saudi teachers prefer using Arabic to teach English because it saves them time and it makes it easier for them to explain language features to the students. However, the use of Arabic language in Saudi EFL classes appears to have a negative impact on learners. It minimises the exposure of the learners to English and gives them very little opportunity to practice what they have been taught in class and to develop the skills to communicate in English. It also limits the kind of connection teachers could make between language and culture. The Saudi identity is Arabic so if teachers do not help students understand how English works in other cultures for them to appreciate how it might work in Saudi culture, this element of learning is missing. Alharbi (2015) claimed that the use of native language in the classroom by the teachers demotivates students to learn English.

Al-balawi (2016) studied this problem in a research project at a female secondary school in KSA. In this study, she surveyed 50 English language teachers, and observed six of these teachers in their classrooms to determine to what extent Arabic was used in EFL classes,

what teachers' attitudes were towards using Arabic in English classes, and the purpose and frequency of Arabic use in the classes. Her findings revealed that 80% of the teachers used Arabic to explain concepts, grammar rules, vocabulary, to control the class and/or to give instructions. In all, 54% of teachers agreed that using Arabic was helpful for students to learn English. Shuchi and Shafiqul Islam (2016) also explored both teachers' and students' attitudes towards using the L1 in EFL classrooms. Their study compared views from both Bangladesh and KSA and found that 56% of teachers in KSA and 61% of teachers in Bangladesh believed that L1 should be used in English classes. It should be noted that 33% of teachers surveyed believed that L1 should not be used in KSA English classes and 11% believed that Arabic should never be used. The teachers identified that the L1 was used to support student learning by allowing them to comprehend more clearly what the lesson was about. As with the research by Al-balawi (2016) the study by Shuchi and Shafiqul Islam teachers identified specific areas for using their L1, such as to explain difficult concepts, check for comprehension, give instruction, explain difficult grammar points and for new vocabulary. These researchers concluded that L1 can be beneficial in the EFL classroom to support targeted learning and to make comparisons between the L1 and L2 that students are learning. The current research would also claim that teachers need to have an understanding of how and when to use either L1 or L2 in an EFL class. Without this knowledge, it seems that teachers do not have the confidence to use this pedagogical approach. Teachers need to take a principled and purposeful use of L1 to support students learning a second language.

Curriculum constraints were identified as teachers not having sufficient time to teach the prescribed English curriculum in a comprehensive way that would lead students to gain English language proficiency (Al-Seghayer, 2014). The limited or poor quality of non-Saudi contextual resources has been seen as a barrier for teaching. The second phase of the Tatweer reforms was targeted specifically at providing development activities for school principals and

teachers to implement change in curriculum (Allyami, 2014; Patalong, 2016). Before Tatweer teachers were not invited to participate in such a process. There has been little research done on the role teachers have taken on because of the reforms. The current research addressed this gap in our knowledge.

Pedagogical and administrative constraints were also addressed in the Tatweer reforms. Until recently, EFL teachers need only a degree in English and not a teaching degree to teach EFL. This lack of professional teacher training led to pedagogical constraints. With no theoretical background to understand why certain teaching strategies are important for EFL learning, teachers adhered to traditional approaches of a teacher-centred approach with a focus on grammar and vocabulary competence rather than on developing language proficiency in a broader sense. These challenges have been recognised by the Tatweer reforms and now there has been a significant shift in retraining teachers and school administrators to support student learning (Elyas & Al-Ghamdi, 2018). This aspect of EFL teaching and learning was explored in the current research by asking teachers and students how effective they believed the class pedagogy was for learning English. Khan (2011) has suggested that teacher courses such as CELTA, DELTA, TESOL and BeEds/MEds are not effective because they are targeted to train Saudi EFL teachers on best practices for local teaching. However, Shah et al. (2013) contended that participants in their research viewed these qualifications favourably and pivotal to teaching Arab students. More research into teacher qualifications for effective EFL teaching and learning is needed. There is provision for this in the Tatweer reforms, so it was important for the researcher of the current research to keep these constraints in mind to determine if they are still a problem for EFL teaching and learning in KSA, or if these have been resolved.

The final constraint identified by Al-Seghayer (2014) was administrative. The curriculum, textbooks, and teaching resources for EFL are distributed by the MoE. Guidelines and rules for teaching are then carried out by a 'panel' of experts. Teachers are not involved in

the process and so may feel left out or disenfranchised about teaching EFL. In addition, Al-Seghayer identified a need for EFL teachers to collaborate with other EFL teachers to share understandings and practices to improve their own pedagogy. Part of the Tatweer reform is that teachers develop professional networks both within KSA and worldwide to trade ideas and support in best practices for teaching and learning EFL. It was of critical importance to consider the pedagogical approaches teachers make to teach EFL. These considerations are described in more detail next.

2.6 Pedagogical Strategies in Saudi EFL Classrooms

As indicated in Chapter 1, EFL teachers tend to favour one of two approaches to teaching English: the grammar translation method (GMT) or the communicative language teaching (CLT) approaches (Natsir & Sanjaya, 2014), although some teachers use both methods relating to teaching and learning needs. Research has suggested that teachers who are more inclined to use the GMT approach are concerned that, if they do not use this approach, they will not have time to cover all the content for the lesson. In addition, teachers claim that not using this approach will lead to behaviour problems (Abduh & Algouzi, 2020). This finding aligns with the research described in the previous section where teachers use Arabic in the classroom as a behaviour management approach (Al-balawi, 2016; Shuchi Islam, 2016). Research also suggested that teachers who adhere strictly to the GMT approach have low teacher-efficacy in their ability to teach EFL and in students' ability to learn English mainly because these teacher do not have a competent level of English to use it as the primary medium of instruction in their class (Choi & Lee, 2018; Eslami & Fatahi, 2008; Mojavezi & Tamiz, 2012). These findings suggested that choosing to use the GMT approach is closely tied to teachers' feeling of efficacy to teach English and maintain control of their class in a subject area in which they do not feel confident or capable to teach. Choi and Lee (2018) found that teachers who favoured GMT strategies did so because this approach was most familiar to them

in other teaching areas, and these teachers tended to have less confidence in their own English language proficiency, and so were not confident that they were not teaching students who were more proficient in English than they were. Their preference, as suggested above, favoured using more Arabic in the class than English. Hoang (2018), however, suggested that one cannot assume that low efficacy beliefs lead to less than desirable results. Instead, low efficacy can encourage teachers to reflect on their teaching practice and/or take further training to improve their teaching.

In contrast, teachers who favour a more communicative language teaching (CLT) approach were seen to have high teacher-efficacy about teaching English. These teachers used a greater variety of resources and teaching strategies and use English more as the medium of instruction in their class. Choi and Lee (2018) found that the more success teachers had over time in promoting the use of English through modelling the use of English, the more confident they were to use CLT approaches and to try out new and innovative approaches. Teachers in this category had fewer behaviour problems in the class and held the belief that they brought about positive changes in learning for their students. Two approaches that align with the GMT and CLT approaches are the authoritarian and the authoritative. It is important to understand the difference in teaching approaches in order to understand why there is such a low level of achievement in learning English in Saudi classrooms. These are discussed below.

Authoritarian Teaching Approach: In this approach the teacher holds all the power in the class, is less likely to provide support to students' individual learning needs and gives few opportunities for students to engage in independent work (Aldhafri & Alrajhi, 2014). These authors surveyed 425 8th grade students from three school districts in the Sultanate of Oman about the effects of teachers' approaches to teaching that motivated or demotivated them to learn. Their findings indicated that teachers who use an authoritarian teaching approach did not increase students' motivation to learn, either intrinsically or extrinsically. These authors

suggested that with this approach the teachers were largely unresponsive to learners' needs and had a highly demanding style in expectations for student learning. The authoritarian approach leads to students adopting self-handicapping such as passive participation in class, which resulted in lower achievements in learning.

As described above, this teaching approach is most likely to align with GMT, a more traditional pedagogy. Safari and Rashidi (2015) completed a qualitative study which involved interviewing 25 experienced EFL teachers in Iran to explore the causes of EFL program failures. A key barrier to the greater success of EFL programs according to the data was the authoritarian and rigid nature of the school system. Safari and Rashidi reported that, in their study, Iranian teachers had few opportunities to be innovative in their pedagogy due to the education system, which is structurally controlled by the MoE of Iran and from which they could not deviate. They described that there is a power hierarchy in schools where principals dominate teachers and teachers dominate students. In this kind of system both teachers and students became 'authority-dependent' and do what they are told to do to avoid punishment for deviating from the stated rules. Another contributing factor was the low pay of teachers, which also indicated a low status for the profession. Safari and Rashidi suggested that teachers were unlikely to be in a position to apply for teacher development programs without financial support. Finally, like earlier reporting in this thesis, Safari and Rashidi also described that the government mandated curriculum, textbooks, and other resources limited teachers from becoming more innovative in their pedagogy. One could argue that similar challenges are faced by teachers in KSA.

In the most traditional forms of schooling in the KSA, teachers have total authority over the learners, and students are passive recipients in the learning process (Natsir & Sunjaya, 2014). It would seem that teachers who are not confident in their English language proficiency turn their focus to ensuring that they have total control of their classes. Having control of the

class reduces the chances of deviating away from the prescribed system of education as laid out by the MoE. As described throughout this thesis, an example of this kind of control is the teacher preference to use Arabic more than English in the class (Al-Awaid, 2018; Alhawsawi, 2013; Almutairi, 2008; Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Alshammari, 2011; Fareh, 2010). Research has also indicated that when teachers provide a lack of English use in the class, students lose motivation to learn English (Abahussain, 2016; Alharbi, 2015; Al-Nasser, 2015; Alrabai, 2018; Al-Seghayer, 2019; Thyab, 2020). Students, therefore, have limited expectations that their teachers will provide them with opportunities to discover correct answers and, hence, they work less and engage less in their learning.

In the authoritarian class there are fewer instances of innovative pedagogy. According to Alnefaie (2016), teachers in KSA feel frustrated, as they see themselves as implementors of a prescribed curriculum rather than innovators of curriculum. They feel constrained because they must follow the established education system set out by the MoE rather than have opportunities to draw on their own strengths and creativity as teachers. In this study, innovative teachers reported feeling marginalised in educational decision-making and in curriculum development. Authoritarian teachers, however, appeared to want to simply provide information to students instead of allowing students to discover information for themselves (Alnefaie, 2016). While this approach made learning difficult for the students, it allowed teachers to have greater control over teaching and learning. While there has been limited research in this area to date, from my experience as an EFL teacher in the KSA, I can confirm that this approach is generally found in Saudi classrooms.

Authoritative Teaching Approach: this is a style of teaching where a teacher feels able to create a more compassionate relation with the student. In this approach the student becomes the focus for learning in the classroom, rather than the teacher as the focus. This is the foundation of constructivist learning (see Bruner, 1966, 1985), where students are active in their day-to-day

interactions in the classroom and, through their own understanding, they shape their learning. In this approach students are not in class to only absorb the information given to them by the teachers and/or be in a constant regime of being corrected for their attempts to use language. Rather, they can participate in the teaching-learning processes. A study in KSA by Aldhafiri (2015) found that Saudi students in an EFL classroom led by an authoritative teacher were largely satisfied with this teacher's approach, indicating that they felt they could rely on the teacher, the teacher was a good leader who did not get angry very often, who listened to them, and who gave them the help they needed to learn. Indeed, it has been found that in a classroom where the teacher uses multiple strategies for teaching and learning, students were more motivated to learn English (Aiusheeva & Guntur, 2019; Al-Asmari, 2008; Gangwer, 2009).

The teacher's belief in their abilities to teach and their students' abilities to learn affects not only the teacher's performance but also the performance of the student (Caprara et al. 2006). The confidence teachers have towards their capabilities highly influences how students learn through participation in a variety of learning activities. Authoritative teachers are more able to support students in achieving better outcomes because they spend more time with students and can identify the different abilities of their students, which helps in reinforcing the intrinsic motivation of the students (Barnes, 1998; Eslami & Fatahi, 2008). The authoritative teacher is responsive and has a focus on addressing the individual learning needs of students while also demanding high expectations of learners. Mojavezi & Tamiz's (2012) research specifically focused on the impact of teachers' efficacy on student motivation and found a significant correlation. EFL teachers with high efficacy used strategies that motivated students to learn. In these classes, there was less need for behaviour management to be the focus as students were engaged in their learning. These findings are supported by the research of Mostofi and Mohseni (2018) who surveyed 60 female English teachers in Iran. Their finding suggested that in the authoritarian class, the teacher's superiority negatively affects student

achievement, whereas, in the authoritative class, students achieved higher results and there was less need for teacher control of students' behaviour. This approach, however, is generally absent from EFL classrooms in the KSA. It should also be noted that in Saudi schools there are generally overcrowded classrooms for teaching English, with up to 50 or 60 students in a class. This factor has been found to undermine Saudi learners' exposure to English in the classroom, resulting in negative consequence on learning (Al-Mohanna 2010; Bahanshal 2013). Teachers' and students' perceptions on the effect of classroom learning was a focus for the current research. A review of the literature based on students' perspectives of EFL teaching and learning is presented below.

2.7 Learners' Needs and Interests

Studies have highlighted how different factors have influenced students' perceptions and motivation about the teaching and learning processes of EFL. Lee (2011), for example, conducted a case study in Korean schools and concluded that only using theory from other contexts to underpin local teaching does not work well while teaching EFL. If students cannot relate to the content of the teaching, they lose interest in learning. This assertion was discussed in Section 2.4 where it was acknowledged that teachers who are not confident about teaching English adhere strictly to the prescribed textbooks and resources rather than creating innovative ways to allow students access to understanding the meanings behind this content to better understand English (Alshumaimeri & Alzyadi, 2015). Lee's (2011) study indicated that learning is effective when students can relate the content for learning to their daily lives which, at present, is not always the case in KSA, because there are limited opportunities. One example of this is that there are limited opportunities for the students to engage with English outside the classroom.

As with Lee's (2011) research, Al-Qahtani and Al Zumor (2016) suggested that it is important that this space provides students with many opportunities to connect their learning

with different contexts where they might use English. The needs and interests of learners are viewed as being vital for the effective implementation of any EFL course. Grave (2000) and Pandey (2012) for example, argued that if the curriculum or course is not developed considering the learners' needs and interests, while using context-based teaching strategies, English cannot be taught effectively. As suggested above, Pandey (2012) cautioned that every EFL situation has its own cultural and contextual dynamics. EFL teachers in KSA need, therefore, to create learning that works best for Saudi students.

According to Al-Otaibi (2004), the centralised system of teaching in Saudi Arabia, where teachers use government-mandated syllabuses and methodologies, limits the teacher on pedagogical choices to use in their classes, which then impacts on the learners' engagement to learn English. These authors described that intentionality and free choice are important factors in developing positive student self-efficacy as EFL learners. Learners who feel restricted by traditional, authoritarian pedagogy respond negatively in the class.

It is also argued that the emphasis on evaluation makes teachers focus on meeting the school and government requirements rather than meeting student needs. This focus results in teachers paying more attention to students developing grammar and spelling capabilities and less attention to developing students' communicative skills in English. According to Al-Shumaimeri (2003) some students can leave secondary education without the ability to communicate effectively in English because, in most cases, the focus of their learning strategies has tended to be memorising grammar rules rather than learning how to have a conversation in English or developing their writing skills (where teachers have used a GTM approach rather than a CLT approach). Elyas and Picard (2010) identified that students taught through the GMT approach normally are advised to memorise the passages that they expect to be tested on at the end of the year in their final exams. Because of this, rather than reach the desired goal which

is to be able to speak fluent English, most of the students do not see the relevance in learning the language beyond the basics,

Alrabais' (2014) study, described above, indicated that in Saudi Arabia, English learners commonly express their anxiety about learning English as a foreign language. These findings concur with other research findings (Alrabai, 2014, 2017; Atasheneh & Izadi, 2012; Aydin, 2008). Alrabai (2014) has categorized this anxiety in Saudi students into six areas, including speaking anxiety, social-image anxiety, negative attitudes toward English classes, comprehension anxiety, and language test anxiety. According to this author, irrelevant teaching strategies are one of the primary reasons for this anxiety, and he suggested that any form of anxiety will have a negative impact on students' engagement for learning. Atasheneh and Izadi (2012) explored the anxiety of 60 intermediate-level EFL learners engaged in a listening comprehension test and the effectiveness of the tester's treatment on a post-treatment test. The results indicated that students who had high anxiety before the first test benefited from the treatment intervention to reduce anxiety and scored much higher on the post-treatment test. These findings indicated that teachers need to recognise and acknowledge the effects that testing has on students. Students who experience anxiety about completing tests became demotivated to learn because of their likelihood of doing poorly on the tests. Alrabai (2014) has suggested that students may experience anxiety on tests due in part to the teaching approach, which tends to place high teacher expectations on success and where negative responses to students who did not achieve success are not uncommon.

In another study done in Iran with secondary mathematics students, Daimi et al. (2017) found that there is a positive correlation between EFL students' classroom environment and their academic self-efficacy. The researchers looked at seven components of the classroom that might affect students' academic self-efficacy. These were task orientation, student cohesiveness, involvement, teacher support, investigation, equity, and cooperation. The highest

correlation was between task orientation during lessons and self-efficacy, and the lowest correlation was with cooperation and self-efficacy. The researchers suggested that teachers who ignore the students' voice in what they want and need for their learning will miss out on opportunities to strengthen the teaching-learning relationship for positive learning. In a study with 630 students in KSA, Alrabai (2017) found that, when there was very low classroom freedom among the students, this perceived lack of freedom resulted in a direct relationship with their academic achievement in EFL. The study attributed the students' lack of freedom to reasons such as the absence of the students in the decision-making policies, over-reliance on the teachers' over-pampering nature of instruction prevalent in this context, old teaching methods used by the teachers, and the lack of training of certain skills each student needs, such as self-management, self-monitoring, and self-assessment. Another study with 10th Grade students in KSA (Qutob, 2018) found that student satisfaction occurred when the teacher's role was supportive and encouraging, and when the teacher provided appropriate corrections to their work.

These findings align with research by Alkaabi (2016), who asserted that poor attitudes towards teaching and learning English affect both the teachers' and students' motivation. Al-Nasser (2015) in a meta-analysis of the literature found that students in KSA wanted more modern approaches to learning (more technology), wanted student-centred learning and wanted teachers to be more 'savy' about teaching English. Morris (2011) identified that technology in the ESL classroom can improve the motivation and self-confidence of the student. However, Morris also identified that there was low use of technology in EFL classrooms.

An important aspect of the EFL learning environment was to understand students' beliefs about learning English as these beliefs will affect their efficacy to persist in learning English. In a study by Alsamaani (2012), 236 Saudi university students (125 males and 111 females) completed a study that explored their beliefs about English language learning and the

relationship between these beliefs and learning outcomes. The findings revealed that 80% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that learning a foreign language such as English should be taught from an early age, and 79% agreed or strongly agreed that some students have a greater aptitude to learn a foreign language, while others do not. It should be noted that these students were English majors, so the results may be skewed in favour of what they believed about themselves as learners. When asked what aspects of foreign language learning was important, 79% responded that learning new words and lots of grammar rules were important. Alsamaani (2012) suggested that this finding might have resulted because of the students' own background in learning English, where the GTM was predominate. However, the respondents also indicated (69%) that learning a foreign language needs to include learning about the culture and people of that language. When asked about their feelings about using English in real life situations, 71% of respondents indicated that they felt embarrassed when conversing with native speakers of the language, and that speaking with 'excellent pronunciation' (65%) was important. Alsamaani (2012) concluded that participants in this research held unrealistic views regarding the need for accuracy and error correction to be able to use language effectively, and that these views may 'negatively affect' the learning process in class.

In another study, Alkaff (2013) explored what EFL university students found challenging about learning English. English is a compulsory language in first-year studies at university. In this study, 47 first-year science and arts students were surveyed to determine if they found English difficult to learn, how English could be taught better, and how much they used English outside the classroom. In response to the first survey question: do students like English and think it is important, 93.62% of students reported that English was fun to learn and 91.49% indicated that they liked to listen to people speaking English. When asked if learning English was difficult, 36,17% agreed or strongly agreed that English was difficult to learn, while 42.6% disagreed that it was difficult. Areas of difficulty included speaking, writing,

listening, and reading, the four essential skills of language learning. When given a chance to respond to an open question on how they could improve their English, respondents included items such as more practice, being in an English-speaking environment, supplementary materials, teacher and teaching methods and personal attitudes. Respondents were asked how often they used English outside the classroom, and they indicated that they use English when they travel abroad, in cafes and restaurants in KSA, in the hospital, and in some shops and malls. It would appear from these two studies that English is generally a subject students want to learn. It should be noted, though, that these studies were done with university students, so they may not reflect the ideas of younger students. The current research was done with secondary students, who were asked similar questions to determine how widespread these responses are with the youth of the nation.

A concern from much research in this area is in how much Arabic EFL teachers use to teach English. Some research is now focusing on students' perceptions of the practice of using Arabic to teach English. Shuchi & Shafiqul Islam's (2016) research mentioned above, for example, surveyed both teachers and students and found that 77% of Saudi students felt that Arabic should be used in their English classes which was somewhat consistent with the results from the teachers (56%), who believed that Arabic should be used to teach EFL. However, the students indicated that they wanted Arabic to be used in a judicious and purposeful manner to make English more comprehensible to them and to help them express themselves in English. Arabai (2014) explored students' motivation to learn English. Findings revealed that students were motivated to learn English to improve their job prospects and for higher education studies. Other important motivators for students were being able to interact easily with English speakers and to build friendships with people who speak English. One of the most salient demotivators for learning English was that teachers used criticism for wrong answers given, and some teachers appeared to be hesitant and uncomfortable while others were considerate and

complimentary of students who gave the correct answers. These findings concur with those in research done by Alkaff (2013) and Alsamaani (2012). In Alkaff's research, 87.21% of students indicated that they wanted to learn English to improve their futures, 93.62% indicating a connection between English and their future jobs, and 80.85% indicating a connection between learning English and higher education prospects. When students were asked if they did anything outside of school to improve their English, 40.43% indicated that they listened to native speakers, read in English, and/or used the internet. In Alsamaani's research, 90% of the students surveyed indicated that if they spoke English well, they would have many opportunities to use it in their lives. About 80% indicated that English would help them get a good job. Participants expressed a strong belief that learning communication strategies was a positive addition for their future endeavours.

An important factor in considering the learning needs and preferences of secondary students in KSA is the large number of young people in the kingdom. Statistics indicate that approximately two-thirds of the population are under 30, with approximately 51% under 25, and students aged 13-17 accounting for approximately 12% of the population (NewSecurityBeat, 2012). According to Alyoussef, Alamri, and Al-Rahmi, (2019) the young people of KSA have embraced modern technology and are active users of Twitter, Facebook, and other media sites at much higher rates than adults in the Kingdom. This access to various online portals provides young people with access to social, cultural, and political viewpoints beyond their local cultural areas and customs and what they may be exposed to in school. It is probable that many students are now more social media savvy than their teachers, which may have an impact on how they respond to lessons in class. The Tatweer project advocated that teachers embrace technology as part of their pedagogy. If students are more capable of interacting and using technology than their teachers, this may have an impact on teachers' confidence to use such technology in the classroom, as indicated by the research of Almalki

(2014), where teachers are reluctant and so do not use the new material provided by the MoE as suggested.

In summary, it has been suggested that if the students do not have the opportunity to apply the language beyond their classrooms, they will not engage in the language. As English is not a formal language of KSA, students have little opportunity to use English outside the classroom and so may not see the relevance of learning English. However, according to the MoE (2003) students are required to acquire linguistic skills that will enable them to compete favourably in the market. The MoE (2003) seeks to reform the education system so that it can enable the learners to integrate whatever was learned in class to the real world and be able to express themselves using the English language.

2.8 Summary of Literature Reviewed

The literature reviewed indicates that, when EFL teachers feel confident about their abilities to teach English (have high teacher efficacy), they are better able to engage students in learning. Teachers who are not confident in their English language proficiency to teach English and who have teaching experiences that focus more on the traditional role of managing student behaviour rather than teaching English have lower teacher efficacy and more problems in the class. The literature identified that curriculum and teaching practices in Saudi EFL classes are mostly based on resources borrowed from other societies and contexts, which have a negative effect on the teaching and learning of English. To date, there are no studies that explore schoolteachers' and students' efficacy in relation to EFL. The above discussion revealed that studies are needed in this area to explore some contextual teaching and learning practices within the Saudi school context. Hence, this research is a small attempt to respond to these challenges.

Saudi EFL learners are not sufficiently exposed to English both inside the classroom and outside. Khan (2011) states that English is taken only as an academic subject, but most of

the classes are held in the native language of Arabic. Students also communicate with their peers, friends, families, and classmates in Arabic, which results in fewer opportunities for communicating in English through their daily interactions. Saudi learners generally do not have authentic spaces for learning English (Alharbi, 2015). As a result of the dominance of Arabic over English in their community, Saudi students are not motivated to increase their English proficiency (Alharbi, 2015). The above contributing factors to the process of teaching and learning EFL in the KSA were explored in the current research. The following chapter provides the theoretical perspective for this study.

Conceptual Framework

3.1 Introduction

The conceptual framework for this research was the triadic reciprocal causation model (Bandura, 1978) with particular reference to the concept of teacher-efficacy for EFL teachers in KSA and students' self-efficacy as English language learners. The triadic model comes out of Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory as described in Section 3.2 of this chapter. The issues explored included a consideration of the teaching and learning practices of English as a foreign language in Saudi classrooms through the overarching lens of both teacher-efficacy and student self-efficacy to understand how and why teaching and learning occurs as it does (Section 3.3). In Section 3.4, the elements of the triadic reciprocal causation model are described, with a description of how these are aligned to EFL teaching. Section 3.5 considers the components that affect EFL learning in the KSA classroom, with the conclusion of the chapter presented in Section 3.6. The chapter begins by considering the components of social cognitive theory and how the triadic reciprocal causation model and self-efficacy has been derived from this theory.

3.2 Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1993; Bandura et al., 1997) explores the cognitive processes of the individual through interactions done in an environment. Each individual has unique cognitive functions and dispositions which play a part in determining their choices and actions within that environment (Eun, 2018). In the 1960's, Bandura developed the social learning theory. According to social learning theory, observing and understanding interactions with people was the main focus for understanding the social context of learning (Bandura, 1977; Pajares, 2002). However, this approach saw people as reactive agents shaped by either internal or external events without consideration of how peoples' beliefs enable them to exercise some control over their thoughts, feelings, and action. This

theoretical approach did not explain how people were thinking through their interactions or how they actively made choices about their behaviours within different environmental contexts.

Bandura (1977) redefined the social learning theory to include a critical understanding of how one's cognitive processes interpret outcomes. In 1986, he proposed his Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) that views human behaviour and motivation, where beliefs people have about their own capabilities are critical. According to SCT, individuals possess a self-system. This self-system is a self-regulatory system that enables individuals to exercise a measure of control over their thoughts, feelings, motivation, and actions. It is people's perceptions of their capabilities (self-efficacy) that are key in SCT. Individuals engage in self-referent thoughts that mediate between knowledge and action (Pajares, 2002). An example here would be an EFL teacher who sees that students do not understand a concept derived from the textbook. To help students understand, the teacher reflects on teaching/learning strategies that students could use (e.g., role play) to help them better understand. The teacher may then choose to incorporate this strategy into their pedagogy. In this scenario the teacher has engaged in reflection on possible barriers to student learning and come to the realisation that a new strategy is needed to bridge the gap between teaching and student learning.

The emphasis of SCT in education, and specifically for this research, is on the cognitive variables in social interactions and learning, and how these variables influence EFL teachers' teaching and students' learning. While Bandura (1986) and Bandura et al. (1997) accepted the role that external factors, such as instructions, had on people, SCT holds the firm belief that people respond to external influences through a cognitive understanding. In the context of the current research, understanding the cognitive role of teaching and learning sees second language acquisition as a conscious and reasoned thinking process involving the deliberate use of teaching and learning strategies. Bandura et al. (1997) developed a framework to consider

the interactions of these behavioural and cognitive processes, which he called the triadic reciprocal causation model. However, before describing the features of reciprocal determinism in the triadic model, it is important to understand the overarching influence of self-efficacy and its importance in SCT research.

3.3 Self-Efficacy/Teacher-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is a set of beliefs that a person has about his/her capabilities to do something that enables him/her to produce desired outcomes and be able to influence the events that affect his/her life (Bandura, 1977). Simply put, self-efficacy is the self-judgement of people on their capabilities to execute different activities (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Lunenburg, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The individual's self-efficacy is seen to be a strong predictor of future behaviour (Eun, 2018). Bandura (1977, 1986, 1998; Bandura et al., 1997) would suggest that the influence of self-efficacy on people can be either positive or negative. Those people who believe in their abilities to accomplish tasks and do well in different activities are said to have high levels of self-efficacy. People who do not have a belief in their abilities to do something will likely not do well at that activity or avoid doing it altogether, and they are said to have low self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is then context-specific in that a person can have high efficacy to complete a particular task but may have lower efficacy to complete another task. One outcome of having high self-efficacy is that a person will persevere in times of hardship with the aim of accomplishing and achieving certain goals, whereas a person with low efficacy is likely to give up (Pajares, 2002).

Bandura (1977) defined self-efficacy as a self-evaluation of one's competency to effectively perform a specific action needed to achieve a desired goal. He described these self-perception beliefs as developed through four sources: *mastery experiences* (the most influential sources of self-efficacy beliefs) where individuals gauge the effects of their own actions. Actions that attain success raise self-efficacy, whereas actions that result in failure lower

efficacy. The second source is through *vicarious experiences* (effects produced by the actions of others) where individuals gauge the efforts of others to accomplish a task. This source is said to be weaker than mastery experiences as the individual is interpreting what others are doing rather than what they have personally achieved themselves (Bandura, 1977, 1986). The third source of self-efficacy is through *social persuasion* (developing beliefs as a result of the social messages received by others) which can include verbal judgements of others. While Bandura described this as a weaker source of self-efficacy than mastery and/or vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion can have both a positive and/or negative impact on people's actions. An example here would be a student receiving criticism from a teacher who develops a low self-efficacy to participate further in this class. The fourth source is what Bandura called the *physiological state* which includes the affect domain, such as anxiety, stress, arousal, fatigue, and mood states, which have the capability of altering one's thinking and self-efficacy beliefs.

It is described that efficacy beliefs vary in level, strength, and generality (Pajares, 2002); they are goal-related, relatively context-specific, and future-oriented judgements of one's competence (Schunk & Pajares, 2009). This means that self-efficacy is affected by both internal and environmental factors, and is related to a specific context (e.g., teaching EFL). The following section provides examples of where teachers' efficacy has been researched in the context of EFL teaching and learning.

Teacher-efficacy

A key area of research, and of most relevance to the current research, is the sub-set of teacher self-efficacy, or teacher-efficacy. Teacher-efficacy is defined as teachers' confidence in their ability to promote learning. This quality enables them to plan, organise and execute a task successfully (Ghanizadeh and Moafian; 2014; Schunk & Pajares, 2009; Tschannen-

Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Teachers' efficacy, according to Steele (2010), is the set of beliefs a teacher holds regarding his or her abilities and competencies to teach and influence student behaviour and achievement, regardless of outside influences or obstacles. Teacher-efficacy is generally measured within a specific context of teaching. A review of the early literature, for example, shows that teachers' efficacy is related to effective classroom management (Hicks, 2012; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990); openness to adoption of innovation (Guskey, 1988); the effort teachers invest in their teaching and the goals they set (Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005); being less critical of students who make errors (Ashton & Webb, 1986); and, student motivation (Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Guskey, 1988). Self-efficacious teachers are determined, and they persevere to achieve the goals they set for themselves. A seminal work by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) produced a teacher-efficacy scale that has been adapted to measure efficacy in numerous contexts as will be described below.

Eslami and Fatahi (2008) researched the teacher-efficacy of 40 Iranian high school EFL teachers (21 females, 19 males) who all held degrees in teaching EFL. The efficacy measure used was an adapted version (in the Farsi language and culturally specific to Iranian culture) of the Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy's (2001) teacher-efficacy scale. The researchers wanted to identify teachers' Personal Teaching Efficacy (PTE), which are the beliefs in one's own ability to make a difference in students' learning, and General Teaching Efficacy (GTE), which is concerned with the powers affecting teaching and teacher control over student performance. The study also used a survey to measure teachers' perceived English language proficiency, and a survey to determine the approach to teaching of the participants. The results indicated that teachers felt higher efficacy in their instructional strategies than in motivating students to learn English, and that teachers' listening skills were the least developed of their communication strategies. The study also revealed that the majority of the Iranian teachers used

fewer grammatically oriented strategies than communicative oriented strategies, and that there was a positive relationship between perceived levels of language proficiency and teachers' sense of self-efficacy. That is, the higher the teachers' perceived proficiency in language skills, the more efficacious they felt. This finding aligns with the literature review on EFL teachers (Al-Seghayer, 2019; Alshammari, 2011) which indicated that teachers who have low levels of English language proficiency rely heavily on Arabic to teach English. The findings of Eslami and Fatahi (2008) show that teachers who relied on using the Arabic language in EFL classrooms felt low teacher-efficacy to teach English.

The literature shows that there is a common theme in the efficacy research that uses self-efficacy scales in that, when teachers' perceived capabilities to teach EFL are high, their efficacy is high. This finding has been described by other researchers from Iran. Fathi & Rostami (2018), for example, found a correlation between collective teacher-efficacy and job satisfaction through the mediating role of teaching commitment. In their study, 312 EFL teachers were surveyed about the role a shared community had on their teaching, and the researchers found that when there was a positive collective teacher-efficacy, individual teachers felt a greater commitment to teach, set higher objectives for their teaching, and tried harder to solve problems that arose in their teaching. Khanshan & Yousefi (2020) found a similar correlation between teacher-efficacy and instructional practices. In their study, 70 university teachers were surveyed to explore the relationship between teacher-efficacy and teacher reflection. They found a significant relationship between teacher-efficacy and teaching practices, in that, teacher-efficacy determined teaching routines. These authors recommended that teachers need to observe other teachers in action to understand and self-reflect on effective strategies that motivate students to learn. Noormohammadi (2014) also explored teacher reflection in relation to teacher-efficacy and autonomy with a participant pool of 172 teachers in Iran. Findings in this research revealed that reflective practices helped teachers in selecting,

planning, and sequencing curriculum successfully, resulting in higher efficacy about teaching. This is a common thread in EFL research in virtually every country where such research is conducted. Koçoğlu (2011), for example, explored emotional intelligence and teacher-efficacy with Turkish preservice teachers, and a study by Wei Huangfu, (2012) in China examined the predictability of EFL teachers' self-efficacy on their motivational teaching behaviours. Each of the above studies found that the more competent and confident teachers were in their teaching, the more likely there were to try new approaches to EFL teaching and learning. Methodologically each of the above studies used similar techniques in relation to EFL research on teacher-efficacy, that is, they used a quantitative (survey) methodology, mostly adapted from the Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) teacher-efficacy scale.

While the majority of research on teacher-efficacy uses quantitative data collection techniques there is a new wave of research where qualitative techniques have been used. In a qualitative Vietnamese study, Phan and Locke (2015) interviewed teachers, observed their teaching practices, and found that mastery experiences were not the most influential sources of teacher-efficacy: social persuasion was. The authors suggested that these results indicate how the cultural context has an impact on efficacy, and that research on teacher-efficacy needs to consider the cultural and contextual factors that influence the choices and actions of teachers. However, teachers revealed that a lack of particular knowledge in a certain teaching area lowered their sense of efficacy. These teachers described that having opportunities to observe other teachers' best practices or have professional development opportunities to engage with other EFL teachers was desired. These findings align with those of Noormohammadi (2014).

In another related qualitative study on teacher-efficacy, Zonoubi, Rasekh, and Tavakoli (2017) collected data through interviews, reflective journals and recordings of the school's professional learning communities to explore the impact of experience on novice and experienced teachers' efficacy. These authors found that continued participation in

professional learning communities increased both novice and experienced teachers' efficacy. Novice teachers gained in efficacy in classroom management and language proficiency and experienced teachers gained in efficacy about using more innovative teaching strategies and in language proficiency.

In research done in KSA, Shah, Hussain and Nasseef (2013) explored factors affecting teacher-efficacy, although this research was done at the university rather than school level. In the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with five EFL lecturers from both English-speaking and non-English speaking countries. The purpose of the study was to explore factors that had an impact on EFL teaching and what efforts teachers made to overcome negative factors. The findings revealed that EFL teachers were challenged in three areas: social, cultural, and religious sensitivities; learners' lack of motivation to learn English; and, unfavourable instructional policies and procedures. In how teachers took action to overcome negative influences, participants described that there was little they could do to counter the negative societal attitude towards learning English, and little they could do to change the minds of parents who found no value in students learning English. These findings align with Bandura's (1977) idea of *social persuasion* as a source of teachers' efficacy and with the research by Phan and Locke (2015), who found that social persuasion in their Vietnamese study was a stronger influence on teachers' efficacy than mastery experiences. In contrast, in Western-oriented teacher-efficacy research, mastery experiences are the most substantial factor.

In Shah et al.'s (2013) research in KSA, the teachers perceived the social messages from parents and the wider community were too strong to fully overcome. Teachers in this study described feeling frustrated by students' lack of motivation. This finding illustrates how teachers' *physiological state* (anxiety, stress, fatigue) affected their efficacy in teaching EFL, and relates to the literature reviewed that described the powerful effect culture has on education

in KSA (Al-Qahtani & Al Zumor, 2016; Lee, 2011; Pandey, 2012). Teachers in Shah et al.'s study did, however, describe strategies they used to overcome these negative factors, such as developing a positive rapport with students and introducing innovative communicative teaching strategies. The lack of authentic resources, in fact, challenged them to use such strategies in their classrooms. Participants also described how various policies, such as the attendance policy, affected their teaching. Teachers also had to stick to the prescribed syllabus in a fixed, but limited, timeframe, even when 'more than half the class was missing'. This led teachers to fixate their teaching on helping students to pass exams rather than encourage them to learn English as a language of everyday communication. These pressures align with an institutional social persuasion (Suoninen, & Jokinen, 2005; Tracey, 2016) as a source of efficacy. Institutional social persuasion includes how an institution (MoE, for example) uses various means of persuasion (e.g., policy (Tatweer), meetings etc.) to convey their institutional goals, aspirations, and expectations. Those working for the institution are expected to comply, but, if they do not understand how they are to comply or do not feel supported in how they can comply, this can have a negative effect on teachers' sense of efficacy.

Mehmood's (2019) paper provided a description of the factors that impact EFL teachers' efficacy, and these align with the international research that has gone on before. This author described that the pressures to ensure high completion rates has EFL teachers who have very low proficiency levels of English feeling frustrated and anxious, and that teachers with high teacher-efficacy are better able to cope because they feel they have the flexibility to 'accomplish a challenging task in the classroom' (p. 45). However, this research was also conducted at the university level, which indicates a need to do research in KSA at the school level. The current research fulfils that need. It should be noted that any form of social cognition research is a new research area in Saudi Arabian EFL teaching and learning (Alghanmi &

Shukri, 2016). Thus, there is a need to learn more about how EFL teachers in the KSA perceive their roles in order to better understand how they can better support students to learn English.

A key component of understanding EFL teachers' efficacy is in understanding the role reflection plays in shaping teacher efficacy. Fathi et al. (2021) identified that reflection is a regular and intentional action of an idea. In teaching this is done through critically evaluating one's practices to determine new course of action to improve student learning. Safari et al. (2020) would add that reflection also requires teachers to build an association with prior experience to ponder new possibilities in the same or similar situation. Reflections have an impact on efficacy because if teachers believe that they have a better understanding of more effective ways that they can teach, they will have more confidence to try new approaches and persevere longer to achieve desired goals. According to Fathi et al. (2021) without high efficacy, teachers may be prone to burn out and experience dissatisfaction with their jobs. One could speculate that this may be especially true considering the expectations of teachers from the Tatweer reforms. Safari et al (2020) found that teachers who were satisfied with their jobs were more likely to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and try to make improvements where they perceived a need. This was also a finding from Al Shaikhi (2020) who found that teachers who engaged in self-directed professional development felt more confident to face challenges in their work. These teachers felt that it was their responsibility to become actively engaged in the professional development. The high level of engagement lead to source out resources for teaching and to connect with fellow teachers more regularly though the internet and social networks. In his research, Al-Shehri (2020) found that teachers appreciated that the new education reforms for EFL honouring the local culture and heritage of the Saudi people however not all teachers were willing to embrace the new student-centred approaches to teaching. Some still clung to the more traditional teacher-centre approach and used older more familiar resources than the new technologies prescribed. Teachers cited other challenges such

as the continuation of large class sizes, unavailable technology in some schools, the incorporation of foreign practices in Saudi classes and the lack of teacher training. These challenges were seen to create a negative teacher efficacy for EFL teachers.

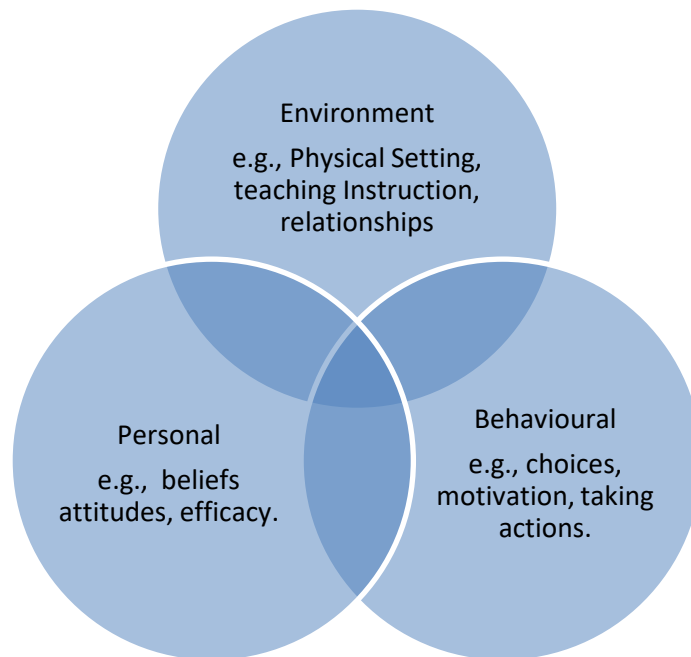
Interactions in social situations are described in SCT as a process (or processes) within the triadic reciprocal causation model (Bandura, 1986). To set up the methodology for the current research, it is important to first situate the research within Bandura's (1986) triadic reciprocal causation model, as the current researcher believes that this is the framework that allows for qualitative research on efficacy to be best explored. A description of the triadic model is provided next.

3.4 Triadic Reciprocal Causation Model

The triadic reciprocal causation model (Figure 3.1) is a key element of social cognitive theory (SCT) (Bandura et al., 1997). According to the model, learning and motivation are influenced by three components: personal, environmental, and behavioural factors. Bandura et al. (1997) suggested that all three factors, and their interactions, influence teaching and learning. Personal factors include elements such as teachers' beliefs about their teaching capabilities and learner beliefs about their learning ability; environmental factors include elements such as teaching strategies, while behavioural factors include elements such as making teaching choices that can enable students to take on learning tasks such as learning English with confidence. In contrast, other teaching choices can become barriers to student learning. Interactions between the three components (personal, environmental, and behavioural) are central to SCT and comprise what Bandura (1986) described as reciprocal determinism. Reciprocal determinism suggests that individuals can be both agents of change and also recipients responding to change. Therefore, behaviour is controlled or determined by the individual through cognitive processes, the environment, and social stimuli (the specific

context/environment under consideration). These three components are used in the data analysis in the current research and are described in more depth below.

Figure 3.1 Triadic Reciprocal Causation Model



Personal Factors

Personal factors include such elements as attitudes, beliefs, and self-efficacy. As indicated above, there are few studies exploring EFL teachers' attitudes towards teaching English in secondary schools and even less research done in relation to Saudi EFL teachers. One study was done in Iran by Sabokrouh (2014) to explore teachers' attitudes to teaching EFL and to determine if there were any links between teachers' level of English language proficiency and their efficacy. There were 68 participants, all non-native English-speaking teachers who completed three measures: an English language proficiency test, an adapted version of the Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy's (2001) teacher-efficacy test, and a test on teachers' attitudes to teaching EFL. The findings indicated that there is a positive relation between teachers' attitude and their efficacy to teach English, and a stronger direct relation

with teachers' level of language proficiency and their sense of efficacy. In other words, teachers who have higher English language proficiency tended to believe more strongly in their capabilities for teaching English. These findings corroborate findings from earlier studies (Eslami & Fatahi, 2008), which identified that the more efficacious teachers reported being, the more innovative they were in their teaching approaches. The less efficacious teachers relied more on traditional teacher-led pedagogical practices. These teachers described that they did not feel confident to use strategies that they perceived as 'different' to established teaching strategies, so their attitude was to 'play it safe' and stick to the pedagogy they had always used.

A key element of personal factors is teachers' beliefs. Utami (2016) described that EFL teachers' pedagogical beliefs about teaching English are critical in determining their pedagogical practices. The belief teachers have about their capabilities seems to clearly influence the achievements of learners and students' motivation (Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989; Mojavezi & Tamiz, 2012), and was explored in the current research. Closely tied to the idea of teachers' beliefs is the notion of teacher's sense of efficacy (or teacher-efficacy), which is described next.

Eslami and Fatahi (2008) found that EFL teachers who used more communicative instructional teaching (CLT) strategies felt high efficacy about their teaching and their students' learning. These teachers have higher teacher-efficacy because they understand the need to have a better relationship with their students and do this by creating a student-centred learning environment. These teachers were also more willing to use innovative teaching strategies in their classes. Teachers who saw these same strategies as confrontational to their current pedagogy had low teacher-efficacy. Pajares (1996) explained that people engage in tasks which they feel confident they can do to achieve success and avoid tasks in which they do not feel confident.

Teacher-efficacy enables the teacher to appreciate the value for education, use innovation in teaching, and use more effective and targeted skills for classroom management (Woolfolk, Rosoff, & Hoy, 1990). Teachers with high teacher-efficacy understand their influence in the teaching-learning process (Greenwood, Olejnik, & Parkay, 1990). These authors suggested that, with high teacher-efficacy, a teacher becomes more flexible in dealing with classroom problems. When a problem arises, the teacher is in a better position to find the best solutions that will be favourable to both the learners and the teacher. With specific reference to EFL, Bagheri (2020), a scholar from Iran, found that teachers who had confidence that they could engage students and help them to learn had perceived high teacher-efficacy about their teaching, had higher job satisfaction, and lower levels of burnout than EFL teachers with low teacher-efficacy. Teachers with low teacher-efficacy described exhaustion and depersonalization in their classrooms. The study found then that teachers' perceived efficacy influenced their teaching performance and determined how effective their approach to teaching was. These findings concur with those of earlier work where Dimopoulou (2012) found that lower levels of teachers' efficacy led to low academic achievement in learners. The researcher of this thesis explored whether the high or low efficacy beliefs of Saudi teachers about their EFL teaching affected their attitudes and the approach they take to teaching and learning in the classroom which, in turn, affects students' motivation to learn English.

Having high or low efficacy also appears to affect teachers' sense of professional identity development. An Iranian study by Rozati (2017) found that there was "a significant and positive association between professional identity of EFL teachers and their teaching efficacy" (p. 868). The study concluded that it is important to nurture positive teacher identity to attain effective teaching. The study also found an association between teacher-efficacy and institutional identity, in that teachers' identities are shaped by their contexts and subject matter. Teachers who feel confident in their teaching environment and who feel confident in teaching

their subject have high efficacy. These findings align with the literature cited earlier in this thesis that contextual elements and teaching subjects influence teachers' efficacy and should be considered carefully in relation to teaching EFL. As reported in Shah et al.'s (2013) study above, teachers in KSA described significant challenges in relation to developing their teacher and institutional identity as the education system is largely run as a top-down system where individual teachers feel they have little input into what or how they should be teaching. Personal factors affecting Saudi EFL school teachers were explored in the current research.

Behavioural Factors

The second component of the triadic reciprocal causation model is behavioural factors (Bandura, 1986; Bandura et al., 1997). Behavioural factors include patterns of motivation for teaching and learning, making choices and taking actions. It is suggested that behaviour is either controlled or determined by the individual through their behaviour, the influence of others, or how individuals act in response to the actions of others and in coordination with the behaviours of others (Bandura 1986; Bandura et al., 1997). In SCT it is suggested that people engage in behaviours that they perceive will allow them to achieve desired goals and make decisions to avoid adverse outcomes. As suggested by Pajares (2002), if an individual perceives that their actions will not achieve success, or they feel incapable of achieving success, then they will avoid doing the task. If, however, they feel they have the ability to achieve success, then they will put the effort in to complete the task. Bandura (1997) suggested that perceived possible outcomes of behaviour are critical because they affect the determination of goals, effort, persistence, and self-efficacy.

As stated above, Bagheri (2020) identified that EFL teachers who do not feel they have achieved success in their teaching are prone to anxiety and burnout rather than high job satisfaction. Those teachers may be attributing their failure to external causes such as the

education system they work under and under which they have no control. Teacher dissatisfaction leads to teachers feeling that they have less control over the curriculum and over student behaviour. These findings align with the seminal work of Weiner (1985) who described that perceived causes for success or failure can be attributed to teachers' perceptions of the stability of their roles as teachers. When teachers attributed their success to internal causes in Bagheri's (2020) study, such as persistence and effort, they reported fewer incidents of feeling exhaustion leading to burnout. These teachers felt motivated to teach and believed that they could make a difference in student learning. These findings are consistent in the EFL literature. Mojavezi and Tamiz (2012), for example, found that teachers who expressed a high teacher-efficacy believed that they had the capabilities to motivate students in their learning. Teachers made pedagogical choices to engage students in learning that would help them to successfully achieve learning in English. Teachers with high efficacy were more able and more motivated to change their teaching strategies according to the needs of their students.

As described in Chapter 1 of this thesis, English is a mandated subject for students to learn in school in KSA (MoE, 2003). Teachers who are given the role receive some training in EFL teaching and learning, most EFL teachers are non-native English language speakers (Moskovsky, 2018), and Saudi teachers prefer to speak Arabic in class rather than English due to their perceived low proficiency level in English (Rabab'ah, 2005). It is not difficult, then, to see why EFL teachers lack motivation to make innovative choices in their pedagogy based on the research finding described above. Their choices instead are to 'play it safe' and teach using the pedagogy they are most familiar with, which is a teacher-centred, student-controlled approach. How these findings are playing out against the government mandate for education reform (Alqahtani et al., 2020) is important to explore. The themes relating to the environmental component of the triadic model are described next.

Environmental Factors

Environmental factors in the triadic reciprocal causation model include such elements as the physical environment, teaching instruction, and the relationships teachers have with their students and that students have with each other. Schunk and Zimmerman's (2006) describe that "one's movements can change the environment and have an effect on how one thinks about oneself; the environment can affect what we do and think, and how we think can have an effect on what we do and how we view the environment" (p.356). Triadic reciprocity indicates that individuals are both products and producers of their environment. The instructional approach a teacher takes (producer) is an environmental factor that has an effect on student learning (product). Teachers are producers of the learning environment. What resources they use for teaching English, for example, have an effect on how they teach and also on how students learn.

As described in Chapter 1 of this thesis, there are two major approaches to EFL teaching in KSA: the grammar-translation method (GMT) and the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach. The GMT approach is teacher-focused, with little interaction between teacher and students and between students and students in the English class (Freeman, 2000), and this is the preferred approach to teaching EFL in KSA. Eslami and Fatahi (2008) reported that teachers who saw teaching instructions as different to their current methods 'rated them as more difficult to implement and therefore less important' (p. 3). Teachers with low teacher-efficacy maintained the approach to 'play it safe' as this is the pedagogical approach they had always used. Adopting more innovative teaching strategies would have moved them out of their comfort zone, and, thus, reduced their level of self-perceived effectiveness as an EFL teacher. However, this approach is contrary to that expected by the KSA (Alqahtani et al., 2020; MoE, 2002, 2003).

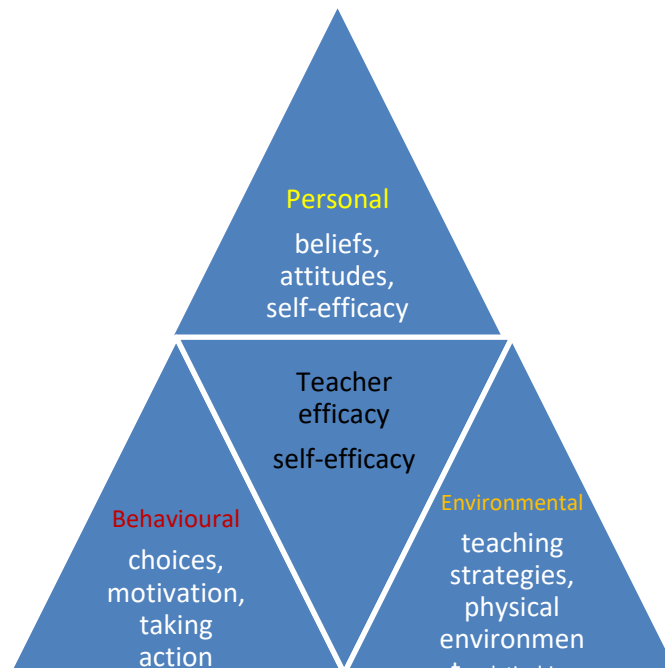
Khan (2011) identified that teachers in KSA have a minimal role in curriculum development and how to implement the EFL curriculum. Teachers have little control over the

resources they use to teach English, and so they may feel high teacher-efficacy in that they perceive that they are maintaining the guidelines from the MoE. These teachers tend to take an authoritarian approach (Aldhafri & Alrajhi, 2014) where control over the learner is paramount. In contrast, with the CLT approach, teachers tend to use a more authoritative student-centred approach (Caprara et al., 2006; Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Hoang's (2018) study found, in line with those cited above, that teachers' efficacy was raised when they undertook additional EFL training that included opportunities to learn more CLT strategies, resulting in more positive student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. These findings concur with those of Choi and Lee (2018), for example, who found that the more accumulated positive experiences of a particular practice (in this research teaching EFL), the higher efficacy teachers had.

3.5 Components of the Triadic Model that Affect EFL in KSA

The triadic reciprocal causation model can be used to identify the recursive nature of interactions in EFL education (see Figure 3.2). The current research explored the teaching practices of EFL teachers in KSA to understand why they make the choices they do for their teaching. Another aspect of this research explored how EFL students in KSA schools are situated in relation to the triadic model. The following section provides an overview from the literature about the relationships of the components of the triadic model for teaching and learning in KSA.

Figure 3.2 *Teacher-efficacy in the Triadic Reciprocal Causation Model*



Interactions within social situations are described in SCT as a process (or processes) within the triadic reciprocal causation model (Bandura, 1986). To understand the model, one has to understand the three elements of the model: personal factors, environmental factors, and behavioural factors (see Figure 3.1). Personal factors include such elements as attitudes, goal setting, beliefs, and self-efficacy. With self-efficacy, an individual has a conviction that they can overcome an obstacle if they work hard (Bandura, 1986, 2000). A teacher who believes that he/she is successful in his/her teaching, for example, would have high teacher-efficacy whereas a teacher who is struggling with teaching would have low efficacy.

Another element of the personal factors in the triadic reciprocal causation model is beliefs. According to the model, beliefs are enhanced when one experiences success. In relation to the proposed research, if EFL teachers experience success in their teaching performance then this belief will have an ongoing impact on future performance, in that teachers would be more willing to repeat this success (Li & Walsh, 2011; Mak, 2011). It is proposed in this research

that this belief system is similar for students. Those who experience success in learning English have a belief that they are good at learning English and so would want to repeat this success. While the teacher's approach affects learning, the learner responds to that approach in some way. Therefore, there is a reciprocal relationship here. If, for example, the teacher has a harsh approach, a student may become fearful and withdraw from actively participating in learning. These interactions would then have an impact on both teachers' and students' goal setting (wanting/not wanting to teach/learn English) resulting in the individual adopting a particular attitude and beliefs about teaching or learning English.

Environmental factors in the triadic reciprocal causation model include such elements as the physical environment and teaching instruction. Schunk and Zimmerman (2006) described that "one's movements can change the environment and have an effect on how one thinks about oneself; the environment can affect what we do and think, and how we think can have an effect on what we do and how we view the environment" (p. 356). Triadic reciprocity indicates that individuals are both products and producers of their environment. The instructional approach a teacher takes (producer) is an environmental factor that influences student learning (product). Teachers are also producers of the learning environment. The instructional approach (e.g., GTM or CLT) and the resources they use for teaching English influence how they teach and also on how students learn.

Another environmental factor is the relationships that people form, where success is seen to be affected by the people they connect with. When an individual sees a peer succeed, their thinking may change about their own ability to succeed in a similar way (Bandura, 1993; Schunk & Pajares, 2002). As Bandura (1982, 1986, 1993) noted, observing the achievements of others has a positive impact on people. Vicarious experience through peer observation can assist teachers to measure their own beliefs about their abilities to successfully achieve their goals. However, when people perceive their peers as being unsuccessful despite persevering,

these perceptions can impact negatively on them (Bandura, 1986, 1993). They may choose to avoid engaging in that behaviour as so avoid a similar failure. Such influences are based on how proximal the peers are and how comparable to self they are. It is described that the more distant the model is, the less influence it would have in influencing behaviour. Further, the peer must be a role model capable of achieving what is desired by the observer (Bandura, 1993; Swanson, 2012). From my experience as an EFL teacher and supervisor, I have found that most teachers in Saudi schools are autonomous and do not have opportunities to observe fellow teachers. As there has been no research in how Saudi EFL teachers interact with one another to share pedagogies and resources, how much influence these kinds of relationships have on teachers' willingness and belief in their capabilities to teach English was explored in the research.

Behavioural factors in the triadic reciprocal causation model include patterns of motivation for learning, making choices and taking actions. It is suggested that behaviour is either controlled or determined by the individual through their cognitive processes. Individuals, through their behaviour, influence others, act in response to the actions of others and act in coordination with the behaviours of others (Bandura, 1986, 1997). In SCT it is suggested that people engage in behaviours that they perceive will allow them to achieve desired goals and avoid adverse outcomes (Atkinson, 1964). If an individual perceives that their actions will not achieve success or that they feel incapable of achieving success then they will avoid doing the task. If, however, the individual feels that they can achieve success then they will put the effort in to complete the task.

Bandura (1997) suggested that all three factors (personal, environmental, and behavioural) in the triadic reciprocal causation model and their interactions greatly influence learning. He suggested that possible outcomes of behaviour are critical because they affect goals, effort, persistence, and self-efficacy. It should be stated here that any form of cognition

research is yet to be done in the Saudi EFL context (Alghanmi & Shukri, 2016). The understanding of EFL teacher's cognition is rare in the country and not well understood in the Saudi Arabia education sector compared to some other countries. Thus, there was a need to learn more about how teachers in KSA perceive their roles in order to better understand how they can better support students to learn English.

As the name of the model suggests there is a reciprocal interaction between the three factors of personal, environmental, and behavioural where they operate in collectively influencing ways. The following describes how some of these interactions occur. The P↔B (person-behaviour) interaction includes the bi-directional influences of the individual's personal factors (including thoughts, emotions, expectations, beliefs, self-perceptions, dreams, and intentions) and ones' behaviour (Bandura, 1986). As a concrete example, a student has developed a strategy to learn 10 English words in preparation for an upcoming spelling test. The student has taken active agency to learn the words in the belief that he can successfully pass the test. Because he believes he will be successful this student has the motivation to proceed with his study strategy. The outcome of the individual's action will affect his thoughts and emotions. Success in achieving his goals or failure to do so will have a different impact on future motivation to work towards achieving similar goals.

The bi-directional interaction between P↔E (person-environment) can be seen in the way people are socialized at home and, more formally, in an educational environment. Human expectations (based on school rules, for example), beliefs, and cognitive competencies are shaped and modified by social influences and physical constructions within the environment. According to the triadic reciprocal causation model, a Saudi school would be deemed as an imposed environment as, individually, teachers and students generally have no say in its organisation. Additionally, if school attendance is compulsory, students behave accordingly and attend school. Although they may not want to go to school, their personal beliefs have little

sway in this circumstance. According to Bandura (1986) social influences carry information and activate emotional reactions through modelling, instruction, and social persuasion. Reciprocally, environmental factors evoke different reactions from an individual's choices and behaviours. In discussing how a student makes certain choices, Bandura illustrated the person-environment interplay in a situation where a student who has previously not enjoyed going to school had grown to like school because of "contact with instructors using infectious enthusiasm" (Bandura, 1986, p.32). Extending this scenario further, students may opt to learn a subject they had previously disliked (such as English) based on the positive modelling of a teacher.

Within the B↔E (behaviour-environment) interactions Bandura contends that people are both products and producers of their environment (Bandura, 1986). A person's behaviour will therefore determine certain aspects of their environment (such as a teacher organising a classroom to suit their approach to teaching), and behaviour is, in turn, modified through that environment (how the teacher teaches and how students learn in this environment). Teachers' environmental expectations will be imposed (e.g., teachers' expectations) with students having to choose a course of action (behaviour) to achieve a desired goal.

Because of the reciprocal nature of the many interactions that occur within different contexts there can be no fixed pattern for interactions (Bandura, 2006). Therefore, a range of interactions in different environments must be considered to understand the processes for teaching and learning English in KSA. The pedagogy that a teacher chooses should be effective in enabling both the teacher to teach and the students to learn the desired objectives. It is suggested in SCT that if one method or strategy fails, there are alternative choices the teacher can make to help students learn, although the making of alternative choices may be contingent upon whether the teacher has the confidence to try another approach or adapt the resources. Teachers who have a belief in their capabilities to teach EFL, for example, will not give-up in

supporting student learning even when faced with challenging situations. Similarly, students will persevere in learning English when they feel confident that they can achieve success.

3.6 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has explored Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) in relation to EFL teaching and learning in KSA. In particular, the components of the triadic reciprocal causation model have been discussed as an explanation of the elements that contribute to success or failure in the classroom. Of particular importance, teacher-efficacy in relation to teachers' preparedness to teaching English as a foreign language to students in the KSA has been highlighted as a crucial component. Teachers who have the passion to teach even before they receive formal training are said to have the highest level of teacher-efficacy, where they are able to identify their capabilities and use their power to produce the desired results. Teacher-efficacy creates the confidence in teachers that enables them to choose the appropriate teaching method and be able to create a positive engagement and relationship with learners.

It is evident that self-efficacy does not only apply to teachers but also to students. Students with high self-efficacy perform better than those with low self-efficacy. Though the teacher is said to be the main player in the education sector, some countries have done little to empower the teachers to work in developing not only their own teacher-efficacy to teach, but also their skills in helping students develop self-efficacy to learn. This research explored how confident EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia are in relation to teaching EFL and what they and their students believe is needed to increase achievement rates.

Chapter 4

Research Design

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to explore English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching and learning practices in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) to determine what constitutes effective teaching and learning of EFL. Using Bandura's (1977, 1986) triadic reciprocal causation model as a framework, a focus for exploration was the role of efficacy for teaching and learning English in KSA. This chapter describes the research methods that were used to conduct the study and how the theoretical framework underpins the methodology. The chapter begins with the introduction to the research design (Section 4.1). This is followed by a description of the research method, which is a social constructivist paradigm (Section 4.2). A rationale for using a qualitative approach is provided (Section 4.3) with further description of the case study design used (Section 4.4). The procedures for recruiting participants are then described (Section 4.5), followed by a description of the data collection techniques (Section 4.6.1) with a break-down of how each technique was done (e.g., document review: Section 4.6.2; semi-structured interviews: Section 4.6.3; observations: Section 4.6.4; and focus group interviews: 4.6.5). A description of the data analysis procedures then follows (Section 4.7), and the process of transcribing and translating the data from Arabic into English (Section 4.8). This section is followed by a rationale for claiming the research's authenticity (Section 4.9) and the ethical considerations associated with the research (Section 4.10), before the conclusion (Section 4.11). As a re-cap, the research questions guiding this project are described below.

Main Question: *What factors contribute to the teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia?*

The research sub-questions are:

- (a) What resources enable or hinder EFL teaching and learning in KSA classrooms?
- (b) What are the pedagogical practices that enable EFL teachers' efficacy within the context of schools in Saudi Arabia?
- (c) What pedagogical practices inhibit EFL teachers' efficacy?
- (d) What factors enable or hinder EFL students' efficacy to learn English effectively in the KSA?

The chapter will begin by justifying a qualitative research approach for this study.

4.2 Research Method: A Social Constructivist Paradigm

The research paradigm describes the basic premises of the research (Creswell, 2008, 2012; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). It is the shared ideas/concepts that guide others on how the research was done (Bogna et al., 2019). This research used a constructivist paradigm. Although the triadic reciprocal causation model was derived from social cognitive theory, Bandura (1977, 1986, 1993, 1997) considered himself a constructivist theorist. A common thread between the two theories is that both equate learning with creating meaning from experiences. Therefore, it was appropriate to consider this research within the framework of constructivism.

A key assumption of constructivism is that individuals construct their own realities and meanings through interpretations of their own experiences (Merriam, 1988). Lincoln & Guba (2000) suggested that these realities are constructed socially, culturally, and historically. In the context of the current research, the perspectives of Saudi teachers and students were sought to understand the teaching and learning practices of EFL in KSA. This research explored how this group of participants' social, cultural, and historical context that interplay within the triadic reciprocal causation model (Bandura, 1977, 1986). As was portrayed in the literature review, the perspectives of these participants align with characteristics of Saudi culture (including its education) and, therefore, are different to those familiar with Western cultural features and education. Therefore, the research design needed to reflect this. The design of the research was

structured to reflect how the personal, behavioural, and environmental components of the triadic reciprocal causation model could be revealed in some measure through a constructivist lens.

In line with this, a constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology which recognises that there are multiple realities (Merriam, 1998). Lincoln and Guba (2000) described this as a multi-voiced reconstruction of the research focus under examination. Therefore, it was necessary to hear the voices of both EFL teachers and students. In addition, my own experience as an EFL teacher in KSA should be noted, as there is inevitably an interplay between the participants' experiences and my own and this could have an impact on how I gathered and interpreted the data. Merriam (1988) described this interplay in this way, "Meaning is embedded in people's experiences and this meaning is mediated through the investigator's own perceptions" (p. 6). Being aware of my own experiences and beliefs about EFL teaching and learning, I have endeavoured to consciously not allow my perspectives and personal meanings to interfere in the data collection and analysis of the current research as much as possible. Where concerns emerged, I consulted with my two PhD supervisors to remove personal bias wherever possible.

This research was conducted through a social constructivist lens to understand and interpret the experiences of teaching and learning EFL in KSA. A social constructivist approach (Vygotsky, 1978) recognises that individual lives are constructed on a foundation of many truths, experiences, values, and beliefs. The meanings people construct to understand their lives become their realities. How teachers and students understand these realities within the context of EFL teaching and learning are based on their own histories and social experiences (Patton, 2002). The interpretations of their realities are how people make sense of their lives and activities in their lives. The social constructivist lens provided an appropriate framework to explore data within the triadic reciprocal causation model for this research.

4.3 Using a Qualitative Approach

This study adopted a qualitative research approach. As a paradigm, the qualitative approach attempts to incorporate a set of beliefs that act to position the research in a larger body of research (Bogna et al., 2019). Lincoln and Guba (2000) suggested that qualitative inquiry could include critical theory, constructivism, positivism and post-positivism, depending on the purpose of the research. As Creswell (2012) has noted, a qualitative approach to research is helpful for exploring and understanding a social phenomenon in a natural setting through the data. A qualitative approach was appropriate because this study was about understanding EFL teaching and learning strategies based on teachers' and students' perceptions of their experiences, understandings, beliefs, and practices. Qualitative research has been applied in many disciplines, and in particular in intellectual disciplines such as educational research (Mason, 2002). According to Mackey and Gass (2015) a qualitative approach is based on descriptive data that does not make regular use of statistical procedures. The aim of qualitative research is to gain a large and deep perspective of the phenomena being explored as it is defined and interpreted by participants. Accordingly, it is inferred that meanings are embedded within experiences of the individuals, and the qualitative researcher's mission is to interpret and bring about an understanding of such meanings from the participants' perspectives. A limitation of the qualitative approach might be that the data gathered might be based solely on subjective views and meanings (Bogna et al., 2019). Therefore, a more rigorous approach to data collection needs to be considered (as described below) in order to gain a wider understanding of the phenomenon being explored.

As described above, the usefulness of using a qualitative approach for the current research was that Bandura's (1977, 1986) triadic reciprocal causation model considers the social structures of actions and beliefs. This was considered the basis for exploring the efficacy beliefs of EFL teachers and students learning English. Recent research on teacher efficacy

(Bagheri, 2020; Koçoğlu, 2011; Phan & Locke, 2015) has indicated that how participants' cultural and linguistic backgrounds form their perceptions on a topic needs to be taken into account. Such an approach allows the researcher to build rich descriptions of meaning through participants' stories (Merriam, 1998). It was necessary in this research to consider the cultural boundaries of the context of the participants' lives. Through the process of qualitative research, the complexities of the social and personal impact of teaching and learning EFL in KSA could best be revealed. Qualitative research is not expected to measure or generalize variables, rather, it describes, investigates, and explores a phenomenon in detail. Therefore, a qualitative inquiry was deemed the best fit to present the natural and holistic picture of this phenomena. This picture of teaching and learning EFL in KSA was constructed using a case study design. The nature of the research design is described next.

4.4 Research Design: Case Study

A case study design was used in this qualitative research project. A qualitative case study is used to study any social phenomenon focusing on a single person, social setting, group, or institution. According to Merriam (1998) a qualitative case study design is common in educational research as it represents a bounded system. A bounded system focuses on the particularities and uniqueness of a particular group of people under study (in this research, the bounded system included teachers and students of EFL in KSA). The benefit of a case study design is that it allows the researcher to examine the phenomena in greater depth and detail to gain a clearer picture of participants' lived experiences and perspectives. It was important to explore teachers' perspectives as they have their own culture and language experiences (mastery experiences) which influence their thinking and understanding in relation to teaching English as a foreign language. EFL teachers in KSA are given professional development and training (social persuasion), which also influences their beliefs and practices about teaching EFL in KSA. Within the micro context of the school, teachers' interactions with other teachers

(social persuasions, vicarious experiences) and the expectations of the educational authorities (social persuasion) affect the way EFL is understood and practiced. In addition to hearing teachers' voices, it was also important to hear the perspectives of students who are learning English to determine what possible enablers or barriers affect their self-efficacy as EFL learners.

Merriam (1998, 2001) described that a case study is non-experimental, descriptive, and inductive in nature. The results in a case study are presented using words and pictures qualitatively, in contrast to analysing quantitative data, which are not commonly used in case studies. Case studies are descriptions of and by the participants who explain their real-life experiences (Cohen, et al., 2000, 2013). It was, therefore, important that participants in the current research be allowed to speak about events and situations for themselves rather than having these perspectives be largely interpreted, evaluated, or judged by the researcher. However, Cohen et al. (2013) pointed out that case studies should not be perceived as unsystematic or merely illustrative portrayals of people's lives but that they should be used to provide a deep understanding of those lives being studied. Therefore, while data collection and analysis in case studies should be carried out systematically and rigorously they should also have the welfare and well-being of the participants in mind.

Schools are located in a particular community and students come from different and unique family backgrounds, making this bounded system of human interactions a complex social space (Merriam, 1988). In the KSA, the school authorities have great power to affect the way the system works and the process of how teaching and learning is undertaken. Teachers have little power over curriculum. How this system impacts on teachers' and learners' self-efficacy in relation to the subject of EFL was important for this research.

While there is ample research to promote the use of case studies in educational research, there are also limitations. The main limitation is that the key investigator of such research

generally has a vested interest in the research focus and is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis (Merriam, 1988). To a certain extent this was true in the current study. The researcher is a trained EFL teacher in KSA. To minimise the potential for any bias, the researcher has outlined his position in the research in Chapter 1 and has stated in this chapter that he is consciously aware of his position in the data collection and analysis processes. Every effort has been made to remove or limit as much as humanly possible any bias his position may bring to the research. However, the researcher has also used his knowledge and experience to consider how to do the research, for example, what theoretical framework to use to underpin the research, what methodology to use, particularly how to analyse the data within the chosen framework of the triadic reciprocal causation model. The following section describes the recruitment of participants for the research. This will be followed by a description of the data collection procedures.

4.5 Recruitment of Participants

The participants of this study were three EFL teachers and their students at a selected secondary school in Makkah AlMukarmah state, Saudi Arabia, as well as the principal of the school. According to the literature on research methodology, obtaining the gatekeeper's permission is crucial (Denscombe, 2014; King & Horrocks, 2018; Roberts-Holmes, 2018). A gatekeeper is someone who grants or denies permission to access potential participants for research. In my case, in order to access the school in Saudi Arabia, I gained permission from the Educational Directorate to which the participating school belongs. To obtain this permission, I lodged my application at the Head of Directorate of Education along with my ethics application (written in Arabic) (see Appendix A) which contained a three-page research proposal explaining the nature and purpose of my study and the research tools I proposed to use. For the study to be successful and to recruit as many participants as possible, the cooperation of the Directorate General of Education Affairs was critical. In preparation for the

visits to the school, contact was made with the Department of Education in the district where the study took place to request a list of the school names and staff from the administrative authority to calculate the required participants. It was planned for the researcher to visit at least three schools, but COVID-19 restrictions did not allow for this. Instead, the research was a bounded system within one school.

After obtaining permission to conduct the research from the Department of Education, the researcher then held a meeting with the principal and the English supervisor at the school to have a brief talk about the research. This discussion included describing its aims and objectives as well as the data collection processes and the ethics permission to collect data (see Appendix B). Once permission was gained by the school, the second step was to recruit participants. Names provided by the supervisor were contacted and invited to participate in the research. The participants were given an information package about my study, where I introduced myself and the aims of my study. Included in the package were consent scripts participants were required to sign for me to get ethical permission from them to be participants in the study. Initially, it was anticipated that nine to twelve teachers (approximately 3-4 from each school) would be invited to participate. However, due to the COVID-19 restrictions, only three teachers were recruited, all working in the same school. The principal granted permission for students at the school to be approached and students were invited to participate in the research. Twenty-one students agreed to participate (divided into 3 focus group interviews) and were given information about the aims of the research and ethical consent scripts to sign. For cultural reasons, all English language teachers, and their students, were males because the teaching of male learners in Saudi Arabia can be carried out only by male teachers. It should be noted that the researcher is also male. In total, 1 school principal, 3 EFL teachers and 21 students agreed to participate in the research, as shown in Table 4.1 below. To distinguish the data in relation to each response given, each participant was assigned a specific code. An

example of this is, there were three teachers and so their data was coded as derived from either Teacher 1 (T1), Teacher 2 (T2), or Teacher 3 (T3). Similar Coding was assigned to the 21 students who participated, ranging from Student 1 (S1) through to Student 21 (S21). Assigning codes was an ethical consideration to ensure that participant identification would be anonymous, and the data would be kept confidential.

Table 4.1 *Research Participants*

Participants	Number	Identifiers
Principal	1	P1
EFL Teachers	3	T1 T2 T3
EFL Students	21	S1 Etc. S21

The following section describes the data collection procedures for this research.

4.6.1 Data Collection Procedures

In this study, four data collection methods were employed to capture the complex social world of a school and its influence on the teaching and learning of EFL. The data gathering techniques included the reviewing of relevant EFL documents (e.g., MoE policy on EFL teaching, and curriculum textbooks/workbooks used in class lessons) that guide EFL teaching and learning in KSA, conducting semi-structured interviews with the school principal and three classroom teachers, conducting classroom observations (one per class), and conducting focus group discussions with students (see Table 4.2 below). According to Mason (2002), in qualitative research, knowledge is constructed by enquiring and interpreting the words, opinions, experiences, and conceptions of people in a social context by asking and observing people. Therefore, a range of data was needed for analysis.

Table 4.2: *Data collection Procedures*

One School in one suburb	Data collection procedure
Ministry of Education policy on EFL teaching Curriculum content offered in suburban secondary schools	Review of Documents: Downloaded from website Documents pertaining to the academic work, the teaching and learning: 4 Worksheets, lesson plans, textbook; assessment practices
1 School Principal 3 Teachers	Individual interviews (45 to 60 mins each)
At least observation of one class per teacher,	Observations
21 Secondary Students (7 per focus group)	3 Focus group interviews (1 hour/focus group)

Data collection began with a review of the MOE documents pertaining to EFL. The researcher downloaded these documents prior to travelling to Saudi Arabia to provide some background information on the roles and responsibilities of school staff and to understand what resources teachers were currently using in their classrooms. These documents were referred to continually throughout the data analysis to ensure that no assumptions of what teachers/the principal should be doing were made. After gaining permission to conduct the research in Saudi schools, the researcher travelled to KSA to do the classroom observations, individual interviews with the teachers/principal and focus groups with the students. The observations were done before the interviews and this data went through a constant comparative analysis with what was recommended should happen in the government documents. The interviews with the teachers were then held. These were transcribed and analysed before doing the focus groups with the students. There was a constant comparative model of data analysis done

throughout the various stages of data collection to ensure that data was focused on responding to the research questions. The data were collected in January 2020 when the researcher returned for a short stay in KSA. As described above, the collection of data was curtailed due to the need for the researcher to return to Australia as the country was going into lockdown due to COVID-19 restrictions. The following section describes the data collection techniques in greater detail.

4.6.2 Document Review

In the first phase of the research, I reviewed documents pertaining to teaching EFL in the KSA (see Appendix C). Schwadt (1997) defined a document review as a procedure that is used in analysing and interpreting data collected from documents that are relevant to a specific study. In the current research these documents included education policy and the prescribed EFL teaching and learning materials. According to Merriam (2001), examples of possible documents include letters, memoranda, agendas, administrative documents, newspapers, articles, textbooks, or any document that is important to the study. Simons (2009) described that documents can be both formal policy documents but also “anything written or produced about the site” which will help inform the research (Simons, 2009, p.63). The review of the documents will draw on Bacchi’s (2009) “what’s the problem represented to be” (WPR) approach. Bacchi’s (2009) approach focuses on problematising policy issues by uncovering implicit representations within them. Bacchi (2009) sees policy documents as prescriptive texts, which tell us what to do. It was important in this research to draw some comparisons to what is prescribed in education policy and what is prescribed in teaching and learning materials to determine if there is an alignment or a dissonance. The purpose for reviewing the documents was to help to create a clearer understanding of the expectations for teaching and learning EFL in the KSA as a mandated subject in schools, and how these were operationalised as viewed through the classroom observations.

Merriam (1988) argued that the process of collecting data from documents is similar in qualitative research to both observation and interview methods due to its systematic nature. A purpose for the document review in this research was to gather data which would help in discovering reliable and valuable data relevant to teaching EFL in KSA. Merriam further added that since the document is not produced specifically for research purposes, it allows the researcher to be more flexible in their consideration of what is relevant to the research. In other words, these data offered insights into how the policies and textbooks provided the foundations for the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia.

4.6.3 Semi-Structured Individual Interviews

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1998) and Mason (2002), an interview can be defined as a conversation between two people with the aim of gaining more information. For the current research, teachers were asked about their EFL teaching strategies and what support or barriers they perceived as impacting on their teaching. The research questions are presented in Appendix. E. The principal of the school was asked the same interview questions as the three teachers. Questions to learners were about taking EFL as a subject, their mastery in the language, and issues they perceive as significant to communication.

According to Patton (2002) the most popular process for conducting interviews is the use of open-ended, semi-structured interviews, and this was the process followed in the current research. This format allowed for the possibility of adjustments to the questions to be made while conducting interviews as issues emerge. In the standardised open-ended approach, the exact wording of questions is determined in advance, and the questions are fully structured and specific. All participants are asked the same questions in the same way and in the same order in which they were written. Prior to conducting the interviews, the researcher prepared a set of guiding questions and prompts (see Appendix D). Prompts are used to follow up interesting developments to let the interviewee elaborate on certain issues (Dornyi, 2007; Merriam,

2009). Semi-structured interviews create a safe environment in which the EFL teachers and students felt comfortable to share their stories and experiences about teaching and learning English. Time was arranged with my interviewees to meet in a quiet office at the school for the teacher interviews, and in an empty classroom for students in the focus group discussions. All interviews were audio-recorded.

As I have experience as an EFL teacher from the KSA, my position in this research included me being an 'insider' in that I have extensive knowledge of being an EFL teacher so am very familiar with terminology and practices of EFL teachers in KSA. According to Hockey (1993, p. 199, in Hellowell, 2006) an insider interviewer plays a crucial part in an interview, which allows the participants to be in a recognisable environment where they feel comfortable to disclose extra elements and aspects of their lives to someone deemed compassionate and familiar with the area of EFL. I believe that I had access to information from participants as an EFL teacher myself that someone not in the same position might have. According to Hellowell (2006), Mercer (2007) and Merton (1972), the insider interviewer is the person who has got a priori knowledge of the society and its inhabitants. The insider is an individual whose life history and cultural context has a familiarity with the group being studied, while the outsider refers to a researcher who does not possess any in-depth knowledge of the history and culture of the researched context. As a former teacher, and now supervisor of EFL in the KSA, I adopted the insider interviewer role. As I positioned myself as a researcher with insider knowledge, it was important for me to continually reflect on my role as a data collector and on the rigor, I needed to analyse the data (Simons, 2013). I have endeavoured to keep a constant check that my own biases, values, and beliefs did not overshadow the data collected by checking and rechecking the data analysis and by conferring with my supervisors about my analysis once the data were written up.

4.6.4 Observations

Observation is viewed as an essential technique in qualitative research methodology (Merriam, 1988). The setting for this research was in the three EFL classrooms of the three interviewed teachers where the actual behaviour of the EFL teachers and learners were observed. This data collection procedure involved conducting observations in the class in an unobtrusive and non-judgemental manner that allowed for unbiased analysis and interpretation of the data (Creswell, 2012). To conduct the observations, the researcher sat at the back of the room out of sight of the students as much as possible. This method allowed the researcher to observe how both physical and social contexts influenced the teachers' and students' actions in the class without a constant reminder of the researcher's presence in the class. The study utilised a semi-structured observation protocol that consists of both structured and unstructured observation (Merriam, 2001). The observation templates (Appendix F) included structured observations of a lesson, the instructional practice of the teacher and the student interactions/behaviours. Field notes about the lesson included unstructured observations not identified on the observation protocol, such as a record of additional comments from the observed behaviours. The time of teaching and learning incidents were also be recorded, for example, the start and stop time of English being spoken (or Arabic being spoken).

The template was set up as a simple checklist of observations with a focus on both the teacher and students' actions in the classroom lesson (see Table 4.3 Observation Template/Checklist below). Teacher observations included how well their lesson plan appeared to be prepared, how closely to the lesson plan the teacher stayed, whether the lesson included strategies and activities to grab and maintain student attention, and the kinds of strategies and techniques the teacher used to check student understanding of lesson concepts. Student observations included how much time students had to participate in classroom activities (was there an equal distribution of opportunities to participate?), whether there was a positive

attitude to learning displayed in the class, how much engagement there was for students to practice English, whether they were provided with feedback on their learning and if so how they used this feedback?

Table 4.3 *Observation Template/Checklist*

Category	Actions Observed	1	2	3	4	5
Teacher	Provides a well-prepared lesson plan.					
	Follow steps and timing outlined in the lesson plan.					
	Has precise, clear accent and correct pronunciation.					
	Grabs students' attention and gets them excited about the new topic.					
	Uses enough ICQs to check for students' understanding of the meaning.					
	Makes wrap up/summary activity.					
Student	Have differentiated learning opportunities/activities that meet their needs.					
	Have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, and support.					
	Are seated and arranged in position which facilitates learning.					
	Are tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable.					
	Demonstrate positive attitude about classroom and learning.					
	Are provided assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks.					
	Make connections from content to real life experiences.					
	Develop and practice receptive and/or productive sub-skills appropriate for the age, needs and level.					
Are provided feedback and opportunities to revise/improve work.						
Total points out of 100						
Further comments						

In addition to using the checklist for observations in the classroom, the researcher took extensive notes to use for analysis of what was observed. The notes provided the researcher's initial reactions to the observations and provided valuable information to fill in the gaps that the checklists could not contain.

According to Cohen et al. (2007), observations can be done in two different ways: participant observation that involves being part of the activities and non-participant observation where the observer is not part of the activities. In my case, since I did not participate in the activities, I took on the role of a non-participant observer. My observations were conducted during the standard 45-minute lessons. The results gathered from the observations helped in complementing the data collected from the teacher interviews and student focus groups to

determine if information provided in the interviews was consistent or different from what teachers and students do or engage in during lessons as a compare/contrast protocol.

There are both advantages and disadvantages to using observations as a data collection technique (Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2012; Simons, 2013). Some of the advantages include data that cannot be solicited from interviews can be observed through participant behaviour; the observer can see things that might escape other people in the setting; and observations can provide a holistic perspective of events. Disadvantages include participants changing their behaviour when they know they are being observed. Because classrooms are busy and dynamic environments, the observer may miss events as they happen in real time. In addition, there is inevitably a built-in bias in what the researcher chooses to observe. A key consideration is that the observer needs to understand the whole cultural system of the setting to understand what they are observing. Considering both the advantages and disadvantages of doing observations, the researcher believed that the advantages outweighed the disadvantages and included these in the data. He is a Saudi teacher himself, has experience in the classroom as an EFL teacher, and so is familiar with the culture and practices of EFL education in KSA.

4.6.5 Focus Group Interviews

A focus group refers to a small group of individuals purposefully created to respond to interview questions to address a specific topic (Patton, 2002). Krueger and Casey (2000) defined a focus group as a discussion which involves a group of people with an aim to gain more understanding on an issue. Focus groups are widely used in qualitative research (Creswell, 2012; Dornyei, 2007; Punch, 2009). The environment of a focus group enables participants to discuss specific issues and to be challenged about their opinions by members of the group. Dornyei (2007) and Krueger (1994) described that the interactions of members of a focus group can lead to a high-quality discussion, can produce high-quality information, and allow for in-depth discussion about issues. Creswell (2008) supported the idea that some of the

advantages of a focus group are that it enables participants to discuss issues regarding the topic, it allows participants to respond to the topic in a group rather than individually, and it provides the researcher with greater information, especially when all participants agree on some issues and participate as a group effectively. A further advantage of using a focus group is that the researcher can collect information from a range of participant perspectives at the one time (Creswell, 2012). In this study, focus groups were used to collect data from students learning EFL in a Saudi secondary school.

As indicated above, to support having students feel comfortable to participate in a focus group, I asked the school administration to provide a separate room for conducting the discussions, in accordance with the time schedules of the school. The participants were allowed to participate if they brought along a signed document indicating their consent to participate in the research voluntarily (Appendix F). As the focus groups were audiotaped (Gale et al., 2013), the participants were given assurances that their names and the data collected would remain anonymous and confidential. This is common practice in any ethical research but proved to help the students to feel relaxed and to reduce any possible nervousness.

To comply with protocol, an interview guide was created (Creswell, 2012; Patton, 2002). The interview guide involved revealing the subject to be discussed to the participants, and it allowed for the systematic collection of data (Appendix G). Open-ended questions were used by the researcher about English language learning and about teaching and learning strategies that encourage students to learn English. The researcher did not ask questions such as whether students approved of specific teaching motivational strategies or to comment on a particular teacher to avoid a possible bias from participants. The researcher did ask students to describe any methods used by their teachers that helped to motivate them to learn.

While there are advantages to using focus groups for data gathering, according to Creswell (2012), focus group have several disadvantages. One of the main challenges is that a

researcher can find it hard to take notes and control the group if it involves a high number of participants. The researcher must take control of the discussion to avoid one member of the group dominating the discussion, as all voices should be heard. When interviewing a group, it can be difficult to distinguish between an individual view and a group view, especially when the individual may be influenced by the group behaviour, as might be the case with student peer pressure. Lastly, it is difficult to make generalisations about the research findings because focus groups represent a small sample of a representative population. Another disadvantage of using a focus group is conducting the interviews in a setting where this form of discussion is not the norm. If individuals are not familiar with the focus group process, or with sharing information in a public forum, some participants may feel embarrassed about responding. The researcher kept these possible limitations in mind when conducting the focus group interviews to overcome potential restrictions in data collection. The focus group discussions were recorded to gain a true representation of students' voices. The following section describes the data analysis procedures done for this research.

4.7 Data Analysis Procedures

Qualitative case study research produces a rich, thick set of data from which a descriptive narrative emerges (Huberman, & Miles, 1994). The data for this research was analysed both deductively and inductively (Merriam, 2012; Simons, 2013) through the lens of Bandura's (1977, 1986) triadic reciprocal causation model. Deductive analysis was conducted using the three components of the triadic model, which are: personal, behavioural, and environmental factors, as well as considering how the data may have aligned with the expectations of government expectations in education (Alqahtani et al., 2020; MoE, 2002, 2003). Deductive coding is a process where the researcher has predetermined themes of identity and practice before going into the data in more depth. As the data were analysed in the three themes from the triadic model, the researcher adopted an inductive data analysis strategy to

explore “the general sense of the data” (Creswell, 2012, p. 243). Notes were made of themes emerging from the data, not explicitly sought out.

Themes explored from the deductive coding process from the triadic model were personal factors, which included beliefs, attitudes, and self-efficacy. Themes explored as behavioural factors included motivation, making choices, and taking action. Themes explored as environmental factors included the physical environment, teaching instruction, and relationships. Through inductive analysis, three themes emerged, which were: the role of the teacher, understanding the learner, and using a range of teaching strategies. Although there is not a one-to-one correlation, these data were also analysed in relation to the goals and expectations of the Tatweer reforms (Alqahtani, et al., 2020), and the goals and expectations for education reform in the KSA.

The analysis of qualitative data involves understanding and interpreting statements, which relies on thematic analysis (Creswell & Clark, 2011). A thematic analysis of the data was conducted to identify common ideas expressed by participants (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002). The technique allows the investigator to identify, analyse and discover patterns in the form of themes and topics, and it is a suitable approach in the analysis of the qualitative data. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying and analysing patterns of meaning (themes) in qualitative data. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis is an analytic method, not a methodology as it does not prescribe theoretical assumptions, appropriate research questions and ideal methods of data collection. There are six phases of thematic analysis according to Braun and Clarke (2006). The first phase is where the researchers familiarise themselves with the data. This phase comprises reading and re-reading the data and noting down the initial ideas. The second phase is generating initial codes, and this means coding the interesting features of the data in a systematic way across the whole data set and analysing data that are relevant to each code. The third phase is searching for themes based on the theory,

which involves gathering all data that are relevant to each potential theme. The fourth phase involves reviewing the themes that have been found in the previous phases. The fifth phase is defining and naming themes. The sixth phase, which is also the last phase in the process, is reporting the results of the analysis. The thematic analysis of the interviews with the participants was carried out using the above procedures. In order to gain a deep interpretation of the teaching and learning of EFL in a secondary school in KSA (see Table 4.4) the researcher followed this process across the different data collection techniques and was constantly going back-and-forth between these data sets to determine what factors from the triadic model were described, how they were described, and how this data fit with data gained from other techniques.

Table 4.4 *Research Themes*

Themes	Deductive	Samples	Inductive Themes	Samples
	<i>Personal:</i> Beliefs Attitudes Self-efficacy (teacher efficacy)	<i>Personal</i> I feel confident using a teacher-centred approach to learning (T3) (- has high efficacy for this approach, could also be behavioural – making choices about his approach to teach, or environmental – teaching instruction)	The role of the teacher	The teacher's role – who is in control the whole time in the classroom (<i>Personal - Beliefs, attitude, could be high/low teacher efficacy – Behavioural could relate to motivation to teach, making choices</i>)
	<i>Behavioural</i> Motivation Making choices Taking action	<i>Behavioural</i> One of these factors is using the Arabic language or mother tongue for teaching and learning (<i>Making choices, could also be personal – beliefs about teaching or environmental – teaching instruction</i>)	Understanding the learner	That textbook is not designed based on students' needs (<i>Environmental --Teaching instruction, taking action, Personal - beliefs</i>)
	<i>Environmental</i> Physical Teaching Instruction Relationships	<i>Environmental</i> We just have a few minutes to share in the classroom, just to answer the questions (<i>Relationships in the classroom, could also be beliefs</i>)	Using teaching strategies	There is not enough time to place students into groups so that they can practice their English (<i>Personal – beliefs, attitudes, Behavioural – taking action, Environmental – teaching instruction</i>)

As can be seen from Table 4.4, there was overlap in data when considered deductively through the three elements of the triadic reciprocal causation model and when paired with the themes that emerged from the inductive coding. An example below shows that the data: *I feel confident using a teacher-centred approach to learning* (T3), can be clearly coded as teacher-efficacy. There is little doubt that T3 is describing his sense of confidence (efficacy) in the approach to teaching he has adopted. However, the data could also be coded as behavioural in that this confidence leads the teacher to make pedagogical choices and environmental decisions in keeping with the teacher-centred approach, which dictates what instructional strategies will be used. This analysis reveals the reciprocal nature of the data within the framework of the triadic model, making it necessary to complete both deductive and inductive data analysis.

4.8 Transcription and translation

Cross-Lingual / Cross-Cultural Research: Because the researcher used the Arabic language for the interviews and focus group questions and spoke Arabic with the participants throughout the research process, cross-lingual/cross-cultural considerations for doing research must be considered. The interview questions were posed in Arabic to allow participants to think and respond in their native language, Arabic. This procedure helped in avoiding participants' misunderstanding of statements due to cultural and linguistic differences. An audio recorder was used in the study in gathering data from the individual interviews and focus group discussions. There were then converted into a textual format (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Gale et al. 2013). Although transcribing is a challenging task, it helped the researcher in becoming familiar with the data (Gale et al., 2013).

It is paramount for the researcher conducting the investigation to share a common cultural background with the participants, in this case the Saudi culture, to reduce chances of errors due to misunderstanding or misinterpretation of data (Larkin, et al., 2007). In this case, the researcher is fluent in the Saudi language, which promoted an ease of communication.

Additionally, the investigator shares the same cultural background as the participants, which contributed to the reduction in potential threats, thus improving the reliability of the research data (Choi, et al., 2012). Furthermore, to ensure the validity of the data collected from this study, the transcribed interviews were reviewed by another professional translator who has mastered both languages: English and Arabic.

Studies show that there are difficulties in the translation process associated with qualitative research (Temple & Young, 2004). The main challenge associated with the interview arises during translation, which leads to misinterpretation, and, hence, loss of data. Consequently, it was essential to conduct translation from Arabic to English for both quotes and notes of the EFL process from participants' responses. The aim of transcribing was to capture the meaning and not the exact words due to differences in syntax and word structure between the two languages (Filipe, 2009). Filipe further suggested that in such instances, the researcher ought to make alterations by correcting the missing pieces, thus making the statements more comprehensible to individuals who are not familiar with the culture and language. According to Filipe, getting the intended meaning is more important than the exact word-for-word translation of information. This was a procedure that I applied in this study. Furthermore, I used various means in ensuring effective translation of the data. One of the methods was involving a consultant (Filipe, 2009) who is conversant with the Arabic language as well as English to review the transcriptions. Their role was to examine, review, and make suggestions on the verbal extracts and the English version of the data.

4.9 Research Authenticity

To ensure there is rigor to qualitative research, authenticity and trustworthiness needs to be considered (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Authenticity includes the concept of fairness, respecting participants' perspectives and empowering them to act. Authenticity lends its weight to the concept of trustworthiness, which includes the research credibility, transferability,

dependability, and confirmability. Credibility has a focus on assuring that the researcher measures what was intended within the framework of the stated methodology (e.g., data collection and analysis) that is fit for the purpose of the research. In this current research the rationale for conducting a qualitative case study has been provided. Credibility can also be enhanced with the inclusion of the researcher's *reflective commentary* (Charmaz, 2006). In the current study, the researcher took extensive notes on the process and products of the one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions as well as the classroom observations to ensure credibility of the results. Transferability is the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations (Merriam, 1998). While this was a small-scale research project where it is not possible to demonstrate how the findings are applicable to other situations and populations, the research does mirror the process of prior qualitative research on teachers and their self-efficacy that can be related to other situations. Transferability is supported by a sufficient, or 'thick' description of the phenomenon under investigation that allows for a proper understanding of the research so that others can compare the phenomenon to their own situations (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Utilising multiple data collection techniques also promotes credibility and conveys the actual situations and contexts being explored. The current research used multiple means of data collection to address this notion of thick description. Dependability occurs through the open and honest reporting of the research processes in detail, which enables a future researcher to replicate the study. The researcher has adhered to this process by reporting the data in as honest and truthful manner as possible, Confirmability ensures that the findings are reported ethically to represent the ideas and perspectives of the participants, rather than the biases and preferences of the researcher. These criteria were guiding factors for the current research.

4.10 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are considered very important in all research (Merriam, 1998). Glesne (2006) argued that ethical considerations are inseparable from the researcher's interactions with both the research participants and the data. Keeping in view the importance of ethical considerations in research, I have followed the ethical guidelines of my university through the different stages of the programme, such as getting permission through proper channels and obtaining the consent from the school leaders and teachers.

Prior to approaching participants to volunteer for the study, ethics approval was sought from the Queensland University of Technology Ethics Committee (Appendix H). I then submitted a letter seeking approval to conduct the research to the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission in Canberra. Following this, I sought permission from the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia to visit the designated schools and meet the teachers and students to collect data for the purposes of the study. This permission was essential. Such a respectful procedure is considered culturally necessary and appropriate. All the participants received a consent form and were given the option to participate or refuse to participate, without having to provide a reason. The focus group students' interviews were prepared in two copies: one in Arabic, and one in English. The participants were able to choose whichever one they preferred. I also obtained consent from the interview participants to record their interviews.

Trust between a researcher and participants of a study is important if the research is to yield results from which any valid conclusions can be drawn. Without such trust, and in situations where participants are under duress, meaningful interpretation of the findings is not possible, especially in qualitative research. Participants also need to be protected from harm, and it must be ensured that they are taking part in the research willingly (Creswell, 2012). To develop trust with my participants I assured them that their privacy and anonymity would be respected regarding their participation in the interviews, focus groups and classroom

observations. This procedure ensured that participants' responses to the interviews would be given willingly rather than under threat of exposure, punishment, adverse consequences, actual or threatened, to coerce them into responding in a particular way or measure (Cohen et al., 2007).

4.11 Limitations of the research design

As with any research done, there needs to be consideration of the possible limitations. With qualitative research, the process is highly dependent on the skills of the researcher. As a novice researcher, I worked closely with my PhD supervisors to ensure that the protocol I was following was that expected for a qualitative study, for example, I needed to ensure that my interpretation of the data was not skewed towards any personal bias I may have as an EFL teacher in KSA. Conversations with my supervisors throughout the data analysis sections were very helpful in keeping any biases I may have had in check.

Rigor may also be a concern with qualitative research. However, I have described in this chapter the rigor I have taken throughout the process for this research and my continual alliance to the considerations for conducting ethical research in schools.

Finally, while a small sample is sometimes a criticism of qualitative research, I believe I have described the depth of the data that was collected and analysed, gathered from multiple perspectives rather than viewing EFL from a single lens. The participant pool for the current research is within the bounds acceptable for qualitative studies.

4.12 Chapter Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter examined the qualitative research design, and discussed case study as a suitable methodology to examine the research focus of this study. A description of the data collection techniques was given as well as the process for analysing the data. The chapter concluded with a description of the ethical considerations for the research. The

following chapter provides the research findings from the documents reviewed for teaching and learning practices of EFL in a Saudi school.

Chapter 5

Document Review

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the data from the document review (Section 5.2) to determine what the expectations are for teaching and learning EFL in Saudi classrooms. The themes respond to my research questions which are:

Main Question: *What factors contribute to the teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia?*

The research sub-question is:

- (a) What resources enable or hinder EFL teaching and learning in KSA classrooms?

5.2 Document Review

This section provides the findings from the document review. The documents reviewed include the *General Objectives of Teaching English* derived from the *English for Saudi Arabia* (MoE, 2002) policy, the Vision 2030 policy (Government of Saudi Arabia, 2017), the *Human Capability Program* (KSA, 2021), *Vision 2030* (2021), and the *Flying High for Saudi Arabia* (Macmillian Education, 2014) teaching and learning package. These documents were reviewed in relation to the perceived benefits they provide in assisting the students to learn English and how the documents are used as appropriate resources for EFL teaching and learning.

5.2.1 The General Objectives of Teaching English

The *General Objectives of Teaching English* are a component of the Ministry of Education's (MoE) policy: *English for Saudi Arabia* (MoE, KSA, 2002) policy. According to the *General Objectives of Teaching English*, the teachers should develop positive attitudes in their students to the learning of English and develop linguistic competence in the use of English

in a wide variety of contexts. Subsequent policies such as the Vision 2030 (KSA, 2017) document and the *Human Capacity Program* (HCP) (MoE, 2021) are intended to harmonise with these general objectives. The HCP program is a component of the Vision 2030 policy. Vision 2030 (KSA, 2017) is an initiative of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. The aim is to develop Saudi Arabia to be a “global model of excellence” (Vision 2017, p. 4) across a wide range of social and economic dimensions. Vision 2030 rests on three pillars. The first pillar is that Saudi Arabia is the centre of the Islamic world. This pillar is reflective of the *General Objective of Teaching English* (MoE, 2002) policy where one of the objectives for the development of linguistic competence in English is so that Saudi Arabians can spread Islamic teaching to the Western world. The second pillar is for Saudi Arabia to become an important global financial and investment hub. This pillar is reflected in the objective for developing linguistic competence so that Saudi Arabians can interact with businesspeople from around the world. It is a recognition that English is the lingua franca of global business. The third pillar is for Saudi Arabia to become an important trade hub for the region. Although the development of competence in English was not referred to specifically in the Vision 2030 document, the educational sector forms an essential part of Vision 2030. Greater accountability is being sought by the MoE for teachers to perform their role in achieving Vision 2030. The Education and Training Evaluation Commission, for example, was established to meet this purpose. One of its functions is the administration of the professional licencing test: “The professional licencing test for teachers is among the tools that positively contribute in enhancing the quality of teacher performance” (ETEC, 2022). Within the educational sector, there has been an increased expenditure for the training of teachers by 1.4% so that they have the skills necessary to develop students in accordance with Vision 2030 (Al Fozan, 2021). As well as having a focus on training students for future lives in their community, this commission is part of a concerted effort to improve the professional competence of the education profession.

The sector plan for education involves a component where there is a shift to digitally mediated education that can be used by both teachers and students, and these documents, directives and resources, provided by the MoE, operate against a departmental policy trend towards the integrating of technology within the learning environment (Assulaimani, 2019). This policy direction commenced with the Tatweer reforms (see Chapter 1). The Tatweer program involves the development of new resources that are orientated for use within a technologically mediated classroom (Assulaimani, 2019) to be used alongside the more traditional resources in the classroom. The Vision 2030 policy document has a mission to “expand the scope of current online services further to include areas such as education” (Al Saud, 2017, p. 70). Although not a significant part of the focus for the current research, it is important to note that EFL education is also part of this reform where technology is expected to be used for both teaching and learning English.

The second document under review was the *Human Capability Program* (HCP) (2021), which is a component of the Vision 2030 (KSA, 2021) document. The HCP focuses on the skill development of Saudi Arabian citizens. The program has been cascaded into a delivery plan that is guiding educational change and development from 2021 to 2025. The final output of the process is the development of a globally competitive citizen (KSA, 2021). The HCP integrates values and skills development. This policy aligns with the English language policy document: *English for Saudi Arabia: Objectives of Teaching English in the Kingdom* (MoE, 2002), where competence in the English language is integrated with the need to be able to do business with other people in the world. The HCP program, while a component of the Vision 2030 policy, rests on three unique pillars. The first pillar was the development of a resilient education system that instils values and develops 21st century skills. Learning English was counted as one of these 21st century skills. The second pillar was orientating the educational system to vocational outcomes for the students. This reflects the neoliberalist trend of education. The vocational

importance of education was reflected in the dominance of vocational outcomes in the objectives for the development of linguistic competence in the *General Objectives of Teaching English* (MoE, 2002). The third pillar was the development of a continual learning ethos that seeks greater inclusion and the development of innovation and entrepreneurship. Once again this reflected the influence of neo-liberal paradigms on the role of education. English is seen as an important element to train the future working force for KSA.

The HCP was broken down into sixteen strategic objectives that were connected to the six Level 1 objectives in Vision 2030 (KSA, 2021). However, specific reference to the role of English occurred only once in the document in relationship to the Pillar 1 objective: to create a learning experience that is more practical and that develops 21st century skills. In the document there was no reference to the specific approaches that should be adopted towards teaching and learning English. Instead, this focus appeared to be contained within school policy documents and the resources that are provided by the MoE, which will be discussed in the next section.

5.2.2 Teaching Documents

The following is a review of the government documents on the recommended manner that teaching strategies should be used in the classroom. Below is an excerpt from the curriculum policy document that contains particular reference to the “Curricular Objectives of Saudi Arabia” (secondary school sector) (MoE, 2017) as a set of performance levels to evaluate the students’ competency in English. Instead of developing evaluation and assessment that is context specific for KSA students, global scales are used to set the performance level, reflecting the MoE’s orientation to measuring a students’ performance based on international scales. An example can be found in the Curricular Objectives of Saudi Arabia (MoE, 2017) document. These curricular objectives were derived from the global scale matrix the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe, 2022). Each of the descriptors

contained at each specific level are subjective and relative. There is, for example, no clarity as to what is meant by “express oneself fluently” or what constitutes “demanding, longer text”. Not having a specific reference about what to evaluate makes it difficult to have a standard interpretation across the Saudi Arabian educational system of a common and consistent level of performance. Because there are no definitions provided for specifics in evaluation, a variety of interpretation can occur, depending on the perception of the teacher marking students’ work. Further, there is no clarity in the policy document as to how the range of different evaluation concepts are to be translated into teaching strategies so that students can work towards common goals. This lack of clarity presented a significant disconnect between policy and practice.

The curriculum document has a high level of jargon and does not cascade the curriculum objectives into clear performance standards that can be easily measured by the teacher. For instance, the policy document stated that the vocabulary range of a student involves a “broad lexical repertoire”. It does not provide information on how to exactly identify what this broad lexical repertoire of English is. How broad is ‘broad’, for example? What should be included or be left out of this broad spectrum? And how is equity achieved if some students display an extensive lexical repertoire of English within this broad spectrum while others may have a much less extensive repertoire of English? For EFL teachers in Saudi Arabian this performance standard is unlikely to be decipherable due to the complex and jargonistic tone of the document, and due in some part to the low competency level of English of many Saudi Arabian English language teachers (Al-Seghayer, 2021). If teachers have low competency in English, what criteria do they use to determine the parameters of a “broad lexical repertoire”? The EFL teacher seeking to operationalise this requirement is likely to struggle to decipher the requirement before any considerations can be made on how it might impact on their choice of classroom strategies to use to teach students to meet these requirements. These standards did not appear in the prescribed classroom materials and teachers’ guide exemplars provided by

the MoE (e.g., the *Flying High* textbook resources) making it more difficult to attain a required consistency in evaluation.

The highly subjective nature of the assessment of students' work prompted by the Curriculum Objectives document was in sharp contrast to the objective assessment under the GTM methodology. A GTM assessment might be structured in this manner:

Abdullah is very angry _____ her boss's decision to sack several members of staff.

Select the right option: about; against; for; by

There is only one clear right answer. The teacher is given the answer in the assessment guidebook so there is little probability that the teacher will have difficulty marking these kinds of student work in their workbooks or on a test. In contrast, questions from the *Flying High* series of EFL teaching and learning resources were open ended and not orientated specifically towards grammar development. The evaluation of the student responses for reading, writing, listening, and speaking is left to the teacher, although there were some answers provided for grammar, comprehension, and vocabulary exercises. In the lessons, there is no clear link between the curriculum document that sets the standards for evaluation and the intended classroom exercise that evaluates different kinds of competence such as critical thinking and problem-solving as well as elements of English language proficiency. If teachers are not tuned into the kinds of evaluation responses that are possible and expected in this kind of activity, this kind of evaluation is likely to provide EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia with considerable difficulty.

This kind of evaluation appeared to be a significant change for teachers than what has been traditional for EFL teaching in the GTM approach and it is probable that it would reduce the level of self-efficacy significantly for some EFL teachers if they were struggling to understand how to do the evaluation as expected. The prescribed textbook covered a wide range

of skill area development for EFL learners and, therefore, the evaluation strategies were highly complex compared with traditional formats for evaluation. The textbook exercises covered linguistic range, orthographic control, propositional precision, flexibility, thematic development, phonological control, and sociolinguistic appropriateness. However, none of these elements were apparent in the textbooks and teacher's guides to the textbooks. The likely outcome of this is that these areas may not be taught. Furthermore, training for the language proficiencies presented in the textbooks have no grounding in specific Saudi Arabian contexts, increasing the challenge for teachers in being able to evaluate successful attainment of the standards. There were no local examples presented in the prescribed textbook. This oversight might be due because the policy document is orientated towards a European system that has evolved over decades towards the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2022). There appeared to be an expectation that the relevant processes were already present within Saudi Arabian schools, however, this perspective reflects an error in policy making. Policies that fail to consider the existing state of EFL teaching and learning in the schools are likely not to support desired necessary changes. When considering comparable standards that are used internationally, such as the *Alte Can do* project (Alte, 2002), there is a greater use of "can do" statements that provide increased clarity regarding the performance requirements at different levels of proficiency. For instance, "can do" statements such as "CAN scan texts for relevant information, and the [can] grasp main topic of text, reading almost as quickly as a native speaker" provides a greater clarity of the benchmark and the performance requirements to demonstrate competence. This was absent from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2022).

The standards in the MoE (2017) document were not activity-based and it was very difficult to link the resources provided to the objectives provided by the MoE. For instance, in the *Flying High* series, assessable skills were mapped to the questions and topics under the

groupings of listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar. Using the provided teacher's guidebook, teachers can identify in which unit and lesson in the students' workbook the relevant skills are presented so that when the workbooks are assessed the score the student achieves can be recorded against the specific skill. For instance, the scores that the student receives when using the *Flying High Workbook 1* can be added together to give a score for the subset listening skill of recognising various intonation patterns. The mapping shifts the focus of the teacher to the development of specific skills across reading, writing, listening, and speaking, rather than to just focus on grammar. The evaluation has shifted to developing competence in the subset of skills that make up reading, writing, listening, speaking and grammar. However, there is a disconnect between the English policy at the macro level (MoE, 2017) and the micro-level (learning through student workbooks). This disconnect means that the activities conducted in the classroom will be linked to the above language skills framework rather than to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2022). This lack of linkage makes assessment of the performance of the student difficult according to the grade levels established through the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2022). The lack of benchmark examples of the expected performance means that the teachers have no reference points to make judgements regarding the students' performance. When this is coupled with the expectation of the teacher to make significant changes to their pedagogy, it is not surprising that there is high resistance to making the change. In comparison, the *Alte Can Do* project provided clear performance standards that were written in simple language and can be assessed easily as there is a clear performance dimension and context. In the "Can Do" framework the skill, for example speaking/listening, is placed in a context with clear performance standards. There was a clear identifier about the topic being assessed: e.g., using a telephone appropriately. And there were clear identifiers as to what student response might look like in relation to what should be

evaluated at each level of competency. These elements were missing from the MoE (2017) curriculum objectives document.

The document, *Objectives of Teaching English in the Kingdom* (Hamdhy, 2017) that outlines the objectives for teaching English in Saudi Arabia was very general. The orientation was towards the use of English to present the Islamic belief system to the Western world. An example in the document refers to the development of linguistic competence: “that enables student, in future, to present and explain Islamic concepts and issues, and to participate in spreading-Islam” and to “enable student linguistically to present the culture and civilization of his nation”. Yet the prescribed EFL materials provided to the teacher had no such orientation and dealt with situations within the Western culture. The information provided in the Teacher’s Guide and textbook bore minimal relationship to the objectives outlined by the MoE. This document dissonance possibly arises from the historical need to appease those in Saudi Arabia who are concerned that learning the English language will undermine the Islamic culture. The Foreword in the Teacher’s Manuals provided a more effective overview of the reasons for and the approaches that the teacher should adopt in the classroom. It appeared that the approach being used by the MoE was linked to the *General Objectives of Teaching English* (MoE, 2002) which as a framework has very little to do with the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe, 2022) for teaching and learning EFL in Saudi schools. Therefore, there is merit in looking at the Teacher’s Manual as a more functional and understandable insight into the reasons for teaching English

5.2.3 Teacher’s Manual/Student Textbook/Workbook

The MoE issued a new series of textbooks entitled, *Flying High for Saudi Arabia* (Macmillian Education, 2014), with accompanying teacher’s instruction manual and student workbook. A set of digital IT resources were included with the paper-based material. These materials were developed using international expertise and input from EFL teachers in Saudi

Arabia. The preparation of the materials was driven by a clear pedagogy of how students would use the material within context. The Teacher's Manual acknowledged that initially there may be a low level of motivation amongst the students for learning English. Indeed, this low expectation was supported in the feedback provided by the students in the current research (see Chapter 6). The Teacher's Manual in the series acknowledged the low level of opportunity for using English within Saudi Arabian society, a problem also acknowledged by teachers and students in this study and in the literature (Almahdi, 2014; Alrabi, 2016). The Teacher's Manual presented the challenges that the teacher is likely to experience because of the context in which English is taught and the implications of this for the teacher. The context for EFL teaching and learning adopted a less external orientation to the Western world and referred instead to using English with other Saudi Arabian students. It is noted by this researcher that this may affect the learner's motivation to learn English. The preface indicated to the EFL teacher that context is very important. Teachers were informed that they need to "pay extra special attention to motivating students; compensate for the very limited exposure to and use of English outside the classroom; teach English for use in Saudi Arabia, as well as for possible international travel; deal with the implications of learners all having the same first language". The requirement of the teacher is to motivate the students; provide a high level of exposure to the English language, develop competence for the use of English in Saudi Arabia and internationally and to accommodate individual differences. This was not a requirement perceived by the teachers retaining the GTM approach in the current study and, thus, reflects the chasm that exists between the government objectives for EFL and classroom practices.

The Teacher's Manual identified that the approach that was to be used in EFL classrooms as the "Triple A" approach. This was the only time that the researcher has noted any referenced to this approach in any of the documentation and exchanges with teachers and students. The Triple A approach in the Teacher's Manual referred to: access, analysis, and activation. The

course resources seek to provide the student to exposure (access) to language in context while the ‘analyses’ of the language adopts a grammatical approach which then ‘activates’ the use of English in different scenarios. Herein may be the source of some of the problems identified in the current research regarding the failure to embrace CLT. On one hand, the new resources seek to facilitate a CLT classroom; however, the approach that was retained for evaluating student performance was GTM. Hence teachers can use the resource materials as a source of grammatical practice and continue to use past materials that should be redundant. However, they were not using the new materials because the approach to assessment remains within the older resources for teaching and learning English. This can be seen to be counter-productive to the activation component that seeks to encourage real-life communication.

The Triple A approach resulted in the themes in the students’ textbook and workbook being split into four lessons. The first lesson provided exposure to the language used in the context (access). The second and third lesson were concerned with grammatical exercises within the topic (analysis). The last lesson was concerned with activities that were more orientated to spoken communication and interpretation (activation). This approach supports the continuation of GTM but with some inclusion of CLT. In the learning context observed in the current research, one lesson in the students’ book was conducted over two 45-minute sessions which provided students with an opportunity to ‘analyse’ the material already taught.

The Teacher’s Manual proposed the structure and approaches that should be used in the classroom. These components were not as clearly articulated in the MoE document, *Objectives of Teaching English in the Kingdom* objectives as they were in the Teacher’s Manual. This may be possibly due to the structure and approaches being presented cautiously in government documents as recommendations rather than as mandates. The Teacher’s Manual suggested that the lesson should be structured into a light introductory activity, intense written tasks in the middle and a light spoken communicative activity at the end. The Manual suggested that

English should be the language of instruction and communication in the classroom. In the current research it was identified that this was not the case, particularly for the teacher who did not deviate from using GTM. The Manual recommended the use of repeated standard phrases and expressions to assist in building competence, but there was no evidence of this in the classroom observations. The Manual recommended placing a poster on the wall of these common expressions. Once again, the interviews and classroom observations revealed no evidence of this practice. The Manual recommended that when a student speaks in Arabic that the teacher ask another student to translate the statement into English. This did not occur in the Arabic dominated environment of the GTM classroom. However, in the classroom where the teacher was using a CLT approach, there was no evidence of the use of Arabic.

The student workbook had a focus on grammatical and vocabulary exercises and was, therefore, orientated towards GTM. There were a wide range of activities provided which are marked as desirable or as an extension activity or not marked, which are core activities. There was no evidence in the three classrooms of the use of extension activities. The layout of the students' resources was clear, structured, colourful but not linked to the audio-visual material provided to the teacher. The emphasis appeared to be on vocabulary, reading, comprehension, grammar and listening. Interestingly listening activities were based on the stimulus of photographs as opposed to aural texts provided on the set of digital resources. Basing listening tasks on visual stimuli seems strangely diametrically opposed.

5.4 Summary of Document Review

The digital material provided by the MoE was essentially a duplicate of the graphics included in the textbook and workbooks. There was an opportunity to include audio-visual supplementary material that can provide samples of real-life interactions, audio files of conversations, and resource material that can stimulate conversations in English. However, the material is unlikely to be used in the manner that it was intended unless there is considerably

more investment in the training of teachers in the use of the material and an extension of the provision of technology within all classrooms. Technology-enabled English language learning is important for the development of effective CLT and, from the responses of the students in the current research, this inclusion would be more motivational for them to learn English than having the teacher stick to using only the GTM approach to EFL. The MoE is in the process of developing online teaching and learning materials as a result of COVID (Online Learning Consortium, 2021). This development may provide a more dynamic environment for the development and access of audio-visual resources that can be used in the classroom once the concerns over COVID have passed.

The findings in this research revealed that teachers had low levels of teacher-efficacy in using technology and integrating it into the learning of English within the classroom (see Chapter 5 below). This lack of confidence to use technology needs to be overcome through training and ongoing support through mentoring and communities of practice (as suggested in the Tatweer reforms). These processes can encourage social persuasion, which is important for the development of teacher-efficacy (Pajares, 2002; Schunk & Pajares, 2009), and overcome the negative physiological state that exists in respect of the use of technology. Unless teacher-efficacy is improved in respect to the use of the digital material that is provided, there is unlikely to be the successful achievement of the MoE's objectives by teachers. The lack of confidence of the teacher in the use of the materials may mean that teachers will circumvent the directives from the MoE as they will be unable to capitalise on the motivation that students have to embrace CLT. For many EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia, the new resources require a complete change in their existing pedagogies, many that have been in place for over 20 years. Changing initiatives will not be successful just through the provision of new directives and teaching resources. The current research has demonstrated this. It is the level of efficacy that

the teacher has towards the use of technology-enabled language learning that appears to be the most significant variable.

The evaluation of the documents revealed a significant issue with the course materials. Although designed to facilitate CLT, the resource materials have retained GTM as the approach used for the analysis of the performance of the student. This disconnect in policy expectations may explain why GTM has not been displaced by CLT and may reveal a major problem with the change initiative. If there is to be a significant change, then the MoE needs to embrace assessment approaches that do not stress grammar to the exclusion of all other elements. Shifting towards the inclusion of assessment items that reflect CLT is likely to force a shift of pedagogy that this study has identified has yet to occur.

Having analysed the documents, the following sections will investigate the influence that these policy and curriculum documents had over the attitudes and behaviours of the teachers and the school principal. It should be remembered that the policy documents and the curriculum documents have been designed to facilitate the use of the CLT approach in Saudi Arabian English classrooms.

CHAPTER 6

Analysis of data from teachers and the principal

6.1 Introduction

Following this review will be the analysis and discussion of the data collected from the interviews and classroom observations with teachers and the principal, starting with an introduction to the teachers (Section 5.3). The three themes for analysis included: 1) the role of the teacher, which included the sub-theme of teacher efficacy and the teaching approach taken (Section 5.4); 2) understanding the learner, which included the sub-themes of home-school connections, motivating students, and using Arabic to teach English (Section 5.5), and 3) using a range of teaching strategies, which included the sub-theme of using technology and using group/collaborative work in the class (Section 5.6).

6.2 Introduction to the Teachers

Three teachers agreed to participate in the research. Table 6.1 provides essential details about all three. Two of the teachers, T2 and T3 displayed a traditional Grammar Translation Method (GTM) approach to teaching and learning, whereas teacher T1 used a combination of GTM and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, depending on the teaching learning situation. As will be evident in the description of the finding below, the way the three teachers spoke about EFL teaching and learning in their interviews closely aligned with what was observed in their classes. All three teachers had a Bachelor of Education degree. Teacher T3 had a Master of Education degree in linguistics.

Of the three, teacher T1 was the only one selected under the Vision 2030 (third phase of Tatweer) to participate in the professional development program: Khebrat. Khebrat involved T1 spending one year in an American K-12 school. The aim of the Khebrat program is to create a mind-shift in the pedagogical thinking of teachers by being immersed in a different

educational environment and, it is anticipated that they can become ‘change agents’ for Saudi education (Bentahar et al., 2021). The program involves six months of English development and exposure to CLT theory and practices and, to date, over a thousand teachers have completed the program. Upon returning to KSA, teachers are expected to implement CLT pedagogy in their schools. Research by Bentahar et al. (2021) suggested that the program has been highly successful in effectively improving EFL pedagogy and teachers’ roles as agents of change. In contrast to T1, teachers T2 and T3 had not participated in a similar training program.

Table 6.1 *Teacher Participants*

Category	T1	T2	T3
Qualifications	Bachelor of Education in English Language	Bachelor of Education in English Language	Master of Education in Linguistics
Current Position	EFL in a rural secondary school	EFL in a rural secondary school	EFL in a rural secondary school
Further Notes	Started teaching English in 2012 – participated in the Khat in 2016, which aims to develop professional practices for teachers within the framework of intranational standards, in USA – has been a teacher in various schools – established an English laboratory for his class in one school – applied the use of technology for teaching English	Started teaching English in 2009 – observed used the textbook <i>Flying High</i> for secondary, term 1 (Grade 10) – during interview a part of his responses and stories related directly to the textbook	Started teaching in 2007, at the three levels (elementary, primary and secondary) – has been using the old MoE textbook for 4 years - during interview a part of his responses and stories related directly to the textbook

Teachers with low teacher efficacy showed a preference for using a grammar translation method (GMT), whereas teachers with high teacher-eficacy used the more innovative strategies associated with the communicative (CLT) approach (Eslami & Fatahi, 2008). The current research explored teacher efficacy through the elements of the triadic reciprocal model where the personal (beliefs and attitudes about EFL students), behavioural (making pedagogical choices) and environmental (teaching instruction and relationships) were

represented by the teachers. Researching teacher efficacy helps to explain why teachers chose to avoid any challenges to their sense of who they believed themselves to be as EFL teachers, as well as why they are prepared to take on the challenges they meet (Pajares, 2002). The following section describes the role of the teachers in the EFL classrooms as observed by the researcher.

6.3 Role of the Teacher

6.3.1 Teaching approaches for EFL in the Saudi classroom

The data from the classroom observations revealed that the three teachers in this research took two different approaches to their roles in the English classroom. The first was the role as a traditional teacher, which participants described as a teacher-led approach to teaching and learning. The second role was as a constructivist teacher, which participants described as a student-led approach. These observations were linked by whether the teacher was using the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) (Natsir & Sanjaya, 2014) or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Nunan, 1991). Where teachers used the GTM, the teacher was traditional and directive in their style with the communication being predominantly one-way (teacher-led approach). This was the dominant style noted in two of the classrooms observed, that of T2 and T3. In the classroom of Teacher 2, for example, the focus of the learning was the use of a textbook and instructions by the teacher were in Arabic. The learning of English lacked any contextual basis to the lives of Saudi students in that the content of the lesson scenarios was directly from the imported Western, culturally based textbooks (*Flying High for Saudi Arabia*) without any modifications to contextualise the information to Saudi culture. While textbooks are an important resource for learning language rules, vocabulary, and grammar, they can also be used as a ‘comfort zone’ for teachers who do not have the time or experience to prepare lessons beyond what the textbook offers (Alshumaimeri & Alzyadi, 2015). Other observers of English practices in Saudi Arabian classroom have noted the same

situation (Alghanmi & Shukri, 2016; Alharbi, 2015; Aljohani, 2016; Mitchell & Alfuriah, 2017). GTM seems to remain the dominant practice in lessons despite reform efforts indicated by the government (MoE, 2002, 2003). This appeared to be the case with participants T2 and T3. Even though they had the prescribed textbook materials for *Flying High for Saudi Arabia*, these materials were not fully used as prescribed.

In relation to the triadic reciprocal causation model (Bandura 1986), observations in the classrooms of T2 and T3 indicated that the environmental factors of teaching strategies (GTM) were connected to the teachers' attitudes (personal factor) towards teaching EFL in that they chose to use a teacher-centred rather than student-centred approach. This decision, in turn, influenced the relationship (environmental factor) they had with their students. The relationship was very formal and represented the traditional hierarchical distancing between teacher and students found in many Saudi classrooms.

There was one teacher (T1) who was observed using a CLT constructivist student-led approach in his class. The *Flying High for Saudi Arabia* textbook series was also used in this class. However, T1 made use of the workbook materials and the accompanying CDs to promote discussion with and among the students in his class. The teacher tried to connect the material from the textbook to the interests of his students and there was a high dynamic of interactive activities that appeared to motivate the students in this class to engage in the lesson. In relation to the triadic model, T1 the environmental factors of choice of teaching strategies had an impact on the teacher's motivation (behavioural factor) and attitude (personal factor) to teach EFL. This teacher was observed to be enthusiastic teaching in his class with students willingly participating in classroom activities.

It was apparent, then, through the observations of the three classrooms that the approach adopted by the teachers had a reciprocal influence on the level of engagement of students. Students in the GTM (teacher T2 and T3) classes were observed to be less engaged in learning

English than those in the one class where the CLT approach was observed. These students did not show enthusiasm to participate and adopted roles of what has already been described as passive recipients of learning English (Natsir & Sunjaya, 2014). How these approaches to teaching affected students' efficacy as English language learners is described in detail in Chapter 6. It could be said that the two teachers who adhered to the GTM approach had lower teacher efficacy to teach EFL due to their preference for a high volume of Arabic used and reluctance to go beyond the ingrained and habitual strategies for teaching. Participant T1, in contrast, had high teacher-efficacy. He used a higher volume of speaking English in his class and used more innovative teaching strategies to engage students in learning. One could say that T1 had high institutionalised teacher efficacy (Tracey, 2016) as he was confidently adhering to the directives of the MoE (2003) to incorporate mandated reforms into his pedagogy. Participants T2 and T3 maintained a negative form of institutionalised teacher efficacy in that they used out-dated forms of pedagogy that EFL teachers have used for many years, but which are shown to be inadequate to support EFL students' learning English. The following section provides comments from participants' semi-structured interviews about teachers' adherence to the traditional approach to teaching and learning and the impact of using this approach on teaching English.

6.3.2 Traditional approach

As was described in Chapter 2 of this thesis, the high power-distance nature of the Saudi Arabian culture means that there is a hierarchical system at work in classrooms where teachers are often distant from their students even while in the same room (Al-Nasser, 2015; Alshahrani, 2016). In this traditional approach, the teacher occupies a position of authority and has complete control over all aspects of what goes on in the classroom. The classroom discourse is mostly unidirectional from teacher to students, and this was particularly the case in the

classrooms of participants T2 and T3. The teachers in this research described that they are aware of the problems associated with the controlling role of the teacher:

The second factor [that] contribute to teaching and learning of English as a foreign language is the teachers' role who is to control the whole time in the classroom. I think the teacher-centred approach is common in our classes (T2)

All three teachers shared similar descriptions of this teacher-centred approach in the Saudi classroom. The level of interaction between the teacher and students in two of the classes was observed as being minimal and highly formal, limited to the teacher imparting directions and, on rare occasions, asking questions of the more competent students. Students who were less competent English speakers were rarely called on to contribute. Teachers T2 and T3 appeared to want to simply provide information to students instead of allowing the students to discover information for themselves or to scaffold their learning. As stated above, this approach is contrary to the educational reforms in the KSA (MoE, 2002, 2003). It could be that teachers adhere to this approach because this is a prevailing and traditional approach to teaching and learning and that most teachers feel more confident to use this approach over a more innovative approach. The teachers that used this approach had high efficacy to use the traditional approach but had low teacher-efficacy to try the newly mandated approaches. Teachers T2 and T3 described that their focus was to use the GTM pedagogy to ensure that students achieved some level of learning but recognised that this was not always the best way for students to be motivated to learn:

The teachers I think do not focus about the importance of using this way [constructivist, CTL), they just use a traditional way such as bring their books and read and ask their students to repeat without giving the students the opportunities to speak or to share in the classroom...but this way, I think, does not help the teacher to achieve their goals. (T3)

This data revealed a tension between what teachers do and what they know they should do. Even though the teachers in this research described that they knew they should be using a CLT approach, as per the recommendations from the Tatweer project, there was still a strong commitment to the traditional GTM approach for two of the teachers. Associated with the dominant GTM is the use of L1 (Arabic) in teaching English (Alharbi, 2019). This approach was evident, particularly in observations in the classroom of T3. Like participant T2, participant T3 used the GTM approach, using Arabic to translate and explain the day's lesson. This approach resulted in the danger of reducing the level of usage of L2 (English) in the classroom both by the teacher and by the students, thereby reducing opportunities to develop students' English language capabilities. This approach had been described in prior research (Ahmad, 2014; Alrabai, 2014, 2017; Rajab, 2013), and was acknowledged by the participants:

One of these factors is using the Arabic language or mother tongue for teaching or learning as well (T1).

Participant T2 provided some justification for using this approach as he described:

For me in my classroom I can do in the English okay, I can explain each word in English and actually my students or most of them understand what I am saying when I explain. But [it] will take more time, will take long period and [in] that long period [they] can be doing any classroom activates. For this reason, we try to use a bridge by using the mother tongue. (T2)

As the data indicated, the teachers seemed to be aware that the use of Arabic as the language of instruction was limiting the level of the students' exposure to English and restricting their practice in using English. It seemed that explaining English to students in an English classroom got in the way of other activities students could be doing, although T2 did not explain what other activities students should be doing in their English lessons. To bridge the gap in perceived student misunderstanding of the purpose of the English lesson, Arabic was used.

It should be restated here that in 2014 in Saudi Arabia a new English curriculum was introduced (Mitchell & Alfuriah, 2017). With a new curriculum there are possibilities for a new approach to teaching and learning. However, while the government direction is for a modern constructivist approach (as indicated in the Tatweer project), the delivery of lessons observed in this research was still dependent in two of the classes on a traditional approach. The teachers described that they had to deal with several challenges, such as time limits for teaching, prescribed teaching materials and resources, and a prescribed curriculum with expectations for students writing exams and government directives. It seemed here, however, that the teachers were concerned about competing institutional priorities (Suoninen, & Jokinen, 2005; Tracey, 2016) rather than on the learning needs of their students. On the one hand, teachers must adhere to prescribed curriculum and pedagogy to meet the curriculum expectations for EFL while, on the other hand, the government is mandating change. How teachers dealt with these competing priorities is described below. One participant indicated, for example, that a traditional approach was not useful for all student learning:

Some of the traditional ways of teaching will be good and useful for students because of our community. And some of it going to be not good for better students. (T1)

Here Participant T1 expressed a belief that teachers need to use traditional ways for most student learning but that 'better students' need additional ways for learning, presumably a more constructivist approach, because these 'better' students have a better command of English than less competent students in the class. While T1 had adopted a more constructivist approach for all students in his class than participants T2 and T3, the view expressed in this data about student needs suggested that a teacher should have the option of targeting different pedagogy for different student learning levels and cultural backgrounds. There was, however, a general agreement from the interview data of all three teachers that most EFL teachers in KSA want to simply provide information to students instead of allowing the students to discover information

for themselves, and this is a traditional approach with adherence to the hierarchy of power in the class. While the participants were critical of the traditional approach, they appeared, in part, to be accepting of this approach. It may be that teachers relied on their prior experiences (mastery experiences) (Bandura, 1986; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) of teaching when choosing their pedagogy to use in the EFL classroom. If their other teaching areas or knowledge of teaching had been done as a traditional pedagogy, then they would want to stick to this approach for EFL to avoid the stress of moving out of their comfort zone for teaching (Mehmood, 2019). In contrast, to the traditional approach to EFL teaching is the constructivist approach, the approach advocated for by the Tatweer project. How the three teachers described their engagement with the constructivist approach is described next.

6.3.3 Constructivist approach

The participants described their attitudes to using a more authoritative, student-centred constructivist approach. The teachers described the difficulty of moving from one approach to the other:

Sometimes maybe we need to change our classroom to make the kind of classroom, like change ... like [use] the flipped classroom. The teachers, I think, do not focus about the importance of using this way. (T3)

This comment suggested that teachers in KSA have had exposure to constructivist thinking and teaching strategies (such as using the flipped classroom) but that most teachers are not trying to use this approach. Participant T3 seemed to believe that most teachers do not understand the importance of using these new strategies to support their students' learning. However, the observations in his class did not reveal that this teacher used this strategy himself. He was able to talk about the strategy but seemingly not implement it. This attitude aligns with the comments by Pajares (1996) who indicated that people engage in tasks they feel confident they can do and avoid tasks in which they do not feel confident. As suggested by the data, if teachers

do not believe a task is something they can accomplish to support student learning needs, they will not do it. The three teachers in this research did, however, describe changes that they had made:

I've scheduled to ask my students about the effective strategies and the best way for them to learn English next week so they can review everything that they have studied and [I asked them if] the strategies which we used if they were effective for them. We are going to continue it with them, [but] if it is not working, we will try to use new methods (T1)

Here participant T1 was describing how he engages students in the classroom learning by providing them with opportunities to contribute suggestions on effective pedagogy the teacher was using and letting the teacher know what is not working for them. Participant T2 also described his awareness of diversity in student learning:

I have two classrooms. Sometimes when I use a strategy in one class it does not suit that other classroom, so it depends. (T2)

Here T2 described the need to be flexible and that strategies that might work in one class might not work for students in another class. While this teacher was able to recognise the diversity of learner needs there was no scope in the current research to follow this concept further; however, it is a consideration for future research. Participant T3 also acknowledged the constructivist approach of planning lessons with students' needs in mind:

I usually try to share [with] my students during the planning of lessons, and provide them with learning opportunities where possible (T3)

While T3 was able to express the language of constructivism the two words 'where possible' suggested that this approach may be somewhat contingent upon other factors. One would think that if a teacher had adopted a constructivist approach, then it would be applied in all possible teaching and learning situations.

In the above examples, the role of the teacher was, for teachers T2 and T3, as a provider of information so that students could successfully pass their exams. For teacher T1 it was being a supporter and facilitator of learning and a mentor of the students rather than the controller. The lesson observation of Teacher 1 identified a focus on the needs of the learner. He engaged with them and involved them in the development of the learning process. Teacher T1's pedagogy appeared to align with his interview comments. However, this same alignment was not as strong with the other two teachers. Teacher 1 (T1) also described the importance of training teachers in this new approach to gain a positive outcome for EFL teaching and learning:

Teachers' training is also one of the most important factors that support or hinder teachers to be able to teach English by the right way. I was one of the lucky teachers who had an opportunity to be as a participant of KHEBRAT program which gave me a chance to go to the US for a year to learn and see how they teach ... As teachers we need to get more training especially for methods of teaching English. Actually, the period when I have got training in the US was very useful for me and I hope they keep doing that with all English teachers to be more qualified and more effective with their students. (T1)

The Tatweer project outlines that EFL teachers should be active in keeping their training current through creating training networks to continually improve their teaching practice (Assulamimani, 2019). A strategy from the project suggested the need for Saudi educators to develop greater competence in their own English language development and, through worldwide networking, achieve a raised awareness of effective EFL teaching strategies and teaching resources that will assist student learning. Teacher T1 described:

If you want to improve the teachers' awareness for using new strategies or effective learning, I think they need to visit other model schools in the other cities or even go abroad for training to see the new strategy which they use it for teaching. (T1)

The data here indicated the importance of social persuasion on helping EFL teachers gain more insight and vicarious experiences to become better teachers (Bandura, 1986; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Participant T1 also described the need for teachers to engage in more training (institutional social persuasion) (Suoninen, & Jokinen, 2005; Tracey, 2016) to learn new skills for teaching English. He also suggested that good pedagogy should be shared within the teaching community with English teachers visiting model schools to learn new strategies for teaching English (vicarious learning), and this is a recommendation of the Tatweer project.

In summary, analysis of the teacher data found that the role of EFL teachers was somewhat dependent on the training they had, which then influenced their beliefs and attitudes about teaching EFL. These factors had a reciprocal relation with teachers' pedagogical choices and the relationships they developed with their students. It should be noted that there was congruence between the views of the teachers and their classroom practices, that is, teachers T2 and T3 described the positive aspects of traditional teaching in their interviews, and this was the teaching and learning approach observed in their classrooms. Participant T1 described the benefits of a constructivist approach, and this was the teaching and learning approach observed in his classroom. Although all three teachers espoused the value of a CLT approach to the development of English competency for their students, only one teacher (T1) had implemented the approach into practice. All three teachers described that a big challenge for them was to motivate students to use English, and they acknowledged that they had to use Arabic to teach English, especially for those students who were struggling to learn English. This reciprocal relationship between espoused attitudes and actual practices was also observed in the research of Alghanmi and Shukri (2016) and requires further research to determine the

underlying causes and reasons, as this disparity appears to be a considerable barrier to the approach to teaching EFL for the teachers in this study and may well also be a barrier in the development of a higher level of English competence for Saudi students. While participants in the current study acknowledged that the traditional approach to teaching and learning was preferred by most teachers in Saudi Arabia, they also described a range of strategies that they used for teaching English that align with a more constructivist, student-centred approach. One of the more important aspects of this new approach was for teachers to take an interest in their students and understand how they learn.

6.4 Understanding the Learner

Understanding the learner in this research related to the beliefs and attitudes teachers had about students' capabilities and motivation to learn English. The three teachers described factors such as the impact of home and the wider community's views about the value of learning English that contributed to students' motivation to learn. These factors had a reciprocal impact on teachers' motivation to teach EFL and they are described below.

6.4.1 The impact of home views and community culture about learning English

There was an agreement in the data from the three teachers that without external support (social persuasion in the triadic reciprocal causation model) (Bandura, 1986, 1997) students lacked motivation to learn English and/or use it anywhere outside the classroom. One area of support that teachers described that contributed to student attitudes towards learning English was their home environment. This they felt was likely to either motivate or demotivate EFL learners:

The students lack the confidence in themselves, and they lack the motivation from the whole of society, family, family background, [and the] school environment. (T1)

and

Some students have a negative pre-image in their minds about the English

language and its difficulty and the importance of learning it, which make judgments based on the opinions of their families, friends and even that family's background about English learning (T3)

As described earlier in this thesis, there is a history of resistance in the Saudi community to prioritise having children learn English (Al Dameg, 2011; Alrashidi & Phan, 2010; Al-Seghayer, 2014) so it was not surprising that this cultural stance was commented on by the teachers. One participant suggested that a negative found in the external environment outside of the classroom about practicing English can create fear and hesitation in students to want to learn English:

These misconceptions make them feel fear, hesitation, and sense of powerlessness towards learning the language ... the situation in Saudi Arabia is very pathetic. The students do not have any chance to use English except in their language classroom.
(T3)

A supportive family environment, however, was seen as having a positive effect on motivating the student:

A students' family background also plays a vital role in frustrating or motivating English language learning. A student who grows up in a family that encourages him from a young age to develop his language skills and always reminds him of the importance of learning other languages is completely different from that who grows up in a family that does not see any benefit from learning the English language and does not pay any attention to it. (T1)

This perspective was also found in the literature, which indicated that social persuasion has an impact on motivating EFL students to learn. Indeed, Phan and Locke (2015) found that social persuasion was the strongest source influencing a commitment for EFL teaching and learning. The literature suggested that if there was not strong support from family and friends then the

motivation to learn English can be limited. The comments from the three teachers in the current research concurred with this perspective. In the main, the participants described that because there are so many negative external attitudes and beliefs about EFL affecting students, the motivation of the student to learn English is left to the teacher:

Some families also leave the teacher fully responsible for motivating, directing, and educating the student and refuse to blame their children if they do not make enough effort to succeed, ignoring that the English language in particular needs additional effort from the student at home and that studying for one hour in school is not sufficient to develop his language skills. (T1)

This lack of home support was described by the other participants as affecting their abilities to teach English. As indicated earlier in this thesis, Saudi culture has traditionally rejected Western-style teaching approaches as largely unnecessary (Aldossari, 2018; Al-Johani, 2009). Participant T1 was describing above that the perception of families does not align with the demands of EFL teaching (or the new Tatweer reforms in teaching and learning) and how these factors have contributed to students' lack of motivation to learn English. It could be suggested that experiencing feelings such as being blamed for a lack of student learning had a negative effect on the teachers and was likely to contribute to lowering these EFL teachers' motivation to teach and, consequently, their efficacy to teach (Bandura, 1986, Shah et al. (2013). A problem for the teachers seemed to be a lack of communication with parents about how there could be support between home and school for students learning English:

Because of the lack of communication with students' parents, there is a lack of cooperation between home and school in order to provide sufficient experience to the family in order to avoid the causes of deficiencies among these students. (T1)

Until recently, parental involvement in Saudi schools has been low, so maintaining the status quo would be seen as appropriate. However, through government initiatives, parental

involvement is beginning to change. Participant T1 commented that the new government initiative (Future Gate) offered a possible way forward to overcome negative connections between home and school to meet society's expectations for EF:

Now we have some kind of connection between teachers and parents, but we are just starting using it (Future Gate), so we are going to adopt it. (T1)

Because this was a relatively new initiative, more research into its effectiveness is needed. The data above suggested that teachers need to be supported by both home and school to engage in innovative pedagogical approaches to teach English. In a reciprocal manner, if students are not supported to learn English, they will not put the required effort forward. It appeared that these de-motivating factors resulted in teachers wanting to expend little extra time and energy teaching English beyond what was required.

6.4.2 Strategies to support students' learning

Participants described a range of teaching and learning strategies that they use in their classrooms to engage students in learning, although participants varied in what they thought was possible and what they were willing to commit to. Participant T2, for example, described the limited range of strategies a teacher could use to encourage students to continue developing their English proficiency:

The only thing that I can use to encourage my students' learning English is homework's activities or outside classroom activities. Actually, they are the only things that teachers can do OK, and more support that we use in our classroom that is encouraging. (T2).

Participant 2's description suggested a low teacher-efficacy to encourage students to use English outside the classroom as he admitted that there was little he could do in this area. His beliefs were that external social persuasion factors leave little opportunity for him, and other teachers, to do much beyond assigning homework, being encouraging in class, and somehow

hoping students can develop their English in activities outside the classroom. He did not elaborate on what these other activities might be. Participant T1, in contrast, described specific activities he uses in class to encourage students to use English as part of a homework project:

...when they go to the supermarket and find some of the products there and try to name it as a homework. Also, some of them record it by saying their names [of the products]. They're going to practice it outside the classroom. (T1)

Teacher 1 appeared to perform the role of being a support to student learning. In classroom observations he provided an interesting and challenging activity for students to do that went beyond writing out pages in their workbooks and he expected students to contribute in class. Part of his strategy was to view students as individual learners with different learning needs and preferences, and this practice indicated a high degree of teacher-efficacy as a supporter of EFL student learning. In contrast, observations in the classroom of participant T2 showed no evidence of the individualisation of the material or a willingness to engage with the student to provide the level of individualised support that they needed, although T2 did acknowledge in his interview the nature of these differences in student learning and needs:

It's something called individual differences... some of your students are visual students, others are auditory, others are learning by doing/action who cannot understand just by looking or just by hearing, he must be involved in an action to understand what going on inside the classroom. This is called the individual differences so in our classroom actually it will be an impossible job for the teacher to make [all] students [learn] the same level...a teacher cannot help the students to be excellent in speaking listening writing and reading. (T2)

This data indicated that participant T2 was willing to believe that there are differences in students' levels of learning and learning approaches. However, he also indicated that there is not a lot a teacher can do to support all students. This was an example of low teacher-efficacy

(Schunk & Pajares, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Here the teacher indicated that because external elements combined to prevent a teacher from meeting the learning needs of all students, there was really no point in trying to achieve high student participation in class. The classroom observation of Teacher T2 also suggested an acceptance of the impossibility to modify teaching approaches to facilitate improved learning as he did not make any modifications for individual students to support their learning. The beliefs, attitudes and pedagogical approaches observed in the classroom of Teacher T2 illustrated how it is possible for students to exit the secondary educational setting that lacks in any promotion of a working and functional level of competence in using the English language, leaving students with little English language proficiency (Al-Shumaimeri, 2003). As described earlier, observations in the classrooms of the three teachers also revealed the use of Arabic to teach English. How teachers rationalised this strategy to support their students' development of English is described next.

6.4.3 Using Arabic to teach English

Participants described their reasons for using Arabic and their awareness of problems of teachers using Arabic to support students to learn English. This has been a situation noted in much EFL literature (Al-Nasser, 2015; Al-Seghayer, 2019). The participants in the current research raised concerns for the need to use Arabic, such as how time was a major restriction for instruction to be conducted in English in order for the curriculum to be met. Alshammari (2011) noted, however, that most Saudi teachers prefer using Arabic to teach English because it saves them time and it makes it easier for them to explain language features to the students. It appeared from the classroom observations that T3 felt more comfortable conducting most of the English lesson in Arabic. He described that time pressures faced by teachers forces them to use Arabic:

I will give you an example, for example I tried to explain new vocab. O.K., it will take me long period to explain each new vocab in English, but when I use my mother tongue it will be much easier for me and there won't be any waste of time. And then I can utilize the time explaining these vocabs in doing any activities inside my classroom. (T3)

The environmental component of instructional choice described by participant T3 seemed closely connected to the physiological state of teacher-efficacy where this teacher was making the task 'easier' for himself to avoid any stress or anxiety on him about wasting class time. His focus was on his needs rather than on the needs of his students. He went on to indicate that because of the time constraints on teaching English, the better mode of instruction was the GTM which, as described above, is teacher-centred with little input from students:

As teachers, we have to explain in English. We are asked to talk in English, we are asked to clear anything we said to our students in English not in the mother tongue. This will take us a long time ... and I'm saying 45 minutes. Will that be enough for the learning if we use some of mother tongue? When try to use some of the...I think called, I think the translated method or grammar translate, if you use this it will be good for learning. (T3)

Here the participant was advocating not only for using Arabic to teach English, but actively resisting the directive that teachers need to use English in the EFL classroom (Tatweer). This teacher advocated for the GMT approach, "I think the translated method or grammar translate...will be good for learning" rather than more modern and prescribed constructivist strategies. The instructional choices seemed to be aimed more at delivering the curriculum within the stipulated time frame over providing curriculum and time for students to develop their English language skills. Researchers (Alharbi, 2015; Al-Johani, 2009) described that most EFL teachers spent the majority of their time explaining concepts to students in Arabic rather

than providing opportunities for students to develop competency in listening to and speaking English. This theme was described by another participant (T1) who suggested that outmoded teaching strategies were used due to time constraints, lack of modern resources and large class sizes:

I consider that time of teaching and learning English not enough. For me I don't think so because we need to give the students explanations about the lesson before hand and it's going to take time so we need approximately 60 min or 90 min so we can explain it to them, and they can't practice it, because if we give them the explanation today and practice it the next time, they maybe forget it and its going to be just a bit of a problem. (T1)

While participant T1 was advocating for attaining the goal of the MoE's (2002, 2003) Tatweer reforms in which teachers in KSA need to use a more constructivist approach to teaching and learning, all three teachers indicated that they used Arabic to help students learn English. Teacher T1 also described that he sometimes opted to use Arabic to teach English as it was a less problematic approach for student learning:

Many students face difficulties when I use just the English language during the classroom without translating each part [for the lesson] to be active [for students] (T1)

The use of students L1 (Arabic) to learn an L2 (English) has long been part of the discussion in EFL teaching and learning (Copeland & Neokleous, 2011; Zulfikar, 2018). These researchers suggested that the judicious use of a first language in learning a new language may be needed to help students understand context and vocabulary. They also described that teachers can feel guilty about using students' L1 (Arabic) because students are supposed to be learning the L2 (English). The participants in the current study provided a rationale for using Arabic. Participant T3, for example, described that using Arabic to teach English came about because teachers had a lack of awareness of individual differences in student learning skills:

Most of the teachers do not aware about their students' skills or their abilities. So, when I try to request from my students to do something over their abilities, how can they do it without any explain for the strategy or the plan? (T3)

Here, the data from T3 aligns with the literature (Copeland & Neokleous, 2011; Zulfikar, 2018) in that, if students do not know enough English to continue a lesson, then Arabic must be used. Researchers have found that the overuse of Arabic language in Saudi EFL classes has a negative impact on learners. It minimises the exposure of the learners to English and gives them very little opportunity to practice what they have been taught in class and to develop the skills to communicate in English (Al-Johani, 2009; Mojavenzi & Tamiz, 2012). This was the case in two of the classes (T2 and T3) that were observed for this research. However, in classroom observations it was noted that participant T1 used mostly English to teach English. The classroom environment of T1 did not appear to suffer from the time pressure that has often been used to explain the use of Arabic as the language of instruction. One participant (T2) made more than one reference for the need to use more English in the classroom because, he reasoned, the more English you use, the more English students are likely to learn. However, as he stated before he put in the added caution of time restraints:

... if we want to make them acquire English you must use the new strategies. As we say we must talk English explain all the time in English and this will take us a long time a long period. (T2)

The general view of the participants was that the use of Arabic language in Saudi EFL classes minimises the exposure of the learners to English and gives them very little opportunity to practice what they have been taught in class and to develop the skills to communicate in English, even though this is what the teachers hoped would happen. Alhawsawi (2013) and Rabab'ah (2003) described that teachers choose to use Arabic language in Saudi EFL classes because of their low confidence in using English. It could be said that their low confidence

(low teacher-efficacy) comes from their own low levels of English language proficiency. Teachers in the current research were more focused on the time-constraints of teaching English and this perspective was dictating they use the practice of speaking Arabic to teach English. They did not mention their own levels of English as a factor.

In summary, the teachers' motivation to teach English was constrained by what they described as the need to use Arabic to help students learn English, the amount (or lack) of time to properly teach English, and the outdated teaching materials they had for teaching. The thought of teaching the lessons mostly in English rather than Arabic seemed to be too challenging for two of the participants (T2 and T3). The rationale for using mostly Arabic in the EFL class had an impact on the choices the participants made for teaching and the teaching approaches they felt they needed to adhere to. The following section follows on by describing the pedagogical choices that affected the teaching of English in Saudi classrooms.

6.5 Using a Range of Teaching Strategies

The third theme from the teacher data was the use of teaching strategies. There were two main areas of focus in this theme: using technology and using group or other collaborative teaching and learning strategies. This section begins with how the participants described their use of technology in the EFL class. It should be noted that this kind of teaching strategy complies with the directives of the MoE (2003) (Tatweer project).

6.5.1 Using Technology as a Teaching Strategy

The classroom observations identified participant T1 using electronic technology to interact with the students in class as a form of instructing the students to use the English language. In findings from the Tatweer project (Alyami, 2014, 2016), it was recommended that teachers incorporate the use of different forms of media in their teaching. In the current research it was observed that in the classroom of T1 the students appeared motivated, engaged, and active. During the interview, T1 described one way he uses technology:

My students have a dictionary in each group, and they use a smartphone as well and they have the freedom to use [them] for learning for finding the meaning of each word by a dictionary. Many students face difficulties when I use just the English language during the classroom without translation (T1).

Here participant T1 was describing how he allows students to use both low-tech (traditional dictionaries) and high-tech (smartphones) technologies to support their learning. His attitude and choices indicated a high teacher-efficacy in that he was enthusiastic in embracing technology as part of his pedagogy. He was also describing how he wanted students to understand the words they are using (finding the meaning) but also that finding the meanings of words helps them to relate these words to similar words in Arabic (students face difficulties without translation). Here participant T1 was displaying his confidence in using innovations to the traditional form of teaching EFL and confidence in his students in managing the technology for their learning. Participant T2 also described how he has incorporated technology, a Smart Board, into his teaching:

Smart Board actually is the great tool that we have in our classrooms. We have many tools actually [on the Smart Board]. You can play songs, you can play videos on the smart board, so in my classroom actually I have two boards, the old one which requires writing on it with hand [White Board], and then sometimes you want the Smart Board. (T2).

However, despite T2 claiming that he used a smartboard, in reality this was not evident in the lesson observation. It may be that T2 was aware of the education directive from Tatweer and the MoE that such technology should be used, but his rhetoric did not translate into classroom action. The dominant approach observed in the classroom of T2 was students opening their textbook, having the information explained to them by the teacher in Arabic, which was also then written on the whiteboard. The student activity was answering comprehension questions

in English in their exercise book. Participant T2 was observed providing vocabulary lists to the students who were informed in Arabic that they had to learn the lists off by heart. It may be that participant T2 had some initial training to use a smartboard (vicarious learning) but did not develop the skills (mastery learning) to be able to use this technology effectively in the class. He may have chosen not to use it to avoid making a mistake in front of his students and so save himself the embarrassment that he might have felt. More research into why teachers make the choices they do in an EFL classroom is needed. The student response in the classroom of T2 was passive. Students appeared reluctant to engage and offer responses during the rare times that the teacher asked a question. It may be that the students did not feel the need to contribute beyond the basics in this class due to the dominant role of the teacher. More analysis of the students' role in these classrooms is presented in Chapter 6.

A similar approach was taken by participant T3. In the classroom observations of this teacher, primacy was given to writing and reading skill development in English. The opportunity for practicing speaking and listening skills was very limited. There was a sense in the classroom of T3 that the long-term adoption of the textbook and teacher-directed instruction meant that it was easier to adopt a GMT approach than to spend time identifying and developing a broader range of resources, as was evidenced in the classroom of participant T1. These findings concurred with other research (Aldhafri & Alrajhi, 2014; Alrabai, 2018) where the English classroom in Saudi Arabia appears to be characterised by a highly traditional and conservative approach to teaching. However, these findings go against the recommendations of the Tatweer project which suggest that EFL teachers should be actively engaged with colleagues in developing authentic materials to complement the lessons from the textbook (Alshumaimeri & Alzyadi, 2015). Despite participant T3 claiming that the learners could use their smart phones to identify meanings and synonyms for words, in reality this information was provided by the teacher during the observed lesson. Although participant T3 was

enthusiastic about describing the benefits of using new technologies, this enthusiasm did not translate into practice for him:

Most of teachers still do not use a technology for their teaching. If they use it, they will find their students more active because this way is more exciting and motivated for their students. (T3).

The use of technology for EFL teaching creates both opportunities and challenges (Morris, 2011). The challenge for teachers is how to integrate technology into the learning environment such that technology does not overwhelm the learning process but adheres to the MoE expectations. It requires new skills for teachers to effectively integrate technology into the classroom. According to Morris (2011) the best practices of the use of technology in the ESL classroom can improve motivation and self-confidence, reduce anxiety in the learner, and, so, need to be incorporated in a structured manner into the lesson. Data from the participants in this study revealed some evidence that high technology was used to teach English, but its use was not widespread. One could speculate that the lack of technology use may be because EFL teachers are still committed to using a traditional approach to teaching or that they do not believe that using electronic technology is wise or appropriate to include in teaching and learning English. It may also mean that the teachers were not highly skilled in using technology, but their students were, and the teachers did not want to be embarrassed that they could not use the technology effectively. As described above, the most commonly used technology observed in the classroom, particularly in those of T2 and T3, was low-tech textbooks.

English is taught in KSA through a ready-made curriculum in the form of textbooks made available by the Saudi Arabia Ministry of Education (MoE, 2003). The MoE provides teachers and learners with a three-part material package which includes: a textbook, a workbook for students, and a teaching manual for the teacher. The curriculum is designed not only to teach English but to reflect the beliefs, customs, values, and traditions of the Saudi

Arabian community and this can be found at every grade level throughout the country. However, the participants in this study described that these resources are outdated and irrelevant but that they were required to use set textbooks in teaching EFL that has content not related to the students' lives:

The textbook is not designed based on the students' needs. For example, there are many lessons in the textbook which are related to some topics which do not interest students contextually. There is a lack of teaching aids to teach English. (T3)

In EFL teaching and learning, the contextual teaching practices in local cultures are viewed as having an important place among other the important factors in enhancing the learning of English (Pandey, 2012). However, most of the textbooks and workbooks used by English teachers in the classrooms in KSA are from other contexts, particularly from English speaking countries, and so do not have an Arabic or a Saudi context. As described above, this institutional social persuasion worked both for and against EFL teaching and learning. Teachers were expected to incorporate lessons that included culturally relevant information for students, but they were given resources that included culturally irrelevant information, as the textbooks are imported from either Great Britain or America. Further, teachers have a minimal role in designing the curriculum and because they are assigned to teach EFL they receive minimal training and so are inexperienced in how to implement the curriculum of EFL. These factors appeared to contribute to EFL teachers developing low teacher-efficacy in their teaching area. Participants did describe activities for engaging students beyond the textbook, for example:

If you let students read other books like grammar books, some novels, or short stories, they will be more confident and so they will be more independent in the future (T3)

Rather than relying only on reading textbooks to learn English, this teacher described how authentic reading materials were likely to appeal to students more. However, the participant did not describe that he did this with his students, and observations of his class and other

comments in his interview would suggest that this is an ideal rather than a general practice. In fact, the majority of his interview remarks described that even if teachers did introduce new strategies to teach English, students were more than likely only going to access prescribed English textbooks. He did not explain further why students would be the agents in the teaching-learning process to prefer prescribed textbooks. Using group work was another teaching strategy mentioned by participants in this research, as described below.

The classroom of T1 occurred in a technology laboratory where students were organised into groups with computers and smartphones that allowed the students access to the Internet and web 2.0 technologies that could facilitate greater learning of the English language. T1 had assigned students to groups of between four to six students to work together. Each group was asked by the teacher to choose one of the modern inventions from the textbook and to write a one-page summary of the information that they found about the invention. The teacher used the DVD supplied with the textbook to show the students a range of inventions that they might like to explore. The article had to include information about the benefits and the risks that the invention had brought to society.

6.5.2 Using group work and other collaborative teaching strategies

As described above, there are generally overcrowded classrooms for teaching English in Saudi schools. Classes of 50 or 60 students are not unusual. One participant described that when there are so many students in one class, the capacity for teaching is lessened. This factor influenced the resources teachers chose to use and seemed to be a major consideration in the limited time teachers had to cover the content for each lesson:

When you have a large number of students in each classroom, which may sometimes reach 40 students, the absorption [of learning English] becomes low. Because of the huge numbers in some classes, [quality teaching practices such as] follow-up, review, evaluation, and attention to editorial work, in terms of quantity and quality, make the

teacher confused about how to hold students accountable as he does not find enough time to deal with all students. Sometimes we could not cover all our students' misconceptions and correct it because of the limited amount of time and the huge number of students. (T1)

It may be that the social persuasion aspect of English not being a valued subject in KSA was reflected in the lack of concern about large class sizes. This factor has been found to undermine Saudi learners' exposure to English in the classroom, resulting in negative consequence on learning (Al-Mohanna 2010). The participants described some of their approaches to counter the negative impact of large class sizes by using group work. Participant T3 described:

Last week, I gave my students some opportunities to be a mini class with them acting as a teacher. So, that experience encourages other students to do like their colleagues. (T1)

In this example, participant T1 was using a vicarious learning experience to encourage student participation. The idea was for students to learn off the examples of the more engaged students and so regulate their own behaviour in becoming more engaged themselves. Participant T1 did not expand on how effective this strategy was in achieving its goals but observations in his class indicated that students were enthusiastic participants. Teacher (T2) described class size as an impediment to group work:

If we had smaller class sizes, I would be able to organise students into smaller groups that would promote more interaction and greater fluency (T2).

It was not clear what participant T2 means in how having fewer students in the class would allow for the creation of small group work. One needs a certain number of students in order to create groups, so, if there is a large number of students in the class, this should not rule out group work. His observation that with small groups of students there could be greater interaction among the students was noted though. It may be that this teacher had not been prone

to using group work in the past and was both considering and resisting using this strategy, blaming class sizes for its non-use. The second remark of this teacher provided a clue about the challenge of group work:

I am concerned that I will lose control over the teams (T2).

Participant T2 described the need for teacher control of the class on more than one occasion, so this comment was consistent with what he described as his approach to teaching and learning EFL in his classroom. His concern over losing control of the class appeared to outweigh the benefits of having students engage in group work. As with teacher T2, there was no evidence of the use of groupwork in the classroom observation of T3. This teacher also provided a rationale for not using group work. His position was that there was not enough time for group work:

There is not enough time to place students into groups so that they can practice their English (T3).

While participant T3 described that there was not enough time to place students into groups, the other two teachers still managed to use group work in one form or another. When strategies adhered to a traditional teaching approach, their observed effects were less successful in engaging students and in supporting the learning of English than those observed in the class committed to the CLT approach used by T1. Despite the claim that class size restricted the use of the CLT approach, the classroom of T1 was as large as the classrooms of T2 and T3 and group work was effectively used, so it would appear that class size in itself does not present as being a restrictive factor in adopting a CLT approach.

The three teachers commented on government expectations for EFL learning and how it was sometimes difficult to meet these expectations:

Because of the importance of English and it is a global need, not only local one, policy makers in education in Saudi Arabia should think about many factors which

affect teaching and learning English in our schools, and they have to be aware about our society and how English language works in it. (T3)

and

The Ministry of Education has stated the aims of teaching English in Saudi Arabia but the problem with [it is] if we are to achieve [them] or not, and how they are [they to be] achieved? (T1)

The institutional persuasion from the government was generally described positively by the teachers in terms of how these new directions would enhance EFL student learning. However, participants expressed some anxiety that they did not have enough information on how these new reforms could be effectively enacted in teaching practice and did not have adequate training to implement reforms. The following section considers EFL classes from the perspective of the school principal.

6.6 Research Findings from the Perspectives of the School Principal

This section of the chapter discusses the research findings from the perspective of the principal of the school where the teachers were interviewed. The chapter analyses the principal's view of the EFL learning and teaching practices within the school and how these connect to the expectations of the Ministry of Education. As with the teacher data, the findings gathered from the principal were analysed according to the triadic reciprocal causation model that considers the three aspects: personal, behavioural, and environmental activities (Bandura, 1986, 1997). The data were also analysed under the same three themes revealed in the teacher data which were: understanding the learner (Section 5.5.1), the role of the teacher (Section 5.5.2), and the range of teaching strategies (Section 5.5.3). The principal of the school also described the impact that the home and community values/beliefs have on EFL teaching and learning. This theme is described in section 5.5.4. before the chapter conclusion is given in Section 5.5. 5.. The principal was asked the same semi-structured questions as were presented

to the teachers so that comparative analysis was possible. The following begins with the section on the principal's perspectives on understanding the learner.

6.6.1 Understanding the learner

According to Alonazi (2017), the capability of teachers to understand the skills and abilities of learners is hampered by departmental regulations and a lack of awareness of the range of EFL teaching strategies. As identified earlier in this thesis, teachers are constrained by departmental policies and the degree of freedom that they have in being able to identify the needs and skills of the learner but also by parental and community expectations in relation to the value of EFL learning. Although the principal was cautious not to be critical of the policies of the Ministry of Education, he expressed the view that a conservative culture meant that teachers are locked into the traditional approaches to teaching:

Some teachers use traditional way of teaching and not concerned with or aware about the disparities and differences in the abilities of individual students. (P1)

This view concurred with that of participant T3 who stated that: *Most of the teachers do not aware about their students' skills or their abilities.* However, it contradicted the views of teacher T2 who stated his recognition of student diversity in being either visual, auditory, or kinaesthetic learners when he said: *this is called the individual differences.* It would appear that at least some of the teachers in the school recognised the disparities in student learning that the principal mentions above, as does the principal, and that this is an area that needs to be acknowledged by teachers to strengthen the teaching area of EFL. The principal also expressed that the role of the teacher was to understand the individual student so that the teacher can use the most effective strategies to help students learn English better:

The English language teacher's role.... means more awareness of individual differences and using this awareness to clearly discuss changing linguistic erroneous beliefs about language learning with students. (P1)

The principal saw the responsibility of the teacher to be a change agent and to address the differing levels of awareness that the student has towards learning English. In Islam, education is considered important (Alyami, 2016). A problem in KSA is that many students do not see the relevance of learning English as they have little exposure to the commercial world and rarely encounter English in the outside world. As Elyas and Picard (2010) described, cultural influences frame what is valued in a society and, subsequently, in its education. If the social and cultural world outside of school places little importance on students learning English, this will be reflected in EFL teaching. Indeed, it has been noted that many of the principals of Saudi schools do not speak English and therefore do not see the importance of students learning English (Alyami, 2016). The principal of the current research did not speak English, but it was clear in his interview that he understood the importance of English for the future success of the students. For the principal, it was not the problem of recognising that students can learn English, but rather the lack of internal motivation and willingness of the students to want to learn English. He stated:

The desire of the students to learn this language is often lacking. (P1)

Here the principal places some of the blame for low achievement rates in English on the students. He provided some possible reasons why students have no desire to learn English such as the conservative approaches used in Saudi classrooms to teach English, a lack of focus on the individual learning by teachers, policy constraints of the Ministry of Education and a general lack of the students' desire to learn English. He described that all these factors create a difficult learning environment. These points have been in discussion about EFL teaching and learning for many years and may have been a driver in initiating the review and reform project for KSA education. The various points have been considered in Tatweer reforms (Alshumaimeri & Alzyandi, 2015) in their recommendations about how to move forward in

the area of EFL. The language of the principal indicated that he is aware of the recommended reforms, for example, he recognised the importance of his role at the school level:

The principal of the school must believe in the importance of the English language by making every available opportunity to encourage students learning and to develop their language skills, whether through competitions or motivation. (P1)

As indicated in the above quote, the principal was aware of the recommendations to move away from the traditional teacher-centred authoritarian approach to teaching and learning. Instead, teaching and learning needed to move to a more authoritative approach, where the individual needs of the students are taken into consideration for lesson planning to motivate students to learn English. It was interesting that the principal mentioned students developing language skills that can be evaluated through competition. While assessment is a vital component of teaching and learning in Saudi education, it would be interesting to know the role of competition the principal might be talking about. He did not elaborate. It could refer to the fact that competition is a traditional form of evaluation in KSA education, but this author would caution that the competition should not be focused on GTM skills over CLT skills. More research in this area is needed to determine the efficacy of competition in EFL teaching and learning.

6.6.2 Role of the teacher

The Tatweer reforms were introduced in 2007 to decentralise education in Saudi Arabia, so that decisions could be made at the local level to improve student performance (Tayan, 2017). The devolution of control to the principal in schools was accompanied by a cumbersome bureaucratic system that effectively meant that the Ministry of Education (MoE) retained control over what was occurring within the school system. The principal in the current research appeared to think that change started with the teacher, suggesting an acceptance of the increase in distributed leadership as a result of the decentralisation of the Saudi Arabian school

system. In relation to EFL policy, apart from the confusion about who makes the decisions for EFL at the classroom level, the policy of the MoE is ambiguous in that, on one hand, English is given an importance in the development of the student, while, on the other hand, the teacher is required to ensure that the Islamic identity of the student is preserved (Elyas & Al-Ghamdi, 2018). Faced with this dilemma, the teacher often adopts the cautious and conservative approach to teaching English in a grammatical approach without consideration of the social context (Aldossari, 2018). It may be that there is resistance from teachers towards adopting an alternative approach for fear of the repercussions that they are not following the directions of the MoE Tatweer reforms. The principal talked about teachers' beliefs in teaching EFL to enhance students' futures:

The first factor that contributes to teaching and teaching English is the teacher's belief in the importance of the English language and its importance for the student in its future, especially in scientific disciplines. (P1)

It would seem that the principal had a good understanding of the reforms in EFL teaching and how learning English can have a positive impact on students' future careers, especially in the discipline of science. He also suggested that teachers must have a similar understanding of the important of English for students. Essentially, the principal considered that the role of the teacher was to be an agent of change in the classroom and that teachers must be the ones who enact this change:

Education, in general, should change from the methods of indoctrination and lecture to the method of presentation and discussion. Classroom activities should be designed so that the learner has the opportunity to speak English in the classroom. It provides him with opportunities to participate and interact in various individual and group activities, allowing the student to use language for realistic communication in various purposes and in different situations. (P1)

Here the principal was describing the various EFL activities that have been outlined by Tatweer as needed for students to develop English (Alshumaimeri & Alzyadi, 2015). It was obvious that the principal has knowledge of reforms that should be happening in the EFL classroom to help students become more proficient in developing English language skills. He was suggesting that teachers have an important role beyond the traditional teaching role to support student learning. However, the principal was critical of the skill levels of his teaching staff and their lack of motivation to improve their skills.

Teachers need training and in developing their teaching skills. (P1)

Lack of prior preparation for some teachers and the inefficiency of some of them to teach. (P1)

The interesting thing is that most teachers are not interested in developing themselves professionally or attending language training courses. (P1)

The principal was critical that the teachers appeared to be conservative in their approach and were unwilling to embrace new techniques and approaches, but he did not describe, as a school leader, what his role was in helping teachers make this transformation in their teaching practices. The principal did not describe any process of how he would work with this EFL staff that would provide a space for shared responsibility to develop curriculum and resources for the EFL classroom. He considered that the reasons for a lack of EFL teacher motivation to change was the result of the lack of training for teachers to upskill their practices to move to a more conversational (CLT) approach to EFL:

One of the common practices of English language teachers is their use of traditional teaching methods based on memorising words, memorising meanings, and focusing on grammatical rules, ignoring the importance of developing other skills such as listening, reading, speaking, and writing. (P1)

In the above quote, the principal identified common criticisms of the traditional approach to teaching EFL (Alnefaie, 2016; Alrabai, 2014), which is mainly pointing out the shortfalls of using the GTM rather than CLT. He appeared to be suggesting that the expected classroom teaching reforms reduce the enthusiasm and willingness of teachers to embrace the uncertainty that comes from the use of new teaching strategies.

Constructivist approach

The MoE requires that the student is placed at the centre of learning (Elyas & Al-Ghamdi, 2018), which, in general, is a move from the GTM approach to EFL teaching and learning to a CLT approach. However, there is no guidance provided by the MoE on how the student is to be taught in this new EFL approach to teaching and learning (Elyas & Al-Ghamdi, 2018). The principal highlights where his teachers were lacking:

Unfamiliarity of the teacher with modern methods and strategies of education, as some of them lack the capabilities that would help him to succeed by knowing and using the effective strategies. (P1)

Education reform in KSA has been ongoing for several years now, so it was strange that the principal had described that EFL teachers were unfamiliar with modern teaching strategies. It may be that, as the current research was done in a regional city rather than the capital city of KSA, that modern strategies for teaching were slower to be given priority. However, as with the analysis above, as the school leader, the principal must share some of the responsibility to move his school to use more modern strategies. The principal was critical of the teacher's attitude about adopting the new reforms:

The teacher's fail to be willing to consider new teaching strategies [they] prefer to using a safe and conservative approach. (P1)

There has been much written about teachers' resistance to adopting modern approaches to teaching and learning in KSA (Al-Johani, 2009; Alrashidi & Phan, 2010) and how, when

EFL teachers cling to GTMs only, students are disadvantaged in developing skills to use English effectively in a variety of situations (Majavezi & Tamiz, 2012). To preserve their identity as Saudi teachers some of the teachers this principal was talking about may be rejecting the modern 'Western' approach to teaching and learning. More research in how principals are managing the education reforms is needed.

6.6.3 Range of teaching strategies

Due to the Tatweer reforms, the principal has assumed a greater role in the management of the teaching staff (Alzamil, 2021). The challenge for the principal in the current research was that he did not speak or understand English and found it difficult to make a significant contribution in the EFL teaching area. The principal was, however, proactive in monitoring the performance of the teachers. Prior to the Tatweer reforms this role had been performed by inspectors from the MoE. This is now the role of the school principal. In his observation of the teaching strategies that were used by the EFL teachers in the current study, the principal noted an absence of group work in the English classroom:

I see little evidence of group work when I visit the classrooms. (P1)

In this observation the principal made note that group work is an important element of learning. He expressed his belief that in the EFL class the focus should be on students being able to participate in using English, either in conversations with peers or in general classroom activities:

Students are not given the opportunity to participate and ask questions in the classroom, which causes the students to be idle and silent, so their enthusiasm decreases, and they feel bored and turn into passive listeners instead of an active participant. (P1)

The Ministry of Education requires that the focus is on the development of the individual through promoting creativity and competitiveness (Elyas & Al-Ghamdi, 2018). Yet the

curriculum document stresses the need for sustaining the team-based culture of Saudi Arabia. The textbook *Flying High for Saudi Arabia* still reflects traditional Islamic views which limits its effectiveness (Elyas & Al-Ghamdi, 2018). This conflict was reflected in the observation made by the principal on what he perceived was the teachers' focus in the EFL classroom:

Teachers still focus on the curriculum and the out-dated textbook, then on the student.

(P1)

The Tatweer vision of educational reform is for the development of a high-tech learning environment where teachers receive appropriate training in how to use the new strategies and resources in the classroom. However, this has not happened (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Elyas & Al-Ghamdi, 2018;). As already described in this thesis, the majority of classrooms in KSA are poorly equipped and the teachers not adequately trained (Aldossari, 2018). The principal understood the problems, and, though not openly critical of the MoE, considers that the Tatweer reforms have not been adequately resourced:

I want to embrace the Tatweer reforms but find myself limited by a lack of resources.

The teacher needs access to tools and resources in the English language classroom.

(P1)

The classroom design, the pedagogy of the teacher as the source of all knowledge, the lack of skills in teaching English, the lack of direction from principals, and poor resources means that group work and other modern strategies are rarely engaged in the Saudi Arabian EFL classroom. The policy issue by the MoE also stresses the importance of the Arabic language when teaching English (Elyas & Al-Ghamdi, 2018). These directives by the MoE suggest that decentralisation of education has been limited and the MoE still exerts strong influence over teaching practices through policy and resources (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020). The principal was aware of the government stress on using Arabic to teach English but also the need for EFL teachers to have more training in English to teach English:

It would be helpful if English teachers could speak English in class and outside of class. Most of the lessons are conducted in Arabic. (P1)

It may be from this comment by the principal that more training was needed for both the principal and his teachers on how to get the balance of using both Arabic and English in the EFL classroom, but the principal did not discuss this further, suggesting perhaps that this might still be an aspiration. According to Aldossari (2018) the EFL classroom in Saudi Arabian schools is not conducive to adopting these new learning strategies. As described above, the principal was aware that a lack of resources and oversized classrooms were not conducive to the learning strategies required to develop language proficiency. He noted that there is a:

Lack of equipment or laboratories for the English language in the school (P1)

However, it appeared that the principal was unable to reduce class sizes:

The practicalities of running the school means that class sizes are large. (P1)

Classes in KSA are only 45 minutes long. With a content-rich syllabus and low skill level amongst teachers, the principal noted that there was insufficient time to engage in real and meaningful activities in the classroom:

Also, that the time of 45 minutes a whole day is not enough, and it is difficult for the student to master the language, and it is difficult for the teacher to create a student who is familiar with the language. (P1)

This section has highlighted several factors that have an impact on teaching EFL at the school from the perspective of the school's principal. It could be suggested that the principal's lack of competence in English limited his ability to provide direction to the staff teaching English in the EFL classroom. He described that there was need for more teacher training in EFL, more resources and more time for students to learn English. The principal also described the impact of external forces such as the government expectation, community and parent expectations that

had an impact on the teaching and learning of EFL. The following section describes the impact of external factors on EFL teaching and learning from the principal's perspective.

6.6.4 The Impact of government, community and parents

From my personal experiences as a Saudi EFL teacher and training, in Saudi Arabia, there is no set of teacher standards. Teaching is not viewed as a prestigious occupation. There is a very poor system for teacher evaluation and the improvement of teacher's standards. As researchers have also described the capacity for teachers to make intelligent and informed pedagogical choices is clearly limited where there is insufficient pedagogical knowledge (Aldossari, 2018). An effective English teacher must understand the reasons why English is being taught, the required content to be taught, and the optimum teaching strategies (Khan, 2012). Often the lack of clarity for the teacher in these areas has resulted in a haphazard approach that is confusing for students.

Learning English in Saudi Arabia was initially driven by the need to enable Saudi Arabian citizens to communicate effectively in the English-speaking business world (Nouraldeen & Elyas, 2014). The primary focus has been the development of written and spoken skills (GTM) (Elyas & Al Grigri, 2014). It seems likely that environmental factors are influential in limiting effective learning outcomes (Alshmaimeri & Alzyadi, 2015). There is evidence of resistance from conservative groups and the clergy to the further development and expansion of English learning in Saudi Arabia (Alrabai, 2018). It is implied in the curriculum documents by the MoE (government) that learning English should be performed in a manner that enables the student to understand the grammatical structures associated with science and technology (Elyas & Al-Ghamdi, 2018). The problem is that there is no integration at the school level with the science and technology subjects. The principal identified that the importance placed on exams by the MoE makes alternative approaches difficult:

We place our full attention on exams related to scientific subjects based on the Ministry's policy. This limits the potential for our team to develop formative approaches for the development of the student. (P1)

By displacing the importance of English with the importance of science and technology, the system relegates the subject of English to being less important in the school. The principal acknowledged this problem:

The educational policy (Ministry of Education) has not given the English language enough attention to its current importance. (P1)

The principal viewed exams as limiting students' capability to become more competent in using the English language:

The goal of teaching English in the classroom should not be limited to success and passing exams. (P1)

The focus on exams could refer to a prior comment by the principal on the role of competition in education. The above comments indicated that, for the principal, the traditional approach to EFL limits students' capacity to learn, but he was also aware of the tension that he must follow the directions of the MoE, which places more focus on science subjects rather than English. The impact of the external factors outlining education priorities by the government provided the principal with certain challenges.

Another challenge the principal mentioned was societal, referring to the impact parents have on their children's learning. The principal expressed a desire to have more involvement from the home environment in encouraging students to learn English and use English outside the classroom:

Giving more lessons or providing the student with educational sites through which he can learn more in the classroom or at home. It is difficult to persuade parents and students the importance of using English in the home environment. (P1)

However, this may also have been an aspiration, as the principal did not describe how this should come about. The principal did not discuss how teachers should go about developing programmes that can encourage a higher level of English use outside of the school environment. However, this kind of training is considered an essential part of the new educational reform and to meet these expectations, EFL teachers would require additional training. To date there has been minimum instruction provided to EFL teachers on the different strategies they could use to encourage students in learning English (Aldossari, 2018). As has been noted in this thesis, the pedagogical choices facing English teachers in Saudi Arabia are both culturally and structurally limited (Khan, 2011). Culturally, the dominance of the high power-distance and low individualism, coupled with large class sizes, restricts the use of more collaborative, experiential and individualised strategies (Khan, 2012). The dominance of the MoE over the syllabus, textbooks, and teaching methodology limits the range of choices that are available to the classroom teacher in Saudi Arabia (Khan, 2011). The language of aspiration amongst the MoE, parents, the community, and teachers is Arabic, not English (Elyas & Al-Ghamdi, 2018) and these views have a big impact on what is expected from schools. The principal described that greater education of the community and parents on the importance of education is necessary:

Weakness in the awareness-raising role of the importance of the English language as necessity in this era and that it is the language of the age and civilization and its impact on students today and in the future. (P1)

As described throughout this thesis, it is deeply embedded as part of Saudi culture that students and parents often do not see the relevance of learning English (Al Dameg, 2011; Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Al-Seghayer, 2014). This attitude lowers the expectation and standing of the subject within the school curriculum. The principal was aware of the need to understand the

balance to meet government and home expectations and attitudes to the teaching and learning of English. However, it appeared that English was still not considered important:

The objectives of teaching English must be compatible with the requirements and of students needs in their daily life. The principal must see this importance. (P1)

and

Students must want to learn English. (P1)

and

The student is not convinced of the importance of the English language. (P1)

Here the principal again put the onus on the student to be motivated to learn English, although he did acknowledge that the principal has a role to see that the students' needs are met. The principal also acknowledged that the problem extends beyond the confines of the classroom. He was aware that English is rarely used outside the classroom. He was also aware that he and the EFL teachers at this school did not speak English outside of the classroom. Indeed, many principals in KSA schools cannot speak English. If teachers are to model desired behaviour to students, then not using English outside the classroom can send students the message that English is not important. With limited outside exposure that students have to use the English language, they may feel discouraged from seeking opportunities to use English because it may be perceived as unnecessary. The principal understood this dilemma but appeared to lack a strategy for moving forward. According to the principal:

Society must have a positive view of the importance of the English language. English is only used in the classroom. (P1)

The current researcher would suggest that having parents and society in general have a positive view about students learning English will be a long and slow process in KSA schools without stronger encouragement for the importance of English raised. The principal of the school in the current research recognised that there are many factors that have a negative impact on raising the importance of EFL in his school. For the principal, the problem of developing English

competence appeared to be due to factors that range from teacher's unwillingness to improve their skills, restrictive MoE policies, the students' and parents' view of the lack of importance of English, a lack of contemporary resources, as well as structural barriers such as time and class size. The principal appeared to see the problem as an inherited problem:

As I said before that one of the most important factors that make learning English difficult is that teaching it as a basic subject does not start at an early age and is delayed until many years have passed for the student in school, which negatively affects the psychological and mental readiness and will of the student. During the previous years of learning English, some students have a wrong and negative preconception in their minds about the English language and its difficulty, and they make wrong judgments based on the opinions of their predecessors, brothers, relatives or friends. This false image makes them take a hostile attitude and look gloomy, full of fear, hesitation, and a sense of helplessness towards learning the language. (P1)

The findings from the teachers and the principal's interviews and the classroom observations indicated that there is need for more research about EFL in schools. There is a greater need to focus on how school principals understand the new reforms and how they see these reforms being effectively applied through their directives as the school leader.

6.5 Conclusion

The information compiled in this chapter integrated data gathered from the interviews with the three EFL teachers and the school principal as well as from the classroom observations as represented in Table 5.2 below as drawn from model 3.1 of the triadic reciprocal causation model (Bandura 1986, 1997). A summary of the classroom observations in relation to the triadic reciprocal causation model indicated that two of the teachers (T2 and T3) appeared to lack high teacher efficacy. Teaching English in their classes was delivered mostly in Arabic and the content of their lessons adhered to the designated textbook/workbook, which did not

contain relevant information to the lives of Saudi students. Their comments about EFL teaching and learning supported what was observed. In contrast, participant T1 used more English in his class, using Arabic to explain difficult concepts or instructions to better inform student learning. This seems to be more in line with what is required by the MoE for teaching English. This teacher was more enthusiastic to incorporate a range of new reform strategies to create a student-centred learning environment.

Table 6.2 *Summary of Findings from the Teachers/Principal*

Positive Factors	Negative Factors	Reciprocal Determinants
[Role of the Teacher] Has a <i>belief</i> in the value of teaching English (<i>personal</i>) T1 and to some extent the principal – leads to a positive <i>attitude</i> to EFL	[Role of the Teacher] Does not have a strong <i>belief (personal)</i> in the value of EFL as a subject (T2, T3) – leads toward the negative <i>attitude</i> to EFL	A negative <i>attitude</i> leads to lack of motivation to teach English (<i>behavioural</i>) A positive <i>attitude</i> leads to higher <i>motivation</i> to teach English – and for the principal to support EFL
[Teaching Strategies] High motivation to teach EFL; use effective strategies (T1)	[Teaching Strategies] Low motivation to teach EFL beyond traditional teaching approaches; no innovative teaching strategies (T2, T3)	A low <i>motivation</i> leads to the use of ineffective teaching strategies (GMT) (<i>environmental</i>) – high <i>motivation</i> leads to innovating teaching strategies (CLT)
[Understanding the learner] Develop positive <i>relationships</i> with students (T1) (<i>environmental</i>)	[Understanding the learner] Maintain a hierarchical power-distant <i>relationship</i> with students (T2, T3)	Having a positive <i>belief and attitude</i> about the value of EFL (<i>personal</i>) creates high <i>motivation (behavioural)</i> to use innovative <i>teaching strategies (environmental)</i> that promote student enthusiasm and a good teacher-student <i>relationship (environmental)</i> Having a negative <i>belief and attitude</i> about the value of EFL (<i>personal</i>) creates low <i>motivation (behavioural)</i> to use innovative <i>teaching strategies (environmental)</i> that demotivates student enthusiasm and the teacher-student <i>relationship (environmental)</i>
Impact of External Factors	Perceptions of low support and expectations from society, government as obstacles for ELF (T1, T2, T3, principal) (<i>personal, behavioural, environmental</i>)	Low expectations (<i>beliefs, attitudes, choices, taking action, relationships</i>) of society and government about the place of EFL in schools leads to demotivation of teachers and students in the teaching learning process
High teacher-efficacy	T1 had high teacher-efficacy: showed confidence to use innovative teaching strategies that motivated students to learn; had engaged students during class. T2 and T3 – potentially high teacher-efficacy to use traditional teaching strategies (even though these were not recommended by the MoE for teaching EFL).	
Low teacher-efficacy	T2 and T3 had low EFL teacher-efficacy – did not show confidence to use innovative teaching strategies; blamed the students for being demotivated; maintained a high-distance relationship with students. All teachers expressed low teacher-efficacy to combat the strong societal disinterest in EFL	

Table 6.2 illustrates the reciprocal determinates that had an impact on EFL teachers. In a positive way, having a strong belief in oneself and one's students led teacher T1 to use innovative teaching strategies and create a supportive learning environment that was welcoming for the students. In contrast, teachers T2 and T3, did not share a strong belief in the value of EFL teaching and learning, and so did not use a range of innovative teaching strategies. The data suggested that they did not have a high motivation to teach EFL as they believed that most of their students were not motivated to learn English. The principal of the school described several factors that hindered effective EFL teaching and learning such as teachers' lack of training, a lack of English use both in the class and outside of school and a lack of use of reform strategies for teaching EFL as mandated by the government. He also mentioned external factors such as lack of support by parents and the community to see English as an important subject in schools and a greater focus on science subjects over English as obstacles to effective EFL teaching and learning. All three teachers in the research also mentioned the lack of community support and cultural restrictions hampering students learning English. While this chapter has discussed the findings from the interviews from the school staff, it is also important to know about EFL in Saudi classrooms from the perspectives of the students. These perspectives are provided in Chapter 7.

Chapter 7

Analysis of data from the students

7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research findings from the perspectives of the students in the same school where the teachers were interviewed. Related to the triadic reciprocal causation model (Bandura, 1986, 1997), this chapter describes the analysis of the beliefs students had about the value of learning English (Section 6.2) and their attitudes towards learning English at the school (Section 6.3). The theme of motivation to learn English was revealed in relation to being in the EFL classroom (Section 6.4) and in relation to personal choices made outside the classroom (Section 6.5). The chapter also reports on the theme of teaching instruction and how the teachers' approach to EFL determines the kinds of relationships students can experience in the class (Section 6.6a), with further analysis of the resources used for instruction (Section 6.6b). The chapter concludes by comparing and contrasting the findings from the teachers and from the students in relation to the theme of the research, which is to explore the teaching and learning practices of EFL in KSA. The data analysed in this chapter refers to the research question:

What factors enable or hinder EFL students' confidence and ability to learn English effectively in KSA classrooms?

7.2 The students' beliefs towards the value of learning English

The research results show that all the students who participated in the focus group discussion had a strong belief that English was an important subject for them to learn. They understood it to be a lingua franca for international engagement:

It's a first language in the world. (S1).

I believe that English language is the most important language nowadays. (S2).

English language is a language of politics, economics and the language of the science. It's the language of the world. (S3).

Most of the English countries are the strongest countries. Because of that, English is really important to Saudi Arabian students. (S4)

It's a common language between nations (countries). It's important for getting a best job. (S5)

It can be seen from the responses above that the students in the focus groups believe in the value of learning English. In the triadic reciprocal causation model (Bandura, 1986) beliefs are elements within the personal factor. Beliefs are described as important in determining an individual's commitment to a task or activity. In Bandura's Social Cognitive Learning Theory (SCT) (1977, 1986,1993), beliefs are an essential component of self-efficacy. Shunk and Pajares (2009) described that beliefs are goal-related, context-specific, and future-oriented judgements of one's competence. The fact that all the students in the focus groups expressed their belief in the value of learning English for their futures and their present participation in global communities indicates that these students have the potential for high self-efficacy as EFL learners. This finding also suggested that one of the Ministry of Education's (MoE) goals to ensure that the English program develops the students' awareness "of the importance of English as a means of international communication" (MoE, 2002, p. 122) has been successful. The students' responses reflected that they were fully aware of the importance of learning English, as English competence provides them with the capability to advance their futures and plays a part in securing future employment. It is also a necessity for access to higher education and to communicate with future businesspeople. However, while these beliefs were shared by the students in the focus groups, these students did mention that this view was not shared by all students. Other students had very different beliefs and attitudes towards learning English.

7.3 Students' attitudes

A component of the triadic reciprocal causation model is 'reciprocal determinism' which suggests that an individual's behaviour can influence the environment (Bandura, 1977, 1986,1993). As indicated above students', teachers' and society's attitude towards learning English can create a negative environment for learning and, consequently, students' commitment to an activity. Beliefs and attitudes are strongly connected in that, without a belief in the value of something, an individual is likely to convey a negative attitude about it. Shah et al. (2013) suggested that the primary goal for students was achieving good grades and a final certificate rather than the desire to learn English as a language they may use outside the classroom. Having negative beliefs and attitudes about learning English is likely to lead students to have low self-efficacy as EFL learners with a CLT approach, but these students may well have high self-efficacy if they are good at writing for exams and strictly adhering to the process of rote learning and the GTM approach to EFL. As Pajares (2002) described, people who have low expectations about their ability to do something (due to their belief that it is not important) will avoid doing the activity (e.g., being engaged in learning English). While the students in the focus groups shared a belief that learning English was important, these students made many references to a group of students in their classes who they described as hating English and who saw no value in learning English. Their negative attitude towards learning English was quite different to that of the students in the focus groups:

Students is hating this language because they think that is so hard and what I said before that they will not do anything by English in their life. This idea makes them hate this language and no one wants to learn it. (S1).

This comment seems to suggest that there are two distinct groups of students in the EFL class, those who see value in learning English and want to learn and those who see that English has no value for them, and so hate the subject. The students who disliked English may reflect the

community's attitude that English is not an important subject in school. Parents may not value English, seeing it as a 'foreign' element that detracts from the cultural identity of Saudi students (Al Dameg, 2011; Clarke, 2009, Nevo, 1998), and so they pass this attitude on to their children who come to school and are disengaged from learning English. Instead, the preference would be to stay with the traditional subjects and not engage with a 'foreign' subject such as English.

This attitude towards English may also be a reflection on teachers' approach to EFL and the attitudes these teachers have towards the subject. One student commented that combined with the negative attitudes of some of the students, the teacher's attitude was a problem in the class:

It's not too much because when the teacher come to class, he always speaks Arabic.

And other students at the back [of the class] make noises and talk alone, and he doesn't try to make them to being silent. (S7)

This comment suggests that there is no attempt by the teacher to curb the actions of this disruptive element in the class. Indeed, the teacher is speaking Arabic to the class and ignores those students at the back who are not engaged in the learning. The students in the focus group have interpreted this attitude as undermining the seriousness of teaching and learning English because the teacher does nothing to curb the disruptive students in the class. The behaviour of the teacher (the pedagogical choices and motivation to teach English) may affirm the messages students are hearing at home and in society in general. As a result, the teachers engage in a kind of resistance to teaching EFL (Al Dameg, 2011; Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Al-Seghayer, 2014; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014) and the students have responded by engaging in their own version of such resistance. Research has shown that teachers who do not feel confident to teach English avoid a strong engagement in teaching the subject (Choi & Lee, 2016; Eslami & Fatachi, 2008). The inference in the comment by the student above is that, because the English teacher communicated in Arabic, there was tacit support for English not being considered an

important subject to learn by many of the students. It could be suggested here that the teacher's low teacher-efficacy to teach EFL had a negative impact on the students who have picked up on this attitude and have responded in agreement with this attitude. They, in turn, have low self-efficacy about learning English.

7.3.1 Students' motivation in the classroom learning experience

It can be inferred from the findings described above that the attitude of the teacher has determined students' motivation to learn English. As has been described previously in this thesis, the approach to teaching and learning English in Saudi Arabia is through using the textbook, with a focus on grammar over language communication and it is a teacher-directed approach (Mitchell & Alfuriah, 2017; MoE, 2003). The English classroom is characterised by a highly traditional and conservative approach to teaching English (Aldossari, 2018), with many EFL teachers having little competency in English (Moskovsky, 2018). In response to this approach, students develop little motivation to learn and instead will often adopt a passive role in such environments (Alrabai, 2018). Students in the current research described the limited range of activities offered by their teachers and, thus, their lack of motivation to learn in class:

We learn from the textbook. The teacher explains on the whiteboard and we do exercises in the textbook (S1)

A similar process was described in another focus group:

My English lesson starts with the teacher telling us to open the textbook at a specific page. Then the teacher explains on the white board in Arabic. Then I write the answers to the exercises in my exercise book (S8)

Teaching strategies are a key component of environmental factors in Bandura's (1986) triadic reciprocal causation model. In the above scenario the teaching strategies described by the students, where the teacher adheres strictly to outmoded strategies for teaching, produced reciprocal behaviour from the students in that the students had little motivation to engage in

the learning. It is clear from the students' descriptions that the EFL teachers were using the GTM approach with a high focus on students learning grammar rather than communication skills (Nunan, 2003). This approach is contrary to the new Tatweer reforms in EFL education, where teachers are expected to provide students with more opportunities to develop skills in conversing in English in different situations (MoE, 2002, 2003). One student was quite graphic in his description of how he felt about how the EFL lessons were conducted in his class:

We learn grammar, grammar, grammar and more grammar (S3)

Despite the students' understanding of the place and importance of English in the world and for them in their future careers "it's important for getting a best job" (S5), English was taught in a traditional way, with Arabic being the dominant language in the class with little opportunity for them to engage in using English as a discourse with others. As well as a heavy learning focus on grammar, students described that vocabulary lists were provided by the teacher, and the students learnt these by heart:

Teachers ask us to memorize like five or ten words every day. (S14)

and

At the end of the lesson, the teacher gives us a vocabulary list to learn for homework.

We never get tested on the list (S10)

The choices the teacher made in their teaching, and the teaching strategies they employed, fall within the environmental factor of the triadic reciprocal causation model but are interpreted here by these students through behavioural (motivation) and personal (attitudes) factors. It could be suggested that these teaching strategies engaged students in using lower-order thinking skills, with EFL teachers being unresponsive to supporting students to develop their English language skills beyond learning vocabulary and writing out grammar exercises in their workbooks (Aldhafri & Alrajhi, 2014). One student in this research described the frustration

of learning vocabulary that was not tested or that was not related to any other context than simply to be memorised:

Memorising vocab without use, it won't be useful. (S3).

Clearly, the students were aware that this process for learning English was very limited. Alshumaimeri and Alzyadi (2015) identified that the classroom is the one place where Saudi students should be able to learn and develop their English language skills and that textbooks can be an effective resource to assist in the process of learning English. However, Alshumaimeri (2003) found that Saudi students often leave school having learned little English and without the ability to carry on a conversation in English. The students' frustration about this problem was indicated in the comments above.

A key factor for the focus of EFL to be on grammar and vocabulary appeared to be to get students ready for their English exams. This is a behavioural factor (motivation) shaping teachers' decisions on how and what to teach, which resulted in reciprocal behaviour (motivation) from the students who described that this was not an effective way for them to learn. Student 4 (S4) described that English was devalued as a subject by the teacher and that the focus is only on having the students pass the exam:

The case of some Saudi schools is that they don't care about learning English. They are not interest about learning; they care about both of the exams. (S4)

This sentiment was expressed by others in the focus group:

In the end of each semester, the teacher gives us two or three papers and ask us to memorise it for the final exam. (S5)

and

When there are exams, we are given a revision sheet by the teacher that contains the answers to the questions (S9)

Schunk and Zimmerman (2006) described triadic reciprocity as a process where one's behaviour in an environment affects how one thinks and behaves and how one views the environment. Individuals are both products and producers of the environment. In the findings described above, the teachers are the products of Saudi education's expectations that exams are a necessary evaluation tool in Saudi education. However, when teachers choose to focus on rote learning to prepare for the exams rather than supporting students in learning English at a deeper level the students described being frustrated, which led to having a negative attitude towards the learning of English for most students. The students expressed that they wanted to be exposed to a range of teaching strategies but were limited by a teacher-focused environment. It should be noted that the high power-distance culture of Saudi Arabia requires compliance by the students to the authority of the teacher, so the researcher found it surprising that the students were willing to talk openly about the limitations of this GTM approach to EFL teaching and learning. This willingness to disclose their thoughts and feelings was an indication of how deep students' frustrations were. The EFL approach they described as used in their classes reduced the opportunity for them to engage with the language in the way that they wanted. It was an expression of the importance of English to the student that they remained motivated despite the frustrations that they had with this teaching style. Because so much of the classroom time was spent on grammar drills and copying what the teacher wrote on the whiteboard as well as the fact that the English lesson was done in Arabic, there was little time left over for students to develop communication skills in English:

I never speak English in the lesson. I listen to the teacher in Arabic. I write in my

exercise book. I read my textbook. There has to be a better way to learn English (S2)

The comments from the students mirror what has been described in the literature in that there is resistance by many teachers to teach English in innovative ways (Alrashidi & Phan, 2010; Grave, 2000; Mahbob & Elyas, 2014). One student commented:

The teacher tells us what to do and we obey (S3)

The top-down nature of the education system means that the voice of the students remained unheard. However, the level of insight of the students into learning English uncovered in the focus groups revealed that the students could have a great deal to contribute if channels could be provided to listen to their voices. The students identified that the highly traditional and conservative approach to teaching English was not effective for them, and they were unhappy about being forced to assume a passive, unmotivated role in the learning process. As one student put it: *English is boring* (S4). Given their high level of personal motivation and acknowledgment of the importance of learning English, it should not be a surprise that the students were disappointed that they merely listened to instructions from the teacher. They had limited engagement to use the language they wanted to learn.

7.3.2 The impact of classroom demotivation

As described above, the teaching approach the teacher chooses to use has an impact on students' motivation to learn. Poor attitudes towards teaching result in poor motivation to learn (Alkaabi, 2016; Al-Nasser, 2015). When a positive motivation to learn English is not encouraged by the teacher, frustration can overtake the learning, as expressed by the following student:

I am frustrated because I want to do well in this subject but find the lack of opportunity to speak frustrating (S3)

Not one student in the focus groups had a negative attitude towards the concept of learning English. However, these students mentioned different factors that came into play to demotivate them in EFL classes. One factor was the fear of being ridiculed that they experienced when they attempted to speak English both inside and outside of the classroom. To save face and not be embarrassed if they made mistakes in English, students remained silent:

I stay in the class silent because I become afraid of making a mistake. (S5).

Or be made to feel silly:

Some students in the school, when I speak by English with my colleagues, they make me feel that is silly. (S3)

Making mistakes in the use of a language is an important part of learning how to use that language (Nunan, 2003; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The students in the current research appeared to seek the safety of anonymity in the classroom, with only two or three students who were proficient in the language commanding the teacher's attention:

Most of teachers ask less number of students, like two or three students [to answer questions]. They don't ask the others. (S13)

and

My teacher just asks and focus on specific students and ignores others. (S15)

and

A few students dominate the class, so I don't get a chance to speak. (S5)

Here, it may be that the teacher's attitude (personal factor) was that most students do not want to learn English (perhaps leading to their disruptions in the class) so, instead, focused only on those students who were willing participants. In taking this approach, the teacher was missing out on helping those students who wanted to participate but not at the expense of being embarrassed. It may also be that this teacher was not himself convinced that English was important enough of a subject to be concerned that not all students were engaged in learning and so did nothing to curb their disruptions and disinterest. This finding would suggest that low teacher-efficacy has resulted in low student self-efficacy in the EFL classroom.

In addition, in the EFL classroom, writing and reading are given priority, as these relate to final exams (Al-Hazmi, 2006), therefore, the opportunities for practicing speaking and listening skills are very limited (Al-Nasser, 2015; Alzahrani, 2019). The students in the current research seemed genuinely disappointed that the quality of the English teaching was of a low

standard, that classes were often disruptive, and that there was minimal opportunity to engage in practicing English. These students were aware that the more frequent opportunities to use the English language in the classroom they had, the more their understanding and language proficiency would increase. The opportunities for using English in the class were negative, so their self-perceived level of competency was low. These minimal opportunities to practice English were particularly demotivating for students. Therefore, the teachers' choices (behavioural factor) in using a GTM approach rather than a CLT approach was a big concern:

Because the teacher uses Arabic, I have little opportunity to hear people speak English
(S1)

and

We just have a few minutes to share in the classroom just to answer the questions
because teacher spends a lot of time for explanation. (S4).

This researcher would posit that a student-directed environment in which the learner is required to interact in English would encourage a broader level of participation. Students were seeking this opportunity so long as they were not exposed to humiliation and the loss of face. Based on the current research, many students appeared to be highly motivated to learn English. It also appeared that this motivation was sustained, despite an educational and external (social) environment that was demotivating. The students described how teachers further limited their opportunities to learn English by conducting most of the class in Arabic:

If the students receive the information by English [it's] better than to get it by Arabic
language. (S11)

and

One of these factors when teachers talked most of the class period by Arabic. They
explain most things by Arabic language. This thing gets students confused. (S13)

As of the result of the teachers' approach to teaching English, students interpret the subject in one way:

English is only about reading and writing, (S3)

The students appeared to want to have a learning environment in which the teacher instructs in English and uses both written and spoken English as the means of instruction and engagement. The high use of Arabic to teach English was frustrating for students. The students' responses concurred with research that revealed students' unhappiness in excessive use of the Arabic language in the English classroom (Elyas & Picard, 2010). This teaching approach was contrary to the approach recommended by the MoE (2003) through the Tatweer reform movement. The students described that their instruction in Arabic rather than in English was likely due to the teachers' lack of English language proficiency. This was a significant observation by the students given the nature of the power-distance culture of Saudi Arabia:

Sometimes I try to ask my teacher by English. Some of them said that "they didn't know" because of their ability of English. They become afraid to make mistakes. (S9)

In this comment the teacher was in alignment with students in being afraid to make mistakes and the students have picked up on it. If the teacher is to act as a role model for students in how they want and expect students to behave, this observation contributes to understanding why there is such a lack of English usage in the class. Another student commented on how the lack of English skills prevented teachers from trying to teach English, but that this is a deficit teachers need to overcome:

They have to love a learning English but teachers here not trying to. (S7).

It is my experience as an EFL teacher that if a subject is devalued within the school, then teachers with lower levels of competence are likely to be assigned to those subjects in Saudi schools. These experiences are described in the literature (Alkaabi, 2016; Al-Nasser, 2015;

Alzahrani, 2019). The students described that the standard of English teaching was below the standard that they receive in other subjects.

While the students described many examples of teachers who did not seem to value English highly, they also identified that there is a young teacher at the school who used technology and English as the language of instruction and communication in the class. They were enthusiastic in their descriptions of this teacher and his teaching approach:

There is one teacher [name omitted]. He is young. He uses technology to engage us in learning English. The students are only allowed to speak English in his class. I want to be in his class. (S2)

My teacher uses English. We can communicate in English and talk to our classmates in English. (S5)

English is about communicating. I can only communicate in English with my teacher. (S3)

Qutob (2018) found that student satisfaction in learning English increased when the teacher took on a supportive and encouraging role and provided appropriate teaching strategies and resources in the classroom. The students in the current research were aware of the difference that this approach brought to their learning. The comments of the students demonstrated a preference for this approach, but students in Saudi schools are not positioned to choose the class that they can be in. From their responses, the students demonstrated a preference for a learning environment that is more interactive, uses technology, is conducted in English, and uses content that is grounded in context, but they had no guarantee that they would be placed in this teacher's class no matter how much they wanted this. Instead, the learning environment for many students was the one they most frequently cited, where only a few students were given the opportunity to engage in conversations with the teacher.

The lack of opportunity to engage in English was described by the students to be the result of several factors, including the large class size, the lack of skill of the teacher and the ease of relying on the textbook. Class sizes in Saudi tend to be large with sometimes up to 60 students. With such large numbers, teachers may feel overwhelmed at trying to meet the individual needs of students and so instead teach by adhering to a structured formula laid out in the textbooks. This theme is further explored in Section 6.4.

Multiple teaching strategies have been identified as motivating students to learn English (Aiusheeva & Guntur, 2019; Gangwer, 2009). Yet there was no evidence in the students' comments that there was any attempt by teachers to deviate from a solitary approach to teaching English, except by the one young teacher that the students mentioned. However, in the focus groups students described how they sought opportunities outside of school to improve their English language competency and gain experience using English, which are described in the next section. In comments made by the students below, there is a desire for additional choices to engage in English.

7.3.4 The students' external motivation to learning English

As an EFL teacher for many years, I know myself that a students' motivation level is extremely important in developing competence in a second language. Having a reason for learning a subject is an important part of the motivation process. The students that were part of the focus group had a set of reasons motivating them for learning English that they were able to describe:

I want to study at an American university, so I need to get a high IELTS score. I am

worried because my reading, writing, and listening is good but not speaking (S1)

This student has identified a future plan where he needs competency in English language skills in every domain. It is probable that his aspirations were being supported by his parents and this support would be in line with the government's Tatweer reforms for education. This student

was worried, however, that he would not have high enough English language skills to get into an American university. In the comment above, he also expressed concern that the approach to EFL was teacher-led and through textbooks activities only, with little focus on developing communication skills. It seems this student had some grounds for his concern. Another student had an equally clear goal for needing competency in English:

I am going to manage my father's business. Many of his clients are American. I need to be good in English (S2)

Here also, the parental involvement was a positive support toward the student learning English. This students' aspirations included the need for him to be proficient (good) in English. Another student expressed a similar aspiration:

I am going to Australia to study. I need English (S3)

The primary driver for the above students was their immediate academic and vocational goals. Inherent to the achievement of these goals was the need to be competent in reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English. It should be noted that the students identified as disruptive in class and uninterested in English chose not to volunteer to be in the focus group sample. Hence, it was not possible to determine whether their disruptions were due to the lack of future goals or if the approach to teaching English put them off learning English. All the students that were present in the focus group had either an academic or a vocational reason for learning English.

7.3.5 Opportunities to motivate students to use English outside the classroom

The lack of external opportunities for practicing English can be a significant barrier to the development of student competence (Al-Qahtani & Al Zumor, 2016; Al-Seghayer, 2019). When a student cannot practice using English outside of the classroom, they can become further demotivated (Alharbi, 2015; Alrabai, 2018). The students' responses revealed that when they were not able to practice using English outside of the classroom, they become demotivated.

The lack of support from parents was a strong demotivating factor for students wanting to develop competence in using the English language:

Since I started learning English in primary school, my parents never focusing on this subject like other subjects such as math or science and they never blaming me if I when I got a low score which make me feel that it's not important. (S15).

Much research has identified that Saudi parents do not value English, as some have a concern that it will introduce Western concepts that will have a negative impact on their children's cultural identity (Al-Johani, 2009; Alrashidi & Phan, 2015). However, students who were motivated to learn English seem to find ways to engage with the language in their own ways, such as watching English language movies:

Sometimes I deal with English by watching English movies. (S6)

And

I'm trying to improve my English by watching English movies or chatting with any English native speaker in the social media. (S7)

Watching English movies provided students with multiple venues of access to English. They can hear the language being spoken in context, see how people use English both verbally and non-verbally, and, if there are sub-titles, they can associate the Arabic words with English words. However, while some students appeared actively involved in seeking opportunities for practising their English, they also described that opportunities to do so in KSA are few and far between:

Even that I hope to make a practice in English language, I will not find people who is fluent in English in our area. (S3).

Due to the fact that English is not highly valued in Saudi culture, particularly outside the capital city, it was not surprising that this student would have difficulty finding people fluent in English that he could talk with. This lack of opportunity may be the cause for a group of

students who are not active in seeking further opportunities for engaging in English outside of the classroom.

Honestly, I deal with this language just in the classroom and because of that I think that I don't need to learn it or to focus on it. (S8)

Students in the focus groups wanted experiences to use English. Some students described that at home they would often use their online gaming environment as a means to develop relationships with other English-speaking gamers of the same age.

Yeah, I'm talking like I'm a gamer so I can talk about like two or three hours to the strangers or native English. Yeah, maybe it's not the everyday but writing and talking and listening at the same time because when you are listening you have to learn about games. That not good information to have by Arabic language so you have to explore the games from the strangers' [point of view]. So, second thing you have to learn it's like talking, practising. You have to get it right now, so if you didn't get it, you can't please so normally you are good in English. (S3)

As described in the literature review, over 50% of the population in KSA are under the age of 30 and most young people have embraced modern technology, such as that which provides for gaming (Alyoussef, Alamri, & Al-Rahmi, 2019). Through these online social portals young people have access to culture and language beyond their local areas and what they may be exposed to in school. It is possible that many students are now more social media savvy than their teachers, which may have an impact on how they respond to lessons in class. An element from the Tatweer report indicates that EFL teachers should be using more technology in their classes. It seems here that without that directive actively pursued by teachers, students find their own ways to engage with others online.

Students displayed a conscious and active approach to the development of their English language skills, actively seeking out opportunities to practice and improve their English, willing to try engaging in using English wherever they could:

Sometimes I try to use what I've learned from the English vocabulary in the restaurant or hospital just to make a practice (S5).

There is clear indication from the current research that students want to learn English and want to be more engaged in that learning process in the class. If teachers are not going to engage in that processes that support students in their learning, students will find their own means to develop English language competency. The next section provides further insights into students' perceptions of the teaching resources used in their EFL classrooms.

7.4 Teaching resources: technology and the textbook series

Pressures of time, a focus on grammar and the lack of skilled teachers, along with the high power-distance culture in the classroom meant that the primary EFL instructional method used by teachers was by rote and repetition (Al-Awaid, 2018). As indicated above, the students understood that this approach has done little to improve their competence in using the English language and saw this approach as lacking in merit:

The biggest problem that teacher keeps focusing on just the textbook without teaching us from another resource (S8)

Several students described that the learning material was not motivating for them and that they wanted to be more active in the classroom:

The students shouldn't just learn from the book (S10).

and

For me, I feel that some content of the book is boring and not interesting (S6)

My teacher uses only the textbook (S1)

In the majority of English classes, there is no use of technology despite technology enabling the contextualisation of language (Morris, 2011) and being mandated by the MoE (2003) as an approach teachers should be using. The students did describe that there is some use of technology in the Saudi Arabian classroom; for example, one student described a smart board in the class by one teacher. This teacher had embraced technology beyond the simple whiteboard to use a more interactive smartboard for teaching. However, this piece of technology appeared to be sitting unused in most other classes:

My teacher has a smart board. He never uses it. He just writes on the whiteboard (S9)

Overall, the level of use of technology was summed up by the comments of students:

The use of technology is very limited (S2, S5, S11)

As described in Chapter 1 of this thesis, the MoE in the KSA provides the textbook *Flying High for Saudi Arabia* for the teaching of English in secondary schools. The publishing company provides a pupil's workbook and an audio CD for each student. Through the classroom observations done for the current research, the use of a range of learning materials associated with the textbook was evident in the classroom of Teacher 1 (T1). The audio material was being used and the pages from the textbook were being projected onto the screen. The students were engaged with activities derived from the exercises in their workbook. The teacher was implementing the CLT approach to encourage students to use communication strategies for learning English, and the range of digital and paper resources appeared to enable him to involve speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills into the lesson. The students' workbooks contained a range of individual and team activities supported by the audio-visual material. In addition to the textbook material, the teacher had developed his own speaking activities within the context of group role-playing focused on the learning material for that lesson. Observations in the other two classes did not reveal a similar high commitment to teaching innovations.

In the class of T1, the *Flying High* textbook and student materials provided opportunities for the students to practice the target language of English in situations that were replicated in the real lives of these student. Parts of the resource targeted the expected future use of English under scholarship conditions at an overseas university (which some students in this study described as a future goal) or language that they would need in the world of business (which other students described as their future goals). The observed focus of the lesson was a comparison of contemporary methods of transportation with historical methods of transportation. The authenticity of the materials and the opportunity for language exchange engaged the students actively in the use of the language in the classroom. The *Flying High* workbook that was used fulfilled the expectation that it seeks to provide authentic materials in the Saudi Arabian English classroom (Alshumaimeri & Alzyadi, 2015). The use of authentic materials grounded in a real-life context is central to CLT (Zohoorian & Baghban, 2011). This was the observed reality within the classroom of Teacher 1(T1) where the authentic content was a trigger for discussion between the teacher and the students, between students and students, and one-to-one discussions between the teacher and students.

The emphasis in T1's lessons in using the *Flying High* textbook and workbook was towards conversational English. In addition to the workbook materials, different speech situations are presented on the audio CD, and the topics in the workbook are designed to promote discussion. The audio CD promotes listening and comprehension as students listen to a context-based passage and are then required to answer questions on what they have heard. The audio CD provides a range of speech acts in different situations. Within the textbook there are a wide range of authentic English language passages from newspapers, restaurant menus, advertisements, forms, magazines, and emails. The layout of the book is clear with a high level of bright illustrations that encourage reading. In the observed exercise in the classroom, the students had to interview each other about their means of transportation. It was evident that the

nature of the materials provided in the *Flying High* textbook and workbook challenged the students. This young teacher (T1) appeared confident with the material and with using the material within a CLT context.

However, as indicated above, this level of engagement was not evident in the classrooms of T2 and T3, which were dominated by GTM discourse. The observations in these classrooms saw the students sitting immobile at their desks, staring at the whiteboard, and occasionally copying the information into their exercise book. Attention and engagement occurred when the teacher faced the students directly to discuss the grammar placed on the whiteboard. The students appeared to listen intently but asked no questions. In these classrooms, the textbook and workbooks remained unopened on the students' desks. The teachers did not have a copy of the teaching manual and did not refer to elements of the textbook for the lesson. The teachers were reliant on the GTM approach that is no longer supported by the textbook (Alharbi, 2015) or by the Tatweer reforms (MoE, 2003). The teachers produced grammatical exercises on the whiteboard from their own material. The students then had to correct grammar errors. This process resulted in only reading and writing skills centred around grammar being developed, but without a context. The available resource material remained closed on the students' desks. In their interviews these two teachers (T1 and T2) expressed their lack of confidence and competence in using English and the material in the resource materials. This lack of confidence (low teacher-efficacy) resulted in the English lesson being conducted entirely in Arabic. While the principal expressed in his interview that he wanted the resources to be used, he appeared to be tolerant of these two teachers to not use the material because they lacked the confidence to be able to use the resource material in the manner for which it was designed. The only engagement witnessed in the classrooms of T2 and T3 was from teacher to the students in a one-way monologue. This was in stark contrast to

the interactions in the classroom of T1 where there was dialogue between all the language participants.

The choice of some teachers to use the resources and others not to use the resources reflects the mixed feelings that teachers have towards the resources (Almalki, 2014). The research of Almalki (2014) suggested that teachers are facing a significant challenge in implementing the CLT methodology and strategies and as a result they do not use these materials but, instead use what they know, which generally is the GTM. This appeared to be the case in the current study. Low proficiency levels in English competence amongst Saudi teachers is likely to be a contributing factor as identified in this research and in the research of Alshumaimeri (2003) and Alzuhairi (2008).

There was a strong alignment between the comments made by the teachers and the principals about the resource materials used in class. Given that both the GTM classroom and the CLT classroom students had the textbook and workbook, it was no surprise that students involved with a GTM approach wanted to be more involved in the opportunities that they could see within the class that used the CLT approach with the resource materials. The students presented in their interviews that they wanted English to be used and to have more opportunities to experience communication in the English language. The resource materials would enable this to happen but were clearly not used, particularly when the teacher was uncomfortable with the challenges that teaching from the material presents.

Given these findings, the researcher would suggest that it may be necessary that a modified version of the learning materials is created that can enable teachers lacking in competency with the English language and the CLT methodology to gradually shift their teaching approach. This might involve training where a mix of English and Arabic is used in contextualised situations so that EFL teachers gain more practice in how to combine teaching approaches until they are confident enough to transition to CLT methods. The researcher notes

that EFL learning materials have not been revised since 2014, and some of the material is showing signs of being dated. Providing audio material and resources that involve current news and items of interest to young people will assist in keeping the material current. A summary of the findings from the student focus groups is provided below in Table 6.1.

Table 7.1 *Summary of Findings from the Students*

Beliefs and attitudes	Motivation	Reciprocal Determinants
<p>Wanted to learn English – had future goals for learning English. Felt frustrated by the learning environment. Wanted to be in the young teacher’s class – knew they had no choice in whose class they would be in</p>	<p>Little motivation to learn in EFL classes due to teachers’ overuse of Arabic to teach English, lack of innovative teaching/learning strategies applied, over reliance on rote learning, uninspired use of textbook materials. Motivated to learn in young teacher’s class – greater use of innovative teaching/learning strategies, encouraged to speak English in class, not made to feel embarrassed. Self-motivation – students initiated own strategies for learning English outside the classroom – watched movies with English subtitles, interacted with other gamers online, attempted to interact with other people in the community who could speak English (but few opportunities in this area)</p>	<p>The uninspired teaching strategies (environmental) used in the class demotivated students (behavioural) for learning English. Students express a strong desire (personal) to learn English for future goals (work, further study) but did not feel supported (personal) to take risks in the class as they did not want to be ridiculed or embarrassed (personal) Students had high motivation (behavioural) to self-teach English through a range of strategies but felt frustrated (personal) that there was a limited range of strategies and opportunities (environmental) to learn and practice English.</p>

7.5 Comparing Student and Teacher Findings

The data collected from the students concurred with what little is known about the students’ views of English, the learning environment, and the opportunities that they must improve their English proficiency outside of the classroom (Alrabai, 2014, 2017; Atasheneh &

Izadi, 2012; Daimi et al., 2017). All the student participants believed in the value of English in Saudi Arabia as they could connect this learning with their future goals and the importance of English within the wider global context. The data indicated a high level of awareness among the students regarding the approaches and the quality of English teaching in the school. When the lessons were engaging (for example with teacher T1) students were motivated to learn. However, there was a wide range of motivation levels among students learning English, from those who were not interested and those who only want to use English in the classroom, to those seeking a more active involvement both inside and outside the classroom. In comparing these findings with the teachers' comments, two of the teachers interviewed in this research did little to encourage students to engage with English. Indeed, teacher T2 indicated that homework was the only thing a teacher could offer to encourage students to practice English outside the class lessons. Teacher T1, on the other hand tried to have students practice their English outside the class, and students' comments indicated their appreciation of this approach toward teaching EFL that this teacher has taken. As one student said: *I want to be in his class.* (S2).

It was disturbing that there were students in the EFL classes who were openly disruptive during the English lessons. These students were clearly demonstrating a lack of respect for the importance of the subject, for the teacher and for their fellow students. According to the discussion with the students in the focus group interviews, this disruptive group of students were ignored by the teacher. That this disruption was not addressed in class may reflect a wider view within the school community that English is not a valued subject. Perhaps by not reprimanding the students this teacher was demonstrating his agreement of negative community views. More research in this area is needed to understand better the impact of EFL teachers' approaches to teaching on student learning.

For many of the students, their experience in the English lesson was to read the textbook, listen to the teacher's explanation, avoid being asked a question so that they did not suffer humiliation if they were wrong, write in English, learn some words for homework and learn by memory the information that they needed to pass the exams. The students in the focus groups were aware that there was a more interesting approach (citing the young teacher's approach) but felt that overall, that most EFL teachers lack the skills to create a more supportive and interesting learning environment. In their comments, the teachers in this research recognised that the authoritarian approach to teaching was not the best way for students to learn, but, as one teacher said: *...the teacher's role who is to control the whole time in the classroom. I think the teacher-centred approach is common in our classes (T2)*. Research would agree with this finding in that this teacher's evaluation of the teaching-learning process in EFL classrooms is not uncommon (Alghanmi & Shukri, 2016; Alharbi, 2015; Aljohani, 2016). Further research is needed to explore the level of receptivity of Saudi students to different approaches to teaching and learning English in the classroom.

It was very clear from the students' responses that they felt that there was a lack of opportunity to develop their English communication skills in the classroom, and, therefore, they had to seek out opportunities in other environments. This researcher would posit that if Saudi Arabian students are to develop the level of competence in English to meet their academic and vocational goals as prescribed by the MoE (2003) and from the Tatweer report, then greater opportunities for interactions between teachers and students and students with students need to be provided in the classroom. The current research indicated that the Saudi Arabian learner wanted to be taught in English and felt frustrated that most of the lesson was in Arabic. Students could recognise that they had teachers with low English language proficiency teaching English. Perhaps it was this knowledge that led some students to be disruptive in class. If their teacher is not knowledgeable and proficient in the language he is

teaching, then it would follow those students would not take this subject seriously. As indicated in Chapter 5 of this thesis, when teachers lacked confidence (low teacher efficacy) in using English in the EFL classroom they would seek safety by teaching in their more familiar Arabic language. The teachers and the principal of the school appeared to be aware of this limitation. As the principal of the school said: *The first factor that contributes to teaching and learning English is the teacher's belief in the importance of the English language and its importance for the student in its future* (P1). Research has indicated that there is a tension on whether teachers should be using Arabic as a matter of first recourse in the EFL classroom or if Arabic should only be used as a language of last recourse (Copeland & Neokleous, 2011; Zulfikar, 2018). More research is needed in this area so that Saudi EFL teachers have the latest theories and strategies at hand to teach English most effectively.

The findings from the student focus groups indicated that there need to be opportunities to bring the external avenues of access to learning English used by students outside the classroom into the classroom. The findings indicated that students are already using a range of strategies to learn English outside the classroom, mostly through electronic media, such as watching English-language films, connecting with people through gaming and other social media avenues. The findings from the teacher interviews, however, indicated that these modes of access to English were not used in the classroom to teach English. Only one teacher (T1) used technology as a regular occurrence in his class and urged students to continue practicing English outside the class, but this teaching approach was not adopted by the other EFL teachers. Although there appeared to be some technology at hand in the classroom (Whiteboards, Smartboards) their efficacy for teaching and learning EFL will require allowing students more frequent use of technology in the classroom environment to support their learning (Al-Qahtani & Al Zumor, 2016; Al-Seghayer, 2019). It is not clear in the research how social media, gaming and English language movies could be used as sources of English language development inside

the EFL classroom. More research in this area is needed. Teachers need to learn how to access and effectively use these electronic sources in English to facilitate English language learning in the classroom as this innovation is part of the Tatweer reform for education in KSA. For many teachers, this innovation is likely to require changes to the curriculum, the resources provided by the MoE, and how teachers use these resources as a natural part of their pedagogy. A component of the Tatweer reform was for teachers to engage in communities of practice to learn and share with each other how to use technology most effectively in the class (Alyami, 2014; Assulaimani, 2019). By engaging in this community, teachers are likely to also develop more confidence and competence in working with technology.

What was clear was that the mandated textbook: *Flying High for Saudi Arabia* provided authentic materials that teachers could use to enhance English language learning for students (Alshumaimeri & Alzyadi, 2015; Zohoorian & Baghban, 2011) but these resources were not used to their maximum benefit. It was observed in this research that teacher T1 was the only teacher who used these materials to effectively trigger class discussions, with an obvious emphasis to promote students' development of conversational English. As described earlier in this chapter, students in classes taught by teacher T2 and T3 were not provided with opportunities to use the textbook resources as intended but rather sat immobile in the class, occasionally copying notes the teacher had written on the whiteboard. With these observations, it seemed apparent that teacher T1 had high teacher-efficacy to use the prescribed teaching materials, whereas teachers T2 and T3 had low teacher-efficacy. In their interviews they expressed how they lacked confidence to use these materials so provided minimal input of English for the students to learn. It is posited by this researcher that the approaches of T2 and T3 were not likely to engage students in learning English and provided a deficit English language learning environment.

These observations were mirrored by the students who described how they sought to achieve a high level of English language proficiency but also did not express hope that they would achieve this goal in their EFL classes. The opportunity to achieve their goals was restricted by limitations in the learning environment that included a lack of teacher training, lack of technology, reliance on the textbook, and the use of GTM as the mode of instruction. These issues have been recorded many times in the research (Al-Asmari, 2005; Alharbi, 2015) and have been acknowledged by the principal and the teachers themselves in this research. The principal for example said: *I want to embrace the Tatweer reforms but find myself limited by a lack of resources. The teacher needs access to tools and resources in the English language classroom (P1)*. This was an odd comment as the *Flying High for Saudi Arabia* resources did provide tools and resources for learning English (as was evident in the classroom of teacher T1). It was concerning that the principal and teachers felt that the perceived lack of resources was part of the problem when it may well have been the teachers' lack of knowledge on how to use the resources that was at fault. Unless there are English teachers who are confident and competent in the use of the language, are conversant with the latest technologies and skilled in CLT, then it appears that the Saudi Arabian student is at a disadvantage. Teachers should be encouraged to develop the English language competence of the learners by training up on how to effectively use the resources at hand.

As indicated in findings from all participants in this research, there needed to be a shift towards student-centred learning and away from the more traditional teacher-centred approach which relies heavily on rote learning for the exams. Such a shift, however, would be challenging to implement because it would require a cultural shift. The researcher of the current study would suggest that any change must be accompanied by a significant investment in teacher training, resource development and curriculum redesign to train teachers to feel more confident as EFL teachers, a recurring theme in this thesis. As described earlier in this thesis,

EFL teachers with high teacher efficacy have greater confidence to engage students in learning (Shi, 2015) and create opportunities for this to happen whereas teachers with low teacher efficacy teach English only in Arabic (Moskovsky, 2018) and stick to traditional modes of delivering content. This problem could be resolved by a replacement of the out-dated grammar approach to a learner-based approach that has a focus on the needs of the students. The students in the current research identified that this was their preferred approach to language learning. This shift would require a greater focus on the skills of speaking and listening in contextualised settings by the teachers rather than on rote learning, so students could practice and master these skills.

Although this was not a major topic in the student data, the problem of overcrowded classrooms may also be a factor affecting learning. It may be that due to the large number of students in the class that the teacher described by the students was prepared to overlook disruptive behaviour. Attempting to manage a large number of students in a language learning environment appeared to shift the teacher towards using teacher-directed rather than student-lead activities where the teacher is the one in control. This approach to teaching and learning, as acknowledged by participants in this research tended to restrict the level of teacher-student interactions, as the number of students in a class was too large to provide individual attention, and instead promoted rote learning, where everyone must commit to memorising the same material at the same time in the same way. This perspective was described by the principal who suggested that: *The practicalities of running the school means that class sizes are large.* (P1). This comment suggested that the principal and teacher have little to no say in reducing numbers in the class. As a result, it was the teacher who must use innovative teaching practices to engage students. As was seen in the findings from the teachers' data, teacher T1 managed to use group work effectively in his class even though he had a large class similar to that of the other two teachers. This situation was not observed or described by the other two teachers in the school

other than the acknowledgement that group work could be an effective strategy for student learning.

The focus group feedback indicated that the students who had a goal for learning English were self-motivated. In this they had adopted greater autonomy outside the classroom than that which was currently being offered. For a similar commitment for all student learning English within the EFL classroom, the teachers and administrators of the Saudi Arabian education system need to provide channels to listen to student feedback to better understand their needs. The autonomy desired by the student could then be achieved by consciously adopting effective teaching and learning strategies. The feedback from the students indicated that there exists a fear of failure that undermined the students' confidence (self-efficacy) to take risks in the classroom to learn English. The consequences of this in the classroom were students' unwillingness to offer answers and/or engage in lessons. The students described only one teacher who seemed the most confident and willing to engage with the student. This teacher made lessons interesting and provided a platform for students to develop their English language skills and demonstrate competence.

7.6 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has provided the findings from the student focus group discussions and a review of the teaching materials used in the three EFL classrooms observed in the research. It provided a comparison of views from the teaching staff and the students about what was effective for students to learn English and what hindered their interest and engagement in the EFL class. The findings concluded that students who are motivated to learn English will seek out other avenues than the EFL classroom to achieve their goals.

Chapter 8

Discussion of Findings

8.1 Introduction

This qualitative case study research explored teachers' and students' efficacy in the teaching and learning practices of EFL in the secondary school context in Saudi Arabia. In particular, it explored the teacher-efficacy of non-native English-speaking teachers teaching English and the self-efficacy of students learning English in the KSA, through the lens of Bandura's (1977, 1986) triadic reciprocal causation model. The research questions that guided this study focused on teachers' beliefs, motivation and practices associated with teaching English and students' beliefs, motivation, and actions in learning English in the KSA. In this final chapter, I discuss the contributions of this research with consideration for increasing our knowledge about EFL in the KSA and how this knowledge may impact future teaching and learning. Insights gained from this research included the theoretical considerations for future research of EFL, the contributions to research methodology in the area of EFL that this research brings, and the practical implications of the findings on teaching and learning EFL in Saudi classrooms. The findings reported on in this chapter respond to the overarching research question: What factors contribute to the teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia? The following describes these findings in more detail.

8.2 Theoretical contributions

This thesis is a timely contribution to the study of EFL in the KSA, as this emerging area of teaching and learning has an impact on how the young people of KSA can fruitfully take their place in the global discourse in many areas of the world through the lingua franca that is English. The theoretical stance taken was to explore teachers' and students' engagement in EFL in KSA through Bandura's (1986) triadic reciprocal causation model, which is a

relatively little used model for research on EFL in Arabic countries. This theoretical model provided the investigation with a framework to explore the dynamics of EFL teaching and learning EFL in the classroom. In particular, the construct of efficacy, both teacher efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy (2001) and students' self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1986, 1993) was explored. Findings revealed that the three factors of the triadic model (personal, behavioural, and environmental) had an impact on efficacy. These will be described below.

In relation to the teachers, the findings indicated reciprocal relationships between teachers' beliefs about teaching EFL and their teaching practices. Specifically the research indicates that teachers' beliefs had an impact on their attitude to teaching which then affected their motivation to teach EFL and, subsequently, influenced their pedagogical choices for teaching. The teachers (T 2 and T3) who conveyed negative beliefs and attitudes about EFL as something that should be taught with innovative pedagogy exhibited low teacher-efficacy. These findings align with the theory of teacher-efficacy where teachers who experience high efficacy persevere in their work while those who experience low efficacy give up (Pajares, 1996, 2002). Despite the efforts of the government to provide training to update EFL teachers' skills and opportunities to network with peers to learn and, therefore, upskill their teaching practices, these two teachers seemed to not take advantage of what they were offered. The findings from Chapter 6 indicated that while the principal and teachers at the school knew and had some understanding of the new directions in education outlined in the Tatweer reform phases, there was still some resistance to enacting reforms. Rather than taking on the responsibility to retrain, these teachers conveyed a lack of teachers' beliefs that positive change could occur, resulting in them having poor attitudes about teaching English. These teachers identified a lack of training and teaching materials as reasons for their resistance to change and adapt to the new reforms. In response, students were largely unmotivated to learn English in

these classes. They seemed to pick up on the negative attitudes of their teachers and described that they saw no value in learning English because it was too hard to learn and they could not see the point in learning it because they would never use it once they left school.

In contrast, Teacher (T1) who described teaching EFL in a positive light and described some innovation in his EFL pedagogy exhibited high teacher-efficacy. Although T1 described some negative external factors, such as social and cultural expectations about students learning English that had a negative impact on EFL teaching and learning, this teacher provided his students with encouragement and support. This support was reciprocated by students who declared: *I want to be in his class*. Teacher T1 held a high and positive belief in why English should be learned by his students and a belief in his students that they could learn English. The other teachers in the research tended to default to the old paradigm of teaching which was teacher-centred, with a focus only on the textbook/workbook material in a very structured and lock-step way. It could be said that these teachers had low teacher-efficacy about implementing the new education reforms, but it may be that they had high teacher-efficacy to teach in the traditional way.

The findings in Chapter 6 revealed the impact of teachers' beliefs and practices on student learning. While students in the focus groups described their desire to learn English, this motivation was squashed by uninspiring teaching practices. Students mentioned only one teacher who seemed to embrace the new directions in teaching EFL by introducing a variety of teaching and learning strategies in the class. In a reciprocal manner, this teacher's choices did motivate the students in his class to learn English to the point where students expressed a desire to have him as their teacher even though they knew that was not possible. Overall, the study highlights some unique factors that impact teacher and student efficacy in the Saudi EFL context, such as cultural and linguistic factors. Further research is needed to explore these

factors in more depth and to determine effective strategies for enhancing teacher self-efficacy in this context.

The findings in this research suggest that using the triadic reciprocal causation model for analysis was a viable conceptual framework to use, as it explored the EFL teaching and learning situation in Saudi classrooms from multiple perspectives. The framework allowed the researcher to consider multiple factors indicating the complexity of teaching and, in particular, the complexity of teaching English in an Arab country. More research in this area is needed as the new education reforms become embedded in the minds and practices of teachers in KSA. There is a dearth of research in EFL teaching and learning in KSA using the triadic reciprocal causation model. The current research has contributed some understanding of how this framework can be applied to increase our understanding of the teaching and learning practices in schools that hopefully will contribute to improving the quality of EFL education.

8.3 Contributions to EFL research methodology

This case study research used multiple means of data collection that responded to the research questions within a qualitative case study methodology. This qualitative approach to research about teacher and student efficacy in the teaching area of EFL is a departure from the more widely used quantitative survey design that is used in much teacher-efficacy research. While there has been some qualitative teacher-efficacy research, there has been little done in KSA. The current research filled this gap. The analysis of the semi-structured interviews with the principal and teachers at the school and the focus group discussions with the students provided insights that could not be had through a survey response. Hearing the voices of the participants provided a more nuanced understanding of teaching and learning EFL in a Saudi school.

Of particular note for the current research, the methodology used both teachers and students as participants. Hearing student voices is not common in KSA research, but it was

necessary in the current research to provide perspectives from the teaching side of EFL in KSA and the students' responses to how they were being taught English. These voices were important to hear as they provided a holistic understanding of the complexity of the problem under investigation in the research. Teaching and learning are bi-directional, reciprocal activities, so what teachers do cause a response/reaction in what students do. Therefore, it was important to hear both sides of the activity of teaching and learning EFL in a KSA secondary school.

Exploring teacher-efficacy in KSA was a relatively new area of research. Therefore, this research contributed to expanding Saudi educators' understanding of how important teachers' confidence in their own practices are, and the effect this confidence has on all other aspects of teaching and what can be expected in classroom situations. The observations done in the classrooms helped to identify the teaching-learning dynamic, with reference to how the government mandated Tatweer reforms were being used. Specifically, it was important to understand how the prescribed EFL textbook and accompanying materials were being used. As discussed in Chapter 1, there is always the concern that foreign-developed textbooks will not be relevant for learning English in KSA (Al-Qahtani & Al Zumor, 2016; Khan, 2011), so it was important to observe what was happening. It is hoped that gaining such an understanding can contribute to helping teachers develop effective teaching strategies in the teaching area of EFL.

While there were some unique features of the methodology used in the current research, there were also some limitations that need to be mentioned. A first limitation is that due to the culture of KSA, the research was conducted in a male-only school. This factor limits the overall understanding of EFL in KSA, as the findings are unlikely to be generalised to the female education sector. More research in this area is needed to gain a greater understanding of the

teaching and learning of English in KSA. What impact does culture have on girls' initiative to learn English, for example?

In addition, it may be a probability in the research that the teachers were somewhat reticence to be critical of the policies and actions of the principal and MoE. If this is the case then it is reflective of the Saudi culture which does not encourage such criticism. This reluctance, however, may have placed limitations on the credibility of some of the comments made regarding departmental regulations and approaches. The causes of the incongruence of comments made by teachers in comparison to the views of the principals and students warrant further investigation.

The major limitation of this study was that caused due to COVID-19 restrictions. Because of COVID-19 the research was conducted in only one school across three classes. The findings cannot, therefore, be generalised to the wider educational context. In addition, the decentralisation of schools by the MoE, although not as yet fully achieving the desired impact, increases the likelihood that the findings cannot be generalised. It may be that there is greater differences between school cultures; for example, findings from EFL teaching and learning in the capital city may differ to findings in a comparable school setting in a regional or rural setting. More research with a broader cross-section of education sectors in KSA is needed.

8.4 Practical implications for teaching and learning EFL

The factors that contribute to the teaching and learning of English in Saudi Arabia were explored through three elements: the pedagogical practices that enabled EFL teaching and learning in KSA (in response to research sub-question a) What are the pedagogical practices that enable EFL teacher' efficacy with the context of schools in Saudi Arabia); the pedagogical practices that limited effective EFL teaching and learning (in response to research sub-question b) What pedagogical practices inhibit EFL teachers' efficacy?), and consideration of the current policy that enables or hinders EFL in KSA, which refers back to

the overarching research questions asking about factors that contribute to the teaching and learning of EFL in KSA. These three elements are described below.

8.4.1 Pedagogical practices that enable teacher-efficacy

One of the teachers had fully embraced the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach to teaching EFL as directed by the MoE (2003). In this class, the students were observed to be noticeably more engaged with their learning than students in the other two classes. There was more peer support in the classroom and a greater range of activities observed. Using the wider range of activities meant that the students were more engaged. The classroom was characterised by learning in context using both spoken and written language skills. The instruction was in English, and students predominately engaged with each other and the teacher in English. It was observed that the teacher spent more time with the students when they were engaged in group work, and he displayed a higher level of individual responsiveness to the students' needs. This level of engagement between the teacher and the student was not evident in the classrooms where the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) dominated. The students interviewed from the CLT class were more motivated to learn English than students in the other classes. The students interviewed from the other classes indicated that they felt they were missing out on a motivating learning experience.

Teachers in the GTM classrooms mentioned that class size was one of the reasons that they avoided the CLT approach as they considered that the GTM approach enabled them to cover the syllabus. The classroom observation of the same-size CLT class raised serious questions about the validity of this claim, as the teacher committed to the CLT approach was able to provide effective learning for students. One must call into consideration the validity of study findings that large classrooms undermine Saudi learners' exposure to English in the classroom, resulting in negative learning outcomes (Al-Mohanna 2010; Bahanshal 2013). The findings from the current research indicated that despite learning English in a large class, one

group of students were successfully engaged. Teaching practices that involve engaging learners and building on the learner's needs and interests have been identified as a key to lifting English competence. Grave (2000) and Pandey (2012), for example, argued that if the curriculum or course is not developed considering the learners' needs and interests while using context-based teaching strategies, English cannot be taught effectively. The teacher using the CLT approach developed his pedagogy with the students' interests and needs in mind.

Some studies have indicated that, in Saudi Arabia, English learners commonly express their anxiety about learning English as a foreign language (Alrabai, 2014; Atasheneh & Izadi, 2012; Aydin, 2008). Alrabai (2014), for example, concluded that Saudi learners experience moderate to high levels of anxiety while learning English as a foreign language. Alrabai (2014) categorised anxiety among Saudi students into six areas, including speaking anxiety, social-image anxiety, negative attitudes towards English classes, comprehension anxiety and language test anxiety. According to Alrabai (2014), irrelevant teaching strategies are one of the primary reasons for this anxiety and any form of anxiety will have a negative impact on students' engagement in learning. The finding of student anxiety was also present in the current research and aligns with Alrabai's (2014) findings in that students were fearful of being humiliated in class for attempting to speak English. Students wanted to speak English but did not because they were ridiculed by peers. It seemed that the teachers did not intervene to correct this negative behaviour. As this finding has revealed an ongoing problem for English language learning in KSA classrooms, there is a need for further exploration of EFL teaching strategies that are effective in the context of the KSA, as this knowledge will contribute to the understanding of a possible mismatch of teaching strategies and learning and how to resolve this problem.

According to Alshumaimeri (2003), some students can leave secondary education without the ability to communicate effectively in English, because, in most cases, the focus of

their learning has tended to be on memorising grammar rules rather than learning how to have a conversation in English or developing their writing skills beyond basic grammar skills. Elyas and Picard (2010) maintained that students are normally advised to memorise the passages that they expect to be tested on at the end of the year in their final exams. Because of this, most of the students do not see the relevance in learning the language beyond the basics, rather than to reach the desired goal, which is to be able to speak fluent English. The finding in the current research concurs with the findings of these researchers. The student participants were particularly vocal in their frustration at having to learn English in this way. They described this process as boring and highly demotivating. Students who described a future need for English (further study, work, business related) sought avenues outside the classroom to learn and practice their English. They had little faith that they would gain enough competence to learn English in school. These students were in the minority. In the current research it was learned that many EFL students were not highly interested in learning English and displayed this by being disruptive in the class. Because English is not a formal language of the KSA, students have little opportunity to use English outside the classroom and, thus, may not see the relevance of learning English. However, the students described above did indicate that they were motivated to find external ways to practice their English. These students were highly motivated by their perceptions of where having competent English language skills would help them in future endeavours beyond high school. With such a high number of young people in KSA having access to a range of technology to interact with others around the world (Alyoussef et al., 2019) students who do want to interact with others to improve their English have opportunities to do so. This would seem an important consideration for teaching EFL in KSA.

8.4.2 Pedagogical Practices that Inhibit EFL Teaching

English is taught in KSA through a ready-made curriculum in the form of textbooks made available by the Saudi Arabia Ministry of Education (MoE) (2003). The MoE provides

teachers and learners with a three-part material package that includes a textbook, a workbook for students and a teaching manual for the teacher. The curriculum is designed not only to teach English but to reflect the beliefs, customs, values, and traditions of the Saudi Arabian community, and this can be found at every grade level throughout the country. However, these textbooks focus on grammar rather than students developing conversation skills that they could use in everyday interactions with English speakers, either in casual encounters, through higher education or in business meetings. The resources provided encourage teachers to retain a GTM approach rather than embrace the CLT approach. It is this mismatch between the desire of developing a higher level of competency among English language learners and the fear of letting go of the old paradigm of teaching and learning by teachers that is one of the most significant barriers to improving English proficiency among students in the Saudi context, as was evident in the current research findings.

The power relationships that are an embedded form of Arabic culture support the distance between the teacher and the student in the EFL classroom. The GTM teaching approach is more conducive to supporting this relationship than the CLT approach in that those teachers using GTM rely on drill sets for teaching rather than engaging students in developing conversation skills and behaviours. Alshahrani (2016) identified that KSA is characterised by a rich and traditional Islamic culture with hierarchical notions of power that divide teachers and learners. Teachers are held in high esteem, and the relationships between teachers and students are highly formal, with no classroom interactions between the teacher and learners besides the teacher directing students on the content to learn. The classroom discourse is unidirectional from teacher to students. This leads to a pedagogical practice that results in widespread underachievement in learning English (Ahmad 2014; Alrabai 2014a; Alrashidi & Phan 2015; Fareh 2010; Rajab 2013). Learners in this research who were in the classes devoted

only to the GTM approach assumed a passive role in learning, and this made their participation level in class low and their motivation to learn English low.

Another one of the negative pedagogical practices identified in the current research was the practice of conducting the English lesson in Arabic. In other studies, the use of the learners' native language with or alongside English is commonplace in the EFL classroom (Al-Arishi, 1991; Alhawsawi, 2013; Almutairi, 2008; Alrashidi & Phan 2015; Fareh 2010). According to Moskovsky (2018), most EFL teachers in KSA are usually Arab speakers only and so are EFL speakers themselves. The current study revealed that there is a lack of confidence among ESL teachers in teaching using the English language and this resulted in them seeking the safety of teaching English using Arabic. Teachers limit their use of the target language (TL) to phonological features and grammar rather than engaging in teaching students highly complex conversational language. Alshammari (2011) noted that most Saudi teachers prefer using Arabic to teach English because it saves them time and it makes it easier for them to explain language features to the students. This finding was supported in this research. The teachers and the principal described that large class sizes and limited time in the curriculum curtailed the opportunities to use English. However, as it has already been stated, one teacher at this school overcame these seeming barriers and used English to teach English. Alhawsawi (2013) and Rabab'ah (2005) described that teachers choose to use the Arabic language in Saudi EFL classes because of their low confidence in using English. This may be the case in the current research but was not discussed by the teachers. The current study identified that the use of the Arabic language in Saudi EFL classes had a negative impact on learners. Learners voiced their desire to have greater exposure to the English language and were conscious that the use of Arabic in the classroom minimised their exposure to English and gave them very little opportunity to practice and develop the skills to communicate in English. The current study supported Alharbi's (2015) claim that the use of the native language in the classroom by the

teachers demotivates the learners. Instead, the classroom should be the site where students can obtain maximum opportunities to practice and communicate in English. Instead of developing low self-efficacy as English language learners, students in KSA should be provided with opportunities to develop high self-efficacy.

As has been argued throughout this thesis, the teacher-directed approach to teaching English reduces the opportunity for student engagement and peer support. Group work in the GTM classrooms was not evident through the classroom observations and, in the interview with the principal of the school, he expressed disappointment that he did not observe groupwork as part of his classroom inspections. The GTM approach with textbooks and workbooks promotes and supports one teaching methodology that has been referred to as “chalk and talk.” This is an approach that has become highly antiquated, yet it was dominant in the classrooms observed in the current research. The centralised system of teaching in Saudi Arabia, where teachers use identical syllabuses and methodologies does not allow the learner to have the freedom to choose among strategies for their learning (Al-Otaibi, 2004). The classroom observations done in the current research would suggest that this approach appeared not to have changed despite attempts to decentralise the system through the Tatweer reforms. This lack of reform where teachers do not fully use the materials provided by the MoE was also reported on by Almalki (2014) almost a decade ago. Findings from the current research would suggest that a closer consideration of how teachers can be encouraged to adopt more effective teaching strategies is needed.

Language teaching is affected by the socio-political context where it is taught (Kramsch, 1993). In the current study, teachers using GTM were found to teach English within the context laid out in the textbook without making further adjustments to meet the local interests and needs of students in their classes. Al-Qhatani (2003, cited in Al-Asmari, 2008) noted that Saudi EFL teachers often limit the cultural context in teaching English due to

concerns around overexposing students to aspects of English culture because they fear that it might impact negatively on students' religious and cultural beliefs. The irony is that the effective shift to CLT requires people to embrace the culture in which the language is grounded. The effective teaching of CLT cannot be conducted without centring directly within the western culture. When learning a new language, one must understand the culture as well the roots of that language (Hamers & Blanc, 2000; Kramersch, 1998; Nouraldeen & Elyas, 2014). Learning a second or foreign language has implications for identity that cannot be ignored. The students in the current study had specific interests for learning English. In effect they wanted to become global citizens, but they did not express a desire to lose their identity as Saudis in gaining proficiency to communicate in English. They saw learning English as a way to enhance their cultural identity, not make a choice between being Saudi and speaking English. This finding suggests that a lot more research about the role of EFL in Saudi identity is needed, so that teachers do not feel their culture is being compromised through teaching English.

At the MoE policy level, learning English has become very important. Al-Seghayer (2012) revealed that *Article 50 of the Educational Policy states that: every student should learn at least one foreign language so that they can conveniently interact with people from other countries and culture and in doing so spreading the message of Islam and serving humanity.* Policy and assessment are still centralised, despite a desire to decentralise control over schools. More research in how the mandates of government are to be realised in teaching and learning practices is needed. If improvements are to be made, then it is important for teachers to be highly involved in the development of the curriculum so what they do helps them understand the importance of their roles. At present, teachers play a minimal role in designing the curriculum and they are inexperienced in how to implement the curriculum of EFL. More research into this area is warranted.

8.4.3 Policies/resources that enable or hinder EFL teaching

As was described above, EFL teachers who do not feel confident in teaching English tend to default to using traditional approaches in the classroom and this includes how they use resources. They do not show a strong understanding or willingness to apply the new reforms in education. These findings align with earlier research in this area (see Choi & Lee, 2016; Eslami & Fatahi, 2008). The document review done for the current research was conducted to respond to the research sub-question: *What elements of the curriculum or current education policy in the KSA enable or hinder the teaching and learning of English in the KSA?* A main document guiding EFL teaching is the English language policy: *English for Saudi Arabia: Objectives of Teaching English in the Kingdom* (MoE, 2002). The policy identified the government's commitment to English as an important subject in education with particular reference to training students as the future workforce with the enhancement of having English for that workforce and so that while members of the global workforce they can promote Islam to the world. The policy, however, did not describe a particular approach that should be adopted for the teaching and learning of English, but one would say that the aim of the policy aligns with the Taweer reforms in the country.

It was found that the curriculum documents reviewed align with the policy in that they are set out for students to learn English so that they can promote Islam to the rest of the world. The actual teaching and learning resources, however, did not specifically align with these goals. The main resource for the classroom was *Flying High for Saudi Arabia* (Macmillian Education, 2014). This series of resources included a teacher's manual, student workbook and a set of digital resources. This series of resources was purposely developed for Saudi students with less orientation on Western culture than found in earlier resources used. The preferred teaching and learning approach described was CLT rather than GTM where teachers would use resource material as a source of grammar practice and vocabulary building. However, as was described

above, two of the teachers in the current research mainly used GTM for teaching English. They used the resources for grammar and vocabulary building with a strong focus on preparing for exams. As was evident in the student data, the students took their cue from the teachers where many saw English classes as a venue for preparing for their final exams rather than learning English as medium of communication with others on many different levels. These two teachers, who showed low efficacy in changing their approach to teaching showed even lower efficacy in using the digital resources and did not take advantage of opportunities to take further training to learn how to use digital resources as part of their pedagogy. In contrast, teacher T1 embraced the use of technology and overall displayed a high teacher efficacy in teaching English.

A significant problem found in reviewing the teaching and learning resources was that, while designed to facilitate CLT the material retained many elements of GMT, particularly for assessing the performance of students. The disconnect with policy and the adherence to GMT may explain why some EFL teachers are reluctant to adopt the new reforms in education. The two teachers in the current research were more confident to use their tried-and-true methods, even though the reforms mandated change. More research into teachers' willingness to adopt (or not adopt) new approaches to teaching EFL are needed. The final section in this chapter will discuss the student data in relation to learning EFL in KSA.

8.5 Factors that enable or hinder EFL learning

This final section considers the findings of the research in relation to the learning of EFL for students in KSA. These findings respond to the research sub-question: *What factors enable or hinder EFL students' efficacy to learn English effectively in KSA?* The current research revealed that many students value learning English, while others do not. Those who value learning English do so as they can see how English will be important for them in their future studies at university and in their future jobs. These students were seen to have high efficacy for learning English. Students who did not have these aspirations for learning English

found it difficult to rationalise why it was being taught and consequently were dismissive of it as a subject. These students were disruptive in class and did little to contribute to their or their peers' learning of English and were deemed to have low efficacy for learning English. The anomaly in the data was that two of the teachers did not actively try to encourage all students to learn English with one teacher simply ignoring the disruptive behaviour in the class. Research suggests that if teachers do not place a value on learning English, students will follow this example (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013) and this seems to be occurring in the classes visited for this research. Many students in the class were demotivated to learn English due in large part because of the teaching approaches taken.

Students in the focus groups described various external venues for learning English such as motivation from family (will work in the family business so need English), traveling overseas to continue their studies, being online gaming with people around the world where English is the lingua franca. These activities were apart from those done in their English classes. Students described that they wanted to use English in class beyond the worksheets and textbook but were given little opportunity to do this, except in the class of teacher, T1. In this class, students used a variety of media for learning and a range of activities where they could use the English they were learning. The approach taken by teacher T1 was the closest to the ideals described in the new reforms for education which would indicate that on some level the reforms are working. More research in this area is needed.

8.6 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has discussed the factors that either enable or hinder EFL teaching and learning in three KSA classrooms. As indicated throughout this thesis, EFL teachers with low efficacy lacked the confidence to try new approaches to teaching English even though these have been mandated in the new education reforms. As a result of low teacher-efficacy, students are demotivated to learn English. Only one teacher expressed high teacher-efficacy, and this

was the class that students wanted to attend. The textbook and teaching resources provided authentic material for teaching and learning but overall were not used to their maximum benefit. There was a finding that both teachers and students saw the benefit of a student-centred classroom, but this approach was observed in only one of the classrooms. In all there were several factors that enabled the teaching and learning of EFL but there were just as many factors that hindered teaching and learning. More research on how teachers can successfully transition the new reforms for education into their pedagogy is needed.

CHAPTER 9

Conclusion and Recommendations

9.1 Introduction

This research explored the enablers and factors that hinder EFL in KSA asking the key question: *What factors contribute to the teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Saudi Arabia?* This chapter will provide an overview the limitations of the research, the implications of the research and, recommendations for future research.

9.2 Limitations of the research

As described above there were some methodological limitations to the research due to the restrictions of COVID-19. The researcher had travelled back to Saudi Arabia from Australia to collect data but had to change data collection processes as the world was shutting down due to COVID and he had to return to Australia to complete his degree. Schools in KSA were shutting down limiting access to access to complete classroom observations and teachers were focused on how to manage in the pandemic and so did not have time to allow for a researcher to come to their school.

The cultural limitations about completing data collection in male only schools have been mentioned. Understanding the impact of culture on education was considered in this research and these considerations extend to doing research. There is scope for similar research to be done with female participants. Questions that could be considered might include: Is teacher-efficacy gender neutral? Do female teachers take advantage of opportunities to upskill their teaching at the same rate as male teachers? What is the impact of cultural and linguistic features for EFL teachers in KSA on their commitment to being highly effective teachers? Answering some of these kinds of questions should provide greater insight in how we can become world class in EFL teaching and learning.

9.3 Implications and recommendations for future research

A main implication of the research is that teachers need to understand how their teacher-efficacy affects students' efficacy to learn English. As was found in this research, teachers with low efficacy used a teacher-centred approach and relied more on using Arabic to teach English than the teacher T1 who used a student-centred approach and encouraged students in his class to use English as much as possible. The result of his approach was that students were more engaged in learning English. It is a government mandate that teachers upskill to more modern teaching approaches (MoE, 2002, 2003); however, this research revealed that some teachers continue to struggle with how to understand what the new reforms mean and then how to use innovative teaching strategies in their classes. Struggling teachers need to understand how to most effectively use the new series of textbooks/resources as it was found in the research that these materials were not used, not used as intended and so not used effectively. This lack of understanding has led to less-than-ideal EFL teaching and learning. This study has highlighted that exploring the nexus between EFL teaching and learning through the conceptual framework of Bandura's triadic reciprocal causation model can provide pertinent information to inform future teaching and learning in this area. I therefore offer the following recommendations for future research in this area:

- 1.** More research exploring the impact of teacher-efficacy on teaching practices is needed to understand how to engage more students in learning English, in how to help them understand the benefits to them in learning English and in understanding the benefits to Saudi Arabia for them to learn English. English is the lingua Franca of the world and those who can use English effectively hold a great advantage both nationally and internationally.
- 2.** EFL teachers need to be provided with more rigorous training on how to utilise the new reforms in teaching and learning so that the CLT approach becomes their preferred method of teaching practice. Consultation between teachers, the MoE and CLT curriculum experts is

needed to develop curriculum materials and resources for teachers that can be used in the classroom in whatever region the school is located. Teachers need training on developing lesson plans where teachers understand how to integrate the resources into their lessons. If this approach becomes more dominant, teachers would be using more innovative strategies to motivate students in their classes to engage in learning English.

3. Monetary resources need to be provided by the MoE to all schools for the upgrading of classrooms so that the available technology and classroom layout are conducive to the delivery of the CLT pedagogy as mandated in the Tatweer reforms. A deadline, therefore, needs to be set for the end of the GTM approach in the classroom. Connected with this recommendation, evaluations, and assessments of the implementation of CLT and the changeover for GMT need to be conducted.

4. Stronger encouragement for teachers to develop peer networking groups to share EFL resources and effective teaching strategies online is recommended. If teachers shy away from using innovative teaching strategies because they lack confidence to change, a supporting network may encourage them to move away from the old paradigms of teaching, as this is recommended by government policy. It is a recommendation in the Tatweer reform that teachers develop online communities of practice. However, this community was not described by participants in the current research. Had these teachers an opportunity to engage with other EFL teachers in online forums, they may have adopted the more recent approaches to teaching and learning, to their benefit and to the benefit of their students. More training is needed to upskill teachers to use technology for these online forums but also to incorporate their use into the classroom activities. The current research revealed that some students have high competency in using technology. The fact that they do not use it for their learning may well be demotivating for them.

5. More training is also needed for EFL teachers to attain higher competency in English. Being a more proficient English language user would increase teachers' confidence to use English rather than Arabic in the classroom. Findings from the current study indicate that some students have much higher English competence than their teachers. This situation may well be demotivating for both teachers and students.

6. More research is needed to understand what elements affect EFL teacher efficacy on a large scale. This research was conducted at only one regional school. We do not know if the findings would be the same at other regional school, at schools in capital cities, at primary schools or for girl's schools. Having a more comprehensive understanding of teacher-efficacy would provide useful information for the future directions of EFL teaching and learning to support the developing of students' self-efficacy as English language learners.

9.4 Conclusion

Teachers want to succeed at teaching but today there remains a high level of resistance to teaching and learning English in Saudi schools. This makes it important to understand the causes of this resistance and how it might be overcome. There is a range of competing forces at work in the classroom impacting the English teacher. The teacher is operating in an environment where the MoE is wanting teachers to shift from the pedagogical approach of GTM to CLT. Externally, the conservative element of Saudi society is pressuring schools and the MoE to ensure that English is taught in the context of Islamic religious principles and Arabic culture. Within the schools, teachers have ingrained pedagogical approaches that are difficult to change. In the minds of some teachers, the systemic pressures of time and examination requirements enforce the GTM approach in the classroom. The degree to which the principal, as the leader of change in a school, is willing to embrace change affects the degree to which there is a shift towards a more student-centred pedagogy in EFL teaching and learning. The availability of resources to facilitate the delivery of CLT and the training provided to

support the pedagogical shift for the teacher are also factors that impact the willingness and capacity to change. Change can and is happening. The more we understand the factors that contribute to or hinder change stronger the road we build to break through resistance where both teachers and students work together in high quality EFL classrooms.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Letter to Head of Directorate of Education / QUT Ethics application

الرقم: ١٥٧٤٠
التاريخ: ١٤٤١/٦/٣ هـ

المرفقات: ١

وزارة التعليم
Ministry of Education

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم
إدارة التعليم بمحافظة القنفذة
التخطيط والتطوير

المكرم / مدير مكتب التعليم بالمظيلف وفقه الله

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.....وبعد :

بناء على طلب الطالب / احمد حسن ابراهيم الخيري هوية رقم /1020053508 المتضمن القيام بدراسة ميدانية في مدارس ادارة التعليم بمحافظة القنفذة والتي تتعلق بمجال بحثه بعنوان : تدريس اللغة الانجليزية في مدارس التعليم بالقنفذة .

لمرحلة الدكتوراه في جامعة Queensland University of Technology

في الفصل الدراسي الثاني ١٤٤٠-١٤٤١ هـ

نامل منكم تسهيل مهمة الباحث بتطبيق دراسته على عينة الدراسة .

وتقبلوا خالص التحايا والتقدير،،،

التخطيط والتطوير

مدير التعليم
محمد ابراهيم الزاحمي

Appendix B

Permission to Collect Data

الرقم: ٧
التاريخ: ٤/٤/١٤٤١هـ
المرفقات: -



وزارة التعليم
Ministry of Education

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم
إدارة التعليم بمحافظة القنفذة
التخطيط والتطوير

وفقكم الله

المحترمين / الملحقية الثقافية باستراليا

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاتهوبعد :

بناء على طلب الطالب / احمد حسن ابراهيم الخيري هوية رقم /1020053508
المتضمن القيام بدراسة ميدانية في مدارس ادارة التعليم بمحافظة القنفذة والتي تتعلق بمجال بحثه
بعنوان :

Exploring the teaching and learning practices of English as a
Foreign language (EFL) in Saudi Arabia

لمرحلة الدكتوراه في جامعة Queensland University of Technology

في تاريخ ١٠/١٢/٢٠١٩ الى ١٠/٠٣/٢٠٢٠

نفيدكم بأنه لا مانع لدينا من قيام الطالب المذكور اسمه اعلاه بإجراء دراسته الميدانية.

وتقبلوا خالص التحايا والتقدير،،،

التخطيط والتطوير

مدير التعليم

محمد ابراهيم الزاحمي

الرقم : ١٥٧٤٠
التاريخ : ١٤٤١/٦/٣ هـ

المرفقات : ١



وزارة التعليم
Ministry of Education

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم
إدارة التعليم بمحافظة القنفذة
التخطيط والتطوير

وفقه الله

المكرم / مدير مكتب التعليم بالمظيف

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاتهوبعد :

بناء على طلب الطالب / احمد حسن ابراهيم الخيري هوية رقم /1020053508 المتضمن القيام بدراسة ميدانية في مدارس ادارة التعليم بمحافظة القنفذة والتي تتعلق بمجال بحثه بعنوان : تدريس اللغة الانجليزية في مدارس التعليم بالقنفذة .

لمرحلة الدكتوراه في جامعة Queensland University of Technology

في الفصل الدراسي الثاني ١٤٤٠-١٤٤١ هـ

نامل منكم تسهيل مهمة الباحث بتطبيق دراسته على عينة الدراسة .

وتقبلوا خالص التحايا والتقدير،،،

التفكير
١٤

التخطيط والتطوير

مدير التعليم

محمد ابراهيم الزاحمي

Appendix C

Interview Protocols

Teacher and principal

1. What factors contribute to the teaching and learning of English as a foreign Language at your school?
2. What are the factors that help and contribute to teaching English as a foreign language in your school?
3. What are the pedagogical practices that enable teaching of EFL within your context of teaching?
4. How can we deal with the problem of weak foundation for students?
5. What pedagogical practices inhabit effective teaching of EFL?
6. What are the factors that hinder students in learning the language?
7. Have you made initiatives as a school principal in encouraging students to teach English at the school level as a whole?
8. Do you think that the educational policy (Ministry of Education) has given the English language enough attention to its current importance?
9. If you were a decision maker, what decisions would you take to develop the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language in Saudi schools?
10. What are the pedagogical practices that enable teaching of EFL within your context of teaching?
11. What factors enable or hinder students' ability to learn English effectively in relation to current teaching strategies for EFL in Saudi Arabia?
12. What factors contribute to the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language in your school?
13. How does curriculum design affect teachers' practices?

Students

1. What is your general view about the importance of English Language?
2. How often do you get a chance or an opportunity to speak in English in the classroom?
3. Do you think that 45 mins will be enough to learn English in the classroom
4. What about your desire for learning English?
5. What are some of the teaching practices that enable teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) within the context of school in Saudi Arabia?
6. What factors in your opinion prevents you from learning English in an effective manner?
7. Do you enjoy and become more fluent when you speak to your peers in English?

Appendix D Observation Template/Checklists

Lesson Observations of Teacher 1

Category	Actions Covered	1	2	3	4	5
Teacher	Provides a well-prepared lesson plan					5
	Follow steps and timings outlined in the lesson plan					5
	Has precise, clear accent and correct pronunciation				4	
	Grabs student's attention and gets them excited about the new topic					5
	Uses enough ICQs to check for student's understanding of the meaning				4	
	Uses enough CCQs to check for student's understanding of the meaning				4	
	Makes wrap up/summary activity					5
	Manages the time allocated for each task effectively					5
Student	Have differentiated learning opportunities/activities that meet their needs				4	
	Have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, and support					5
	Are seated and arranged in position, which facilitates learning					5
	Are tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable					5
	Demonstrate positive attitude about classroom and learning					5
	Are provided assistance to understand content and accomplish tasks				4	
	Make connections from content to real life experiences			3		
	Develop and practice receptive and/or productive sub-skills appropriate for their age, needs and level				4	
	Are provided feedback and opportunities to revise/improve work				3	
Total points out of 100						75

Lesson Observations of Teacher 2

Category	Actions Covered	1	2	3	4	5
Teacher	Provides a well-prepared lesson plan	1				
	Follow steps and timings outlined in the lesson plan	1				
	Has precise, clear accent and correct pronunciation		2			
	Grabs student's attention and gets them excited about the new topic	1				
	Uses enough ICQs to check for student's understanding of the meaning	1				
	Uses enough CCQs to check for student's understanding of the meaning		2			
	Makes wrap up/summary activity	1				
	Manages the time allocated for each task effectively		2			
Student	Have differentiated learning opportunities/activities that meet their needs	1				
	Have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, and support		2			
	Are seated and arranged in position, which facilitates learning		2			
	Are tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	1				
	Demonstrate positive attitude about classroom and learning		2			
	Are <u>provided assistance</u> to understand content and accomplish tasks			3		
	Make connections from content to real life experiences	1				
	Develop and practice receptive and/or productive sub-skills appropriate for their age, needs and level	1				
	Are provided feedback and opportunities to revise/improve work	1				
Total points out of 100		25				



Lesson Observations of Teacher 3

Category	Actions Covered	1	2	3	4	5
Teacher	Provides a well-prepared lesson plan	1				
	Follow steps and timings outlined in the lesson plan	1				
	Has precise, clear accent and correct pronunciation		2			
	Grabs student's attention and gets them excited about the new topic	1				
	Uses enough ICQs to check for student's understanding of the meaning	1				
	Uses enough CCQs to check for student's understanding of the meaning		2			
	Makes wrap up/summary activity	1				
	Manages the time allocated for each task effectively		2			
Student	Have differentiated learning opportunities/activities that meet their needs	1				
	Have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, and support		2			
	Are seated and arranged in position, which facilitates learning		2			
	Are tasked with activities and learning that are challenging but attainable	1				
	Demonstrate positive attitude about classroom and learning		2			
	Are <u>provided assistance</u> to understand content and accomplish tasks			3		
	Make connections from content to real life experiences	1				
	Develop and practice receptive and/or productive sub-skills appropriate for their age, needs and level	1				
	Are provided feedback and opportunities to revise/improve work	1				
Total points out of 100		25				



Appendix E
Consent Scripts

RE: Exploring the teaching and learning practices of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Saudi Arabia

Dear Principal

My name is Ahmad Hassan E Alkhairi from the School of Early Childhood and Inclusive Education, Faculty of Education at Queensland University of Technology (QUT). I am completing a PhD in *Exploring the teaching and learning practices of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Saudi Arabia*, under the supervision of Dr Radha Iyer and Associate supervisor Dr Donna Tangen.

I seek your permission to approach your school as it is a public school. I would be interested in conducting interviews with you, as the Principal, the EFL teachers and Focus groups with students who volunteer to participate. Further, the study will involve some classroom observations and video- recording of EFL teacher participants teaching English.

I am attaching three Information Sheets (for you, your teachers, and students). These have detailed information about the study.

I would appreciate if you could kindly provide a response to me via email.

Please note that this study has been approved by the QUT Human Research Ethics Committee (approval number 1900001181).

Further, it has ethics approval from the Directorate of Education, ALQunfudhah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (See attached letter of approval).

Thank you and I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

PhD Candidate

Mr Ahmad Hassan E Alkhairi

PhD Candidate

ahmadhassane.alkhairi@hdr.qut.edu.au

Principal Supervisor

Dr Radha Iyer

Senior Lecturer

+61 7 3138 3418

radha.iyer@qut.edu.au

**School of Early Childhood and Inclusive Education, Faculty of Education
Queensland University of Technology (QUT)**

Exploring the teaching and learning practices of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Saudi Arabia

QUT Ethics Approval Number 1900001181

Research team

Ahmad Hassan E Alkhairi	ahmadhassane.alkhairi@hdr.qut.edu.au	
Radha Iyer	radha.iyer@qut.edu.au	(AUS) 61 7 3138 3418
Donna Tangen	d.tangen@qut.edu.au	(AUS) 61 7 3138 3807

Statement of consent

By signing below, you are indicating that you:

- Have read and understood the information document regarding this research project.
- Have had any questions answered to your satisfaction.
- Understand that if you have any additional questions you can contact the research team.
- Understand that you are free to withdraw without comment or penalty.
- Understand it is not possible to participate without the interview being audio-recorded.
- Give permission to the teachers and students in your school to participate (interview and observation) in the research project.
- Understand that if you have concerns about the ethical conduct of the research project you can contact the Research Ethics Advisory Team on +61 7 3138 5123 or email humanethics@qut.edu.au.

Please tick the relevant box below:

- I **agree** for the teachers and students in my school to participate in the study.
- I **do not agree** for the teachers and students in my school to participate in the study.
-
- I **agree** for the researcher to observe classes.
- I **do not agree** for the researcher to observe classes.
- I **agree** to be interviewed.
- I **do not agree** to be the interviewed.

Name

Signature

Date

Please return the signed consent form to the researcher.

Exploring the teaching and learning practices of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Saudi Arabia

QUT Ethics Approval Number 1900001181

Research team

Ahmad Hassan E Alkhairi	ahmadhassane.alkhairi@hdr.qut.edu.au	
Radha Iyer	radha.iyer@qut.edu.au	(AUS) 61 7 3138 3418
Donna Tangen	d.tangen@qut.edu.au	(AUS) 61 7 3138 3807

Statement of consent

By signing below, you are indicating that you:

- Have read and understood the information document regarding this research project.
- Have had any questions answered to your satisfaction.
- Understand that if you have any additional questions you can contact the research team.
- Understand that you are free to withdraw without comment or penalty.
- Understand that the two interviews will be audio-recorded. It is not possible to participate without the interviews being audio- recorded.
- Understand it is not possible to participate without being video-recorded.
- Understand that if you have concerns about the ethical conduct of the research project you can contact the Research Ethics Advisory Team on +61 7 3138 5123 or email humanethics@qut.edu.au.

Please tick the relevant box below:

- I **agree** for the researcher to observe and video-record my classes.
- I **do not agree** for the researcher to observe and video-record my classes.
- I **agree** to participate in the interviews.
- I **do not agree** to participate in the interviews.

Name

Signature

Date

Please return the signed consent form to the researcher.

Exploring the teaching and learning practices of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Saudi Arabia

QUT Ethics Approval Number 1900001181

Research team

Ahmad Hassan E Alkhairi ahmadhassane.alkhairi@hdr.qut.edu.au
Radha Iyer radha.iyer@qut.edu.au (AUS) 61 7 3138 3418
Donna Tangen d.tangen@qut.edu.au (AUS) 61 7 3138 3807

Statement of parent/guardian consent

By signing below, you are indicating that you:

- Have read and understood the information document regarding this research project.
- Have had any questions answered to your satisfaction.
- Understand that if you have any additional questions you can contact the research team.
- Understand that you are free to withdraw without comment or penalty.
- Understand that if you have concerns about the ethical conduct of the research project you can contact the Research Ethics Advisory Team on +61 7 3138 5123 or email humanethics@qut.edu.au.

Please tick the relevant box below:

- I **agree** to my child participating in the focus group and being audio-recorded.
- I **do not agree** to my child participating in the focus group or being audio-recorded.

**Name of
parent/guardian**

**Signature of
parent/guardian**

Date

Please turn over for the child consent.

Please return this signed Consent Form to the researcher.



CONSENT FORM FOR QUT RESEARCH PROJECT
Student Focus Group: Parent/Guardian & Child Consent Form

Exploring the teaching and learning practices of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Saudi Arabia

QUT Ethics Approval Number 1900001181

Research team.

Ahmad Hassan E Alkhairi ahmadhassane.alkhairi@hdr.qut.edu.au
Radha Iyer radha.iyer@qut.edu.au (AUS) 61 7 3138 3418
Donna Tangen d.tangen@qut.edu.au (AUS) 61 7 3138 3807

Statement of child consent

Your parent or guardian has given their permission for you to be involved in this research project. This form is to seek your consent to participate in the research.

By signing below, you are indicating that you:

- Have read and understood the information about this research project.
- Have discussed the research project with your parent/guardian.
- Have had any questions answered to your satisfaction.
- Understand that if you have any additional questions you can contact the research team.
- Understand that you are free to withdraw without comment or penalty.
- Understand that if you have concerns about the ethical conduct of the research project you can contact the Research Ethics Advisory Team on +61 7 3138 5123 or email humanethics@qut.edu.au.

Please tick the relevant box below:

I **agree** to participate in the focus group and for it to be audio-recorded.

I **do not agree** to participate in the focus group or to be audio-recorded.

Name of child

Signature of child

Date

Please turn over for the parent/guardian consent.

Please return this signed Consent Form to the researcher.

Appendix F Ethics Approval

Sent: Sunday, 2 February 2020 11:12 AM

To: Ahmad Hassan E Alkhairi <ahmadhassane.alkhairi@hdr.qut.edu.au>; Radha Iyer <radha.iyer@qut.edu.au>; Donna Tangen <d.tangen@qut.edu.au>

Cc: Human Ethics Advisory Team <humanethics@qut.edu.au>; Education Ethics <educationethics@qut.edu.au>; Faculty of Education Space, Equipment and Assets Team <seat@qut.edu.au>

Subject: Ethics Approval: Ahmad 99426: Exploring the teaching and learning practices of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Saudi Arabia

Dear Ahmad, Radha, and Donna,

Thank you for returning your ethics application after addressing feedback provided. The application is now ready to approve. Ethics approval is provided for "Exploring the teaching and learning practices of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Saudi Arabia".

You will receive a formal approval number in an email directly from the Human Research Ethics Team in a few days' time, after which you can begin data collection, or pursue permissions from other organisations to do so.

If you require a formal approval certificate, please contact the Human Research Ethics Team at humanethics@qut.edu.au and one will be issued. Please ensure that you cite the approval number on relevant documents. Your project has been awarded ethical clearance until September 2022 and a progress report must be submitted for an active ethical clearance at least once every twelve months. It is the responsibility of researchers to provide reports. Failure to submit an appropriate progress report may result in ethical clearance being revoked and/or the ethical clearances of other projects suspended. When your projects have been completed please advise us by email at your earliest convenience.

Research Health and Safety

As your research may involve work off campus you will need to complete the Faculty's Health and Safety Form. You can expect to hear from OER soon in regards to this. The form should be returned to edn.grants@qut.edu.au when completed. OER will also provide you with details about data management and storage.

Variations

For variations, please complete and submit an online variation form at: <http://www.orei.qut.edu.au/human/var/> You need a variation request form for changes including, but not limited to research team members (including Research Assistants who will work on the project); participants; data collection instruments, methods and sites; participant information and consent processes; and timelines (extension).

Concerns, complaints, and adverse events

Any concerns, complaints, adverse or unexpected events should be reported immediately to QUT HREC. For further details about this reporting process please go to <http://www.orei.qut.edu.au/human/adv/> Best of luck with the next phase of your research.

Best wishes,

Professor Kerryann Walsh

Faculty Research Ethics Adviser for the Faculty of Education Low Risk Ethics Review Team.

Kerryann Walsh, PhD

Professor

School of Early Childhood and Inclusive Education | Faculty of Education

Co-leader [Childhoods in Changing Contexts Research Group](#)

Faculty Research Integrity Advisor

E Block, Level 4, Room 450 | QUT Kelvin Grove

t (07) 3138 3174 e k.walsh@qut.edu.au

Appendix G

Sample Transcript from a student focus group interview

أ. الله يحييكم طيب في بعض الاسئلة نتمنى نلاقي لها إجابات طبعاً راح يعطي المجال لكل واحد فيكم انه يجاوب زي ما يحب

السؤال الأول

- What's your general view about the importance of learning English?

ايش من وجهة نظرك يعني تمام، أهمية اللغة الإنجليزية

- Who wants to answer?

تفضل تقدر ترفع صوتك او تقرب عندنا، هي تستخدم في اكثر من دولة وأكثر من المحل عشان ما تكون ايش رأيك تمام عن أهمية اللغة الإنجليزية، يعني في وقتنا الحالي يعني ايش تقول أنت لو سألتك؟ ايش أهمية اللغة؟ ليش مهمة؟ هذا هو السؤال.

ب. أنك تكلم أي احد في أي مكان.

أ. ممتاز كوسيلة التواصل.

ب. الوظيفة

أ. ممتاز تعطيك فرصه إنك تأخذ وظيفة أفضل غيره؟

ت. اللغة المشتركة بين الدول.

يعني تعتبر اللغة الرسمية للدول. official language. ممتاز لغة التواصل بين الدول هي ال

حد عنده شيء؟

ث. تتقف نفسك وتنفعك في بعض الوظائف، اللغة الإنجليزية يعني الترقية.

أ. ممتاز تعطيك فرصه، طيب من ناحية الثقافة هل تقصد ثقافة؟ يعني من خلال يعني اكمالك لتعليمك.

ج. تقدر تتواصل معاهم من غيرها ما تقدر.

أ. ممتاز، طيب

- How often do you get chance or opportunity to speak English in the class?

class، تقريبا يوجد لديك فرصه للتحدث واستخدام اللغة الإنجليزية في ال

٥٠٪

يعني الإجابة أقول أنه discussion with your صوتك، من خلال كيف؟ مثلا من خلال أسئلة؟ ولا من خلال

مثلا مع زميلك مثلا، طيب باللغة الإنجليزية

ب. الإجابة تواصل مع الاستاذ والتفاعل داخل النظام ومع المدرس، والتواصل داخل المدرسة.

أ. تعرف ايش الثالثة؟ طيب

- What are some of the teaching practices that enable teaching of English as a foreign language within the context of school in Saudi Arabia?

طيب ايش هي بعض الممارسات التدريسية التي تساعد وتطور عملية تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية في سياق المدارس بالنسبة لك

أنت؟ يعني ايش الممارسات التي تشوفها او ايش العادات التي تقوم فيها كمعلمين لغة إنجليزية؟ او ايش الأجواء التي

تساعد على تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟

ب. تسهيل الدرس

أ. كيف أنا كمعلم لغة إنجليزية اسهل لك الدرس؟ طبعاً الشرح بكون موجود.

أ. غيره؟

ت. أساسيات، والتعبير وحسن إيصال المعلومة.

أ. كيف حسن إيصال المعلومة؟

أ. ايش الأشياء أو العوامل التي تخليني اوصل لمرحلة إنني ..

ج التحفيز، يعني اقول الله عليك ..

ت. التشجيع.

أ. ممتاز، يعطيك العافية إنك تكلمت.

ت. التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية.

أ. ممتاز، تتحدث باللغة الإنجليزية.

- Have you ever tried to ask your teachers by English language?

هل حاولت إنك سؤالك للمعلم يكون باستخدام اللغة الإنجليزية؟

ب. إن أحاول.

أ. بعض الاحيان، البعض الثاني ايش المشكلة؟

ب. المعرفة باللغة الإنجليزية.

أ. حاولت إنك تجاوب حتى لو بالغلط؟

ب. ايه.

أ. طيب ما هي العوامل في رأيك التي تمنعك من تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية بطريقة فعالة؟ ايش العوامل اللي تمنع تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية بطريقة فاعلة؟

ج. المدرس.

أ. يعني ممكن يكون عامل مساعد وممكن يكون ..

ج. ممكن يكون شنو ما بدك، يعني سؤال إذا ما عرفت حلّه زي كده لا يسوي زي كذا مو لا يخصك، إذا كان أسلوبه معاك

يحطمني.

أ. كيف يحطمك؟ فين التحطيم؟

ج. يعني إذا كان جوابك باللغة الإنجليزية يقول جوابك غلط.

أ. استحيل إنه يغير ..

ب. لا لا يقول مثلا أنت فعلت شيء كويس، ما يجبرني، ما يقول أنت ما سويت، وما سويت وما سويت

أ. لأنه يفترض إنك في كل الأحوال تكون كويس.

ب. top. يعني أنا مو كويس في اللغة الإنجليزية وايد، يعني أنا لازم أكون مرة

أ. لا مو لازم إنك تكون توب بس لازم إنك أنت توصل، يعني شوف أنا أبغي أقول لك اللغة الإنجليزية لو جينا حطيناها

ما بين الترتيب هذا، ترى بالنسبة للأهمية لازم تكون من ضمن المواد اللي تأخذ فيها الاهتمام يعني أقصى درجات

الاهتمام من حيث أهميتها طيب.

ب. إذا معك هيك بالفعل يعطيك الصعوبة، إذا معك بأفعاله، إذا معك

المحتوى حق المنهج ولا كيف؟ ، content. ج. جتلك الصعوبة من حيث ايش؟ من حيث المنهج، ال

ب. يبدأ بصورة بعدين يبدأ بصعوبة، وأحيان لا تلقى يعطيك ٤ أو ٥ حروف، ويعطيك ..

أ. طيب لو سألت سؤال الحين

- What would you like to be in the future?

ايش تبغى تكون تشتغل في المستقبل أنت؟

ب. مدرس.

أ. مدرس ايش؟

ب. أحياء أو كيمياء

أ. الأحياء والكيمياء هذي راح تكون عندك في السنة التحضيرية راح تكون في اللغة الإنجليزية، فهمت ايش بيكون

هالتركيز عليها؟ يفترض انه الحين ..

ج. عشان البعثة.

أ. لا مو حكاية بعثة، حتى لو تدرس هنا استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية أو يعني أهمية اللغة الإنجليزية ما تنحصر فقط بالسفر

للخارج، حتى هنا دراستك أو .. طيب شباب بالنسبة الحين في حال .. في تواصلك مع زميلك

have you tried to use English?

هل حاولت إنك تتواصل مع زميلك باستخدام اللغة الإنجليزية؟ have you tried to use English?

ت. بعض الاحيان نعم نحاول، نمارس كل .. تعود ..

- Do you do that now?

أ. يعني مثلا تسأله عن ايش مثلا؟ يعني تسأل عن معاني؟ تسالوا عن شيء؟

ت. يعني مثلا كنت في البيت وحت كلمة جديدة أو جملة جديدة اليوم الثاني بتكلم فيها.

أ. ممتاز طيب

- what's the difference between using English with your colleague and your teacher?

ايش إنك أنت تخاف تستخدمها مع معلمك وتتعامل فيها مع زميلك.

ب. لأن زميلي ما يهون عليه.

أ. لا يهون عليه.

لا ترا هذي مشكلتنا يمكن هذي واقع شوف ترى هذه مرينا فيها تمام أنه والله كنا نخاف أن الواحد يغلط وما ادري ايش وإن واحد يضحك عليك، لكن تعرف

As much as you make mistakes as much as you learn.

على عدد ما إنك أنت تغلط تمام على أكثر ما إنك أنت تتعلم.

ب. ايوه والله.

ت. في مرة إنك تغلط، ففي حد يخاصم.

أ. لا ما في حدا يخاصم، بدون ذكر أسماء.

أ. أحيانا تخاصم ولا شي تمام تخاصم من حرصي عليك، ايش تبغى تكون إن شاء الله في المستقبل، ايش رغبتك؟ تركي؟

ث. ايه؟

أ. يا ما شاء الله تبارك الله، ايش تبغى تكون في المستقبل إن شاء الله؟

ح. طابط.

أ. ضابط ما شاء الله تبارك الله الله يوفقك إن شاء الله وتوصل للشيء اللي تتمنى إن شاء الله.

ب. يجي يقولك اتعلم، وهذا يقول هحاول، ويجي اليوم الثاني ..

أ. ممكن هذا الشيء أنا استخدمه عشان أطلع الطاقة الموجودة فيك المكبوتة، يعني الحين أنا يمكن تكلمك وشوف طلعت

الطاقة أقول لك ما أعرف وش السالفة بعدين تكلمت عطنا رأيك صح يعني هي كذا.

أ. على حسب على العموم، طيب شباب شنو رأيكم في استخدام اللغة العربية في اختبارات اللغة الإنجليزية، تشجعه ولا ما تشجعه.

ب. هو كويس بس في ضرر هالحين ..

أ. ابغى رأي كل واحد فيكم.

ب. وضح المعنى.

أ. يعني مهمة وضرورية؟

ب. على حسب.

أ. يعني أنت سألت عشان المعنى.

ب. نعم، توضيح المعنى.

أ. طيب

Why you didn't try to get this meaning or definition by dictionary?

dictionary. ليش ما حاولت تأخذ هذا المعنى من ال

ب. حالاً همر، لو في كلمة حد ما يعرفها.

dictionary. ايش دخلهم، استخدم ال dictionary. لا ال

ج. العربي مهم لأنه ..

اللغة الإنجليزية. class. لا استخدام اللغة العربية في

ج. الإنجليزي، لو هنتكلم هالحين إنجليزي وندرس أي حرف أي مادة أي شيء يغير المعنى بتاعته، فالعربي يسهلها.

أ. صحيح، شيخ تركي.

ت. احسن كلاس انجليزي ما يكون فيه استخدام عربي.

أ. ممتاز، حلو، كيف نحنا نغير هالموضوع أنه خلاص يعني، بدل ما يكون في استخدام عربي يكون

All read by English.

ب. كان في مشكلة في اللكنة في الابتدائية.

أ. يعني كان في مشكلة في البداية؟

ت. ايه في التأسيس.

أ. طيب شباب لو سألت احد فيكم هل يستخدم اللغة الإنجليزية بعدما يطلع من المدرسة؟

ب. ايه.

watching T.v. كيف استخدامه؟ يعني هل عن طريق السوشيال ميديا، هل عن طريق

ب. أشاهد برنامج.

أ. ممتاز، برنامج، غيرها؟

ت. تتسولف مع أبوك أو أخوك.

ب. by English? ممتاز،

ت. ايه.

أ. تتسولف مع أبوك ولا أخوك؟

ت. أبي.

أ. ما شاء الله تبارك الله، أبوك وبين شغال؟

ت. التابعة.

تمام تسنتر عندهم؟ practice. أ. ما شاء الله تبارك الله، يعني لو حبيت

ت. ايه.

أ. طيب ممتاز، ها شباب؟

ج. تروح السوق، وتسال حدا عن شيء ما يتكلم عربي.

أ. هل تعتمد في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية على ال ٤٥ دقيقة دول بس؟

ج. لا بالممارسة بالبيت وفي كل مكان.

أ. طيب بالممارسة ايش نوع الممارسة عشان تتطور من اللغة الإنجليزية.

ج. المذاكرة، التتابع المسهل،

أ. هل عندك مواقع؟ برامج

ج. برنامج تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية.

أ. اللي هو؟

ج. Can play..

أ. تستخدمه؟

ج. ايه.

ح.

موقع E-english.

أ. ممتاز، يعني تستخدم الأدوات المتاحة لك في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية.

ح. المواقع، الألعاب.

خ. ألعاب التعلم كلها بالإنجليزية. والقصص

أ. على سيرة هذا الموضوع، أنا قابلت الأسبوع اللي فات اتنين طلاب أنا الصراحة يعني وصلوا لمرحلة ما شاء الله تبارك

الله إنهم ما هم طلاب يعني يوازوا المعلمين في اللغة الإنجليزية، تعلموا الإنجليزية عن طريق السوشيال ميديا وعن

طريق ايش اسمه؟ البلايستيشن، ف ما في شيء صعب.

لذلك

Do what would you like, and like what would you do.

طيب.

ب. لازم يكون عنده إصرار.

أ. ايش؟ الرغبة والطاقة موجودة إن شاء الله.

طيب هل عندكم أي شيء ثاني تضيفوه.

بخصوص الإنجليزي، بالنسبة للمنهج، ايش رأيكم في المناهج.

ب. الشرح من عندهم.

ت. المنهج في الكتاب مو ملخص، يعني ما تلاقي إجاباته المطلوبة صح، لازم تطلع.

أ. ايش المشكلة لإجابات حقت ايش؟

ت. زي الكتب المرجعي، الدرس تدور بكلام كلام كلام.

أ. هل حاولت تترجم الكلام هذا عشان توصل للزبد اللي فيه؟

على العموم شباب الله يعطيكم العافية وشاكر ومقدركم.

هالحين بعطيكم أوراق أبغيتكم تقروها، وبعطيكم أوراق ثاني.