# Developing dialogic interactions: Teacher talk in Saudi Arabian secondary schools' English language classes

Mohammed Judaya M Alanazi
B. A. (King AbdulAziz University), M. A. (University of Technology Sydney)

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Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
School of Education

University of Technology Sydney

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## Certificate of Original Authorship

I, Mohammed Alanazi declare that this thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, in the School of Education/Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Technology Sydney.

This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise reference or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to Mom and Dad, my wife and children, whom trusted and encouraged me to accomplish this thesis.

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## List of Abbreviations

ACER Australian Council for Educational Research
ARAMCO Arabian American Company of Oil
CAH Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis
CK Craft Knowledge
CD Classroom Discourse
DA Discourse Analysis
EFL English as Foreign Language
EL English Language
ELT English Language Teaching
ESL English as Second Language
FL Foreign Language
FLL Foreign Language Learning
F-Move Follow up /Feedback move
GAT General Ability Test
GPGE General Presidency of Girls Education
HSGPA High School GPA
IRF Incitation, Respond and Feedback
KSA Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
L1 First language
L2 Second language
MKO More Knowledgeable Other
MoE Ministry of Education
MoHE Minister of High Education
PCK Pedagogical Content Knowledge
RQ1A Research Question One A
RQ1B Research Question One B
RQ2 Research Question Two
RQ3 Research Question Three
SAAT Standard Achievement Admission Test
SFL Systemic Functional Linguistics
SLA Second Language Acquisition
SL Second Language
SLL Second Language Learning
TL Target Language
TT Teacher Talk
TTT Teacher Talk Time
WTC Willingness To Communicate
ZPD Zone of Proximal Development

## Abstract

This study investigated the nature of teacher talk in Saudi EFL secondary school classrooms. The study explores how teacher talk assisted or hindered the development of the students' dialogic skills. By analysing aspects of teacher talk (TT), in particular the role of the F-move in the IRF (initiation, response, feedback) interaction sequence, it investigated how TT was affected by certain cultural, educational and teaching practices in learning of the target language.

This is a qualitative research, in which data were collected from naturalistic settings through classroom observations, audio recordings of classroom interactions and interviews with 18 EFL teachers teaching in six different secondary schools within Hafr Al-Batin province (a region in Saudi Arabia).

The findings showed that the F-moves of repetition and evaluation were commonly used in Saudi EFL classrooms, whereas the F-moves of elaboration and reformulation were less dominant in teacher talk. The former are less likely to promote discussion and dialogue; they restrict learners' engagement with meaning-making in classroom talk because both F-moves function as indirect corrective feedback which impedes students' output and uptake and encourage low order thinking. Students were not provided with appropriate learning opportunities but were merely exposed to teachers' subject matter knowledge, specifically, grammatical knowledge. The brief nature of the exchanges was insufficient to stimulate learning.

The study also found that some teachers failed to utilise macro-teaching strategies that encourage productive teacher talk, especially in the areas of negotiated interaction facilitation, promoting learner autonomy, raising cultural awareness and maximising learning opportunities. Instead, the teacher's role did not promote dialogic talk but merely reinforced teacher authority. Some teachers spent considerable time on managing students' behaviour; as a result, they paid little attention to building positive relationships in the classroom.

The findings also showed that there is a strong interconnection between pedagogy and culture. In other words, dialogic teaching is not independent of the

sociocultural setting of the classroom, institution and community in Saudi Arabia. Accordingly, classroom talk cannot be transformed into dialogic talk without cultural modifications in EFL teaching, such as providing freedom of speech and space for dialogue and debate. It is therefore. recommended that professional development programs include material related to dialogic talk/teaching in order to increase teachers' awareness and understanding of the role of TT in managing classroom talk and to enhance their ability to help students achieve their full potential in language learning and development.

# Chapter 1

# Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

This research examines particularities of teacher talk in Saudi Arabian EFL context, and explores how these talks give impact on classroom instruction. Research into English language teaching covers a broad range of topics, including explorations of methodology, language use, the role of English in a global context, and language learning in order to understand classroom discourse. Research into classroom discourse is similarly wide ranging, investigating areas such as students' activities in the classroom, the teaching materials used, the method of language assessment, and student-teacher talk (Cazden 1995). Classroom discourse (CD) refers to the activities and rules exercised within the classroom, and represents a unique style of communication that occurs in classrooms. According to Behnam and Pouriran (2008, p. 117), the 'special features of classroom discourse include unequal power relationships, turn-taking at speaking, patterns of interaction'.

It is important to note that types of teacher talks exercised in classroom will definitely shape classroom discourse and in turns influence classroom instruction. It is for this reason that this research is timely. The aim of this study is to enrich the literature on classroom discourse, which is arguably a key responsibility for teachers at all levels of education (Mckay 2006). Research on classroom discourse, and the subsequent sharing of information about it, not only enables teachers to improve their teaching by broadening the dialogue styles they use in their classroom; it can also allow them to share insights with other educational practitioners about classroom activities. This research explores classroom discourse, with particular focus on one method of discourse in a specific cultural and educational environment, namely, teacher talk (TT) in the Saudi Arabian secondary school classroom. The study draws on classroom interactions between teachers and students and, due to the complexities of these classroom dynamics, it also touches on additional areas of teaching methodology, the role of first and second languages, and other issues related to classroom teaching practices.

Teacher talk, which is seen as a nexus of learning and development, has always been central to the quality of English language learning in the classroom. When the talk allows space for classroom interaction, it produces dialogic learning. This is because teacher–learner interactions are deemed one of the most important potential determinants of effective learning in the classroom (Scott 1998; Sinclair & Coulthard 1975; Thornbury 1996). Alexander (2010, p.1) defines dialogic teaching as follows:

> Dialogic teaching harnesses the power of talk to stimulate and extend students' thinking and advance their learning and understanding. It helps the teacher more precisely to diagnose students' needs, frame their learning tasks and assess their progress. It empowers the student for lifelong learning.

According to Alexander (2004, p. 13):

> Dialogic teaching seeks simultaneously to attend to a viable concept of teaching, to evidence about the nature and advancement of human learning, and to the conditions for education in a democracy, in which the values of individualism, community and collectivism stand in a complex and sometimes tense contrapuntal relationship.

TT, as part of classroom talk, is an important component in language classrooms, as it stimulates the development of language learning (Silver & Kogut 2009). Even though studies on TT has been conducted extensively around the globe (see Appel 2012; Cullen 1998, 2002; Gibbons 2002, 2015; Horst 2010; Ivanova 2011; Lee 2007; Liu & Zhu 2012; Ma 2006; Mercer 2003; Mercer & Hodgkinson 2008; Scott 1998; Sharpe 2008; Sinclair & Brazil 1982; Teo 2016; Van Lier 2001; Walsh 2002; Yanfen & Yuqin, 2010), these studies have not explored secondary schools in Saudi Arabia.

In the Saudi Arabian context, many educational researchers in the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) have neglected the analysis of TT, demonstrating instead a strong interest in research on linguistics. The lack of studies that focus on classroom interaction in a Saudi educational context represents a gap which this current research aims to fill by investigating the particularities of TT and their role in producing more interactive classrooms. Previous research in the Saudi context and beyond, such as the work by Almutairi (2008), Alrashidi and Phan (2015), Alrabai (2016), Liton (2012), Khresheh (2012) and, Shuchi and Islam (2016), has focussed on examining the influence of classroom interaction on learners' motivation and performance, and has paid little attention to TT and its influence on learning outcomes. In short, although

these studies have contributed to the study of interactions in the EFL classroom, they have not addressed TT and its role as an important influencing factor.

Even though many scholars in Saudi emphasise issues other than TT, existing studies exploring TT show little interest in the incorporation of influential sociocultural aspects into a holistic view of the nature of TT in classroom discourse. Only one researcher in the Saudi context refers to the sociocultural framework of learning (Alshenqeeti 2014).

In analyses of the effectiveness of TT in generating student learning opportunities, corrective feedback and elicitation techniques have attracted more attention than other components of TT (Alqahtani & Al-enzi 2011; Alsubaie 2015; Faqeih 2012; Gitsaki & Althobaiti 2011). Student attitudes and performance, including willingness to communicate in response to TT, have also been investigated, though the discussion was restricted to the traits of individual learners (Al-Otaibi 2004; Mahdi, 2014; Turjoman 2016). Finally, there has been little interest among researchers in the Saudi EFL context in the issue of TT in secondary schools (Almeniei 2005; Al Noghaimishi 1985; Al-ghamdi 2015; Al-Otaibi 2004; Alshenqeeti 2014).

The presents study, therefore, considers how TT encourages or hinders classroom interaction. In exploring this issue, I also consider sociocultural aspects that influence learning and individual language development, and presents a comprehensive discussion of teachers' and learners' cultural values, identities, attitudes, perceptions and beliefs, learning strategies, and other professional issues in contemporary research on English as a Second Language (ESL) and EFL teaching (Johnson 2006).

The current study is qualitative in nature and uses a constructivist-subjectivist paradigm in the form of a case study. The case study allows researchers to understand the issue being investigated through various methods of data collection, such as interviews and observations (Denzin & Lincoln 2013). In this particular study, three methods of data collection are employed: recording of classroom interactions, classroom observations and in-depth semi-structured interviews. As this study employs a linguistic analysis of TT, both the TT and interview sessions were audio recorded to allow the researcher to gain in-depth understanding of the participants' utterances. The recordings were used to capture various types of TT in the classroom and to explore

teachers' understanding of sociocultural elements and of how to manage talk respectfully in a classroom-teaching environment.

This thesis presents a qualitative analysis of the models of EFL classrooms in the Saudi context, which is in line with a discourse analysis of TT. The research analyses the features and particularities of TT and follow-up moves as well as how teachers create learning opportunities for their students, and the attitudes and characteristics that shape their way of managing classroom discourse in 27 EFL classrooms using Cullen's (2002), Kumaravadivelu (2003) and Hammond and Gibbons (2005) analytical frameworks. Cullen's (2002 framework identifies F-moves for reformulation, elaboration, comment, repetition, and evaluation. The discourse and evaluative teaching strategies were examined to determine the role of TT in the development of dialogue skills in EFL classrooms in Saudi Arabia. Cullen's framework, which is based on the initiation, response, feedback (IRF) interaction sequence, was highly suitable for the Saudi secondary teaching context. The study initially mapped the types of classroom interactions and found that most conformed to the IRF sequence. The F-move analytical model was applied to the Saudi EFL context in order to establish the degree of teacher involvement and analyse how it contributes to or discourages the flow of classroom interactions.

The findings showed that, although Saudi students start learning English in Year 4 of primary school and continue to do so to the end of secondary school, at the end of their schooling they still lack some basic language skills that are essential for meaningful communication in a second language (L2), both within and outside the classroom. Based on my personal experience and interaction with other EFL teachers, it is evident that some teachers do not fully use TT as an opportunity to develop their students' ability to communicate. Even though some language teachers are aware of the importance of some aspects of TT as a tool to develop more classroom interaction, others fail to recognise how TT occurs and its implications for learning. This results in a lack of opportunity for students to practise the target language. In the context of the secondary language classroom, traditional language teaching continues to dominate (Abahussain 2016; Jawhar 2012). By traditional language teaching, I mean teaching methods such as grammar translation, the audio-lingual method and other teaching methods that rely heavily on a teacher-centred teaching process in which the teacher dominates the classroom discourse (Abdulkader 2016).

Success in creating learning opportunities in Saudi secondary school contexts depends on the quality of TT inside the classroom and during lessons. As in many English language classes around the world, classroom sessions are sometimes the only opportunity for many Saudi EFL learners to use the target language (Hamad 2013; Khan 2015; Liton 2013). However, students in a Saudi school context do not have sufficient opportunities to express themselves in the target language within the classroom itself.

Studies of classroom discourse enable researchers to explore the use of the target language as a medium of communication (Cazden 2001). Hence the classroom was selected as the site for the present investigation. An examination of what is actually happening inside Saudi EFL classrooms will assist teachers to identify possible solutions to those classroom constraints that result from the nature of Saudi EFL TT. A better understanding of this style of TT enables teachers to reflect upon and, if necessary, amend their EFL spoken classroom behaviours. As mentioned above, the study analyses classroom interactions using the frameworks of Cullen (2002), Kumaravadivelu (2003) and Hammond and Gibbons (2005). These approaches enable in-depth analysis of classroom interactions based on data generated from the fieldwork. The outcomes of this research will be informative and valuable for educational policy makers, educational supervisors, teachers, students, educational contexts in general, and Saudi EFL teachers and students in particular, as it is based on data obtained from authentic EFL classroom interactions.

### 1.2 Context and Rationale for the Study

English as a foreign language has been a component of the Saudi intermediate school curriculum since 1958 (Years 7 to 9) (Mahboob & Elyas 2014). Today, it is a compulsory subject in general education schools (starting in Grade 4 in primary school) as well as in some tertiary level institutions. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia places great value on English language learning. Even though English is taught at all levels of education, not all students are capable of speaking English fluently. This would suggest that language teaching is not only complex but also not as effective as it could be; it takes a great deal of training and experience for teachers to teach English effectively and students must also work hard to learn English well.

To teach effectively, EFL teachers are required to prepare extensively: teachers should consider appropriate teaching materials, teaching methods, classroom

management, and how they will assess learning. One of the most important components of language teaching is the notion of teacher talk during the instructional process. Teacher talk (TT) refers to strategies used by teachers in the classroom to ‘’transfer’’ knowledge to students (Ma 2006).

Since TT impacts language learning, it is important to examine the various ways in which teachers engage in the language classroom. This is because TT influences the process of language learning. Different styles of TT impact on the level of achievement in students’ learning. Research on TT has been conducted in many different settings (e.g. Dodu 2013; Jing & Jing 2018; Teo 2016; Rezaee & Farahian 2012), where it has been demonstrated to play a significant role in successful language learning. This study will enrich the current literature on the particularities of TT and how they impact on language learning.

In addition, based on my teaching experience, I realise that the way I use language in the classroom influences my students’ attitude towards learning. It is for this reason that, as an English teacher myself, I feel motivated and, in fact, obliged to undertake this research. By examining my own profession, I am able to gain insight into teaching practice and identify areas that may benefit from application of the results of the study. In this particular research, therefore, I chose to examine my colleagues’ classroom practices, in particular those related to TT. My rationale for exploring this issue through a case study approach was that it allows me to take advantage of both my insider and outsider positions. As I am a teacher in the same sector as my research participants, I can utilise my insider status, which gives me first hand understanding of the institutional context. At the same time, I can observe teachers’ practices through the lens of the outsider which, I believe, allows me to adopt a more objective perspective on the phenomenon under investigation. The findings of this study therefore provide a more comprehensive understanding of the styles of TT in the classroom.

The research questions that were designed to guide the study and address the research problem are elaborated below.

### 1.3 Research Questions

The study addressed the following research questions:

RQ1A. What are the particularities of teacher talk in Saudi Arabian EFL classrooms?

RQ1B. To what extent can the influence of this teacher talk be attributed to the culturally embedded learning particularities of the students?

RQ2. What kinds of interactions/learning opportunities are created by teachers' questions to students?

RQ3. How do teachers' attitudes/characteristics, such as language proficiency, teaching experience and education, shape the way they manage classroom discourse and create language opportunities for their students?

### 1.4 Research Aims, Objectives and Scope

The overall aim of the research is to understand particularities of TT implemented in Saudi EFL classroom contributing to the development of learners' L2 skills. The research also aims at investigating teachers' strategies for creating learning opportunities and their attitudes towards shaping classroom discourse.

The objective of this study therefore is to explore the relationship between TT and students' dialogic opportunities, to identify factors that aid or obstruct learning opportunities in Saudi EFL classrooms, to discover what kind of influence TT has on the dialogic response of secondary school students in English classrooms in Saudi Arabia and how this impacts the development of meaningful dialogue in the classroom. Another dimension of the investigation is to establish the extent to which teachers take into account the particular sociocultural context of Saudi Arabian students. Consideration is also given to teachers' methods of managing their classrooms and creating language opportunities, which are shaped by teachers' language proficiency, teaching experiences and education.

Other specific objective of the study is to investigate the traditional nature of classroom talk (teacher and learner talk) in the context of English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching in Saudi Arabia. Second, because classroom discourse is, as Vygotsky explained, inextricably bound up with the sociocultural context of the users, it seeks to document how learning and teaching are embedded within the cultural values of students and teachers. It examines the emerging sociocultural relations that shape TT in classroom teaching, such as particularities of teacher talk and the influence of students' culturally unique learning characteristics on TT and on the strategies teachers employ in Saudi EFL classrooms to create learning opportunities. Third, it investigates the gaps

between teachers' actual capacities, concepts of the ideal teacher, and professional development related to classroom talk and dialogic teaching.

This study delimits itself to discussing issues related to particularities of teachers' talks as exercised in specific Saudi secondary school contexts in a regional province. The study focuses on teacher talk in a number of English language classes these particular cases allow for an in-depth linguistic study. As it is qualitative research, there is no intention whatsoever that findings of this study will generalize all school contexts in Saudi Arabia.

### 1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant in several respects. It is the first study to collect authentic examples of TT from a range of EFL classes in Saudi secondary schools; it is the first linguistic analysis of TT in Saudi secondary EFL classrooms; and it is the first study to explore the extent to which TT helps or hinders interaction in these classes.

Because the study examines the immediate effects of TT on EFL students in Saudi Arabia, its findings can inform the development of viable pedagogical strategies to promote the development of dialogic skills in this setting. By examining TT in Saudi Arabian classrooms and analysing its potential influence on students' conversational skills, the results shed light on the extent to which TT currently encourages or discourages dialogue in the classroom and the relationship between TT and the learning particularities of Saudi Arabian students. As well, the study focuses on a particular group of learners in the secondary school system, which represents a largely under-researched learning context.

### 1.6 Theoretical and Analytical Frameworks

The study is guided by several well-established theoretical and analytical frameworks. The most important of these is Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which proposes that language learning is socially constructed. This perspective is used to contextualise the present study, which is based on the concept of sociocultural learning and acknowledges the importance of interactions at the centre of students' learning. In this framework, teacher-student interactions play a key role in developing students' dialogic skills and promoting their L2 language output.

Against this background, three widely used analytical frameworks are deployed. The first and most important of these for this study is Cullen's (2002) analysis of the follow-up move (F-move). The F-move, commonly known as 'follow-up' or 'feedback', is the third element of the Initiate-Response-Follow-up (IRF) cycle in TT classroom exchanges (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975). Cullen's (2002) approach examines the way in which initiation and feedback occur, how initiation is phrased, and how students respond to that initiation. The present study focuses on the feedback move in TT, because teachers can use this third move in the exchange 'for stimulating and scaffolding learner moves' (Mickan 1997, pp. 89-90), thereby enabling students to engage in dialogic talk, which leads to effective learning and quality teacher talk. In the present study, F-moves are analysed because this kind of talk can stimulate interlanguage development (Steiner & Mahn 1996). In other words, classroom interactions do not only facilitate declarative and practical knowledge that lead to a certain level of proficiency, but also encourage higher order thinking in expressing criticality that is embedded in language expression through the use of the target language (Mercer & Littleton 2007; Negueruela 2008).

In Cullen's seminal work, F-moves (the moves of feedback) occur either as questions (referential or non-referential) or corrections or in other forms of feedback. Within sociocultural theory, feedback is considered to be a part of scaffolding (Walqui 2006) and these components are seen as integral aspects of pedagogy and culture; hence the analysis of F-moves is coterminous with cultural and situational teaching contexts (Alexander 2008; Mercer 2003), including teachers' awareness of students' learning strategies and contexts, along with complexities beyond the classroom (Kumaravadivelu 1994). Talk has been examined in a variety of classroom contexts to identify why limited practices persist in the repertoire of teacher and learner interactions (Teo 2016).

The second analytical framework applied in the present study derives from Kumaravadivelu's (2003) post-method pedagogy. He identifies particular dimensions of teaching practice and describes how certain learning interactions/learning opportunities are created by teachers' talk. I examined how this works in Saudi classrooms.

The analysis also draws on the work of Hammond and Gibbons (2005), specifically, their investigation of factors that shape teachers' strategies of managing classroom discourse. These studies of TT examined how meaning was negotiated

through language in the classroom, but they did not specifically focus on foreign or second language learning. These analytical frameworks nonetheless are highly appropriate and useful in understanding the discourse in Saudi EFL classrooms.

The research adopted a discourse analysis approach, drawing on Cullen 2002 and Hammond and Gibbons (2005) to examine the language interactions in the English language classes. The discourse analysis focused on the teachers' interaction sequences, in particular on the feedback (F) move. This involves analysis of the different types of F-moves, such as discourse questions, evaluative questions, feedback, declarative statements, and other aspects of TT, as well as macro and micro strategies and scaffolding. An appropriate discourse analysis model is used to describe and interpret the TT in relation to form, purpose and impact. Thematic analysis is used to describe the nature of the phenomenon under investigation, as well as its relation to, or influence on, other phenomena. This methodological approach is deployed because the principal focus of the research lies in the wider web of contextual influences on TT and its relationship to the development of students' dialogic skills (Fisher 2011).

Within the extant literature relevant to interactions in EFL/ESL classrooms, no previous study has investigated EFL/ESL or the Saudi L1 school context from a sociocultural perspective, with a focus on the relationship between the sociocultural particularities of TT and the development of students' spoken outputs. The present study, therefore, contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the role of TT in developing students' spoken outputs, particularly in the context of EFL.

### 1.7 Organisation of the Thesis

Chapter 1 has presented information on the framework of the research, including the rationale and justification for the study, and my positioning within the research process. It stated the research questions, aims and objectives and introduced the theoretical and analytical frameworks.

Chapter 2 describes the research context. It presents background information on Saudi society, with particular focus on the Saudi educational system. It presents an overview of the history of teaching the English language as a subject in Saudi schools and the characteristics and work of Saudi English teachers.

Chapter 3 presents a review of relevant literature on TT. It elaborates on the theoretical and methodological frameworks used to interpret the data, namely, those of

Cullen (2002), Kumaravadivelu (2003) and Hammond and Gibbon (2005), and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. Finally, it identifies the knowledge gap that the present study was designed to address.

The research methodology is explained in Chapter 4, which presents a comprehensive description of the methods of data collection and analysis (interview and observation), and the characteristics of the study participants.

The next three chapters present results relevant to each of the research questions. Chapter 5 presents the findings on the particularities of teacher talk and the relationship between TT and the unique cultural learning characteristics of students. Chapter 6 describes the learning opportunities created by teachers in Saudi school classrooms. Chapter 7 presents findings on teachers' attitudes and characteristics that shape classroom discourse.

Chapter 8 discusses the findings in relation to the research questions and relevant literature. Chapter 9 concludes the thesis by considering the implications of the research and making recommendations for future work.

## 1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has set out the rationale for the present study and explained its significance. The aims, objectives and research questions have been stated. The theoretical and analytical frameworks have been described, and an overview of the structure of the thesis has been presented. The following chapter contextualises the study setting.

# Chapter 2

# Saudi Schools in Context

Qualitative research deals with the interpretation of the phenomenon being observed in relation to its context. Data in qualitative research are often generated through in-depth investigation of natural settings that are associated with the phenomenon. The findings from a qualitative study of teachers' pedagogical competence need to be interpreted in context, since their performance is shaped by such context. Accordingly, this chapter describes the Saudi school context and how it relates to teacher talk (TT) and dialogic learning, as well as the strategies that teachers adopt and the attitudes that shape their approach to learning in classroom discourse.

The following section discusses the history of education in Saudi Arabia. A comparison of the educational policies before and after the 2001 reforms serves to underline the importance of the development of the country's main education authority, the Ministry of Education. Historical changes in the position of English as a subject in Saudi secondary schools are described to highlight the factors that have contributed to the importance of English language learning in the country and its current status as a core subject in the curriculum. The chapter also considers the teaching and learning aids that are commonly available in Saudi classrooms, the status of English, and the training of EFL teachers, and assesses some of the challenges involved in teaching and learning English in the country.

## 2.1 History of Education in Saudi Arabia

### 2.1.1 Education policies before 2001

Education policies often reflect the political leadership and socio-economic conditions of the society. In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the King himself leads the Council of Ministers as the main legislative, executive and administrative body of the Saudi government (Ansary 2008). The government controls all education policies. Throughout the Kingdom, there is a large degree of uniformity with regard to syllabi, curricula, and textbooks (Alshengeeti 2014). With the exception of some specialised schools that exhibit a limited range of variation, the same materials are used in every school.

The history of the government-supervised educational system dates from 1932, when the country had only just been established. King Abdulaziz established a Directorate of Knowledge to manage the formal education of boys in the Hijza region. The authority and roles of the Directorate of Knowledge were expanded beyond the remit of its early years during the 1930s and 1940s, when it was restricted to the Hijaz region (Rugh 2002). In response to the complexities of many educational issues, the Saudi government established the Ministry of Education (MoE) in 1951. Originally known as the Ministry of Knowledge, its focus remained on the education of boys (Ministry of Education 2017b). The Ministry planned and monitored the education of boys in all primary, intermediate and secondary schools. Prior to 1960, the general educational emphasis in the country was on boys and, even though some girls' schools existed, they were not monitored or regulated as such by the government. In 1960, King Faisal Bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud established the General Presidency for Girls' Education, which marked an important milestone in the country's education system (Albadi 2014). Owing to the new social, economic and political developments taking place in the country, and recognising the workforce requirements of the 21st century, the General Presidency for Girls' Education was merged with the Ministry of Knowledge in 2002, and the new Ministry was renamed the Ministry of Education in 2003 (Al-Shabi 2013).

The MoE has continued to influence Saudi educational practices since its establishment in the 1950s until today, developing the objectives of and guidelines for education in the Kingdom. The policy document released by the Ministry in 1970 was of great significance at the time, and almost all pedagogic, curricular, and resource materials are still required to abide by its strictures. Highlighting the centrality of religion in all aspects of life, including education, it states that the national education system must be embedded within the tenets of Islam and that all classes must be taught in the light of the *Quran* and *Hadith* (the Muslim sacred text and the prophetic tradition, respectively). The document conformed to the traditional Islamic views prevalent in the country, and promoted a concept of unity in which state, education, and religion are indivisible; it employed the word "Islamic" as an adjective to define subjects and topics such as law, history, culture, and even science. In the early stages, this emphasis on Islamic education acted as a barrier to the teaching of English, which was viewed as a means of transmission of Western or even anti-Islamic values (Alshahrani 2016).

Underlying the new Ministry's policies was the view that there was a need to educate Saudi students after the secondary stage within the country itself, rather than sending all such students abroad for their higher education. To this end, the Saudi government opened the first university in 1957 in the capital Riyadh. At that time, participation in higher education was low and students were paid a stipend to attend the university. Following the establishment of King Saud University in 1957, six more universities were founded over the next 20 years. To cater for the growing number of university students, the government established the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) in 1975 (Alamri 2011).

### 2.1.2 Education policies after 2001

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has experienced significant transformation in its educational policies, with changes in both the types and systems of education. For example, the Ministry of Education developed its first 10-year educational plan (2004-2014) to align the educational system in the country more closely to educational systems and practices in many other parts of the world. Instead of focusing on Islamic principles alone, the 10-year plan accepted the need to adopt modern principles of education, promoting a balanced approach that values both Islamic and global identities (Al-Zahrani 2015).

Up to the beginning of 2015, the two main Saudi government agencies in charge of education were the MoHE and the MoE. In January 2015, the MoHE was merged into the MoE, which made the MoE a single important body managing education in the country (Ministry of Education 2017a). Post-2015, the MoE comprises two divisions. The General Education division manages the country's 42 educational districts, which contain more than 30,000 schools (Oyaid 2009), and is linked to local schools through district offices. The Higher Education division is responsible for all that pertains to higher education in Saudi Arabia, including supervising educational offices abroad, scholarships, and international academic relations. It is also in charge of overseeing teacher training schools, junior colleges and all other tertiary education institutions. There are 27 public and 10 private universities in Saudi Arabia, in addition to 41 private higher education colleges (Ministry of Education 2017c).

## 2.2 The Current Education and School System in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia's overall education system, from primary school to higher education, has undergone a gradual transformation from its earliest days to its present form. Even though the Islamic religion remains at its core, the education system has begun to place increasing emphasis on science, technology and mathematics (Al-Zahrani 2015). Education is compulsory for all children between the ages of six and 15 years. The general school education system has four stages: children aged three to six can attend an optional pre-school stage; those aged six to 12 must complete the six-year primary stage; adolescents aged 12 to 15 have their own intermediate schools; and older children aged 15 to 18 attend secondary schools. Each stage is three years in length, except for the six-year primary stage (Ministry of Education 2014a). Arabic is the language of instruction of all general and higher education institutions, except in English-language classes (Alresheed 2008), university-level degree courses in medicine and engineering, and some private educational institutions which use English as the medium of instruction.

Figure 2.1 shows how children progress through the education system in Saudi Arabia, encompassing all levels from primary to higher education.

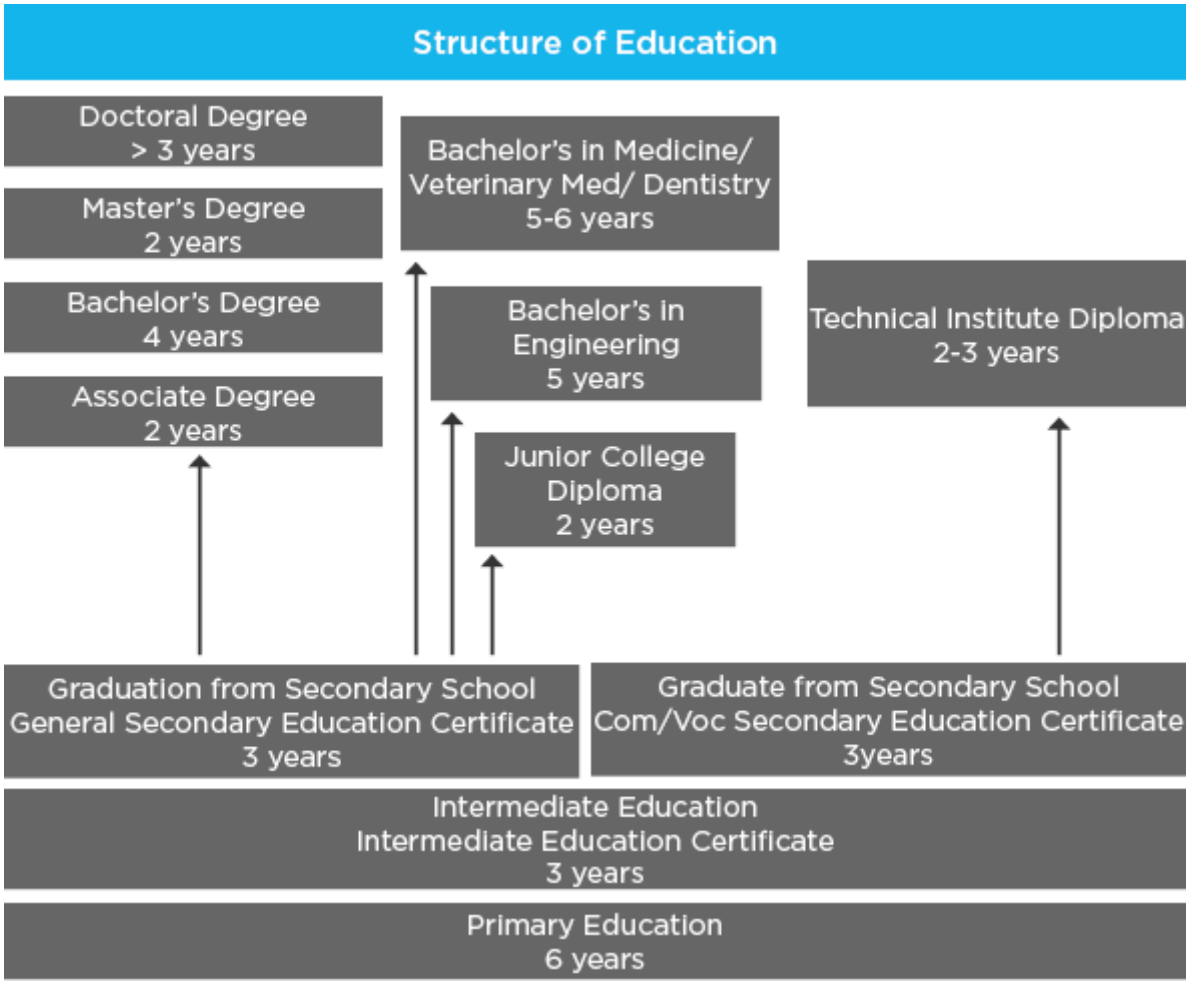


Figure 2.1 The Saudi educational system (Clark 2012).

The public school education system is highly centralised in Saudi Arabia (Oyaid 2009). The public school education division of the MoE is home to a curriculum department that ensures the uniformity of curricula throughout the country, and is responsible for the basic content of all syllabi and curriculum development. Both private and public schools are required to use a specific textbook for every subject, and follow an academic year that is divided into two 18-week semesters. In each semester, instruction and learning activities take place over the first 16 weeks, while the remaining two are used for final examinations. Only the topics covered in the textbook are examinable by teachers, and students revise exclusively from these books. Students must pass all subjects to advance to the next grade.

There are positive indicators that Saudi educational policies are reducing illiteracy levels and ensuring that everyone in the country has access to education to meet the country's social, religious and economic needs (Saudi Arabian Cultural

Mission to the U.S. 2013). The Saudi government has been placing great emphasis on the development of the Kingdom's school education system in recent years, which is reflected in the high literacy rates the country has recently reported. In 2009, the United Nations estimated the overall literacy rate in Saudi Arabia as 85% (89% for males and 79% for females over the age of 15); more pleasingly, the literacy of young people – those aged from 15 to 24 – was found to be 97-98% for males and 96% for females in the same year (Al-Silami 2010). Furthermore, student enrolment at Saudi secondary schools has grown from 755,977 in 1999 to 1,206,348 in 2009 and 2010 (Clark 2014).

The number of secondary school students of both sexes jumped from 1,217,419 students in public schools and 277,292 in private schools in 2013 to 1,540,994 in public and 319,122 in private schools just three years later. Figure 2.2 shows the rapid rise in the number of secondary school students in Saudi Arabia between 2013 and 2016 in both private and public schools. It is expected that the number of secondary school students will increase further in the next few years (General Authority for Statistics in Saudi Arabia n.d.).

After completing secondary school, students undergo a testing and evaluation process to secure admission to university. In 2000, King Abdullah issued a Royal Decree to establish the National Centre for Assessment in Higher Education (QIYAS) to guarantee equity and excellence in university admissions and improve the efficiency of the higher education admissions procedure (Ministry of Education 2018a). Admission to university in Saudi Arabia is based on students' performance in the General Ability Test (GAT) and the Standard Achievement Admission Test (SAAT), along with the grades achieved in the course of secondary education (Hendrickson 2012). The GAT is a non-curriculum-based test that is used to determine students' aptitude for higher education; it measures language comprehension, mathematical ability, and logical problem-solving and inferential abilities. The GAT is offered primarily in Arabic, but is also available in English for non-native speakers. In contrast, the SAAT is a curriculum-based test that examines what students have learned in the fields of biology, chemistry, physics and mathematics, and is also completed in the Arabic language (Hendrickson 2012). The GAT also tests students' English skills, but this component does not have a significant weighting. According to Alnahdi (2015), Saudi students' High School GPA (HSGPA) is the strongest predictor of university performance; that is, HSGPA results have more accurate predictive validity than the

GAT or the SAAT. This seems to indicate that the GAT does not test students adequately, and is therefore flawed. Even though English is a compulsory subject in school and is also used as a medium of instruction in some universities, it is not given due importance in admission tests, which could affect student performance and achievement in later stages of higher education.

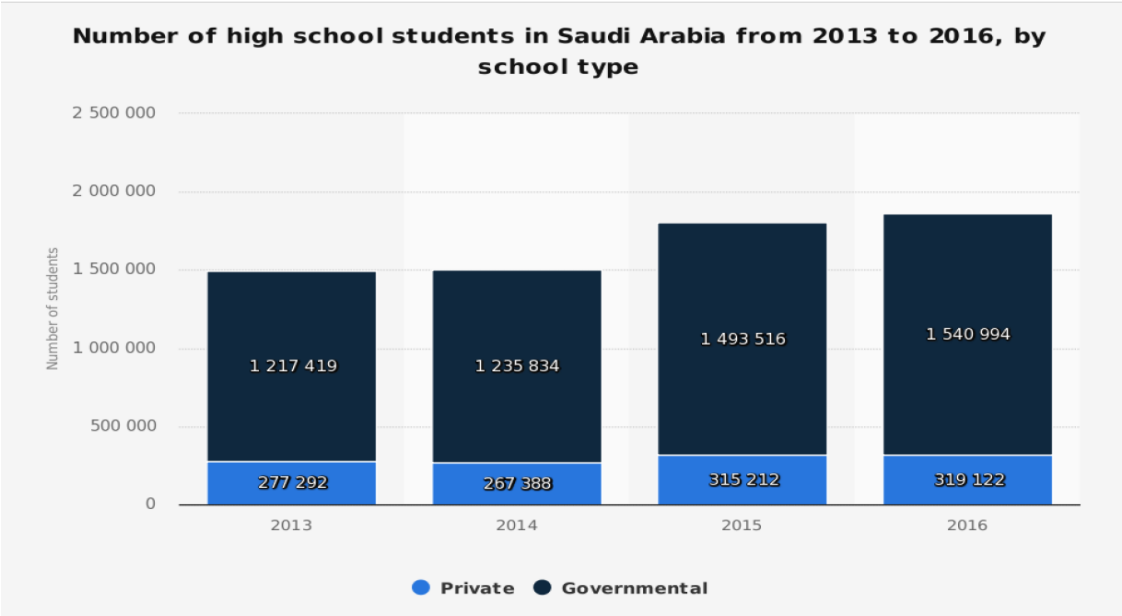


Figure 2.2 The number of secondary school students in Saudi Arabia 2013-2016, by school type (General Authority for Statistics in Saudi Arabia n.d.).

### 2.3 English in Saudi Arabian Schools

There has been a long and controversial debate over English language instruction in Saudi Arabia. In the early years of the Kingdom, religious scholars opposed the spread of English because it was considered a tool of Western culture (Alshahrani 2016; Elyas & Picard 2010). The literature does not offer an exact timeline for the introduction of EFL in Saudi Arabia, but it seems that it was largely a product of the 1920s and 1930s; the country was established in 1932, and the Arabian American Company of Oil (ARAMCO) was founded in 1933 (Alshahrani 2016). Elyas and Picard (2010) argue that English was introduced to accelerate Saudi Arabia's integration with the outside world and, more specifically, to enhance the country's relationship with the two English-speaking superpowers, the United States and the United Kingdom. After World War II, the newly discovered oil reserves in Saudi Arabia made the country a

centre of global attention, particularly from the United States, due to its commercial interests in oil (Alshahrani 2016). Given the rise of the oil industry and the increasing involvement of the United States in the region, English and English Language Teaching (ELT) became extremely important for the economic and social development of the country (Faruk 2013). The use of English in the Kingdom is inextricably linked to commercial interests, more specifically to the production of petroleum, and economic demands became the major driver of EFL (Mahboob & Elyas 2014). The economic and commercial impact of English in Saudi Arabia is so far-reaching that Karmani (2005) has dubbed the phenomenon 'petro-linguistics'.

The first major breakthrough in ELT in Saudi Arabia was made in 1943, when legislation was passed to make English a compulsory subject in grades 7-9. Then, in 1970, English became a compulsory subject in grades 7-12 (Al-Ghamdi & Al-Sadat 2002), with students being exposed to English for four periods of 45 minutes per week. However, English had low status as a subject, with little emphasis being placed on becoming genuinely fluent in the language (Alshahrani 2016). Throughout the 20th century, Saudis mainly used English to communicate with expatriates, who came to the Kingdom in huge numbers due to the booming petroleum industry.

According to Al-Ahaydib (1986), English was first taught in Saudi Arabia in the mid-1920s, with the key objective of helping students to master the language so as to ensure that the country was home to professionals who could communicate effectively with people from the English-speaking world. English was also taught for the purpose of equipping Saudi students with the international language of science and knowledge exchange, as well as to share Islamic culture. As in all other countries, the teaching style in the Saudi school system is influenced by its sociocultural context (Sywelem et al. 2012).

English is taught in Saudi Arabia as a foreign language, and therefore the Kingdom fits into the third circle of Kachru's (1985) concept of linguistic concentric circles, which depict "the types of spread, the patterns of acquisition and the functional domains in which English is used across cultures and languages" (Alshumaimeri 1999, p. 12). Countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada form the inner circle, in that English is the primary language of the society. The next circle is made up of countries such as Singapore and India, where

English is taught as a second (and unifying national) language. The third, 'expanding' circle consists of countries where English is taught as a foreign language and used to facilitate trade, communication, diplomacy, business and travel, and as the primary medium of instruction in some tertiary institutions. Even though the model has been criticised by Bruthiaux (2003) and Park and Wee (2009), it nevertheless offers a useful tool to understand how English-language education in Saudi Arabia differs from that in other parts of the world. Kachru would place Saudi Arabia in the expanding circle in relation to how the language functions in society (Alshumaimeri 1999).

The use of English is particularly common at the tertiary level in the Saudi education system, especially in subjects such as engineering, dentistry, medicine and computer science. Proficiency in the English language is, therefore, a prerequisite for entry to a number of tertiary education institutions, such as those specialising in dentistry and medicine (Alshumaimeri 1999).

Elyas (2008) has claimed that the English language has become part of daily life in Saudi Arabia in terms of ideological perspectives, work and recreation. He further proposes that the influence of English in Saudi society is growing in certain aspects of people's lifestyles that are ideologically neutral. This being so, the current study argues that, even though the widespread use of English is important for a number of reasons and purposes in Saudi society, it is worth noting that English is still viewed as a foreign language, and that there is cultural resistance to its further incursion among many Saudis (Mahboob & Elyas 2014). Furthermore, EFL teaching and learning in Saudi education in general and in secondary schools in particular still suffer from certain constraints such as lack of professional training of teachers, sociocultural particularities and limited learning opportunities, which are elaborated below and in Chapters 5 and 6. In the present study, the data were analysed to identify constraints and their impact on TT and the development of EFL learners' dialogic skills.

### 2.3.1 English in the Current Saudi Education System

From the beginning of the 21st century, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has undergone significant political, economic, and social development. In the late 1990s, the Saudi government promoted various economic and social policies designed to achieve the modernisation of the state and to respond to the rapid spread of globalisation (Faruk 2013). The increasing use of English in business, economics and international relations

is a particular feature of this development (Liton 2013). During the same period, there has been a surge in the number of tertiary students going from Saudi Arabia to other countries, especially English-speaking countries such as the US, the UK, Canada and Australia. To help Saudi students who wish to study abroad, in 2010 the Saudi government passed a law stipulating that English be taught in all Saudi schools from fourth grade onwards (for primary school students aged around ten) (Alrashidi & Phan 2015). In 2005, the government announced a significant change in the national vision, and introduced a plan to reduce the country's dependence on oil and promote the growth of a knowledge-based economy (Faruk 2013). Driven by this vision, the Saudi education sector has also undergone a transformation, and has seen tremendous growth in the importance of English. This trend has mainly come about through the encouragement of the Saudi government, particularly through the King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Scholarship Program (Ministry of High Education 2014d), which is offered to all students studying abroad.

In the 21st century, the status of English changed from a low-key to a high-impact language, and this has been accompanied by an increased focus on English learning and teaching. There is a general understanding in the Saudi educational sphere of the need for advanced English skills to promote social, economic and educational development of the country. The current aims and guidelines of the MoE in relation to teaching English also reflect this notion:

> The aim of teaching English in the secondary schools is to have the public attain standard which will permit him [sic] to make ready use of desired materials in English and which will enable him [sic] to communicate satisfactorily, according to his [sic] needs, in both spoken and written forms (MoE 2002, cited in Elyas & Badawood 2016, p.74).

The Ministry's aim is that secondary school students will understand the importance of English not just as a compulsory subject, but also as a form of written and oral communication in higher education, business and trade.

The role of English in Saudi Arabia is similar to that in other Arab countries (Javid & Umer 2014). English is used as a medium of instruction in a number of hospitals, institutions and companies, for maritime navigation and aviation, in some university faculties, and in various other organisations and departments (Al-Kahtany, Faruk & Al Zumor 2016; Al-Asmari & Khan 2014a). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, English has had a particular role in the development of the Saudi petroleum

industry and this has clearly influenced the spread of English to other significant industries and services. English is also required for job applications in many Saudi employment markets; most job criteria typically require at least a minimum level of English proficiency, especially in writing and speaking skills, to gain an offer of employment. It can be reasonably asserted that most Saudis understand the importance of English for their work, travel purposes, or the future education and work prospects of their children. Gaining fluency in English is important for both current and future Saudi workers in a variety of sectors, given that, in the international jobs market, candidates with strong English skills are typically preferred and highly valued since English is a prerequisite for many high-paying jobs (Aljuaid 2015). The following section presents a detailed discussion of secondary education in Saudi Arabia, since this study focuses on EFL teachers in secondary schools in the country.

### 2.4 Education and Teaching Strategies in Saudi Secondary Schools

The purpose of general education in Saudi Arabia, of which secondary education is one stage, is to enhance students' religious devotion to ensure they remain practising Muslims, help them acquire scientific knowledge and make them familiar with modern sciences, and prepare them for higher education and/or vocational training (Saudi Arabian Embassy to the U.S. 2018). Under the umbrella of the secondary school system in the country, a distinction is made between religious, technical and general education schools. Because this study is concerned with general schools, the following discussion is limited to an account of the nature of education in these schools.

The secondary school is of particular importance in the Saudi education system because it prepares students for entrance to, and the type of learning they will experience in, higher education institutions. This stage is three years in length. Up to 2014, the curriculum in the first year of secondary school is the same for students throughout the country, while students can choose the subject area in which they will specialise in the second and third years: natural sciences, or Arabic and Islamic studies (Mahib ur Rahman & Alhaisoni 2013).

In September 2014, the Ministry of Education introduced a new system applicable to secondary schools, applying a quarterly system to the $10^{th}$ grade; the new system was extended to the $11^{th}$ grade in 2015, and will be gradually phased in across the entirety of the secondary education system. Briefly, the quarterly system consists of

three grades, divided into six levels. The 10th grade consists of two separate levels, although all students follow a similar curriculum; these two levels are referred to as the 'general preparation' stage. However, in the 11th and 12th grades, both boys and girls will be able to choose to study one of the following areas: natural sciences, Arabic and Islamic studies, or management and social sciences. Cumulative grade averages will apply from the 10th grade onwards (Ministry of Education 2018b).

The MoE has stated that its goal

> Is supporting education in general, and the secondary stage in particular, through strategies such as developing students' technical capabilities, offering specialised human resources, and advanced instructional design. Students' needs can be met by encouraging their analytical and creative thinking, developing their skills, and integrating technology into their classroom experiences (Ministry of Education 2014b).

Although each of these elements should be taken into account when working to develop the Saudi curriculum, the importance of TT within these objectives is yet to be explored.

In addition to the transformation of the school system, the Saudi government has also made an effort to transform teaching methodology. This is because school success is very much related to teachers' classroom practices. Al-Awaid (2018) has proposed some teaching strategies that are seen to be appropriate for Saudi classrooms. However, in the context of Saudi Arabia, perceived appropriate teaching strategies that enable students to learn English effectively have not been sufficiently explored. In practice, it has been found that some teachers overuse L1 in teaching English, or they teach English for exam purposes only. As a result, English instruction in the Saudi context seems to have been less successful in developing students' dialogic skills. Most students are not very capable of using English daily. This is partly due to teachers' lack of competence in promoting dialogic learning and failure to create more learning opportunities.

According to Jawhar (2012), the English-language teaching approach employed in Saudi Arabia has been affected by the polarity between the traditional and communicative models of teaching. One example of how English teaching methods have suffered due to this polarity can be seen in the commonly used Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) which, in its conventional form, follows a process of stimulus and response. Through this method, students learn not only grammar, but also general English reading and writing skills. The justification for the use of the ALM to teach

English hinges on fulfilling certain teaching aims. In Saudi Arabia, however, teachers have been known to ignore certain parts of the method and to include only certain aspects in their lessons (Alresheed 2008). This being so, the ALM is actually only partially implemented in Saudi classrooms. For instance, the use of English-language laboratories is an integral part of the ALM but, as noted by Albedaiwi (2014), they have not been installed in all Saudi schools and, in some cases, even when such laboratories have been built, teachers have not made adequate use of them. This is a consequence of the uniform approach to language teaching in the Saudi secondary education system. Naturally, the absence or neglect of such laboratories in Saudi schools deprives students of one of the key benefits of learning via the ALM – the opportunity to listen to English lessons and the genuine sounds of the language.

Although some Saudi EFL teachers apply other teaching methods, such as cognitive code learning, the direct method and the grammar translation method (Alresheed 2008), they are not sufficiently encouraged to integrate communicative competence or dialogic teaching into their lessons. This lack of expertise in dialogic teaching among Saudi EFL teachers negatively impacts on students' ability to learn the spoken language, since EFL learners do not receive enough stimulation to speak or participate in English. Despite the fact that the ALM and the grammar translation method are frequently criticised, they are still widely used by Saudi EFL teachers. It is also worth mentioning that a significant proportion of Saudi EFL learners graduate from secondary school without necessarily having gained the ability to express themselves in spoken English (Alresheed 2008).

The methodologies employed to teach English should place great emphasis on providing learners with opportunities for communication (Ellis 2008). The emerging disparities between language proficiency levels of Saudi EFL learners mean that teachers need to develop new techniques for enhancing interactions in the classroom, and such techniques will largely depend on approaches that foster the interest of students. Such initiatives should motivate students to learn English, as well as develop their general learning capacities (Mahib ur Rahman & Alhaisoni 2013).

A common example of the Saudi teaching strategy, which is also found in most other Arab countries, is the practice of using traditional, teacher-centred EFL methods; the effective teaching of English in Saudi Arabia is thus limited by certain challenges

that face most Arab countries (Fareh 2010). These result from the use of traditional lesson formats that feature teaching methods that do not pay attention to the development of students' oral fluency. For example, teachers tend to dominate lessons, interactions and discussions, with students enjoying only minimal opportunities to participate (Al-Seghayer 2014a). Saudi EFL teachers continue to favour approaches such as the grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods, which focus on the teaching of discrete skills and make use of explicit instruction (Al-Seghayer 2014a). This may contribute to a lack of motivation among students to speak in class.

EFL instructional media in Saudi Arabia can be divided into three book categories: teachers' guidebooks containing teaching guidelines, student textbooks containing learning materials, and student workbooks for assignments (Albedaiwi 2014; Alresheed 2008). Recently, the MoE has sought to introduce technologically enhanced learning methods (Al-Asmari & Khan 2014b; Oyaid 2009), and some EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia are therefore now equipped with computer-assisted language learning tools such as interactive blackboards and computers (Isman et al. 2012).

However, the Saudi education system continues to manifest a traditional approach to teaching and learning, with limited use of modern technology in classrooms (Alrabai 2016), and the integration of technology into EFL classrooms is also limited (Alrabai 2016). Even though online learning, audio-visual and blended learning, and computer technologies are frequently a feature of higher-education classrooms, these are rarely found at the school level (Al-Maini 2011; Al Mulhim 2014; Almutairi 2008).

### 2.5 EFL Teachers' Qualifications and Training

In recent times, it has been reported that EFL teacher preparation and training programs in Saudi Arabia are not well organised or well-managed and are largely inadequate (Al-Hazmi 2003; Al-Seghayer 2014a). While teacher training and preparation in teaching methods have changed significantly, it has been claimed that the professional and linguistic competencies of the majority of Saudi EFL teachers are poor, and they lack a sufficient command of crucial elements of language (Al-Seghayer 2014a).

It is generally the case that EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia are mostly Saudi citizens who have either graduated from a university in Saudi Arabia or elsewhere with at least a bachelor's degree in English Language, or have an equivalent tertiary

qualification for which they studied aspects of linguistics, literature and education. However, a few schools are hiring non-Saudi English teachers from other Arabic-speaking countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Sudan and Pakistan (Norton & Syed 2003; Alresheed 2008). Saudi novice teachers are typically graduates of a four-year English-teaching program in the Arts department of a Saudi university, or a four-year English program in colleges of education, which prepare students to become teachers in Saudi public schools.

English-language teachers who study in university Arts faculties are trained to be experts in English-language translation, but not necessarily to be experts in teaching. On the other hand, colleges of education specifically prepare students to teach English at Saudi schools. In both programs, students receive intensive training in aspects of linguistics such as phonology and phonetics, syntax and morphology, semantics, English literature, teaching methods and other general subjects (Al-Seghayer 2014b). However, courses in education are offered only by the colleges of education.

Teacher training programs emphasise enhancing candidate teachers' linguistic skills, including competence in listening, reading comprehension, speaking, and writing, and are less focused on imparting teaching knowledge (Al-Seghayer 2014a). In other words, the Saudi MoE provides schools with teachers who have sufficient content knowledge but limited knowledge of pedagogical teaching practice. EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia are in need of in-service training, and many have reported a lack of satisfaction with the current level of preparation in the areas of professional development, cultural awareness in language teaching, and the use of modern teaching aids (Alshuaifan 2009; Zohairy 2012).

The Ministry sends supervisors to monitor classroom practices in all schools, and conducts visits to classes and attends actual lessons in order to provide educational suggestions and valuable feedback to novice teachers. These supervisors are authorised to conduct evaluations to determine which teachers need in-service training.

### 2.6 Challenges of Teaching and Learning English in Saudi Arabia

There is some doubt as to whether the majority of Saudi students are able to use the English they have learnt outside of the classroom, at both university and school level (Hamouda 2012; Norton & Syed 2003). Furthermore, many students graduate from secondary schools without having gained the necessary proficiency in English to

flourish at the tertiary stage. Al-Seghayer (2014a), Norton and Syed (2003) and Khan (2011) have shed some light on the constraints that Saudi EFL learners face, such as styles of learning, teaching strategies, students' motivation to learn the target language and teachers' motivation to teach, students' attitudes and linguistic barriers, and teachers' levels of professional development and training.

In addition, Fareh (2010) proposes that EFL programs in most Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, are affected by a number of impediments that hinder their effectiveness. Such challenges include, but are not limited to, teachers with limited professional training and inappropriate teaching techniques. The other important factor hindering effective EFL teaching is the preference for teachers to adopt a teacher-centred rather than student-centred teaching technique.

Other barriers to effective language instruction include compartmentalisation instead of holistic language models, undue emphasis on rote instruction at the expense of skills development, a lack of instruction and learning resources such as textbooks, inadequate assessment techniques, and a lack of practical exposure to the target language (Al-Seghayer 2014a; Mahib ur Rahman & Alhaisoni 2013). Consequently, many English teachers working in the context of the Saudi education system are likely to face constraints that hinder the success of their EFL teaching program.

According to Alresheed (2008) and Al-Seghayer (2014a), complaints have also emerged regarding the competence of Saudi EFL teachers and their ability to teach English speaking and writing skills. One could conclude that Saudi EFL teachers are insufficiently qualified due to the inadequacies of EFL pedagogical preparation programs (Al-Seghayer 2014a). Furthermore, EFL teachers often face challenges in the form of students' lack of motivation to achieve learning (Alrabai 2014; Alresheed 2008; Al-Murabit 2012).

Al-Silami (2010) also mentions common shortcomings manifested by teachers, particularly those in rural schools, such as an insufficient training period, a lack of in-service training, insufficient self-development activities, and poor job commitment and performance. He also claims that many teachers are forced to teach subjects that are outside their areas of interest or specialisation due to the lack of specialist teachers, and that some teachers rely on memorisation to prepare students for exams, rather than evaluative styles of teaching. These pedagogical methods can negatively impact

teacher-learner interactions, and thereby hinder the development of students' dialogical skills.

Moreover, the English textbooks that are written and designed by the MoE are not always of an adequate standard to make students proficient in English. The textbooks concentrate on imparting knowledge, at the expense of supporting teaching efforts that seek to boost the necessary socio-linguistic and communicative skills. In particular, the content tends to present information to students, rather than giving them sufficient opportunities to participate or actually practise the language being taught (Al-Seghayer 2014a).

### 2.7 Sociocultural Values and EFL Learning

According to Morris (2011), EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia face a number of particular challenges. These challenges can be divided into two groups: cultural and classroom challenges.

Language learning is found to be inhibited by perceived clashes in sociocultural values between L1 and L2. According to Alresheed (2008), for example, there are major cultural barriers between the Arabic and English languages that undermine students' attitude and motivation to learning English. These barriers include students' values and beliefs, which may be in conflict with those taught in EFL classrooms (Elyas 2008). In his article 'Teach us English but without its cultural values', Al-Seghayer (2013) asserts that culturally inappropriate textbooks and teaching materials prevent EFL students from following an optimal learning process. He notes complaints from some Saudi families about the design of English textbooks that include culturally inappropriate material (such as photos of women without a *hijab*, pictures of naked persons, or depictions of drinking alcohol) that are associated with Western culture. Such behaviours continue to be unacceptable in the local culture. In the EFL context, some linguists argue that language learning will remain problematic if textbooks continue to display such culturally inappropriate material (Elyas & Badawood 2016). Therefore, educational program developers are advised to be aware of the issue and design Saudi-specific versions (Al-Seghayer 2013).

Socio-cultural aspects are highly relevant to the discussion of language teaching. This is because language instruction is closely related to the sociocultural context in which language students and teachers live, and different sociocultural values result in

different ways of perceiving things. In Saudi society, for example, Saudi males are the heads of their families. Boys in Saudi families are allowed a great deal of freedom with regard to their responsibilities, except for the obligation to pray five times a day. Around the age of 12, or even younger, many boys begin driving cars with the permission of their parents, even though the official age at which Saudi citizens can obtain a driver's license is 18. At the age of 15, boys acquire some responsibilities that are unique to male family members (Long 2005). Notably, until recently, the Saudi government did not allow women to drive, and no public transport is available in the Kingdom. Some families are able to hire drivers, but the majority do not have the financial resources to do so; consequently, the responsibility for providing transport falls on the male family members (Long 2005). These family obligations can lead to a high rate of classroom absence and failure to complete assignments; students regularly attribute their failure to submit assignments or attend school to family commitments (Morris 2011).

Significantly, many parents neither realise the importance of EFL in Saudi Arabia, nor understand the role they could play in motivating their children to study a second language. The lack of direct or indirect parental involvement in children's education, particularly in the context of EFL learning, is reflected in the attitude displayed by some students in the classroom, which in turn makes the work of the teacher even more challenging. For instance, some students often attend class without the required learning materials and textbooks, sometimes even without pencils or other necessary equipment (Morris 2011). As a result, teachers are forced to waste valuable time asking other students to share their textbooks or other learning materials. Although this is not a regular occurrence in schools, some Saudi students exhibit a lack of time management skills.

Al-Silami (2010) argues that many parents have no awareness of the importance of maintaining a strong relationship with their children's school programs and activities, or making periodic visits. He further states that the parental support children receive is often inadequate to encourage scholastic performance and progress, and some school principals have reported that parents have poor levels of cooperation with schools. This aspect of Saudi culture is reflected in the quality of TT inside classrooms, and impacts negatively on the development of students' dialogical skills.

In addition, the fact that the weather is extremely hot during the summer in Saudi Arabia leads many students to sleep after school hours until sunset, and to postpone going to bed until midnight or even later. The Saudi lifestyle changes again during the holy month of Ramadan (Long 2005), during which many students sleep for the whole day and spend the whole night awake. This greatly affects class attendance and the quality of classroom interactions, and therefore the quality of learning.

School absenteeism is not restricted to Ramadan, but also occurs in the weeks leading up to and following any official holiday (Morris 2011). This issue highlights the gap between official Saudi education policy and educational practice. Although MoE policy mandates certain educational practices, not all are implemented as intended. For example, the official educational policy is that students are not allowed to miss any classes during the semester without an acceptable reason (Ministry of Education 2014a) and, if students are continuously absent without an acceptable reason, their grades are to be penalised. While this is the official policy, it is rarely applied, and students often circumvent it by providing a variety of excuses. The issue of absenteeism contributes to a further reduction in classroom interactions, given that classes often have at least one absent group member. This being so, in order to address the cultural issues that influence Saudi students' behaviours and attitudes, it is necessary to create models and frameworks that can help to bridge the gap between Saudi educational policies and educational practice.

According to Al-Silami (2010), there is a disparity in the quality of education, resources and teacher training between rural and urban schools. He also suggests that a major factor in the inferior situation of rural schools is the lifestyles of the inhabitants of rural areas, who often resist centralisation in education and integration into mainstream urban society. The decentralisation and semi-nomadic lifestyles of Saudi rural residents places a strain on resources in rural schools, and also results in low enrolment. Rural schools are usually smaller in size and have insufficient modern learning and teaching aids, such as dedicated rooms for learning resources, smart boards, libraries, labs and other facilities. Another unhelpful factor is that the buildings that house rural schools are frequently poorly equipped and mostly rented (Al-Silami 2010). These issues combine to exert a negative effect on the standard of teaching and students' educational development, and thereby negatively impact the instruction that teachers can impart.

If students receive low levels of academic exposure during their early educational experiences, this can have an influence on their later attitudes and performance as secondary students in EFL classrooms. For example, Saudi students often lack sufficient skills in the areas of problem-solving, critical thinking and interpersonal attributes, which have not been taught to them in previous years (Allamnakhrah 2013). Moreover, despite the growing influence of English in business, employment and tertiary institutions in Saudi Arabia, most EFL learners in the general education system lack sufficient exposure to the English language outside the classroom; this has a negative impact and limits their ability to interact with native speakers of the language. It also has a significant impact on students' overall language-learning performance, which influences the entire EFL pedagogical process (Alharbi 2015; Al-Seghayer 2014a; Hamouda 2013).

In order to ensure EFL acquisition, the process of learning and teaching requires a positive attitude on the part of both teachers and students (Alresheed 2012). EFL students must be encouraged and incentivised through the provision of engaging learning experiences and the creation of an interactive learning environment.

Against this background, it is not surprising that teaching EFL in Saudi Arabia is challenging. As argued in this chapter, this is mainly due to a combination of factors such as teaching challenges, low motivation, cultural barriers, classroom challenges and limited teaching aids (Alresheed 2008). These challenges indicate the magnitude of the task that EFL teachers and students face in the process of teaching and learning English in Saudi secondary schools. To address the difficulties faced by the EFL teaching profession in Saudi Arabia, it is important to be aware of the country's political, economic and cultural background. Understanding of this context is also necessary to inform any exploration of Saudi TT and the associated dialogical issues.

## 2.8 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an account of the history of general education in Saudi Arabia, the position and status of English in the country, the popular teaching strategies, approaches and aids, and EFL teacher qualifications and training, and has briefly identified the most prominent constraints and challenges faced by EFL students and teachers in the Kingdom. The information in this chapter has laid the groundwork for the conceptual framework and literature review that follows.

# Chapter 3

# Literature Review

The previous chapter has shown that there are various cultural challenges and classroom constraints in the Saudi EFL context. Saudi teachers need to navigate serious impediments in their work, including a lack of teacher awareness of student-centred approaches and dialogic teaching strategies, along with ineffective training in these approaches. Students too must deal with limitations such as insufficient practical exposure to the target language and scarce institutional resources. Both teachers and students also have to deal with the major cultural barriers between the native and target languages, with resulting implications for motivation and attitude towards the acquisition of the target language.

Description and analysis of the impact of TT on the development of students' dialogical skills can shed light on only a few of the above-mentioned constraints inside Saudi EFL classrooms. Although the influence of TT has been widely investigated in different geographical areas (Sadeghi, Ansari, & Rahmani 2015; Teo 2016; Walsh 2002), there is a paucity of research about the influence of TT and student dialogical skills in Saudi Arabia's dynamic sociocultural context. As such, this study seeks to provide a basis for developing viable pedagogical solutions to promote dialogic skills in Saudi EFL classrooms. As there is little previous research about TT in Saudi Arabian secondary school English classrooms, this chapter mainly reviews previous research in different educational contexts and foreign language classrooms in other geographical areas beyond the Saudi context. The following literature review elaborates the sociocultural perspective that provides the conceptual framework for the study, it considers definitions of TT, different kinds of TT and the teaching exchange sequence of initiation-response-feedback (IRF). It explains some features of TT and discusses previous studies that have investigated its implications for the classroom. Finally, it discusses what is known about TT in the Saudi context from the available literature, and identifies the knowledge gap that this study was designed to address.

## 3.1 Teacher Talk

This section examines the ways in which TT in EFL classrooms has been conceptualised as well as what TT features have been found to improve dialogic skills.

It provides practical examples of TT leading to students' learning through the relationship between output and input language, as well as the ways that TT operates as a tool in the EFL classroom to improve dialogic skills. Importantly, it discusses the differences in TT between ESL and EFL classrooms. Literature examining TT in different EFL contexts, including the Saudi context, is also reviewed.

### 3.1.1 Definition of teacher talk

According to Ma (2006), foreign/second language learners acquire a targeted language inside a classroom, which is where they experience most frequent exposure to the target language. The classroom interactions and discourse can seriously impact students' learning and ability to cope with foreign/second languages outside the classroom environment. Ma (2006) defines TT as the form of language that a teacher uses within the classroom setting to impart knowledge to learners.

In the available literature, researchers have defined TT in several different ways. For example, Richards and Schmidt (2010, p. 588) define it as

> That variety of language sometimes used by teachers when they are in the process of teaching. In trying to communicate with learners, teachers often simplify their speech, giving it many of the characteristics of Foreigner talk and other simplified styles of speech addressed to language learners.

Nunan (1991, cited in Jing & Jing 2018, p. 320) proposes that 'teacher talk refers to the language used by a teacher in organizing class and language teaching'. According to Ivanova (2011, p.7), 'the terms "foreign talk" and L2 "teacher talk" are often used interchangeably by some linguists in their studies due to the fact that "teacher talk" is seen as a variety of "foreigner talk" used in a classroom setting by teachers'. Ellis (1985, cited in Hermanto 2015, p. 145) defines teacher talk as 'the special language that teachers use when addressing L2 learners in the classroom', observing that 'the language that teachers address to L2 learners is treated as a register, with its own specific formal and linguistics properties'. This indicates that, in seeking to communicate with learners, teachers often simplify their speech, giving it many of the characteristics of foreigner talk and other simplified styles of speech addressed to language learners.

TT is the specific type of discourse that pertains to classrooms and is directed by the teacher's educational objectives as well as by certain beliefs or attitudes of the

teacher regarding his or her own role in the classroom. According to Myhill, Jones and Hopper (2005), TT differs from ordinary conversation and follows certain rules that students learn during their early school years. Liu and Zhu (2012 ) indicate that, in foreign and second language classrooms, teacher talk is an essential aspect of the teaching environment and determines to a large extent the success of the language lesson.

According to Chaudron (1988, cited in Ivanova 2011, p. 8), 'although teacher talk in L2 classrooms differs from speech in other settings, it does not exhibit differences that are qualitatively distinct and systematic enough to be identified as a phenomenon of another special sociolinguistic domain'. Dodu (2013, p. 10) argues that TT 'that results from attempts to teach target language is necessarily different from the talk that occurs naturally outside the classroom'. Research on TT can be divided into two categories: studies that examine the type of language that teachers use in language lessons, and studies that examine the type of language that teachers apply in subject classrooms.

From the above-mentioned definitions, it can be concluded that TT in ESL/EFL lessons constitutes a unique variety of language whose characteristics are distinct from other varieties of language. These features are observed as responses to the restrictions caused by physical settings, the special requirements of learners, and the specific teaching objectives.

TT can also be seen as a unique communicative action. Its objectives are to communicate with learners and to develop their proficiency in a foreign language. Teachers can use TT to develop students' learning abilities as well as to manage activities in the classroom (Ma 2006). Teachers can also employ TT with the aim of enhancing interactions with learners. In such a situation, learners acquire the target language by responding to their teacher's questions as well as discussing among themselves. In other words, TT can be used in communication-oriented talk (Ma 2006).

### 3.1.2 The teaching exchange sequence – IRF pattern

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) studied classroom discourse in L1 primary school classrooms and developed a model for analysing TT in the classroom context. Often referred to as the Discourse Analysis model, it has been widely applied in linguistic research on TT and classroom discourse in both L1 and L2 contexts, even though it was

initially developed for L1 classrooms (Atkins & Brown 2001; Wells 1993). The model is an elaborated form of Halliday's (1961) rank-scale model of grammar description. Sinclair's and Coulthard's (1975) well-known hierarchical rank-scale model is similar to Halliday's (1961), with five ranks: 'lesson; transaction; exchange; move, and act' (Atkins & Brown 2001, p. 3). In this model, there are two types of exchanges: teaching exchange and boundary exchange. The teaching exchange elicits the classroom exchange between teacher and pupils, initiated and directed by the teacher (Willis 1981, 2013), while boundary exchange refers to the exchange between resources and social boundaries; it is beyond classroom settings. However, this study focuses on teaching exchange, which is the sequence model proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) consists of Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) moves in classroom exchanges and structures. IRF simply refers to the process whereby teachers initiate speech and students respond. After this, teachers may follow-up or give feedback (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975). Every teacher exchange involves at least an initiation that is followed by either response or feedback. When initiation is followed by response, this is then followed by feedback (Willis 1981, 2013). An example of an IRF exchange sequence would be:

Teacher: What is the capital of Australia? (Initiation)
Student: The capital of Australia is Canberra. (Response)
Teacher: This is correct. (Feedback)

Even though IRF has been criticised by researchers (Nunan 1987; Thornbury 1996, cited in Cullen 2002), it remains a commonly used sequence, especially in the situation where the teacher's role is mainly that of a transmitter of knowledge (Gibbons 2015). The pattern of IRF is very familiar to teachers and students in traditional classrooms (Gibbons 2002, Liu & Zhu 2012, and Yanfen & Yuqin 2010). The IRF pattern may also be useful in the process of interaction in modern classes. It enables teachers to probe students' understanding in specific contexts (Gibbons 2015). Moreover, the IRF sequence can be found in almost all instances of exchange in the process of imparting knowledge, especially in linguistics teaching (Yanfen & Yuqin 2010). It is believed that most classroom interactions occur through IRF sequences (Sinclair & Brazil 1982).

According to Cullen (2002), the IRF sequence has survived the communicative revolution in pedagogy, even though it is a heavily teacher-centred classroom technique. The reason for this is that teachers use the IRF sequence instinctively because of its perceived value as a powerful methodology for transmitting and constructing knowledge (Cullen 2002). Seedhouse (1996) notes the IRF sequence exists outside the classroom as well, mainly in parent-child discourse, and that it frequently occurs in almost all published transcripts of parent-child conversations. The exchange structure is similar in both language classroom and home settings. The frequent occurrence of IRF in parent-child interactions and language classrooms can help to explain why even communicative theorists in linguistic pedagogy encourage its use in language teaching (Cullen 2002; Seedhouse 1996).

Teacher-student interactions are usually initiated by moves such as invitation, giving direction and asking questions. In a teacher invitation, the teacher might use commanding utterances and act as a leader by employing interrogative or imperative sentences to lead students to do something. The teacher could then direct the classroom to follow some instruction or authoritatively order them to perform some activity, which is known as giving direction. The third move, asking questions, refers to the process of asking students for information; it can be divided into two categories: display questions and referential questions. With display questions, the teacher often knows the answer and wants to check students' preparedness, whereas with referential questions the teacher is looking to involve students to generate interaction and does not necessarily know the answer (Yanfen & Yuqin 2010).

The response from the students to what is initiated by the teacher is known as the student's response. These responses take different forms depending on the student's fluency and the teacher's proficiency during the initiation process. Since the focus of this study is on teachers' feedback or F-moves, the element of student response will be only analysed in terms of its relevance to F-moves (Yanfen & Yuqin 2010).

The F-move is the last move of the IRF sequence. It functions to give students valid feedback depending on their responses. There are different types of follow-up moves or feedback from teachers to students: teachers' F-moves are associated with either correct responses or incorrect responses from students (Yanfen & Yuqin 2010). Cullen (2002) describes the F-move as an important part of the exchange sequence

because it distinguishes classroom discourse from other speech interactions that occur outside the classroom. Outside the classroom, the F-move is less frequent and unpredictable. In the language classroom, however, the F-move serves the pedagogical purpose of offering feedback to learners.

The feedback or follow-up to correct responses is given as either a comment or acknowledgement. Teachers' comments are usually intended to encourage students' correct responses. This might be achieved by praising or acknowledging the correct answer to encourage a student or to draw other students' attention to the correct response. These feedback comments can be brief or detailed (Yanfen & Yuqin 2010).

The main follow-ups that occur after incorrect responses are informing, prompting, encouraging, criticising or ignoring (Yanfen & Yuqin 2010). By informing, the teacher can help students to realise their error by negotiation of linguistic forms and meaning. This is considered a direct means of involving students by providing them with some examples or definitions. With regard to prompting, the teacher helps the students to produce correct answers in a number of different ways, for example, by asking for clarification, emphasising some parts or repeating questions to get students' attention. Another move is encouragement, which involves acts undertaken by teachers to make students feel inspired, confident, courageous and hopeful about participating in the next cycle of questions. By contrast, criticising is associated with wrong answers from students. For example, a teacher might comment critically on a wrong answer in order to draw students' attention to the mistake. The last follow-up move is ignoring, which happens when a teacher turns to the next student without commenting or paying attention to the first student (Yanfen & Yuqin 2010).

The sequence of IRF is highly significant for this study since its focus is on the language that teachers use in Saudi EFL classrooms, especially when teachers are following up on their students' responses. As evident from the above research, in the follow-up process in language classrooms teachers choose to give feedback primarily by informing, prompting, ignoring, criticising, acknowledging, commenting or encouraging students (Cullen 2002; Yanfen & Yuqin 2010). In this study, teachers' follow-up moves are examined in order to inform the development of Saudi Arabian students' dialogic skills and their ability to produce comprehensible output through TT.

### 3.1.3 Features and functions of teacher talk

TT is often simpler and shorter than other language utterances. In this section, previous research is examined to identify the characteristic features of TT, including different forms of TT and teachers' use of language for classroom management.

Many scholars regard TT as a special code (Ellis 1985; Richards & Schmidt 2010, Hermanto 2015; Shinde & Karekatti 2010; Ma 2006) or simplified language used by teachers to match their learners' competency. Lei (2009) and Ma (2006) have discussed the various features of TT. Ma (2006) identifies two features of TT — form and language. The first refers to formal aspects of talk such as speed, pause, repetition and modifications. The second refers to the function of TT in relation to classroom management and organisation, and includes the quality and quantity of the talk, questioning, teacher feedback, and interactional modification.

Mercer (2008b) discusses two further dimensions of TT: historical and dynamic. The historical aspect refers to things that are said based on the combined past experiences of both teachers and students, whether shared or individual, while the dynamic aspect involves things that emerge naturally during a conversation or interaction, rather than being planned. Information about the shared history of participants, the temporary development or direction of the interaction, and the trajectory of the event and its educational outcomes contribute to the manner in which TT evolves. Teachers can effectively use talk to sow seeds, which in turn can increase the students' understanding and learning.

TT is considered one of the core elements of teaching and much research has been devoted to this concept. TT fulfils different pedagogic functions in the classroom and its nature can vary accordingly. A teacher performs various acts, and an analysis of classroom discourse cannot be complete without integrating different authoritative and dialogic roles of the teacher in the classroom. Authoritative TT is traditionally considered as a monologue rather than a dialogue as it involves more of the teacher speaking and the students listening (Mercer & Littleton 2007), unless the teacher invites students to participate or respond. Along with maintaining the power and authority relationship between teacher and students, TT is also used for effective classroom management.

Dialogic TT incorporates dialogue and enhanced interaction between the teacher as the knowledge dispenser and the student as the seeker of information (Walsh & Sattes 2004). In the traditional ELT context in Saudi Arabia, the teacher is considered an absolute authority in both classroom management and subject matter. The teacher is the ultimate source of knowledge and learners are passive recipients of it, which is reflected in the lack of participation by learners in the classroom discourse (Gulnaz, Alfaqih & Mashhour, 2015). This indicates that Saudi teachers use authoritative classroom talk to negotiate their sociocultural identities as authority figures in ELT classrooms, thereby undermining student talk and the dialogic function of TT. The present study aims to investigate the impact on TT of the characteristics and attitudes of teachers, and it is therefore important to distinguish between different functions of TT in Saudi EFL classrooms.

The available research on the F-move in the IRF sequence has mainly focused on its functions of evaluation, feedback and follow-up and their influence on student learning. However, local classroom factors and contingencies are often excluded from this research. Lee (2007) investigated the impact of teaching practices and local exigencies on the nature and role of third-turn moves on students' learning. Based on analysis of 46 hours of EFL classroom recordings and observation of several teacher and student interactions, Lee (2007) identified various local contingencies that are embedded in the third turn of the IRF sequence. Contingent on second turn responses, teachers follow with praising or by directing students towards an interactional trajectory by re-initiating the three turn sequence through third turn; that is, as well as evaluating students' responses, the third turn is also used to move classroom discourse in specific directions. As well, language teachers may use the third turn to identify gaps in language learners' proficiency and competence by observing their responses or inability to respond. The third turn is also used as a classroom management technique, and the teacher's exercise of power and authority in the third turn directs students on what to do, what to say, and who should speak.

Dafouz and García (2008) argue that teacher repetition in what is known as 'low engagement' contexts is necessary to fulfil learners' needs for content understanding and making sure that the message is properly reinforced. Teacher repetition also provides learners with appropriate opportunities to become aware of target language features. This could not happen without teachers' comments and encouragement. The

most common teacher repetition pattern is that of social acts associated with pedagogical feedback. These can be seen in most classroom contexts, where they function to help learners improve their comprehensible output in a second language. As well, such feedback provokes more dialogic interactions between learners and teachers (Yanfen & Yuqin 2010). The current study, therefore, acknowledges the crucial role played by teachers' F-moves in improving students' dialogic skills.

The ways in which interactions between students and teachers proceed, which are influenced directly by TT, determine the success of teaching. Yanfen and Yuqin (2010) studied the different types of TT that were favoured by teachers and students in EFL classes. Teachers and students were found to prefer an invitation to initiate an interaction, although it was the least-used method. The most commonly utilised method was questioning, which was more favoured by teachers but least liked by students. Direction, on the other hand, was more preferred by students than by teachers. Teachers usually resorted to prompting when students were unable to answer. Students, on the other hand, wanted the teacher to simply give the answer rather than prompting them. Students who provided answers expected them to be commented on instead of just being approved. They felt this to be a form of encouragement.

Silver and Kogut (2009) investigated how the type and quantity of TT is related to classroom activities and pedagogy. They sought to understand the effectiveness of TT in encouraging students and also in promoting thinking and learning. Their findings on English language learners in Singapore are highly relevant to the present study since they showed that teachers can influence the practice that they are trying to introduce to students through their feedback, which in turn reflects their cultural and social values.

They reported the results of an evaluation of TT in relation to classroom activities for both whole-class and group or pair work settings. Their study was based on observing and recording 28 lessons over two terms at a primary English language classroom in Singapore. Seven teachers were observed in the same school for group and pair work activities. They then coded the TT and analysed the student participation patterns in different settings and activities. They found that TT dominated classroom interactions in all settings in line with class activities and that TT was mainly curriculum oriented due to the inherent pedagogical requirements for effective teaching. They concluded that teachers should consider the quality of curriculum-oriented TT

while still seeking to promote thinking in students. As the current study explores both the quantity and quality of TT in classroom activities and pedagogy in Saudi Arabia, Silver's and Kogut's work is significant. Teachers' F-moves that include quality talk can promote and extend dialogic skills.

Scott and Meiers (2009), along with others, have compiled a periodic digest series that is published by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). Even though these digests are not specifically directed to EFL, they provide an insightful collection of various studies about classroom dialogue that discuss different types and purposes of classroom talk and the learning effects of dialogic teaching. Most of the collected studies illustrate the powerful effect of dialogic teaching when it is implemented proficiently. Dialogic teaching is described as a learning process to which both the teacher and the student make substantial and significant contributions, thereby developing the student's thinking. Scott and Meiers (2009) propose that dialogic teaching is defined by collaboration, mutual support and lengthy interactions between the teacher and the student. They also acknowledge the significant influence of the teacher in assisting students' learning through objectively tailored TT.

TT should be skilfully integrated into the learning process in order to create an interactive learning environment. The above-mentioned studies have identified the importance of implementing a dialogic teaching model. Some researchers (e.g. Peppard 2010) advocate for a more student-centred classroom through the reduction of uncommunicative TT. Others (e.g. Santiago i Ribas 2010) emphasise the importance of acknowledging the high level of influence that TT has on students' dialogic skills and the whole teaching process, and highlight the value of improving the language used in TT to enhance classroom interactions. Although these studies are characterised by some limitations, such as small sample sizes, their findings reflect the general consensus, namely, the desirability of implementing a dialogic teaching model that emphasises TT quality over quantity.

Researchers suggest that the development of TT occurs as an element of micro-teaching (Sarigoz 2013; Ma 2006) . Ekiugbo Uche et al. (2013) describe micro-teaching as the process whereby small peer-led units of learners are instructed on specific skills for up to 20 minutes within a longer lesson. Micro-teaching is effective in developing

the skills of questioning, reinforcement, silence and non-verbal cues, illustration and giving examples.

From the discussion above, it is clear that research has established a positive connection between language learning and TT (Ma 2006). As a tool for implementing lesson plans and for attaining teaching goals, TT plays a vital role in language learning and acquisition. Edwards-Groves and Hoare (2012) cite a body of other relevant literature that documents the connection between TT and students' learning.

The current study draws on the available literature on the features and functions of TT, teachers' roles in the classroom and their corresponding talk, and TT in overall classroom management to explore the interactions between learners and teachers in Saudi Arabian EFL classrooms. The study examined the features of language that teachers use in the classroom to develop dialogic skills and improve the intelligible outputs of students in a specific cultural and social context. Its findings are expected to inform policymaking and contribute to the creation of an appropriate environment in which teachers can support the process of EFL learning through their talk and effective classroom discourse.

### 3.2 Conceptual Frameworks

There are different views on the influence of TT on the development of dialogical skills. This study draws on the sociocultural perspective of learning, which originated in Vygotsky's (1978) research into the central role of interaction in learning. Vygotsky's earlier work has been further developed by other researchers, such as Mercer (2003, 2008a, 2008b), Gibbons (2002, 2009, 2015), Cullen (2002), Alexander (2005b, 2005c and 2017), and Kumaravadivelu (1994, 2003). In this section, ideas relevant to the improvement of dialogic skills and the language of teachers during teacher-student interactions in school settings are discussed. There is particular focus on the concepts and approaches that informed the framework of the present study.

#### 3.2.1 Sociocultural perspective – Vygotskian theory

According to Vygotsky's (1978) theory of learning, cognition and modified behaviour are products of social interaction, while language is a social phenomenon that develops via social interactions. Vygotsky (1978) suggested that language acquisition involves not only the exposure of the individual to the target language but, more

importantly, is an interdependent process of development between thought and language. Social interaction therefore plays a vital role in language development.

He also observed that language learning requires the learner to acquire the mental tools of the language culture. The process of language learning involves not only information acquisition, but also social and cultural growth and steered interactions that lead to the conversion of the learned language into the learner's thoughts through internalisation. This theory thus advocates for steered participation in language learning (Scott & Meiers 2009 ). In other words, the practical application of Vygotsky's theory ensures that the learner acquires sufficient skills and understandable language to enable them to apply, transform and, eventually, make the learned language a part of their cognition.

Another important element of Vygotsky's framework is the role of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) as the educational basis for language learning. The ZPD refers to the cognitive gap between what a child or learner can do alone and the skills he or she can master when joining with others more expert than themselves. From Vygotsky's (1978) perspective, when working through the ZPD, learners should be able to achieve more through coordination with others than they can alone. Therefore, the development of the process of cognition should be considered the result of cognitional coordination with others. For example, learners initiate engagement when they share their thinking with others through external social talk or dialogue; this might be associated with seeking to solve some problem during participation in daily activities (Gibbons 2015).

Vygotsky also assumed that the external talk that learners are exposed to is progressively changed into an internal resource for the learner's individual thinking. Through what he called inner speech, the child or learner would gradually develop his or her own dialogue without help from external talk. This sort of learning helps learners not just to master certain forms of knowledge, but also to produce that knowledge in different contexts. Thus, during this process, students might learn different ways of using language (Gibbons 2015).

The sociocultural perspective informs this research, since it considers foreign language learners from two perspectives: learning a different language, and learning to produce the language in other social contexts (for example, outside the classroom). If

we agree with the assumption that external talk is the main resource for the development of interaction and thinking, then we should also consider the nature and the kinds of talk that students hear, as this process most effectively integrates the learning of language.

In addition, SL/FL learners' achievements often depend on the linguistic and social frameworks in which the process of learning takes place and within which the learning of language is embedded. Therefore, what Saudi EFL teachers decide to do in their classes, as well as the kinds of feedback they provide, are considered crucial in this study due to their impact on developing students' dialogic skills. The sociocultural perspective is essential because it provides a contextualising framework for analysing TT in Saudi EFL classrooms.

#### 3.2.1.1 Dialogic pedagogy

According to Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory of children's cognitive development, sociocultural interactions are important in the acquisition of higher mental functions such as language, and dialogue is a critical element in language learning. Dialogue offers natural opportunities and instances for learners to learn and practise language. The term 'dialogic teaching' has appeared with increasing frequency in the pedagogic research literature over the past two decades (Abbey 2005; Alexander 2017, 2010; Lyle 2008). The findings from research on dialogic teaching shed light on the role of classroom dialogue in learners' language acquisition, and are therefore pertinent to the present investigation of TT in EFL classrooms. This section discusses dialogic pedagogy, its features, and its significance in language learning, drawing on the work of Robin Alexander.

There are various approaches to describing and analysing classroom talk from the perspective of dialogic talk or academic talk. The term 'dialogic talk' is an umbrella term referring to a range of approaches that make the connection between talk and learning. Mercer and Hodgkinson (2008) and Littleton and Mercer (2013) use the term 'exploratory talk', which differs from the classroom talk as it explores the idea or subject in a more sustained way than do closed-ended questions and brief responses. From research on classrooms in the United States, Resnick et al. (2010, 2018) developed the concept of 'accountable talk', which builds on the responsibility associated with classroom talk. In accountable talk, participants listen to each other to learn from each other's ideas and knowledge. Nystrand's (1997) concept of

'dialogically organised instruction' also reflects the features of dialogic teaching. Alexander's work on dialogic teaching integrated these constructs and approaches. Alexander explored how teachers can facilitate dialogic learning environments. Although his work did not focus specifically on language learning, his ideas have been applied to the language learning context in Australia by a number of literacy educators working in partnership with teachers (see) (Jones, Simpson & Thwaite 2018).

Calling for better quality talk in the classroom, Alexander (2017) refers to the essential principles of dialogic teaching as collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative and purposeful. In dialogic teaching, all classroom participants - that is, teachers and students - collaborate to achieve learning goals (collective); both teachers and students share ideas and listen to each other's perspectives (reciprocal); and learners feel welcome to participate and support each other in reaching mutual understanding (supportive). Teachers and students then build on each other's ideas, shaping them into coherent classroom ideas (cumulative) and teachers plan and use dialogue to facilitate learning (purposeful). Alexander's work is discussed in detail in a later section.

For classroom talk to be effective for learning, it should include the features of dialogic teaching. Even though every type of classroom talk provides learning, the traditional classroom talk does not include these features of dialogic teaching and therefore does not provide the optimum productive context for learning. In the traditional classroom, teachers dominate and lead the talk, with low levels of participation from students. Questions with predetermined correct answers make up most of the students' talk, followed by brief and uninformative feedback, which is not conducive for learning. In the traditional classroom setting, there is no time for students to reflect, and opportunities for students' participation are restricted. By contrast, dialogic teaching aims at maximising the productivity of classroom talk in learning. Instead of relying on closed-ended questions and the teacher taking up most of the talk time, it fosters a collaborative environment with authentic questions and classroom dialogue that results in higher order thinking and reflection, which translates into learning.

In the traditional classroom, teachers are considered the ultimate authority, as reflected in their authoritative talk. Authoritative talk is characteristic of monologic pedagogy in contrast to dialogic pedagogy, which involves teachers using talk to

transfer their knowledge and understanding to students. The teacher closely controls and monitors the classroom talk and opportunities for dialogue between teacher and students and for student-student interactions are few and far between. In dialogic pedagogy, there is interplay between authoritative talk and dialogic talk. The aim of TT itself is not to transfer knowledge but to encourage students to reflect, learn and share their knowledge. As this aspect of classroom management cannot be ignored, dialogic pedagogy is inclusive of both authoritative talk and dialogic talk, thereby moving all the participants together towards achieving their learning goals. Despite the fact that dialogic teaching urges students towards higher order thinking and participation, teachers and their pedagogies remain at the heart of it. Moving towards dialogic pedagogy is not possible without facilitative, supportive and insightful TT.

Based on these concepts, Alexander (2017) identified five principles of classroom talk, as mentioned above, and also developed a typology of enriching forms of classroom talk: interactive talk, everyday talk, learning talk and teaching talk. Interactive talk occurs in the setting of a whole class and takes different forms, including teacher-student and student-student interaction. Everyday talk helps teachers accomplish a range of everyday functions, including administrative work, interrogation and exposition. Learning talk and teaching talk involve interaction and activities that support learning, collaboration and deep thinking.

Jones, Simpson and Thwaite (2018) successfully applied Alexander's framework to an analysis of talk in an Australian classroom setting by a number of literacy educators whom collaborating with teachers. They do not, however, relate explicitly dialogic teaching to intersubjectivity and TT. Alexander's work is neither exclusively related to language classrooms nor does it result from detailed analyses of classroom talk. The focus is on the interconnection between pedagogy and culture, especially dialogic pedagogy, which emphasises the teachers' role as facilitator and authority figure and the interplay of these in the classroom.

#### 3.2.1.2 Discourse analysis

McCarthy (1991) defines discourse analysis (DA) as the study and analysis of relationships that exist between contexts and language, and how such relationships may be used. In the spoken language context, DA examines how sentences might be formed out of meaningful social contexts – from simple conversation to high level discussions (Yoshida 2008). As such, DA has been recognised as a useful tool with which to

evaluate the language of the classroom and discover new approaches to the teaching of language (Hatch 1992).

Usually, DA and applied linguistics take into consideration factors such as context and cultural influences. From this perspective, EFL teachers might influence the interaction by controlling or manipulating the context, which could be achieved either explicitly or implicitly through interactional sequences. The evaluation output and relationships between teacher and students in the classroom might also be affected. Therefore, the language that teachers use in EFL classrooms can be analysed and examined using DA.

Cullen's (2002) framework as referred to the work of Sinclair and Couthard (1975) regarding teachers' talk in classroom identifies various aspects and types of F-moves in TT. These highlight different roles of interaction in F-moves, such as discoursal and evaluative roles. Each role within Cullen's framework supports the process of learning in different ways. This research draws on Cullen's framework to analyse the F-moves that teachers perform in Saudi EFL classrooms. The framework was used to analyse some features of the language used by EFL teachers, such as reformulation, elaboration, comment, repetition and responsiveness. The analysis also considered aspects of interaction in EFL classes, such as response to meaning, slowing down the dialogue, allowing enough time to respond, helping students to explain their reasoning, and using message abundance in order to stretch learners' language (Gibbons 2015).

In the Saudi EFL context, the discourse structure was expected to be limited because teachers usually initiate questions and students rarely respond (Alrabai 2016). As previously mentioned, the classroom is often the only opportunity for learners to use the language. There is also a lack of discourse naturalism in terms of English proficiency and students' fluency.

The study therefore attempts to understand particularities of TT as implemented in Saudi EFL classroom, which contribute to the development of learners' L2 skills. In particular, Cullen's (2002) framework was integrated to examine teachers' F-moves in Saudi EFL classrooms.

### 3.2.1.3 Scaffolding Theory

Scaffolding is a pedagogical practice based on neo-Vygotskian principles that has been investigated in general education and in second language learning (Gibbons 2002; Hammond & Gibbons 2005a, 2005b; Mercer 1994; Thomsen 2003). This section explores the available literature on scaffolding and the role of teachers as knowledgeable others in EFL classrooms in improving learners' language.

Gibbons (2002) asserts that good teachers use scaffolding to prepare students for success and protect them from failure. For Mercer (1994, p. 96), scaffolding in education is a 'kind and quality of cognitive support that an adult can provide for child's learning – a form of "vicarious consciousness" that anticipates the child's own internalization of mental function'. He explains that the concept of scaffolding relates to Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as it helps to explain the importance of effective teacher intervention in students' learning. Scaffolding is an intuitive quality for teachers as it resonates with the core of teaching and effective teaching. Gibbons' (2003) research evaluated the importance of teacher-student talk in the content-based classroom from the perspective of mediation (social interaction), drawing on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and the construct of mode continuum from Halliday's (1991) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). It combined the approaches of SFL and ZPD to highlight the influence of TT on students' language learning inside the EFL classroom and showed that teachers facilitate learning through various means, including helping students to reformulate a response, providing subtle feedback, and enabling learners to produce language through re-contextualising personal knowledge (Hammond & Gibbons 2005a).

In language learning, a knowledgeable participant can use speech to create a conducive learning environment through social interactions or, more simply, talk, to support learners in acquiring higher levels of knowledge and competence in a foreign language (Thomsen 2003). In the majority of the research on scaffolding, the teacher emerges as the 'knowledge participant'; there is little available literature on peer-peer scaffolding. One of the reasons for the lack of research on peer-peer scaffolding, according to Kayi-Aydar (2013), is that there are power struggles and dominance challenges in student-led discussions. Therefore, the teacher becomes the more proficient and knowledgeable participant in classroom discourse, with the ability to initiate and manage whole-classroom discussions. A teacher is an authority, a knower

who disseminates knowledge to the learner, and the teacher's choice of language plays an important role in establishing and constructing teacher authority in the classroom (Wenren 2014).

The present study drew on the construct of scaffolding to analyse the use of TT in Saudi Arabian classrooms as a means of providing learners with access to social and cultural learning of language. It addressed the question: Do teachers' attitudes/characteristics, such as language proficiency, teaching experience and education, shape the way they manage classroom discourse and create opportunities for learning and internalisation of language? The scaffolding framework was also a useful tool to address other parts of the research that related to how TT acts as an enabler of culturally embedded language and target language learning in classroom discourse.

#### 3.2.1.4 Supportive teacher talk – Cullen's F-move model

One important component of both the sociocultural theory of language learning and scaffolding is the role of the teacher as the knowledgeable participant in classroom communication, what Vygotsky (1978) calls the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO). From the perspective of Vygotsky's theory, the MKO's tool is TT. Interactions between the teacher and the learner are most important in developing the learner's language skills, and this highlights the role played by TT (Lei 2009). Walsh (2002) reaffirms the role of TT in language acquisition: teachers' choice and use of language obstruct or construct students' learning and participation in the classroom. Johnson (1995, cited in Walsh 2002) suggests that teachers' use of language allows them to control what goes in their classroom.

Another of this study's research questions (Research Question 1A) concerns the nature of TT, focusing on the follow-up move in the IRF sequence of TT and its role in students' language learning and dialogic skills. Cullen's (2002) theory of the role of F-moves in supportive TT is highly relevant in this context. Essentially, the Feedback F-move distinguishes TT from all other discoursal language contexts. Cullen (2002) emphasises that the F-move has an evaluative as well as discoursal function in the IRF sequence, and that it is an inevitable part of teacher-initiated classroom talk. Along with providing students with negative or positive feedback to their responses, the teacher may incorporate students' responses in classroom discourse to develop a dialogue between teacher and students (Mercer 1995).

Cullen's F-move framework guided the analysis of the particularities of TT in the current study to understand and interpret the effectiveness of TT in the Saudi Arabian secondary school context. According to Cullen's (2002) findings, there are four types of effective TT: F-move reformulation; F-move elaboration; F-move comment; and F-move repetition. The first three specifically relate to the discoursal function of the F-move, while repetition occurs across both discoursal and evaluative functions. Each of these types is described in the following sub-sections.

*Reformulation*. Reformulation is used by teachers in EFL classrooms to demonstrate correct use of language while maintaining classroom discourse (Cullen 2002). In reformulation, the teacher provides evaluative feedback by reforming or correcting a student's response without clearly stating whether the response is right or wrong. According to Agbatogun (2011), reformulation is a recasting of the wrong response/utterance provided by a student in a form more appropriate to the target language without changing its meaning. In a learner-centred classroom, a strategy such as reformulation can help to build learners' confidence in using a foreign language for communication and mutual interaction. It helps to promote learners' engagement in tasks that require negotiation of meaning to complete (Lee & Ng 2009). Teachers intentionally use reformulation to point out students' mistakes and negotiate meaning (Agbatogun 2011). The recasting and reformulation of learners' responses do not require self-repair or peer-repair; instead the teacher, as MKO, presents the more target-like form (Panova & Lyster 2002).

*Elaboration.* Elaboration, or clarifying a response by adding to it, can make students think about the target language and content, enabling correct language acquisition (Haneda 2005). Teachers in EFL classrooms use elaboration to reformulate students' responses and embellish them in some way to enhance understanding (Cullen 2002). F-move elaboration can help to clarify meaning in learner talk in the classroom discourse through adding to the reformulated response (Islam 2017). Elaboration, as a follow-up strategy in the IRF sequence, helps to reduce students' reticence and improves their confidence to use the target language in their interactions (Lee & Ng 2009).

*Comment.* In this follow-up move, teachers add a personal comment to the students' responses, usually after repeating it (repetition). Comment is different from elaboration as the teacher does not embellish or clarify a student's response but adds a

personal and often spontaneous comment. 'Comment' does not have to be target-like, but it is natural, spontaneous and often humorous, and preserves the natural and communicative discourse in the classroom (Cullen 2002; Francis & Hunston 1992). Yanfen and Yuqin (2010) define comment as words of encouragement or criticism that teachers use in response to students' correct and incorrect answers. Even when their responses are correct, students prefer comments to simple encouragement.

*Repetition.* As the term suggests, repetition involves the teacher repeating students' expressed ideas or responses using the same or different words. Teachers use repetition in several ways, including as acknowledgement, as corrective feedback, as criticism or, more specifically, as 'echoing'. Repetition is also used to direct other students' attention towards a correct or target-like response. Repetition plays both discoursal and evaluative roles as a follow-up function, although it was previously considered as a feature of non-interactive or non-discoursal TT (Cullen 2002). Repetition is a pedagogical strategy with strong foundations in ESL/EFL teaching and in education generally. Repetition and reinforcement help in language learning and enhance learners' language acquisition. Teachers also use repetition to promote participation by all students in classroom dialogue (Jones & Lock 2011). Teacher's use of repetition in response to a student's incorrect response can lead students to clarify or reformulate their responses, thereby promoting self-repair (Yanfen & Yuqin 2010). According to Duff (2000), repetition gives learners more access to forms of language and helps to develop automaticity in learners' language use.

#### 3.2.1.5 Dialogic teaching

Any discussion of classroom discourse is incomplete without consideration of dialogic teaching. As mentioned in the previous section on the functions and features of TT, teachers use language for a variety of purposes in classrooms, such as demonstrating authority, buoying communication, and facilitating learning. Teachers actively think, form and adapt their language use according to these roles. Based on its importance, dialogic teaching has become a research focus in the past two decades, with Robin Alexander's work making the most significant contribution.

Alexander examined dialogic talk extensively in his books *Culture and Pedagogy* (2001) and *Towards Dialogic Teaching* (2017). The major objective of his studies was to present an evidence-based case to practitioners for using dialogic

approaches in classroom talk and scaffolded dialogue exchange. He defines dialogic teaching as harnessing the power of talk to stimulate and improve students' skills and learning. Talk is one of the most pervasive and powerful tools in human development and learning. It plays a mediating role between thought and cultural spaces, thereby preparing learners to become independent thinkers and citizens. Therefore, dialogic teaching is not like other talk or informal interaction in the classroom. It is purposive and carefully directed to pedagogical goals that create learning opportunities for the novice. This section of the literature review elaborates dialogic pedagogy with a focus on Alexander's work and discusses other theorists on the periphery of the concept. According to Alexander, whole class direct instruction appears to be the most dominant form of discourse, but there are instances when the instructor is unable to construct an exchange of dialogue. In such cases, scaffolded dialogue is employed to bring about the development of general understanding via questioning that is structured and organised according to concepts and principles (Bruner1978; Wood, Bruner & Ross 1976; Fisher 2011b).

Alexander (2004) criticises the pedagogical basis of whole class interactive teaching because, he argues, it supports a cultural model of competitive effort to call for attention through a series of quick, short, undeveloped responses to questions. He questions the notion of speaking and listening and introduces the dialogic teaching model to take its place. As previously noted, this model is described as collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative and purposeful. Alexander argues that dialogic teaching should promote 'thinking aloud' activities to enable students to develop their ideas and to encourage extended interactions.

Alexander (2017) highlights the relationships between dialogic teaching, reciprocal teaching and talk rules in the development of guiding principles for respecting talk from all parties. He explains that dialogic talk does not include the general learning forms of drilling by rote, knowledge accumulation by recitation, or teaching instruction/exposition; rather, it encapsulates discussion in the form of information sharing, problem solving and dialogue to achieve understanding via structured and cumulative questioning. It is also important to make talk the key educational goal, as oral competence leads to literate competence. He emphasises that dialogic teaching is no panacea; claiming too much for an idea is dangerous, arrogant and foolhardy, no matter what evidence underpins it. He cautions against the outcomes,

for instance, of adopting whole class interactive teaching as pedagogy without exploring its theoretical roots.

From his comparative study of Russian classrooms, Alexander (2001) found that pedagogical talk was different when only a few children were expected to contribute orally. In other words, rather than it being a fast, competitive guessing game involving the whole class, only a few children were allowed to participate in an organised sequence of sustained interactions. In the context of this collective learning ethos, the speakers had to play the role of representatives, not individuals, and they spoke to their peers as well as to their teacher. This passing up of gamesmanship for probing thoughts may reflect a significantly robust learning opportunity rather than a reframing of the opinion of the teacher.

It is evident from the empirical classroom literature over the past three decades that discourse patterns can be described as monologic, controlling and controlled by the teacher. Current studies, by contrast, call for maximising active interaction and promoting inter-subjective understanding, which will require a significant transformation in the practical classroom.

In a related study, Smith and Higgins (2006) propose that the locus of attention should be shifted from the teacher's questions to the pupil's responses. This is consistent with Alexander's (2008, 2005a, 2005c) construct of an emerging pedagogy of talk that can help to shape and develop children's engagement with learning and comprehending. They advise teachers to make use of 'wait time' and different open-ended questions to promote active interaction. This approach is grounded in a social constructivist perspective, whereby students talk in order to speculate, form hypotheses, and use reasoning and evaluation. Interactive teaching in this context generates exploratory talk (Mercer 2000) for the construction of knowledge and sharing of ideas and understanding.

Smith and Higgins (2006) used their findings to identify a gap in previous research in relation to the use of open questions in literacy and numeracy lessons. They conclude that the constructs of open- and closed-ended questions should be defined in relation to the teacher's intent in asking the question. According to Edwards and Westgate (1994), closed questions are those questions that are asked to elicit what the questioner knows, while Galton et al. (1999) argue that the definition should be based

on the reaction to the answer, as opposed to the intent of the teacher. Smith's and Higgins' approach is consistent with that of Nassaji and Wells (2000), who propose that language development is promoted if the teacher steers clear of any evaluative reaction to the follow-up move in an IRF exchange, and asks for justifications and counter-arguments. Accordingly, Smith and Higgins (2006) conclude that the feedback move is related to the teacher's intent and his or her conceptualisation of the role of talk as a learning tool. They also highlight the problem of unexpected pupil reactions that take teachers beyond their pre-existing intentions for the curriculum and which may be irrelevant to the subject knowledge. According to Alexander (1992), the way in which responses are received says less about their quality, and more about the manner in which the teacher steers the discussion back to the pre-planned agenda. As such, open questions may not be as open as generally assumed.

It is important for teachers to encourage pupils to ask and respond to questions in order to go beyond the recitation script. This may also lead to directing interaction and reviewing each other's contributions. Teachers should model reciprocal engagement by adding backchannel moves when discussing subjects with students to convey their interest in the topic – a proposal supported by Alexander (1991, 2001, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2017) and Dillon (1994). In the former's typology of three key elements that relate to demands on learners (Alexander et al., 1991), conceptual knowledge includes discourse knowledge, which refers to the ability to relay understanding to another. According to the authors, this is achieved via teaching about language and its uses, despite its apparent relationship to syntax and rhetoric rather than the development of conceptual understanding. In this regard, Dillon (1994) suggests that, rather than asking questions, making statements that call for longer and complex answers can become an instrument for the development of dialogic pedagogy.

Alexander's cross-cultural and cross-national research on dialogic pedagogy highlights the importance of both quality and quantity of teacher talk in learning. The present study draws on the literature on dialogic pedagogy to distinguish dialogic teaching practices from ordinary talk in the classroom. Alexander's framework helps to identify teacher talk that promotes learners' participation and creates sustained opportunities for learning and scaffolding their knowledge. The current study also draws on Alexander's dialogic pedagogy to investigate the pedagogical and cultural

gaps among language learners in Saudi Arabia and how dialogic teaching can be promoted in classroom discourse.

#### 3.2.1.6 Dimensions of teaching practice: Kumaravadivelu's macro strategies

In his analysis of the state of L2 teaching, Kumaravadivelu (1994) discussed the similarities and differences between theory and practice, drawing on the concept of the 'postmethod condition'. He describes the postmethod condition as an alternative of method, not an alternative method, which can be used to design a pragmatic approach to L2 teaching and learning. In order to integrate theory with practice, he argues, teachers need to be empowered with the relevant knowledge and skills to enable them to apply theory to practice in their L2 teaching and classroom strategies. Kumaravadivelu seeks to revolutionise the role of teachers in L2 teaching and minimise the differences between what theorists expound and what teachers actualise in practice.

To help teachers become strategic thinkers and strategic practitioners, he developed a framework that brings together a range of linguistic fields relevant to L2 teacher education, including psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, second language acquisition, and critical pedagogy. This framework includes the 10 macro strategies outlined in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Kumaravadivelu's (1994) 10 Macro Strategies

| Macro Strategy | | Explanation |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Negotiated interaction facilitation | This encourages turn taking as learners are involved in interactional activities such as modification, clarification and requisition of input. Interactions do not break down as learners continue to interact with peers. |
| 2 | Promoting learners' autonomy | Every student needs the opportunity to process and understand the language in a different way. Various strategies can be used to motivate a students' heuristic sense, providing them with the necessary materials for individual-directed learning and an ideal environment for implicit learning. |
| 3 | Raising cultural awareness | Learners respect and empathy for the native speaker is developed through awareness of the target culture. Understanding of the socio-cultural context will make learning more achievable and manageable. |
| 4 | Maximising learning opportunities | Learning should be a social activity in which both learners and teachers are the facilitators and creators. Both students and teachers become partners in the activity when a collaborative and interactive learning process is encouraged. |
| 5 | Minimising perceptual mismatches | Any misalignment between teachers' intention and learners' interpretations needs to be recognised in order to achieve learning. Specifically, teachers should be fully aware of different types of mismatches that may occur with learners because they can negatively affect learners' understanding. |
| 6 | Activating intuitive heuristics | This involves creating a rich linguistic environment that stimulates learners' intuitive problem-solving insights and encourages them to implicitly understand new input. |
| 7 | Fostering language awareness (LA) | LA is promoted by focusing on learners' oriented, cyclical and holistic potential to acquire understanding, general principles and operational experience, instead of simply relying on memorisation. |
| 8 | Contextualising linguistic input | Language features cannot be understood in isolation, but must be contextually integrated in order to achieve successful learning. |
| 9 | Integrating language skills | All language skills (productive and receptive) should be connected in order to optimise language learning. Learners seem to use parallel integration for their skills in the classroom, which supports the claim that all language skills are interrelated and so cannot be usefully taught separately from each other. |
| 10 | Ensuring social relevance | Teachers should connect what learners learn in the classroom with their social, political and educational life in order to achieve effective results. |

Source: Kumaravadivelu (1994, pp. 33-42, 373-378)

Kamaravadivelu's (2003) work offers a broad perspective on the dimensions of teaching and so goes beyond simple views that are based on methodology. His contribution potentially prompts the practitioner to act independently of the conceptual limits of methodology and, with new understanding, ability and attitude, to arrive 'at a systematic, coherent, and relevant theory of practice' (p. 40). He provides a way of analysing the relationships between different aspects of teaching, social contexts, students, teachers, and how teachers develop their own understanding and ideas about the dimensions of teaching. In the context of this research, Kumaravadivelu's (1994, 2003) work provides a new framework of thinking about what teachers do and can do in the classroom to inform the development of practical recommendations that can be implemented in Saudi Arabian L2 classrooms.

The theoretical tools used in the present study were based on the social cultural learning theories developed by Vygotsky (1978) and Cullen's (2002) F-move framework. Of the ten macro strategies proposed by Kumaravadivelu (1994, 2003), four were found to be relevant to this study: negotiated interaction, promoting the learner's autonomy, cultural awareness, and maximising learning opportunities. These strategies are elaborated in the following sections.

1. *Facilitating negotiated interaction*

Negotiated interaction refers to meaningful student-student and student-teacher interactions in the classroom through which the students are able to initiate and manage the talk, not simply react to it. In other words, students are actively involved in the classroom discourse and not merely passive members (Kumaravadivelu 1994). This means that classroom interactions accelerate learners' understanding and production of language in L2 classrooms. The facilitation of negotiated interaction can be viewed as a macro strategy for 'scaffolding' or language learning as a function of ZPD, which is part of the theoretical framework of this study. Much of the research referred to in this review draws on Halliday's (1985) construct of metafunction in Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which locates context at the centre of language teaching and learning. Halliday (1985) identified three types of interaction: interpersonal, ideational and textual. Interaction as an interpersonal activity refers to language used to encourage communication among participants.

Kumaravadivelu (2006) subsequently identified specific macro strategies that are effective in facilitating negotiated interaction. These macro strategies are intended to provide more opportunities for students to extend their knowledge of linguistic and dialogical capabilities as well as share their different experiences. Birjandi and Hashamdar (2014) conducted a study to design context-based micro strategies based on suggestions from teachers for post-method language teaching in Iranian EFL classrooms. Since some of these micro strategies were not applicable in that particular context, EFL teachers were asked to come up with appropriate strategies. Birjandi and Hashamdar (2014) proposed some other micro strategies to involve students more actively in classroom interactions, namely, negotiating, free-talk and critical thinking. Their research is relevant to the present study given the similarities in EFL environment, conservatism and sociocultural characteristics between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

In regard to negotiating, the key objective is to encourage negotiated interaction via facilitated talk and topic management among learners, which can be a cooperative activity. Birjandi and Hashamdar (2014) note that teachers can apply this strategy in their classrooms in different ways. They can allow students to practise through role play activities, such as salesman and customers or doctor and patients. By acting out such negotiated situations, students not only apply language to the roles but also use bargaining techniques. This activity maintains negotiated interaction among students.

The other micro-strategy is to allow students to debate or discuss a topic of their choice or one nominated by their teacher. The teacher divides the students into two or more groups and seeks to manage the classroom discussion by encouraging the students to talk about the topic. This need not be a daily activity but could be adopted at least once a week, as it encourages and stimulates learners to talk and participate during the classroom interaction.

Critical thinking also encourages students to talk and negotiate during classroom interaction. Teachers need to give students an opportunity to think and discover for themselves instead of directly providing them with the answer. The strategy can be used with many kinds of learning processes or interactive scenarios. It is likely to be one of the most beneficial micro strategies for learning in the Saudi context, where learners are used to being dependent on their teacher and fail to develop their critical thinking skills. In other words, they wait for the teacher to feed them instead of feeding themselves.

Teachers' questions are one of the most important strategies for developing students' critical thinking and negotiated interaction skills. Saudi classrooms follow the IRF sequence exchange and students do not initiate classroom talk themselves unless their teacher initiates classroom speech by asking questions. Here teachers need to think about the sort of questions that they intend to ask of their students and their relevance to the target learning mission.

In terms of negotiated interaction, Kumaravadivelu (2003) advises teachers to promote question-answer sessions in EFL classrooms. Most EFL teachers, however, rarely ask referential or open-ended questions (Brock 1986; Qashoa 2013). Why should teachers ask referential questions? Research shows that referential questions lead to increased learner participation in class (Al-Muaini 2006). It is known that Saudi classrooms are teacher-centred and, therefore, most EFL teachers ask questions that the students simply respond to. Furthermore, Saudi EFL teachers tend to use display questions that hinder negotiated interaction. Display questions may not motivate students to engage in class, but instead force them to focus on the instructor's words (Ahmad 2014).

2. *Promoting learner's autonomy*

It is important to help students learn how to learn (Tian 2014). In other words, students should be taught how to direct their own learning process and monitor themselves. Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) conducted an extensive study of teachers' perceptions and practices as enablers of learner autonomy in EFL/ESL contexts. The findings showed that teachers, through their use of language in the classroom, can encourage or hinder learner autonomy. However, there is a gap between the extent to which teachers consider learner's autonomy to be desirable and their beliefs about the feasibility of involving learners in classroom discourse. Drawing on relevant literature, Kumaravadivelu (1994, 2012) suggests that there are two connected forms of autonomy, social and academic autonomy, and a third form referred to as liberatory autonomy.

Social autonomy tends to be a more interpersonal action and is closely linked to the learners' willingness and capabilities (Kumaravadivelu 1994). It works efficiently to support the individual autonomy of learners and also enables collaboration among learners. According to Broady and Kenning (1996), skills that implement students' interaction with others are among the strategies and actions associated with improving learning management and language awareness. These skills can improve their social autonomy in different ways. For example, students may collaborate with other students to form groups. They can divide

tasks, manage group activities and share the responsibility for completing the assigned project. In this activity, learners can develop at least two important skills: they acquire a sense of responsibility for their peers, and develop awareness and understanding of classmates whose capabilities may be greater or less than their own.

Academic autonomy is more closely related to the learning process than social autonomy. Only when students are able and willing to monitor and direct their own learning process will they become autonomous learners (Holec 1988). Benson (2013) discusses the convergence and divergence models of autonomy, that is, autonomy achieved through open and other-directed curriculum and autonomy developed through class-management and classroom discourse strategies.

Academic autonomy plays a significant role in learning in the classroom. It helps students to be more active and helps teachers to recognise students' difficulties and their individual differences (Chamot et al. 1999; Oxford 1990; Reid 1998). Kumaravadivelu (1994) observed that learning strategies and styles provide an opportunity for students to maximise and self-direct their learning process. He advocates the development of learner autonomy and the idea that post-method learners are basically autonomous learners. The development of learner autonomy contributes to more effective classroom management, and enhances teachers' and learners' ability to evaluate learning and identify learning constraints.

While social and academic forms of autonomy are beneficial in helping students to recognise their inherent learning abilities, Kumaravadivelu (1994) argued that what he called liberatory autonomy is necessary for autonomous learners to attain the core of post-method autonomy. If social autonomy motivates students to be cooperative learners and academic autonomy allows students to be active and dynamic learners, then liberatory autonomy enables them to become serious thinkers. Therefore, liberatory autonomy has a wider remit than those of these other two forms of autonomy. It helps students to recognise the socio-political constraints that influence their position and furnishes them with the necessary rational methods to overcome those constraints.

Language pedagogy establishes numerous opportunities for classroom activities relevant to liberatory autonomy. In language classrooms, meaningful liberatory autonomy can be promoted by teachers in various ways, such as stimulating students to demonstrate their assumptions about an issue or to write diaries and journals about a particular issue. This kind of autonomous learning allows students to understand, explore, reflect, observe and engage in

the social structuring of language; that is, to recognise how it is related to the social world around them. Students can also go beyond classroom opportunities by accessing the internet and online sources and bring their own topics and suggestions for discussion.

According to Kumaravadivelu (1994), these three forms of autonomy can be easily adapted to different teaching and learning contexts to address the targeted aims, activities and institutional requirements. It can improve students' academic capabilities, mental competencies and social awareness and develop the attitudes they need to overcome the challenges they might encounter either outside or inside their classroom. Again, this requires that students be helped to learn how to be autonomous learners (Chen 2014). The current study explores classroom discourse and TT with specific reference to creating learning opportunities in which students can autonomously and collaboratively learn and produce language. Hence these concepts of and strategies for student autonomy are highly pertinent to understanding the state of student autonomy in language classrooms in Saudi Arabia.

In the Saudi context, teachers transmit knowledge throughout the class and there is little opportunity for autonomous learning by students (Ahmad 2014). Learners are provided with deductive rather than inductive explanations as the teachers talk continuously (Fareh 2010). Self-discovery activities are particularly challenging for learners according to some researchers who argue that this is as a result of overdependence on teacher guidance (Fareh 2010; Liton 2012). Consequently, students suffer from weak dialogic skills and inadequate comprehensible outputs.

*3. Cultural awareness*

The third macro strategy, raising cultural awareness, draws attention to the learners' cultural background and previous knowledge and how these may by employed to promote students' classroom participation and engage them in classroom talk (Chen 2014). Kumaravadivelu (1994) asserts that promoting awareness of the target language's culture is crucial in any L2 language teaching context. He suggests that students and teachers of L2 should understand as much as they can about the values, beliefs and behaviours of native speakers of the target language.

A number of researchers have highlighted the importance of relating language teaching to students' lifestyles (Cook 2016; Norton & Toohey 2011; Jabeen & Shah 2011). EFL teachers are expected to help learners gain a variety of communication skills and support

their cross-cultural understanding, while students are expected to use the target language in a culturally appropriate and consistent manner.

Stern (1992) argues that the teaching of culture should proceed in parallel to the teaching of language. In order to attain cultural proficiency, the process of language teaching should be preceded and driven by the teaching of culture.

Although L2 teachers are expected to provide an appropriate socio-cultural environment to improve students' language proficiencies and extend their cross-cultural understanding, they are also required to understand the culturally appropriate use of the target language in order to promote learners' input and output skills. (Kramsch 2013; Risager 2007).

With regard to raising cultural awareness in Saudi EFL classrooms, Saudi language teachers need to have clear goals and integrate specific activities for promoting intercultural competency in classrooms. Turkan and Çelik (2007) set out a suggested lesson plan for integrating culture into the language classroom to enhance students' understanding of the language in its cultural context. One of the activities they suggest is 'role playing for Christmas shopping', which is intended to familiarise learners with the vocabulary associated with Christmas and its practical use in shopping. A study of Saudi English major freshmen students (Alqarni 2017) investigated the role of vocabulary learning strategies in language acquisition. The findings indicated that 'learn[ing] new words by watching English speaking movies with subtitles' (p.144) was the most preferred learning strategy among the participants and represented a sub-category of language learning strategies. Engagement in computer-based activities involving graphics, multimedia, games, and online community participation has also been found to help develop cultural competence in second language acquisition (Chapelle 2001; Levy & Stockwell 2013). Overall, teachers are expected to ensure that all related classroom activities promote students' cross-cultural understanding, as this enhances the proficiency of language learning. They can also relate these tasks and activities to aspects of the students' own culture in order to extend their cultural awareness (Kumaravadivelu 2003). Creative teachers can modify these activities to suit their students' capabilities.

Despite these recommendations that teaching the culture of the target language should proceed in tandem with language teaching in classrooms (Kumaravadivelu 2003; Stern 1992), Saudi EFL learners are not exposed to the culture of the target language; they simply learn the language in isolation from its cultural context (Al-Seghayer 2013). Consequently, they

lack sociocultural awareness, which often leads to the development of a conceptual gap between the language and its culture (Al-Seghayer 2013; Turkan & Celik 2007). Further complicating the problem is the status of English as an international language as opposed to the language of a country or a region. English is a 'lingua franca' that is used as a language of communication between different native language speakers. Nonetheless, Saudi students' English learning environment lacks any interaction with or reference to its international and cultural status. The development of sociocultural awareness within dialogic skills is vital if students are to communicate effectively in the target language by using culturally and linguistically appropriate components.

Further, every teaching culture has multiple sub-cultures. The cultural gap between a teacher and his/her students must also be taken into account, so that learning of a target language can be assimilated into the students' culture of learning (Vygotsky, 1978).

In summary, learning and teaching of EFL in Saudi Arabia must be informed by an awareness of culture and students' sociocultural backgrounds if quality language acquisition is to be achieved. In the process of teaching, teachers should keep in mind that they cannot separate a language from its culture and, at the same time, take account of the multiple sub-cultures within their society and classrooms. Teachers and students need to collaborate to create an environment that is conductive to creating cultural awareness - both of the target culture and their own (Ahmad 2014).

Although the relationship between culture and English language teaching is complex, it is important that teachers strive to develop awareness of the relationship between language and culture. This can be achieved by examining the similarities and differences between the L1 (Arabic) and L2 (English) cultures and how different norms and practices are expressed in the L2.

*4. Maximising learning opportunities*

Maximising learning opportunities is a strategy that imagines teaching as a process of devising and employing learning opportunities (Chen 2014; Kumaravadivelu 2003). According to Birjandi and Hashamdar (2014), learning opportunities are created by teachers for their students and, at the same time, teachers can use opportunities created by their students. Teachers are also expected to achieve a balance between their role as mediators of the process of learning and their role as planners of the process of teaching. The involvement of learners in the lesson's activities helps both students and their teachers to maximise

opportunities for learning. Kumaravadivelu (2003, 2012) argues that teachers can most effectively maximise their students' learning opportunities through the meaningful investment of learners in EFL/ESL classrooms. According to Norton (2010), 'learner investment' results when learners are highly involved in the classroom activities; when language learners talk, they are not merely engaging with other language speakers, but are also organising and reorganising a sense of who they are and how they are socially linked to the world around them (Norton 2000, 2001,2010).

Birjandi and Hashamdar (2014) propose that teachers can maximise learning opportunities among their students by creating activities and micro-strategies, such as competitive games, using technology that involves the learner during the lesson. Competitive games are reported to be a useful strategy to maximise students' opportunities for learning through the application of specific teaching practices. Technology can also be employed in the process of teaching for this purpose if it is directed in an appropriate and professional way. Thus, teachers generate and use different techniques of learning. For instance, when a student asks a question about the meaning of a particular word, teachers can refrain from giving a direct answer, instead inviting other students to participate in order to increase their knowledge.

One effective way of increasing learning opportunities in EFL contexts outside classrooms is to connect schools with the students' communities. Such connections can facilitate use of the L2 outside school. In the context of Saudi Arabia, such micro-strategies might involve asking students to interview or converse with the staff of local health clinics or fast-food restaurants, such as McDonald's or KFC, which they audio-record and bring to the classroom the next day. Students may be asked to read a newspaper published in the target language, or listen to the radio or watch certain TV channels, such as CNN or BBC. Careful use of the internet via smart phones, iPads, iPhones, tablets, computers and online games can also create learning opportunities outside classrooms (Kumaravadivelu 2003; Nilufer 2012).

Teachers are expected to view pedagogy not just as a process of increasing learning opportunities inside classrooms, but also as a way of understanding the possibilities for knowledge transformation outside classrooms, thereby maximising students' learning opportunities.

Increasing learning opportunities is considered a social activity since both teachers and learners are involved as producers and facilitators of this activity in classrooms. This

generates a collaborative and interactive learning environment where both teachers and learners participate in the same task (Kumaravadivelu 1994). Most Saudi EFL teachers, however, do not maximise learning opportunities during the teaching process. As a result, EFL students in Saudi Arabia lack skills in initiating and creating opportunities for dialogue in English (Fareh 2010).

In summary, Kumaravadivelu's (1994, 2012) framework is compatible with the objectives of both teachers and students. It is a flexible framework that provides a balance between institutional goals and students' needs. Kumaravadivelu's (1994) micro strategies acknowledge the importance of TT and knowledge in teaching. Therefore, the four macro strategies elaborated in this section were used to analyse TT in Saudi classrooms and to assess how effectively it addresses the needs, ideas, values, and interactions of learners and teachers (Ahmad 2014).

Taken together, the three frameworks discussed above provide the conceptual tools that can be used to understand Saudi EFL classroom interactions. These frameworks are relevant to the present study for a number of reasons: they allow for analysis of sociocultural factors that might influence interactions in Saudi EFL classes; they introduce different methods of classroom research; and they offer a range of perspectives on the relationship between teachers' language and the process of learning in other EFL contexts. Accordingly, they provided the conceptual and methodological guidelines for the present study.

### 3.3 Teacher Talk in L1 and its Impact on L2 Learning and Acquisition

The inclusion or exclusion of L1 in language classrooms has long been debated and researched in multiple contexts around the world. The majority of studies focus on whether or not L1 should be used in second language classrooms, rather than on examining the merits and demerits of the use of L1 (Cole 1998). With the introduction of the communicative approach to language teaching, the notion of maximum use of L2 to develop students' dialogic skills in EFL classroom took root in English language teaching (Franklin 1990; Willis 2013; Atkinson 1993; Butzkamm 2003).

The proponents of the L2 only approach advocate monolingual teaching in which students are only exposed to the target language (TL) in the classroom. A few studies indicate that the use of L1 in the classroom hinders learners' L2 acquisition. According to the contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH) (Brown 1994, p. 193), L1 interference can cause errors in second language acquisition via the negative transfer of elements of the first

language to the second language. This view led to the development of the English-only movement in L2 classrooms, which requires that teachers only use English for all functions of TT (i.e., to explain, evaluate, communicate, and manage the classroom). This approach was reinforced by the United Kingdom's curriculum design (Pachler & Field 2001, p. 84). The English language only policy is loosely implemented in EFL classrooms in Saudi Arabia.

However, the bilingual method of language teaching (i.e. both L1 and L2) is gradually gaining support, particularly in culturally homogeneous environments where the majority of people speak the same language (Forman 2012; Jenkins 2010; Alptekin 2010). According to Forman (2005, p. 234) 'this conception has aimed to achieve a delineation of what the teacher does as distinct from what students do, as well as to acknowledge that not only L2 but L1 can represent an important part of teacher talk if teachers and students share a first language' (p. 234). Research has shown that L1 has an important role to play in the relaying of both meaning and content – a role that is significant in relation to all four skills of writing, reading, listening and speaking (Nazary 2008; Sagarra & Herschensohn 2010; Yamashita & Jiang 2010; Wolter 2006; Halasa & Al-Manaseer, 2012).

Cook's research (2010, 2005, 2001) represented an important breakthrough in demonstrating the effective and directed use of L1 in maintaining and managing classroom discourse in EFL teaching and underlining the importance of L1 in facilitating L2 acquisition. According to Cook (2010), L1 can be systematically integrated into language teaching to explain instructions or content to students with limited L2 knowledge, to build up connections between knowledge of L1 and L2, to promote classroom dialogue and peer to peer communication, and to allow students to use code-switching within and outside the classroom.

It is crucial for L2 to be used as much as possible in EFL classrooms in which learners share a common first language. In such a situation, it is important for teachers to enhance the dialogic skills of learners in L2 (Norris 1997). There are a range of options available, depending on the reasons why learners make use of L1 rather than L2. These include low proficiency in L2, naturalness in using L2 to perform specific tasks, shyness in using L2 or lack of interest in learning L2.

The use of the mother tongue and its impact on learners' acquisition of L2 (mainly English) has been explored in the Saudi EFL context (Alshammari 2011; Al-Nofaie 2010; Khresheh 2012; Jenkins 2010). Alshammari (2011) concluded that the balanced and judicious

use of the native language (Arabic) by teachers as well as students can improve learners' comprehension and language proficiency. His findings suggest that teachers should include Arabic language in EFL classrooms for explanatory and clarification purposes. They indicate that use of Arabic enables students to make connections between the linguistic structures and cultures of both the mother tongue and English. Khresheh's (2012) research on beginner, intermediate and advanced level language learners showed that the use of L1 helps to build positive connections between L1 and L2 for learners of all proficiency levels. At the beginner level, teachers use L1 to facilitate students' understanding of new concepts and allow students to answer in L1 where difficult English language constructions are required. At the advanced level, however, the use of Arabic sometimes reflects cultural and religious norms, as students prefer to answer some questions in Arabic. In addition, teachers often use L1 to lower students' psychological barriers and to build their confidence (Al-Amir 2017).

Arabic is used by teachers in EFL classrooms as an eclectic technique irrespective of their teaching methods (Khresheh 2012). Sometimes, the teachers resort to the Arabic language when they need to deliver a lengthy communication in order to avoid mistakes in English, as it is culturally shameful for teachers to make mistakes in front of students.

Overall, students and teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of the Arabic language in EFL classrooms in Saudi Arabia (Al-Nofaie 2010; Al-balawi 2016; Jenkins 2010). Arabic can be used as a pedagogical tool to improve learners' understanding of a foreign language. Currently, the use of Arabic is elective and selective; teachers use it to facilitate the teaching process. L1 serves as an asset rather than a liability in efforts to improve the language proficiency of low-level learners (Jenkins 2010).

English and L1 are in competition in some countries, and the use of English is maximised at the expense of L1. It is crucial for teachers to respect the learners' L1 and to avoid making L1 appear secondary to English. At the same time, it is important for teachers to assist learners to develop their English dialogic skills. This requires a balanced method to maximise L2 dialogic skills in the EFL classroom while valuing L1.

### 3.4 Studies of Teacher Talk in Saudi Arabia

From the perspective of language acquisition theory, TT is significant as it is almost certainly the main source of understandable target language input received by the student. This reinforces the consensus that the amount of TT is a decisive factor in the success or failure of language teaching (Setiawati 2012). In addition, second language acquisition (SLA)

theory affirms that high quality and plentiful input is required for effective language learning and that learning cannot take place without input (Garcia 2000; Gass 2013; Khatib, Alemi & Daftarifard 2010; Sun 2008; Zhang 2009). It is important to mention that past research in Saudi Arabian EFL classrooms revealed the classroom to be the main source of input for language learners (Al-Bargi 2013; Jawhar 2012). At the same time, comprehensible output represents an essential part of L2 acquisition. Therefore, comprehensible input without output is an insufficient learning process for L2 learners (Swain 1985, 1995). Furthermore, the accurate production of language might not happen without learners' stimulation in the process of comprehension. Thus, output may play a significant role in the development of some linguistic features (Zhang 2009).

According to Jawhar (2012) , classroom interaction has not been explored within the Saudi Arabian education system. Some studies focusing on Saudi Arabian learning challenges, have examined the classroom from a purely linguistic perspective, which emphasises the final product at the expense of the procedure. The linguistic perspective is also characteristic of studies that focused on classroom interaction, whereby issues were explored based on traditional L2 acquisition theories, thus ignoring the notion that understanding the nature of TT in the classroom requires the incorporation of interactive theories. Only a small group of researchers have incorporated the aspect of internal classroom interaction in Saudi Arabia (Almeniei 2005;Al Noghaimishi 1985; Alshenqeeti 2014). The available literature shows that no study has yet been conducted to examine the different features of TT in classrooms within the Saudi Arabian general education system.

For instance, Al Noghaimishi (1985) focused on classroom interactions involving Saudi Arabian high school students and their teachers using a behaviourist approach. His study provides insight into interactions involving the perception of students towards teachers as well as student and teacher EFL classroom interactions. Al Noghaimishi's (1985) study applied the reason action theory for predicting intentional behaviour. He argues that reasons trigger a closer working relationship between students and teachers on issues pertaining to their school as well as their personal life. The study also included demographic characteristics of students, particularly those that are relevant to predicting the behaviour of teachers. In general, Al Noghaimishi's (1985) study is important for providing psychological insights into the relationship between teachers and their students; however, it failed to address the type of learning and teaching procedures that inevitably involve TT.

Almeniei (2005) examined the relationship between Saudi Arabian students and teachers within the classroom, focusing on the reasons for the presence of low levels of language proficiency, as well other issues related to learning. The author attributed the poor performance of students in the classroom to the lack of opportunities to use the language. This confirms the need to investigate the role of TT in Saudi EFL classrooms.

One of the more recent studies in the area is the research by Al-ghamdi (2015). He investigated the impact of questions asked by teachers on the development of students' conversation in foreign language classrooms. The methodology used by the researcher was audio-recording during class sessions. He also attended some classes as an observer. He reported that most were teacher-centred.

However, the results also showed that open-ended questions, as opposed to closed questions, were more likely to encourage the development of students' conversation skills in the EFL classroom. Unfortunately, he did not investigate the role of quality TT. The focus was exclusively on the type of questions, and did not include other factors such as teachers' use of language. Another limitation was the fact that the researcher was not physically present in the classes of the two teachers who were recorded. Al-ghamdi (2015) explained that the recordings were sent via email and, due to time restrictions, it was difficult to measure if the recommendations of the study worked, and if a change in practice occurred. Moreover, the research took place in a vocational and technical training college. Therefore, from a sociocultural perspective, it could be argued that the results obtained from this research cannot be generalised to learners in secondary schools due to the differing stages of human development between the two groups. The present study addressed this gap by investigating classroom interaction in a secondary school.

Al-Otaibi (2004), in a masters thesis presented to the King Saud University, investigated the impact of 'positive teacher talk' on students' performance. This refers to teachers verbally expressing a positive, caring and accepting attitude toward their students in the classroom, drawing on techniques such as displaying trust towards learners and making use of positive reinforcement and encouragement. The researcher used an experimental approach in the study. The results showed a positive correlation between positive TT and student performance. The study was conducted with female students so it is difficult to generalise the findings to male students. The research did not examine whether the positive talk had an effect on student dialogical skills in EFL classrooms. The study was carried out in

a university, so its findings cannot be generalised to secondary school learners, for the reasons mentioned above.

Alshenqeeti's (2014) study explored the element of 'questioning' in Saudi EFL classroom discourse. The study was conducted in the context of EFL education in public universities and the participants were first-year university students. Its focus was on investigating questioning practices in the classroom and students' perspectives on the importance and function of these questions in EFL learning. The research aimed to document the students' perspectives on the questioning strategies employed by teachers and how they affected their learning. A mixed-methods approach was adopted for data collection, involving questionnaire, classroom videos and interviews with teachers. The results indicated that teachers' questions accomplished various functions in the classroom, including working as an elicitation tool, improving learners' L2 fluency, inviting students' responses, repairing communication breakdown and as classroom management tools. The study is important as it gives an insight into the dialogic functions of TT in Saudi Arabia and how teachers accomplish it with the help of questioning and modification of questions. It shows that both teachers and students have positive attitudes towards questioning, which is part of teacher talk. The findings shed important light on the role of teachers' questions in creating learning opportunities for EFL learners in Saudi Arabia. The present study sought to extend these insights in the context of secondary learners.

### 3.4.1 Educational dialogue skills in the Saudi L1 context

These section reviews studies that have been translated from Arabic by the researcher. Saudi educational researchers have conducted some valuable studies into the development of dialogical skills in L1 contexts. The researcher has reviewed this literature, written in Arabic, from a number of academic journals, university libraries and digital libraries. The review found that no previous study had addressed the contextual levels that shape TT, quality of TT and students' dialogic skills in L2 Saudi classrooms. Nevertheless, it identified a number of studies that are related to some aspect of educational dialogue. These are reviewed below.

One study investigated the 'Factors that impact on students' academic participation in university classrooms at King Saud University Department of Education from the students' points of view' (المصوري 1990). To address students' dialogic participation, the researcher recruited participants from 608 students in the Faculty of Education, 32% of whom were selected at random. The results of the study showed that the most important factor that

negatively affected students' academic discussions was the teacher's inability to foster students' participation and involvement in classroom dialogue. The students also identified other factors, such as over-crowded classrooms, students' unpreparedness to participate in the classroom discussions, and a lack of knowledge in the basic skills of researching sources prior to classroom discussions. The participants also pointed to the fact that there were no marks for participation in classroom dialogue. This study provides insight into a critical dialogic element, namely, student academic participation in the classroom setting. In particular, it provides understanding of the students' perspectives on why they participate (or not) in classroom discussions. The study concludes that the teacher has to develop a classroom environment that encourages and allows students to participate in classroom discussions. This can be achieved through such strategies as improving their preparedness and ability to participate in classroom dialogue. For example, students should be encouraged to prepare for the next class discussion and provided with information about relevant resources and how to access them. The study was limited to a focus on the academic participation of the students in the classroom dialogue. In the context of the present research on secondary schools, it was further limited by its focus on university classrooms.

In relation to dialogic talk, another descriptive study from Saudi Arabia sheds light on the importance of dialogue outside the classroom from the teachers' perspective. الدعيج (2005), in her study on 'The development factors of non-classroom dialogue and debate in girls' secondary schools in Riyadh region from teachers' point of view', adopted a descriptive approach to investigate the phenomenon. Random sampling was used to select 397 teachers, or 12.6% of the total teacher population, to participate in the study. The instrument used to collect data was a questionnaire that was designed to elicit information about the development of non-classroom dialogue and debate in the Riyadh region. The results showed that non-classroom dialogue groups were critical in breaking down the barriers of fear and hesitation in students' expression within the classroom, thus highlighting the importance of this factor in improving students' communication skills. Further, the discussion groups and non-classroom dialogue helped teachers to understand the psyche of students and their patterns of thinking. The findings have some relevance to the current research as they show that non-classroom dialogue can be utilised by teachers to improve students' communication skills, thus facilitating the development of their dialogic skills in classroom discussions, and that fear and hesitation were key barriers to students' participation in classroom discussion. From the perspective of the present study, the results suggest that TT within and outside the

classroom in a secondary school setting are likely to be related to improvement of the dialogic skills of students. However, the study's relevance is limited since the analysis focused on general dialogical interactions outside the classroom in the mother tongue, as opposed to the current study's interest in L2 dialogical interaction within the EFL classroom that are specific to lesson aims.

The subject of communicative competence has also been addressed by researchers in Saudi Arabia within the context of language learning. One such study is titled the 'Promotion of dialogue skills in Saudi Secondary Schools: Reasons, justifications and methods' by العبيد (2008). It focuses on the development of dialogic skills in L1 within Saudi secondary schools. The author used a descriptive methodology, employing documentary analysis and a questionnaire to collect primary data. Participants comprised teachers of secondary schools in the Riyadh region, as well as, expert volunteers and directors who worked at the King Abdul Aziz Centre for National Dialogue and other groups of educational specialists and experts inside and outside Saudi Arabia. The study aimed to draw on this wide ranging group of teachers, experts in the dialogic approach and other educational specialists to develop an integrated understanding of the concept and principles of dialogue and to identify ways of promoting dialogue skills among secondary school students in Saudi Arabia. The results emphasised the importance of promoting dialogic skills and giving students freedom to express their opinions and discuss any problems in the school setting. They further demonstrated the important role of encouragement in breaking down any psychological barriers, such as fear of expressing themselves. Like الدعيج (2005), العبيد(2008) concluded that fear of expressing themselves is one of the main barriers to the development of students' dialogic skills. العبيد's (2008) study is critical to the current study because it adopts a holistic approach to understanding the role of teachers in the development of students' dialogic skills from the perspectives of the teachers themselves and education expert volunteers. The current study utilised these insights to inform the analysis of the role played by TT in the development of dialogic skills in students within EFL classrooms.

Some research on dialogue or dialogic teaching has also been conducted outside the classroom education context. The study titled 'The role of dialogue in promotion of moral values in girls' secondary schools in the region of Riyadh' did not focus on a classroom setting but rather on the use of dialogue in promoting moral values (الباني 2010). The study

aimed to identify the role of dialogic skills in the promotion of moral values such as patience, tolerance and acceptance of different opinions. A questionnaire was used to collect the data. The study targeted all secondary school girls in the Riyadh region, with a total population of 74,647students. A sample of 456 was selected randomly. The results showed that the students engaged in dialogue with their teachers and their peers and believed that such engagement was important, especially at the secondary level. The researcher concluded that dialogue played a significant role in the promotion of moral values and the development of cooperation and understanding. البابي's (2010) findings are critical for the current study as they illustrate the importance of the development of students' dialogic skills. Although the study's relevance is limited by its focus on the promotion of moral values, it nonetheless provides useful insights into the impact of dialogistic skills among students.

Another study from Saudi Arabia sheds light on the responsibility of teachers to create sustained and meaningful dialogue in the classroom to facilitate learning. Entitled 'The responsibility of secondary school teachers in the development of educational dialogue skills of students in the region of Hafr Al-Batin from the perspective of principals and teachers', the study examined the roles and responsibilities of secondary school teachers in developing their students' educational dialogic skills ( العنزي2011). Again, a descriptive approach was adopted, and survey methodology was employed to collect data. The study samples comprised 35 school principals and 111 school teachers, who completed a total of 146 questionnaires. The results showed that teachers and principals believed in the importance of educational dialogue with their students and that they encouraged their students to participate in dialogue. The author concluded that teachers' role is fundamental and that their educational dialogue with their students represents a good model of successful talk inside the classroom (العنزي 2011). These findings are important in the current research since they support the view that teachers play a central role in promoting and developing dialogic skills among their students.

The studies mentioned above have several limitations in the context of the current research. First, they are largely descriptive studies that use the same methodology; typically, this is a questionnaire survey of large random samples of participants. This quantitative approach allows researchers to easily draw conclusions and generalise their findings, but precludes the generation of insights into participants' attitudes, values and motivations. This gap can be filled by employing qualitative research methods, such as discourse analysis, to

extend and deepen understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. In the present study, for instance, discourse analysis can contribute to better understanding the sociocultural factors that affect the development of dialogical skills in the EFL context. Quantitative research methods, with their focus on measurement, are less well suited to this task, given the complex factors at play in the development of dialogue skills in EFL classrooms.

Further, all the L1 studies discussed above, with the exception of العنزي(2011) and الدعيج (2005), focus on the perspectives of students. This highlights the relative lack of attention that has been given to the role of the teacher in the development of dialogical skills. The body of literature largely neglects this important dynamic and undervalues the role of teachers in this context. It is important to focus on teachers and their attitudes as they play a key role in determining how students will approach dialogical skills development. The influence of teachers is particularly important in EFL classroom settings since opportunities to practise dialogue outside the classroom are severely limited in the Saudi context.

The review of extant Saudi literature in both L1 and L2 contexts failed to identify any single EFL study that addressed the contextual levels that shape TT in EFL classrooms via F-moves. It is noted that some previous studies discussed theoretical issues, albeit without consistent consideration of empirical evidence. It is likely that a range of factors, such as sociocultural influences, govern classroom interactions. The present study sought to fill this knowledge gap by exploring TT in the Saudi EFL context. The researcher examined the various interactions that take place in Saudi EFL classrooms, with particular interest in understanding how available theoretical frameworks can be applied to an analysis of TT in EFL classrooms in Saudi Arabia. Its findings were expected to make a valuable and original contribution to the limited empirical evidence on this topic.

### 3.5 Conclusion

In summary, this chapter has presented a review of the available literature related to teacher talk and dialogic talk (section 3.1). Dialogic talk and /or dialogic teaching are key concepts in this study; they provide an analytical framework to assess the types of interactions carried out by teachers in Saudi Arabian schools. This theoretical framework allowed me to effectively interpret my findings. It has also described the theoretical and analytical frameworks (section 3.2) that informed the analysis of the study's findings. The chapter has further discussed TT in L1 and its impact on L2 learning and acquisition (section

3.3). To provide background for the study and explain the context of the research, I have reviewed several studies of TT in Saudi Arabian classrooms (section 3.4). An overview of TT definitions, features, the teaching exchange sequence-IRF patterns and some dimensions of teaching practice has also been presented. The findings are discussed in relation to these analytical frameworks. Overall, the chapter has moved from a broad view of TT to a specific focus on TT in Saudi Arabian classrooms. In the process, an important gap in the research literature was identified. The present study seeks to fill this gap through a qualitative investigation into the learning particularities of TT, the learning opportunities presented to students, and how teachers' attitudes and characteristics shape their management of classroom discourse. The following chapter elaborates the methodology used in the study.

# Chapter 4

# Methodology

This study explored particularities of TT implemented in Saudi EFL classroom contributing to the development of learners' L2 skills. The research focussed on the influence of teacher talk (TT) on the development of students' dialogic learning. The available evidence, discussed in the previous chapter, highlighted the problematic nature of Saudi secondary school teacher talk in that it consists mainly of IRF sequences and fewer instances of extended interactions. This chapter describes the methodology employed in this study, including methods of data collection and data analysis and the procedures of data validation. It also introduces the research setting and participants and discusses the ethical considerations involved in the research.

## 4.1 Methodology: Case Study and Researcher Positioning

The project adopted a case study methodology based on a constructivist ontology and a relativist epistemology. This approach posits that the beliefs underlying the nature of teacher talk are constructed by the teachers' understanding of traditional classroom discourses in a specific learning scenario. It lends itself to the collection of multiple sources of data to generate multi-layered understanding of the phenomenon of teacher talk. The premise is that the user of such talk interprets the phenomenon through a set of broader linguistic and sociocultural influences and not simply as the result of individual characteristics. Therefore, both linguistic and sociocultural forms of analysis are used to interpret the emerging data. The data sources included audio recordings of classroom teacher and learner interactions and interviews designed to gain more in-depth understanding of teachers' moves.

The data were analysed to identify key themes of relevance to the research questions. This is a common methodological procedure in case studies (Yin 1994). According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research provides a medium for understanding and exploring the meanings that individuals or groups attribute to human or social problems. Qualitative research draws on, and establishes meaning from, participants' opinions and experiences, allows the phenomenon under investigation to be explored in the participants' own context, and recognises that individuals convey or bring with them a variety of meanings (Denzin &

Lincoln 2005). Unlike quantitative research, this kind of research analyses data inductively and interprets it to generate new theories about the phenomenon (Gray 2004; Rovai et al. 2014).

In linguistics education and in many other research fields, the case study approach is commonly used by qualitative researchers (Hyett, Kenny & Dickson-Swift 2014; Thomas 2011) and has become increasingly popular in a range of other disciplines (Creswell 2013; Denzin & Lincoln 2011; Stake 1995; Yin 2009). The case study is designed to focus on a bounded research entity. It accommodates a range of different data sources and types of research questions. Although most case studies are conducted through qualitative research, some studies adopt quantitative methods (Hyett, Kenny & Dickson-Swift 2014; Kohlbacher 2006), depending on the nature of the problem being investigated. The case study in qualitative research enables a deep analysis of data in order to understand and contextualise the research issues. In education research, the focus of case studies is mostly on performances, perspectives, experiences or knowledge of individuals, such as learners or teachers of language (Kohlbacher 2006).

According to Yin (2003), case studies generate theory from data, and this is a core function of the qualitative case study. It is an essential consideration in the early stage of research design. The focus of a case study can be broad and open-ended or highly focused, depending on the variety and depth of the available literature. According to Yin (2003, p. 2), case study research emerged from the need to understand the complexity of social phenomena. This is because the case study allows researchers to gain a holistic perspective and meaningful view of real-life experiences. Frequently, a case study is chosen as a suitable strategy for ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions and makes it possible to contextualise these in terms of an explanatory study, depending on the nature of the research question. Case study research design can also be used to address ‘what’ questions (Yin 2003). Hence, the case study was to be highly suitable for accomplishing an in-depth exploration of the issues being investigated in the present study.

Case study was an appropriate methodology for this study, not only because it offers an opportunity to fully explore the research questions but also because it suits the scope of the research and, as a social study, it corresponds well with the study aims and small sample size. Most of the early qualitative research was conducted in the fields of anthropology and sociology, which are mainly concerned with investigating human behaviours (Shomoossi 1997). With this in mind, the case study is an appropriate methodology to explore

particularities of TT, the strategies teachers use to create learning opportunities, and their attitudes towards shaping classroom discourses. The present study addressed these issues by exploring human activities through in-depth interview and observation.

Because I am myself an English teacher in a Saudi Arabian school, it is necessary for me to interrogate the theoretical frameworks of insider and outsider. One of the most prominent conceptual frameworks in this context was developed by Merton (1972, p. 21). He describes insiders as 'the members of specified groups and collectivities or occupants of specified social statuses; outsiders are the nonmembers'. Other scholars, like Hodkinson (2005), for example, have noted that insiders possess several advantages in the research process, in that they have are highly likely to succeed in interacting with their participants. In addition, the insider position enhances the researcher's ability to conduct effective qualitative interviews, since they already possess important insights into their participants' world. As an insider, therefore, I was well placed to construct questions that would elicit rich and meaningful responses during the interviews. As Merton (1972, p. 15) has observed, as an insider:

> one has monopolistic or privileged access to knowledge, or is wholly excluded from it, by virtue of one's membership or social position…the outsider may be incompetent…the outsider, no matter how talented, is excluded in principle from gaining access to the social and cultural truth.

In other words, outsiders are regarded as incapable of understanding communities in which they have never socialised and incapable of understanding the values of the society under investigation. In this study, I was privileged to have been as an insider, since it gave me greater understanding of my participants, with whom I share both cultural and professional backgrounds. As a fellow English teacher, I am very much aware of what these teachers have experienced. The ability to successfully interact with research participants enables researchers to engage in high quality research.

Merton (1972) suggests, however, that being a complete insider can lead to a loss of objectivity (see also Hodkinson 2005). According to Subedi (2006, p. 580), the 'status of insider-ness [is] conditional and unstable'. My insider status can influence my assumptions about my participants (Bogdan & Biklen 2007; Hodkinson 2005) and, hence, the way I interpret the research findings. This is because experience influences the way researchers construct their ideas in the present (Alridge 2003; Litchman 2012). Since my status as an

insider could potentially influence the way I interpreted and understood my research findings, I needed to negotiate my subjectivities.

To this end, I began from Alridge's (2003) observation that, although being an insider enhances one's ability to understand his or her own community, teachers-as-researchers need to 'produce rigorous and respectable academic scholarship' (p. 28) by using 'consistent and rigorous methodological approaches, which include such strategies as triangulation of sources and careful explication of [one's] arguments substantiated by data' (p. 26).

Glesne (2015) identifies three ways in which subjectivities can be negotiated and research quality can be improved. First, researchers should establish good rapport with their participants. Rapport is needed to gain participants' trust, which enhances their willingness to speak up. In conducting interviews, I established good relationships with my participants, while avoiding the development of friendships, which can inhibit the achievement of one's research objectivities. Second, being a reflexive researcher allowed me to evaluate my progress. Lichtman (2012, p. 121) defines reflexivity as 'a bending back on oneself'. It refers to the self-awareness that should be employed during research, whether in interviewing or during observation (Elliott 2005). After interviewing my participants and analysing the transcripts of their narratives, I often reflected on the rationales some of them were articulating and, through reflection, I was able to separate my own emotions and perceptions from the analysis.

### 4.2 Research Sites and Participants

In order to maximise what was possible to learn (Stake 1995), site selection was a central consideration. For that reason, prior to selecting potential research sites, I communicated with relevant gatekeepers to help me identify appropriate schools and visited several of these; this is seen as an important step prior to conducting fieldwork (Yin 2010). The aim was to identify the selected schools first and then to determine the eligibility and willingness of EFL teachers to participate in the study and agree to their classes being observed. Brewer (2004) suggests that, if optimal cases are selected as sites at which to conduct fieldwork, it is possible to anticipate what happens next.

My discussions with the Central Province Authority of Education and with some secondary school principals about the proposed fieldwork allowed me to identify 26 public and private schools that had a sufficient number of teachers with EFL expertise. I wanted to engage schools with the largest number of EFL teachers. The Authority of Education

recommended six out of the 26 secondary schools that had the highest number of EFL teachers and students. These six secondary schools, located in different areas of the Central Province, were then selected as the research sites. The private schools had a total student population of around 925, and the public schools had around 770 students.

All of the teachers at each school were included in my study. The study sample comprised three public schools with two teachers each and one public school with three teachers; one of the private schools had four teachers, and the other had five teachers. The teachers taught Years 10, 11 and 12 in both public and private schools. A total of 27 classrooms from all six schools were ultimately observed. In physical appearance, all these classrooms were traditional: students' desks were arranged in parallel rows in front of the teachers' desks, with the exception of three classrooms in which desks were arranged in small clusters for group work. All classrooms had air-conditioning, and there were at least two windows in each classroom to allow sunlight and fresh air into the room.

Most of the six selected schools were surrounded by walls at least two metres high and had two yards: one at the inner area of the school and the other behind the school. This practical design, which characterises all government schools in Saudi Arabia and some of the private schools, enables educational staff to easily supervise students from the ground floor. Usually, educational and administrative offices are located on the ground floor, which might also include additional school facilities, such as laboratories, resource centres, canteens and toilets for students and staff. Frequently, students' classes are held on the first, second and third floors, but sometimes the ground floors contain some classrooms. The designs of some schools, however, vary because they are rented. Fortunately, none of these rented buildings were among the schools selected for data collection.

Each of the participating schools, all of which have been given pseudonyms, is described in more detail below. English subject lectures, 45 minutes each, were presented twice a week in all classes at each of these schools.

*Al-Shorooq School*

Al-Shorooq School is a public school located in the heart of the Central Province and is believed to be the city's oldest secondary school. At the time of the study, there were around 200 students and 18 teachers. Only two teachers taught English as a subject. Mr Omran (all names are pseudonyms) was responsible for Year 11 and Year 12 students, while Mr Sunhat was responsible for Year 10 students. Mr Omran (age 39) had around 15 years'

experience as an English language teacher, while Mr Sunhat (age 34) had around nine years' experience. Mr Omran held a Bachelor of English Language and Translation and a Master of Applied Linguistics, while Mr Sunhat held a Bachelor of English Language and Translation. There were no more than 28 students in each class.

*Al-Noor School*

Al-Noor School is a private school located in south-western Hafr Al-Batin. At the time of the study, it had around 425 students and 35 different subject teachers. Only four teachers taught English as a subject. Mr Jarrah and Mr Sami shared the responsibility for teaching both Year 10 and Year 11 students, whereas Mr Adel and Mr Abdulnasser taught Year 12 students. Mr Sami (age 35) had around 10 years' experience as an English language teacher, Mr Jarrah (age 28) had around four years' experience, Mr Abdulnasser (age 52) had around 27 years' experience and Mr Adel (age 50) had around 25 years' experience. All four teachers held Bachelor of English Language and Literature degrees. There were no more than 30 students in each class.

*Al-Asalah School*

Al-Asalah School is a private school located in eastern Hafr Al-Batin and is considered one of the best secondary schools in the province based on its output and Authority of Education reports. At the time of the study, it had around 500 students and 40 teachers. Only five teachers taught English as a subject and shared the responsibility for teaching Years 10, 11 and 12 students. Mr Talaat (age 34) had around nine years' experience as an English teacher, Mr Morsi (age 27) had around two years' experience, Mr Emad (age 31) had around six years' experience, Mr Motwally (age 46) had around 23 years' experience, and Mr Hadi (age 57) had around 33 years' experience. Mr Talaat, Mr Morsi and Mr Emad held Bachelor of English Language and Literature degrees, whereas Mr Motwally and Mr Hadi held Bachelor of Art in Education degrees. There were no more than 30 students in each class.

*Al-Somood School*

Al-Somood School is a public school located in eastern Hafr Al-Batin. At the time of the study, it had around 180 students and 19 teachers. Mr Talal, Mr Antar and Mr Jubran taught English as a subject. Mr Talal was responsible for Year 11 and Year 12 students, Mr Antar was responsible for Year 10 students, and Mr Jubran was responsible for Year 11 students. All three teachers, Mr Talal (age 25), Mr Antar (age 24) and Mr Jubran (age 26),

had one year of experience and held Bachelor of English Language and Translation degrees. There were no more than 25 students in each class.

*Al-Shamal School*

Al-Shamal School is a public school located in northern Hafr Al-Batin. At the time of the study, it had around 190 students and 20 teachers. Mr Jameel and Mr Soheel taught English as a subject. Mr Jameel was responsible for Year 10 students, while Mr Soheel was responsible for Year 11 and Year 12 students. Mr Jameel (age 40) had around 16 years' experience as an English teacher, and Mr Soheel (age 30) had around two years' experience. Mr Jameel held a Bachelor of English Language and Translation, whereas Mr Soheel held a Bachelor of English Literature. There were no more than 28 students in each class.

*Al-Atlal School*

Al-Atlal School is a public school located in western Hafr Al-Batin. At the time of the study, it had no more than 200 students and 20 teachers. Mr Farhan and Mr Ageel taught English as a subject. Mr Farhan was responsible for Year 11 and Year 12 students, while Mr Ageel was responsible for Year 10 students. Both teachers, Mr Farhan (age 25) and Mr Ageel (age 24), had one year of teaching experience. Mr Farhan held a Bachelor of English Language and Literature, while Mr Ageel held a Bachelor of English Language and Translation. There were no more than 28 students in each class.

The characteristics of participating teachers are summarised in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Characteristics of Participating Teachers

| Teacher | Age | Experience | Educational Background | Classes Taught | School |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Omran | 39 | 16 | Bachelor of English Language and Translation; Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics | Grade 11 & Grade 12 | Al-Shorooq |
| Sunhat | 34 | 9 | Bachelor of English Language and Translation | Grade 10 | Al-Shorooq |
| Jarrah | 28 | 4 | Bachelor of English Language and Literature | Grade 10 & Grade 11 | Al-Noor |
| Sami | 35 | 10 | Bachelor of English Language and Literature | Grade 10 & Grade 11 | Al-Noor |
| Adel | 50 | 25 | Bachelor of English Language and Literature | Grade 12 | Al-Noor |
| Abdulnasser | 52 | 27 | Bachelor of English Language and Literature | Grade 12 | Al-Noor |
| Talaat | 34 | 9 | Bachelor of English Language and Literature | Grade 11 & Grade 12 | Al-Asalah |
| Morsi | 27 | 2 | Bachelor of English Language and Literature | Grade 10 & Grade 11 | Al-Asalah |
| Emad | 31 | 6 | Bachelor of English Language and Literature | Grade 10 | Al-Asalah |
| Motwally | 46 | 23 | Bachelor of Art in Education | Grade 11 | Al-Asalah |
| Hadi | 57 | 33 | Bachelor of Art in Education | Grade 10 & Grade 12 | Al-Asalah |
| Talal | 25 | 1 | Bachelor of English Language and Translation | Grade 11 & Grade 12 | Al-Somood |
| Antar | 24 | 1 | Bachelor of English Language and Translation | Grade 10 | Al-Somood |
| Jubran | 26 | 1 | Bachelor of English Language and Translation | Grade 11 | Al-Somood |
| Jameel | 40 | 16 | Bachelor of English Language and Translation | Grade 10 | Al-Shamal |
| Soheel | 30 | 2 | Bachelor of English Literature | Grade 11 & Grade 12 | Al-Shamal |
| Farhan | 25 | 1 | Bachelor of English Language and Literature | Grade 11 & Grade 12 | Al-Atlal |
| Ageel | 24 | 1 | Bachelor of English Language and Translation | Grade 10 | Al-Atlal |

## 4.3 Data Collection and Recording

Two methods of data collection were employed: in-depth semi-structured interviews and classroom observation. The entire cohort of 18 EFL teachers from the six participating

schools were interviewed and observed. The English language teachers employed in the six selected secondary schools were Saudi Arabian or Egyptian. In general, they had similar linguistic backgrounds, but their experiences, ages and qualifications were quite different (see Table 4.1). The participants' experience ranged from 1 to 33 years, and their ages ranged from 24 to 57 years. One teacher had a master's degree, and the rest had bachelor's degrees. I was aware that this wide range of teaching experience (1-33 years) would be likely to shape their ways of understanding the phenomenon under investigation, and this awareness was factored into the analysis.

The data were collected and interpreted in two stages. In the first stage, the interactions that took place in 27 EFL classes were audio-recorded, transcribed and analysed. In the second stage, individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with 18 EFL teachers. The data were collected over a period of three months. One or two lessons per week were audio recorded for each teacher.

The methods of data collection and recording are elaborated below.

### 4.3.1 Observation of classroom interactions

The method of participant observation, originally associated with ethnographic studies, can be applied in all social research (Atkinson & Hammersley 1994; Holliday 2007). Observation is a fundamental method in qualitative research (Silverman 1993) which, unlike non-observational methods, allows a broad range of cultural characteristics to be considered (Holliday 2007). In addition, observations that have been audio-recorded enhance the trustworthiness of the data and capture an important aspect of social reality. The recording device, which captured up to 45 minutes of talk for each class, was placed in a location that would record all of the teacher talk and classroom interactions in their natural setting.

Audio-recordings of teacher–student sessions allowed all language features used by teachers in their classes to be captured. Audio recording of data has several advantages, such as allowing one to listen to the data repeatedly and enabling other researchers to access the raw data to check the findings. Audio recording classroom interactions also allows researchers to listen several times to pick up on features that might not have been noticed in a first hearing (Sacks 1992; Zuengler, Ford & Fassnacht 1998). In addition, it frees the researcher from taking detailed notes on the interactions, allowing him or her to concentrate on other aspects of the setting and interactions. In addition, audio recordings provide a temporal basis for the process of participants' talk, by representing the sequential structure of

talk for later analysis after it has been transcribed into more accessible text (Zuengler, Ford & Fassnacht 1998).

### 4.3.2 Semi-structured interviews with teachers

In this study, I used semi-structured interviews to obtain data from 18 EFL secondary school teachers. The semi-structured interview questions included topics that had been identified from the literature review as relevant to the inquiry. There was some flexibility, and follow-up questions were sometimes asked in order to probe participants' responses. One of the positive aspects of semi-structured interviews is that they allow more space than other types of interviews for interviewees to answer in their own terms (Edwards & Holland 2013). The interviews lasted for 30 to 45 minutes.

The data collected were integrated to obtain a variety of insights into the participants' responses (Rabionet 2009). Participants had the opportunity to state their opinions about key issues, which may not have been evident during the observational sessions.

The observations and interviews with participants comprised the main sources of data in this study. This mixed methods approach helped to reveal the complexity of the classroom as well as the relationship between TT issues and students' dialogical skills.

In summary, the use of qualitative strategies allowed me to document teachers' F-moves and students' dialogic skills and the use of audio recording enhanced the validity of the data. Through use of these instruments, I was able to collect data on the embedded and invisible patterns of TT in Saudi EFL classrooms, which become visible through qualitative analysis (Frank 1999). The findings that emerged from analysis of several sources of data allowed me to develop a more informed understanding of classroom talk in order to achieve the study objectives and address the research questions.

The study methodology – which involved first identifying the research questions, then planning the research in line with the questions in order to maintain consistency between methodology and epistemology (Crotty 2003) – is summarised in Figure 4.1.

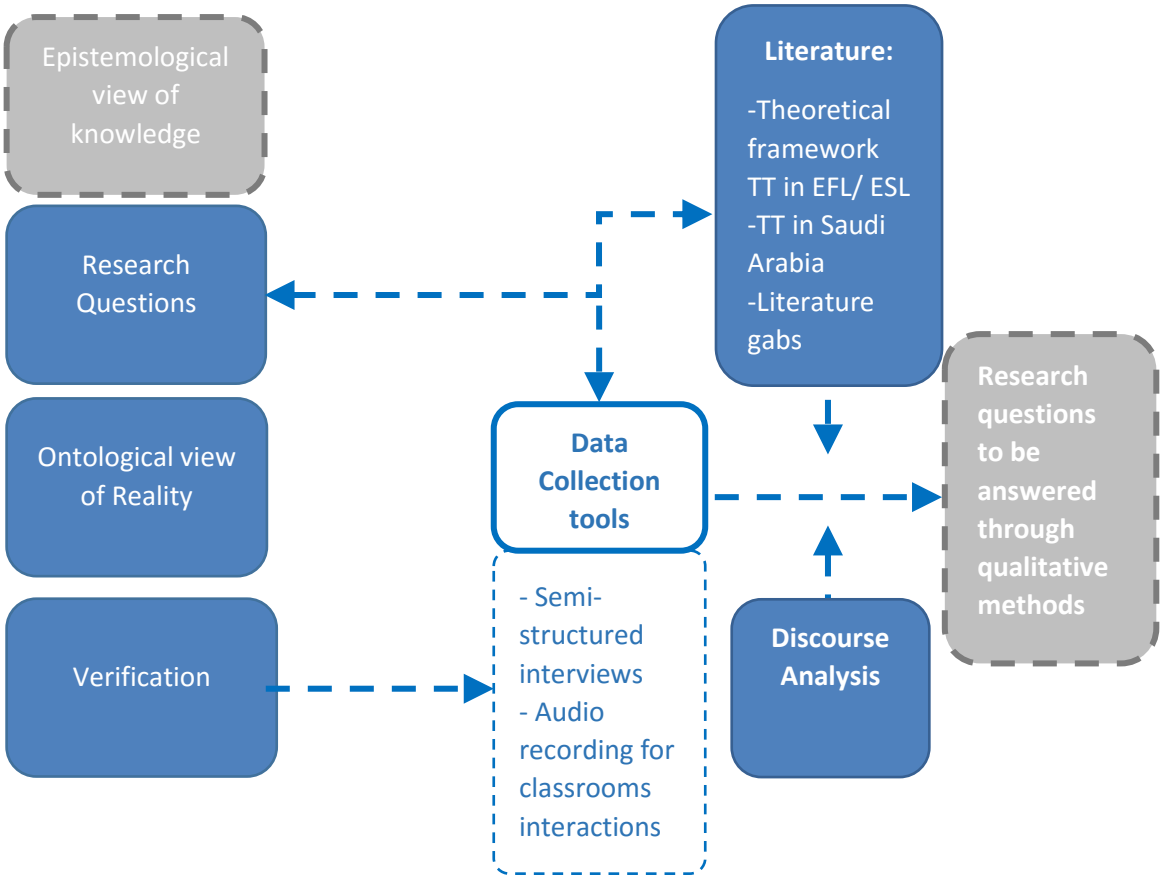


Figure 4.1 Research Design and Methodology. The figure and was adapted from Groat and Wang (2002) for purposes of this study.

### 4.4 Data Analysis

The data analysis was performed using N-Vivo, which is a widely used software package for qualitative data analysis. The following steps were followed in analysing the data, in accordance with the usual procedure in qualitative research. First, all interviews were transcribed verbatim to record all details. This is important to help researchers capture the voice and the tone of their participants. All the transcripts were then imported into NVivo software to facilitate coding. These codes inform the development of themes that allow the research questions to be addressed.

The data were divided into two categories: linguistic aspects and sociocultural aspects, via a comprehensive discourse analysis. The former generated themes relevant to questions about the particularities of teacher talk, while the latter provided insight into the impact of sociocultural factors. In this thesis, the data are displayed according to the conventions of qualitative research.

As this study was inductive, the dominant themes emerged from the data. The research questions served to refine the overall scope of the study and guide the analysis. After a close reading of the transcribed data and considering the multiple meanings that could be interpreted from them, I broke the raw data down into a large number of categories, from which a smaller number of overarching categories were drawn, until the themes emerged.

During the first stage, the imported data were organised into folders. The initials of the teachers were attached to each folder, which contained two main data files: transcripts of the audio-recorded classes and transcripts of the interviews.

During the second stage, the transcripts of the audio-recorded classes were analysed to create a set of F-move functions. The recordings were analysed in order to identify trends and patterns in TT, and related files were cross-referenced. Similarly, the transcripts of interviews were scrutinised, and preliminary themes relevant to sociocultural aspects that potentially impact TT were developed. At this stage, all sorted data were regarded as nodes, and they were labelled to facilitate future retrieval.

During the third stage, the emerging themes from these two files on all teachers were regarded as propositional themes that were ready to be displayed. These data subsequently become codes, and the coding process proceeded to tables that showed the frequencies and percentages of the particularities of TT and mind-maps that showed a network of themes indicating sociocultural factors that influenced TT.

During the next stage, the data were related to the research questions (query level), with the dominant themes directed to each research question. At the same time, verification procedures were undertaken and provisional conclusions were reached.

Finally, models were constructed showing causal relationships or themes, or clustering of data. The analysis continued in recursive fashion until I was satisfied that all relevant details had been captured.

### 4.4.1 Data organisation

The data were organised based on their alignment with the three research questions and the three methodological frameworks used in this study. The findings regarding the nature of TT and embedded-learning particularities acquired from audio recordings of teacher–learner interactions are presented in Chapter 5, where the relevant IRF sequences are identified and the F-moves are analysed drawing on Cullen's (2002) approach. In Chapter 6, learning opportunities afforded by teachers and captured from audio recordings of classroom

interactions are analysed from the perspective of Kumaravadivelu's (2003) post-method macro strategies. In Chapter 7, teacher attitudes and characteristics, based on teacher interviews, are analysed through a linguistic and sociocultural lens, with particular focus on micro- and macro-scaffolding processes (Hammond & Gibbons 2005a). The organisation is shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Data Organisation, Methods of Analysis and Presentation of Findings

| Type of Data | Research Question | Method of Analysis | Chapter |
|---|---|---|---|
| Audio recordings of teacher–learner interactions | 1A. What are the particularities of teacher talk in Saudi Arabian EFL classrooms?<br>1B. To what extent can the influence of this teacher talk be attributed to the culturally embedded learning particularities of the students? | F-moves (Cullen 2002) | 5 |
| Audio-recordings of teacher–learner interactions and teachers' interviews | 2. What kinds of interactions/learning opportunities are created by teachers' questions to students? | Macro strategies (Kumaravadivelu 2003) | 6 |
| Teacher interviews | 3. How do teachers' attitudes/characteristics, such as language proficiency, teaching experience and education, shape their ways of managing classroom discourse and creating language opportunities for their students? | Micro- and macro-scaffolding (Hammond & Gibbons 2005) | 7 |

## 4.5 Validation of Research Findings

This section describes the strategies I employed to validate the research findings.

### 4.5.1 Triangulation

Triangulation is a method of confirmation that is used to strengthen the validity of a study by integrating standpoint, procedure and method (Cohen & Manion 2000). In social science research, triangulation usually draws on multiple methods, theories or different data sources; more than one source of data is typically used in a study in order to overcome the biases or weaknesses that can result from the application of a single empirical material, theory, observer or data source (Bogdan & Biklen 2007; Jakob 2001).

There are different views about the role of triangulation in both qualitative and quantitative research. For example, some researchers argue that triangulation is useful only for understanding the studied issue in deep and different ways (Olsen 2004). Others maintain that the purpose of triangulation is to enrich the accuracy of the research findings (Denzin 1978; Smith & Kleine 1986). Generally, researchers consider triangulation to be one of the most important measures of research validity.

Triangulation affords consistency in terms of findings and new ways of looking at the core of research problems. In addition, it helps to integrate different findings and theoretical frameworks, providing a clearer understanding of the data and the ability to interpret unique data and generate original interpretations (Berg & Lune 2004; Flick 2004; Jick 1979; Yeasmin & Rahman 2012).

### 4.5.2 Trustworthiness

The issue of quality is central in research regardless of the paradigm underpinning the study. In the positivist paradigm, quality is ensured through tests of reliability and validity. In interpretivist and associated paradigms, the term ’trustworthiness’ is used to describe how research quality is ensured. Trustworthiness is one of the means that qualitative researchers can use to demonstrate to others that their research is rigorous and that the findings are reliable (Lincoln & Guba 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability as criteria for ensuring trustworthiness.

Establishing *credibility*, or substantiating that the findings of a study are believable, is achieved by providing rich data as evidence to support the findings (Lincoln & Guba 1985). Some interpretivist researchers (Lincoln & Guba 1985; Shenton 2004; Yin 2014) have proposed data triangulation, member checking and prolonged engagement as appropriate

techniques for ensuring credibility. As previously noted, data triangulation involves using multiple data sources as evidence to support research findings. In this study, as described above, data were collected through classroom observations and interviews with teachers. The data were then analysed to identify *a priori* and emergent themes. In many cases, themes that emerged from the interviews and classroom observations were consistent with each other. Transcripts from the classroom observations and the interviews are provided as evidence for each of the study's findings.

Prolonged engagement was used also to ensure credibility. According to Shenton (2004), spending considerable time in the field and with the research participants helps the researcher to understand the research context and the cultures of the participants, which in turn enables him or her to understand the data. In this study, the researcher visited various classrooms in which the lessons were being taught and stayed until the lessons were over. Furthermore, since the researcher is a Saudi and understands the culture of the participants, it was possible to interpret the data within the cultural context of the participants from an insider perspective.

*Dependability* guarantees that the findings of the research are consistent and can be repeated. To ensure the dependability of this study, I have carefully described the methodology, research design, sample selection and methods of data collection and analysis used in the research.

*Transferability* refers to the extent to which the research findings can be transferred to other contexts (Lincoln & Guba 1985). The present study's findings have been compared with the extant literature to identify consistencies with those of relevant studies. As well, comprehensive descriptions have been provided of the context of the study, including research sites and participants. Finally, the interview guide used for data collection is included as an appendix.

*Confirmability* refers to the extent to which the data collected support the research findings. Confirmability ensures that the research findings are free of bias. In this study, confirmability was ensured through the use of member checking. The PhD supervisor reviewed the findings and the quotes used to support them. Additionally, a copy of the transcript of the interview was sent to each participant to verify that it accurately reflected his responses. All participants indicated that this was the case.

Finally, I have discussed the concepts of insiderism and outsiderism in the context of qualitative research because being an insider influences the way researchers interpret their data. As I am an English educator in Saudi Arabia myself, I have acknowledged that my interpretation of the data is shaped by my experience as a teacher.

### 4.6 Ethical Considerations

The main ethical concerns in this study pertain to the participants' privacy and informed consent. Participants were assured that they would remain anonymous to ensure privacy. Participants were informed about the purpose and aims of the study as well as the importance of their involvement for the validity of the study. They were also informed of their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Those who chose to participate were reassured that the data would be used only for research purposes. The participants were first asked via written invitation to take part in the study and then contacted directly to ask whether they required more information.

The research adheres to the ethical guidelines of the UTS Human Research Ethics Committee. Ethical approval for the study (No 2015000381) was obtained prior to beginning the fieldwork. Ethical issues were taken into account when considering all arrangements for access to the participating schools and data collection procedures. Permission to conduct the study was also obtained from the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission in Canberra and the Central Province Authority of Education.

Prior to data collection, consent forms were obtained from the participating teachers. A meeting was held with each of the six participating schools' principals and teachers before the process of data gathering was initiated. In the meetings, consent forms for obtaining audio recordings of classroom lessons were delivered to the principals for distribution to the participating classes' students and their parents. Over the next two days, responses were collected from students and parents; further consultations were then held with the teachers in order to arrange a timetable for audio recording their lessons and for interviewing them. A participant database, which includes the consents of teachers, students and parents, was created. As the main participants were teachers, part of the database was allocated to the information on the 18 teachers, audio recordings of their lessons, and their interviews. The database was created to ensure that all participants had provided informed consent and to arrange and classify the collected data. It should also be noted that the recordings were made in such a way as to avoid interruptions and disruption of normal classroom teaching.

Pseudonyms were used instead of the names of participants, schools and research site (province) in order to maintain anonymity. Consistent with legal requirements, the participants' privacy was guaranteed, and full anonymity was maintained at all stages of the research. To ensure that all audio-recorded material and participants' information remained confidential, the data were saved in secure storage. Backup copies of the data were made and stored in a secure location.

## 4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has explained the epistemology and ontology underlying this study and clarified the theoretical framework of its methodology, methods of data collection and analysis, procedures, sites, and ethical considerations. It has described in detail how teacher talk was collected and analysed. The collected data were transcribed and coded, and then analysed by means of discourse analysis in order to identify patterns of talk. The transcribed data were analysed using N-Vivo software, and dominant themes were extracted from the data. The focus of data analysis was on the impact of teacher talk on the development of L2 learners. Data were collected through audio recordings of classroom interactions during teachers' lessons and interviews with teachers. Consistent with the case study approach, the procedures for collecting data were flexible and used qualitative methods.

The following chapters present the findings of the study and identify the underlying principles of the particularities of TT and the influence of culturally embedded learning particularities of students. These chapters also describe the learning opportunities that were created by teachers to support their students and the attitudes and characteristics of teachers that shaped the ways in which they managed classroom discourse.

# Chapter 5

# Findings: The Particularities of Teacher Talk and its Relationship to the Culturally-embedded Learning Particularities of Students

This chapter presents findings relevant to the first two research questions: the particularities of teacher talk and their relationship to the culturally-embedded learning particularities of students. The focus here is on teacher talk in both dyadic and group interactions. Language production by teachers was found to be more highly valued than students' output. TT was analysed in relation to the sociocultural factors that contributed to teachers' classroom repertoires.

First, the particularities of teacher talk are examined as spontaneous language productions using a model of teacher talk. The talk is then analysed to explore teacher's use of F-moves following Cullen (2002) (see Chapter 3 and Chapter 4).

The learning particularities of students are understood here as qualities or specific attributes that characterise the ways in which they activate their knowledge via teacher-learner interaction in the classroom. These are analysed from a sociocultural perspective. The emerging sociocultural factors are further examined using Vygotsky's (1987) theory, which indicates that learning takes place through social interaction and that the acquisition of language is also the result of social interaction.

## 5.1 RQ1A: Particularities of TT

Analysis of the data showed that, in most of the participating English classrooms, the usual type of interaction was a dyadic interaction between teachers and students. It had multiple purposes, including assessment and eliciting students' opinions. Less frequently, there was group interaction in which the teacher's stimulation was presented at the beginning and was responded to by students who actively engaged with the learning activity.

English classroom activities were traditionally set up as a teacher-centred lecture. Teachers used the lecturing technique to explain the learning materials on content knowledge or knowledge about language. In such a format, the interaction tended to be one-way, with students playing the role of listeners and challenged by the task of critically questioning learning materials. Despite the fact that the contemporary instructional process is expected to

involve two-way communication, in which teachers and learners interact, it appears this approach to effective classroom practice has yet to be fully implemented in Saudi schools.

Various forms of TT were observed in Saudi secondary EFL classrooms; no particular types of TT were practised by teachers on a regular basis. On one occasion, they may use repetition and/or evaluation, while in other instances they use elaboration and/or reformulation.

The participating teachers deployed different TT techniques in the EFL instructional process. These included: repetition, replication and questioning which, in Cullen's (2002) framework, are referred to as F-move discoursal repetition; direction, exemplifying and code-switching, or F-move evaluation; and dictation, recitation and directive feedback, or F-Move dictation and recitation. They also commonly used the techniques of requesting clarification and repeating the questions, or F-move discoursal elaboration, and reformulating and elaborating the question, or F-move discoursal reformulation. Each of these particularities of TT is elaborated in the following sections.

### 5.1.1 F-move discoursal repetition

F-move discoursal repetition is a feedback strategy in which teachers reiterate their students' response. The data presented in this section are drawn from teaching interactions between four different teachers and their students. The F-move functions involve multiplication including, but not limited to, the model of language production for students (Mr Motwally in extract 1), stimulating another response from students (Mr. Talaat in extract 2 and Mr. Morsi in extract 4), and amplifying a student's response for all students in the classroom (Mr. Abdulnasser in extract 3).

Extract 1 shows how Mr Motwally repeated words that give students clues that allow them to imitate the teachers' use of words. Mr. Motwally seems to use F-move discoursal repetition to help the students use the appropriate words to complete sentences. The evidence is from a dialogue between Mr Motwally and his students from Year 11 of Al-Asalah School. Mr Motwally was explaining the present continuous tense (grammar). The extract below presents an example of how Mr. Motwally engaged in F-move discourse repetition with his student Khalid.

*Extract 1*

> Mr Motwally: OK. Present continuous talking about what? I am reading a book. I am reading 'Oh, look at me, I'm watching TV'. Ahmed, hey man, what are you doing? I'm watching TV. I'm watching. OK. What are you doing?
>
> Khalid: I am eating.

The teacher kept repeating the sentence to give space for students to understand and grasp the concept. In this example, the teacher initiated the interaction with a clue about the tense being used and examples that included a question. Mr. Motwally repeated the correct form of present continuous tense ('I am reading a book' and 'I am watching'). This kind of repetition is expected to give clues for students on the correct form of present continuous tense. It allows students to repeat the present continuous tense, as can be seen from the extract where Khalid responded, 'I am eating'. However, the data do not indicate that students have the opportunity to expand their sentence. In this example, the student only repeated two words representing the form of present continuous tense. This kind of response, however, is not necessarily the result of students' lack of language ability, but may be due to interlanguage interference. In Arabic culture, it is perfectly acceptable to simply respond 'I am eating', and this is reflected in Arabic language usage.

On another occasion, Mr Motwally elicited his students' responses, as shown in the following conversation:

> Mr Motwally: I am eating. What are you doing?
>
> Solaiman: Writing.
>
> Mr Motwally: I am writing. What are you doing?
>
> Ammar: Listening.
>
> Mr Motwally: I am listening. What are you doing?
>
> Faleh: Reading.

In this conversation, the teacher exemplifies the present continuous tense and the students respond with a single word. F-move discoursal repetition occurred at the beginning (repeating, as the previous student had done) and the same question was used to elicit the students' participation. The student's response was brief - only a single word, such as 'writing'.

The conversation between Mr. Motwally and his three students (Solaiman, Ammar and Faleh) reproduced above shows that the teacher modelled the sentence, and then asked questions to encourage students to imitate. Mr. Motwally kept repeating the same sentence structure.

He used F-move repetition again to reconstruct Ammar's response in conjunction with questioning. The student's response was a single word.

Following the third student's response, Mr Motwally initiated another conversation with another student, Faleh. F-move repetition was again used to replicate Faleh's response (3) in conjunction with questioning. This student's response was also only a single word.

The teacher repeated what the students said. The teacher's repetitions were a complete sentence with subject and progressive verb. It is apparent that the feedback is focused on form instead of meaning. The teacher seems to showcase an ideal model of expression via the (corrective) feedback. However, the students did not appear to notice that they always produced a single word referring to an activity.

In another conversation between Mr Talaat and a student in Year 12 of Al-Asalah School, we can observe the use of discourse repetition. The teacher taught grammar (the present continuous tense). The following extract shows F-move discourse repetition in the talk between Mr. Talaat and two of his students.

In this and much of the following dialogue, it should be noted that the participants often used the expression *Ha.* This is a word meaning 'yes' that is sometimes used to invite a response (Who can answer or complete that?').

*Extract 2*

> Mr Talaat: No problem. There is no problem. Here, you can put it in any tense. The problem where? Ha? Verb verb 'ing' … Enjoy. Enjoying. Will enjoy … No problem. I will enjoy. I enjoy. I have enjoyed. I had enjoyed. No problem. OK. Ha? Amr? … Very good. I finished ha?
>
> Ahmed: Yeah….Both of the verbs have 'ing' no problem…. I finished doing homework.
>
> Mr Talaat: Very good. I finished ha?
>
> Ahmed: Doing.

Mr. Talaat repeated an example of present continuous tense, which then allowed his students to grasp how to construct present continuous tense. This type of TT did not, however, contribute to the emergence of dialogic learning.

In the following conversation, the teacher used cued elicitation to encourage students to complete the sentence. However, the teacher's effort does not seem to have been successful, since Abdelelah remained uncommunicative and still responded in an incomplete sentence.

Mr Talaat: Doing..?

Abdelelah: Homework.

The above TT shows that, on one hand, the teacher was successful in his attempt to encourage his student to continue the sentence by supplying the missing word. This however, did not help to improve the student's communicative competence.

When the teacher proved unsuccessful in encouraging dialogic learning, he took a different direction by again inviting the student's contribution and modelling the ideal sentence. The student then replied and replicated the new sentence.

Mr Talaat: Do homework. I finished doing homework. Very good, ha …
Abdelelah

Abdelelah: I spend… I spend…spending money on something.

From this dialogue, it can be observed that the teacher restated verbatim what the student said. In this extract, the feedback was restricted to a focus on language. The students seemed to have noticed what the teacher said and they immediately practised this new knowledge.

The third example of TT comes from the following conversation between Mr Abdulnasser and his student Rakan. Mr Abdulnasser teaches in Year 12 in Al-Noor School. The teacher was explaining a reading text entitled 'Study and life at university'.

The following extract is derived from the class interaction transcripts and illustrates F-move discourse repetition:

*Extract 3*

Mr Abdulnasser: Good, can you give me an advantage of studying at your hometown? Stand up please. Yeah.

إيه

تانى

طب (an Arabic expression meaning what else?)

Rakan: I'll be studying at university.

Mr. Abdulanasser: I'll be studying at university, thanks. What the advantage of studying at your hometown?

Rakan: I will be close to my family.

This conversation shows that the teacher initiated an open question. The student Rakan then responded with a complete sentence to follow up the dialogue. Mr Abdulnasser repeated the student's response and asked for more information. In this interaction, in addition to repeating the questions, the teacher also code switched between Arabic and English.

The following extract shows that, in order to engage in a deep conversation, the teacher repeated his own sentence and also confirmed the student's response.

Mr Abdulnasser: As I told you studying at university, you can study at university in two branches. You can study in university at your hometown or country (but) studying abroad has advantages and disadvantages ha? What other ideas?

Rakan: When you study abroad you will get nice certificate.

Mr Abdulnasser: When you study abroad you will get a nice certificate, good.

As seen in these data, the teacher repeated the student's expression in order to amplify the idea to the class. The idea was not accompanied by more interventions, such as higher order thinking questions or inferential questions. The class was silent for some time and the teacher finally produced an uptake repeating the student's expression. This can be seen as a way to engage students in dialogic learning.

Another important example of TT is shown in the following dialogue between Mr Morsi and his students, Malik and Amer. Mr Morsi, who teaches in Year 11 in Al-Asalah School, has a bachelor degree specialising in English Language and Literature. The following extract illustrates repetition through elicitation. The lesson is a discussion about a reading text entitled 'The multiple means of transportation'. Extract 4 shows another F-move discourse repetition.

*Extract 4*

Mr Morsi: What else? Ha! People in the past used to live in what?

Malik: Tents.

The teacher elicited with a question and gave an example, which then allowed Malik to respond quickly:

Mr Morsi: In tents. Now people live in what?

Malik: In houses.

F-move repetition was used again and further questioning was used to invite more responses. The teacher followed up the interaction with F-move repetition and returned to the use of display/closed questioning on the same topic:

Mr Morsi: In houses, big houses like what? Like villas and flats. A means of transport in the past was camels. With what else?

Malik: Horses.

Mr Morsi: Horses, good. With what else?

Amer: Walk.

The teacher inserted an F-move comment with a question:

Mr Morsi: You can walk to reach your destination, but now there are new metrics of transportation, like what?

Amer: Trains and buses.

Drawing on these responses, Mr Morsi continued:

Car, trains, good. What else? Ok. Now, we are going to listen to an audio tape about a seventy-year-old woman talk about her life as she was growing up. Where and when she grew up. Listen! I will play the recording. Listen carefully to fill in the table. (Mr Morsi plays the audio).

This conversation shows that the teacher consistently reiterated the students' responses. Such repetitions seemed to be part of his communication discourse style. However, the teacher's turn-taking did not encourage dialogic learning, since the type of questions he asked were low order thinking questions and display/closed questions that related to the topic of discussion.

From these extracts of TT, it can be suggested that F-move repetitions were predominantly focused on form. The repeated expressions were teacher uptakes that were mostly accompanied by indirect corrections (recast). Only a small number of teacher uptakes had potential to elicit further elaboration. The emerging questions were also closed questions or display questions and the teachers anticipated the answers.

Other types of TT as generated from interviews and observation are illustrated in the following sub-section.

### 5.1.2 F-move evaluation

The F-move evaluation is one of the feedback moves a teacher can employ for correction, and this correction is usually given in an immediate utterance to students. It functions to indicate correction (see Mr Motwally), showcase an ideal model of language production (Mr Talaat), or emphasise a correction with an explanation (Mr Abdulnasser).

The following extracts show how the three teachers - Mr Motwally in extract 5, Mr Talaat in extract 6 and Mr Abdulnasser in extract 7 - used the F-move evaluative technique in their English lessons. The class was Year 11 from Al-Asalah School. In the extract below, Mr Motwally explains the present continuous tense (grammar) and used teacher talk representing the F-move evaluative.

*Extract 5*

Mr Motwally: The present simple. The present simple talking about habits and routines. Habits and routine: What is the present simple talk about?

Rayed: Routines

Mr Motwally: A routine like…ah… for example…. I get up. She what?

Rayed: Gets up.

Mr Motwally: Gets up, Ok… I have a shower? I have a shower. She…what?

Rayed: Has a shower.

The teacher initiated the interaction with a display question that prompted students to create a simple present tense sentence. This TT shows that the teacher explained the meaning of simple present, and then continued with a question to confirm that students understood the explanation.

Another example of F-move evaluation can be observed from the following conversation:

Mr Motwally: She has a shower. طيب(OK) I am a teacher. Continue…He is …?

Mosa: Teacher!!Teacher!! (The student calls the teacher's attention in order to complete the sentence).

Mr Motwally: I am a teacher. He is …

Mosa: A student.

The F-move evaluation was used after the student's responses to indicate the correct expression. The teacher again elicited the student's response through cued elicitation.

Mr Motwally: A student. OK. I eat. I eat green green. Green green?

ملوخية.Kind of plant (Jew's mallow) OK? I eat green green. He….

F-move evaluation was again produced by the teacher as feedback, confirming whether the response was correct or incorrect. The teacher then produced another cued elicitation and the student responded with the required verb:

Fahad: Eat.

Mr Motwally: Eats. That is present simple with third subject. Talks about habits and routine.

F-move evaluation was delivered here along with a short explanation from the teacher.

Mr Motwally: Amer, give me a sentence?

عامرمين يعطيني جملة كدة

عطيني جملة؟

زي

ما

بتحب

(Give me a sentence Amer!) As you like.

The teacher provided space for his students to give other examples of simple present tense. However, students seem to have responded with a sentence that was structurally correct but grammatically incorrect, for example:

Amer: The sun rise every morning.

The sentence was wrongly constructed and the teacher exposed the mistake by showcasing the ideal model of sentence.

Mr Motwally: The sun rises every morning. That is a fact yes. Hmm?

واحد تاني؟

يلا.

(Another student can give me another sentence)

Yes, you Hammad.

Hammad: I use my laptop all day.

The teacher had an expectation of the student's response and exemplified the ideal model with additional information about the language system, in particular, present simple tense with third subject. The teacher talk was used to assess the student talk, indicated by the use of corrective feedback as an evaluative function.

In a different interaction between Mr Talaat and his students Shaker, Saleh and Ahmed, the teacher employed F-move evaluation. The evidence is generated from a dialogue between Mr Talaat and his students from Year 12 in Al-Asalah School. The teacher was explaining grammar (when to use 'do' and when to use 'make'). The following extract illustrates the use of the F-move evaluation.

*Extract 6*

Mr Talaat: Let's start. Today we are going to discuss about two points.

خلاص؟ نقطتين اتنين.

(Only two points)

Do…make. Do and make and infinitive and gerund. When to use 'do' أو (or) when to use 'make'. Can … can … Can you pick any word? Can you choose any word that goes with 'do' or 'make'?

The teacher elaborated the use of ‘do’ and ‘can’ at the onset and elicited the students’ responses by a display/closed question:

Shaker: Do.

Mr Talaat: Do. Ha? OK. Do what? Do excuse, or do business or do good? Ha? Or do fun, or make fun? Make business?”

Repeatedly, the teacher exemplified the use of ‘do’ and ‘make’ in sentences to encourage students’ contribution to the interaction. The student responded with a new expression.

Saleh: (teacher) Make good. استاذ؟؟

Mr Talaat: Make good. Ha? Put it in a sentence. جملة. (Sentence) Ha?

The teacher used F-move repetition and gave another instruction with the expectation of a full sentence:

Saleh: Make a good man.

Mr Talaat: Again.

The student then responded:

Saleh: Make a good man.

F-move evaluation was applied at this point using a right/wrong dichotomy. Another student responded and identified the mistake.

Mr Talaat: Make a good man. Ahmed, can you check it? Is it right?

Ahmed: No, it is not.

The teacher gave a clue and the other student took the opportunity and offered a correction. The teacher was highly aware of the student’s word choice. The dichotomy ‘right or wrong’ was emphasised to encourage learners to consider the correct form. Ahmed gave a correction and received confirmation from the teacher. The correction was made focusing on form and the teacher’s move was an evaluative F-move.

Finally, I present evidence from a dialogue between Abdulnasser and his students Anwer and Bader. The class is Year 12 in Al-Noor School. This script deals with grammar (simple present tense) in the lesson on ‘Study and life at university’. The following extract represents the F-move evaluation.

*Extract 7*

Mr Abdulnasser: طيب(once again). Again, for example: She plays football every day, it plays in winter, ال ( the) three verbs

دول فيهم

S

ليه?

(Why those be added to them 'S')

The teacher initiated interaction by providing a grammatical explanation of the simple present tense and asked students about the impact of third singular subject on verbs in positive sentences. The student successfully answered the question.

Anwer: عشان (because) he, she, it.

The F-move evaluation appeared in the teacher's utterance, together with compliments, and the teacher elicited responses from students with a simple present sentence. The student responded with the same sentence with more salient 'S':

Mr Abdulnasser: Very good, excellent يبقى نقدر نقول ال

(we will say) present simple

مع

(with)

he, she , it

ياخد?ياخد إيه

(It comes with what?)

Anwer: S ياخد

(It comes with S)

The teacher again used F-move evaluation by repeating what the student said with more emphasis on 'S'. Another sentence with a right or wrong answer was also provided. The student again responded with the correct form.

Mr Abdulnasser: S ياخد

Good

(It comes with S)

طب لما أقول إيه

(Alright, then what if I say) Ali play football everyday…Who can correct 'play'? Who can correct 'play'?

Bader: Plays.

The teacher repeatedly confirmed students' knowledge of the tense and the students showed their understanding as expected by the teacher.

Mr Abdulnasser: Why?

Bader: He (the student means the third singular subject).

Mr Abdulnasser code switches, using Arabic (L1) here to present a summary and provide additional explanation about the grammar. In this particular situation, F-move evaluation alone is deemed inadequate for teacher feedback. Mr Abdulnasser often supplemented the F-move with additional grammar explanation in L1. For example:

Mr Abdulnasser: He, I can omit Ali and put

إيه?

(What) And put "He".

Anwer:

لا يتغير

شئ

(The verb doesn't change).

Mr Abdulnasser: Many thanks.

نقدر نستنتج من هنا يا شباب إن ال

لو كان ال

الضمير

He

او

she

أو

It

او ال

الاسم

ياخدS

Guys! We can figure out that the verb of present simple! For example, if the subject is a singular pronoun like he /she /it or a noun, we put 'S' at the end of that verb.

طب نيجى

للحقيقة

إحنا خلصنا

العادة

اول

شيء

ايش

معنى

حقيقة?

الحقيقة يعنى ايه؟!!..

ايه هى الحقيقة؟

Now we come to the fact! So far we have finished from the habit. Ok, who can give me an example using a fact?

First…Fact! What does fact mean? Fact means what?

The students' response shows a high awareness of the language system and hence of the language structure. This was indicated by the revision made by the student. Additionally, the response gave a clue related to the language system. Mr Abdulnasser over-used code-switching in his interaction with his students. In this extract, the focus was on form rather than on meaning.

It is evident that the teachers commonly used evaluative functions, as shown in the use of the right/wrong dichotomy employed to assess students' answers. The feedback was mostly in the form of direct correction by the teacher or other students. The focus was still on

form rather than meaning. Some of the above extracts demonstrate the evaluative F-move and show that additional explanations about the language system were provided. In general, the extracts show that the teacher talk was too short and emphasised correction rather than more dialogic interaction.

Other types of TT identified in the analysis, dictation and recitation, are discussed in the following section.

### 5.1.3 Dictation and recitation

Dictation refers to a verbal command/activity, while recitation feedback is a simple response by a teacher in the form of a word/lexis. This feedback is usually used to introduce a new lexis, practise an ideal production of the lexis (extract 8), invite students to recite the lexis (extract 9), and explain the lexical meaning (Mr Hadi).

The following conversations between Mr Motwally and two of his students, Ammar and Khalid, provide illustration. The teacher explains the present continuous tense (grammar) and explains the lexical meaning of some words. In this extract, Mr Motwally represents dictation and recitation.

*Extract 8*

Mr Motwally: …. Ok. Friendship. Friend… ha?

Ammar: Ship.

This conversation presents an example of cued elicitation. The student quickly took the cue and gave the required suffix. The teacher consistently dictated the vocabulary and pushed the students to re-produce the same vocabulary:

Mr Motwally: Friend, Friendly. Ha? Friendship, again.

Khalid: Friend.

The teacher used dictation and recitation at the beginning of the classroom interaction, starting with the root form and moving on to the use of two suffixes. The students collectively recited, as instructed by the teacher:

Mr Motwally: No.No.No. Say after me. Friend.

Group of students: Friend, Friendly

Mr Motwally: Friend, Friendly. Ha? Friendship. Again. Ha? Friend. Ha?

Students repeat after Mr Motwally: Friend, Friendly, Friendship

Mr Motwally: Friend, Friendly. Ha? Friendship. Again.

Students repeat after Mr Motwally: Friend, Friendly, Friendship

Mr Motwally: Excellent. ممتاز . What is the meaning of friend, friendship and friendly?

Khalid: ودود. (Friendly)

The teacher did not intend to present semantic information about the word. He merely expected the students to contribute more by producing a new word from a similar root – friend. The focus was on the lexical meaning. The teacher used dictation, recitation, elicitation and repetition in order to push students to use the language components (lexical meaning).

Similarly, in an interaction between Mr Morsi and his students, the teacher used dictation and recitation to merely help the students to recite and grasp the lexical meaning of words. The following extract was recorded in the Year 10 classroom at Al-Asalah School. The lesson was about direct and indirect questions and discussion of a reading text. The extract below illustrates dictation and recitation.

*Extract 9*

Mr Morsi: OK. So, raise your voice. OK. 'Request.' Repeat after me. All of you. 'Request.' All of you. 'Request'.

Students: Request.

The teacher clearly initiated the interaction with an instruction for the students to follow his dictation (verbal command/activity) and recite. This is clearly shown in the instruction, 'Repeat after me'. The teacher dictated, and the students recited:

Mr Morsi: Request

Students: Request

Mr Morsi: This is the way how to read the word 'request'… now what is the meaning of 'request'?

Ahmed: (reply)" رد"

Mr Morsi: not really!

Mohsen: طلب(request)

Mr Morsi: Yes, excellent. That's what I need. Request means what again?

Students: طلب(request)

Mr Morsi provided corrective feedback on the students' recitation and gave the word's lexical meaning. He corrected the students' recitation and pushed them to understand the lexical meaning of the words.

The following interaction between Mr Hadi and his students provides additional illustration of this theme. This interaction was in the Year 10 classroom of Al-Asalah school. The teacher explained some new words in a reading text. The following extract from the classroom interaction illustrates dictation and recitation.

*Extract 10*

Mr Hadi: Or to do what? ask forgiveness! ask forgiveness!

Student group: Ask forgiveness.

The teacher recited an expression and the students responded with the same expression. Dictation and recitation was a common pattern in the classroom. For example:

Mr Hadi: Ha!

Mohamed: - ! يسأل المغفرة (ask forgiveness)

Mr Hadi: المغفرة : ايه

Ask forgiveness! (The teacher speaks loudly to indicate he wants the student to repeat after him).

The teacher's instruction was to listen to his language production and for the students to recite what he had dictated:

Mr Hadi: You don't know! This word! What about…listen, listen everyone! Essential.

Students: Essential!

Mr Hadi: Essential, yes! Essential means necessary,

حد يعرف(Anyone knows what is it mean?)

Students: Essential means necessary.

In the above conversation, the teacher dictated a synonym for the word and indicated that the students should recite the vocabulary item. From the beginning of the lesson, the students repeated the words/lexis modelled by the teacher. The teacher provided the lexical meaning of the vocabulary in order to help the students understand its meaning. Until the end of the class, the teacher talk continued to focus on lexis-semantic features through dictation and recitation.

In all the interactions, it can be seen that teacher talk, functioning as dictation and recitation, was mostly used to increase the students' vocabulary by showcasing the lexical meaning of words in English.

As well, L1 worked to support the learning process in order to accelerate and consolidate students' comprehension of some semantic issues. The teachers used compliments to reinforce the correct word or pronunciation.

The above extracts demonstrate that teachers implemented a traditional model of knowledge transmission. In their teaching, there was a clear emphasis on knowledge of the language (for example, grammar and vocabulary). The only contribution they expected from the students was the production of new words from a similar root. The teacher talk purposively focused on forms of lexical-meaning and semantic features.

The teachers appeared to expect that such an approach would guarantee learners' success in their final examinations. They failed to implement any new teaching strategies that were not in their existing repertoire. Such a conservative stance was clearly demonstrated in both audio-recorded and observed classes.

### 5.1.4 F-move discoursal elaboration

The F-move of discoursal elaboration is a strategy that teachers can use to stimulate students' contribution through open discussion in order to enhance learning (extract 11), to move the mode from spoken to written discourse (extract 12), or to maintain and expand conversational ideas that explore students' voices/expression (extract 13).

In the following extracts, for instance, Mr Talaat explains grammar (how to use 'do and make'). The extract starts with the teacher initiating an open discussion and indicates the F-move discourse elaboration.

*Extract 11*

Mr Talaat: I agree with you. You pretend to be a good guy. OK. Next? Next? OK. Next. Mohamed, you don't have any ... OK. Now we are going to make a free discussion. OK? To discuss any point, and I want to hear your point of view. Try to be free. Try to be free. Don't be shy. Say whatever you think. OK? How can you be a good man? How can you be a good man?

Muhammed: Pray.

From the beginning, the teacher emphasised that the discussions were to be free and without any consequences. The teacher then elicited the students' interaction by a non-inferential/open question. Muhammed answered the open question from his point of view:

Mr Talaat: Pray? OK. What does it mean to pray?

Muhammed: Pray to my God to be a good man.

The teacher then asked a more in-depth question using F-move elaboration in the form of a clarification request. The student Muhammed then elaborated on his previous response with a longer sentence. The teacher then triggered a cued elicitation about the preposition used in the student's sentence.

Mr Talaat: Pray to God or pray for God?

Muhammed: Pray for God

Mr Talaat: No.

Muhammed: To God

Mr Talaat: OK. Ha? OK. Ha? How many times?

Muhammed: Five times.

The F-move elaboration used by the teacher allowed him to maintain and expand the interaction with the student. He used questioning as another confirmation check. Unusually, the emphasis was not on form but on meaning or content:

Mr Talaat: Five. Are you sure?

Muhammed : Yes.

The teacher elicited more through a combination of F-move elaboration and questioning;

Mr Talaat: OK.

How many ركعة

(bows as in prayer)

Muahmmed: Seventeen.

The teacher continued to interact with the students and maintain the conversation. At the same time, ideas about this particular issue continued to be developed and the students appeared to express their genuine views. Meaning was taken into account in this extract. The teacher did not correct the students, but scaffolded the students' participation in the interactions even though the students contributed only brief responses, mostly in the form of a single word, which might have reflected their reluctance to use English.

In another dialogue, Mr Morsi used F-move discoursal elaboration. This TT was generated in the Year 11 classroom in Al-Asalah school. The teacher explained a reading text titled, 'My family tree'. The following extract illustrates the use of F-move discourse elaboration.

*Extract 12*

Mr Morsi: My family, ok. What is the first thing that comes to your mind when we say the word "my family", ha?

Yaseen: Mother.

In the above conversation, the teacher initiated the interaction with a question. The student quickly responded as expected to the teacher's question. A compliment preceded the F-move elaboration and the teacher sought to elicit more participation:

Mr Morsi: Good, mother. What else?

Salem: Father.

The F-move elaboration continued with a specific expression from the teacher, following which students continued to contribute:

Mr Morsi: Yes, good. Ha?

Abdullah: Brother and sister.

The F-move repetition and F-move elaboration were applied here:

Mr Morsi: Brother and sister, ha? What else?

Abdulaziz: Cousin.

Attention then switched from the spoken to the written form. Then, there was more F-move elaboration:

> Mr Morsi: A cousin, yes. Who can write cousin? Yes please. Write in this part! Who can write mother? Yes here and there? (The teacher is directing students at the board). Ok thank you. What else. Thank you. What else?
>
> Thamer: Grandfather

The teacher expanded the ideas contributed by the students and increased their ability to spell and write down the common vocabulary on this particular topic. The trigger for elaboration ('what else?') clearly indicated that the students were expected to suggest more words/phrases, although not in a complete sentence.

A dialogue between Mr Adel and his students provides more evidence of the use of F-move discoursal elaboration. The data were generated from the Year 12 classroom of Al-Noor School. The teacher explained a reading text titled, 'Study and life at university'. The following extract illustrates the F-move discourse elaboration.

*Extract 13*

> Mr Adel: Hmm? After leaving secondary school. After finishing studying at this school? What are you going to do? Not today, but at the end of the year. What are you going to do? Ha?
>
> Ryan: University.

The teacher initiated the interaction with a new topic related to studying at university. The questions were rephrased for the students to make them more understandable. The student responded with a single word.

> Mr Adel: You will join to university.
>
> Ryan: Yeah.

The teacher then completed the word and used F-move elaboration to sustain the topic:

> Mr Adel: OK. In your opinion, ha? Can you tell me? Can you show that to me? What is the difference between university life and school life? Are they the same?

Ryan: No, teacher in school and doctor in university.

The teacher adopted the F-move elaboration in the form of sentence rephrasing. He modified the question and used other means to enhance the students' understanding of the answer to the previous question:

Mr Adel: Where is your school? At your hometown. OK? What about university? Yes, Walid? Ha? In any?

Walid: Hafr Al-Batin.

From this interaction it can be seen that the teacher's attempt to encourage the students' to become involved in elaborating ideas and maintaining conversation was effective. The teacher rephrased some expressions and encouraged the student to share ideas. This produced a positive outcome from the student Walid. However, the students' responses were still mostly one word. This suggests that F-move elaboration is a successful technique. The added values were negotiated feedback, idea expansion, and maintaining teacher-learner interaction. These three elements are actually interrelated, indicating that when the teachers provided negotiated feedback in TT, the ideas were elaborated and the conversations were sustained.

Some aspects of this interaction could, however, have been improved. For instance, the teacher's efforts around idea expansion could have been more dynamic and the students' responses were too short.

### 5.1.5 F-move discoursal reformulation

F-move discoursal reformulation feedback is usually used for rephrasing sentences in order to clarify their meaning to students (extract 14) and for correcting the students' responses indirectly (extract 15).

F-move discoursal reformulation was used by two teachers in two different lessons I observed. One of these was Mr Motwally and his Year 11 class at Al-Asalah school, which has been previously discussed in another extract in this chapter. The teacher explained grammar (present simple). The conversation below represents F-move discourse reformulation.

*Extract 14*

Mr Motwally: And you? Hmm? And you?

Faleh: He asking about chil...children

The teacher asked a question to trigger student's motivation to create a sentence and then the student produced the sentence. However, the student's construction was incorrect, and the teacher reformulated it.

Mr Motwally: How many children do you have? How many children do you have? Excellent. Ammar, He is asking about what?

Ammar: Work.

F-move elaboration was also observed in the form of confirmation check:

Mr Motwally: Work. Like what?

Ammar: About salary

Mr Motwally: Yeah. About salary. What else?

Ammar: Shift.

Mr Motwally: Shift. Hmm? Like?

Ammar: How many hours he's at work.

F-Move Formulation was again used here to correct the sentence and produce the correct one:

Mr Motwally: How many hours does he work? Yeah. Excellent.

هذه ال

(This is)

Communications

يا ولاد المهارات اللي

احنا نتعلمها في حياتنا- مش احنا بنجلس مع بعض

في مقعد– بنفضل كلنا نسأل بعض و نسولف مع

بعض. هذه الحاجات اللي بنسأل فيها بعض

(Oh boys, these skills we learn in our life -we sit together - we ask each other - we talk with each other- this is the things that we ask each other with).

Are you married? OK? Your salary is good or not? How many children? I have one. I have just only one.

الحمد لله علي النعمة.

(We thank God on his grace)

OK. OK? Today's next step talking about what? Grammar present simple. Present simple. What's the meaning of present simple? No need to speak in Arabic in grammar. Listen to me and try to guess. OK? Every day I get up early. I get up early. I get up. I get up. Ha?

Students: Early.

From the above interactions, it can be seen that the teacher rephrased the students' answers. The students adopted the re-phrased sentence and used it in their response. The teacher re-uttered the students' short responses and re-cast a complete sentence with the same question. Due to a clear reformulation, students were able to progress in the interaction. The rephrased sentence was recognised successfully by students. Mr Motwally's first move was a display question, and his F-move was corrective feedback and recast.

Evidence of reformulation can also be found in extract 15 from Mr Talaat's classroom. The class is year 11 at Al-Asalah school. The following extract illustrates F-move discourse reformulation.

*Extract 15*

Mr Talaat: My brother has one son and my sister has two?

Zayed: Son.

Mr Talaat: Two daughters.

In this conversation, Mr Talaat initiated interaction with cued elicitation and the student Zayed completed the sentence. Mr Talaat reformulated the student's answer and asked the other students to apply their knowledge to construct similar sentences on their own:

Mr Talaat: My grandfather has many grandchildren sons and daughters (brothers and sisters). Try to talk about your family tree. Try to ask your

classmate questions! If you do not know, you do not have to. Pay attention to my diagram, try to design your own family tree from your mind, your own family tree.

Naif: My grandfather's name is Mohammed and he married to my grandmother.

F-move reformulation took place in the form of repair. The student noticed what the teacher said and reapplied it in his uptake (response):

Mr Talaat: He is married.

Naif: His son is my father who is Garir and he is married to my mother. My father has three uncles… three brothers. They are my uncles.

Mr Talaat: Very good.

Naif: My mother has five sisters and they are my aunts. My father has one son and two daughters. I have two sisters. My sister has one brother. My father do not have any grandchildren.

The F-move elaboration was used here to maintain the same topic. Again, the instruction was given and the student constructed a new sentence:

Mr Talaat: Very good. Thanks. May I ask you, Khalid? How many grandfathers do you have?

Khalid: One grandfather and one grandmother. My grandfather married to my grandmother. And he have three sons and three daughters.

Mr Talaat: Very good. Wait I want one of you to ask him about his family. And he there will answer your questions. They will ask you and you will answer their questions. Try to ask him Ayman.

Ayman: How many uncles your father has?

Khalid: Ah, three uncles

Mr Talaat: Ayman! How many uncles do you have?

Ayman: How many uncles do you have?

Mr Talaat's reformulation corrected Ayman's expression. This case is different from the previous extract in that the students Naif, Khalid and Ayman did attempt to practise the

model provided by the teacher, but the student Zayed did not. This was possibly because Zayed might not have noticed the recast. Mr Talaat's F-moves were reformulations of his students' language forms.

It is clear from the above extracts that the F-move reformulation maximised the potency of the use of indirect corrective feedback. The teachers' reformulations stimulated more student uptakes. Students were also responsive, although the responses were relatively concise and took the form of fragmented sentences. However, the interactions with F-move reformulation still produced more lengthy exchanges and turn-taking.

From all the F-move extracts presented above, it can be concluded that the majority of TT was corrective feedback, especially indirect corrective feedback: recast and negotiation for meaning. The former was used to draw attention to aspects of language correction and the latter was used to create meaningful interactions, ignoring grammatical aspects, for communicative purposes. In the data, recast (indirect corrective feedback focused on form) outnumbered negotiation for meaning. The former was strongly indicated in F-move repetitions and F-move elaborations, whereas the latter was strongly associated with F-move reformulations. Both of them were performed indirectly, meaning that they were repaired or reconstructed with or without interlocutors' consciousness.

Direct corrective feedback was uttered straightforwardly by the teachers to highlight when a correction was required. The correction usually concerned grammatical issues, thereby demonstrating the high value teachers placed on grammatical competence. Direct corrective feedback was represented in the data via F-move evaluations.

Focusing on form was prominent because the role of accuracy of language production seems to have outweighed the role of fluency in classroom language teaching. This is seen in the numerous metalinguistic explanations embedded in the TT. Following corrective feedback, TT usually functioned to explain knowledge about language and to encourage learners to place such new knowledge into practice. At the same time, the TT became the conduit for modelling ideal models of English language through corrections.

The second most frequently used form of TT was categorised as display type questions. This type of question is often considered the most effective for assessing students' learning of the teaching materials. It is crucial for teachers using this type of inquiry to ensure that taught knowledge has been absorbed by students. The limitation of this strategy is that it imposes constraints on the ability to expand and promote interactive communication because

this kind of question is ineffective in encouraging dialogic talk. Moreover, this type of question usually involves lower-order thinking. As such, students can answer the question without thinking aloud. As a result, their responses might not result in successful long-term learning because they do not necessarily apply their knowledge and skills at their maximum capacity.

In summary, these two patterns were emergent themes in the data and therefore warranted closer scrutiny. Specifically, these patterns were: the dominance of corrective feedback and questions in TT. In relation to the former, indirect corrective feedback was more prevalent than direct corrective feedback; such indirect corrective feedback was recast and negotiated for meaning. The indirect corrective feedback was more intensive than the direct corrective feedback. In relation to the latter, display questions occurred more frequently in classroom teacher-learner interactions than inferential questions, which occurred rarely in TT in this study.

The next sub-section addresses the second part of the first research question: To what extent can the influence of this teacher talk be attributed to the culturally embedded learning particularities of the students?

### 5.2 TT and the Culturally-embedded Learning Particularities of Students

Teachers and their talk are culturally embedded, and TT and the learning particularities of students are mutually constituted. TT clearly influences how students' learning particularities are shaped in the classroom. This section presents findings in relation to the particularities of TT and their relationship with the learning particularities of students that are associated with culture. These are:

1. The students' willingness to communicate (WTC) in English is low, so that teachers' talking time (TTT) tends to exceed students' talking time. This is indicated by three characteristics of teacher talk, namely, the use of L1 in students' responses, the use of L1 in teachers' instructions, and teachers' frequent use of F-move elaboration.
2. Corrective feedback (both direct and indirect) and non-inferential (display) questions were used frequently throughout TT. The first appeared regularly in the form of F-moves such as F-move repetition, F-move evaluation, F-move elaboration and F-move reformulation, whereas the other corrective feedback emerged out of this category of TT.

3. Grammatical competence with the language system (metalinguistic knowledge) dominated other competences (such as strategic and discursive competences). In other words, linguistic competence was consistently valued over strategic and discursive competences in teacher talk.

### 5.2.1 Low willingness of students to communicate in English

This first learning particularity indicates that the students did not use the opportunity to use English rather than Arabic (L1) in the classroom context in responding to the teacher's F-move (extract 16). In addition, the students relied excessively on code-switching that did not stimulate further interaction (extract 17).

The following conversations between Mr Morsi and his students further illustrate the students' unwillingness to communicate in English. The data were generated from Year 10 at Al-Asalah school. The lesson was about direct and indirect questions and discussion of a reading text. The following extract illustrates students' responses in L1.

*Extract 16*

Mr Morsi: OK. Can you tell me where Hafar Al-batin is? Those are two different types of questions. One of them is direct the other is indirect. We have direct and indirect. What's the meaning of direct? Direct. Yes?

Jaber: "مباشر

(Direct)

The response was in L1';

Mr Morsi: Excellent. So, indirect means what? Indirect?

Mashari: "غيرمباشر (indirect)

F-move elaboration was used by the teacher to invite more responses from the students;

Mr Morsi: Excellent. We have two types of questions. The first one is direct, the second one is indirect. Who can figure out the differences between them? Who can say the difference between them? Who can tell me the difference between the first and the second question? Yes?

Mashari:

السؤال

الاول

اعطاك .."

(The first question: He gave you the answer)

After giving a compliment, the teacher provided another explanation. He also used rephrasing of questions. The responses were still in the students' L1:

Mr Morsi: "Can you tell me in English please? In English? Try to say it in English please. Yes? Try to say it in English. OK, no problem. No problem. Say it in Arabic. *OK.*

Qasim: "السؤال

الأول

اعطاك

إياها

'مباشر.'

سألك

عن

"المكان"

A student interprets what his classmate said:

(Direct! He gives you the answer for the first question).

(He asked you about the place!).

Mr Morsi: OK, the second one?

Meshal; "لكن السؤال الثاني يقول لك 'تقدر تخبرني يعني وين بتكون حفر الباطن؟'

(The second question: Can you tell me where is Hafr Al-Batin?)

The teacher tried to insist on the use of English in the classroom interaction. The students still used their L1 in responding to the teacher's invitation. Despite his efforts at simplification, with many re-phrasings, the students still did not use English. More interestingly, the teacher seemed to view the students' responses as entirely normal and the interaction proceeded smoothly.

Another example can be found in the interaction between Mr Soheel (extract 17) and his students. The class is year 12 at Al-Shamal School. The teacher explained new vocabulary that was written on the white board. The following extract shows how code-switching between L1 and L2 was used in the teacher's instructions.

Extract 17

Mr Soheel: Microwave.

دائماً نسميه (We always call it) Microwave

اسمه (We call it) Microwave- microwave.

Students: Microwave

Both the teacher and students used L1. The teacher code-switched with English to introduce a new vocabulary and the students repeated the word.

Mr Soheel: Oven. يعني (we call it oven) similar to microwave

تحط

داخلها

اشياء

وتسخنها

(You may heat food inside that oven).

Students: فرن؟ (Oven)

Students: حق

التسخين

(It is used for heating)

There was no clear gaol to generate interaction in this extract; students merely responded to Mr Soheel in the Arabic language. In addition, their responses were usually in the form of single words. Mr Soheel continued reciting the new words using Arabic, and the students repeated after him:

Mr Soheel: فرن.

(Oven)

وشو؟ (what?)

Students; فرن. (Oven)

Mr Soheel:; فرن(It is called Oven).

Students*:* فرن(Oven)

The interaction above shows a good flow of conversation between students and teachers. However, the conversation did not allow dialogic talk to occur as students kept saying the word in the L1 rather than the L2.

### 5.2.2 Dominant indirect corrective feedback and display questions

Recast or indirect corrective feedback occurs when the feedback is not really noticed; it is unlikely that learning will occur as a result of this move. This feedback was usually embedded in F-moves of repetition and reformulation. It is ineffective if a student cannot maximise the proffered feedback to promote learning. The teacher also used display questions when exploring students' understanding of the material being taught to examine students' comprehension of the learning objects, as can be seen in extracts 18 and 19. Teachers used indirect corrective feedback to correct their students' mistakes indirectly, and they used display questions to explore students' understanding of what was being taught. There was a link between display questions and indirect corrective feedback, since teachers only used correction after they had ascertained the extent of students' understanding of the material.

The following conversations between Mr Farhan and his student Fahad were observed and illustrate this point. The data were generated in Year 11 at Al-Atlal School. The teacher explained a grammar point to his students. The following extract illustrates the use of corrective feedback in association with F-move repetition.

*Extract 18*

Mr Farhan: Yes. You answer? My clothes are dirty. Ha? I must.

Fahad: Have.

Mr Farhan: Yes. Have.

Fahad: Clean.

Repetition also occurred in the following TT.

Mr Farhan: Hmm, I must have.

Fahad: I must have….

The student tried to complete the sentence:

Mr Farhan: Yes. Ha…Complete!

Fahad: I must have them…

Another F-move repetition from the teacher took place:.

Mr Farhan: Yes. I must have them….

Fahad: Cleaned.

The teacher repeated the verb, but did not give the student additional knowledge about how to create an ideal sentence. It can be seen that the teacher only indirectly indicated that students should create ideal sentences by repeating the verb instead of giving them additional knowledge.

Mr Farhan: Cleaned.

Fahad: استاذ

Cleaned.

تجي

مع

ed

(Teacher: cleaned comes with– ed).

The teacher talk was mostly indirect corrective feedback (recast). The feedback did not directly revise the error but repeated what the student achieved in order to maintain the conversation. The repetition functioned as a stimulus for the student to maintain the interaction and provided some missing knowledge so that the student also learned concurrently.

Mr Talaat also used indirect corrective feedback in his Year 12 classroom at Al-Asalah school. The following extract was a conversation between Mr Talaat and his students Saleh and Shaker.

*Extract 19*

Mr Talaat: How to be a good lover. Ha?

Saleh: Song a sing

Mr Talaat: Sing a song! Are you sure? Can you sing a song?

Saleh: No

Mr Talaat: Why?

Saleh: I…

Mr Talaat: So you are not a good lover?

Saleh: I say the love words like 'I love you'. Because the girls love words.

Mr Talaat: I say the romantic words such as I love you, because girls love the romantic words. Very good, but what is better? Is to say or to do things? Ha (yes)!

Saleh: Say.

Mr Talaat: Say! You mean I just tell her that I love you and then I kick her?

Saleh: No.

Mr Talaat: What is the benefit of words without action? Nothing!

Saleh: Nothing!

Mr Talaat: Ok now! What do you think is better ha (yes)? Words or Actions...? Ha (yes).

Saleh: Both of them… Actions.

Mr Talaat: Both actions and words, well I think, actions speak louder words. Actions ha (yes)? Actions speak louder than words. What is better now? Which is the most important? To say sweet things? Or to do sweet things? What is better for you Saleh? Saleh: To do.

Mr Talaat: To do sweet things! OK. Again what is better for you, is it to talk to you in a good way and harm you? Or to deal with you in a good way?

Saleh: In a good way.

Mr Talaat: To deal with you in a good way. OK. The first one, to be a good singer as you said 'to say sweet words', if you want to do a good actions like what else?

Saleh: Flowers.

Mr Talaat: Give flowers. Good!

Saleh: And gifts.

Mr Talaat: Give gifts. Can. Can. Can you love me and give me flowers and gifts? Saleh [laughing]: Yes.

Mr Talaat: OK. How can you be a good lover? By the way, when I said to be a good lover, what comes to your mind? Is it the love between a boyfriend and girlfriend only or the love in general? Yes, Shaker!

Shaker: In general!

Mr Talaat: Good, I meant the love in general meaning. How to be a good lover to your mother! How to be a good lover to your father, to your friends, how to be a good lover to your God, how to be a lover to your prophet. I meant the general meaning. Not the specific meaning. OK.

Shaker: The general meaning.

This long extract shows that Mr Talaat rephrased the student's answer. The teacher used indirect corrective feedback as recast and reformulation. He reused the student's short response and rebuilt/rephrased it as a complete answer and he also used questions to refer to the knowledge being taught and examine the students' responses to see if all of them understood.

### 5.2.3 Over-valuing grammatical competence

The teachers in this study traditionally prioritised grammatical competence, as was evident in some of the previous and following extracts. If genuine interaction could not be achieved, classroom interaction was characterised by explanations. Such explanations usually provided knowledge about language using one of the core declarative skills of EFL teachers.

The following conversations between Mr Jameel and his students demonstrate this point. These data were collected from Year 10 at Al-Shamal school. The teacher explained a grammar point (past passive). The extract below illustrates TT with dense grammatical knowledge via F-move elaboration:

*Extract 20*

Mr Jameel: OK, what can you discover, what can you …?

Abdulrahman: Understand!

Mr Jameel: Understand from these two passages. What kind of grammar we have studied in these two passages?

Muhammed:

بدأ

ب

Past passive

(The passage started with past passive)

Grammatical explanation was given here. The teacher ended with an instruction:

Mr Jameel: Very good! Past passive, past passive. There are many different sentences is started with past passive … Who can make a sentence of his own? Any sentence! Yes, Salah! Say any sentence!

Salah:

لم

افهم

السؤال

(I did not understand the question).

Mr Jameel: Any sentence?

Salah: The door was opened by Ahmed

Mr Jameel: Very good, who can make another sentence?

Majed: Anwar was born in Hafr Al-Batin.

Mr Jameel: Look at this sentence! (Writes a sentence on the board). Who can read this sentence, Ali? Ali Hassan! Ha!

Ali: The boy bought a story

Mr Jameel: The boy bought a story, the boy bought a story. What kind of tense was used in this sentence? Present simple, past simple, present perfect, past perfect? What tense was used in this sentence ... Moflih (name of student)! Ha! Look at the verb, what is the verb tense? Look at the verb, what is the verb in the sentence? What is the verb?

Moflih: Bought?

Mr Jameel: Bought is the verb, what is the subject?

Moflih: The boy.

A display question with F-move elaboration followed:

Mr Jameel: OK, the boy is the subject. This is an active sentence or a passive sentence? This is an active sentence or a passive?

Majed: Active!

This extract illustrates a dense grammar interaction with questions that represent F-move elaboration. The teacher talk emphasises the language system. The teacher used input enhancement with a display question to allow the students to think aloud, providing a clue about the kind of verb that was appropriate. The student gave insufficient information; the teacher then explained the language aspect more thoroughly, making sure that the student had absorbed the relevant knowledge.

In another class, Mr Abdulnasser also gave grammatical explanations and instructions to his students Akram and Khalid by using inferential questions.

*Extract 21*

Mr Abdulnasser:

احد/

يعرف

يجيبلى

Verb

اخره/

Y

ويكون

قبله

حرف

ساكن؟

Consonant?

Who can say a verb ends with a consonant and Y?

Akram: I brought.

Mr Abdulnasser: Stand up please, brought.

دى

(This) Irregular verb

اخره

*Y*

ويكون

قبله

حرف

ساكن?

I said a verb ends with a consonant and y.

طيب أنا عاوز أقولكم د/ محمد درس فى الخارج

I want to say Dr. Mohammad Studied abroad?

Akaram: Study

Mr Abdulnasser: Study, very good.

طب لما أقول

Dr. Mohammad…

ايه

كمل

لو

سمحت

Alright! When I say Dr. Mohammad … what? Continue! Use that verb please?

Akram: Studied

Mr Abdulnasser: Dr Mohammad (study- studied) in America last year.

هنا الصح فين

Study او studied.

Which one is correct, study or studied?

Kkalid: Studied.

Mr Abdulnasser: طب ليه

study?

ما أخدش

only

y

Khalid: لأنه

(Because it is)

a past simple.

Analysis of the interactions between teachers and their students presented in this section indicates that the occurrences were not incidental; rather, they emanated from underlying sets of explainable arguments. The prevalence of these three particularities - students' low willingness to communicate, the frequent use of corrective feedback and the prioritising of grammatical competence with the language system (metalinguistic knowledge) – indicates their acceptance and relevance in this educational and research context.

**5.3 Conclusion**

This chapter has shown how TT and the learning particularities of the students are inextricably linked. An examination of the data showed how the teachers and learners work within the cultural particularities of the classroom, a topic that will be further explored in the following chapters. Similar TT patterns or interactional sequences are often reproduced in different classrooms by different participants. The research encountered many examples of the same F-move occurring in different contexts and with different recipients.

The key findings in relation to the nature of TT are the dominance of indirect corrective feedback, such as recast and negotiated feedback, over direct corrective feedback, and the prevalence of non-inferential questions in TT. In relation to learning particularities, it was found that the use of L1 in students' responses and teacher instruction may contribute to

the level of willingness of learners to use English. The prioritising of indirect corrective feedback over direct feedback raises questions about the influence of sociocultural factors. Finally, the high value placed by teachers on grammatical competence is a phenomenon that warrants further analysis. All of these findings will be further elaborated, explicated and discussed in Chapter 8. The next chapter presents findings related to the learning opportunities created by teachers and the teacher characteristics that shaped their approach to managing classroom discourse.

# Chapter 6

# Findings: Creating Learning Opportunities

Chapter 5 presented findings related to Research Question 1, which focused on the particularities of teacher talk (TT) and the relationship between TT and the cultural learning particularities of students. This chapter six addresses Research Question 2, which focuses on learning opportunities created by teachers in the Saudi school context. Data relevant to this Research Question were derived from audio recordings of classroom discourse and interviews with teachers.

The chapter is divided into two main sections. Section 6.1 presents findings on the learning opportunities created by teachers. These findings were divided into four major themes, which were then divided into a number of smaller sub-themes: engaging students to interact in the classroom; promoting learners' autonomy; raising students' awareness of their classmates' different cultural values; and finally, maximizing learning opportunities. Section 6.2 summarises these findings and integrates them to prosecute an argument across the thesis.

## 6.1 Learning Opportunities created by Teachers

As explained in Chapter 3, my analysis of the effect of TT on classroom dynamics drew on the 10 macro strategies proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2003). Four of these 10 macro strategies were present in my data, and these became the focus of analysis here. These four strategies were negotiated interaction facilitation, promoting learners' autonomy, raising cultural awareness, and maximising learning opportunities. These four macro strategies are embedded in Kumaravadivelu's post-method approach, which assumes that there is no particular 'best' method; rather, a teacher needs to take account of the teaching and learning context, learners' characteristics, and other influential factors. Rather than relying on one particular method, attention shifts to the ways in which components of teaching can be optimised for utmost effectiveness. This brings into view the micro components of teaching and learning, particularly teacher-learner interaction, and their implications for quality improvement (Kumaravadivelu 2003). Cullen's (2002) theoretical framework also informed some aspects of the analysis.

All the 27 classroom lessons were recorded and subsequently transcribed and coded. I applied topic coding, using the four macro strategies that were present in my data as a guide

to developing categories, as explained in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. Cross-category comparison was then used to generate themes relevant to the research question.

Extracts from both classroom discourse and teacher interviews are presented to support the developing interpretation.

### 6.1.1 Negotiated interaction facilitation

Negotiated interaction facilitation is defined as a set of macro strategies that encourage turn taking in meaning-making in the form of interactional activities. These strategies include: modification, clarification and requisition of input (Kumaravadivelu 1994). In this study, the strategies were present in some of the teacher talk in classrooms. The various means of negotiated interaction facilitation employed by the teachers are elaborated in the following sub-sections.

#### 6.1.1.1 Students' proficiency in pronunciation and teachers' role in correction

During the lesson, teachers often corrected their students' pronunciation. In these interactions, the teachers demonstrated a high level of proficiency in correctly modelling the correct pronunciation. In negotiated interaction facilitation, proficiency of pronunciation was prioritised for quality improvement.

As noted earlier, I observed 27 classroom lessons involving three different cohorts of students - Grade 10, Grade 11 and Grade 12 - in 6 different secondary schools. In interview, the teachers emphasised the importance of correcting students' pronunciation, and the classroom observations provided numerous examples. Teachers demonstrated their mastery of English pronunciation by modelling correct pronunciation and correcting their students' mistakes. The following dialogue between Mr Morsi (teacher) and Ahmed (student) provides evidence of this type of teaching. This conversation took place in Year 10 at Al-Asalah school. The lesson focused on direct and indirect questions and the discussion was based on a reading text.

*Extract 22*

> Mr Morsi: Number two. Question number two. Question number two. Two.
>
> Ahmed: How much does this T-shirt cost?

In this dialogue, the teacher instructed Ahmed to read the question, and he did so. In order to model ideal pronunciation, Mr Morsi repeated the sentence and added another sentence:

Mr Morsi**:** How much does this T-shirt cost? This is the question. How can I add 'do you know*?*'

After this, Ahmed repeated the new sentence Mr Morsi had added. When Ahmed was repeating 'Do you know…?', he pronounced "know" with the 'k' audible. In an attempt to correct Ahmed, Mr Morsi said, 'No, it is "know" not "Know" [with the 'k' clearly enunciated]. The 'k' is silent'.

Having been corrected by his teacher, Ahmed was able to pronounce "know" without the 'k' sound. In the above dialogue, the F-move repetition was applied twice and the language was presented as a system. The teacher was clearly aware of the student's mispronunciation. The model sentence was presented straightforwardly with a brief clue as to the ideal way to pronounce the word 'know'. I observed from the dialogue that Mr. Morsi was highly skilled in English pronunciation.

Another exchange between Mr. Sami (teacher) and Ali (student) also involved proficiency of pronunciation and teacher correction of the student's pronunciation. Ali was a student in Grade 10 at Al-Noor School. The lesson was about transportation around the world. At the end of the lesson, the teacher gave his students some activities related to pronunciation using the smart board.

*Extract 23*

Mr. Sami initiated the interaction with the question, 'Who likes chilli?' and Ali responded only with the subject 'I'. In correcting Ali, Mr. Sami used F-move repetition to model the sentence. Mr. Sami said; 'I like chilli?' Ali responded: 'I'

Again, Ali responded only with the subject. In order to ascertain whether the student knew what a chilli was, Mr. Sami listed some foods on the board and asked Ali to say which of them contains chilli? The items were sandwich, soda, peach, watermelon, soup.

Ali said 'soup' (which he pronounced as 'soap') to contribute to the interaction. Mr Sami provided the ideal pronunciation of this word: 'Not "soap", "Soup". "Soup"'.

This dialogue shows the teacher was quite strict in relation to phonology. This technique confirms his identity as a teacher who can provide the best model and the learners used the model demonstrated by the teacher to practise. They demonstrated awareness of any mispronunciations among their classmates and immediately produced more proficient linguistic models.

### 6.1.1.2 Varying repertoires of teacher talk

Various forms of TT related to learning were noted during the observations. For example, teachers were found to use open-ended questions and to repeat students' answers verbatim, praising and encouraging students. Teachers' ability to develop students' dialogic skills was observed in two cases. These two teachers used referential questions, which encouraged the students to actively participate in lessons.

The following extract provides evidence of these strategies. This is a conversation between Mr Talaat and his students in Year 11 in Al-Asalah school. The teacher opened the discussion with his student Faisal by asking open-ended questions. In the following dialogue, Mr Talaat used referential questions to invite longer turn-taking, develop the conversation and encourage student participation.

*Extract 24*

Mr Talaat: OK. Ha, Feisal? When did you get up today?

Faisal: at seven o'clock.

In this dialogue, Mr Talaat initiated the interaction with a referential/open-ended question and Faisal responded briefly. To encourage participation, Mr Talaat repeated the sentence, complimenting Faisal. The teacher continued to ask Faisal open-ended questions:

Mr Talaat: Very good, at seven o'clock. What is your car colour? What is your car's colour?

Faisal: Red.

Mr Talaat: Red, very good. What is your car brand? What is your car brand?

Faisal: Toyota.

Mr Talaat continued asking open-ended questions and the dialogue pushed the student to talk. The repetition and open-ended questions enabled Faisal to introduce new words into the conversation.

Similarly, in the following conversation between Mr Talaat and Khalid, a student in year 12 at Al-Asalah school, the topic of the lesson was 'Being a good man'. Mr Talaat used the same principle to encourage and help Khalid to participate, learn and generate new words:

Mr Talaat: Ha? What else? What else can you do Khalid?

Khalid: Donate money.

Following this, Mr Talaat used an elaboration technique in the form of a question to help the student expand his response:

Mr Talaat: Donate money. Very good. Ha? To donate money.

Khalid: [elaborating] To give money to the poor.

From this conversation, it can be seen that repetition of questions and elaborations helped students to construct a new word or sentence while expanding on their previous sentence.

In another conversation between Mr Talaat and his student Deyab, the repetition strategy was used to encourage learning. The teacher also used reformulation of questions to help Deyab learn and talk:

Mr Talaat: Give money to the poor or poor people. Ha? Reading. Reading. Ha? Reading. Reading can make you a good man, yes or no Deyab?

Deyab: Yes.

The following dialogue between Mr Hadi and his students Basheer, Abdulrahman, and Abduallah provides further evidence. Mr Hadi and his students were interacting about the benefit of grammar in learning the English language, then moved on to talk about how to change a verb to a noun (gerund). Mr Hadi was teaching Year 12 students at Al-Asalah school. He initiated the talk by asking an open-ended question about the lesson's topic:

*Extract 25*

Mr. Hadi: OK, what does grammar help me to do? OK. Grammar, helps me… grammar helps me? Ha, talk? Talk, ha? Talk well, yes talks well

The student Basheer repeated what Mr Hadi had said: 'talk well'.

Mr. Hadi repeated what Basheer had said and tried indirectly to allow Basheer to come up with the word's synonym: 'Speak well'. Basheer repeated: 'Speak well'.

Mr. Hadi asked another student: 'Okay, grammar helps me to be, to be إيه? (What) Ha?

Student Abdulrahman answered: Accurate.

Mr Hadi replied by repeating what the student had said: 'Yes, برافوا (bravo) to be accurate, accurate', and the student Abdularaman repeated: 'Accurate'.

Mr. Hadi repeated the word again loudly to allow the whole class to repeat the word 'accurate', and the students did so.

Mr. Hadi asked his students to open their books. He selected one student to read a particular sentence on page 14**:** 'Everyone, open your text books to page 14, text books to page 14, page 14, OK look here, look here, excuse me Abdullah read this sentence'.

Abdullah read: Studying is hard but inter… inter… interestin … (Abdullah mispronounces the word interesting).

Mr. Hadi then corrected the student's pronunciation: 'interesting'. Abdullah repeated**:** 'interesting'. Mr Hadi asked his student to repeat again: 'again, again'. Abdullah repeated correctly**: '**Studying is hard but interesting'.

In these dialogues, it can be seen that the teacher began the interaction with an open question that was related to the topic but which was not limited to a particular expected answer. He repeated the students' answers verbatim, praising and encouraging them. The students responded with various ideas and the teacher kept elaborating the talk. This sequence shows that the conversation was successful in giving learners' space to join the classroom interaction and also demonstrates the teacher's ability to develop students' dialogic skills successfully.

There was evidence for the use of open-ended questions, verbatim repetition of students' answers, and praise and encouragement, as well as successful development of students' dialogic skills, in the following conservation between another teacher, Mr Sunhat, and his student Khalil. The data were obtained from Year 10 in Al-Shorooq school through observation. The lesson was a reading text titled 'Seeing the world', with attention to new words and some grammar.

In this conversation, the teacher used repetition to negotiate feedback on both form and meaning.

*Extract 26*

Mr Sunhat: I would like to go to…, sorry…, I would like to go to… – choose your place- because I, ha [ yes, who can answer?] I would like to go to…, the same example here yes ha yes? Ha, who can give me example here, yes, ha… no writing, speaking only.

Khalil: I would like to go to Japan…to

In this dialogue, Mr Sunhat initially used an F-move repetition to showcase the model. Then he asked for another example. This instruction was non-referential, requiring information from sources other than the learning materials. The student did well to complete the sentence. Following Khalil's reply, Mr Sunhat again used F-move repetition to solicit more general information about it:

Mr Sunhat: Ha…ha… to Japan, excellent...because……

Khalil: Because I like see the culture.

Mr Sunhat [correcting]: I would like to see…

Khalil [completing the sentence]: Because I would like to see the culture.

Here, repetition is used but this time Mr Sunhat focused on form by correcting what the student had produced. This repetition, however, only helps students to construct a grammatically correct sentence, and is a form of TT that does not allow dialogic learning to occur. Mr Sunhat also used compliments:

I would like to see …what are there? Culture, excellent.

In these examples, the teacher provided verbatim repetition. He did not give any grammatical explanation, but only a clue. He gave the student some space for correction and to raise the student's awareness of both form and meaning. The focus-on-form feedback is related to the use of 'would like to', whereas the focus-on-meaning is indicated by the use of the student's idea (Japan and culture). Both form and meaning were accommodated by the teacher's verbatim repetition.

There was similar evidence in the dialogue between Mr Adel and his student Ahmed in Year 12 at Al-Noor school. Mr Adel explained a reading text titled 'Study and life at university'. The extract shows how dialogic opportunities were optimised in teacher-learner interactions.

*Extract 27*

Mr Adel: OK. What subjects that you going to take at university? What about subjects at university? Can you tell me some subjects you want to study at university? Yes? Ahmed?

Ahmed: Subjects.

In the above dialogue, Mr. Adel paraphrased the sentence three times to ensure that the student understood the question. After Ahmed replied, Mr Adel used reformulation to correct Ahmed's sentence:

Mr Adel: You want to be a doctor?

Ahmed replied: Yes.

Mr Adel: Then the answer should be like that: ''I will take a medicine subjects such as surgery.

Ahmed: I will take a medicine subjects such as surgery.

The teacher also employed elaboration to ask another question:

Mr Adel: In your opinion, if you want to be a doctor, what subjects should you study? Which subject must you study if you want to be a doctor?? What subject at university? Give me a scientific subject like what?

Ahmed: Biology.

From this dialogue, it can be seen that the teacher used probing and encouraged the student to sustain the communication. He tried to develop the student's idea with an expectation that the student had some prior knowledge of the topic. The teacher again meaningfully probed the student's understanding about the subject. He emphasised the fact that the student's idea would be highly appropriate via the phrase 'in your opinion'. The student, however, only provided a one-word answer. This suggests that encouraging elaboration to occur through rephrasing the question did not allow dialogic learning to occur.

The dialogues indicate that open-ended questions, verbatim repetitions (both form- and meaning-focused feedback), praise and encouragement and the ability to promote dialogic skills positively contribute to negotiated interaction. They are interdependent and essential for meaning-making in classroom interaction. However, in this case, these types of TT were not successful in encouraging dialogic learning.

### 6.1.1.3 Teaching strategies to promote student interaction and risk-taking

This section describes the strategic pedagogy underpinning teacher talk. The teachers used appropriate teaching techniques to plan and implement their lessons. Again, they instilled confidence in the learners in the classroom, which helped the students to grasp the content of the particular lesson. The following dialogue between Mr Hadi and his student Rashed from Year 10 in Al-Asalah school provides an example. The teacher explained some new words in a reading text related to travel for the purpose of pilgrimage. The teacher demonstrated the ability to implement an appropriate teaching strategy, such as peer or group discussion, as illustrated below.

*Extract 28*

> Mr Hadi: We will work in groups, each group leader will give us the ideas, give us ideas! Write down the ideas on a piece of paper! Then collect your ideas! And someone will talk about this.
>
> [to Rashed]: Where is your piece of paper you are going to write on? Write your ideas and share with your friend, try to discuss that.
>
> Rashed: Sure I will…

In the above dialogue, the teacher provided instruction on how the students can develop a dialogue. The student's response remained brief, but he demonstrated understanding, participated in the conversation with the teacher and followed up by engaging his friend Mohamed, as shown in the following example:

> Mr. Hadi [to all students]: Please stop and listen to Mohamed's idea, listen to Mohamed's ideas...
>
> Mohamed: [representing his group's idea]: Yes, they has travelled to Mecca.

Mr. Hadi tried using F-move reformulation to continue the conversation, accompanying this with a compliment*:* 'OK, Mohamed wants to say: My family has travelled to Mecca, Mohamed, 'bravo'. Mohamed endeavours to respond to the reformulation by saying, '*Perform* Hajj [pilgrimage]'.

Mr. Hadi then allowed students to form groups and discuss their reasons for traveling. They wrote down their ideas to answer the teacher's questions. From the beginning, the teacher accommodated students' initiatives. Strategic teaching was evident in the above extracts, as the teacher provided instruction to the class on how to participate in a group

discussion. Appropriate planning was reflected in provision of media (paper) and the imposition of a time restriction.

In another dialogue, Mr. Sami demonstrated similar skills in classroom organisation. The following extract is taken from a Year 11 class at Al-Noor school. The teacher started the interaction by encouraging students to use their imagination to talk about the topic of the lesson, 'Various types of transport around the world'. The teacher built confidence in the learners, as shown extract 29.

*Extract 29*

Mr. Sami: Just imagine. Use your imagination, how will (transportation) change in the next 50 years?

The students remained silent. This strategy to generate the talk from imagination initially appeared to surprise them, despite its intention to push them to talk and generate words.

Again Mr. Sami tried to facilitate this strategy and build confidence among his students by giving examples: 'In transportation in general. Cars, what will happen to cars?'

Students started to understand that they were required to participate by talking. One student, Ahmed, replied: 'Fly'.

In another instance, Mr. Sami maintained the interaction and invited students to respond accordingly. He started to build up the learners' confidence via an error-free zone that only required their imagination:

Mr. Sami: They will fly like hovercrafts maybe. What about trains?

Ahmed: Fly.

Mr. Sami: Fly, maybe. Use your imagination! Train will fly, OK Planes? Yes Ibrahim

The students felt more motivated and increasingly confident. They responded as shown here:

Ibrahim: Cars dive in the sea.

Haitham: More faster.

Mr. Sami: Cars will dive in the sea, maybe yes. Faster, but it is not safe. OK, what else?

These data demonstrate the teachers' pedagogical skills and their application in classroom teaching. In turn, the confidence of the learners appeared to be built up gradually through the quality of teacher talk.

These strategies used by teachers seemed to support students' ability to respond to the questions. However, as seen in the extracts, students were still reluctant, or were challenged to expand the conversation. They did answer the teachers' questions but the answers given tended to be very short. This kind of interaction was not an example of a communicative classroom.

#### 6.1.1.4 Teacher self-confidence and ability to manage the classroom

Teacher self-confidence and the ability to manage classrooms are two tangible factors that influence the availability of negotiation and facilitation in classroom interaction. Self-confidence here refers to the way in which teachers set up appropriate classroom activities to promote meaning-making. These attributes are illustrated in the following extracts.

The data in the first extract were generated from Year 12 in Al-Asalah school. After the teacher opened the discussion by asking a general question related to the topic of the lesson (Being a good man), he did not neglect to draw attention to aspects of grammar (use of 'do' 'make', for which Mr. Talaat gave examples). While the extract cited above illustrated Mr Talaat's skills in promoting learners' confidence, extract 30 focuses on teachers' confidence and its relationship to their ability to manage classrooms.

*Extract 30*

> Mr. Talaat: Do and make. Do and make and infinitive and gerund. When to use 'do' أو (or) when to use 'make'? Can you pick any word? Can you choose any word that goes with 'do' or 'make'?
>
> Omar: Do.
>
> Mr. Talaat: Ha [Yes]? OK. Do what? Do excuse, or do business or do good? Ha?[Yes]. Or do fun, or make fun? Or make business?
>
> Salman: Make good.

In order to get his point across, the teacher instructed students to produce a sentence containing the word:

> Mr. Talaat: Make good. Ha [Yes]? Put it in a sentence. جملة. Ha?

Omar: Make a good man.

Mr. Talaat: Again.

Salamn: Make a good man.

Mr. Talaat: Make a good man. Ahmed, can you check it? Is it right?

Ahmad: No, it is not.

Omar: We can use 'do'.

Mr. Talaat: Very good. Do good! I will do …Ha? [yes] good things. I will do my best. OK, next!

Teacher self-confidence and the ability to manage classrooms is also illustrated in extract 31. The data were generated from Mr Morsi's year 11 classroom in Al-Asalah school. The title of the lesson was 'The family tree'. The teacher demonstrated the ability to manage classrooms and confidence, especially when he involved his students in the lesson and used the four English skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening). In classroom management, inviting students to become involved in the learning process enabled them to produce output, as shown in the following extract.

*Extract 31*

Mr. Morsi: If I want to talk about brother and sister. They are called what? They are called what? Brother and sister! What are they? Ha!

Salem: Children?

Mr. Morsi: Children! Maybe, but I need another word. They are called what?

Abdulaziz: Sons?

Mr. Morsi: Sons! Ha [yes], they are called siblings, siblings. Come and write it on the board and read it again!

Abdulaziz [reading]: Siblings.

Mr Morsi: OK. If I want to talk about a brother and I want to talk about a sister. I imagine I'm a brother and I have a sister, our father calls us what? Our father calls us what?

Abdulaziz: Siblings.

Teacher Mr. Morsi: Yes, excellent. Siblings are sons and daughters. We are sons to father and mother or daughters to father and mother. OK.

If I'm talking about other category…a grandfather and a grandmother! We are what? Ha! A grandmother and a grandfather, we are what?

Thamer: Grandsons.

Mr. Morsi: Yes, that is right, come and write that on the board and read it.

Thamer [reading]: Grandsons.

Mr. Morsi: All of those are words related to family tree. OK, now we have a listening activity. We will listen to this tape again, and we will answer (fill in the table). [Mr. Morsi played the audio recording].

In summary, data analysis identified four dimensions in negotiated interaction facilitation: teachers' proficiency of pronunciation; use of open-ended questions, repetition of students' answers verbatim, praising and encouraging students; ability to devise an appropriate strategy, to plan the lesson, and to build learners' confidence; and teachers' self-confidence and ability to manage the classroom.

It can be inferred from the use of these micro strategies that, on a higher (macro) level, teachers in this study were adept at producing learning resources for the students via pedagogical skills, teaching methods, and linguistic properties required in language classrooms. However, on a micro level, they lacked potential for maximising teacher-learner talk and interactions. An important implication is that teacher talk promoted teaching activities in the classroom, but did not promote the dialogic skills of students. This finding also means that macro strategies did not fully drive teacher talk or interactions to improve students' interaction capabilities.

The next section presents data relevant to the second macro strategy, namely, promoting learners' autonomy.

### 6.1.2 Promoting learners' autonomy

To enhance the quality of English learning there is a need for teachers to encourage learners to learn on their own, outside of classroom lessons. Students are expected to be independent and autonomous learners. In this section, I present findings on teachers' strategies for producing autonomous learning. Three main themes emerged in relation to this issue: teachers' use of learning resources other than the teachers themselves; the nature of students' classroom interaction; and teachers' knowledge of subject matter and pedagogical content.

#### 6.1.2.1 Use of learning resources/teaching aids

The data show that teachers used various resources to help them create autonomous learners. The use of teaching aids and learning resources is essential for the successful teaching of English. Modern instructional technologies, such as audio- and video-recording devices, can be employed to facilitate students' language learning. The following extract from the interview with Mr Talaat shows how he incorporated technology into his teaching.

*Extract 32*

> Boards and smart boards are very helpful, especially in English language classes. I know that audio and video are very helpful. I consider modern teaching aids are the most important element in English language teaching.

The teacher was aware of the importance of other learning resources in his class, but he indicated that not all lessons required teachers to use learning media. Rather, the use of media depended on the nature of the lesson.

Like Mr Talaat, Mr Antar, a teacher in Al-Somood school, commented in his interview that the use of appropriate media was important in the teaching of English. He discusses the role of teaching aids in English teaching in the following extract.

*Extract 33*

> I have my own teaching aids, sometimes I bring them with me to the classroom. The teaching aids that I have are speakers or headphones. I used to use them in the past but I don't use them anymore! Also I have other learning sources (dictionary). Sometimes, but not today, I bring it with me and, after dividing the class into five groups, I hand the dictionary to a group. When the first group finishes, I give it to the other group. I stopped using these technological aids because we have only one resources room in the school. Most of the time my class timetable clashes with other classes. Unfortunately, our classrooms are not provided with these technological aids.

Mr Antar's narrative shows that he used both modern technologies as well as more traditional teaching media such as dictionaries. This reflects his understanding that modern teaching aids, like audio-visual devices, and traditional teaching aids, like dictionaries, complement each other. However, Mr Antar also reported that his failure to use some

modern teaching technology was the result of timetabling clashes with other classes, since the school only has one resource room.

#### 6.1.2.2 Nature of classroom interactions

Learning and teaching aids not only take physical form; they also comprise intangible elements such as classroom talk (Fisher 1993). Classroom talk can be used to extend the potential of learning and understanding the discursive features that are embedded in it.

In his interview, Mr Emad explained that teachers were aware that opportunities to use classroom interaction for this purpose should be grasped, but his previous attempts to do so were not successful and he has gradually omitted this strategy from his teaching and learning activities. Mr Emad acknowledged the importance of classroom interactions for English learning in the following extract.

*Extract 34*

> Sometimes, I ask questions to push students to speak more ... I also give them the opportunity to ask any questions they want to ask, to push the shy ones to speak…yeah....A teacher is supposed to give opportunity for students to speak more and more, for example 'What is your opinion of .....?'. But, unfortunately, I do not always use that way.... that has rarely happened in my classroom!

Although MrEmad believed he had encouraged students to become active participants in classroom interactions, he found that it was not that easy to encourage students' participation in classroom activities.

Similarly, Mr Antar reported that he uses encouragement and instruction to facilitate students' participation in classroom interactions, as revealed in the following extract.

*Extract 35*

> I give opportunity for students to ask any questions they want but not at any time. I also ask them some questions. Unfortunately, students do not always ask or respond to questions. Most of the class time it is the teacher who speaks and the students only listen in my class - students control my way of teaching! Unfortunately, the students only receive the information. If students can discuss, I can discuss and interact with them but if students cannot, this is the problem! Therefore, in my class, students control my way

of teaching! If there are interactions and discussions from students I will ask questions, if not I cannot ask them.

Mr Antar believed that interaction cannot be realised if students remain passive during the instructional process. This is because teaching and learning activities are also dependent on students' ways of learning. The observational data confirmed that most interaction and discussion were usually stimulated by prompts or questions given by teachers. Otherwise, classroom interaction was minimal.

These extracts also show that students were actually given freedom to ask anything and contribute to classroom interaction. However, not all students responded actively to teachers' questions and feedback. Indeed, the passiveness of students was a major challenge, and these teachers relied on feedback and questioning to initiate discussion in their classrooms. In other words, they were teacher-learner questions and answers, not teacher-learner interactions. The teachers also reported that classroom talk was not used optimally in their own teaching context as a result of this type of interaction and they therefore resorted to using feedback and questions. This situation in turn led them to employ classroom management skills via questions and instructions instead of talk in classroom discourse.

#### 6.1.2.3 Teachers' subject matter knowledge and teaching skills interpreted as TT

Teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge was clearly evident in the classroom activities. Some teaching terminology, such as teacher talk, was new to two of the participants. In practice, however, they demonstrated understanding of its significance when they discussed their teaching techniques. This is evident in the following extract from Mr Motwally's interview.

*Extract 36*

I first heard the terminology of 'teacher talk' from you. If you mean that teacher's talk refers to classroom management, the teacher's beliefs in education strategies and techniques, I think you might also use this terminology to also describe his practice inside the class.

Mr Motwally understood that teacher talk is related to classroom management, especially in relation to the best way of structuring strategies and techniques for classroom teaching. This suggests that classroom management was always prioritised over talk management in the teaching context.

My interview with Mr Ageel covered similar ground. He noted the availability of learning resources but still relied on traditional teaching media for teaching and learning activities that prioritised grammatical knowledge, as shown in the following extract:

*Extract 37*

> The learning resources exist in every class here in our school, for example, projectors, but I don't use it. Indeed, I prefer using the whiteboard only.

This indicates that not all teachers used modern technology and media during teaching.

In summary, these extracts suggest that teachers have low awareness of the importance of prioritising and promoting student talk. Thus, classroom interaction is not used to fulfil its ultimate function, that is, to accelerate learning. Instead, classroom interaction is reduced to feedback and questioning. In addition, the teachers were unable or unwilling to support students with other learning resources, thereby limiting the learning resources available to them.

The next section presents findings relevant to the third macro strategy, namely, raising cultural awareness.

### 6.1.3 Raising cultural awareness

Cultural awareness is not solely focused on understanding language as a cultural artefact, but also on how to equip language learners with knowledge of the correct use of language (Liddicoat 2005). This is important because there are many cases in which language proficiency cannot guarantee the contextually appropriate use of language expression. This study also recognises that students' sociocultural context can positively contribute to English language learning (Kumaravadivelu 2003). The more teachers acknowledge the sociocultural context of learners, the more adept they become at situating language learning in a positive learning climate. Teachers are expected to create such an environment, and this demands a heightened level of awareness and ability to modify classroom culture (Alexander 2008).

Three interrelated sub-themes emerged from analysis of the data relevant to this macro strategy: teachers' understanding of students' sociocultural context; children's freedom of speech; and families' contribution to learner achievement.

#### 6.1.3.1 Teachers' understanding of the sociocultural context of students' learning

The extent to which teachers understood the sociocultural context of students' learning can be inferred from the following interview extracts. As previously noted, there are

multiple levels of the same culture in a teaching context, and even the cultural gap between a teacher and his/her students must be taken into account. In the following extract, Mr Antar narrates his experience of harnessing the students' cultural background for language learning.

*Extract 38*

> I always use examples from the environment and from the students' backgrounds because I understand my students' social-cultural background and I also know how they think. In this way, the information reaches students faster and more clearly. For example, I brought things my students know or are familiar with and give examples of things they know …from their local environment - from the countryside or the city … so it is well known and familiar to them.

This narrative shows that the teacher used his understanding of his students' sociocultural background and local environment to inform his teaching.

On the other hand, Mr Emad explained how his inability to understand his students' culture affected the students' learning of English. During the interview, Mr Emad demonstrated his awareness of the importance of understanding students' sociocultural backgrounds.

*Extract 39*

> Last year, when I just came from Egypt, I did not understand my students' sociocultural backgrounds, so I suffered a lot. Sometimes when I say something they start laughing at me! I felt I was like an idiot many times! However, this year I understood some of my students' culture; for example, when I say 'village' they did not understand that because they called it 'hejrah''. Now I understand their terms much better and use that to explain my points.

The teacher recognised there was a sociocultural gap between himself and his students. His expressions were not familiar to his students, so he had to learn the correct terminology.

Mr Morsi told a similar story in the following extract.

*Extract 40*

> A teacher must know and understand the students' culture. A teacher needs to know his students sociocultural background or even social problems and

try to help them as much as he can. The teacher needs to know what is acceptable in the students' culture and what is not acceptable! I will give you one example: when I was a new teacher here in Saudi Arabia I felt that students were insulting me when they said to me ''Ya Walad'' during conversation. ''Ya Walad'' is an offensive term in Egyptian culture but, later when I realised its meaning in the Saudi culture, which is''Oh mate'', I understood the importance of knowing the students' culture.

This extract illustrates the importance of becoming aware of any cultural gaps between the students and the teacher. It shows that the literal meaning of an expression may not be adequate to understand the way in which it is being used.

#### 6.1.3.2 Children's freedom of speech

The classroom observations highlighted the influence of freedom of speech on the learning of English. Certain aspects of Saudi culture impede students' willingness to speak in class and limit their freedom of expression, which contributes to the slow pace of their learning to speak the language. Saudi culture creates a barrier young and older generations, in which children are not able to express themselves freely in the presence of an older person. This affects the learning of English both in the classroom and at home.

Mr Omran presented his ideas about this phenomenon in the following extract.

*Extract 41*

Parents should treat their children well and give them freedom of speech and talk. They shouldn't create barriers between themselves and their children or prevent them from talking. That will affect students even in the school and will help them progress in their learning. As a teacher, I have noticed that students who receive good opportunities to talk and deliver their opinions always speak fluently; they do not hesitate to answer, even if it is the wrong answer.

This narrative expresses the value of freedom of speech for young learners in this specific sociocultural learning context. The role of the parent is an important external element of the language learning process. When children are accustomed to talking, they can express their ideas more clearly and become proficient in speaking another language, like English.

Similarly, Mr Antar noted how freedom of speech affected the learning of English. In particular, he pointed out how the limits on free speech that characterise Saudi culture affect his students' ability to learn English.

*Extract 42*

> In some families or tribes in Saudi Arabia, a young boy does not have opportunities to talk and give his opinion in front of elderly people. Because the old people think that they have wider experience than those young boys, so they don't listen to them or socialise with them.

Mr Antar's narrative suggests that, when the learner's opinion is respected, she/he will be more confident and this will accelerate their mental development.

In his interview, Mr Emad also commented on the issue of limited freedom of speech.

*Extract 43*

> Students also are affected by their families, particularly by their father's authority or parental domination. This is the main authority entrenched in learners' willingness to participate in classrooms. For example, when a student behaves badly or makes mistakes, I could say 'I will contact your father and tell him about you', the student swears that he 'will not do that again, just keep my father out of it. So, in my opinion, this a kind of evidence that shows how parents have some parental domination that may impact either positively or negatively on the students' participation with me in the classroom.

This extract supports the view that parental authority impacts classroom interaction, enhancing or limiting the ability of learners to become active in expressing their ideas freely. It also shows how teachers can rely on parental authority to control the classroom interaction. This has a negative influence on students' talk in school. The teacher should be encouraged to find a more positive means of increasing students' talk rather than invoking the threat of parental involvement to control his classroom.

These interview extracts suggest patriarchal authority plays a role in moulding the nature of classroom discourse in the Saudi EFL context by limiting freedom of speech. A gradual approach to parents might help to establish more space for learners to communicate with family members at home. This theme is explored in more detail below.

#### 6.1.3.3 Family contribution to learners' achievement

The family's contribution to learners' success has been identified as one of the key sociocultural aspects of learning a language. In this study, it was clear that the families of the students contributed to students' learning experience either positively or negatively. This was seen in the extent to which families cooperated (or not) with the school. In the following extract Mr. Sami shares his experience of students' absenteeism and lack of family cooperation, which negatively impact on the process of teaching and learning of the English language.

*Extract 44*

> One of the main things that affect the classroom interaction is the students' absenteeism. That usually happens in first two weeks and the last two weeks of study semester, in the spring season and the month of Ramadan. Also, on Thursdays some of the students are absent as it is the end of the working week. Sometimes, they are absent because of the weather, when it rains or during a dust storm. Sometimes we send messages to the students' parents asking them to send their kids to school on Thursday because they have exams, but sometimes they do not cooperate.

This extract suggests some parents fail to support the teachers by ensuring that their children are always present in English language classes. Although families do not necessarily teach language, their role here is simply to ensure that they attend classes. Saudi sociocultural traditions, however, contribute to students' absenteeism.

In another extract, Mr Sami alludes to the role of the family's sociocultural background in the teaching and learning of the English language. Mr Sami relates this impact to the learner's situational context.

*Extract 45*

> The sociocultural background of the students' families plays a significant role in their participation and performance in the classroom. If the families care about teaching English, that will have a positive effect on their kids. I have taught in Makkah Almukarrama in Almanarat School before I came to Hafr Al-Batin. I found the students at Almanarat School very interested in learning the English Language. That's because their families used to travel with their kids during the summer holidays to English-speaking countries.

> When I came to Hafr Al-Batin, I found a different environment and different sociocultural background. Some of the students are not interested in learning English. Most of those students have families who are not interested as well. So the sociocultural background of the families could affect the students' participation. Also, that may affect teacher and classroom interaction.

In his narrative, Mr Sami compares two different sets of sociocultural circumstances within a prosperous and (supposedly) monocultural society. The different environments have either a positive or negative impact on the teaching and learning of the English language. As Mr Sami observes, the children of families who travel regularly and see other cultures, interact and learn English better than those from families who do not.

Similarly, Mr Adel refers to the influence of the families' sociocultural background on their children's learning and interaction processes in the following extract.

*Extract 46*

> I realised that students whose fathers are working for the ARAMCO Company, they like to learn English also; they speak better than us as teachers! They speak like native speakers! Whereas, some other students are without motivation to learn, because their families don't care or they won't complete their schooling for some reason. Some of the students said 'We want to get a job so we do not need to learn English language'. Other students said 'We will not learn English language here at Hafr Al-Batin, until we travel abroad', so they won't learn until they travel abroad. They think that learning is only possible in the native speaker countries. They put barriers between themselves and learning English in their school. I think the family's sociocultural background is very important and will affect the role of the teacher inside the classroom.

Similar narratives are common in EFL settings in which there are varying levels of interest in, and value attached to, learning English. In summary, these findings indicate that sociocultural factors impact on English language teaching and learning activities in the study context and may also influence the nature of students' participation in classroom discourse. This is discussed further in Chapter 8.

### 6.1.4 Maximising learning opportunities

Learning opportunities do not merely involve the provision of more time to produce language output; they also include students' participation in problem solving, techniques of soliciting students' output, and teachers' awareness of individual student learning needs. Most importantly, there are shared roles between teachers and learners in facilitating learning; both sides play an important role in shaping dialogic teaching.

Two ways in which learning opportunities can be maximised were identified in the data: facilitating shared roles between teacher and learner in classroom culture, and balanced role sharing in the classroom learning culture. Teaching and learning is carried out within a hierarchical context, teachers possess expertise in terms of content and pedagogy. However, teachers can facilitate a sharing of some roles in constructing an ideal classroom culture in this and other teaching contexts. However, such a construction requires a modification of culture in classroom interaction (Bakhtin 1981). There are a number of issues involved here, but the cultural setting is the most challenging aspect for EFL teaching where the target language and context of learning are constrained by the absence of learning opportunities beyond the classroom. The following extracts illustrate the importance of promoting equity of roles to enhance the quality of interaction.

#### 6.1.4.1 Facilitating shared roles between teacher and learner in classroom culture

Several ways of facilitating shared roles between teacher and learner were observed in the classrooms. In particular, shared roles between teacher and learner in classroom culture can be facilitated by teachers providing opportunities for students to express opinions, encouraging them to ask questions, responding to students' questions and respecting diversity in the classroom. Mr Omran makes this point in the following extract.

*Extract 47*

> I accept and encourage any participation from students even if it is wrong in order to encourage them to speak. Sometimes I correct that for them if it is wrong, sometimes I leave it for them to discover in their own time. However, this participation is conditional because some students want to spend the time in ways that are not systematic and purposeful.

Mr Omran emphasised that the students' contribution was highly valued, and was more important to him than correcting errors in language output from them. The teacher did not report that he used any particular structure to organise the classroom interaction.

Similarly, Mr Antar emphasised empowering learners to respond to errors they might make in target language production.

*Extract 48*

> It is very important for me to accept students' participation whether it is correct or not. I used to ignore errors just to encourage students to speak more; the good students may correct their classmates. Sometimes I made errors in front of students to let them discover that and tell me about it. I want them to understand that making errors is natural, so allow them not to fear committing errors. I said 'Just go ahead, make errors! It doesn't matter!

Mr. Antar wanted to build a positive learning environment with an equal relationship with the students to reduce their negative reaction to making errors. The teacher also expected that students pay more attention to errors and revise them independently afterwards.

Extract 49 from Mr Sami's interview shows a similar attitude. He reported that he preferred to provide more indirect corrective feedback (F-move evaluation or F-move repetition) so that the students consciously review mistakes and find the ideal form of expression in the target language later on.

*Extract 49*

> I'm not concentrating on students' errors at all, I encourage them especially in speaking. If I am only looking for right answers none will speak! I correct my students indirectly. For example, if one of my students makes a pronunciation mistake, I will praise him and write the correct answer on the board. So, I'm indirectly correcting my students' errors in order to encourage them to speak. So, he will understand the correct answer and avoid errors next time.

Mr Sami clearly prioritised eagerness and willingness to participate in communication and learning over correction of errors.

#### 6.1.4.2 Balanced role sharing in classroom teaching

The disparity in role-sharing between teachers and learners was evident in the fact that teacher talk normally dominated classroom dialogue. Mr Emad expresses his view on the importance of balanced role sharing in classroom teaching in the following extract.

*Extract 50*

> Most teachers spend the whole classroom time just talking without giving any opportunity for students to participate in the dialogue. They are supposed to give a chance for students to talk.

Mr Emad seems to be describing the over-production of teacher talk from his experience in observing other teachers' classrooms. Balanced role sharing in classroom teaching is clearly signalled by giving students a chance to participate in classroom dialogue. Mr Emad suggests that the presence of teacher talk does not give enough opportunity for student talk to occur in classroom interaction. Balanced role sharing in classroom teaching is key to promoting student talk during classroom teaching. It helps students to contribute in class, generate new ideas and maximise learning opportunities.

Similarly, Mr Sami indicated in his interview that if there is imbalanced sharing of roles between teacher and learner, the teacher tends to dominate the time talk and students' talk is neglected. This discourages students' talk, as he explains in the following extract.

*Extract 51*

> If the teacher gives his students the chance to talk that will create a high level of noise inside the classroom and the teacher will either use his authority to control that or continue with the noise. The noise that comes from the classroom here in our schools is not acceptable and it an indicator of the weakness of the teacher. People [principal and staff] just judge the weakness of the teacher without understanding that it is because he is using group work or dialogic talk. So the teacher will say, 'Oh, I don't want people to say that about me'. Here, the teacher's authority could impact on student talk negatively. The teacher will talk all the time and the students' talk will be less. If the teacher allows his students to talk, that will be individually and for a very limited time. I know that's not the recommended way of teaching but we should work to develop the students' talk in any way.

This narrative suggests that teachers can experience criticism from school management and other staff because of the noise generated by some strategies for encouraging students' talk in the classroom. This can be seen as a downside of teachers

sharing their facilitating roles with students in this particular teaching context, even though it encourages the students to participate fully in classroom lessons.

Mr Sunhat also talked about balanced role sharing. He suggests ways of involving students in classroom discourse in the following extract.

*Extract 52*

> Sometimes the teacher uses his authority to manage the classroom, or to find solutions, or to encourage his low-motivated students to talk. For example, some students do not like to participate; I could ask them to go in front of their colleague and say something, or repeat, or write something on the board and so on.

From this extract, it can be seen that Mr Sunhat uses his role as a facilitator of classroom lessons to invite students' participation and uses his authority to achieve balanced role sharing in classroom teaching, rather than increasing teacher talk. In this way, he maximises the learning opportunities for his students.

### 6.2 Summary of Findings on Macro Strategies

The findings presented in this chapter indicate that it was difficult for teachers to deploy their pedagogical content knowledge, subject matter knowledge, and paralinguistic features of language production to facilitate negotiated interaction. Their teaching abilities and mastery of English were not accompanied by facilitative teacher talk that promoted a dialogic learning environment. In relation to learners' autonomy, it was apparent that teacher talk played a less prominent role due to teachers' lack of awareness of the importance of prioritising student talk. Teacher talk was predominantly used for feedback and closed questions (see Chapter 5), which locate the teacher as the sole source of students' learning, which in turn leads to the production of more teacher talk than student talk.

Teachers' knowledge of students' culture merely functioned to build interpersonal relationships and was not employed to maximise understanding of the sociocultural context of student learning. In fact, students begin to establish positive attitudes towards English-language culture by asking critical questions and are keen to acquire new knowledge and skills. The learners' sociocultural context and family cultural values contributed to the nature of classroom discourse. One of the most salient findings in this regard was the challenge teachers faced in the form of negative learners' behaviour and attitudes, paternal domination leading to limited freedom of speech, and absenteeism.

Finally, there was limited marginal role sharing between teachers and students in the classroom. There were indeed examples of rich teacher responses, freedom of inquiry, and opportunities to express opinions. However, learning opportunities for students in the classroom remained limited due to low levels of student participation in problem-solving, lack of student involvement, and failure of teachers to allow enough time for the students to respond. All of these factors limit the potential of classroom culture, which is the only learning context for most students, to practise language production and uptake. Together, these factors contribute to the development of passivity and unwillingness to communicate among learners.

The following chapter draws on the data generated from interviews with teachers to identify their attitudes and characteristics. Teachers' narratives present the rationales that underpin their use of teacher talk and its relationship to dialogic teaching via an analysis of sociocultural factors beyond the classroom.

# Chapter 7

# Findings: The Role of Teachers' Attitudes and Characteristics in Shaping Classroom Discourse

Chapter 6 addressed Research Question 2, which focused on learning opportunities created by teachers. This chapter focuses on Research Question 3, which explores the attitudes and characteristics of teachers that shape classroom discourse. The data are drawn from interviews with teachers.

Teachers' attitudes and characteristics are discussed in relation to two main themes: the relationship between teacher's roles and the nature of teacher talk; and the gaps between teachers' capabilities, teachers' attributes and teachers' professional development related to classroom talk and dialogic teaching. These major themes were generated from teachers' narratives during interview, in which they discussed their talk during instruction and the impact of this TT on students' learning.

## 7.1 Understanding Teachers' Roles and the Nature of Teacher Talk

Analysis of the data identified three main roles prioritised by teachers in the Saudi context during their instruction: As implementers of authority; as classroom managers; and as providers of space for the creation of an interactive classroom. Figure 7.1 displays the interconnections between these three roles.

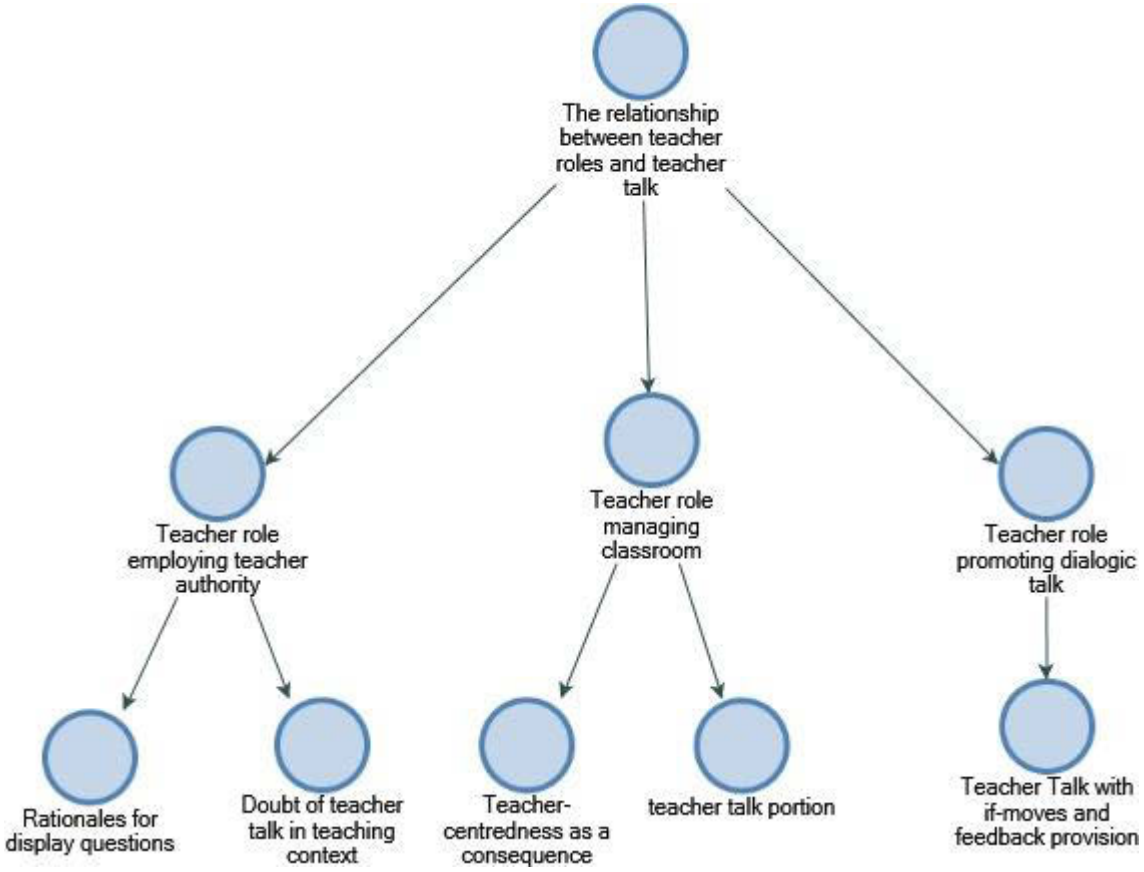


Figure 7.1: Three interacting roles in teacher talk.

### 7.1.1 Exercising authority: Rationales for display or referential questioning

In exercising their authority, teachers were found to use display and/or referential questioning. These types of questions were used to ensure that students paid attention during the instructional process. The particular type of questioning is important, since it allows teachers to ascertain whether students are engaged in learning or not. This is elaborated in the following sub-section.

#### 7.1.1.1 Teachers' doubts about students' language proficiency

It was noticeable that the participating teachers lacked confidence in using teacher talk to encourage learner interaction. Mr Ageel, who teaches Year 10 students at Al-Atlal school, explains his reluctance to provide more opportunities to improve the production skill 'speaking'. He believes that the only way to increase students' language proficiency is by concentrating on the input skill 'listening', as seen in the following extract.

*Extract 53*

> I think our talk or is not helpful to extend the students' talk. The students don't know too many words. So, they need to learn and increase their vocabulary list. Also, they need to listen to the language. I think, it is most important to listen to the language. I realise that from the students themselves. Those who are used to watching films and programs in English are better than others. I think when students listen to the language they may adopt to it.

It is evident that the teacher prioritised receptive skills over productive skills, although he did not state in his narrative he saw receptive skills as more important than productive ones. Rather, he assumed that the students had insufficient knowledge to produce the language. As a result, he felt it was preferable for students to be exposed to language production by listening to English-language movies or other media rather than engage directly in speaking the language themselves. The teacher believed that the more learners were exposed to ideal English production, the better they would be able to imitate such language production.

In the following extract from Mr Adel's interview, the success of teacher-learner talk is also seen to depend on students' language proficiency levels. Mr Adel teaches Year 12 students at Al-Noor school. The context was a discussion of a reading text titled 'Study and life at university'.

*Extract 54*

> It depends on the students' levels; some students still don't know the alphabet letters, how are you going to extend their talk! For me, it is impossible to do that. This is the reality; some students don't know even a single word or sound in English. I can only try with good students, I can talk and interact with them and encourage them to talk in English. However, there are some other poor students who are just waiting for an opportunity to ignore the lesson and talk about anything else in Arabic, and that causes lots of noise and I cannot control the class if that happens, so I try to stick with the lesson only as much as I can. You know the problem, sometimes when you open a discussion you cannot control the classroom talk. Students need

to be in English environments so they can speak and practise, otherwise they not going to learn the language.

This shows that lack of classroom interaction using the target language cannot always be blamed on teachers themselves. This is because some students are reluctant to talk in the classroom and refuse to communicate with teachers. The presence of these 'muted students' was challenging for classroom interaction. This suggests that, although teachers are generally able to exercise their authority in the classroom, when collaboration between students and teachers breaks down, they can no longer do so. This occurs when teachers invite students to participate in the learning process but the students are unwilling to join in the discussion. In other words, the interactive classroom is only possible when students and teachers collaborate in the learning process.

#### 7.1.1.2 Managing the classroom: Implications of teacher-centeredness

Humanist educators encourage student-centeredness in classrooms to promote active learning, positive perceptions, relationships of trust with students, reciprocal respect, and student self-control, self–placement and independence (Garrett 2008). This is because learner interdependence can produce more opportunities for autonomous learning. The literature suggests that restricting students' autonomous learning and compelling them to follow rules negatively affect learning (Brophy 2006). Students learn by doing or practising, therefore a student-centred approach can provide an appropriate foundation for classroom management (Pereira & Adcock 2011).

In EFL classroom settings, the key characteristics of a student-centred classroom are giving students more responsibility to manage their learning process, and allowing teachers to act as facilitators rather than sources of knowledge in managing the classroom discourse. (Nonkukhetkhong, Baldauf & Moni 2006). The teacher's role is indeed a highly complex one, ranging from planning learning activities to assessing students' achievement as an indicator of learning outcome. The skills required to manage classroom activities from distance, so to speak, are demanding, and the effectiveness of the process depends on the capabilities of both teachers and learners. In the following interview extract, Mr Omran voices his awareness of the importance of learner centeredness. Mr Omran teaches both Year 11 and Year 12 students at Al-Shorooq school.

*Extract 55*

> You know from students' outcomes. The student should be the centre of learning, not the teacher. If the class is teacher-centred, that is, when students are mere listeners or recipients of information, their outcomes will be very poor. Therefore, the student should be the focus of the educational process, so there will be better outcomes.

Mr Omran emphasises that learners should not be passive in the learning process. They should engage in active learning because this is the core of the process. He further links high academic achievement with opportunities for students to exercise independence in communication and expression of their opinions. Student-centeredness is one of the pre-requisites for active student learning.

In the following interview extract, Mr Motwally expresses a similar view. He acknowledges that the learners should play the central role in the classroom and the basic role of the teacher is to facilitate the language learning process.

*Extract 56*

> The learner is actually the core of your teaching. The teacher, he is a guide, a facilitator, a counsellor and a simplifier. But, how can he simplify the language for the student and give a chance to speak if his attitude is like this:
>
> 'I am right and all of you are wrong and I am the master here in the class you should only listen passively!'
>
> No, a good teacher should help students to speak more and more. The more the students speak inside the class, the more this indicates that your teaching is effective. As a teacher, I say, it is time (for teachers) to listen, not act as the only source [of knowledge].

Mr Motwally recognised that teachers are supposed to create opportunities and provide space for students to talk, and to listen to their talk. He sees the amount of student talk in the classroom as the main source of evidence for effective teaching, since this shows that that the teacher provides opportunities for his students to speak and that his classroom is not teacher-centred but student-centred.

These extracts demonstrate teachers' awareness of the positive impact of student-centeredness and the negative implications of teacher-centeredness. This awareness underpins ideal classroom management activities; for example, when teachers prioritise the production of student talk over teacher talk in classroom talk.

#### 7.1.1.3 Managing the classroom: Dominance of teacher talk

The findings presented in Chapter 5 showed that teacher talk accounted for the majority of classroom teaching time. Yet effective language learning requires teachers to provide learners with the opportunity to talk in the classroom so they can build their confidence in speaking English. In the following extract, Mr Sami, who teaches both Year 10 and year 11 students in Al-Noor school, emphasises the amount of time teachers spend talking in this cultural setting.

*Extract 57*

> Teachers talk all the time and the students listen! We should give a chance for students to talk inside the classroom because there is no opportunity to talk outside the classroom.

These Saudi teachers believed that students should be given sufficient space to interact and express themselves in the classroom. Mr Sami's narrative indicates that he takes account of the sociocultural learning environment of learners, where classroom learning provides the only space for EFL students to produce the target language. More importantly, opportunities for language production by students will only occur if teachers reduce the amount of their own talk.

Mr Motwally, who teaches Year 11 students at Al-Asalah school, offered a similar observation. In the following extract, he reflects on how he shares his views on the dominance of teacher talk with his colleagues.

*Extract 58*

> I always tell my colleagues that (they) should not spend more than 20 or 15 minutes talking in a session that lasts a maximum of 45 minutes. You (the teacher) should take 20 or 15 minutes only for teacher talk.

Mr Motwally is suggesting that the ideal amount of teacher talk is about one-third of the total teaching time in a session, and the rest should be allocated to student talk.

Mr Omran comments on the same theme in the following extract.

*Extract 59*

> I do not mean that students have the half of the time. For example, there are some activities, such as written activities, which consume most of the time, so around 20 minutes are given to students to talk, sometimes less than that. I expect that students are supposed to have 70% of class time for talking, while teachers should not take up more than 10% of class time and no more than 20% if there are activities, such as explaining some concepts. This is what should be; however, the reality is different.

Mr Omran gives a realistic assessment of the ideal amount of teacher talk. He argues that teacher talk is contingent on the ways a teacher manages classroom learning activities. For example, in teaching writing skills, teachers may request less student talk, since writing is an individual activity. He also notes that teacher talk is necessary at times, for instance, when the teacher is providing an explanation of learning content.

Further support for this perspective came from the interview with Mr. Antar, who teaches Year 10 students at Al-Somood school. The following extract shows how his personal teaching experience helped him to develop the ability to manage teacher talk in classroom communication.

*Extract 60*

> For me, in the first-year experience, I just talked the whole lesson. I felt that the English lesson was boring and the students disliked that. In my second year, I have changed my teaching style. I just explain the lesson in 15 minutes; in the second 15 minutes, students do some exercises, and the last 15 minutes is for students to talk; either they talk in front of their peers or in groups or open discussion. I found that the students started to like the English subject better than before. This is my understanding of the term 'teacher talk'. Just from my teaching experiences, I got that.

Mr Antar indicates that allocating teacher and student talk is determined by the teacher's classroom management skills. He describes how his experience and teaching knowledge helped him to adapt his classroom management when his students appeared disinterested in participating in English teaching and learning activities. Once students' talk

was more effectively integrated into the learning activities, the students' motivation increased significantly.

The extract also shows that teacher's experiential knowledge allowed him to reflect on his teaching. Having reflected on his teaching, he gained insight into the process of language learning. Instructional activities that give space for students to participate in language learning are believed to enhance students' participation in learning. Their interest in learning grew in line with the increased amount of student talk. These results indicate that a skilful teacher can optimise classroom talk by providing more opportunities for student talk, thereby improving the quality of teaching and learning.

The data presented above indicate that appropriate allocation of teacher and student talk is a crucial aspect of teachers' skills in managing teaching and learning activities. The participating teachers were aware of the significance of student talk and the importance of minimising the amount of teacher talk in a classroom, in accordance with the particular learning task involved. This can generate more opportunities for language production in English. However, teachers may lack understanding of how classroom management can be designed for such purposes and assume that the design is related only to the content being taught.

#### 7.1.1.4 Creating a stimulating learning environment

The learning environment plays a significant role in producing dialogic talk in the classroom. It is for this reason that teachers' ability to create conditions that allow students space to talk is important. In the following extract, Mr Ageel, who teaches Year 10 students at Al-Atlal school, describes how he invites students to speak to create a stimulating learning environment.

*Extract 61*

> At the beginning of every lesson, there are usually pictures or drawings. I ask the students, "What is that?" and "What do you think about it?" Then, we start a discussion. It is like brainstorming. Dialogic talk enables students to extract their ideas and participate in the classroom. I don't use it too much, but it is very helpful, although not particularly practical.

It appears that Mr Ageel was aware of strategies to trigger dialogic talk in classroom discourse. He described the process and seemed to be familiar with the concept of dialogic

talk. However, he rarely adopted this strategy because he saw it as in impractical learning model. Presumably, this view reflected the need for resources and considerable preparation to implement it in the classroom.

Mr Farhan, who teaches both Year 11 and Year 12 students at Al-Atlal school, conveys his understanding of dialogic talk in class dynamics in the following extract from his interview

*Extract 62*

> It is a dialogue between two or more people. It involves a discussion among all participants in the dialogue. It has a positive value for the learning of English. If it is applied well, students will learn how to speak. It has a positive value for the class dynamics as well. It creates a kind of interaction inside the classroom. All the students will interact so you feel that the class is animated. It helps to prevent students from getting bored.

Mr Farhan's narrative indicates that he understands the benefits of dialogic talk in class dynamics and that he believes that the particularities of teacher talk can improve students' spoken skills. However, in this narrative, the value of dialogic talk is reduced merely to that of a means to address the issue of boredom among students rather than a way of creating a stimulating learning environment. Regardless of the intention, however, the data suggest that TT is successful in encouraging students to learn.

Mr Antar shared a similar view. A teacher of Year 10 students at Al-Somood school, he explains why he likes using display questions in the following extract.

*Extract 63*

> For me I just ask questions in order to let students answer them. Sometimes I ask, 'What does it mean?'… In that way, I let the student speak. I never ever give an answer that is wrong, just to encourage them.

Mr Antar has a specific purpose in mind in his use of questions – to ensure the learners' engagement with the learning activities. At the same time, he regularly uses questioning to confirm students' understanding. However, the emphasis in his account was not on the feedback to errors in language production but on providing flexibility for learners to participate in the classroom interaction. It is important to note that providing more

flexibility for students to practise the language and allow for mistakes to occur is one way of encouraging their participation in learning.

This extract indicates that teachers can use a certain type of questioning in at least two ways. First, questioning is used as a means of ascertaining whether the students are truly engaging with the teaching and learning activities. Second, a certain type of questioning can be used as a medium for teachers to assess the students' learning outcomes. Certain types of questioning are relevant to the ways in which teacher authority can be employed to enhance the quality of English language teaching. To these teachers, this kind of questioning is ideal for stimulating classroom interaction in their particular teaching contexts.

The two extracts presented in this sub-section show that the teachers acknowledge the significance of dialogic talk. However, there appears to be a need for additional effort to realise the learning model in practice. Further, in some Saudi classrooms, the role of dialogic talk is limited to an ice-breaking activity rather than to stimulate learning.

#### 7.1.1.5 Promoting dialogic talk: Teachers' use of feedback

Classroom discourse is an important medium for supporting learners' language development. In sociocultural language learning theory, modified classroom discourse can mediate human mental development through language as a cultural artefact (Vygotsky 1978). However, such modification of language exposure must be accompanied by systematically-designed purposes and supports (Cross 2010). The inclusion of F-moves in teacher talk can promote dialogic talk that is essential to stimulate learning. F-moves can generate multiple benefits by showing the ideal model of target language production, providing opportunities for language output production, developing new skills and knowledge from the feedback, and practising the target language from the feedback.

TT is a mediated social activity in classroom teaching. Through TT, students are given enough language input to help them to improve, modify and extend their dialogic output in the target language. TT, however, has a double-sided impact; it can be positive when TT is consciously managed for educational purposes via communicative conversation or discussion, active engagement of learners, and meaning- or content-driven interaction (Thornbury 1996). TT can also have a negative impact when teachers dominate the talking time, produce arbitrary or sporadic language output, and fail to initiate learner interaction (student talk).

The following extracts illustrate the teacher's role in promoting dialogic talk in which iterating feedback (F-moves) in TT is understood as feedback for learning (see theoretical discussion of F-Moves in Chapter 3). This theme was evident in the interview with Mr Morsi, who teaches both Year 10 and Year 11 students at Al-Asalah school. Extract 64 below shows how he used F-move elaboration in his feedback.

*Extract 64*

> Since we are using the IRF sequences with F-moves, we should ask different types of questions and then give detailed feedback. For example, I asked someone what would like to be in the future. He answered, 'I want to be a doctor'. I then asked, 'Which area of medical specialisation would you like to enter in the future?' and so on. Thus, the feedback from the teacher indicates to the student that the teacher is interested in that [idea]. This encourages students to participate and answer the teacher's questions.

Mr Morsi believes that feedback can be given through F-moves. The example he gives is an F-move elaboration that is effective in providing meaning-focused feedback, maintains the flow of conversation and triggers the development of more ideas. As a result, the space for interaction by learners becomes wider and opportunities to practise the target language are generated. The above extract shows that Mr Morsi's series of questions triggered students' willingness to talk and participate in the classroom.

Mr Sunhat shared this view. Mr Sunhat teaches Year 10 students at Al-Shorooq school. The following extract from his interview shows how he provides feedback to students through F-move repetition.

*Extract 65*

> It helps to develop the students' talk. The feedback should include some key words with sufficient time for students to participate. I could use his answer to ask other students. It is like a chain. I may ask, 'What is the capital of Kuwait?' The students answer, 'Kuwait' directly. Whereas, I don't want them to answer directly like that, so I could suggest, 'The capital of Kuwait is Kuwait'. In that way, I help them to answer. Ask them to repeat! I may ask some of them to use the answer to ask other students.

Mr Sunhat believes that the feedback produced via F-move repetition can help students to gain knowledge of the target language, but not necessarily help them engage in dialogic talk. The extract shows that his form of questioning helped students to engage in conversation. The teacher asked questions and confirmed the answers for other students. This example supports the findings from observational data, presented previously, that F-move repetition was the predominant F-move employed in this teaching context, although it was not very effective in comparison with other F-moves. As well, Mr Sunhat's focus is on form-focused feedback; his concern is to rephrase or reproduce the sentence in ideal form. The chain of the F-move is then continued by asking the same question to other students for dictation and recitation.

Mr Omran expressed a similar view in his interview. Mr. Omran teaches both Year 11 and Year 12 students at Al-Shorooq school. Extract 66 displays Mr Omran's narrative about the significance of oral form-focused feedback via F-move repetition.

*Extract 66*

> Oral feedback is very important in developing students' dialogic skills. There are different types of oral feedback. One example [is], a student might make a certain error in grammar or sentence structure. If the teacher wants to let his student notice the error, the teacher might repeat the correct sentence or the word without indicating the mistake [recast]. The student will then know when and where he made a mistake and what the correct form is. This way [the form] will be engraved in the student's mind.

Mr Omran explained that, during the instructional process, he indirectly corrected students' errors. That is, he corrected without directly indicating the error. In this way, he believed that students paid attention to the correct form of the sentence. Mr Omran seems to be suggesting that correction of students' errors through recast or implicit feedback does not interrupt the conversation and the student is given the correct form when the mistake is noticed.

The above extracts illustrate teachers' ideas about their role in promoting dialogic talk in the classroom. They show that the function of feedback was most often associated with the use of F-move repetition. Indeed, F-move elaboration was only mentioned by one teacher. Most teachers seemed to believe that feedback with F-move repetition is the most effective way to facilitate students' willingness to communicate.

In relation to the type of feedback used by teachers, implicit feedback (recast) via F-move repetition was more popular among them and the focus of feedback was still on forms of language. Both F-move repetition and focused-form feedback are believed to help students understand language form but they do not necessarily promote dialogic talk in these classroom environments.

In summary, the characteristics and attitudes of teachers can be described in relation to their roles in classroom teaching and the nature of teacher talk (F-moves, questioning and feedback). The preceding extracts show that the activities connected to the employment of teachers' authority, such as questioning, responding with feedback, and assessing and evaluating, account for most of these teachers' attention and energy. This situation can be attributed to the unequally shared roles between teacher and learner and the teacher-centeredness that is part of the traditional classroom culture.

It was also found that teachers lack understanding of the significance of TT, even though they express awareness of the amount of time usually devoted to it in the classroom. These teachers appeared to have only limited understanding of how the potential of classroom talk can be maximised for learning. This finding suggests that paying attention to the particularities of teacher talk was not part of the participants' classroom management skills. They seemed to think that TT was not something that could be learned as an important element of teaching technique. Only one teacher stated that such awareness can be obtained experientially through teaching practice.

Some teachers assumed that not all skills require communicative competence. Writing activities, for example, were believed to involve less need for TT, since the main focus of writing is conveying information in written form and that communicative competence is less significant in this activity. Speaking skills were the only component of a lesson that should encourage more classroom talk. Further, teachers' use of F-moves and feedback mainly involved the function of F-move repetition. F-move repetition was preferred because it does not necessarily interrupt the discussion and it can be used to alert students to errors of form.

In short, there appears to be a strong relationship between the challenges to teachers' roles in these teaching contexts and the nature of teacher talk, especially the dominance of F-move repetition that was observed in the data (see Chapter 5). The exercise of teacher authority was the main role teachers enacted during teaching and learning activities. The role of classroom management mitigated against the incorporation of TT and student talk that can

lead to dialogic teaching. Teachers' efforts to promote dialogic teaching mainly involved F-move repetition as a way of providing form-driven feedback. In the next section, the relevance of teachers' experience and professional development relevant to classroom talk and dialogic teaching is discussed.

### 7.1.2 Teachers' conceptual gaps and actual capabilities

Teacher education is a crucial determinant of teachers' ability to optimise the value of classroom talk and dialogic teaching. Teacher education here includes teaching experience, as well as pre-service and in-service teacher education. Analysis of the data in this study identified gaps between teachers' actual capacities and concepts of ideal teacher education and professional development. The findings are presented under five categories: teaching experience, qualifications and peer learning; teachers as error-tolerant facilitators; teachers as lifelong learners; learner-centeredness in teaching; and understanding of TT and dialogic talk in teacher professional development.

#### 7.1.2.1 Teaching experience, qualifications and peer learning

Teaching experience, qualifications and peer learning are determining factors in how teachers use English and produce teacher/dialogic talk in the classroom. As shown in Table 4.1, half of the participants had been teaching for more than 10 years. This indicates that they would have developed substantial professional experiential knowledge in teaching English in the Saudi context; hence they are classified as experienced teachers. The most common qualification among participating teachers was a bachelor degree specialising in English Language and Literature.

Analysis of the teachers' interview data indicated very low levels of shared or peer learning among them.

Mr Omran, who had been teaching at Al-Shorooq school for more than 16 years and held a Master degree qualification in Applied Linguistics and Teaching, offers a critical assessment of the teaching and learning environment in the following extract.

*Extract 67*

> There is nothing that deserves to be mentioned. It is very rare that shared activity occurs. If some of my colleagues ask about the content of something, I might discuss it with him, but neither my colleagues nor I have

taken that initiative to share knowledge or participate in a peer learning activity.

Mr Omran was outspoken in his critique of the teaching and learning environment at his school. He explicitly states that he has had no experience of knowledge sharing with his colleagues. This suggests that teachers are compelled to solve problems that arise and improve their teaching skills independently and privately. There was no collegial personal development in this teaching context.

Mr. Jameel, who teaches Year 10 students in Al-Shamal school and has 16 years' experience, shared a similar perspective. In the following extract, he describes his experience of peer learning with his colleagues.

*Extract 68*

> Usually teachers are busy with their own classroom issues. So they don't have time to share an activity or perform peer learning. If there is a question from a colleague, I might answer it. However, most teachers don't ask except if there is a new teacher asking about some particular thing. In our school, there is no way to conduct a peer learning activity among teachers and, if that happens, it will be very limited.

These findings indicate that few if any opportunities for peer learning were available to the participants to enable them to increase their experiential knowledge and improve their skills.

#### 7.1.2.2 Teachers as error-tolerant facilitators

Teachers often interpret errors by learners as a negative outcome of their teaching and, as a result, fear can prevent them using their occurrence for beneficial outcomes. The literature, however, indicates that managing errors in the learning process can be more beneficial than avoiding them if there is appropriate feedback and a teaching philosophy of error-tolerance (Keith & Frese 2008; Rach & Heinze 2013). Thus, becoming an error-tolerant teacher is an effective way for teachers to adopt a productive approach that can help to improve learners' output (Rach & Heinze 2013). This characteristic is important for accelerating learning. Teacher-learner interaction will not be interrupted and learners are able to build their confidence in using the target language. Moreover, when the conversation is maintained and followed up with appropriate corrective feedback, learners can acquire new knowledge and opportunities to make corrections (uptake) will be highly valued.

Mr Talaat explained in interview how his tolerance for errors by learners has helped him in his teaching practice. Mr Talaat teaches both Year 11 and Year 12 students at Al-Asalah school. In the following extract he describes this characteristic of his teaching and how he uses it in order to encourage his students to participate in the classroom.

*Extract 69*

> Mostly, I encourage students to speak English and accept from them anything they can pronounce, even if it is wrong, I accept that. Sometimes, for the good students, I may not accept their contribution, just to motivate them. However, at the same time, I still accept anything from some students.

Here Mr Talaat displays an attribute of good teaching, namely, understanding his students' varying levels of competence. He suggests that, when students are allowed to make mistakes, they are willing to become involved in the learning process. This is because students do not worry about expressing themselves, since their errors are not criticised. Being flexible in how errors are treated can motivate students and allow them to participate in classroom interaction.

Mr Omran shared this view. He commented in interview that too many restrictions on students in fact inhibit their learning.

*Extract 70*

> If I give my students a chance to speak, practise and create dialogic opportunities in the classroom, my students will progress, and their dialogic skills will improve. Whereas if I did not accept their incorrect answers or if I criticised or corrected their answers, they would not interact with me in the classroom. They would be afraid of the criticism. It would come to their minds that answering questions might cause them some problems, so they would rather keep silent.

In this extract, Mr Omran proposes that too much restriction during teaching inhibits effective learning and students' willingness to communicate and engage with teaching and learning activities.

Mr Antar was another participant with a similar view. Mr. Antar was new to the field, with only one year's teaching experience. In the following extract, he comments on the need to avoid being error-phobic in classroom discourse.

*Extract 71*

> If any students make an error I cannot say that is wrong, because I want to encourage my students to talk. Some students correct errors for their classmates if that happens. But for me, I just ignore it (error correction) to encourage them to speak and to participate. Sometimes, I intentionally make a mistake, just to let them discover and correct my mistake. So, this strategy works with my students perfectly.

Mr Antar is aware that students' contribution to classroom talk is the ultimate purpose of learning at this stage. This means that focusing on forms of language can be set aside for the sake of vibrant classroom interaction led by students. In fact, he sometimes engaged students in classroom interaction by deliberately making a mistake and allowing the students to correct it. This kind of interaction enhances students' willingness to communicate in the classroom. This practical strategy worked effectively in his teaching context.

#### 7.1.2.3 Teacher's professional development

One of the most important steps that teachers can take is to engage in the process of professional development; in other words, they should be lifelong learners. The participating teachers acknowledged the central role of professional development in improving their language proficiency, teaching methodology and classroom management, including classroom discourse. The following series of extracts addresses this concept. First, Mr Ageel expresses his views about teacher professional development in extract 72.

*Extract 72*

> A good teacher attends different courses or training in order to develop his proficiency and skills. He is also the one who concentrates on developing the different skills of the students, not just being satisfied with one skill.

Here, Mr Ageel acknowledges the importance of regular self-development activities for the quality of his skills and knowledge as a teacher. Being a teacher and a learner at the same time gives teachers more opportunity to reflect on their practice, which in turn allows them to enhance their teaching competence. A salient target skill identified by Mr Ageel is his own language proficiency so that he can be a role model for students.

This was further evidenced in the interview with Mr Motwally, one of the most experienced teachers in this study, with 23 years in the field. Mr Motwally described how professional development helps students to learn English.

*Extract 73*

> If he (the teacher) can understand his students, material, he will keep up-dated with new techniques and approaches to teaching and learning of English. The more the teacher puts in an effort and increases his knowledge, the more the teacher critically evaluates himself after the lesson and reflects on his own practice.

This narrative shows that Mr Motwally was aware of the value of self-reflection in teacher professional development. Teachers must not become complacent about the skills and knowledge they have obtained through education but must continually seek new information to renew and revitalise their approach to the development of learners and other challenging objectives.

Two salient dimensions of professional development for English language teaching were identified by the teachers in these extracts: language proficiency, and self-reflection on techniques and teaching approaches. Managing classroom discourse was not explicitly mentioned, however, which might indicate a gap in their experience and/or expectations of professional development.

#### 7.1.2.4 Misunderstandings about dialogic teaching/talk

Analysis of the interview data revealed the existence of misunderstandings among the teachers about the nature of teacher talk and dialogic talk. These gaps in understanding can help to explain the limited quality of TT observed in classroom discourse. The following extract from Mr Motwally's interview presents an example.

*Extract 74*

> The first time I heard 'teacher talk' terminology was from you. I think it refers to classroom management, teachers' beliefs in education strategies and techniques, and his procedure inside the class.

This idea that TT is associated with the macro structures of classroom management or teaching methodology was also expressed by Mr Talaat, as shown in extract 75 below.

*Extract 75*

> Actually, I have no idea what teacher talk means. This is the first time I have heard about it. I guess it could mean teacher talk time? It could be related to teaching styles and classroom management.

Such narratives indicate that these teachers were not equipped with sufficient knowledge and skills related to the ability to manage classroom interaction, which led them to assume that teacher talk was a particular teaching methodology.

This was further evident in the extract from Mr Talaat below.

*Extract 76*

> To be honest, this is the first time I have heard this term, 'teacher talk'! I can only guess, maybe you could mean 'teacher talking time' in the classroom? I was never exposed to this term during my studies or even from the supervisors' feedback.

Mr Talaat misunderstood the meaning of 'teacher talk', presumably because he had not been exposed to the term during his previous studies and subsequent experience. Such misunderstanding is likely to be reflected in the predominance and overvaluing of subject matter knowledge and teaching methodology, rather than classroom talk. He had very limited awareness of the importance of prioritising and promoting classroom talk.

The findings presented above indicate that the teachers have only a partial understanding of teacher talk and classroom management. They appear to misunderstand and confuse the concept of teacher talk with classroom management. Teachers would benefit from understanding the interconnection between classroom management and the pattern of teacher talk in classroom interaction.

Analysis of the data further indicated that misunderstanding of teacher talk was not the only issue that affected English learning in the classroom context. There was also misunderstanding of dialogic teaching.

This was evident from Mr Omran's interview. He has a senior role in Al-Shorooq school, with more than 16 years' experience. In the following extract he comments on dialogic talk.

*Extract 77*

> Dialogic talk! I may open a discussion with my students on any given topic. The students can communicate with me or with each other. In that

> discussion, we make a dialogue. For example, there will be a conversation about our selected topic. Sometimes, two students perform roles. They might imitate a conversation like what they have in their textbooks. Usually, they try to play the roles in different ways. For example, they might change the location or the topic of the original conversation in their textbooks.

In this extract, the teacher misinterprets dialogue learning activities as relating to students' understandings of dialogic talk. This sort of dialogue is prescriptive, since the context and topic of the dialogue are pre-designed and a model of the dialogue is then performed. Students are expected to engage in dialogue via role play, with the aid of the textbook. The teacher's account indicates that he does not understand the real meaning of dialogic talk.

Mr Sunhat had a similar understanding of dialogic talk, as shown in the following extract.

*Extract 78*

> I presume [it means] to make conversation. This is what I understand from that [dialogic teaching]. Usually, I divide the classroom into groups and start a conversation in English. I ask them to repeat that many times. Repetition gives the students confidence to speak. It creates dynamics and they learn better in a dialogue.

In Mr Sunhat's understanding, dialogic teaching refers to something that can be implemented through group discussion. Within these discussions, he encourages the use of repetition, which undervalues learning itself. This teacher demonstrated a limited understanding of dialogic/teacher talk in relation to meaning-making through dialogic teaching.

A similar misunderstanding of dialogic teaching is apparent in the following extract from Mr Antar's interview.

*Extract 79*

> It [dialogic teaching] is related to dialogue or learning through dialogue. I think the students' level in English language is weak. So, it is difficult to implement that in the curriculum. Consequently, there is limited dialogic talk.

In this narrative, Mr Antar relates dialogic talk to students' low level of English mastery. This leads to pessimism about teachers' ability to adopt dialogic talk. In his understanding, the students' mastery of English is a pre-condition for the promotion of dialogic talk in his classroom discourse.

These extracts show that participants' understanding of dialogic talk is linked to the implementation of practical activities such as group discussions and role plays. Such an interpretation requires that students have an adequate level of language proficiency.

In summary, this section has elaborated findings related to participants' teaching experience and experience of peer learning, and a teaching philosophy of error-tolerance, both of which are considered aspects of the ideal model of teaching. The section has also highlighted the nature of teacher talk and dialogic talk. The analysis revealed important gaps between teachers' capacity, constructs of the ideal teacher, and understanding of teacher and dialogic talk. These gaps indicate the inadequacy of teacher education and professional development in relation to teacher and dialogic talk in the Saudi context. To recapitulate, teacher talk and dialogic talk are viewed as declarative dimensions of teacher skills, in which talk is always associated with the content of learning. Moreover, teacher and dialogic talk are misinterpreted as stimulated conversations, which the teacher monitors with the aid of textbooks. This kind of talk requires learners to have a minimum level of language proficiency.

### 7.2 Summary

The analysis of data presented in this chapter has identified emerging teacher characteristics and attitudes that play a significant role in shaping classroom discourse. These attributes are partly influenced by factors external to the learners and teachers themselves, such as parental and environmental factors.

The interaction between language proficiency and learning opportunities reflected in the nature of classroom discourse was found to be dependent on the relationship between three teacher's roles. The first role, exercising teachers' authority, was prioritised because it was the only means of assessing students' understanding. This role always involved the use of questioning. In practice, referential questioning was used to perform two main functions: to stimulate talk and to measure students' comprehension. The findings also showed that accommodating student talk did not promote the authoritative role of the teacher, which might inhibit classroom management. The second role played by these teachers was that of

the main source of knowledge. This was associated with a teacher-centred form of management and the dominance of a one-way model of interaction characterised by extensive teacher talking time. Even though most of the participants agreed with the ideal proportion of teacher talk, they claimed they were unable to provide quality classroom discourse for learners. Ultimately, the third role – that of promoting dialogic talk via F-moves, questioning and (corrective) feedback – had less attention devoted to it because the other two roles (exercising authority and managing the classroom) consumed most of the teachers' energy. Moreover, the teachers' understanding of classroom management did not include awareness of the vital function of classroom discourse in teaching.

In relation to teaching experience and professional development, the findings revealed gaps between the teachers' actual capacities, concepts of the ideal teacher, and teacher professional development. These gaps impacted on the nature of classroom discourse, with teachers' interviews showing significant misunderstandings about TT and dialogic talk. TT and dialogic talk were understood by teachers as part of learning activities such as group work and discussions. More importantly, these misinterpretations were rooted in the over-emphasis in teacher education on declarative dimensions of teacher skills and knowledge rather than procedural dimensions such as communicative ability and classroom discourse management. It can be inferred from the interview data that the participating teachers regarded teaching methodologies that involve pedagogic knowledge and content knowledge (knowledge about language) as more useful in their teaching context and that they interpreted TT/dialogic talk as part of these declarative dimensions. The findings of this study indicate the relationship between teachers' personal capacities and their professional development.

# Chapter 8

# Discussion

This chapter discusses the key analytical themes that emerged from the findings of this research. The salient findings relevant to the research questions were presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Briefly, Chapter 5 presented an analysis of data on the particularities of TT in response to the first research question, which addressed the nature of teacher talk and the learning particularities of students. Chapter 6 presented findings related to the second research question, which addressed the learning opportunities produced by particularities of teachers' talk. Chapter 7 presented findings in relation to the third research question, which explored teachers' characteristics and the attitudes that shape traditional classroom discourse.

This chapter discusses the main findings in relation to Cullen's (2002) framework for conceptualising aspects of feedback moves (F-moves) in teacher talk (TT). Cullen (2002) proposes that classroom interaction occurs through teachers' feedback, which shapes students' learning and, at the same time, is shaped by students' ability to engage in classroom interaction. This framework, which is elaborated in Chapter 3, enables an in-depth analysis of the particularities of TT and the reasons why teachers engage in particular forms of TT during the instructional process.

The discussion here is also informed by other theoretical frameworks, particularly in relation to the second and third research questions. The analysis of data related to the second research question draws on Kumaravadivelu's (1994) conceptualisation of teaching practices. As discussed in Chapter 3, Kumaravadivelu (1994) argues that teachers need to have both subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. In his later work (Kumaravadivelu 2003), he emphasised the importance of post-method theory, which proposes that effective teaching requires teachers to incorporate the values and cultures of the local context into their teaching strategies, thereby creating their own unique teaching methods. The findings in relation to the third research question are analysed using Hammond's and Gibbons' (2005) scaffolding framework, which proposes that, in order for effective learning to take place, teachers have to do adopt appropriate interventions (see Chapter 3 for an elaboration of these three frameworks). These three theoretical frameworks are interrelated to provide a comprehensive understanding of Saudi teachers' TT, the

strategies they use to create learning opportunities, and the role of their characteristics and attitudes in shaping classroom discourse.

The chapter begins with a summary of the key findings in relation to each of the three research questions: the particularities of teacher talk (TT), teachers' strategies in creating learning opportunities and the role of teachers' characteristics and attitudes in shaping classroom discourse. This is followed by an interpretation of the findings through the lens of the three aforementioned theories.

### 8.1 Particularities of Teacher Talk (TT)

Teacher talk (TT) is generally defined as the language teachers use to provide instructions, to explain forms of content knowledge, to facilitate learning activities, to ask questions and obtain feedback from students (Savignon 1991). Unfortunately, there is little evidence that TT guarantees the emergence of high-quality interactions for effective learning (Scott 1998; Thornbury 1996; Walsh 2011). This is because the particularities of TT are influenced by the classroom culture of particular schools. The findings of the present study contribute new insights into the particularities of TT and its relationship to effective learning in Saudi classrooms.

Five categories of TT as identified by Cullen (2002) emerged from the analysis (see Chapter 5). These were: F-move discoursal repetition, which includes repetition, replication, and questioning; F-move evaluation, which involves direct correction, exemplification, and code switching; F-move dictation, including dictation and recitation, and corrective feedback, which includes introducing lexis and pronunciation; F-move discoursal elaboration, which includes stimulating students' engagement, requesting clarification, and indirect questioning; and F-move reformulation, including reformulating, rephrasing, and elaboration. Analysis of the data suggested that the second and third categories limited opportunities for dialogic learning to take place, although these particularities of TT did help to develop language competence. F-move discoursal elaboration and F-move reformulation categories were interpreted as contributing to the development of dialogic learning. The F-move discoursal repetition was the most frequently occurring move found in this study. It involved correction of the language form rather than the meaning. This move would not promote and extend the dialogic talk. However, this emphasis on language form could be more beneficial if the move were modified. Such modification might be achieved by guiding learners to reproduce the

language forms through the uptake process (Gass & Mackey 2006), which has been shown in F-move reformulation. These moves are discussed in more detail in later sections.

The observational and interview data showed that all participating teachers, regardless of the length of their teaching experience, engaged in some or all of these five types of TT interchangeably during teaching. Two teachers - Mr Motwally, who had 23 years' teaching experience, and Mr Talaat, who had been teaching for 9 years - in fact used all five types of TT during classroom instruction. The other teachers only used some of them. This suggests that length of teaching does not significantly influence the particularities of TT. It is also interesting to note that particularities of TT were not consistent across all the teachers in this study. For example, Mr Talaat engaged in repetition, replication and questioning and, at the same time, he also used other types of TT, such as direct correction, exemplification, and code switching. This supports the idea emanating from Vygotsky's sociocultural framework that classroom discourse and students' backgrounds influence types of TT, that is, students from certain social backgrounds bring with them different ways of interacting during learning.

For example, Finn (1999) investigated four US schools that represented different socioeconomic milieu: working class, middle class, affluent professional and executive elite. She reported that the students in each of these schools approached learning differently. Such findings align with Vygotsky's argument that sociocultural values play a significant role in constructing students' ways of learning in the classroom. Teachers have to negotiate their TT in response to these different learning styles and abilities, as illustrated in the examples presented in Chapter 5. These differences are assumed to be influenced by the sociocultural location of both students and teachers.

The following section summarises the particularities of TT that were identified in Chapter 5.

### 8.1.1 Improving language competence but limiting dialogic learning

As explained in Chapter 5, the findings showed that the first three particularities of TT (F-move repetition; F-move evaluative; and F-move dictation and recitation) did not encourage students' dialogic learning, even though they were seen to improve students' language competence, especially in terms of language form (Jones 2011; Yanfen & Yuqin 2010). This was because these particularities were aimed mostly toward rote learning, recitation and instruction, with little emphasis on discussion and dialogue. In most cases,

teachers spent more time correcting students' pronunciation of the word, grammatical mistakes, and introducing new lexis through repetition, dictation and recitation. This discouraged effective learning, as illustrated in the fact that most students gave short responses, often only a single word, to their teachers' questioning during the classroom observations (extract 1). On other occasions (extract 5), the teacher kept repeating the same word to help students learn it. This form of TT enables students to acquire knowledge of new vocabulary but does not contribute to expanding the conversation.

#### 8.1.1.1 F-Move Repetition (repetition, replication and questioning)

The data showed that, although teachers helped students by repeating sentences and providing wait time during their talk, they still gave short answers in response to teachers' questions. This approach does not allow for longer turns of interaction to take place in the classroom. Students felt reluctant to engage in longer conversations, for several reasons. As suggested in Chapter 5, they were unwilling to communicate because of the dominance of indirect feedback and display questions from teachers and the teachers' overvaluing of grammatical competence. This unwillingness to interact was very much influenced by students' sociocultural backgrounds.

In addition, the teacher participants were deeply concerned with maintaining their authority in the classroom. They were afraid that if they opened up discussion, they would lose control of the classroom and their authority to manage it. My observations of classrooms showed that teachers adopted an authoritarian role. They were highly anxious about maintaining their authority to manage their classroom and keep the students quiet. When teachers were asked why they used their authority to control the students' talk, they said they would be criticised by their principals if they lost control of the classroom. The effect of this authoritarian role is that many Saudi students fail to engage in lengthy interactions with teachers. They are expected to respect their teachers and to engage in extended communication with them would be taken as a sign of lack of respect.

This kind of school culture built on respect for teachers was also reported by Al Noghaimishi (1985), who described how demographic characteristics influenced the nature of the interaction between teachers and students. As in the present study, most of the repetitions observed in Al Noghaimishi's study involved form-focused feedback. Such a focus inhibits students from freely communicating in the target language. In other words, form-focused feedback inhibits effective learning by producing a learning environment in which students

are likely to experience 'error phobia' and are unwilling to talk because they are worried about making mistakes in the classroom (Luk & Wong 2010). This kind of form-focused feedback in TT does not accommodate dialogue and puts the responsibility to correct the error onto other students. This leads to loss of confidence among students to seek to correct the error themselves in front of their peers. Consequently, students become reluctant to participate in classroom interaction.

Form-focused feedback also has a de-motivating effect on students. Cullen (2002) proposes that repetition enables students to pay attention to the correct sentence as the teacher repeats it, a suggestion that is supported by later work, such as that of Yanfen and Yanqin (2010) and Jones (2011). The present findings indeed suggest that repetition develops students' accuracy in language form, but highlight the fact that it fails to improve dialogic communication significantly.

Although repetition undeniably produced the ideal form of language (extract 8), this particular form of TT failed to elaborate on meaning. This traditional 'backward' feature does not promote meaning making, and even the extended interaction is unlikely to stimulate conversation. According to Cullen (2002), repetition simply in the form of dictation and recitation limits the potential for extended talk between teachers and students and between students. F-move repetition occurred frequently in the data (see e.g. extract 10); teachers merely introduced lexical items and repeated their pronunciation. In general, however, repetition was most often used with beginner students to introduce new vocabulary and teach its correct pronunciation.

#### 8.1.1.2 F-move evaluation (direct correction, closed/display questions, code switching)

Other kinds of feedback identified in the data included direct corrective feedback. F-move evaluation is generally believed to hinder language learning. F-move evaluation functions as an instruction to students to produce the target language with a focus on the form expected by the teacher. The teacher provides a clue for students to revise their language production and usually presents an ideal model.

An example of teachers' use of F-move evaluation can be seen in extract 5. As suggested by Seedhouse (1997), direct corrective feedback can be useful for students. The teacher, Mr Motwally, corrected students' errors directly but through cued elicitation. In this way, he deployed minimal correction whilst ensuring that the student was given enough language knowledge to be able to correct his error. After the error has been identified and

understood by the student, the teacher has to create an opportunity for relevant modification. Minimum explicit correction was not used in all cases because the majority of teachers perceived it as having potential to interrupt the conversation and waste time, since not all errors needed to be corrected.

F-move evaluation was also found to be difficult to implement in on-going interaction, requiring decisions about timing, the kind of errors that needed correction, choice of correction type and, more importantly, the kind of strategy to deploy. Extract 7, for example, illustrates the difficulties teachers faced in identifying appropriate strategies to provide feedback to students. As Ellis (2009) has observed, implementing F-move evaluation is indeed complex and challenging, not least in relation to deciding on the appropriate timing of the evaluation. Teachers in the present study employed communication strategies such as requests for clarification or even correction, which is consistent with the findings of Dornyei and Scott (1997), who reported that not all skilful language teachers can enact the strategies effectively.

My results also showed that teachers used closed/display questions, which are seen as detrimental to classroom interaction. These types of questions do not elaborate on any possibilities that might occur in real foreign language interaction. Nor are they able to generate interaction unless the teacher controls his/her language output and interaction with students (Moore 1989, 2001). If the teacher is highly aware of the classroom interaction, these questions could be a preamble to more open questions following the display questions.

In the present study, it was found that closed/display questions could benefit learners when they were used to comment on the grammatical knowledge of students. This is consistent with the work of Alsubaie (2015). This elicitation technique refers specifically to the student's mistake and the stimulus question is used to draw the student's attention to the mistake for self-correction based on his or her prior grammatical knowledge. Closed/display questions are regarded as effective when their use is contingent on the presence of appropriate opportunities (Boyd & Rubin 2006). They can be deployed to explore more deeply the information that resulted from the previous turn-taking, which forces students to think aloud and engage with the on-going classroom interaction.

Unfortunately, only a few participants were observed to be able to deliver contingent and explorative questioning at an appropriate time, which requires them to exercise their language proficiency and mastery of the learning materials. Although the interaction that took

place through this mechanism was not authentic, as it was specifically initiated by the teacher, this model of classroom discourse might increase students' knowledge of the language system but does not necessarily support the generation of dialogic talk in the classroom.

#### 8.1.1.3 F-move dictation and recitation (corrective feedback)

Other types of TT that limit interactive talk of students in the classroom were also observed. Teachers in the Saudi context engaged in F-move dictation and recitation. Examples can be found in extracts 8 and 9, which show the extent to which Mr Motwally used dictation and recitation in his classroom. These particularities of TT helped students to recognise the language form, but restricted dialogic learning. However, dictation and recitation are reported to constrain opportunities for students' language use in classroom discourse (Hall & Walsh 2002) if they are not directed towards communication, especially when contrived or modelled interactions which follow scripts or learning materials. It was common in this study for teachers to repeat a specific item of vocabulary with emphasis on its articulation, and the students responded in the same way. Consequently, dictation and recitation became an extended interaction that contained little meaning and which discouraged a longer conversation.

In spite of the weaknesses of these particular forms of TT, sociocultural theory suggests that dictation and recitation can be classified as constructive practices if they lead to internal speech production (Lantolf & Beckett, 2009; Mitchell & Myles, 2013). In other words, dictation and recitation allow students to manipulate a language item and reformulate it in meaningful ways for language development if they are given time to challenge themselves during dictation and recitation. This is exemplified in extracts 8 and 10, where students learned from the examples given by teachers and were able to produce a new word. This was evident in extract 8, Mr Motwally gave the examples of 'friend' and 'friendly', and his students were then able to create another noun phrase by adding an appropriate suffix to a particular noun.

The data also suggested that dictation and recitation enabled students to memorise the new vocabulary. This is consistent with Dahlin and Watkins (2000), who reported that, when students imitated the teacher's utterance of a particular sentence, this enhanced their memorisation of new words. They also argued that dictation and recitation increase understanding of how to produce a language item and this knowledge is gradually integrated

into the students' repertoire. This idea is akin to the rationale for the use of drills in the audio-lingual method within behaviourist learning theory, which places high value on automaticity generated by long-term practice of language production (Duff 2000). These practices were observed with considerable frequency in the present study.

In educational theory around science, dictation and recitation are seen as part of a restructuring process (McLaughlin 1990) whereby students internalise lexical or syntactical items of language via repetition. This has been found to be effective in improving students' interlanguage development and automatising the newly-structured language components so they can be recalled in future real communication. The data in the present study showed that, through dictation, recitation and repetition, students were able to produce a new noun phrase based on their ability to imitate the other types of TT. In relation to these arguments about the positive impact of F-move dictation and repetition, it can be concluded that these particularities of TT have some benefits for language learning but, equally clearly, they can have a negative impact, as shown in this current study.

The findings also suggest that students' learning styles and intellectual abilities influenced the particularities of TT to some extent. The data presented in Chapter 5 indicate that teachers tended to use repetition, direct correction and dictation in line with their students' learning ability. Most students were unwilling to communicate in the target language and teachers were discouraged from using other types of TT that encourage dialogic learning. Extracts 16 and 17, for instance, show how teachers' efforts failed to encourage students to engage in longer conversations. Students only gave very short responses to teachers' questions, and mostly did so in L1. Their reluctance to speak up in L2 highlights the need for students and teachers to work collaboratively to achieve success in language learning.

Another factor that inhibited effective learning was the frequency with which teachers used indirect corrective feedback. As explained in Chapter 5, indirect feedback is ineffective when students fail to notice and, hence, benefit from the teacher's feedback. While corrective feedback is necessary to improve language learning, indirect corrective feedback is less effective in helping students improve their language skills. Extracts 18 and 19 illustrate the extent to which teachers found it difficult to help students understand the lesson using indirect correction. This was due to students' lack of knowledge of EFL. The students were not able to reflect on their learning.

Analysis of the data also identified another important factor discouraging the emergence of an interactive classroom, namely, the teachers' over-emphasis on grammar. Extracts 20 and 21, for example, show that when the teacher, Mr. Jameel, invited students to talk, he focused attention on grammatical accuracy, with little emphasis on communication. This type of TT is indeed helpful in facilitating students' competence in grammar, but it does not provide sufficient opportunities for students to express their ideas in English.

This section has described the particularities of TT that discourage dialogic talk because they do not provide sufficient opportunity for students to interact in the classroom and communicate in L2. Specifically, the section has discussed how F-move repetition, F-move evaluation, and F-move dictation and recitation seemed to discourage students' talk in the classroom. Some of the participants regularly used these types of TT during language instruction, but there was no indication from the data that they did so because their pedagogic abilities were inadequate. Rather, their use of these types of TT was very much shaped by the characteristics and sociocultural values of their students.

The following section examines the particularities of TT that support dialogic talk, promote interactive classrooms and create learning opportunities.

### 8.1.2 Particularities of TT that encourage dialogic talk

The study also identified some particularities of TT that are known to be supportive of communicative classroom culture and which encourage the development of dialogic talk in Cullen's (2002) framework, these were F-move elaboration, which involves stimulating students' engagement, requesting clarification and questioning (Extract 4), and F-move reformulation, which involves reformulating and rephrasing (Extract 5).

#### 8.1.2.1 F-move elaboration

Cullen (2002) suggests that F-move elaboration has a positive impact on language learning. This type of TT allows dialogic talk to emerge because it is performed via negotiated feedback. The teacher also asks referential questions to generate more communication. Extract 11, for example, presents evidence of TT that encourages dialogic talk. The teacher, Mr Talaat, first asked a question and then followed up with a referential question to allow students to respond to his question correctly. This kind of questioning provides learning opportunities to students.

This extract also illustrates the type of TT that allows students to express their opinions, feelings and ideas freely through their responses and ongoing engagement with the

interaction. Here the teacher did not focus exclusively on language form so that the interaction could flow longer and more turn-taking could occur. Via referential questioning involving freedom of expression, the teacher kept the classroom interaction moving without limiting responses to the specific learning content. All the characteristics of elaboration in teacher talk are represented, even though the responses of students remained short.

Other forms of referential questioning require the support of scaffolding. Some of these reflect the teacher's interest in the student's response (Dillon 1994). Not all forms, however, guarantee the continuation of an established interaction. In the present study, teachers seemed to place a great deal of reliance on this type of questioning to expand teacher-learner interaction.

During the instructional process, teachers often provided assistance that enabled students to accomplish the task more independently. Teachers stimulated students' engagement through requests for clarification, questioning, reformulating, and rephrasing the talk. An example can be seen in extract 11, where Mr Talaat used probing questions and clarification requests to encourage students to respond. This particularity of TT allows dialogic talk to occur between students and teachers.

Such sequenced forms of teacher assistance are referred to as scaffolding. They are offered to students who are performing a task which is above their level of capability and challenges their existing capacity (Wood, Bruner, & Ross 1976). This assistance is usually accompanied by additional efforts to keep learners motivated towards the task, to indicate important features of the task, to minimise stress, and to showcase ideal stages of dealing with the task (p. 98). Scaffolding enables learners to keep participating in the task however they can in order to hone their ability to deal with a similar task in the future as they acquire new knowledge. This kind of teacher assistance is evident in extracts 13 and 14, where Mr Adel rephrases his question to enhance his students' understanding (extract 13), and Mr Mowally seeks to achieve the same purpose by reformulating the sentence (extract 14).

#### 8.1.2.2 F-move reformulation

The other type of TT used in language classrooms in the present study was F-move reformulation, as exemplified in Chapter 5. According to Cullen (2002), this type of TT helps dialogic talk to occur. In extract 14, for example, Mr Motwally reformulated his question to enhance students' understanding, which constitutes an example of scaffolded assistance. The teacher gave feedback and used open/referential questioning. In another example extract 15,

Mr Talaat also engaged in F-move reformulation; he first corrected students' mistakes using recast and then gave prompts to encourage more communication. This kind of TT is preferred by many students, as reported by Panova and Lyster (2002).

The findings on teachers' strategies to create learning opportunities are discussed in the following section.

## 8.2 Strategies to Promote Learning Opportunities

The second main aim of the study was to explore the strategies teachers employed in shaping the classroom environment to create learning opportunities. Analysis of the observational data yielded four main themes: negotiated interaction facilitation; promoting learner autonomy; raising cultural awareness; and role-sharing (see Chapter 6). These four themes were used to analyse the teaching and learning activities identified in this study and to evaluate the quality of classroom interaction in the observed teaching activities (Kumaravadivelu 2003).

### 8.2.1 Negotiated interaction opportunities

As seen in Chapter 6, teachers created learning opportunities in several ways. The first strategy was persistent correction of students' pronunciation mistakes by articulating the correct pronunciation. Extract 22, for instance, shows how Mr Morsi used correction to help his student, Ahmad, to pronounce the word 'know' correctly. Other extracts in Chapter 6 contain similar examples of teachers using this strategy to create learning opportunities.

The second set of strategies used by teachers for this purpose was open-ended questions and encouragement. In extract 24, for example, the conversation between Mr Talaat and his student Faisal shows the teacher's use of open-ended questions to facilitate communication and dialogic talk in the classroom. The teacher actively introduced prompts to maintain communication.

Third, the findings showed that teachers used their pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and craft knowledge (CK) to create learning opportunities. PCK refers to the ability of teachers to transfer knowledge using various media and teaching strategies, while CK refers to their skill in modifying their techniques to fit the students' learning styles. The teachers encouraged students to engage actively in learning, as shown in the observation from Mr Hadi's classroom in extract 25.

Fourth, teachers' self-confidence and classroom management skills created learning opportunities in the classroom. This is because students are more likely to engage in learning when they trust their teacher's professionalism. Extracts 30 and 31 present examples of teachers' confidence in language teaching.

### 8.2.2. Promoting learners' autonomy in the Saudi school context

A democratic learning environment is seen to be more effective in creating learning opportunities. A democratic classroom is characterised by teachers' willingness to open space for students to express their opinions and perspectives. It is also characterised by the ability of teachers to engage in role sharing during instruction. In interview, Mr Antar and Mr Emad suggested that the ability to engage students in learning through questioning and probing was one of the most effective ways to create learning opportunities. Their students seemed to be more engaged in their learning once they were given space to express themselves freely.

As discussed in Chapter 6, there are three main ways in which teachers promote learners' autonomy. First, it is necessary to use teaching media and resources effectively. Extracts 32 and 33 show that the Saudi teachers paid attention to the use of learning media and recognised its importance for promoting learners' autonomy. Second, it is important for teachers to take note of students' interaction in the classroom. Extract 34 provides an example in which the teacher pushed students in a way that triggered them to speak up. Third, in order to promote learners' autonomy, it is important for teachers to be able to effectively implement their substantive and pedagogical content knowledge see extract 36. My findings support the importance of these three strategies in promoting learners' autonomy.

### 8.2.3 Understanding one's students

Analysis of the observational and interview data generated three key themes in relation to the importance of teachers' ability to understand their students and their circumstances. First, teachers demonstrated understanding of the need to be conscious of students' sociocultural context in order to help promote learning opportunities. Extracts 38, 39 and 40 show that Mr Antar always provided examples that were socioculturally familiar to his students. Most other participants agreed that awareness of students' sociocultural backgrounds was important to create learning opportunities.

Second, participants reported that an important trigger for students' participation in learning was the teacher's willingness to provide space for students to express themselves

during the instructional process. As shown in extract 41 and 42, they also believed that students should be given more freedom to speak at home. It is common in Saudi families for children to be discouraged from expressing their opinions, a situation that reflects the hierarchical family system in Saudi society. In Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, students' behaviour at home would be seen to influence the ways in which they behave at school. Thus, if there are barriers to interaction with authority figures at home, these will be replicated in their interactions with their teachers at school and beyond. Extracts 43 and 44 illustrate this point, showing how the dominant role played by parents discourages children from expressing their ideas, and in turn, this attitude shapes students' engagement in the classroom.

In his interview, Mr Sami expressed the view that students' academic achievement is significantly related to the attention that families pay to their children's school activities. He explained that a positive attitude from parents encouraged their children's academic achievement. In extracts 45 and 46, he explained that families from different sociocultural backgrounds had different aspirations for their children's education.

### 8.2.4 Creating learning opportunities via a democratic classroom

All the teachers interviewed in this study believed that a democratic learning environment is important to create space for students' participation in classroom instruction. In this context, the data highlighted the importance of teachers' efforts to facilitate role-sharing. They believed that role sharing during the instructional process encourages students' participation in the classroom. These views are illustrated in Extracts 47-49. One important way in which they sought to encourage their students to take up their role was by accepting students' errors in order to increase their willingness to continue engaging in the learning process. Mr Omran, for instance, suggested that role sharing helps to break down learning barriers. This is because students feel more confident and are willing to communicate with their teachers in the classroom. In addition to emphasising the importance of role sharing, the teachers talked about the need for the roles played by students and teachers to be balanced, so that neither teachers nor students dominate the talk. Extracts 50-52 illustrate this point.

## 8.3 Role of Teachers' Characteristics in Shaping Classroom Discourse

The other main aim of the study was to explore how teacher attitudes and characteristics contributed to shaping classroom discourse. Four key themes were generated

from in-depth analysis of the data, as discussed in Chapter 7. Each of these is elaborated below.

First, an important contributor to positive classroom discourse was the amount of teacher talk in the classroom. The participants interviewed in this study believed in the importance of inviting students to participate in language learning. However, some of these, like Mr Ageel and Mr Adel, expressed concern about their students' readiness to be more communicative in the classroom (see extracts 53 and 54).

The second theme concerned the issue of student-centredness. Extracts 55 and 56 indicate that these EFL teachers in Saudi Arabian schools believe that allowing the voices of students to be heard was important in shaping positive classroom discourse. The proposition that teachers should talk less than students is central to the concept of a democratic learning environment. In this scenario, teachers are seen as facilitators of students' talk. This practice is crucial for the establishment of a positive learning environment.

As discussed in Chapter 7, another important attitude shaping classroom discourse is teachers' tolerance of students' errors. This not only enables students to freely engage in classroom discussion without being worried about making mistakes, but also helps to develop a healthy relationship between teachers and students. Extracts 69-71 indicate that teachers' engagement in continuing professional development will enrich their knowledge and teaching skills, which in turn shape their classroom practice.

The third theme relates to the proportion of teacher talk *vis à vis* student talk. All teachers interviewed agreed that teachers should talk less than students. As shown in extracts 57-60, these teachers endorsed the concept of student-centredness, which gives students the space to express their opinions in the classroom. In these extracts, Mr Sami, Mr Motwally, Mr Antar and Mr Omran all agreed that students in Saudi schools should be given time to express their opinions in the classroom.

The fourth theme concerned the role of teachers in creating a learning environment that facilitates dialogic talk. In extracts 61-63, Mr Ageel, Mr Farhan and Mr Antar argued that teachers need to implement various strategies during the instructional process to trigger students' motivation to express their opinions.

### 8.4 Particularities of TT, Learning Opportunities and Classroom Discourse

This study explored the particularities of TT, teachers' strategies in providing learning opportunities, and the role of teachers' attitudes in shaping classroom discourse. The data

were analysed using a framework derived mainly from Cullen's (2002) work on the F-move, Kumaravadivelu's (2003) post-method pedagogy, and Hammond's and Gibbons' (2005) scaffolding theory.

An examination of the data through the lens of the F-move analytical framework showed that teachers in Saudi Arabian schools engaged in several types of TT as described by Cullen (2002). Some of them used TT that encourages dialogic learning to occur, such as F-move repetition, F-move evaluation, and F-move dictation and recitation. It was unclear, however, whether these particularities reflected teachers' lack of teaching competence or students' learning attitudes. In Saudi classrooms, students' learning engagement was not merely related to their level of intellectual ability. Students tend to be passive in interaction with older adults because of their personal characteristics and the sociocultural values that shape their behaviour at home and elsewhere. As suggested by Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, students' learning style is a product of the interaction between students and their sociocultural environment. For example, quiet students who do not participate in classroom discussion are less likely to actively engage in learning and will be more likely to withdraw from the learning process if they are not familiar with the teaching approach and learning activities.

My analysis of the nature of teacher talk, especially in relation to teachers' F-moves, has shown that sociocultural factors, and not simply teacher characteristics, impact the quality of talk. This is consistent with Vygotsky's (1978) theory of learning, which conceptualises learning as the product of social interaction. In this perspective, pedagogy and culture are inextricably interrelated in human development (Alexander 2008a). Human interventions must be designed to connect talk, language learning, and development. Such interventions must be comprehensive, encompassing all the factors that contribute to ideal learning and development in a particular sociocultural setting, such as the classroom teaching context. Previous chapters have presented data on the ways in which different types of TT are shaped by students' cultural values and by social interaction.

One of the most striking characteristics of the students' learning particularities was the low level of learner motivation, which manifested in their reluctance to communicate. In the absence of systematic and deliberate efforts by teachers in relation to the teaching and learning of talk, it is understandable that learner motivation was low. However, other factors such as interaction (Kang 2005; Kao et al 2011; Mahmoodi and Moazam 2014), personality traits (Alaei et al. 2014), and culture (Wen & Clement 2003) were also influential. Learner

motivation here was understood as a construct associated with a unique individual with complex, contextually-grounded social relations (Murray 2011). The study's findings suggested that this low level of communication reflected the limited space available to children to express themselves freely in Saudi Arabian schools. This lack of space to engage in free expression in turn reflects the conservative culture of their society. Those students who were given more opportunities to express their opinions at home seem to have participated more actively and interacted more with the teachers than their peers who were not given this kind of space to express themselves. This might explain why these teachers tended to invite these particular learners to participate through questions and feedback (Finn 1999).

However, the data also indicated that some teachers failed to invite students to engage in classroom talk because they believed that these students had faced challenge to communicate in English. The observational data provided some support for the teachers' view. If students themselves lack the ability to communicate, teachers' motivation to encourage dialogue will be reduced. When teachers lack confidence in their students' ability to engage in dialogic learning, they are less likely to utilise approaches to TT that will encourage students' participation.

This is because high quality talk requires an equal positioning of teachers and students in enacting their roles in shaping a constructive classroom discourse – a reciprocal egalitarian relationship. A dialogic and interactive classroom discourse can only be mediated by an egalitarian relationship between teachers and learners who understand talk as a tool for learning (Teo 2016). In other words, teachers' understanding of learners can be represented by the way in which teachers share their role as teachers in the classroom – that is, balanced role sharing. When teachers facilitate balanced role sharing, there will be more interaction in classroom discourse because knowledge is not only transferred but also collaboratively constructed through debate and discussion (Gavelek & Raphael 1996). This ideal scenario involves more than simply encouraging participation from students; it values critiques, insights and ideas from peers, teachers, and even textbooks for knowledge co-construction (Alexander 2008a). On one hand, teachers must be responsive by providing language output and production opportunities for students. On the other hand, students have to realise their own roles in making use of such opportunities. In order to achieve such an ideal setting, classroom discourse needs to be both interactive and dialogic (Scott et al 2006). This in turn requires open-mindedness and cooperation on both sides.

This perspective leads to a consideration of the post-method pedagogy proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2003). Post-method pedagogy allows teachers to be creative and devise their teaching strategies according to the particularities of their students. The findings presented in previous chapters, however, show that some Saudi teachers did not engage in post-method pedagogy.

In this study, willingness to communicate is interpreted as a transformable cultural behaviour. It is regarded as an intention that requires opportunities to produce such behaviour (MacIntyre et al 1998). In other words, willingness to communicate must have two precursors: desire to speak and self-confidence. Taking into consideration the characteristics and language level of learners, these two requirements can be harnessed by talk and opportunities that can be produced by interactionally-aware teachers. Moreover, willingness to communicate emanates from three interacting sociocultural variables: topic, interlocutor and situational context (Kang 2005). Hence this behaviour can be enhanced by stimulating learning.

The achievement of dialogic talk was indeed found to be challenging for the teachers in this study. In many classes, teachers were observed to be non-interactive and authoritative in classroom discourse, giving students very limited space for participation. Other classrooms, while non-interactive, were somewhat dialogic when the students engaged with different perspectives raised by the teachers and were able to take up opportunities to debate issues arising from them. In some classes, teachers displayed interactive teaching and learning, but did not harness this interaction to shape a critical environment for classroom discourse.

One way of improving the quality of talk is to employ ZPD and teacher scaffolded assistance as supportive tools to streamline the transition from interaction to learning (Alexander 2008a). The ZPD is developed by both teachers and students playing the roles of proficient and apprentice while interacting in the classroom within a specific temporal order (Vygotsky 1986). The participating teachers demonstrated awareness of the potential of ZPD to facilitate learning through varied tasks and activities, while scaffolding was regularly present in the form of waiting time, guiding students to persevere with language reproduction, managing stress and sustaining the flow of the interaction.

In other words, if a teacher has a heightened awareness of ZPD, he/she will use meaning-negotiated feedback and open/referential questions in the F-moves and provide the

assistance necessary for learners to maintain and develop interaction. Teacher assistance can be provided in the form of clues for learners, additional information about emerging issues, and waiting time (Aljaafreh & Lantolf 1994; Nassaji & Swain 2000). This process relies on the availability of assistance for the student, which must be guaranteed by teachers. Such assistance is withdrawn when the students can do it by themselves. Thus, the use of clues and other forms of F-move elaboration resulted from teachers' recognition of learners' zone of proximal development. In the absence of teacher awareness and the use of supportive tools in classroom discourse, the value of talk to exploit its potential to promote learning was reduced to showcasing ideal language form with limited student response (F-move repetition) and assessing student performance (F-move evaluation).

In summary, the availability of teacher assistance as needed, that is recast as form-focused feedback in conjunction with noticing (recast learner attention) and uptake (learner L2 production/response) can improve the quality of F move reformulation in teacher-learner interaction. Similarly, in F-move elaboration, meaning-negotiated feedback and open/referential questions were made available to promote learning. These two F-moves were found to have more learning potential than the F-move repetition and F-move evaluation, where the interaction was built on pseudo-inquiry, recitation and closed/display questions.

## 8.5 Conclusion

This chapter has summarised the research findings on the particularities of teacher talk (TT) that influence the construction of dialogic learning and shape classroom discourse. The data were analysed using Cullen's (2002) F-move framework, Kumaravadivelu's (2003) post-method pedagogy and Hammond's and Gibbons' (2005) scaffolding theory. Through the application of these analytical frameworks, it can be concluded that TT is influenced by the socio-cultural context and the teachers' professional learning and their beliefs and values. The data showed that teachers' use of these five F-moves reflected the gaps between students' capabilities and teachers' teaching competence. The chapter has also discussed key findings on the strategies used by teachers to create learning opportunities and the role of teachers' attitudes in shaping classroom discourse.

# Chapter 9

# Conclusion

This study investigated particular instances of teacher talk (TT) and its complexities in the context of Saudi secondary schools. In the previous three chapters, qualitative data from interviews and observations were analysed and interpreted via a holistic theoretical framework. This chapter briefly summarises the study and its findings. It then considers the implications of the findings, identifies the contribution of the study and concludes with recommendations for future research.

## 9.1 Overview of the Study

The aim of the study was to map instances of TT employed by EFL teachers in Saudi secondary school English classes. Examples of TT were presented and analysed to determine whether Saudi TT promotes dialogic learning or restricts opportunities for students to engage in dialogic learning. A further aim was to examine how teachers take account of sociocultural particularities of their teaching context, and to what extent some particularities of TT affect the development of students' dialogical skills. The study also investigated the role of students' learning particularities, how Saudi teachers manage their classroom discourse and create learning opportunities for their students, and how teachers' characteristics, such as language proficiency, experience and education, shape classroom discourse.

These objectives were addressed using a qualitative approach. The research design and theoretical framework were informed by a review of relevant literature. Data were collected through interviews and observation, with particular focus on: particularities of teacher talk; the role of TT in shaping students' learning opportunities; interaction and learning opportunities created by teachers' questions; and the role of teachers' attitudes in shaping teachers' management of classroom discourse.

The observational data were collected in a natural setting. Classroom observations and interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and analysed following the systematic procedures of qualitative research. Eighteen EFL teachers from six different secondary schools within a central province in Saudi Arabia participated in the study. The fieldwork

began with observations of the F-moves used by the Saudi EFL teachers in response to their students' contributions. A total of 27 classrooms were observed.

The key findings in relation to the RQ1A and RQ1B on the nature of TT and the embedded learning particularities of teacher and learner IRF interactions, with particular focus on five types of teachers' F-moves, were presented in Chapter 5. The analysis also identified types of teacher-learner interactions that were not in the form of IRF, namely, sporadic or interrupted TT. The findings in relation to the RQ2 and the RQ3 were presented in Chapters 6 and 7 respectively.

### 9.2 Summary of Findings

When viewed from a holistic sociocultural perspective, the main findings of the study show that TT did not play an effective role in the EFL classroom. Consequently, teacher talk functioned partly as classroom talk and was thus not successfully extended into dialogic talk (see Chapter 5). Regarding the RQ1A, the nature of TT in Saudi EFL classrooms was found to be consistent with the F-move categories suggested by Cullen's (2002). As evidenced in Chapter 5, the TT placed higher value on language form than on meaning or content. These F-moves were not used to promote dialogic teaching; this in turn restricted the space for TT to create more learning opportunities. The data also showed that recasting usually functioned as a kind of repetition (see extracts 1 and 4), while teachers usually posed questions in the form of evaluative feedback (see extracts 5 and 6). A shortcoming of this type of feedback is that the teachers' recasting discourages students' uptake and limits their opportunities to talk, which then shapes the exchange as casual turn-taking.

In regard to RQ1B, the findings show that the TT was shaped by the particular sociocultural environment and the associated embedded learning particularities of the students. The data show that, in general, the amount of TT far exceeded the amount of student talk, and this inhibited the development of dialogic learning processes. It was clear from the data that the teachers put more emphasis on grammatical explanations and accuracy than on dialogic practices. The focus on structure and form was found to surface more frequently than other models of classroom discourse, and the teachers were observed to be highly capable in this area of knowledge or subject-matter knowledge. The extracts presented in Chapter 5 also suggested that the students' lack of interest and motivation to use the language daily discouraged them from using L2 extensively in their classroom interaction. The nature of students' responses indicated their reluctance to engage in longer interactions

in English. Their spoken English was brief and choppy; this type of language use can indicate two things: students are not well motivated to communicate in English or they lack language competence.

The findings in relation to RQ2 on teachers' strategies to create learning opportunities for students show that teachers mainly used their position in the lesson to exercise their authority and manage the classroom rather than to promote dialogic talk. The data showed that, in many instances, the teachers did not allocate sufficient wait-time for students to give appropriate answers to teachers' questions, or invite interactions with students during the lesson time. The results also indicate that the teachers did not build solid knowledge of the students' sociocultural environment and the factors that might affect students' learning. In spite of these issues, the data do provide evidence that the participating teachers made some effort to create opportunities for students' learning. This reflected the understanding among some teachers that encouraging students to participate in classroom interaction is important in the attempt to create learning opportunities.

Finally, the data relevant to RQ3 suggest the existence of significant gaps between teachers' actual competence, the ideal image of what a teacher should be, and teachers' engagement in professional development. The optimisation of talk requires the development of systematic, planned and programmed interventions. These teachers would benefit from targeted teacher training related to the production of effective dialogic talk. This type of talk would involve changes to existing school practices and cultures; techniques such as recitation, instruction and rote learning would need to make way for meaningful discussion in classroom discourse. The fact that teachers adopted accommodating attitudes towards their students' sociocultural backgrounds was a positive contribution to facilitating dialogic learning. Given my own background as an EFL teacher in the Saudi context, I have much in common with my participants and have insider knowledge of the sociocultural and pedagogical context. The findings also suggest that unequal role sharing between teachers and students was significant in teacher-learner interpersonal relationships, which were characterised by the power differential between them (see Chapters 6 and 7). Cultural understandings of what constitutes an acceptable amount of talk by children and distant teacher–parent relationships were identified as additional factors that influenced the nature of TT in general (see Chapter 6).

The findings also identified other factors that impacted on the development of student learning. Although teachers were qualified for their jobs, they were eager to upgrade their

classroom discourse management skills. They were aware that teaching is a complex process and that they needed to update their knowledge and skills. With limited professional support, the participants described the ideal teacher as one who would be tolerant of errors, learner-centred, and a lifelong learner (see Chapter 7). However, their understandings of teacher or dialogic talk tended to focus on the surface features of interactions; they referred to teaching activities such as teacher-student conversation and group discussions as examples of dialogic talk.

### 9.3 Contextualising the Findings

The findings of the current study are clearly consistent with those from other studies related to classroom discourse, despite diversity in both geographical and classroom contexts. Studies by Alshenqeeti (2014), Alsubaie (2015), Cullen (2002), Jones, Simpson& Thwaite (2018), Ma (2006, 2008), Teo (2016), Yanfen and Yuqin (2010) and other scholars have examined the significance and function of different types of talk, such as elicitation, questioning, feedback moves, parent talk, and dialogue, for promoting student learning. If learning is to lead to skills improvement and language development, the potential of TT must be fully exploited by teachers.

EFL teachers are unlikely to change their F-moves without engaging in professional development to help them develop the requisite knowledge and skills. Vygotsky (1978) proposes that learning can be accessed via the outer world, and does not merely reside in the cognitive domain. Thus, teachers must understand the communication dynamics within the classroom that impact students' perceptions of L2 learning and their participation in classroom activities if they are to provide an environment that is conducive to the effective acquisition of L2. The ideal nature of talk is dialogic (Alexander 2017). It is not merely used to deliver information, explain and give instructions. It contains diverse turn-takings and stimulates questions with emergent, contingent and dialogic interactions (Aljaafreh & Lantolf 1994).

Such forms of assistance are related to what Cummins (2000, cited in Alshenqeeti, 2014 p. 210) refers to as 'contextual support' and what Walsh (2011) calls 'interactional awareness'. Teachers need to understand that talk functions to streamline and simplify language production and students do not only comprehend but also learn from exchanges of meaning-making. This is related to Hammond's and Gibbons' (2005a) construct of 'scaffolding', which can be realised by a combination of teachers' and students' input to

ensure that the teacher's facilitation is internalised into students' language learning development. Similarly, Wells (1999) noted the importance of dialogic inquiry in the modification of TT to enable students to develop their dialogical skills, which in turn will improve their spoken language. Engaging students requires teachers to adjust their TT in order to provide meaningful support and accomplish interactive teaching that leads to improved spoken outputs by students.

This research aligns with the findings of the present study, which concluded that teachers need to modify their F-moves in Saudi EFL classrooms to more appropriately meet students' needs and develop their students' dialogic repertoire. The findings further indicate that, in addition to modifying their F-moves, EFL teachers need to recognise the importance of understanding their students' sociocultural backgrounds and develop more direct and indirect feedback on students' speaking errors. Some teachers in the current study were found to accept speaking errors, which is a good indicator that they are aware that this is an important consideration among learners of any foreign language.

Another important finding from the present study concerns the role played by the teaching and learning context in Saudi Arabia (and, presumably, other similar countries) in discouraging dialogic/teacher talk. Learners' behaviour played a major role in directing the teachers' attention and energy towards managing the classroom dynamics. Teachers' dominant speech practices and students' lack of freedom to speak in class were found to be the most important cultural influences on the nature of TT. Students are accustomed to being passive, only taking on the role of listener. Parents rarely ask for their children's opinions and, since teachers are regarded as *in loco parentis* in the school, the same phenomenon is likely to impact on TT.

Other interesting results emerged from the audio recordings of classroom interaction, which showed the use of L1 was commonplace in teacher–learner talk throughout daily classroom activities. This result could be explored in future studies within Saudi secondary schools to identify its causes and impacts, and to compare it with previous ESL/EFL classroom studies. Ramos (2005, p. 423), for instance, investigated the opinions of EFL teachers about communication using learners' L1 or their native language. He reported that teachers likened the use of L1 to sitting on a comfortable sofa, thus enabling talk to flow easily. In other words, he argued that the use of L1 promotes interaction and supports classroom discourse.

Understanding students' sociocultural backgrounds and linguistic comprehension of L1 is also necessary to achieve a proper balance between L1 and L2. This could be achieved, for instance, by the teacher welcoming and encouraging learners' responses in L1 and then gradually increasing the use of L2. This approach to the use of L1 in the EFL classroom is advocated by many researchers who have investigated the role of the mother tongue in L2 learning. Cook (2007), for instance, reported that students who did not use their L1 were less confident in themselves, which might discourage them from realising their own identity and decrease their knowledge. However, teachers need to be aware that the use of L1 should be limited to reflecting the students' needs and as a scaffolding technique for acquiring L2.

The five principles of dialogic teaching identified by Alexander (2008) - collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative and purposeful - were missing from the TT observed in the present study's setting. These teachers did not use diverse strategies in managing classroom talk because they were unaware of the importance of promoting collective interactive settings of classroom discourse through F-moves. Their perception of interactive settings was limited to whole class or group work teaching; it did not extend to include one-on-one communications, which suggested the existence of shallow reciprocal interpersonal relationships with the students. This might have contributed to minimal uptake and responses from students because a climate of fear and embarrassment continues to prevail in the classroom setting. Further, there was minimal supportive and contingent teacher assistance in TT; classroom talk did not provide opportunities for students to learn from mistakes and from communication breakdowns in teacher-learner interaction. As such, there was a cumulative disconnect between learning and cognition in classroom talk, in which interaction was dominated by rote learning, repetition and recitation, with less emphasis on dialogue and discussion. It was apparent that there was no purposeful design or plan for classroom talk to be significantly implemented due to the gap in teachers' professional development on dialogic teaching in the Saudi EFL context.

The main results of RQ1A, RQ1B, RQ2, and RQ3 were generated from analysis of incidental micro-levels of classroom discourse from TT, F-moves and relevant macro strategies. These results were supplemented with data on teachers' knowledge, beliefs and rationales regarding classroom management. The teachers' capabilities and professional development were subsequently explored. Ultimately, this study incorporates aspects beyond teacher and learner, namely, teaching context and the family as the sociocultural learning context. All of these elaborations are consistent with the precepts of sociocultural theory,

which proposes that any educational phenomenon, such as classroom discourse, needs to be understood holistically within a wider sociocultural context of learning (Steiner & Mahn 1996).

### 9.4 Contributions of the Study

Given the paucity of research on Saudi EFL teacher talk, this study has made significant empirical as well as theoretical contributions by exploring TT and teachers' practices and views on TT in an EFL classroom environment in Saudi Arabia. The qualitative approach adopted enabled an in-depth investigation into various aspects of TT, thereby generating a holistic understanding of the phenomenon. The main contributions to disciplinary knowledge are elaborated below.

First, essential knowledge was generated by applying a discourse analysis approach and qualitative research methodology involving observations of classroom interactions and semi-structured interviews with teachers. This approach differs from that adopted in most other studies in the same content area, making the study's findings both original and unique. The discourse analysis approach was guided by a rigorous analytical framework, which could be adopted in future studies. The use of triangulation, which has rarely been applied in Saudi EFL studies, strengthened the scientific value of the research.

With regard to data collection, audio recording of the observations enabled the detection of interconnections between pedagogy and classroom talk. This technique helps to identify TT particularities, functions and modifications to discover how teachers either create or hinder learning opportunities. The incorporation of four of the ten macro strategies proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2003) facilitated an exploration of hidden aspects of TT in classroom interactions that may otherwise have gone undetected. Audio recordings captured actual classroom talk (real teacher–student interactions) and natural teachers' practices to enhance the quality of the linguistic analysis, which would not have been possible from classroom observations alone. Further, semi-structured interviews with teachers provided insight into teachers' attitudes and characteristics that shape classroom discourse. In this way, the present study has made an important contribution to the literature on TT in an EFL context, and added original empirical and theoretical insight into the nature and role of TT in developing EFL students' dialogical skills.

The study also examined teachers' language proficiency, characteristics and attitudes that shape the nature of teacher–learner interaction. In this context, it identified over-

emphasis on grammatical competence and a willingness to communicate in the first language to facilitate learning. I have argued that it is necessary to consider the particularities of Saudi learners and teachers and the learning possibilities in the classroom setting in order to explain the source of these shortcomings. No previous study has addressed the contextual levels that shape teacher talk and students' dialogic skills from a holistic perspective. In particular, no extant research has focused on TT in relation to its role in encouraging dialogue in classrooms and the contribution of sociocultural factors to dialogic talk.

Second, the study's findings make an important contribution to the available literature that examines TT in Saudi Arabia and other similar EFL contexts. Most previous TT studies in the Saudi EFL context have ignored the levels and quality of TT as well as dialogic teaching. Further, they relied on quantitative methods of data collection, which are limited in their ability to generate in-depth, holistic understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The findings demonstrate the benefits of this type of TT study in EFL classrooms with particular focus on the role of teachers' F-moves, quality of TT and dialogic teaching. These benefits may not be limited to the study of TT and F-moves in the EFL or L2 contexts, but may also be useful in other contexts, such as L1.

Finally, the study sheds light on the nature of TT in Saudi EFL contexts and the relationship between pedagogy and culture. As such, it contributes to untangling the bottleneck in EFL teaching in this unique teaching context, which recent literature has failed to address satisfactorily. This thesis proposes that dialogic teaching can inform the development of a new template for teacher–learner interaction in which the status of teachers and learners is more equal, interpersonal relationships are strengthened, and teachers are skilful in utilising the potential of TT. The following section discusses the implications of the study and presents practical suggestions that are consistent with Vygotskyan sociocultural theory.

### 9.5 Implications of the Study

The findings, although based on data from Saudi EFL classrooms, have a number of implications for future research, language teaching proficiency, and teacher education practices that may be transferable to other EFL contexts. They add to existing understandings of the role of TT in EFL classrooms and suggest potential strategies for improving EFL teachers' F-moves and, consequently, TT. For example, they can inform investigations into

how teachers' F-moves increase or develop students' speech and the kinds of F-moves that help to manage classroom talk.

In any particular context, it is necessary for L2 teachers to understand which performances are effective and which are ineffective (Seedhouse 2004). In this study, it was found that the English language teacher modified the students' responses and made F-moves (elaboration and reformulations; see Chapter 5) so the classroom talk could continue without delay or obstruction. Hence, L2 teachers in some specific circumstances would benefit from adopting micro-level modifications of TT.

It was also shown that teachers' F-moves within classroom discourse can achieve multiple purposes. This further highlights the complexity of TT in Saudi EFL secondary school classrooms and, presumably, in other learning environments.

The findings also have implications for teacher training programs. Extracts from these study's audio recordings could be utilised (with consent from the participants) in teacher training programs in order to stimulate teachers to adopt reflective practice, or what is called the 'stimulated recall method' based on teacher language awareness (Andrews 2007; Lyle 2003). The reflective practice process has value for TT, especially in language classrooms and teacher education programs (Walsh 2006; Walsh 2013; Seedhouse 2008). Walsh (2006) recommends that teachers learn from their own classroom practice to improve their own and their students' awareness of language. The transcripts analysed in this study (again, with permission from the participants) could be used to study the language awareness process or the creation of learning through TT in EFL classrooms.

The findings also provide a baseline for future research on Saudi classroom TT at different stages of education. Dalton-Puffer (2007) argues that multiple levels of analysis of classroom discourse and academic language functions can provide a conceptual framework for development of appropriate teaching practices. Further in-depth investigation of the nature of TT and suggested modifications in the Saudi EFL context is necessary to enrich understanding of the macro and micro levels of classroom talk. Future research on TT and dialogic talk might identify more discoursal and evaluative roles in classroom interactions. The findings are also expected to benefit teacher training program designers, teacher education, and EFL teachers and students themselves.

## 9.6 Limitations of the Study

Like all research, this study has some limitations. First, it was apparent from the interviews that some of the participants were either novice teachers or came from a non-Saudi background. As a result, they did not appear to understand the terms TT and dialogic talk in this teaching context, even though they realised the significance of TT in English language learning when the researcher explained these terms to them.

Second, the Saudi L2 classroom interaction was constructed following IRF sequences, and students gave short or very limited responses to the initiation of the teacher. Consequently, the study was limited in its ability to capture the whole range of influences of teacher talk on L2 learners' dialogic skills, especially in contexts where more demands on spoken language are available (Ivanova 2011).

Third, student absenteeism was a common occurrence during the period of fieldwork. Over the first three weeks of the second semester, only a few students attended school. The students' absenteeism thus prevented the researcher from observing all students' interactions with teachers.

Fourth, the observed students were passive performers. They remained silent until teachers initiated speech by asking students to respond to questioning. As previously explained, this was due to students' low levels of language proficiency and limited exposure to the English language outside the classroom. Students also came from a similar sociocultural background in which they were accustomed to remaining passive and only taking on the role of listener. Parents rarely asked for their children's opinions and parental speech dominated. This cultural influence on students' freedom of expression in the home environment was likely to have been reflected in their classroom interaction and participation. Hence it is problematic to generalise the findings to classrooms that are embedded in less conservative cultural environments.

Fifth, because Saudi schools are single-gender schools, the researcher was only able to access boys' schools and male teachers. It was not possible to involve female students and teachers due to sociocultural constraints. Future research in girls' schools is therefore necessary to provide data for comparative analysis.

Finally, in all qualitative research, small sample sizes (here, 27 EFL classes and interviews with 18 teachers) make it difficult to generalise the study findings – in this case, to other EFL classroom contexts. This study focused on the experiential and dialectical

construction of specific local knowledge. The cumulative knowledge of both teachers and learners interacts with the sociocultural relations that may vary across the different environments in which Saudi schools are located. To the critique that teachers' responses were subjective, and therefore potentially biased, it should be noted that the findings from interviews were triangulated with those from observations, thereby enhancing their trustworthiness.

Due to the scope of the study, several issues remained unexamined. These are elaborated in the following section and recommendations to address them are presented.

### 9.7 Recommendations

This section makes recommendations for future research in relation to methodological, theoretical and practical limitations of the present study.

First, the methodological approach adopted here yielded only cross-sectional descriptive data that were collected during Term 1 of the 2016 school year. It would be useful to examine TT in EFL classrooms using longitudinal or comparative approaches over a lengthy period to enrich the findings. A longitudinal study of TT particularities, dialogic talk and teacher/learner characteristics might reveal other as yet unexplored sociocultural factors.

Future studies could also use discourse, conversational and content analyses as methodologies to identify TT patterns and behaviours. These methodologies may provide multi-layered analyses that could identify more micro- and macro-level TT patterns, and offer a different perspective on and more comprehensive understanding of classroom talk dynamics, in particular in relation to the influence of TT on the process of EFL learning.

Future research could also incorporate students' perspectives and involve female teachers so that a comprehensive picture of Saudi EFL TT can be developed. This could include exploration of teacher–student roles across gender, different perspectives on TT, and how those perspectives change over time.

Another recommendation is that future studies could employ video recordings on school campuses and/or interviews with parents. This study had to rely on audio recordings of classroom interaction and teachers' interviews because it was not possible to obtain permission to video the classroom interactions, as the students were teenagers. Video would enable the totality of classroom interactions to be captured, thereby allowing researchers to examine both verbal and non-verbal aspects of TT dynamics in more detail.

In relation to theoretical concerns, future studies could investigate other domains of TT, such as communication strategies, in/corrective feedback or error correction, teacher assistance, gestures and multimodality (voice to text modes) and other aspects of classroom talk. This would provide insight into whether the same influences that were observed in the present study are at play in other domains of classroom discourse.

It is also imperative to examine teacher beliefs in more depth to enrich knowledge about the teaching context. Teacher beliefs are affected by the teacher's life trajectory, learning journey and teaching experiences (experiential and scientific knowledge). It would be especially beneficial to compare the perspectives of those who were educated overseas with those of their peers who have learned and taught English in their home country. This would provide insight into the role of cultural modification in shaping teachers' ability to manage language production.

Another theoretical concern is the desirability of extending the analysis to micro-components of students' classroom talk, such as private speech and willingness to communicate. The current study was not able to capture students' private speech in their native language in the classroom, or their reasons for using L1 in classroom talk. It may be, for instance, that fear and embarrassment are not the only factors influencing their abilities and intercultural positioning towards English.

Finally, 'intersubjectivity' needs to be examined in the context of TT. The present findings indicated that classroom interaction was not dominated by dialogic talk, which constituted only a minor proportion of teacher–learner communication. Such interactions involve the co-construction of knowledge or understanding about a phenomenon. They proceed from dialogic talk that is elevated into intersubjective understanding. This level of interaction can be seen as the highest quality of dialogic talk, which blends learning and development of thinking skills simultaneously.

It is clear that the teachers in the current study were not familiar with dialogic teaching, and their professional identity may have been threatened by the absence of this skill. Because the current study adopted sociocultural theory, these findings could be used to inform the development and implementation of teacher training or other professional development activities that are directed to teachers' perspectives on language teaching and the cultural and pedagogical nature of the process. Capacity building should also focus on technical issues in managing classroom talk effectively.

With regard to practical concerns, it is highly important that in-service teacher professional development programs focus on the management of quality of talk. This would be the first stage in stimulating a cultural transition in teachers' understanding of the significance of speech for human learning and development. This intervention should be followed by continuous monitoring and evaluation so that talk becomes a priority that is integrated into pedagogic knowledge and knowledge about language.

Finally, education is hardly independent of the external world. In this regard, parents and community members should be encouraged to discuss the progress of English learners' development. At home, families should be encouraged to develop positive speech habits and support students' development in multiple ways, such as building dialogue through discussion of issues within the family. Creating a positive classroom culture seems to be insufficient for optimising learners' language proficiency. Community support can accelerate this achievement. Assistance from others is a vital aspect of students' learning and development in this teaching context.

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## Appendix 1: Semi-structured Interview

- Teacher Profile

1. How long have you been teaching?

2. What qualifications did you have when you started teaching?

3. How many (in-service) courses have you attended in terms of dialogic teaching? Or classroom talk?

- Socio-cultural perspectives on teaching and learning

1. What is the impact of the students' sociocultural background on their participation in class? Taking this into account:

- What is the role/impact of the family?

- What is the role of the teacher in the classroom?

2. What is your idea of a good teacher?

- Teacher talk

1. What is your understanding of 'teacher talk'?

2. What impacts the effectiveness of teacher talk? Eg:

- Class management – student behaviour

- Teacher's authority

- Teacher's understanding of the impact of teacher talk.

3. In what ways do you encourage student output in class?

4. What is your understanding of dialogic talk? What value does this have for:

- English language learning

- Class dynamics?

5- In your opinion, what is the most suitable environment that teachers can foster or create in order to promote their students' dialogic skills?

6. How does the role of the teacher change if there is more dialogic talk in the classroom?

- Simulated recall from observation/follow up questions about particular strategies or techniques they used and other issues related to the teachers' answers.

**Appendix 2: Parent Consent form in Arabic**

جامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا

**موافقة ولي أمر طالب للمشاركة بالبحث**

عنوان البحث:

**" تأثير خطاب المعلم في تطوير مهارات الحوار عند الطلاب في فصول دراسة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية في المدارس الثانوية بمحافظة حفرالباطن"**

أعلم أن الباحث: محمد العنزي طالب بجامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا يقوم بإجراء بحث بشكل جماعي لغرض جمع بيانات رسالة الدكتوراه.

أقر أنا _____ والد الطالب _____ بالصف _____ بمدرسة _____، بأني أوافق على إعطاء التصريح لابني للمشاركة في مشروع بحث الدكتوراه تحت عنوان **" تأثير خطاب المعلم في تطوير مهارات الحوار عند الطلاب في فصول دراسة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية في المدارس الثانوية بمحافظة حفرالباطن "**. في جامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا "يو تي إس"، والحاصل على الموافقة من لجنة أخلاقيات البحث البشري "إتش آر إي سي" رقم الموافقة المرجعي: 2015000381 والذي يقوم بإجرائه طالب الدكتوراه الباحث: محمد العنزي, رقم وإميل التواصل به هو:

تحت إشراف الدكتور جاكي ويدن من جامعة سيدني للتكنولوج سيدني, ,رقم وإميل التواصل به هو:

+61 95143744

Jacquie.Widin@uts.edu.au

أدرك أن الغرض من إجراء هذه الدراسة هو محاوله اكتشاف تأثير خطاب معلم اللغة الانجليزية على مهارات التحدث لدى طلاب المرحلة الثانوية بالسعودية.

كما أدرك أيضا أن مشاركة ابني بهذا البحث تشتمل على مراقبة الباحث للحصص الدراسية وتسجيل بعض محتوياتها. قد تستغرق زيارة الباحث لفصل ابني بقصد الملاحظة والتسجيل الصوتي 10 حصص دراسية تقريبا, وتستغرق كل حصه على 45 دقيقة.

تأكدنا عن طريق الباحث بأن المخاطر بهذا البحث ستكون قليلة جدا وهي تمثل الحد الادنى من المخاطر ومن الأمثلة على ذلك  قد تكون فترة البحث التي يستغرقها على حساب وقت الدراسة الذاتية.

أيضا أدرك كولي أمر أن بإمكاني التواصل مع قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بإدراة التعليم بمحافظة حفر الباطن على رقم 966137226188+ لأي غرض قد يتعلق بهذا البحث. وأعلم أيضا بأنه ليس هناك أي التزام يجبر ابني على المشاركة بهذا البحث ولن يكون هناك أي عواقب سلبية في حالة رفضه المشاركة. كما أعلم بأن لابني مطلق الحرية في سحب مشاركته بهذا المشروع بأي وقت شاء، بدون أي عواقب، وبدون أي مبررات.

أخيرا, أريد أن أؤكد أن الباحث/ محمد العنزي, قد أجاب على جميع استفساراتي وكذلك اشتفسارات إبني بوضوح تام. وأنا على يقين تام بأن البيانات التي سوف يتم جمعها بهذا المشروع, ليس في ثناياها أي معلومات خاصة بإبني والتي سيتم نشرها مستقبلا سوف تكون بدون أي تعيين لهوية ابني بأي طريقة كانت.

توقيع (والد الطالب المشارك بالبحث) _____

التاريخ_____

توقيع (الباحث) _____

التاريخ_____

ملاحظة:

لقد تم التصديق على الدراسة من قبل جامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا, لجنة أخلاقيات البحوث الإنسانية بسيدني. إذا كان لديكم أية شكوى أو ملاحظات تتعلق بأي جانب من جوانب مشاركتكم بالبحث والتي لا يمكنكم وصول حل لها مع الباحث، فيمكنكم التواصل مع لجنة الأخلاقيات عن طريق الإميل والرقم التالي:

Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au

+61 2 9514 9772

فقط أرفق الرقم المرجعي: 2015000381 الخاص بلجنة أخلاقيات البحث البشري "إتش آر إي سي" بجامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا "يو تي إس". سوف يتم التعامل مع أي شكوى وارده منكم في سرية كاملة والتحقيق بشكل عاجل كما سيتم إبلاغكم بالنتائج.

**Appendix 3: Parent Information Sheet in Arabic**

**بيان معلومات للمشارك بالدراسة/ أولياء أمور**

عنوان الدراسة: **" تأثير خطاب المعلم في تطوير مهارات الحوار عند الطلاب في فصول دراسة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية في المدارس الثانوية بمحافظة حفرالباطن "**

**من الذي يجري هذه الدراسة؟**

أنا **محمد العنزي**، الذي سأقوم بإجراء هذه الدراسة, باحث أكاديمي في جامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا وستجري هذه الدراسة تحت إشراف الدكتور/ **جاكي ويدين** من جامعة سيدني للتكنلوجيا.

**ماذا تبحث هذه الدراسة ؟**

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى اكتشاف طرق و اساليب حديث المعلم في تنمية مهارات المحادثات والتحاور في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في المدارس الثانوية, وأيضا تنظر الدراسة الى كيفية تأثير التغذية الراجعة شفهيا بشكل خاص في اكتساب وتطوير مهارات اللغة المنطوقة لدى الطلاب, ويركز هذا البحث تحديدا على الوظائف التقييمية والخطابية للتغذية الراجعة التي يقوم بها المدرس.

الغرض منها مساعدة المدرسين على تحسين أساليب وطرق التخاطب داخل الفصول الدراسية, واكتشاف الحلول التربوية التي تسهم في رفع كفاءة الطالب اللغوية في التخاطب تحديدا.

**إذا قبلت بمشاركة ابني في البحث, على ماذا تشتمل مشاركته؟**

لا تشتمل على أي دور رئيسي للطالب فالمعلم هو المشارك الأساسي والذي ستتم ملاحظته وكذلك التسجيل له صوتيا لمدة حصة واحدة في كل فصل يدرسه وقد تستغرق 45 دقيقة وكذلك مقابلته لمدة ما بين 30-45 دقيقة, كل ذلك سيتم اثناء الوقت المعتاد للحصص الدراسية, طلب اذنكم فقط لأننا سنحضر الحصص وسنلاحظ المعلم وذلك يقتضي حضور الطلاب. نضمن لكم سرية معلومات ابناءكم التامه باستثناء ما يسمح به القانون ، وسيتم حفظ المعلومات الشخصية التي تم جمعها على امتداد المشروع بشكل آمن وتستخدم فقط لأغراض البحث العلمي المتفق عليها .

**هل توجد أية مخاطر؟**

يتضمن هذا المشروع مستوى منخفض جدا من المخاطر نظرا لتصميم البحث بعناية شديدة، يمكننا أن نفصح لك عن هذه المخاطر التي نعتبرها تمثل الحد الادنى كتعرض ابنك للاحراج اثناء الملاحظة أو التسجيل، كما أنه من المتوقع أن نأخذ بعضا من وقت حصصهم, هذه أبرز المخاطر التي قد يتعرض لها المشارك بالبحث.

**لماذ تطلب من ابني المشاركة بالبحث؟**

لقد تمت دعوة ابنكم للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة البحثية التي تبحث " تأثير خطاب المعلم في تطوير مهارات الحوار عند الطلاب في فصول دراسة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية في المدارس الثانوية بمحافظة حفرالباطن ". للأسباب التالية:

- ❖ لقد تمت دعوة ابنكم للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة لأن ابنك احد اعضاء الفصل الذي ستتم ملاحظته، في هذه الورقة يقوم الباحث بإبراز معلومات المشاركة حيث يطلعكم على المعلومات الخاصة بالدراسة البحثية، أيضا معرفة ما تتضمنه الدراسة ويساعدكم في اتخاذ قراركم بشأن المشاركة في هذا البحث، يرجى قراءة هذا البيان بعناية وطرح أية استفسارات بشأن أي مسألة قد تجدوا صعوبه في فهمها أو ترغبون في معرفة المزيد عنها.
- ❖ تذكر أن نتائج هذه الدراسة ستملأ النقص في السياق السعودي حيث تتوفر أبحاث قليلة في هذا المجال، هذه الدراسة قد تقدم إطارا نظريا لتنمية المهارات الحوارية لدى الطلاب وكذلك حديث المعلمين في فصول تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في السعودية، وقد تساعد ابنكم على تطوير مهارات التحدث والحوار داخل الفصل.
- ❖ المشاركة في هذه الدراسة البحثية تطوعية، وبناء عليه لديكم مطلق الحرية في المشاركة أو عدم المشاركة.
- ❖ بموافقتكم على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة تقر بأنك:
  - ✓ تفهم ما قرأته
  - ✓ توافق على مشاركة ابنك في هذه الدراسة البحثية المبينة أدناه
  - ✓ توافق على استخدام معلومات ابنك الشخصية حسب ما ورد.
- ❖ سنوافيكم بنسخة من بيان معلومات المشاركة للاحتفاظ بها

**هل يتوجب علي الموافقة؟**

لا نفرض عليك الموافقة مطلقا.

**ماذا يحدث لو رفضت المشاركة؟**

يمكنك تغيير رأيك في أي وقت ولا يتعين عليك ذكر السبب، وسنقوم بشكركم على وقتكم حتى الآن ولن يتم الاتصال بكم بخصوص هذا البحث مرة أخرى.

**ماذا لو كانت لدي بعض المخاوف أو الشكاوى؟**

لو كانت لديكم أية مخاوف بخصوص البحث، يمكنكم الاتصال بي أو بالمشرف على الدراسة، يمكننا تقديم العون، لا تتردد في الاتصال بنا على البريد الإلكتروني: [redacted]، رقم الهاتف المحمول: [redacted]، أو بمشرفي الدراسي عبر البريد الإلكتروني: Jacquie.Widin@uts.edu.au، أو رقم الهاتف: +6195143744.

أيضا إذا رغبتم التحدث إلى شخص اخر ليس له علاقة بالبحث، فيمكنكم الاتصال بمسئول أخلاقيات البحث على الرقم 02 9514 9772.

لقد تم التصديق على الدراسة من قبل جامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا, لجنة أخلاقيات البحوث الإنسانية بسيدني. إذا كان لديكم أية شكوى أو ملاحظات تتعلق بأي جانب من جوانب مشاركتكم بالبحث والتي لا يمكنكم وصول حل لها مع الباحث، فيمكنكم التواصل مع لجنة الأخلاقيات عن طريق الإميل والرقم التالي:

Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au

+61 2 9514 9772

فقط أرفق الرقم المرجعي: 2015000381 الخاص بلجنة أخلاقيات البحث البشري "إتش آر إي سي" بجامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا "يو تي إس". سوف يتم التعامل مع أي شكوى وارده منكم في سرية كاملة والتحقيق بشكل عاجل كما سيتم إبلاغكم بالنتائج.

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**Appendix 4: Student Consent Form in Arabic**

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY

جامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا

**موافقة الطالب على المشاركة بالبحث**

عنوان البحث:

**" تأثير خطاب المعلم في تطوير مهارات الحوار عند الطلاب في فصول دراسة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية في المدارس الثانوية بمحافظة حفرالباطن"**

أعلم أن الباحث: محمد العنزي طالب بجامعة سيدني للتكنلوجيا يقوم بإجراء بحث بشكل جماعي لغرض جمع بيانات رسالة الدكتوراه.

أقر أنا _____ الطالب بالصف _____ بمدرسة _____، بأن أوافق على المشاركة في مشروع بحث الدكتوراه تحت عنوان **" تأثير خطاب المعلم في تطوير مهارات الحوار عند الطلاب في فصول دراسة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية في المدارس الثانوية بمحافظة حفرالباطن "**. في جامعة سيدني للتكنلوجيا "يو تي إس"، والحاصل على الموافقة من لجنة أخلاقيات البحث البشري "إتش آر إي سي" رقم الموافقة المرجعي: 2015000381 والذي يقوم بإجرائه طالب الدكتوراه الباحث: محمد العنزي, رقم وإميل التواصل به هو:

تحت إشراف الدكتور جاكي ويدن من جامعة سيدني للتكنولوج سيدني, ,رقم وإميل التواصل به هو:

+61 95143744

Jacquie.Widin@uts.edu.au

أدرك أن الغرض من إجراء هذه الدراسة هو محاوله اكتشاف تأثير خطاب معلم اللغة الانجليزية على مهارات التحدث لدى طلاب المرحلة الثانوية بالسعودية.

كما أدرك أيضا أن مشاركتي بهذا البحث تشتمل على مراقبة الباحث للحصص الدراسية وتسجيل بعض محتوياتها. قد تستغرق زيارة الباحث لفصلي بقصد الملاحظة والتسجيل الصوتي 10 حصص دراسية تقريبا, وتستغرق كل حصه على 45 دقيقة.

تأكدت عن طريق الباحث بأن المخاطر بهذا البحث ستكون قليلة جدا وهي تمثل الحد الادنى من المخاطر ومن الأمثلة على ذلك قد تكون فترة البحث التي يستغرقها على حساب وقت الدراسة الذاتية.

أيضا أدرك أن بإمكاني التواصل قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بإدراة التعليم بمحافظة حفر الباطن على رقم 966137226188+ لأي غرض قد يتعلق بهذا البحث. وأعلم أيضا بأنه ليس هناك أي التزام يجبرني على المشاركة بهذا البحث ولن يكون هناك أي عواقب سلبية في حالة رفضي للمشاركة. كما أعلم بأن لي مطلق الحرية في سحب مشاركتي بهذا المشروع بأي وقت أشاء، بدون أي عواقب، وبدون أي مبررات.

أخيرا, أريد أن أؤكد أن الباحث/ محمد العنزي, قد أجاب على جميع استفساراتي وكذلك استفسارات والدي بوضوح تام. وأنا على يقين تام بأن البيانات التي سوف يتم جمعها بهذا المشروع, ليس في ثناياها أي معلومات خاصة بي والتي سيتم نشرها مستقبلا ستكون بدون أي تعيين لهويتي بأي طريقة كانت.

توقيع (الطالب المشارك بالبحث) _____

التاريخ_____

توقيع (الباحث) _____

التاريخ_____

ملاحظة:

لقد تم التصديق على الدراسة من قبل جامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا, لجنة أخلاقيات البحوث الإنسانية بسيدني. إذا كان لديكم أية شكوى أو ملاحظات تتعلق بأي جانب من جوانب مشاركتكم بالبحث والتي لا يمكنكم وصول حل لها مع الباحث، فيمكنكم التواصل مع لجنة الأخلاقيات عن طريق الإميل والرقم التالي:

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فقط أرفق الرقم المرجعي: 2015000381 الخاص بلجنة أخلاقيات البحث البشري "إتش آر إي سي" بجامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا "يو تي إس". سوف يتم التعامل مع أي شكوى وارده منكم في سرية كاملة والتحقيق بشكل عاجل كما سيتم إبلاغكم بالنتائج.

**Appendix 5: Student Information Sheet in Arabic**


**بيان معلومات المشارك/ الطلاب**

عنوان الدراسة: **" تأثير خطاب المعلم في تطوير مهارات الحوار عند الطلاب في فصول دراسة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية في المدارس الثانوية بمحافظة حفرالباطن "**

**من الذي يجري هذه الدراسة؟**

أنا **محمد العنزي**، الذي سأقوم بإجراء هذه الدراسة, باحث أكاديمي في جامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا وستجري هذه الدراسة تحت إشراف الدكتور/ **جاكي ويدين** من جامعة سيدني للتكنلوجيا.

**ماذا تبحث هذه الدراسة ؟**

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى اكتشاف طرق و اساليب حديث المعلم في تنمية مهارات المحادثات والتحاور في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في المدارس الثانوية, وأيضا تنظر الدراسة الى كيفية تأثير التغذية الراجعة شفهيا بشكل خاص في اكتساب وتطوير مهارات اللغة المنطوقة لدى الطلاب, ويركز هذا البحث تحديدا على الوظائف التقييمية والخطابية للتغذية الراجعة التي يقوم بها المدرس.

الغرض منها مساعدة المدرسين على تحسين أساليب وطرق التخاطب داخل الفصول الدراسية, واكتشاف الحلول التربوية التي تسهم في رفع كفاءة الطالب اللغوية في التخاطب تحديدا.

**إذا قبلت المشاركة في البحث, على ماذا تشتمل مشاركتي؟**

لا تشتمل على أي دور رئيسي للطالب فالمعلم هو المشارك الأساسي والذي ستتم ملاحظته وكذلك التسجيل له صوتيا لمدة حصة واحدة في كل فصل يدرسه وقد تستغرق 45 دقيقة وكذلك مقابلته لمدة ما بين 30-45 دقيقة, كل ذلك سيتم اثناء الوقت المعتاد للحصص الدراسية, طلب اذنك فقط لأننا سنحضر الحصص وسنلاحظ المعلم وذلك يقتضي حضور الطالب. نضمن لكم سرية معلوماتك التامه باستثناء ما يسمح به القانون ، وسيتم حفظ المعلومات الشخصية التي تم جمعها على امتداد المشروع بشكل آمن وتستخدم فقط لأغراض البحث العلمي المتفق عليها .

**هل توجد أية مخاطر؟**

يتضمن هذا المشروع مستوى منخفض جدا من المخاطر نظرا لتصميم البحث بعناية شديدة، يمكننا أن نفصح لك عن هذه المخاطر التي نعتبرها تمثل الحد الادنى كتعرضك للاحراج اثناء الملاحظة أو التسجيل، كما أنه من المتوقع أن نأخذ بعضا من وقت حصصك, هذه أبرز المخاطر التي قد يتعرض لها المشارك بالبحث.

**لماذ تطلب مني المشاركة بالبحث؟**

لقد تمت دعوتك للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة البحثية التي تبحث " تأثير خطاب المعلم في تطوير مهارات الحوار عند الطلاب في فصول دراسة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية في المدارس الثانوية بمحافظة حفرالباطن ". للأسباب التالية:

- ❖ لأنك احد اعضاء الفصل الذي ستتم ملاحظته، في هذه الورقة يقوم الباحث بإبراز معلومات المشاركة حيث يطلعك على المعلومات الخاصة بالدراسة البحثية، أيضا معرفة ما تتضمنه الدراسة ويساعدك في اتخاذ قرارك بشأن المشاركة في هذا البحث، يرجى قراءة هذا البيان بعناية وطرح أية استفسارات بشأن أي مسألة قد تجدوا صعوبه في فهمها أو ترغبون في معرفة المزيد عنها.
- ❖ تذكر أن نتائج هذه الدراسة ستملأ النقص في السياق السعودي حيث تتوفر أبحاث قليلة في هذا المجال، هذه الدراسة قد تقدم إطارا نظريا لتنمية المهارات الحوارية لديك وكذلك في حديث المعلمين في فصول تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في السعودية، وقد تساعدك ايضا على تطوير مهارات التحدث والحوار لديك داخل الفصل الدراسي.
- ❖ المشاركة في هذه الدراسة البحثية تطوعية، وبناء عليه لديك مطلق الحرية في المشاركة أو عدم المشاركة.
- ❖ بموافقتك على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة تقر بأنك:
  - ✓ تفهم ما قرأته
  - ✓ توافق على مشاركة ابنك في هذه الدراسة البحثية المبينة أدناه
  - ✓ توافق على استخدام معلوماتك الشخصية حسب ما ورد.
- ❖ سنوافيك بنسخة من بيان معلومات المشاركة للاحتفاظ بها

**هل يتوجب علي الموافقة؟**

لا نفرض عليك الموافقة مطلقا.

**ماذا يحدث لو رفضت المشاركة؟**

يمكنك تغيير رأيك في أي وقت ولا يتعين عليك ذكر السبب، وسنقوم بشكرك على وقتك حتى الآن ولن يتم الاتصال بك بخصوص هذا البحث مرة أخرى.

**ماذا لو كانت لدي بعض المخاوف أو الشكاوى؟**

لو كانت لديك أية مخاوف بخصوص البحث، يمكنك الاتصال بي أو بالمشرف على الدراسة، يمكننا تقديم العون، لا تترد في الاتصال بي على رقم الهاتف: أو البريد الالكتروني:

أو بمشرفي الدراسي على رقم الهاتف: +6195143744 أو عبر البريد الالكتروني

Jacquie.Widin@uts.edu.au

أيضا إذا رغبتم التحدث إلى شخص اخر ليس له علاقة بالبحث، فيمكنكم الاتصال بمسئول أخلاقيات البحث على الرقم 02 9514 9772.

لقد تم التصديق على الدراسة من قبل جامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا, لجنة أخلاقيات البحوث الإنسانية بسيدني. إذا كان لديكم أية شكوى أو ملاحظات تتعلق بأي جانب من جوانب مشاركتكم بالبحث والتي لا يمكنكم وصول حل لها مع الباحث، فيمكنكم التواصل مع لجنة الأخلاقيات عن طريق الإميل والرقم التالي:

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+61 2 9514 9772

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فقط أرفق الرقم المرجعي: 2015000381 الخاص بلجنة أخلاقيات البحث البشري "إتش آر إي سي" بجامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا "يو تي إس". سوف يتم التعامل مع أي شكوى وارده منكم في سرية كاملة والتحقيق بشكل عاجل كما سيتم إبلاغكم بالنتائج

**Appendix 6: Teacher Consent Form in Arabic**


**موافقة معلم على المشاركة بالبحث**

عنوان البحث:

**" تأثير خطاب المعلم في تطوير مهارات الحوار عند الطلاب في فصول دراسة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية في المدارس الثانوية بمحافظة حفرالباطن"**

أوافق أنا _____ المعلم بمدرسة _____، بالمشاركة في مشروع بحث الدكتوراه تحت عنوان **" تأثير خطاب المعلم في تطوير مهارات الحوار عند الطلاب في فصول دراسة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية في المدارس الثانوية بمحافظة حفرالباطن "**. في جامعة سيدني للتكنلوجيا "يو تي إس"، والحاصل على الموافقة من لجنة أخلاقيات البحث البشري "إتش آر إي سي" رقم الموافقة المرجعي: 2015000381 والذي يقوم بإجرائه طالب الدكتوراه الباحث: محمد العنزي, رقم وإميل التواصل به هو:

تحت إشراف الدكتور جاكي ويدن من جامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا,رقم وإميل التواصل به هو:

+61 95143744

Jacquie.Widin@uts.edu.au

أدرك تماما أن الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو مساعدة المعلمين في تحسين الأسلوب الذي يتحدثون به داخل الفصول الدراسية بالإضافة إلى تحسين مهارات التحدث لدى الطلاب، بالاضافة الى اقتراح الحلول التربوية التي تنمي المهارات الحوارية لدى الطلاب السعوديين في فصول اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

كما أدرك أن مشاركتي في هذا البحث لا تنطوي على مخاطر تذكر سوى الطفيف منها والذي يمثل الحد الأدنى من المخاطر كالتعرض للإحراج عند حضور الباحث بقصد الملاحظة أو التسجيل أثناء حصص التدريس.

وسوف أخضع للملاحظة وتسجيل بعض حصصي صوتيا لعدة مرات، في كل مرة قد يستغرق الوقت 45 دقيقة. كذلك سيتم إجراء مقابلة معي وتسجيلها لمدة قد تستغرق من 30 الى 45 دقيقة.
أيضا أدرك أن بإمكاني التواصل مع قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بإدراة التعليم بمحافظة حفر الباطن على رقم 966137226188+ لأي غرض قد يتعلق بهذا البحث. وأعلم أيضا بأنه ليس هناك أي التزام يجبرني على المشاركة بهذا البحث ولن يكون هناك أي عواقب سلبية في حالة رفضي للمشاركة. كما أعلم بأن لي مطلق الحرية في سحب مشاركتي بهذا المشروع بأي وقت أشاء، بدون أي عواقب، وبدون أي مبررات. كما أوافق على نشر البيانات البحثية التي تم جمعها من هذا المشروع بالصورة التي لا تحدد هويتي بأية حال.

أخيرا, أريد أن أؤكد أن الباحث/ محمد العنزي, قد أجاب على جميع استفساراتي بوضوح تام.

_____ ____/ ___/ _____

التوقيع (المشارك)

_____ ____/ ___/ _____

التوقيع (الباحث )

**ملحوظة:**

لقد تم التصديق على الدراسة من قبل جامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا, لجنة أخلاقيات البحوث الإنسانية بسيدني. إذا كان لديكم أية شكوى أو ملاحظات تتعلق بأي جانب من جوانب مشاركتكم بالبحث والتي لا يمكنكم وصول حل لها مع الباحث، فيمكنكم التواصل مع لجنة الأخلاقيات عن طريق الإميل والرقم التالي:

Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au

+61 2 9514 9772

فقط أرفق الرقم المرجعي: 2015000381 الخاص بلجنة أخلاقيات البحث البشري "إتش آر إي سي" بجامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا "يو تي إس".
سوف يتم التعامل مع أي شكوى وارده منكم في سرية كاملة والتحقيق بشكل عاجل كما سيتم إبلاغكم بالنتائج..

**Appendix 7: Teacher Information Sheet in Arabic**


**بيان معلومات المشارك/ المعلمون**

عنوان الدراسة: **" تأثير خطاب المعلم في تطوير مهارات الحوار عند الطلاب في فصول دراسة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية في المدارس الثانوية بمحافظة حفرالباطن "**

من الذي يجري هذه الدراسة؟

أنا **محمد العنزي**، الذي سأقوم بإجراء هذه الدراسة, باحث أكاديمي في جامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا وستجري هذه الدراسة تحت إشراف الدكتور/ **جاكي ويدين** من جامعة سيدني للتكنلوجيا.

**ماذا تبحث هذه الدراسة ؟**

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى اكتشاف طرق و اساليب حديث المعلم في تنمية مهارات المحادثات والتحاور في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في المدارس الثانوية, وأيضا تنظر الدراسة الى كيفية تأثير التغذية الراجعة شفهيا بشكل خاص في اكتساب وتطوير مهارات اللغة المنطوقة لدى الطلاب, ويركز هذا البحث على الوظائف التقييمية والخطابية للتغذية الراجعة التي يقوم بها المدرس.

**إذا قبلت بالمشاركة في البحث, على ماذا تشتمل مشاركتي؟**

سأطلب منك المشاركة في حوار شخصي لمدة ما بين 30-45 دقيقة وسيتم تسجيله صوتيا، أيضا سألاحظ بعض حصصك وأقوم بتسجيلها صوتيا، أيضا قد تتطلب مشاركتك في البحث تسجيل صوتي لعشر دروس أخرى ، في كل درس قد يستغرق التسجيل 45 دقيقة.

نضمن لكم سرية معلوماتكم التامه باستثناء ما يسمح به القانون ، وسيتم حفظ المعلومات الشخصية التي تم جمعها على امتداد المشروع بشكل آمن وتستخدم فقط لأغراض البحث العلمي المتفق عليها .

**هل توجد أية مخاطر؟**

يتضمن هذا المشروع مستوى منخفض جدا من المخاطر نظرا لتصميم البحث بعناية شديدة، يمكننا أن نفصح لك عن هذه المخاطر التي نعتبرها تمثل الحد الادنى كتعرضك للاحراج اثناء الملاحظة أو التسجيل لك اثناء قيامك بالتدريس، كما أنه من المتوقع أن نأخذ بعضا من وقت فراغكم, هذه أبرز المخاطر التي قد يتعرض لها المشارك بالبحث.

**لماذ تطلت مني المشاركة بالبحث؟**

لقد تمت دعوتكم للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة البحثية التي تبحث " تأثير خطاب المعلم في تطوير مهارات الحوار عند الطلاب في فصول دراسة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية في المدارس الثانوية بمحافظة حفرالباطن ". للأسباب التالية:

- ❖ يمكنك تزويدي بالمعلومات التي أرغب في اكتشافها بشأن إذا ما كان حديث المعلم ذو طبيعة تسلطية أو ذو طبيعة حوارية، ومدى تأثير ذلك على تنمية الحوار الهادف في الفصول التي تدرس فيها اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية, وذلك من خلال تحليل التغذية الراجعة أو المتابعة التي يقوم بها المدرس، وتحدد أيضا إلى أي مدى يعمل معلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في المملكة العربية السعودية على تعزيز أو عرقلة تعلم اللغة المستهدفة بالإضافة إلى تحديد ما يجري من منطلق التفاعلات الحوارية، تذكر أن نتائج هذه الدراسة ستملأ النقص في السياق السعودي حيث تتوفر أبحاث قليلة في هذا المجال، هذه الدراسة قد تقدم إطارا نظريا لتنمية المهارات الحوارية لدى الطلاب وكذلك حديث المعلمين في فصول تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في السعودية، وقد تساعد معلمي اللغة الإنجليزي كلغة أجنبية أيضا على تنمية أساليبهم التدريسية وتشجع على الابتكار في التدريس.
- ❖ لقد تمت دعوتكم للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة لأنك مدرس لغة إنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، في هذه الورقة يقوم الباحث بإبراز معلومات المشاركة حيث يطلعكم على المعلومات الخاصة بالدراسة البحثية، أيضا معرفة ما تتضمنه الدراسة ويساعدكم في اتخاذ قراركم بشأن المشاركة في هذا البحث، يرجى قراءة هذا البيان بعناية وطرح أية استفسارات بشأن أي مسألة قد تجدوا صعوبه في فهمها أو ترغبون في معرفة المزيد عنها.
- ❖ المشاركة في هذه الدراسة البحثية تطوعية، وبناء عليه لديكم مطلق الحرية في المشاركة أو عدم المشاركة.
- ❖ بموافقتكم على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة تقر بأنك:
  - ✓ تفهم ما قرأته
  - ✓ توافق على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة البحثية المبينة أدناه
  - ✓ توافق على استخدام معلوماتكم الشخصية حسب ما ورد.
- ❖ سنوافيكم بنسخة من بيان معلومات المشاركة للاحتفاظ بها

**هل يتوجب علي الموافقة؟**

لا نفرض عليك الموافقة مطلقا.

**ماذا يحدث لو رفضت المشاركة؟**

يمكنك تغيير رأيك في أي وقت ولا يتعين عليك ذكر السبب، وسنقوم بشكركم على وقتكم حتى الآن ولن يتم الاتصال بكم بخصوص هذا البحث مرة أخرى.

**ماذا لو كانت لدي بعض المخاوف أو الشكاوى؟**

لو كانت لديكم أية مخاوف بخصوص البحث، يمكنكم الاتصال بي أو بالمشرف على الدراسة، يمكننا تقديم العون، لا تتردد في الاتصال بنا على البريد الإلكتروني [redacted]، رقم الهاتف المحمول: [redacted]، أو بمشرفي الدراسي عبر البريد الإلكتروني: Jacquie.Widin@uts.edu.au، أو رقم الهاتف: +6195143744.

أيضا إذا رغبتم التحدث إلى شخص اخر ليس له علاقة بالبحث، فيمكنكم الاتصال بمسئول أخلاقيات البحث على الرقم 02 9514 9772.

## Appendix 8: Teacher Invitation Letter in Arabic

**خطاب دعوة لمعلم**

جامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا

**دعوة لمعلمي اللغة الانجليزية في المرحلة الثانوية للمشاركة بالدراسة التي بعنوان:**

**" تأثير خطاب المعلم في تطوير مهارات الحوار عند الطلاب في فصول دراسة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية في المدارس الثانوية بمحافظة حفرالباطن"**

أخواني وزملائي معلمي اللغة الانجليزية أنا الباحث: محمد العنزي طالب دكتوراه بجامعة سيدني للتكنولوجيا أقوم بإجراء بحث علمي لغرض جمع بيانات رسالة الدكتوراه.

أرحب بكم, وأدعوكم للمشاركة بهذه الدراسة التي لن تأخذ الكثير من وقتكم ونتائجها ستسهم في تحسين مستوى خطاب المعلم اضافة الى ايجاد طرق لتحسين مهارات التحدث لدى ابناءنا الطلاب, لذلك مشاركتكم تهم هذه الدراسة. وسوف تشتمل مشاركتكم على ملاحظة وتسجيل لبعض حصصكم اليومية في المستويات التي تقومون بتدريسها بواقع حصة لكل مستوى اضافة الى اجراء مقابلة لمدة قد تستغرق مابين 30-45 دقيقة.

لذلك أوجه لكم هذه الدعوة ويسرني تواصلكم معي عبر البريد الإليكتروني:

، ورقم الجوال .

كما يمكنكم أيضا التواصل مع مشرفي الاكاديمي: اذا رغبتم عبر البريد الإليكتروني:

Jacquie.Widin@uts.edu.au

أو عبر رقم الهاتف 6195143744+.

كونوا على يقين بأنه ليس هناك ما يجبركم على المشاركة في هذا البحث اذا لم يكن لديكم دافع الرغبه.

وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام والتقدير.


أخوكم: محمد العنزي

طالب دكتوراه

كلية الآداب والعلوم الاجتماعية

المبني رقم 10، الدور 8، الغرفة 101، مكتب رقم 10112

ص.ب 123 , الرمز البريدي: 2007

هاتف رقم : 6195143744+.

البريد الإليكتروني:

**Appendix 9: Parents' Consent Form in English**


**Parent's Consent to give permission for child participation in Research**

**Research Title: Developing dialogic interactions:**
**A study of teacher talk in Saudi Arabian secondary schools' English language classes.**

**I am aware the project is being jointly conducted by Mr MOHAMMED ALANAZI from the University of Technology Sydney.**

**I, _____, a parent of the student _____ from class _____ of _____ Secondary School, agree to give permission for my child to participate in the self-funded research project, *Developing dialogic interactions: A study of teacher talk in Saudi Arabian secondary schools' English language classes. (UTS HREC Approval Reference Number: 2015000381)* being conducted by PhD student Mr. MOHAMMEDE ALANAZI ( ), under the supervision of Dr. JACQUIE WIDIN from the University of Technology Sydney (Jacquie.Widin@uts.edu.au, ph: 9514.3744).**

**I understand that the purpose of this study is to explore the ways how Saudi Secondary Students' dialogical skills Influenced by teacher talk in English as Foreign Language classrooms in Hafr Al-Batin province.**

**I understand that my child's participation in this research will involve contributing to be observed and audio- recorded. My child's participation in the audio- recording will be required for approximately 10 lessons each lesson will last for 45 minutes. I confirm that both my child and I have been reassured by the researcher that the risks involved in this research are minimal but I do understand that there is a possibility that my child's self-study time might be involved.**

**I am aware that I can contact the English Department in Hafr Al-Batin Authority of Education on the number +966137226188 if I have any concerns about the research. I understand that my child is under no obligation to participate in this research and there will be no negative impact if they say no. I also understand that my child is free to withdraw participation from this research project at any time my child wishes, without consequences, and without giving a reason.**

**I confirm that the researcher Mr. MOHAMMED ALANAZI has answered both my child's and my questions fully and clearly.**

**I am aware that the research data gathered from this project will be published in a form that does not identify my child in any way.**

_____ ____/____/____

**Signature (parent of the participant) Date**

_____ ____/____/____

**Signature (researcher) Date**

*NOTE:*

*This study has been approved by the University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any aspect of your participation in this research which you cannot resolve with the researcher, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (ph: +61 2 9514 9772 Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au), and quote the UTS HREC reference number. Any complaint you make will be treated in confidential and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.*

**Appendix 10: Parents' Information Sheet in English**


**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

**Research Title: Developing dialogic interactions:**
**A study of teacher talk in Saudi Arabian secondary schools' English language classes.**

**WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?**
**Teacher Researcher: Mohammed Alanazi,**
**ph:**
**Supervisor: Dr Jacqueline Widin, Jacquie.Widin@uts.edu.au, ph: 9514.3744 From the University of Technology Sydney**

**WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH ABOUT?**
**The purpose of the study is to.**
***Help teachers to improve the manner in which they talk in their classrooms.**
***Improve students' conversational skills.**
***Discover and integrate pedagogical solutions that would promote dialogic skills for Saudi EFL learners.**
**So, teacher talk is very important for both classroom teaching organization and students language learning in the foreign language learning and second language acquisition, because teacher talk is a tool of implementing teaching plan.**

**IF MY CHILD SAYSA YES, WHAT WILL IT INVOLVE?**
**Your child will kindly be invited to do the following research task(s):**
**□ Be observed and audio recorded (Each class will be observed for 10 lessons and every lesson takes 45 minutes)**

**All the students will be present in the class but they are not the subjects of the research. The teachers are the focus of the research as I will analyse their initiation and follow up moves. The observation will be conducted during normal class time.**
**The anonymity will be completely assured and the personal information about the participants that will be collected over this project will be stored securely and will only be used for purposes that he has agreed to. The identity and information will be kept strictly confidential, except as required by law.**

**ARE THERE ANY RISKS?**
**This project presents only a very low level of risk. There is a possibility that your child's self-study time might be involved.**

**WHY HAS MY CHILD BEEN ASKED?**
**Because your child is a class member and the study methods have been designed to be collected from a classroom environment. Furthermore, the study results may contribute**

**to improve his conversational skills as well as discover and integrate some pedagogical solutions that would promote dialogic skills for Saudi EFL learners.**

**DOES MY CHILD HAVE TO SAY YES?**
**No, your child doesn't have to say yes. They may also withdraw at any time.**

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF MY CHILD DOES NOT WANT TO PARTICIPATE?**
**Nothing, the researcher will thank them for their time so far and won't contact them about this research again. Your child is under no obligation to participate in this research and there will be no negative impact if they say no or withdraw from the study.**

**IF MY CHILD SAYS YES, CAN THEY CHANGE HIS MIND LATER?**
**Your child can change their mind at any time and they don't have to say why. The researcher will thank your child for their time so far and won't contact them about this research again.**

**WHAT IF I HAVE CONCERNS OR A COMPLAINT?**
**If you have concerns about the research that you think the researcher can help you with, please feel free to contact: Mr. Mohammed Alanazi,**
**ph:**

**If you would like to talk to someone who is not connected with the research, you may contact the English Department Supervisor in Hafr Al-Batin Authority of Education on the number +966137226188 and/or the Research Ethics Officer of the University of Technology Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee on +61 2 9514 9772, and quote this number *(UTS HREC Ref No. 2015000381***

**WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS TO MY CHILD?**
**The benefits to your child are to improve:**
**□ Students' conversational skills.**
**□ Teachers' manner in which they talk in their classrooms.**
**□ Dialogical skills for Saudi EFL learners.**
**□ The ways of learning and acquiring English as a Foreign Language.**

**All efforts will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained throughout the research process and in the publication of findings.**
**Yours sincerely,**
**Mohammed Alanazi**
**Doctoral Research Student**
**Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences**
**Building 10 Level 8 Room 101, desk 10112**
**P. O Box 123, Ultimo 2007**
**Tel: +6195143744**

*NOTE:*

*This study has been approved by the University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any aspect of your participation in this research which you cannot resolve with the researcher, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (ph: 02 9514 9615, Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au) and quote the UTS HREC reference number 2015000381 Any complaint you make will be treated in confidential and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.*

**Appendix 11: Students' Consent Form in English**


**Student's Consent to participation in a Research**

**Research Title: Developing dialogic interactions:**
**A study of teacher talk in Saudi Arabian secondary schools' English language classes.**

**I am aware the project is being jointly conducted by Mr MOHAMMED ALANAZI from the University of Technology Sydney.**
**I, _____, a student _____ from class _____ of Hafr Al-Batin Secondary School, agree to give permission to participate in the self-funded research project, *''Developing dialogic interactions: A study of teacher talk in Saudi Arabian secondary schools' English language classe''s.* *(UTS HREC Approval Reference Number: 2015000381)* being conducted by PhD student Mr. MOHAMMEDE ALANAZI ( ph: ), under the supervision of Dr. JACQUIE WIDIN from the University of Technology Sydney (Jacquie.Widin@uts.edu.au, ph: 9514.3744).**

**I understand that the purpose of this study is to explore the ways how Saudi Secondary Students' dialogical skills Influenced by teacher talk in English as Foreign Language classrooms in Hafr Al-Batin province.**

**I understand that my participation in this research will involve contributing to be observed and audio- recorded. My participation in the audio- recording will be required for approximately 10 lessons each lesson will last for 45 minutes. I confirm that both my parent and I have been reassured by the researcher that the risks involved in this research are minimal but I do understand that there is a possibility that my self-study time might be involved.**

**I am aware that I can contact the English Department in Hafr Al-Batin Authority of Education on the number +966137226188 if I have any concerns about the research. I understand that I am under no obligation to participate in this research and there will be no negative impact if you say no. I also understand that I am free to withdraw participation from this research project at any time wish, without consequences, and without giving a reason.**

**I confirm that the researcher Mr. MOHAMMED ALANAZI has answered both my parent's and I questions fully and clearly.**
**I am aware that the research data gathered from this project will be published in a form that does not identify me in any way.**

_____ ____/____/____
**Signature (student) Date**
_____ ____/____/____
**Signature (researcher) Date**
*NOTE:*

*This study has been approved by the University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any aspect of your participation in this research which you cannot resolve with the researcher, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (ph: +61 2 9514 9772 Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au), and quote the UTS HREC reference number. Any complaint you make will be treated in confidential and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.*

**Appendix 12: Students Information Sheet in English**


**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET/ STUDENTS**

**Research Title: Developing dialogic interactions:**
**A study of teacher talk in Saudi Arabian secondary schools' English language classes.**

**WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?**
**Teacher Researcher: Mohammed Alanazi,**
**ph:**
**Supervisor: Dr Jacqueline Widin, Jacquie.Widin@uts.edu.au, ph: 9514.3744**
**From the University of Technology Sydney**

**WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH ABOUT?**
**The purpose of the study is to.**
***Help teachers to improve the manner in which they talk in their classrooms.**
***Improve students' conversational skills.**
***Discover and integrate pedagogical solutions that would promote dialogic skills for Saudi EFL learners.**
**So, teacher talk is very important for both classroom teaching organization and students language learning in the foreign language learning and second language acquisition, because teacher talk is a tool of implementing teaching plan.**

**IF I SAY YES, WHAT WILL IT INVOLVE?**
**You will kindly be invited to do the following research task(s):**
**□ Be observed and audio recorded (Each class will be observed for 10 lessons and every lesson takes 45 minutes)**

**All the students will be present in the class but they are not the subjects of the research. The teachers are the focus of the research as I will analyse their initiation and follow up moves. The observation will be conducted during normal class time.**
**The anonymity will be completely assured and the personal information about the participants that will be collected over this project will be stored securely and will only be used for purposes that he has agreed to. The identity and information will be kept strictly confidential, except as required by law.**

**ARE THERE ANY RISKS?**
**This project presents only a very low level of risk. The assigned research tasks may take up some of your free time.**

**WHY I HAVE BEEN ASKED?**
**Because you are a class member and the study methods been designed to be collected from a classroom environment. Furthermore, the study results may contribute to**

**improve your conversational skills as well as discover and integrate some pedagogical solutions that would promote dialogic skills for Saudi EFL learners.**

**DO I HAVE TO SAY YES?**
**No, you don't have to say yes. You may also withdraw at any time.**

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I SAY NO?**
**Nothing, the researcher will thank you for your time so far and won't contact him about this research again. You are under no obligation to participate in this research and there will be no negative impact if you say no or withdraw from the study.**

**IF I SAY YES, CAN I CHANGE MY MIND LATER?**
**You can change your mind at any time and you don't have to say why. The researcher will thank you for your time so far and won't contact you about this research again.**

**WHAT IF I HAVE CONCERNS OR A COMPLAINT?**
**If you have concerns about the research that you think the researcher can help you with, please feel free to contact: Mr. Mohammed Alanazi,**
**ph:**

**If you would like to talk to someone who is not connected with the research, you may contact the English Department in Hafr Al-Batin Authority of Education on the number +966137226188 and/or the Research Ethics Officer of the University of Technology Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee on +61 2 9514 9772, and quote this number *(UTS HREC Ref No. 2015000381)***

**WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS TO ME?**
**The benefit to you is to improve:**
**□ Students' conversational skills.**
**□ Teachers' manner in which they talk in their classrooms.**
**□ Dialogical skills for Saudi EFL learners.**
**□ The ways of learning and acquiring English as a Foreign Language.**

**All efforts will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained throughout the research process and in the publication of findings.**
**Yours sincerely,**
**Mohammed Alanazi**
**Doctoral Research Student**
**Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences**
**Building 10 Level 8 Room 101, desk 10112**
**P O Box 123**
**Ultimo 2007**
**Tel: +6195143744**

*NOTE:*

*This study has been approved by the University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any aspect of your participation in this research which you cannot resolve with the researcher, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (ph: 02 9514 9615, Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au) and quote the UTS HREC reference number 2015000381 Any complaint you make will be treated in confidential and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.*

**Appendix 13: Teachers' Consent Form in English**


**Teachers' Consent to participation in a Research**

**I _____ agree to participate in the research project 'Developing dialogic interactions: A study of teacher talk in Saudi Arabian secondary schools' English language classes'' being conducted by Mohammed Alanazi, ( , ). He is a student at the University of Technology, Sydney for his degree Doctor of philosophy.**

**I understand that the purpose of this study is help teachers to improve the manner in which they talk in their classrooms as well as improve students' conversational skills. Also, to discover and integrate pedagogical solutions that would promote dialogic skills for Saudi EFL learners.**

**I understand that my participation in this research will involve a slight risk such as embarrassment. I may be embarrassed by being observed or recorded during my teaching.**

**I understand that I may be observed and recorded for at least 10 periods each period 45 minutes.**

**I understand that I will also be invited to participate in an interview for approximately 30-45 minutes, which will be audio-recorded.**

**I am aware that I can contact Mohammed Alanazi or his supervisor(s) Dr. Jacquie Widin from the University of Technology Sydney (Jacquie.Widin@uts.edu.au, ph: 9514.3744)if I have any concerns about the research. I also understand that I am free to withdraw my participation from this research project at any time I wish, without consequences, and without giving a reason.**

**I agree that Mohammed Alanazi has answered all my questions fully and clearly.**

**I agree that the research data gathered from this project may be published in a form that does not identify me in any way.**

**_____ ____/____/____**
**Signature (participant)**

**_____ ____/____/____**
**Signature (researcher or delegate)**

*NOTE:*

*This study has been approved by the University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any aspect of your participation in this research which you cannot resolve with the researcher, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (ph: +61 2 9514 9772 Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au) and quote the UTS HREC reference number. Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.*

**Appendix 14: Teachers Information Sheet in English**


**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET/ TEACHERS**

**Research Title: Developing dialogic interactions:**
**A study of teacher talk in Saudi Arabian secondary schools' English language classes.**

**WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?**
**My name is Mohammed Alanazi and I am an academic/student at UTS. (My supervisor is Dr. Jacquie Widin**

**WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH ABOUT?**
**This research is to find out about the spoken language in terms of TT in Saudi EFL classrooms, and how TT may impact the development of meaningful students' dialogic skills. So, to be more accurate the effort of this research will focus specifically on the evaluative and discoursal functions of the F-move performed by the teacher.**

**IF I SAY YES, WHAT WILL IT INVOLVE?**
**I will ask you to participate in an interview for approximately 30-45 minutes, which will be audio-recorded. I will observe you and watch you as you work as well as audio-record some parts of your lesson. Your participation in the audio-recording will be required for approximately 10 lessons, each lesson will last for 45 minutes.**
**The confidentiality will be completely assured and the personal information about the participants that will be collected over this project will be stored securely and will only be used for purposes that he has agreed to. The identity and information will be kept strictly confidential, except as required by law.**

**ARE THERE ANY RISKS?**
**This project presents only a very low level of risk because the research has been carefully designed. However, it is possible that you may be embarrassed by being observed or recorded during your teaching. Also, the assigned research tasks may take up some of your free time.**

**WHY HAVE I BEEN ASKED?**
**□ You are invited to take a part in a research study that explores the 'The Influence of Teacher Talk in the Development of Dialogue Skills of Students in Foreign Language Classroom.**

**□ You are able to give me the information I need to find out about whether Teacher Talk is authoritarian or rather dialogic in nature and how this impacts the development of meaningful dialogue in EFL classrooms by analysing teachers' F-moves. Also, to what extent EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia promote or hinder learning of target language as well as what goes on in this setting in terms of dialogic interactions.**

**Remember that the result of this study will contribute to fill the lack of classroom research in Saudi context as there is little research in this area. It might provide framework to develop students' dialogic skills as well as TT in Saudi EFL classrooms. Also, it may enhance EFL teachers to develop their teaching styles and encourage innovations in teaching.**

**□ You have been invited to participate in this study because you are EFL teacher. This Participant Information Statement tells you about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the research. Please read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about.**

**□ Participation in this research study is voluntary. So it's up to you whether you wish to take part or not.**

**□ By giving your consent to take part in this study you are telling us that you:**

**□ Understand what you have read**

**□ Agree to take part in the research study as outlined below**

**□ Agree to the use of your personal information as described.**

**□ You will be given a copy of this Participant Information Statement to keep**

**DO I HAVE TO SAY YES?**

**You don't have to say yes.**

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I SAY NO?**

**Nothing. I will thank you for your time so far and won't contact you about this research again.**

**IF I SAY YES, CAN I CHANGE MY MIND LATER?**

**You can change your mind at any time and you don't have to say why. I will thank you for your time so far and won't contact you about this research again.**

**WHAT IF I HAVE CONCERNS OR A COMPLAINT?**

**If you have concerns about the research that you think, you can contact me or my supervisor. We can help you with, please feel free to contact us on [redacted] mobile number is: [redacted] or Jacquie.Widin@uts.edu.au the phone number is: +6195143744.**

**If you would like to talk to someone who is not connected with the research, you may contact the Research Ethics Officer on 02 9514 9772.**

**Appendix 15: Teachers Invitation Letter**


## INVITATION LETTER FOR TEACHER

**Research title: Developing dialogic interactions:**
**A study of teacher talk in Saudi Arabian secondary schools' English language classes.**

**Dear EFL teachers**

**My name is Mohammed Alanazi and I am a student/academic at the University of Technology, Sydney. I am conducting research into 'Developing dialogic interactions: A study of teacher talk in Saudi Arabian secondary schools' English language classes' and would welcome your assistance. The research would involve interviews, observation and audio-recording and should take no more than 10 teaching periods of your time plus 30-45 minutes for the interview.**

**If you are interested in participating, *I would be glad if you would contact me on the following email: and mobile number also, you can contact my supervisor on the following email Jacquie.Widin@uts.edu.au or the phone number +6195143744.**

**You are under no obligation to participate in this research.**

**Yours sincerely,**
**Mohammed Alanazi**
**Doctoral Research Student**
**Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences**
**Building 10 Level 8 Room 101, desk 10112**
**P .O Box 123, Ultimo 2007**
**Tel: +6195143744**

## Appendix 16: Department of Education permission letter

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم
(٢٨٠)
إدارة التعليم بمحافظة حفر الباطن
التخطيط والتطوير

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وزارة التعليم
Ministry of Education

الرقم : ٣٧٨-١٣١٥
التاريخ : ١٤٣٧/٥/١ هـ
المشفوعات: - ٧ -

الموضوع : تسهيل مهمة الباحث/ محمد بن جديع العنزي.

**تعميم**

**(لجميع مدارس المرحلة الثانوية بالمحافظة )**

**المكرم/ة/ قائد/ة مدرسة : _____ وفقهم الله .**

**السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته**

إشارة إلى خطاب الملحق الثقافي بسفارة المملكة العربية السعودية في استراليا رقم وتاريخ بدون بشأن طلب تسهيل مهمة الباحث/ محمد بن جديع العنزي (طالب دكتوراة في تخصص الدراسات الانسانية بجامعة ( The University of Technology Sydney (UTS ) لتطبيق دراسته المرفقة وهي بعنوان (تأثير خطاب المعلم في تطوير مهارات الحوار عند الطلاب في فصول دراسة اللغة الانجليزية في المدارس الثانوية بمحافظة حفر الباطن).

عليه نأمل منكم تسهيل مهمته.

**والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته .**

**مدير التعليم بمحافظة حفر الباطن**

**عايض بن نافع الرحيلي**

ص/لمكتبنا.
ص/لجميع اقسام الادارة لتسهيل مهمة الباحث.
ص/للحفظ.

**Appendix 17: Saudi Cultural Mission permission letter**

ROYAL EMBASSY OF SAUDI ARABIA
CULTURAL ATTACHÉ OFFICE
CANBERRA

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

سفارة المملكة العربية السعودية
مكتب الملحقية الثقافية
كانبرا
إفادة تسهيل مهمة

١٤٣٦/٠٥/٠٧ هـ الموافق ٢٠١٥/٠٢/٢٦م

## إلى من يهمه الأمر

يفيد مكتب الملحق الثقافي في سفارة المملكة العربية السعودية في أستراليا بأن المبتعث محمد بن جديع بن مزعل العنزي، (رقم الهوية الوطنية ١١٠٠٤٥٧٢١٥) مبتعث من وزارة التعليم العالي لدراسة الدكتوراة في تخصص الدراسات الانسانية - Applied Linguistics بجامعة University of Technology Sydney- UTS في استراليا، وهو متواجد حالياً في مقر البعثة، ، وستنتهي بعثته في تاريخ ٢٠١٧/٠٢/٢٤م.

ونظرًا لحاجة المبتعث للقيام برحلة علمية لجمع معلومات متعلقة برسالة الدكتوراة من المملكة ولتوصية المشرف الأكاديمي للمبتعث في الجامعة بذلك؛ نأمل من الجهات ذات العلاقة التكرم بمساعدة المبتعث المشار إليه أعلاه وتسهيل مهمته في جمع المعلومات المطلوبة لأغراض البحث العلمي.

هذه المعلومات صحيحة حسب بيانات نظام الشؤون الدراسية في التاريخ المحدد أعلاه، وبناءً على طلب المبتعث تم منحه هذه الإفادة.

**والله الموفق.**

**الملحق الثقافي**
**بسفارة المملكة العربية السعودية في كانبرا**

**د. عبدالعزيز بن عبدالله بن طالب**

سفارة المملكة العربية السعودية مكتب الملحقية الثقافية Canberra كانبرا Cultural Attache Office Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia

Ref No:....., Date:....., Attachments..... ..... المرفقات ..... التاريخ:..... الرقم:

Tel: +61 2 62693170 Fax: +61 2 62325978 P.O. BOX 1206, DICKSON , ACT, 2602, AUSTRALIA

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