An Integrated Program to Promote the Confidence of Saudi Public School Students in Speaking English

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Abstract

This case study investigates the introduction, implementation and evaluation of an integrated program—Let’s Speak English (LSE)—in a Grade 7 Saudi Arabian classroom. This program is designed to promote students’ competence and confidence in speaking English.

Saudi public schools aim to educate students to use English in real-life communication. However, the current curriculum—particularly the spoken English syllabus—does not meet these expectations. The majority of Saudi high school students graduate with low levels of understanding and competence in speaking English, despite having been taught English from Grade 4. This situation in schools demands the development of a syllabus that embraces communicative and interactive pedagogies.

The following questions guide this study:

1. What is LSE?
2. Does LSE build confidence and increase the participation of Grade 7 students in the English-speaking classroom? If so, how does it do this?
3. What teaching and learning strategies of LSE contribute to the improvement of spoken English in a Grade 7 Saudi classroom?
4. What is the role of the LSE teacher in an English-speaking classroom?

This study investigates the teaching and learning associated with LSE over 16 weeks on a daily basis. LSE is based on four themes: ‘My News’, ‘Islamic Chants’, ‘Stories in English’ and ‘Videos in English’. The LSE curriculum differs from the traditional teacher-directed approach to introducing a learner-centred approach. Twenty-one teachers, four supervisors and 28 students contributed to this study and participated in observations, interviews and surveys.

This study found that LSE contributes positively to students’ linguistic confidence and competence. The factors found to contribute to students’ increased confidence and competence included increased opportunities to participate in group activities and speak English in front of peers, connecting learning to real-life experiences and the Islamic religion, authentic activities,
and a supportive learning environment. The outcomes from this study will inform current practice and policy in the teaching and learning of English in Saudi Arabian classrooms, and will contribute to creating an engaging, interactive and learner-centred syllabus for the future.
Acknowledgements

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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAH</td>
<td>Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLL</td>
<td>Community Language Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLT</td>
<td>Communicative Language Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPH</td>
<td>Critical Period Hypothesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGS</td>
<td>Department of General Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFL</td>
<td>English Foreign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>EL</td>
<td>English Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as Second Language</td>
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<td>FL</td>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>FLL</td>
<td>Foreign Language Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDC</td>
<td>General Direction of Curricula</td>
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<td>GPGE</td>
<td>General Presidency of Girls Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>KSA</td>
<td>Kingdom of Saudi Arabia</td>
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<tr>
<td>LLS</td>
<td>Language Learning Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSE</td>
<td>Let’s Speak English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoHE</td>
<td>Minister of Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoP</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Natural Approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Presentation, Practice and Production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>Second Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLL</td>
<td>Second Language Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL</td>
<td>Test of English as a Foreign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPR</td>
<td>Total Physical Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPRS</td>
<td>Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling</td>
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 English Language Teaching in Saudi Classrooms: A Reflection

As a personal insight into the little understood Saudi education classroom and learning context, this section presents a brief synopsis of my 10-year experience as a teacher of English in an intermediate school. In 1994, I graduated from the College of Arts at King Saud University in Riyadh with a Bachelor Degree in English–Arabic Translation. I had an intensive course of English for one semester. During the following four years, in addition to elective courses, I studied 13 courses in English skills, 12 courses in Arabic language skills, 19 courses in translation and completed a graduation project. In short, I had no exposure to pedagogy, nor did I have any practical experience in teaching.

Due to the shortage of foreign language (FL) teachers, I was hired by the Saudi Ministry of Education (MoE) to teach in a public intermediate school. My first day of teaching was a disaster. After being handed the English textbook, I was told by the principal to go to the Grade 8 class to teach 40 14-year-old girls. In the classroom, I found desks that were ordered neatly in parallel rows, and students sitting silently behind them. In front of this class of 35 students, I stood silently and looked at them, feeling inadequate because I did not even know how to begin a lesson. All I could see were eyes staring at me and wondering why I was looking at them blankly. I could not see the features of their faces. They could only assume I was to be the teacher.

I pondered what I would do for 45 minutes. It took me sometime to realise that I should begin by introducing myself. I then asked the girls to introduce themselves, one at a time. To ease the shock of that first day, I spent the remainder of the lesson having a general conversation in Arabic with the students. The students were interested to know about me, and spoke in Arabic about their families, friends and hobbies. For my next class, I decided that my only option was to follow the teacher guidebook step by step. In doing so, I spoke for three-fourths of the period, while students sat quietly at their places listening carefully. They spoke only when permitted and, like robots, did only what they were asked to do. For me, teaching became following the same textbook with all students.
I was ill prepared for teaching—I had no pre-service education on pedagogy, FL teaching, classroom management or curriculum. Throughout my teaching career, I attended only one in-service course about planning lessons and assessment, which was during my fifth year of teaching.

Three days into my first week, the English supervisor attended one of my classes to evaluate my performance. After the class, the supervisor discussed the strengths and weaknesses of my teaching. I was advised to restrict my teaching only to the textbook and to follow the schedule rigidly. I was also told to finish two weeks before the final exam in order to begin revision.

In my second semester of teaching, I decided to experiment with a reflective teaching methodology. I started by teaching the same lesson to four different classes during one week, and I wrote notes after each class. By reflecting on the first class, I realised that my teaching greatly improved in the second, third and fourth classes. The students appeared to be more interested and motivated to participate. In order to improve my teaching, I read about teaching methodology and psychology, and the sociology of education and teenage students. While considering the content of the mandatory curriculum, I planned my lessons and found this helped me to better organise additional information and resources.

During my 10 years of teaching experience, I faced many teaching challenges and attempted many strategies to overcome these challenges—some more effective than others. Teaching an FL was daunting, and I was concerned about the students’ lack of motivation, first language interference, students’ insufficient vocabulary and knowledge of language structures, the lack of time to practise speaking, classroom management, student feedback and evaluation.

In my 10 years, I discovered that teenage students were motivated when they received positive feedback from their peers and teacher. I began to give more feedback and recognise hardworking students. Feedback and positive recognition are expected in traditional Saudi classrooms. I noticed that the students were responsive to and greatly influenced by teachers they liked. I developed rapport with my students by getting to know their needs, problems and interests. I focused on making my teaching and learning tasks enjoyable and interesting, and I encouraged
students to be responsible for their work. I established the expectations for each course and shared the course objectives to ensure that the students understood the course plan and content.

I insisted that students spoke English during their English speaking classes. Prior to this, the students’ preference was to speak and respond in Arabic, and they expected me to speak Arabic while teaching English. Instead, I spoke English for the majority of class time. I gave support to build their confidence and competence. In the first month, I spoke slowly and used many gestures and facial expressions. I gradually increased my rate of speaking to let the students experience the normal rate of speaking English. When students and parents complained about the changes, I explained that, with time, the students would adjust and be more confident communicating in English.

I persevered and continued to introduce strategies to support students’ participation and engagement. The students’ lack of vocabulary and understanding of language structures hindered their effective communication. I tried various strategies to overcome this, including having students memorise the vocabulary learnt in each lesson, and then reinforced by me dictating the words at the beginning of the following class. After each unit, I used information-gap activities and word categorisation activities. The students were exposed to the language in context. I encouraged students to tell stories in English and to adopt role-playing activities.

Finally, because English classes were restricted to three hours each week, I decided to provide extra classes by volunteering to teach the classes of absent teachers. I planned lessons carefully to make the most of the time available, and, when students could not finish the activities in class, I encouraged them to finish the work at home.

Classroom management proved to be stressful for me. I felt discomfort, lack of control, and the inability to provide individual attention and feedback. I found myself constantly speaking loudly to gain the students’ attention. With the lack of space in classrooms, I could not move around to instruct students and talk to them individually. After time, I realised that I had to change the physical environment by grouping the tables to enable space to move freely between groups.

Grouping the students led to additional problems because the students were not accustomed to working in groups, and I had little knowledge of how to establish ground rules for group work.
The noise level interfered with their learning and caused me to feel lost and lacking in control. Shouting to keep the class quiet (the expected practice) was all I knew to do. Stressed and with a sore throat, I decided to introduce a signal so that students would be aware when I wanted to speak—it worked. I established a classroom routine so that the class ran smoothly. This routine was adjusted over time to accommodate students’ needs.

However, the textbook and rigid schedule limited what I could teach. My aim was to attract students’ attention and motivate them, so I introduced attractive visual aids; asked open-ended questions beginning with ‘why?’, followed by ‘could you explain?’; and encouraged greater participation by waiting and then asking ‘Who else? I cannot see anyone from that side’. The students were encouraged to speak loudly so they could be heard by all students in the class.

I addressed the students by name as a mark of respect, personal attention and care. I memorised all the students’ names, and the students were invited to speak about their personal experiences, opinions, likes and dislikes in relation to the curriculum. All classes had approximately 40 students and it was difficult for me to evaluate the extent of all students’ learning. Where possible, I attempted to give additional support and guidance to students who required this. However, I was worried that this was not enough, so I checked the students’ work. Based on the advice of my colleague, after each unit, students completed an exam and then corrected each other’s work.

My reflections and experiences of 10 years of teaching highlight the constraints of teaching an FL in Saudi classrooms. For me, five broad categories exist: students’ lack of motivation, first language interference, inadequate knowledge of vocabulary and language structure, insufficient time to practise speaking, and issues pertaining to large classes and classroom management. In order to address these constraints and improve learning opportunities for students, an integrated program—Let’s Speak English (LSE)—(Appendix 1) was developed. LSE takes into account the learning environment; resources; effective strategies for teaching English; and ways to encourage greater engagement, confidence and interaction in English-speaking classrooms so that students are supported to leave school competent and confident to speak English.
1.2 Overview

This case study investigates the introduction and implementation of the LSE program (Appendix 1) in a Grade 7 English-speaking classroom in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). It investigates the effect of the interactive activities of LSE on students’ willingness to participate and engage in English speaking, as well as the effect of LSE on students’ confidence in speaking English. Saudi English speaking-classrooms are traditionally teacher-directed and adhere to a rigid curriculum with prescriptive content. Classrooms are occupied by passive students completing workbooks, and students have limited opportunities to interact with their peers and teachers. This study examines students’, teachers’ and supervisors’ responses to the introduction and implementation of LSE.

Saudi public schools aim to educate school leavers to use English in real-life communication. However, the current curriculum—particularly the spoken English syllabus—does not meet these expectations. Large numbers of Saudi high school students graduate with little knowledge of English. This situation in schools demands the exploration and development of English speaking programs that incorporate communicative and interactive pedagogies, as opposed to teacher-centred, worksheet-based instruction.

This case study introduces LSE to a class of Grade 7 girls on a daily basis over four months. LSE is an integrated program based on four themes: ‘My News’, ‘Islamic Chants’, ‘Stories in English’ and ‘Videos in English’. LSE aims to move teaching practices from teacher-centred to learner-centred by using a variety of interactive strategies.

A case study approach is used, and multiple data sources are employed, including observations, interviews and the collection of artefacts, such as language learning diaries, field notes, samples of students’ work and surveys. The findings from this research can lead to improved classroom practices, particularly in the area of FL teaching in Saudi classrooms. Policymakers will also be informed about changes required in the spoken English curriculum and pedagogy.
1.3 Study Questions

This case study addresses the following questions:

1. What is LSE?
2. Does LSE build confidence and increase the participation of female students in a Grade 7 English-speaking classroom? If so, how does it do this?
3. What teaching and learning strategies of LSE contribute to the improvement of spoken English language in a Grade 7 Saudi classroom?
4. What is the role of the LSE teacher in an English-speaking classroom?

1.4 Rationale for the Study

There were six primary reasons for undertaking this study, as outlined below.

1. The current curriculum for teaching spoken English in Saudi public high schools fails to achieve its aim of encouraging students to use the English language meaningfully in communication with others. Stakeholders, including the MoE, researchers, teachers and parents, have expressed concern about the inadequacies of the English curriculum to improve the English-speaking competency of Saudi students. It must be noted that education is relatively new for girls—it was mandated in 1960. The following sources emphasise the needs for change in Saudi English-speaking classrooms.

a. To date, there has been no research study conducted to promote students’ confidence in speaking English in the Saudi context. It is anticipated that generating a rich description of a range of activities that can be used in the Saudi context to encourage confidence and competence in speaking will provide a useful resource for stakeholders, supervisors and teachers of English. In addition, this will contribute to improving Saudi students’ learning of English in public schools, and confidence in speaking English. Research has identified constraints that hinder the progress of students learning English, and warrant change.

(i) Abu-Ghararah (1990) investigated the causes and remedies of Saudi students’ inability to speak English at a Saudi college of education. Abu-Ghararah found that
student deficiencies in speaking English were related to the negative attitudes towards speaking held by students, teachers and peers, and the limited opportunities in classrooms to speak English.

(ii) Research by Dukhayil (2002) found that:
- there is unnecessary repetition and duplication of information in the Saudi curricula
- students are given too much material, which forces memorisation
- no attention is given to talented students
- students are discouraged from demonstrating initiative and creativity.

b. The Saudi MoE (2005a) stresses the need for curricula to be developed qualitatively in order to keep up with scientific progress, social and economic development and global changes. The teaching of English is considered crucial, and is mandated in all schools from Grades 4 to 12. The KSA aims to become fully engaged in the international community. With the growth of English as the global language, it is increasingly important for KSA to be fully engaged in the international community and for its young people to have an effective command of English (Saudi MoE, 1982). Communication in English will contribute to a better understanding developing between the West and the Arab world.

Learning other languages, particularly English, presents an opportunity for Saudi’s young generation to be exposed to the cultures of these languages. Exposure to diversity is desirable for Saudi students who are unfamiliar with multiculturalism. Building students’ confidence in language learning, particularly in speaking, is a significant motive for a student to succeed in learning the target language. A growing body of research has been conducted to investigate the factors that promote students’ competence in speaking English (Ando, 1987; Fang, 1984; Huong, 1992; Songsiri, 2007; Thuoc, 1988; Wang, 1984). This research considers how the classroom social environment influences student engagement and performance.

The Arab environment is vastly different to the Western environment in terms of culture and religion. My own experience is that Saudi students are taught to be self-effacing in school and in public, which means that speaking aloud—especially in a new language—is daunting.
c. Teachers are aware that students are reluctant participants in English speaking classes (pilot study). My firsthand observations of students speaking English in Saudi classrooms led me to believe that students are generally reluctant participants and refuse, resist or—at the very least—are reluctant to speak English. When participating in an English class, they tend to reply in Arabic because they are shy, they laugh and do not reply, or they pretend they understood what was said and respond by nodding.

In 2007, I conducted a pilot study in two public schools in Riyadh. Ninety students from Grades 7, 8 and 9 and their six teachers were surveyed (Appendices 2 and 3). The studies found that most Saudi students admitted to lacking confidence in speaking English. Most teachers and students were dissatisfied with the way English was taught and learnt in Saudi classrooms, and did not like the English textbook. This agrees with the findings of Abu-Ghararah (1990) and Dukhayil (2002). The students showed preference for learning how to use the language, rather than learning about the language. These results suggested the need for more opportunities to practise speaking in classrooms via authentic resources and interesting activities in which students can talk about themselves and their hobbies, tell real stories, watch English films and role-play.

d. Parents have expressed concern that the current strategies for teaching and learning English are inadequate and do not produce increased student confidence to communicate in English. The Alwatan Newspapers by Al-Abdallay (2010) highlight the lack of English speaking competency among graduating students.

Saudi students who hold scholarships cross geographical boundaries and challenge the difficulties facing them to complete their higher studies. However, there remains the spectre of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)—a barrier that hinders them from achieving their goals, and sometimes impedes their hopes for completing their studies. Al-Abdallay (2010) added that when these students fail to achieve a high enough grade on the TOEFL, they realise their weakness in English. Blame is directed at the Saudi curriculum; at English teachers for their lack of qualifications and lack of seriousness in teaching the curriculum; and at the inappropriate methodologies used for teaching and learning English, such as using Arabic in the English classroom. The family and education stakeholders are
also blamed for their lack of awareness and the lack of importance they place on language education for students during their first years in school.

2. In the context of Saudi education and curriculum innovations, this study is ground-breaking. Little research has been undertaken on this topic, and education in the traditional Western sense is a relatively new consideration in the KSA. A new approach that emphasises a two-way interaction between teachers and students will be adopted. As part of the Saudi educational reform in the Tatweer project (2004 to 2014) (Appendix 4), I was awarded a full scholarship from the Saudi MoE to determine ways to promote students' confidence in speaking English. It is expected that this thesis will identify practical solutions to assist students to overcome their reluctance to speak English.

1.5 Context: The KSA

Considerable effort is placed on explaining the unique context of this study, which is conservative and based on a strong religious foundation. Little is understood and known about Saudi education because access to this information is limited. Even as a Saudi citizen, it was extremely difficult and time consuming to access information and find authentic research data. Most Western books and websites include prejudiced information, particularly regarding Saudi religion and culture, judged from a Westerner’s perspective. In addition, Arabic books and websites are limited and often present information that is lacking in content.

The primary source of information for this study was the MoE website (http://www2.moe.gov.sa/). This is a valuable resource for educators, teachers and students, and is a professional-looking website with interesting and updated content that is easy to navigate and use. However, in 2010 (during the time of the research), the MoE website was attacked several times by hackers, according to Gulf Newspapers (Shaheen, 2010) and was inaccessible. As a result of this, it was undergoing repair until the end of 2011.

Saudi educational policies are designed deliberately to ensure that education meets the religious, economic and social needs of the country (Saudi MoE, 2005a). Islam is considered both integral to and the essence of education. Saudi principles of education include the responsibility to
engender faith in human dignity, and incorporate religious education and maintain Islamic culture at all education levels. An Islamic orientation is integrated in teaching and all curriculum content, including science and English. There are six major influences on KSA education: geographic, demographic, political, economic, religious and cultural influences. Each of these are explained below.

1.5.1 Geographical Influence

Geographical influences, including climate and region, affect classrooms practices (Saudi MoE, 1974). The climate influences the daily routine of classrooms, with public schools starting early (7.00 am) and finishing early (12.15 pm) to avoid the high temperatures during the day. In addition, the school year starts in September and ends in June to enable students to enjoy a summer vacation. The location and geographic features of each region influence the culture and communities involved.

There are 13 regions in the KSA (Map 1) that are governed by princes from the royal family. Altatwor School (the site of the study) is located in the Nejd region, which is in the centre of the KSA. The Nejd region is the homeland of the main Bedouin tribes, including the tribe of the royal family (Al-Sunbul, Al-Kataib, Metwally & Abduljawad, 2008). The people of the Nejd region are not influenced by the bordering countries and are proud of their Saudi identity. In addition, since this region is the hometown of Muhammad Abdulwahab—a powerful exponent of Islam—adherence to religious practices is extrememly apparent. For example, in addition to their conservative clothing, many females tend to wear black socks and black gloves to avoid attracting the attention of men. In most schools in this region, there is an obligation for female students and educational staff to also dress accordingly.
1.5.2 Demographic Influence

The population in the KSA increases every year. This increase in population—especially among people aged younger than 20 years—places pressure on the government, particularly in the education sector. According to Al-Akeil (2005), Othman (2006) and Al-Sunbul et al. (2008), in 1973, the population was 6.6 million. In 2010, based on what was reported by Saudi News Agency (2010) in Okaz Newspapers, the population was 27,136,977 million. The total number of citizens was 18,707,576 million, with 9,527,173 million males (50.9%) and 9,180,403 million females (49.1%). The number of KSA residents from other countries was 8,429,401 million.

1.5.3 Political Influence

Politics shape the framework of education in the KSA. The main aim of Saudi politics is to protect Islamic heritage and Arabic identity, and have a leadership role among Islamic and Arab countries (Saudi MoE, 1974). This political influence is one of the main objectives of general education, and is greatly enhanced in Saudi curricula.

The political history of the KSA has undergone three main phases: first, second and modern phase (Bowen, 2008). Each phase has had a profound influence on the current education climate. The following sections briefly describe the evolution of education and the influence of politics and religion on the curricula and teaching practices.
1.5.3.1 First Phase (1744–1817)

The first phase was significant for the history of the KSA in general and for education in particular. It strengthened the influence of religion and made the government stricter about protecting the religious identity of Saudis through education, by supporting the original form of Islam and fighting off superstitions. This is one of the main objectives of general education.

Education was lacking and rigorous in approach (Ham, Shams & Madden, 2005). It was based on religious men teaching boys from the same neighbourhood Islamic rules, and reciting and memorising passages from the Holy Quran. Students sat quietly at their desks and listened to one individual after another recite his or her lesson, until each teacher had been called upon. The teacher’s primary activity was assigning and listening to these recitations. Education took place at the teacher’s house or in a location attached to a mosque. This place was called ‘Kuttab’ (Al-Jamali, 1998). The families of the students provided the teacher with food, clothing or a wage. The teacher could punish students who did not complete their homework by hitting them with a stick on their feet.

1.5.3.2 Second Phase (1824–1891)

The second phase was important in the development of the Saudi curricula because it strengthened the influence of politics. One of the objectives of general education is deepening the spirit of loyalty and pride of the country through intellectual awareness of the Kingdom’s national assets. Comprised mostly of desert, the Arabian Peninsula was initially one of the poorest and most desolate regions. The royal family fought for this land to protect the Islamic heritage and Arabic identity by uniting the Arab tribes and establishing the country. No one knew at the time that this land would become one of the largest producers of oil in the world.

*Kuttab* was still the main resource used to maintain education in the second phase of the state (Abdrabboh, 1984). However, in addition to teaching Islamic rules and the recitation and memorisation of passages from the Holy Quran, religious people taught public reading and writing of Arabic by focusing on Arabic grammar and poetry (Al-Thah’ar, 2003).
1.5.3.3 Modern Phase of KSA (1902 to Present)

This phase is significant because it was during this time that the current KSA was established when the royal family succeeded in uniting the Arab tribes and establishing the country (Reed, 2007). Developing education was the priority of King Abdulaziz (Image 1) and his sons, Saud, Faisal, Khalid, Fahd and Abdullah (Saudi Ministry of Culture and Information, 2006).

![Image 1: King Abdulaziz](Source: Focus on Jerusalem (2012))

According to Bin Deheish (1986), the KSA experienced several developmental plans that each lasted five years (1970 to 1995) and were successfully accomplished, with all objectives met. Developing education was the main aim of these plans. The current developmental plan of education (2004 to 2014) is the largest yet. The first and the current developmental plans are described briefly below to indicate their progress.

The first development plan (1970 to 1975) occurred under the leadership of King Faisal (Image 2). The total expenditure of this plan was 80 billion SR (22 billion AUD) (Al-Tahawi, 2002).

![Image 2: King Faisal](Source: Saudi Arabia (2012))
The results of this plan in terms of education are summarised as follows:

- more schools for literacy education were established for both boys and girls in general, and for adult education
- community development centres were urbanised to teach consumer issues, as well as literacy
- summer programs presenting basic literacy training and religious, medical and occupational services were established for Bedouin and rural residents
- education subjects were added to all teacher preparation institutions
- the coordination of literacy training efforts was encouraged among ministries and departments (Cleron, 1978).

King Abdullah (Image 3) established a 10-year intensive development project called ‘Tatweer’ (2004 to 2014) to guarantee the availability, and that the planning processes are characterised by continuity and connection (Appendix 4) (Othman, 2006). This project is the most ambitious developmental plan, according to the Saudi MoE (2005a). The MoE has developed Tatweer at a cost of 9 billion SR (2 billion AUD) to promote innovation in education, and the LSE program was made possible with support from the MoE.

Image 3: King Abdullah
Source: Moubayed (2009)

Taking advantage of the experience of international educational institutions, Tatweer, in partnership with Oxford University (United Kingdom), plans to implement the Saudi Oxford Program to promote significant quality improvement in education through:

- training and improving the qualifications of school leaders and teachers
- developing the curricula and establishing extracurricular activities (such as LSE)
• improving the school environment
• activating the role of the student in the classroom.

The KSA seeks to develop, upgrade and improve its education system to cope with the development of international education. Generally, when comparing the criteria of the first and last development plans to improve Saudi general education, enormous educational growth and development has been obvious over a 34-year period.

1.5.4 Economic Influence

Abbas (2009) emphasises that the oil industry has had a great influence on the development of the KSA in all areas, including education. The KSA experienced remarkable growth in its economy over a short period following the discovery of oil in the 1930s (Niblock, 1982). As a result of this, the budget for education was 218 million SR (59 million AUD) for the first three development plans (1970 to 1985). In addition, the growth of the oil industry caused major changes that encouraged a rapid transformation from nomadic life to modernisation (Saudi Arabian Population, 2010). According to Niblock and Malik (2007), these changes affected the lives of the population, as well as their social environment (Rassekh, 2001).

According to El-Mallakh (1982), these changes can be summarised as the rapid development of new cities and increase in size of older cities, nomadic Bedouins settling in villages, villagers leaving their communities for urban areas, and people from older cities moving to newly developing cities. According to Othman (2006), in 1992, three-quarters of the population was urban, with the remainder classified as rural, including the few remaining nomads. Due to relocating from one place to another, people experienced occupational changes.

However, with high prices during the oil crisis in 1982, the KSA decreased the production of oil from 9.6 million tanks daily in 1981 to 6.5 million in 1982 (Nonneman & Aarts, 2006). This decrease in oil production continued and reduced the national income to 296 million AUD in 1984. This influenced the national income assigned to education. After the crisis, the national income increased to 702 million SR (190 million AUD) in 2007. When oil prices rose in 2007, the budget of education increased to 75 million SR (20 million AUD), which represented 20.2% of the government’s budget (Al-Sunbul et al., 2008). According to Al-Thah`ar (2003), the
government has become aware of the necessity to educate and develop human resources in order to diversify the Saudi economy.

1.5.5 Religious Influence

All students are of Islamic faith, and Islamic religion is embedded in their speech, behaviours and appearance. The phrase ‘In the name of Allah’ is frequently stated, particularly when beginning an action, such as reading, writing, eating, opening and closing a door, and boarding a vehicle (Al-Razy, 1992). Students greet each other with the greeting of Islam, ‘Peace be upon you’, to which the reply is, ‘And upon you peace, mercy and blessings of Allah’. When saying goodbye, students stated, ‘In the custody of Allah’, and reply, ‘In the custody of the Generous One’. Students behave modestly and wear conservative clothing.

Religion penetrates all aspects of Saudi’s lives (Abou Elfadi, 2006). Islamic heritage, Arabic identity and Saudi’s responsibility to have a leading role in the Arab Muslim world all deeply influence the personal and moral values of Saudi citizens (Rassekh, 2001). The results of the survey of Simmons and Simmons (1994) found that Islam has a deep influence on the values of Saudi students.

Religion has a profound influence on education and classroom practices, new initiatives and curricula. For example, students study four subjects of religion at school, and musical instruments are forbidden, particularly in public schools. There is segregation in buildings between male and female students. Since Friday is a religious day in Islam, Thursday and Friday are weekend days. The Islamic calendar, which is based on the lunar year, is the calendar that is followed by all government institutions, including schools (Saudi MoE, 1998). Moreover, Islamic influence has a strong influence on the design of public school buildings, with female students’ schools designed to align with the conservative culture and protect the students’ privacy. The findings of a study by Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi (1996b) suggest that religious motivation is used to arouse students’ enthusiasm and build a positive attitude towards learning.

An understanding of the cultural and unique aspects of the context of this study is essential. The religion of Islam and Muslim females’ economic rights, roles in the family and society, customs and expected behaviours greatly influence what is taught and how it is taught in classrooms.
1.5.5.1 Influence of Islam on Education

The word ‘Islam’ is derived from the Arabic root ‘SLM’, which means ‘submission’ or ‘surrender’, as well as ‘peace’. Thus, Islam is grounded in the concept of peace in and through one’s submission to the authority and will of Allah. The followers of Islam are Muslims, which means ‘those who submit’ (Abou Elfadi & Inati, 2004). The Holy Quran and Sunnah (the practice and example of the Prophet) are the main bases of Islam. The Holy Quran is the ultimate revealed word of Allah and the basic source of Islamic studies and laws. Social justice, economics, politics, legislation, jurisprudence, law and international relations are important contents of the Holy Quran. In addition, the Holy Quran deals with the basis of creeds, morality, history of humanity, worship, knowledge, wisdom, Allah–human relationships, and human–human relationships. As the Holy Quran states, ‘It is guidance to the people and clear signs of guidance and the criterion between right and wrong’ (Ali, 2001, 2:185).

The Sunnah is the other source of Islam (Khalid, 2005b) and is one of the Islamic subjects studied by students in Saudi schools. It explains and elaborates the Quranic verses; therefore, it is the second authority for Muslims, and believing in the Sunna is part of the Islamic faith. The Sunna also provides examples of the practical application of Islamic laws (Al-Bukhari, 1924).

1.5.5.2 The Stages of Islam

There are three obligatory stages in Islam—Islam, Eiman and Ehsan—each of which complements the other (Al-Bugdadi, 1981). These stages have a great influence on Muslims’ everyday life, including the experience of students and educational staff.

1.5.5.2.1 The First Stage: Islam

The first stage is Islam, which involves five pillars that constitute the framework of Muslims’ life—namely, Islamic declaration of faith, prayer, giving of alms, fasting and the pilgrimage. According to Al-Garadawi (2006d), some of these pillars must be practised daily or annually, while others are required a minimum of once in a lifetime.
The pillars, which are action based, are activities of faith to serve a person’s spiritual purposes, satisfy his or her human needs and mark his or her whole life with a divine touch (Khalid, 2005c). These fundamental pillars are the focus of the Saudi curricula and also influence classroom practices. For example, 15 minutes are allocated during the school day to the noon prayer. In addition, students are always encouraged through the activities of the mosques attached to schools to raise money to give alms to poor people both within and outside the country. Since the Arabic months are based on lunar calendar, Ramadan (the month of fasting) can occur on school days. Consequently, some changes are made to adjust students’ study while fasting. For example, the hours of school are minimised to three hours, from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm. In addition, the number of classes are minimised to six instead of seven, and every class lasts for 30 minutes. All students and government employees take a two-week holiday on the twenty-fifth day of Ramadan to celebrate Eid Al-Fiter (a religious celebration after the month of fasting). Finally, every year, all students and most government employees take a two-week holiday to have a chance to perform Hajj (pilgrimage) if possible, and to celebrate Eid Al-Adha (personal experience).

The Islamic declaration of faith— or Shahada—is the first pillar of Islam (Khalid, 2005e). The Shahadah means believing that ‘There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah’ (Al-Bugdadi, 1981). According to Abou Elfadi and Inati (2004), the Shahada is the first sentence to say when converting to Islam. The significance of this pillar is indicated by its inclusion on the Saudi flag used by the government since 15 March 1973 (Image 4) (Al-Sbaiey, 2003).

Image 4: The Flag of the KSA
Source: Players A-Z (2012)
The second pillar is prayer—or Salah—which is obligatory for every Muslim male and female who is sane, mature and—in the case of women—free from menstruation and confinement due to childbirth (Image 5) (Abdullslam, 2000). This pillar consists of five daily prayers. Since some of the school staff and parents of the students involved in this case study lived in the same suburb, they were neighbours who prayed together with their children in the mosque, and socialised daily. In addition, similar to the mosque in each suburb, the mosques attached to schools encourage religious and social meetings among students. Students perform the noon prayer at school—outside of the school context, they engage in prayer daily on four other occasions (Al-Garadawi, 2006d).

![Image 5: The Holy Mosque in Makkah](image)

Source: Baitalmal (2012)

According to Al-Garadawi (2006c), alms—or Zakat—is the third pillar of Islam, and it is obligatory to pay when a Muslim’s capital reaches a certain amount. For most purposes, this involves the payment each year of 2.5% of one’s wealth and properties; however, Muslims can contribute more than their obligatory Zakat payment (Khalid, 2005d).

The fourth pillar is fasting—or Seyam. Fasting during Ramadan, which is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar year, is obligatory for every adult Muslim, if he or she is mentally and physically fit and not on a journey (Al-Garadawi, 2006b). Every year, in the month of Ramadan, all Muslim adults fast from dawn until sundown. They abstain from food, drink and sexual relations (Khalid, 2005f). This encourages Muslims to value the blessing of food and encourages them to empathise with those people who may be unable to access food (Al-Garadawi, 2006a).

The annual pilgrimage—or Hajj to Makkah is the fifth pillar of Islam. It is an obligation only for those who are physically, mentally and financially able to perform it; however, it is required a
minimum of once in a lifetime (Khalid, 2005b). Hajj begins on the ninth day of the twelfth month, which is named ‘Haji’ after this pillar. Pilgrims wear special clothes that are simple garments that strip away distinctions of class and culture, so that all stand equal before Allah. This concept is taught to students in order for them to understand that justice is for all—everyone is equal to Allah and only their work is counted.

1.5.5.2.2 The Second Stage: Eiman

The term ‘Eiman’ means to consider something to be sure and reliable, without doubting (Khalid, 2005f). Religious actions in Islam without Eiman are described as ‘dead end’ because they quickly lose their liveliness and motivational power. Eiman influences Muslims’ beliefs; Muslims accept with good faith all that Allah does, even though they may fail to understand it or may disagree. This basic concept, which promotes a feeling of satisfaction, is taught at schools, particularly during religious classes.

1.5.5.2.3 The Third Stage: Ehsan

The highest stage of Islam is Ehsan, and this is worship in its most comprehensive form. According to Al-Bukhari (1924), Ehsan is to seek the pleasure of Allah by observing Him in secret and in public, in words and in deeds. That is, a person feels the existence of Allah with him or her in every moment of life. The stage of Ehsan influences students’ attitudes because those who believe in Ehsan tend to participate in good behaviour, such as treating peers in a decent manner and supporting and encouraging each other. They also pray at school without the supervision of their parents or school staff.

In conclusion, the pillars of Islam—Islam, Eiman and Ehsan—greatly affect a Muslim’s life because they involve actions that influence the routine of Muslims’ everyday lives. Moreover, believing in one Allah and the complete acceptance of His wisdom and guidance makes a person aware of the meaningfulness of the universe and of his or her place in it. Finally, believing in Ehsan influences Muslims’ behaviours and consciousness of the presence of Allah and of each individual’s obligations.
1.5.5.3 Education and Muslim Females

This study involves only female students in Grade 7 in an intermediate school. The status of Muslim females is discussed in this paper because of the controversial issues surrounding the status of women in Islamic society in general, and in Saudi society in particular. The stereotype of a Muslim woman is often that of an uneducated person with no rights or opportunities (Al-Tha’ar, 2003). However, the status of Muslim females is defined differently according to Islam (Büyükçelebi, 2005). The status of the wives of the Prophet Muhammad and the important roles played by them in the course of his ministry contradict the view that Islam undervalues female rights.

1.5.5.4 Females and Economic Rights

Islam gave women economic rights equal to those of men long before such rights were attained by Western women (Kelly, 1984). Al-Kepaicy (1990) explains that, from the beginning of Islam 14 centuries ago, women have been legally allowed to inherit property and hold wealth, even after marriage, without obligation to contribute that wealth to their husband or family. Long (2005) states that ‘Islam affirms that all persons, regardless of gender are equal in the right of God’ (p. 36).

1.5.5.5 Female Role in the Family

The stability of family life and security of women in Islamic societies differ notably from the conditions women today face in Western society (Long, 2005). The Islamic emphasis on the role of the mother is paramount to the extent that the Prophet Muhammad said that ‘paradise lies at the feet of the mother’ (Al-Nisabory, 2005). That is, Islam urges children to treat their mothers kindly and gently, and this is a ‘condition to enter the heaven’. This concept is strongly promoted in Saudi religious curriculum. Under Islam, a woman is expected to give full commitment to her family, within which she plays the greatest role (Al-Kepaicy, 1990). Muslim women play a great and honourable role in building the young generation as the basis of society.
1.5.5.6 Female Role in Society

According to Khalid (2005a), there is now further encouragement for women to assume an active role in public and private life. The development of the KSA has brought increased opportunities for women in both education and employment, within the constraints of Islamic mores. In 1960, the KSA government introduced a national education program for girls. By the mid-1970s, approximately half of all Saudi girls attended school—five years later, education was available to all girls. By 1980, there were six universities for women (Saudi MCI, 2006, p. 152), as will be further discussed in Chapter 2.

Women in the KSA currently play an active role in professions such as teaching, medicine, nursing, social work, banking, television, radio programming, computing and library work. In addition, Saudi women have always been active in business. The findings of a survey conducted in the KSA in 2004 suggest that Saudi women have a 34% stake in private business in Riyadh and 25.6% in Jeddah (The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2006). There are an estimated 5,000 businesswomen in Riyadh and 4,000 in Jeddah (Al-Sunbul et al., 2008).

1.5.5.7 Female Customs

Female attire reflects the religious beliefs and gender expectations of women and girls in the KSA. Clothing worn by girls at school reflects an image of girls’ conservatism, modesty and security. Islamic regulations, although similar to many other cultures where modest costume is concerned, are unique because they reflect the Muslim identity of morality (Al-Akeil, 2006). These regulations affect teachers’ and students’ uniforms and attire in schools. Female students wear conservative uniforms that consist of long navy blue tunics with white long-sleeved blouses underneath. Teachers wear dark coloured long skirts with long-sleeved blouses or shirts. Outside school, both educational staff and students wear the Abaya—a black cloak that loosely covers the entire body (Image 6).
In addition, educational staff and students cover their hair with scarves (Image 7) and their faces with the Niqab (Image 8). Once students enter school, they remove the Abaya, scarves and Niqab. Women in some regions, such as the Nejd region, are more conservative. They tend to wear black socks and black gloves in order to avoid attracting the attention of men. Islam seeks to protect individuals and society from awkward situations that involve the unnecessary intermingling between males and females that leads to natural temptation.
1.5.6 Cultural Influences

The culture and social environment of the classroom are intertwined. Social interaction among Muslims in general and Saudis in particular is mostly shaped by the instructions of the Holy Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (Hasan, 2005). Social interaction among Muslims and Arabs is marked by respect for age differences and modesty in speech and manner. According to Abou Elfadi (2006), social interactions between Saudi generations are often characterised by strict formality and the maintenance of good manners. Therefore, in the school setting, students are expected to respect adults and uphold good manners. For example, they never address older people by their names, and educational staff tend to be addressed with ‘teacher’ before their name. It is customary for students to address the gatekeeper and canteen ladies according to the names of their oldest sons—for example, the mother of Muhammad.

Islam encourages Muslim males and females to adopt certain characteristics designed for self-protection from natural temptations and mutual attractions between genders. One of these characteristics is that social interaction in the KSA is marked by strict gender segregation that is applied by the state and society, based on religious rules (Al-Kepaicy, 1990). Therefore, gender segregation is maintained in all aspects of life, including schools and universities. If male–female interaction is necessary—such as in work settings, colleges of medicine and shops—this is kept formal and strictly limited to the process of working, studying, buying and selling.

A second characteristic is avoiding eye contact, with males and females required to avoid direct eye contact and lower their gaze in modesty. This etiquette is based on the command of Allah to women: ‘And tell the believing women to lower their gaze’ (Ali, 2001, 24:31) and to men: ‘Tell
the believing men to lower their gaze and guard their private parts. That is pure for them. Indeed, Allah is acquainted with what they do’ (Ali, 2001, 24:30).

1.5.6.1 Music

Music is mentioned in this paper because the theme ‘Islamic Chants’ involves religious chants—a permissible form of music. The issue of singing is controversial to Muslims, whether with music accompaniment or not because of religious reasons (Al-Garadawi, 2006a). Most Saudi scholars permit singing only when it is not accompanied by a musical instrument and when the content is not prohibited (Al-Akeil, 2005). Therefore, songs with musical instruments are forbidden in KSA schools. The only musical instrument allowed is the tambourine because it was used in the era of the Prophet Muhammad when the people of Al-Madinah received the Prophet for the first time. Therefore, folk dances in the KSA are accompanied by tambourine.

1.5.6.2 Arabic Language

The first language of all participants in this study was Arabic, which was spoken fluently, and the second language was English. An explanation of Arabic is included in this section because it is essential to understand the similarities and differences of the alphabetic systems of the students’ first and second languages.

Interestingly, from the 5th century to the present day, poetry has been the most important form of literary expression in the Arab world (Selim, 1972). Poetry represents a powerful source of identity within Arab cultures where Arabic language used in rhymed structures. Arabs used poetry to praise their tribe in terms of courage and loyalty and to describe the beauty of their women, the speed of their horses and the patience of their camels (Jassem, 2000).

Since the beginning of Islam, Arabic has maintained an exceptional position, being read and chanted by millions of Muslims around the world (Fellman, 1973). Muslims greatly appreciate Arabic because they consider it the language of Allah. A study was conducted by Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi (1996b) to investigate the factors and domains that shape the status of Arabic and English in the KSA. They found that Saudis have an ideological and sentimental attachment to their Arabic language—they view Arabic as more expressive, beautiful, logical and sacred than
English. The official language of the KSA is Arabic, and this is the language of instruction of all subjects, except English. Students use the classical Arabic in writing and the Saudi dialect of Arabic in speaking. However, they are obliged to speak classical Arabic in classes of Arabic, which consist of six classes—reading, writing, grammar, dictation, composition and chants.

The reason for the flourishing of Arabic is inextricably linked with the rise of Islam and, more specifically, to Islam’s Holy Book, the Quran (Taha, 2008). Therefore, Arabs are sensitive to language changes. As a result, normative language academies have been established in several areas throughout the Arab world, including Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad and Amman, to create equivalent Arabic terms to represent Western ones (Chejne, 1969).

Arabic is a right-to-left alphabetic language (Coffman, 1995). It has 25 consonants and three long vowel letters, in addition to 12 diacritical marks, including three short vowels (Figure 1). This means that the short vowels are not a part of the alphabet instead, they are written as marks over or below the consonant and long vowels. Each consonant letter has a detached form and one to four attached forms. Letters are joined to create words, and diacritics are placed above or beneath a letter. In the early stages of learning, students learn to decode words with diacritical marks (Figure 2). When they master the word identification skills, they decode words without diacritical marks. Words in books, newspapers and magazines are normally printed without diacritical marks (Taha, 2008).

![Figure 1: Arabic Alphabet](Source: Verbix (2012))
There are two types of Arabic—written and spoken. Written Arabic serves as the standard written language of all Arab nations (Nasr, 1972). Arabs use a spoken form of written Arabic for radio and television news broadcasts. This form also serves as a general spoken language for Arabs who speak different dialects and for non-native speakers who are interested in learning Arabic (Bateson, 1972). Spoken or colloquial Arabic consists of dialects in different areas of the Arabic-speaking world, such as Saudi, Egyptian and Syrian dialects (Fishman, 1972). In addition, within one country, there can be many sub-dialects.

Arabic diglossia (two languages) is a major sociolinguistic and educational problem that faces Arabic-speaking countries. Many children and young adults feel linguistically insecure when they experience situations that require common acts of social communication and personal expression (Zughoul, 1980). Phonological, lexical and syntactic differences exist between the spoken and written forms of Arabic language (Kaye, 1972). From birth to school age, Arab children are exposed to the colloquial form at home and the standard form via television, cartoons, films and children’s books.

In essence, this study is set within a unique context that demands that religion and cultural factors be considered. Saudi culture is conservative and based on a strong religious foundation; therefore, it cannot be separated from Islamic religion. The government of the KSA is strict about protecting the religious heritage and Arabic identity of Saudis through education. Deepening the values of Islamic religion and strengthening respect for Arab nationalism are among the five fundamental characteristics of education in the KSA (Saudi MoE, 2005a).

Describing the influence of religion—particularly for female Muslims’ economic rights and roles in family and society, and Saudi customs and culture in terms of music and the Arabic language—is essential to understand the context of this study. Religion and culture affect
students’ speech, behaviour (teacher–student and student–student relationships) and appearance. They begin speaking with the name of Allah, behave modestly and wear conservative clothes, are required to be polite in class and respectful to teachers in Saudi classrooms, and males and females are educated separately.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

There are three major limitations that need to be identified as affecting this study:

1. School context research is new in the KSA; thus, scarce information is available about the Saudi school context because school-related research is limited. In addition, school leaders and teachers have little or no experience of being involved in research.

2. There were system constraints that affected the research. This study was originally designed as an action research study to be conducted over two cycles. However, it proved impossible to complete Cycle 2 because of the rigid rules of the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) for sponsorship. Sponsorship allows limited opportunities to complete classroom research in the KSA. During the course of the study, it was made apparent by the MoHE that, as a scholarship candidate, I was permitted to undertake only one trip to conduct this research, and this trip could only last four months. Consequently, and with little warning, I was forced to adjust my methodology to accommodate these changes to the rules. My methodology was subsequently adjusted from action research to a case study.

3. Ethical constraints related to respecting Islam and cultural exclusivity also affected this research. Strict rules relating to privacy restricted the use of video and recording devices in classrooms and interviews.

1.7 Organisation of the Study

The chapter established the context and highlighted some of the unique factors that affect the curriculum, the roles of teachers and students, and the pedagogy of the classroom. The following chapter examines in more detail the current status of teaching and learning in contemporary KSA classrooms. It is a more specific exploration of the current and traditional English speaking experience of the Saudi student.
Chapter 2: Speaking English in Saudi Classrooms

2.1 Overview

While the previous chapter examined the cultural, economic, geographic and religious contexts of schooling in the KSA, this chapter considers the more specific educational and historical context pertaining to teaching English as an FL. It is assumed that all KSA students of the same age begin from the same point; therefore, with the exceptions of physical education and home economics, the curricula for both males and females are the same. Instruction involves the whole class and teachers use the same textbooks, cover the same texts and activities, and follow the same teaching approaches with all students. When following whole-class instruction, those who have less language experience tend to be disadvantaged, while those who are independent tend to experience few challenges.

According to Al-Seghayer (2005), the curriculum departments at the central offices of the MoE undertake the tasks of planning, establishing and developing educational resources. To complete these tasks, the MoE relies on teachers’ suggestions, supervisors’ reports and the contributions of language researchers. According to Zaid (1993), although teachers are encouraged to submit recommendations, especially in terms of textbooks, these recommendations are largely not considered—possibly due to lack of academic knowledge about FL education. The MoE insists that school principals are responsible for administering their schools on a daily basis. The role of the teacher is seen as a transmitter of knowledge through teaching the content of the textbook to students.

This chapter sheds light on these current practices, as well as outlining the history of English FL (EFL) education and the development of English language (EL) curriculum. The first section of this case study describes the unique context of schooling, and the way this affects how English speaking classes are conducted.
2.2 General Education in the KSA

General education progressed slowly in the KSA until the MoE was established in 1953 (Lal & Al-Jundy, 2004). In the beginning of the implementation of the general education in the KSA, the MoE focused on males’ education regarding teacher training programs, curriculum, educational resources and school libraries (Saudi MoE, 1987). Although there was considerable resistance to female education in the KSA, the General Presidency of Girls Education (GPGE) (1984) was established in 1960. This focused only on females’ education in terms of teacher training programs, curricula, educational resources and school libraries. Hence, general education is relatively new for Saudis, particularly females. Education for females was later placed under the administration of the MoE in 2002 (Lal & Al-Jundy, 2004).

General education in the KSA consists of a two-year optional preschool education, a six-year compulsory elementary education, a three-year optional intermediate education (Grades 7, 8 and 9) and a three-year optional secondary education (Grades 10, 11 and 12) (Musleh, 1981). Although education is not compulsory in the KSA (except at the elementary level), the high rate of school enrolment (more than five million students in public education in 2010) shows that the majority of Saudis attend school beyond the basic level (Saudi MoE, 2005b).

After intermediate education, students attend either high schools or vocational schools (Al-Hegail, 1984). Students in high schools choose between arts or sciences. Their progress is determined by comprehensive written exams that are conducted twice each year, and supervised by the MoE.

According to Al-Saluum (1996), there is strict separation of the genders at all levels of education, with the exception of kindergarten, nursery school and some private lower elementary schools. In addition, the centralised educational system is applied to all levels of education for both males and females (Al-Sunbul et al., 2008).

In 2004, the Saudi MoE (2005a) introduced the 10-year Tatweer project with the aim of promoting significant quality improvement in education. Under this project, greater authority was given to schools, and principals became responsible for distributing school schedules; modifying
school parameters, such as the school schedule of quotas, rotation and testing; and evaluating the performance of teachers’ and other workers’ school activity (Saudi MoE, 1998). In addition, teachers’ roles became more active in both the teaching and learning processes—to some extent, in addition to the main curriculum, they are permitted to engage in extracurricular activities (Saudi MoE, 1990). With more policy authority, the principal’s role is proving to be more effective and supportive of teachers and students, while the teacher’s role appears to be more valuable in encouraging the learning processes (Saudi MoE, 1990).

2.3 Literacy Rate

In the era of King Abdulaziz (1932 to 1953), the KSA had a literacy rate of 20%; however, it has been persistent in its efforts to improve that figure (Oxford Business Group, 2010). According to the results of the demographic survey conducted by the Department of General Statistics (DGS) in the Ministry of Planning (MoP) (2007), the incidence of illiteracy among the Saudi population in 2007 was 13.7%, with 1.4% among 10 to 14 year olds, and the highest level of 73.9% in the age group of 65 and over. A considerable difference in the rate of illiteracy among the administrative regions of the KSA exists. The highest level of illiteracy for both genders is found in the Jizan region, with men rated 14.8% and women rated 31.6%. The lowest rate of illiteracy among males is in the Riyadh region (5.1%) (Ramady, 2010).

2.4 Female Education

Since the establishment of the GPGE in 1960, apart from the 39 private elementary schools, 15 girls’ primary schools were established in Riyadh, Makkah, Jeddah, Al-Taif, Dammam and Al-Madinah (Saudi MoE, 1988). These newly opened schools consisted of 127 classes for 5,180 students and 113 teachers. In 1963, the intermediate education for girls began with the establishment of classes attached to five elementary schools (GPGE, 2001). The first independent intermediate school was established in 1966 in Makkah (Saudi MoE, 1998).

Al-Thah’ar (2003) states that the percentage of women receiving an education has increased since the 1960s because the government has paid particular attention to girls’ education, and the number of girls’ schools has increased at a faster rate than boys’ schools. The report of the Centre
of Statistics in the MoE (2006) suggests that the total enrolment rate in 2006 for females was 36.1%, while the enrolment rate for males in the same year was 24.7%.

In 2009, an expert on girls’ education became the first female Minister in the KSA—Nora Al-Fayez was made the Deputy Education Minister in charge of a new department for female students (Ramady, 2010). According to the Saudi MoHE (2010), the KSA provides female students with one of the world’s largest scholarship programs for women (supported by the Tatweer project). In 2010, there were approximately 70,000 Saudi students living abroad and enrolled in higher education, 50% of which were females.

2.5 Challenges of Education in the KSA

The challenges facing the educational system in the KSA include the growing number of students, the changing nature of education and the inadequacies of the present education system to prepare students for a global future. The following sections discuss these challenges.

2.5.1 The Growing Number of Students

The first challenge facing the Saudi education system is the growing number of students, and the subsequent greater demands placed on the current education system (Saudi MoE, 2005a). Significant to education in the KSA is the fact that 41.9% of the population is in the age range of zero to 15 years (Al-Sha’lan, 2010), and this percentage is expected to increase in the coming years. According to Al-Sunbul et al. (2008), there is an urgent need to provide educational opportunities for students at various stages, especially at the primary level. This issue is considered to be a basic aim in itself that requires the expansion of the educational system and its programs. In addition, the quality of this education needs to be considered.

During 1981, 1990 and 2000, the number of schools, teachers (male and female) and students (male and female) in the primary, intermediate and secondary levels increased significantly (Table 1) (Centre of Statistics in MoE, 2006; DGS in MoP, 2007).
Table 1: Development of the Elements of General Education in 1981, 1990 and 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of schools</th>
<th>Number of teachers (male and female)</th>
<th>Number of students (male and female)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Primary level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>12,622</td>
<td>95,233</td>
<td>998,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>17,038</td>
<td>208,718</td>
<td>1,876,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>23,435</td>
<td>363,086</td>
<td>2,286,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The number of schools, teachers and students continued to increase in 2010. General Director Al-Batel stated that the public educational system in 2010 comprised 500,000 teachers and more than five million students (Al-Sha’lan, 2010). The annual increase in the number of students gives the KSA a high ratio of students to teachers. Providing more schools and qualified teachers is a considerable challenge facing the MoE.

2.5.2 The Changing Nature of Society and its Effect on Education

In the KSA, global industrial, technological and economic developments have influenced the transformation of the society’s needs and nature of the labour market. They impose various challenges on the Saudi educational system to successfully face international competition (Arani, 2004; Rassekh, 2001; Soubbotina & Sheram, 2000). This situation has resulted in increased demand for better and increased education. Countries with a rich culture, such as the KSA, are more challenged to achieve this aim, while maintaining traditional values (Saudi MoE, 2005a). Therefore, there is an urgent need in Saudi for a long-term plan to raise the standards of education and ensure the improvement of its outcomes, while still promoting Islamic and Arabic traditions and culture.

Another concern of the Saudi authorities is whether learning an FL may cause culture change, and whether English may be a threat to the Saudi identity and values by diluting the norms of behaviour (Al-Abed Al-Haq & Smadi, 1996a). However, research by Al-Abed Al-Haq and Smadi (1996a) concludes that English is not considered a threat to the Saudi national identity or religious commitment.
2.5.3 Constraints of the KSA Classroom

KSA classrooms operate according to a prescriptive curriculum. The constraints of the KSA classroom include the use of a single textbook, lack of student participation, rigid schedule, intensity of the curriculum, class size and fear of change. According to Dukhayil (2002), the Saudi curriculum also includes unnecessary repetition and duplication of information across different grades. A textbook for each grade contains as many lessons as teaching weeks; therefore, there is no consideration for remedial, supplementary or enriching activities. For example, a lesson of 45 minutes of English generally consists of activities to practise the four skills of reading, listening, speaking and writing. Teachers are expected to complete the materials prescribed for each lesson, and the homework from the previous lesson is checked.

The Saudi MoE insists on the adoption of one textbook for all subjects in all public schools. This strategy limits teachers’ and students’ creativity, and focuses on the mastery of content. Teachers are required to follow a rigid schedule; for example, in week four of the semester, students complete Unit 4. Teachers must complete the curriculum on time, irrespective of whether the lessons’ objectives have been achieved by students. As a result of this rigid curriculum and prescriptive pedagogy, the competency of students receives insufficient attention, including their competency in speaking English. Teachers justify eliminating speaking activities because students are not evaluated on their speaking; thus, speaking activities are viewed by most teachers as time consuming, less important and boring (pilot study).

In order to allow extra time to teach English, teachers can choose to undertake relief teaching (teach the classes of absent teachers) when it is available. However, this creates an extra workload for these relief teachers. Moreover, the times of these classes are not scheduled, so teachers have to tell their students to be prepared to have an extra English lesson daily. Students consider these classes extra work (personal experience).

Classes in Saudi public schools have 35 to 40 students. Traditionally, teachers stand at the front of the room, and students sit in parallel rows. Attempts have been made to change the Saudi teaching and learning environment from a traditional environment to be more interactive (Alam, 1986; Al-Hazmi, 2003); however, such attempts have not been particularly successful because Saudi teachers and students are confused and suspicious about the functions and effectiveness of
interactive classroom activities. They lack knowledge about alternative methods of teaching, and have no teacher training or experience in these alternative models (Dukhayil, 2002). In addition, they lack the confidence and knowledge to generate independent practices (Al-Hazmi, 2003).

King Abdullah’s project, Tatweer (2004 to 2014), is attempting to address the challenges that face education in the KSA (Saudi MoE, 2005a). For example, the units of work in each textbook were reduced from 14 to eight to allow students more time for understanding and consolidation. Many new schools have been established and the number of students in each class has been reduced from 40 to 30. In addition, there has been a notable improvement in the use of technology in Saudi public schools. In 2000, the National Committee for the English Language suggested the incorporation of computer-based instruction in the EFL curriculum (Saudi MoE, 2005b). At the time of conducting this study, the MoE had integrated resource centres and smart-board rooms, which include a variety of technological resources, in all public schools.

For continued reform in education, research strongly suggests that teaching and language learning strategies (LLS) should focus more on learning, thereby moving students from being passive recipients of information and services to being critical thinkers and lifelong learners (Cogan & Derricott, 2000; Torres, 2001). Through Tatweer, the MoE has embraced new perspectives on educational policy and has replaced educational goals, curricula, contents and methods with creative new approaches that are appropriate for the twenty-first century.

### 2.6 Speaking English in the KSA

English enjoys a high status in the KSA. It is the only FL taught in public education and universities, and is used in ministries, factories, hospitals, hotels and large companies (Al-Subahi, 1988). Little research information is available on the teaching of FLs in the KSA. Most Arabic books and websites are minimal and present information that is limited in content and accuracy. At the time of the research, the website of the Saudi MoE—a quality resource for educators, teachers and students—was hacked and was subsequently inaccessible.

English is the only FL taught in public upper primary school (Grades 4, 5 and 6), intermediate school and secondary school. It is also included in special education programs. English is taught
at all Saudi universities as either an elective subject or a major field of study (Al-Abed Al-Haq & Smadi, 1996a). Factories, hospitals, hotels and large companies, such as ARAMCO, Samarec, Dallah and Saudi Airlines, demand high proficiency in English as a requirement for appointment. They have established their own centres and programs to train staff and upgrade their workers’ levels of proficiency in English (Ibrahim, 1985).

Three English-language daily newspapers are published in the KSA: *Arab News*, *Daily Riyadh* and *Saudi Gazette*. One of the two national Saudi television stations, Channel 2, is an English channel that was established in 1982. An English radio channel and European language radio station transmit 24 hours a day (Baghdadi, 1985).

### 2.6.1 Teaching English at Saudi Public Schools

Teaching English in the KSA is centralised and controlled by the MoE (prior to the GPGE). English teachers at each grade are required to adhere to identical syllabus guidelines and timelines. Until the academic year for 2001/2002, English was a required subject for Grades 7 to 12 for both boys’ and girls’ schools. The English curriculum was introduced at the upper elementary level (Grades 4, 5 and 6) at the beginning of the academic year 2002/2003. It was introduced because the low English proficiency level of Saudi students was believed to be the result of limited English instruction prior to the intermediate and secondary levels. Since then, Saudi students have learnt English as a compulsory FL in Grade 4 and continue to do so throughout their schooling (Saudi MoE, 1982). Saudi students are required to study English for a total of nine years.

At all stages of schooling, students undertake four English classes per week (Ibrahim, 1985), each lasting 45 minutes. There are two 18-week semesters per year, comprised of 14 weeks of study, two weeks of revision and two weeks of exams. Of the total 180 days in the school year, 28 are designated for revision and 28 for exams. Students have 112 days of English instruction each year. Public school students are exposed to compulsory English classes for three hours each week. Approximately 30 minutes in total is dedicated to instruction in speaking English. By the time a student has reached Grade 12, 756 hours of English instruction and approximately 160 hours of English speaking have been completed (personal experience).
2.6.2 EL Learning Environment

The Arab environment is vastly different to the Western environment in terms of such variables as family, community, culture and religion. Saudi society stresses the importance of politeness in class and respect for teachers. In addition, classroom learning in the KSA adheres to a traditional teaching and learning model, in which the student is the receiver of information and the teacher is the imparter of knowledge. There is segregation in buildings between male and female students, and male and female schools have different designs. The physical appearance of classrooms is a traditional one, with desks arranged in parallel rows in front of the teacher’s desk (personal experience).

Public schools start at 7.00 am and end at 12.15 pm five days a week. There are seven periods in a school day, each consisting of 45 minutes (Encyclopaedia of International Education, 1985). There is a break of 30 minutes after the third period. Students remain in one classroom throughout the day, with the teachers rotating to different rooms. The Islamic calendar is followed by Saudi schools (personal experience).

2.6.2.1 English Teachers in the KSA

The KSA has a shortage of qualified English teachers. According to Al-Shabbi (1989), relying on unqualified English teachers has long been a problem. When the MoE was established in 1953, the government employed non-Saudi English teachers to meet the shortfall of qualified English teachers, with 1,300 English teachers recruited in 2001 (Al-Awad, 2002). Most of these recruited teachers come from Arab countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Syrian and Palestine. However, this strategy has not solved the continuing shortage of EFL teachers. Some of these imported teachers were not well trained and did not receive in-service education upon assuming their posts in schools. The government decided to ‘Saudise’ all EFL teachers, and was committed to employing an educational staff of only Saudis. In 1985, 95% of male and 33% of female teachers in public education were Saudis (Encyclopaedia of International Education, 1985). The increasing number of Saudi teachers has helped to ease, but not yet eliminate, the prospect of having suitable qualified teachers in public education (Al-Shabbi, 1989).
According to Al-Hazmi (2003), EFL teacher preparation programs in the KSA over the four decades before 2000 can be described as non-systematic and inadequate. EFL teachers graduate from the English departments of colleges of education, enrol in an intensive program in English for a semester, then join a four-year academic English program. They study a number of courses, such as English linguistics, phonology, morphology and syntax, teaching methodology, educational psychology, sociology of education, evaluation, school administration and curriculum studies (Al-Hazmi, 2003). In addition, they teach for a semester in an intermediate or secondary school under the supervision of an advisor in their last semester. They graduate with a Bachelor in English literature. However, after graduating, many teachers lack essential English skills, particularly the ability to speak the language (Saudi MoHE, 2010). As non-native speakers, Saudi teachers face the challenges of teaching pronunciation, overcoming the perception of inferiority, and seeking to choose authentic oral resources.

In order to further address the problem of the shortage of FL teachers, the students of colleges of arts are hired by the MoE to teach English in public schools. These students are graduates with Bachelors in English Literature or English–Arabic Translation (Saudi MoHE, 2010). They have no exposure to teaching methodology or practical training in teaching (Zaid, 1993). Therefore, most English teachers are not qualified to teach English. They lack subject knowledge, language proficiency and competence in FL teaching methodology (Al-Ahaydib, 1986). Cross (1995) stresses that placing untrained teachers into classrooms to meet the increased demand or to expand access to schooling affects the quality of teaching and learning, the character of education and the education budget.

It is ironic that the MoE has worked towards improving and updating the EL curricula since 1991, but lags behind in doing the same for EFL teacher education programs (Beare & Slaughter, 1993; Jan, 1984; Mazawi, 1999; Wiseman & Alromi, 2003). The gap between the content of teacher education programs and the needs of classrooms continues to widen (Sheshsha, 1982). In-service education programs for teachers are conducted on a limited scale via the local education departments across the Kingdom (Al-Qurashi, 2002). The Tatweer project was introduced in 2004 as a comprehensive approach to address the issues associated with the lack of teacher qualifications.
2.6.2.2 Students

Saudi students are taught to be self-effacing in school and in public; thus, speaking aloud to another student—particularly in a new language—is very intimidating for most individuals. Saudi society values politeness in class and respect for teachers. For example, students do not volunteer information unless asked, they refer to their teachers by stating ‘teacher’ followed by the teacher’s name, and they stand up when greeting and speaking with their teachers. This applies particularly to girls because female students are required to be even more polite (personal experience).

Teachers use extrinsic motivation—that is, they grant grades to encourage Saudi students to learn English. Intrinsic motivation is non-existent. Students usually do not pay serious attention to learning English because there is no immediate application. They tend to devote little effort to achieving the minimal grade required to pass. They memorise vocabulary, grammatical rules and passages of composition because that is what is required for their final exams (personal experience).

2.6.3 EL Curriculum in KSA Public Schools

The curriculum for English as an FL in the KSA has undergone a number of changes. There is one curriculum for Grades 4 to 12, with each grade having a specific workbook related to this. Since beginning teaching English at Saudi public schools, it has been taught with no defined objectives (Al-Hajailan, 1999). In 1960, the initial curriculum—with the textbook entitled *Living English for the Arab World* (Allen & Cooke, 1961)—was based on the grammar translation method (Al-Seghayer, 2005). Under this curriculum, teachers relied heavily on explaining grammatical structures, memorisation and vocabulary instruction (Al-Ahaydib, 1986). Further, teachers often used Arabic to teach English, or depended on translations.

In 1980, the *Living English for the Arab World* curriculum was replaced with *Saudi Arabian Schools English* at the intermediate and secondary levels (Field, 1980). In 1990, the Curriculum Department at the MoE, in collaboration with some EFL specialists from King Fahd University, replaced the previous curriculum with *English for Saudi Arabia* (Directorate of Curriculum, 1995) to teach English at the intermediate and secondary levels. This curriculum was developed
around four major components: objectives, content, teaching methods and student evaluation techniques. This curriculum had specific expectations and a more demanding focus on the four language skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) (Abu Nabah, 1986).

The current curriculum is *Say it in English* (General Direction of Curricula [GDC], 2007/2008), which was implemented in the school year 2003/2004. These series of textbooks were established for public intermediate schools (Grades 7, 8 and 9), with a textbook for each semester. According to Almulhim (2001), there is a lack of inclusion of some target elements of culture, such as lifestyle, family orientation and the names of places and people. In addition, the textbooks fail to produce students who can undertake basic conversations or comprehend simple oral or written messages. This textbook is discussed in detail in the following section.

In order to address the inadequacies of *Say it in English*, in 2011, the MoE replaced this textbook with a more developed textbook, entitled *Lift Off* (McIver & Allenby, 2009), to be taught at intermediate public schools. The lessons and topics were designed to address a variety of issues, meet students’ needs, and be more interesting and easy to understand. They discuss local, Islamic and international or target cultures. Particular emphasis is placed on literacy skills, and students are encouraged to communicate with each other in English.

In summary, the curriculum for English as an FL in the KSA has undergone a number of changes. With each successive curriculum, the government has sought to improve the quality of FL education in terms of interest, content and relevance.

### 2.7 Background to the Curriculum

The curriculum in place when this study was conducted was *Say it in English* (GDC, 2007/2008) (Figure 3). There is a textbook for each semester consisting of eight units—six main units and two revision units. Each unit contains four lessons related to one topic or theme. Lesson 4 of each unit is revision of what was covered in the whole unit. Each lesson occupies two pages and is taught over two days—that is, students work with the materials of each topic as a unit for eight classes.
The eight units are organised according to functions (speaking), grammar, listening phonics and reading/writing (Figure 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Listening Phonics</th>
<th>Reading / Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Good Morning</td>
<td>Greeting people; introducing yourself; asking for phone numbers.</td>
<td>Indefinite articles: a / an</td>
<td>Listening to numbers, sounds &amp; words.</td>
<td>Writing numbers and letters of the alphabet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>My Classroom</td>
<td>Naming classroom objects; giving classroom instructions.</td>
<td>Singular &amp; plural nouns; demonstrative pronouns; this, that, these &amp; those</td>
<td>Listening to letters &amp; words; listening to instructions.</td>
<td>Writing letters of the alphabet &amp; words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>My School</td>
<td>Describing locations at school; asking about school occupations; asking about locations at school.</td>
<td>Verb “be” affirmative statements; yes / no questions with verb “be”; short answers.</td>
<td>Listening to people talk about their jobs; listening to riddles and numbers.</td>
<td>Writing sentences, numbers, questions &amp; short answers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Review of Units 1 - 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4: Plans of Student’s Textbook

Each textbook of the series is accompanied by a teacher guidebook, workbook and cassette. The teacher guidebook, which is tightly organised, guides the teacher step by step in the effective use of the textbook and the workbook, which comprise of homework activities for each lesson. Moreover, it contains suggestions for effective teaching strategies, as well as scripted questions to ask students at specific points in dialogue and reading passages. It provides answers to the questions of the textbook and workbook. The cassette, which includes all the recorded listening
resources in the textbook, has been recorded by native speakers. The audio texts are considered a model that the students should imitate as closely as possible (personal experience).

*Say it in English* was designed to encourage students to communicate using meaningful English sentences and to demonstrate accurate grammatical structures. In addition, it aims to develop learners’ skills mainly in interactional speaking and, to some extent, in transactional speaking when exchanging information. The introduction of this document contains some information in Arabic for students about English, and some advice with pictures about effective LLS (Figure 5). There is also advice for parents on how to encourage their daughters to learn English by supporting them and providing an effective learning environment.

![Figure 5: Information in Arabic for Students](image)

The features of this document include communicative activities, such as role-play activities and comparison and spelling games around themes that reflect Arab and Muslim culture and customs. Students are encouraged to use transactional speaking when exchanging information, but there are no oral presentations. Specifically as it relates to this study, the spoken syllabus of both English Grade 7 textbooks (Semesters 1 and 2) has numerous activities involving speaking and conversation. It comprises 242 activities regarding grammar, vocabulary, listening, reading and writing. Lesson 1 (Unit 5) of the Semester 1 textbook of Grade 7 provides an example (Figure 6).
Lesson 1 shows the typical format followed by sentences (Figure 7). Similar to all the conversational activities of the textbook, it is recommended that students first listen to the conversation through a recording, then practise the conversation individually and silently while listening, and then again practise the conversation in pairs after listening. The students have to answer some questions aimed at encouraging individual opinion, such as: ‘A family gathering is a blessing. Why?’
In the speaking activity, students are encouraged to work in pairs to ask about their partner’s family. Two examples of this kind of question are as follows:

- How many brothers do you have?
- What are their names?

It is assumed that the spoken syllabus encourages building communication skills through question and answer drills between teacher and student regarding the students’ attitudes, opinions and behaviours (personal experience).

The teacher directs the lessons, and the lessons are presented through short dialogues specific to grammatical activities, such as filling the gaps in sentences to form complete sentences, and selecting from multiple choices. The questions and answers are structured and predictable. There is often only one correct, predetermined answer (Zaid, 1993). Within this teaching method, students are not exposed to authentic spoken English. Emphasis is placed on teaching the content of the lesson and mastering the language, rather than on developing communicative competence. Saudi teachers are often confused because they lack the confidence and knowledge to generate
independent practice; subsequently, they frequently revert to a superficial demonstration of teaching through restricted pair and group work activities.

2.8 Conclusion

To conclude, general education progressed slowly in the KSA until the MoE was established in 1953, and female education began in 1960. Education in the KSA has five fundamental characteristics: an emphasis on Islam, deepening the spirit of loyalty and pride for the country, strengthening respect for Arab nationalism, a centralised educational system, and separate education for men and women. The challenges facing the Saudi educational system include the growing number of students, the changing nature of education and the inadequacies of the present educational system.

English enjoys a high status in the KSA, being the only FL taught in public education. However, relying on unqualified and inexperienced English teachers has long been a problem. The curriculum for English has undergone a number of changes in the attempt to improve the quality of FL education in terms of interest, content and relevance. In 2004, the 10-year Tatweer project was introduced with the aim of promoting significant quality improvement in education and addressing the challenges that face education in the KSA.
Chapter 3: Literature Review

3.1 Overview

This chapter reviews six relevant themes pertinent to the development and implementation of an English speaking curriculum designed for Saudi classrooms. These themes relate not only to decisions about content and pedagogy, but also to the specific nature of the learners involved—female adolescents. The themes include understanding FL learning, speaking an additional language, strategies and issues relevant to the FL classroom, the nature of the learner (particularly adolescent learners) and gender considerations for the FL classroom.

Interaction, transaction and performance are three types of speaking functions evident in the FL classroom. Each has a specific form and purpose, and requires different teaching approaches. Fluency-based activities and accuracy-based activities are two broad types of speaking activities that play an important role in encouraging students to communicate in an FL. However, irrespective of the approach, learning style or strategy adopted, the nature of the learner is a crucial consideration. Inhibition, embarrassment, resistance and reluctance are just some of the factors that need to be considered, especially in relation to adolescent learners, and girls in particular. This chapter investigates FLs in terms of teaching, learning and the learner.

3.2 Foreign Language Learning

Foreign language learning (FLL) refers to learning a language that is not native to the society. The language plays no major role in the community and is learnt only in the classroom, such as English learnt by Arabs in the KSA. In contrast, the term ‘second language’ (SL) is far from clear and has been given different interpretations by different researchers. According to Ellis (2006), SL refers to a language that is a native to the society and plays an institutional and social role in the community. For example, English is the SL for Arabs learning English in Australia. Ellis (1994) suggests the term ‘additional language’ be used in place of SL to refer to any language learned in addition to a person’s first language; thus, ‘additional language’ is used in this study.
There is confusion between SL learning (SLL) and FLL. According to Bely-Vroman (1989), the distinction between FLL and SLL is significant because there are radical differences in what is learnt, how it is learnt, and which sources are used to learn. For example, when learning a language in a country where the language is native and plays a significant role in the community, the language and its culture dominate the process of acquiring, as well as learning, the language (Mackey & Gass, 2005). According to Krashen (1981), the term ‘learning’ refers to the conscious learning of language rules, while the term ‘acquisition’ is used for the unconscious internalisation of knowledge. Krashen’s definition is applied in this study. In addition to hearing the SL outside the home, it pervades the learner’s home through television and radio—this is a major difference between an SL and FL (Di Biase, 2008; Fromkin, Blair & Collins, 1999; Gass & Selinker, 2008; Mackey, 1999; Myers-Scotton, 2006; Saville-Troike, 2012). For example, it is much easier for an Indian to learn both Hindu and his or her local language because he or she is likely to be immersed in both languages in different ways on a daily basis (Bely-Vroman, 1989).

3.2.1 Learning an Additional Language

It is believed that there is a critical period for learning an additional language (Harley & Wang, 1997), and two assumptions underpin this belief. The first is that, if there is a critical period for acquiring one’s first language (L1), then it is logical that the same is the case for acquiring L2. The second assumption is that older learners may be unable to attain native-like proficiency if they begin learning after a certain age (Krashen, 1982). The Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) confirms that there is a sensitive period in a person’s life after which language acquisition becomes impossible (Birdsong, 2009). The basis for this hypothesis is the fact that the brain reaches its full development by puberty, and language acquisition becomes extremely difficult after puberty (Lightbrown & Spada, 2006).

The research of Patkowski (1990), Johnson and Newport (1991) and Moyer (2004) provide considerable evidence of maturational constraints and a sensitive period for learning an additional language. However, the precise limits of the critical and sensitive periods and the language features that are influenced by the critical periods are unclear (Kennedy, 2006; Nikolov & Djigunovic, 2006). According to the CPH, learning an additional language should occur within a critical period, extending from early infancy until puberty, to achieve the best results. Patkowski
(1990) and Johnson and Newport (1991) explain that starting after age six appears to make it impossible for many learners to achieve native-like competence, no matter how motivated they might be or how many opportunities they might have.

In contrast, according to Hatch (1983); McLaughlin (1986); Singleton (1989) and DeKeyser, Alfi-Shabtay and Ravid (2010), the data on the maturational constraints are mixed and ambiguous. They conclude that some learners attain native-like proficiency despite starting to learn an additional language after the closure of the sensitive periods. Long (1990) asserts that these studies are merely subjective reports of individuals, and that learning competence is not easily measured. Long claims that these studies are based on impressionistic judgements and inappropriate data from inadequate samples. In short, the critical age for language learning continues to be debated among educators.

The only conclusive evidence for the CPH with regard to the language features influenced by the critical periods when learning an additional language relates to phonology (Herschensohn, 2007). Most learners who have shown great ability to acquire an additional language have not been able to overcome their foreign accents. Nikolov and Djigunovic (2006) claim that only children can attain a native-like accent in an additional language.

However, Meise (2011) hypothesises that there is growing evidence that maturational constraints in learning an additional language are not restricted to phonology. Native-like morphology and syntax are possible only for those beginning before age 15. However, Ellis (1985), Flege (1987), Major (1987), Snow (1987), Genesee (1988), Slavoff and Johnson (1996) and Abu-rabia and Kehat (2004) reject the idea that ‘the younger the better’ when learning an additional language. Similar to L1 development, these researchers believe that adults learn the morphology and syntax of the additional language better and faster than younger students because they can read and codify patterns. In addition, they use a greater range of techniques in language learning. For example, they can use memory tricks, such as mnemonic strategies, to sustain newly gained information. Moreover, they are able to integrate their new language with their already-learnt experience.
3.2.2 The Adult FL Learner

According to Fromkin, Rodman, Hyams, Collins and Amberber (2005), there are many reasons for adults to learn a FL. They learn for professional purposes, for everyday life, to be part of another culture, for reading, for enjoyment, as a challenge, for family reasons and for international communication. The variation in goals is one of the fundamental characteristics of adult FLL (Bely-Vroman, 1989). This variation in aims follows from the hypothesis that adult FL acquisition is a type of general problem solving. Setting goals is the main characteristic of cognitive models involving general problem solving. Accordingly, different people will view the problem to be solved in different ways, and will establish different goals in a particular field. For example, they may choose either to focus on communicative needs, grammatical correctness, vocabulary size or all of these factors together. Different goals require setting different sub-goals, perhaps involving different LLS. Consequently, there is considerable variation among FL learners in degrees of attainment, even with consistent age, exposure and instruction, both in the course of learning and in strategies of learning (Saville-Troike, 2012).

Bely-Vroman (1989) identifies nine characteristics of adult FLL: lack of success, general failure, variation in goals, variation in success, course and strategy, fossilisation, indeterminate intuition, importance of instruction, negative evidence and the role of affective factors. The most significant characteristic of adult FLL is lack of success. There is a general failure to achieve a native-like accent, to use grammar perfectly, and to achieve complete understanding. Temple (2005) confirms that learning a language with only general cognitive strategies is impossible because the learner already has knowledge of one language and a powerful system of general abstract problem-solving skills.

Bely-Vroman (1989) notes that FL learners reach a certain stage of learning—labelled ‘a stage short of success’—where they are permanently stable in language learning. Birdsong (2009) calls this phenomenon ‘fossilisation’. This fossilisation is observed when learners are able to communicate successfully with others, even when their grammar is unlike that of native speakers. According to Gold (2006) and Gass and Mackey (2012), most advanced non-native speakers have some confusion in grammar.
Bely-Vroman (1989) stresses that instruction plays a major role in FLL. Systematic, organised and controlled practice is recommended. However, the efficacy of instruction is difficult to test because of variables such as individual variation, conscious learning and the quality of instruction. Despite these variables, Temple (2005) and Colville-Hall and O’Connor (2006) demonstrate that quality instruction does contribute greatly to FLL.

Teachers and learners of FL agree that feedback is necessary, and correction is particularly helpful for language learning (Bely-Vroman, 1989). The teachers’ role as the diagnoser or corrector of errors is to be carefully considered. A careful policy is required to decide what, when and how to correct (Norris, Davis, Sinicrope & Watanabe, 2009).

Finally, general adult skill acquisition is highly influenced by personality characteristics, such as motivation, anxiety, attitude, socialisation, self-image and ego (Nakata, 2006; Reid, 2007; Wlodkowski, 2008). MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) found that negative experiences during speaking activities cause the greatest anxiety for students. Building learners’ confidence in language learning, particularly in speaking, is a significant motive for them to succeed in learning the target language (Kelly & Watson, 1986; Moller, 1993). Learner confidence cannot be enhanced without the teacher’s support, which enables them to build confidence in their own ability and encourages them to achieve their goals (Sudharsan, 2006). In addition, a teacher is also a factor giving students positive or negative attitudes towards language learning (Wiriyachitra, 2003). Moreover, Prodromou and Clandfield (2006) view enthusiasm as the key to success, and the ‘presence’ of the teacher can inspire enthusiasm in learners.

Dornyei (2001) suggests some strategies to be followed by teachers to promote students’ confidence:

- Inform the learner about the learning and performance requirements and the assessment criteria: Saetan (1991) states that self-confident learners tend to choose ways to self-check their learning, instead of relying on someone else to do so.
- Provide challenging and meaningful opportunities for successful learning: Gander (2006) argues that many individuals appear most satisfied and successful when they have gained at least the independent or fluent levels of proficiency, where they feel confident in their work.
• Link learning success to personal responsibility: For example, the teacher can provide positive feedback to the learner about his or her efforts to learn.
• Encourage motivation and attitudes that reduce anxiety: To deal with a lack of confidence, the teacher can prepare students for new and unexpected situations by asking them to write down what they want to say, and then read it aloud. This helps them speak more correctly, and can give them the confidence to speak without reading their notes.

Krashen (1985) and Lujan and DiCarlo (2006) claim that input is essential for FLL. First, input must be understood and sufficient, and the necessary grammar must be automatically provided. The teacher’s main role is to ensure that students receive comprehensible input. Second, students build competence through comprehensible input. Gass and Selinker (2008) question how to define levels of knowledge, and how to know whether the quantity of input is sufficient or not.

It appears that FL learners do experience a significant shortage of opportunities to learn the FL, especially in countries where the language is not spoken and in classes that meet only a few hours each week for one or two years (Bely-Vroman, 1989). Additional issues arise when teachers do not speak the language well.

Affective factors such as attitude, anxiety, competitiveness and other emotional responses can help or hinder language learning (Church, 2006; Gass & Selinker, 2008; McKay & Wong, 1996; Norton, 2000). For example, when a student is tired, dispirited, tense or angry, a ‘filter’—as suggested by Krashen (1985)—works as a sliding barrier and prevents the processing of input. A learner who has generally negative attitudes towards learning a language will have a high affective filter, and the task of the teacher will be considerably difficult (UNESCO, 2002b). This highlights the role of the teacher in creating beneficial conditions for language learning, and balancing personality differences by ensuring an equal share of attention and opportunity to contribute.

3.2.3 L1 Interference

L2 acquisition is strongly influenced by the learner’s L1; however, researchers disagree about the extent and nature of the effect of L1 on learning L2. Their disagreement is based on examining L2 acquisition psychologically. The role of L1 was first linked to transfer theory and behaviourism,
which views L2 acquisition as a process of forming habits (Ellis, 2006). The association of a particular response with a particular stimulus shapes a habit. According to this theory, old habits get in the way of learning new habits. Any two languages may have similarities and differences, and an error can occur in L2 because the learner will transfer elements from L1 into L2. The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) was developed by Ellis (2006) in order to raise awareness of the areas of difficulty that learners may experience in FLL. Based on this hypothesis, Ellis concludes that the errors caused by L1 can be minimised.

The CAH was based on the idea that the similarities between L1 and L2 facilitate learning, while the differences create learning difficulties. However, Kleinmann (1977) proves the opposite. He noted in his study that, despite the absence of the progressive tense of verbs in Arabic, Arab learners learnt the progressive tense of verbs in English very well. He claims that frequent use of the progressive in English may be the motive that encourages an Arab learner to recognise the structure more easily than other structures. Ringbom (1987) and Meise (2011) support the idea that sometimes differences between L1 and L2 make learning easier.

In Ellis’s (2006) research, a number of studies were conducted to examine the validity of the CAH. The research suggests that many errors predicted by the CAH did not occur, and many errors that were not predicted did occur. Based on the findings of these studies, the importance of L1 was validated. In addition, the consequence of theoretical attacks on the validity of behaviourism helped create a ‘crisis’ in the CAH that led to a re-examination of the effect of L1 on L2.

This re-examination took two forms. First, the CAH was modified to consider avoidance, the degree of similarity between items of L1 and L2 where interference can take place, and the multi-factor nature of learner error (Ellis, 2006). The difficulty suggested by the CAH might be considered avoidance instead of error. For instance, Schachter (1974) investigated the usage of relative clauses in different languages, and found that Chinese and Japanese learners, whose first languages contain relative clauses that differ from those in English, made few errors. In contrast, Iranian and Arab learners, whose first languages are similar to English in relative clause structure, made more errors. This contradicts the CAH; however, Schachter concludes that the Chinese and Japanese students made fewer attempts at using relative clauses in the first place; therefore, they made fewer errors. This means that avoiding using relative clauses leads to fewer
errors. In another study by Bertkau (1974), it was found that Japanese students scored lower on
the comprehension of relative clauses than did Spanish learners. This shows that the learner’s L1
influences both the production and reception of L2. Although the CAH might fail to predict
production errors, it might still be successful in predicting comprehension errors and avoidance
of structures.

In addition, the CAH was modified to consider the degree of similarity between the elements of
L1 and L2 where interference can occur. The need for some kind of similarity between L1 and L2
does not contradict transfer theory. Interference will occur in certain contexts where there are
similarities. The task of L2 research is to provide specific details on how these similarities are
measured in order to predict or accurately explain when interference takes place. This is a
complex task because it requires balancing psychological and linguistic factors—such a task is
unfamiliar to traditional contrastive analysis (Ellis, 2006).

Finally, the CAH was modified to consider the multi-factor nature of learner error. There are
three factors involved in L2:

1. universal factors, such as those relating to the universal way in which natural languages
   are recognised
2. specific factors of the learner’s L1
3. specific factors of the L2.

The second role of L1 in L2 acquisition is shifting from behaviourism to cognition. The CAH
was integrated into a cognitive framework by dealing with interference as a strategy for
communicating when there were insufficient L2 resources. Kellerman (1979) attempted to
investigate the transfer from L1 to L2 within a cognitive domain, where a learner was seen as
making decisions about choosing the appropriate form and functions of L1 to be used in L2.
More recently, interest in the CAH has shifted to reflect current developments in linguistics that
emphasise more subtle uses of language. This development is known as ‘contrastive pragmatics’
(Gass & Selinker, 2008).

The learner’s L1 is an important factor of L2 acquisition. However, it is not the only factor and
may not be the most important. The L1 is a resource of knowledge that learners will use both
consciously and subconsciously to help them shift the L2. When and how this resource is used
depends on linguistic, psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic factors, such as the learner’s stage of
development and the type of language use. In addition, L1 has a significant influence on L2 phonology. This influence was considered negative in traditional contrastive analysis. If L2 acquisition is viewed as a developmental process, then the L1 can be viewed as a contributing factor to this development that will become less powerful as the learner’s proficiency grows (Gass & Selinker, 2008).

### 3.3 Speaking an Additional Language

Verbal communication (speaking) is a complex task that demands the achievement of grammatical structure, vocabulary, communicative skills, intonation and stress, as well as background knowledge (Verderber, Verderber & Sellnow, 2012). According to Levelt (1989), speaking an additional language involves four processes. The first step in speaking is conceptualisation, where planning the message content takes place. Background knowledge about the topic and genre plays an important role in this phase. The second step involves formulation, where the speaker tries to find the words and phrases to express meaning and prepare sound patterns. The interference of L1 occurs in this step. The third step involves motor control of the articulatory organs, such as the lips, tongue, teeth, alveolar palate, velum, glottis, mouth cavity and breath—this step is called ‘articulation’. The final step is self-monitoring, through which the speaker identifies his or her mistakes and self-corrects them. These processes are performed automatically in L1, while, in L2, it is difficult to pay attention to each stage of speech production. In addition, it is more difficult to organise ideas and find words in L2 than in L1.

### 3.3.1 Functions of Speaking and Implications for Teaching

The systemic functional linguistics approach has been described as a functional semantic approach to language that explores how people use language in different contexts, and how language is structured for use as a semiotic system (Halliday & Webster, 2009). According to Eggin (2004), language cannot be good or bad—rather, it is appropriate or inappropriate to the context of use. Language function (what it is used for) is often more important than language structure (how it is composed).
Several attempts have been made to classify the functions of speaking in interaction. Brown and Yule (1983), Cutting (2002), Partington (2006), Andrews (2006) and Bilbrough (2007) distinguish between the human interactional functions of speaking that serve to establish and maintain social relations, and the transactional functions used to exchange information. Speech that does not belong to interactional functions or transactional functions is considered a performance function (Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2010; Nation & Newton, 2009). Each kind of speaking—speaking as interaction, speaking as transaction and speaking as performance—has a certain form and function and requires different teaching approaches. These teaching approaches are explained below.

Speaking as interaction refers to what normally is meant by ‘conversation’, such as exchanging greetings and engaging in talk (Table 2) (Partington, 2006). The focus is more on the speaker and how the speaker wishes to present himself or herself.

**Table 2: Features and Skills of Speaking as Interaction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has a primarily social function</td>
<td>Opening and closing conversations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occurs in conversational meetings</td>
<td>Choosing topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be formal or casual, depending on the circumstances</td>
<td>Making small-talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflects relationships among speakers</td>
<td>Using personal language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflects the speaker’s identity</td>
<td>Turn taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflects degrees of politeness</td>
<td>Interrupting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employs many common words</td>
<td>Reacting to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is constructed coherently</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Partington (2006)

In classroom practice, teaching speaking as interaction is very difficult because interactional speech is complex and may not be a priority for all learners (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). In a situation that requires speaking for interaction, some students can feel awkward and at a loss for words. They feel inept at presenting a good image of themselves and sometimes avoid situations that require this type of speaking (Baker & Westrup, 2003).

According to Green, Christopher and Lam (1990) and Bilbrough (2007), providing examples embedded in everyday language dialogues is an effective way to promote interactional speaking at school. These dialogues can serve to model the skills of interactional speaking. For example,
when practising their responses to what others say, teachers provide students with a dialogue in which listener reactions—such as ‘Really?’, ‘Is that right?’ and ‘That is interesting’—are omitted. Students work in pairs to add these reactions to the dialogue, practise the dialogue and then practise a different dialogue, this time adding their own reactions.

Speaking as transaction refers to situations in which the focus is primarily on what is said or achieved (Andrews, 2006). Accuracy may not be a priority, as long as information is successfully communicated or understood (Table 3). Transactions occur among people when obtaining goods or services, such as checking into a hotel, buying something in a shop or ordering food from a menu in a restaurant. The message is significant in such situations, and making oneself understood clearly and accurately is paramount, while the participants’ interaction socially with each other is of lesser importance.

Burns (1998) defines another form of speaking as transaction called ‘situations’, in which the focus is on giving and receiving information, such as asking someone for the time or for directions on the street, classroom group discussions, problem-solving activities, and class activities during which students work together.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Features and Skills of Speaking as Transaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Features</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The message is the central focus, not the participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants employ communication strategies to be understood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent questions, reports and comprehension checks are included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There may be negotiation and digression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic accuracy is not as important</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Andrews (2006)

In classroom practice, teaching speaking as transaction is easily planned because current communicative resources are suitable for group activities, information-gap activities and role-play activities (Nation & Newton, 2009). These activities encourage practising how to converse for sharing, how to obtain information and how to employ transactions, and include ranking activities, values clarification activities, brainstorming and simulations. Tsang and Wong (2002)
suggest that group discussion activities can be initiated by having students work in groups to prepare a short list of controversial statements for others to think about. Groups then exchange statements and discuss them.

Speaking as a performance refers to public speaking that transmits information before an audience, such as public announcements and speeches. Martínez-Flor and Usó-Juan (2010) note that speaking as performance involves distinctive features and skills (Table 4). In contrast to speaking as interaction or transaction, speaking as performance tends to be in the form of monologue, rather than dialogue; uses a written language, rather than a conversational language by including an introduction (speech of welcome) and a conclusion; and is often evaluated according to its effect on the listener (Gillian & Yule, 1983).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Features and Skills of Speaking as Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Features</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Often in the form of monologue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is a focus on both the message and audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Form and accuracy are important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Language is more like written language, which has certain organisation and sequence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In classroom practice, teaching speaking as performance requires different teaching strategies (Brown, 2006; Hayton, 2005; Richards, 1990). It involves providing examples or models of speeches, oral presentations, and speaking classroom activities. Maehr (1984), Ames (1992) and Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) claim that success in mastering a new language depends on the extent to which students engage adaptively in classroom learning tasks. There are two kinds of in-class speaking activities: fluency-based activities and accuracy-based activities.

### 3.3.2 Speaking Activities

Speaking activities play an important role in encouraging students to speak a language. By using developed communicative activities, learners can participate in purposeful communication and
improve the accuracy and fluency of their interactions. It is suggested that both accuracy and fluency-based activities should be used in class (Cutting, 2002).

Building ease and confidence in students enables them to produce language both fluently and accurately (Harmer, 2001). Building the learner’s confidence in language learning, particularly in speaking, is a significant motivation for a learner to succeed in learning the target language. Fluency-based activities and accuracy-based activities are two broad types of speaking activities, as described in detail below.

3.3.2.1 Fluency-based Activities

Fluency is the process of performing speech automatically by using suitable words, connecting the words to each other to form sentences, connecting the sentences together, and maintaining ideal pronunciation and suitable intonation (Nunan, 1999). According to Baker and Westrup (2003), fluency speaking activities can be noisy; however, there is a difference between ‘naughty noise’, when students are getting out of control, and ‘busy noise’, when groups and pairs are talking at the same time. According to Nation and Newton (2009), some controlled activities play a significant role in motivating students to speak and communicate fluently. These activities are as follows:

i. Free discussion activities: These activities encourage students to deal with different topics by expressing their opinions and experiences. Gibbons (2002) identifies some examples of discussion activities as describing pictures, finding differences between pictures, finding things in common, creating shopping lists and solving problems. The role of the teacher in such activities is essential to encourage participation from all students. From time to time, teachers may need to lead the discussion.

ii. Role-play activities: These activities involve imagining oneself or someone other than oneself in a situation outside the classroom (Lightbrown & Spada, 1990). Such activities begin with basic dialogue and go through different stages to end up with sophisticated speech. Role-play activities are often preferred by students because they are simple and interesting (Hedge, 2000). In addition, role-play is best used to describe varied situations, feelings and relationships (Ur, 1996).

iii. Gap activities: These activities are considered effective methods to practise speaking and collect information using the target language (Bygate, 2001). Such activities motivate
students to work in groups to search for data that are unknown by other groups. Then all
groups practise speaking by sharing the information they have collected.

3.3.2.2 Accuracy-based Activities

Accuracy-based activities require accuracy in the learner’s output in terms of grammatical
structure, phonological features, conversational scheme, communicative function and time
sequencers. In order to have accurate production, learners need to experience contextualised
practice, the personalisation of language, the social use of language and building confidence
(Harmer, 2001). These are described as follows:

i. Contextualised practice aims to make clear the link between linguistic form and
communicative function. This means finding a situation in which a structure is commonly
used (Hedge, 2000). Stringer (1998) examined the effects of everyday life performance on
English-speaking college students who were enrolled in first- and second-year Spanish
classes. The study revealed that the everyday life performance of Spanish is successful in
training the eyes, ears and tongues of beginner FL students. It enables them to achieve
language accuracy in a short time.

ii. Personalising language enables students to express their own ideas, feelings, preferences
and opinions (Cook Hirai, Borrego, Garza & Kloock, 2010). It makes the language more
memorable, which can be motivating. Good class practice for personal speech is any that
allows students some degree of choice in what they say.

iii. Being aware of the social use of language means that the learner achieves an
understanding of what is appropriate social behaviour, and what language accompanies
this (Harmer, 2001). For example, not being aware of the appropriate way to start a
conversation can cause the other participator in the conversation to feel offended.
Lewis (1993) and Mackey (1999) argue that the best way to help students develop both fluency
and accuracy in a language is to expose them to large amounts of comprehensible input.

Some useful techniques can be used to encourage the successful inclusion of these fluency
activities in the classroom, including interactional talk, providing each learner a lengthy period in
which to speak, and providing varied situations (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). In
interactional talk, students learn how to greet, take leave, begin and end conversations, apologise,
thank and so forth. According to Lewis and McCook (2002), interactional talk is very culturally
linked because it differs from one culture to another. The learners’ interactions depend on their cultural knowledge and common sense. Some kinds of role-play activities are ideal for practising this activity. Providing learners a lengthy period to speak can be achieved by telling stories or jokes; describing a person or place in detail; recounting the plot of a film, play or book; giving a short lecture or talk; or arguing a case for or against a proposal (Brown, 2006; Stringer, 1998). Finally, learners need to experience the language in variable contexts. Role-play activities are the most useful when learners imagine themselves in different situations playing the role of someone other than themselves (Partington, 2006).

Speaker (2000) suggests introducing teaching proficiency through reading and storytelling (TPRS). According to Ray and Seely (2002), TPRS lessons use a mixture of reading and storytelling to help students learn an FL in a classroom setting. The method works in three steps. In step one, the new vocabulary structures are taught using a combination of translation, gestures and personalised questions. In step two, these structures are used in a spoken class story, and, in step three, these same structures are used in a class reading. Throughout these three steps, the teacher uses a number of techniques to help make the target language comprehensible to students, including carefully limiting vocabulary, constantly asking easy comprehension questions and undertaking frequent comprehension checks. Sebelius (2002) stresses that TPRS is the teaching method most consistent with the principles of SL acquisition. The steps and techniques in TPRS help teachers provide this input by making the language spoken in class both comprehensible and engaging.

In order for fluency- and accuracy-based activities to work effectively, some factors need to be considered in classroom application. The learners must be given opportunities to work separately on fluency, accuracy and complicity—the same content with different tasks. In addition, learners must have sufficient time to practise speaking and they should have knowledge of turn taking, pauses, long and short turns and social relationships between speakers. Teachers are aware of the importance of schema and the fact that learners are often concerned about their lack of ideas, and need assistance with planning and developing ideas (Bygate, 2001). Teachers should ensure that the students internalise each phrase before moving on to new material, giving additional story lessons with the same vocabulary when necessary.

3.3.3 Problems Encountered by Learners when Participating in Speaking Activities

Stuart, Wright, Grigor and Howey (2002) summarise the problems encountered by language learners according to the following categories:

1. Inhibition: Learners are often inhibited when trying to say things in an FL in the classroom because they feel worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism and losing face, or afraid of attracting attention by speaking. The role of the teacher is to encourage students to speak, even with mistakes.

2. Having nothing to say: Some learners cannot think of anything to say and some are not interested in expressing themselves. The role of the teacher is to prompt ideas and encourage participation from all students in the group. Teachers should carefully choose topics and tasks to stimulate interest.

3. Low or uneven participation: In large classes, students have limited opportunity to speak, and, upon receiving this opportunity, have limited time. This situation is worse when some learners dominate the conversation, while others speak very little or not at all. The teachers’ role is to encourage equal participation from all the students in the group.

4. Mother-tongue use: When all or some learners share the same first language, they may use this because it is easier or because it feels unnatural to speak to one another in an FL. Learners may feel less exposed if they use their mother tongue. It is very difficult to force learners to speak the target language in small groups, especially if this includes less disciplined or motivated learners. Harmer (2001) lists factors that can encourage learners to use L1 in English classrooms. First, the choice of task may make the use of L1
expected. Second, the student will use the L1 to explain something to another because this is habit behaviour. Third, if the teacher uses the students’ L1, the students will follow him or her. Finally, the amount of use of L1 by some students is related to learners’ styles and abilities—some use the target language from the first class, while others need to use their L1 more often and feel safe and comfortable doing this.

According to Ur (1996), there is no doubt that L1 will be used in class, whether it is encouraged or not. However, there is debate regarding whether students should be allowed to use it in some situations or not. Harmer (2001) states that the use of L1 is acceptable when learners are working in pairs on a task. In contrast, using the target language is essential when learners are performing an oral fluency activity. Harmer (2001) suggests some actions that teachers can take to promote the use of the target language in class:

- establish clear guidelines about when L1 is permitted and when the use of the target language is essential
- choose tasks appropriate to the learners’ level of competence
- create an atmosphere with the target language by making the target language the classroom language. For example, when teaching English, this could even occur through anglicising the students’ names, using persuasion by moving groups around during speaking activities, and repeating statements such as ‘speak in English, please’. Ur (1996) suggests appointing one student in the group to remind all participants to use the target language.

**3.3.4 Common Speaking Errors and Teacher Feedback**

Speaking errors, which most students make at different stages of language learning, occur because of two factors: L1 interference and over-generalisation (Harmer, 2001). All students undergo a similar process when learning their first language and make common errors, such as ‘goed’ instead of ‘went’. One of the keys to successful FLL and SLL is the feedback that learners receive (Brown, 2001). Cognitive feedback must be optimal in order to be effective. Too much negative feedback causes learners to cease attempts to communicate, while too much positive cognitive feedback reinforces errors (Hedge, 2000).
In the presence of errors in the classroom, teachers often wonder whether they should correct these errors or ignore them (Gottlieb, 2006). If they decide to correct learners’ errors, two questions arise. The first is when correction of speech should occur—that is, whether the correction should occur when the error happens or once the speech activity performance is complete. The second question is how speech errors should be corrected. The answers to these two questions are based on the type of errors, type of activities, learners’ level of proficiency and student who made the mistake.

Being able to distinguish between the different kinds of errors that occur in the classroom enables the teacher to decide what to correct. Systematic errors are indicators of a learner’s current stage of inter-language that is influenced by incomplete or faulty knowledge of the language. Mistakes can also occur as a result of the learner’s inability to use particular knowledge when speaking because of carelessness, tiredness, distraction or difficult circumstances, such as noise.

Mistakes will be self-corrected if the learner recognises them, but if not, there are two approaches for the teacher to take. The first is for the teacher to judge whether highlighting these errors will provide useful feedback for the individual and others in learning the target language. Alternately, the teacher can identify errors that hinder communication. There are two types of errors that distract learners from communicating successfully:

1. global errors, which cause misunderstanding by the listener, such as ‘I will fly to Canada’.
2. local errors, which relate to minor errors such as grammar, spelling or punctuation, which do not cause misunderstanding by the listener, such as in ‘I drunk orange juice this morning’ instead of the correct sentence ‘I drank orange juice this morning’.

Making such a distinction is not an easy task during the quick interaction of the classroom. However, experienced teachers attempt to distinguish between global errors and local errors, and handle them confidently.

3.3.4.1 Correcting Errors During Speaking Activities

Harmer (2001) and Baker and Westrup (2003) list some error-correction strategies observed in the classroom during controlled practise of speaking:

- The teacher may frown and say, ‘No, you do not say that. What do you say? Can anybody help her?’, or the teacher may say, ‘That’s not quite right’.
• The teacher may repeat a sentence that the student has just said, with rising intonation up to the point of the mistake, and wait for the student to self-correct.
• When the student uses incorrect intonation in a question, the teacher may ask the class for an accurate version, repeat it, ask the class for choral and individual repetition, and then return to the original student.
• The teacher may look puzzled and request clarification by asking, ‘What did you say?’, or the teacher may ask the student to repeat what he or she has said by saying ‘again’.
• The teacher may move his or her hand to indicate error, state the correct version and ask the student to repeat it. Harmer (2001) argues that when the teacher knows his or her class well, a simple facial expression or gesture may be a good indicator that something needs to be fixed. He added that this needs to be undertaken with care because a wrong expression or gesture may give the impression of rude behaviour.
• The teacher may provide a hint that is familiar to both the student and teacher to activate rules they already know by using linguistic terms such as ‘tense’ and ‘countable’.
• The teacher may reformulate the wrong speech by repeating what the student has said correctly without making a big issue of it.

3.3.4.2 Correcting Errors After Speaking Activities

Duran (2011) stresses the importance of not interrupting a learner’s attempts to communicate during fluency-based activities. Teachers are advised to delay correction until the end of these activities. Some suggestions by Duran (2011) of error-correcting techniques after speaking activities include:

• noting each individual’s main errors on separate cards and giving these to student for reflection
• recording the activity on video or audio cassette and asking students to listen and determine whether they can identify and correct their own errors and those of peers
• making a note of key errors made by several students, or those relating to recent teaching points, and going over these with the class afterwards
• noting examples of errors and using these for a game in the next class.
3.4 Promoting Speaking Skills

Although spoken language is more flexible and informal than written language, and perfect structure is not required for informal spoken language, the development of speaking skills must be supported in class (Andrews, 2006; Bygate, 2001; Cutting, 2002; Harmer, 2001; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Nation & Newton, 2009; Scrivener, 1994; UNESCO, 2002a). A variety of pedagogical approaches for teaching FL have been implemented and are briefly described chronologically below.

3.4.1 Twentieth-century Language Teaching Methods

Language teaching appeared as a profession in the twentieth century. Popular methods of teaching languages in that era were the grammar translation method, direct method and audio-lingual method (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). These teaching methods are explained below (Table 5).
Table 5: Characteristics of Twentieth-century Language Teaching Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching methods</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammar-translation method</td>
<td>• Grammar translation was influential until the 1950s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It enabled students to read literature in the target language, and benefit from the mental discipline of studying a language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Textbooks combined abstract grammar rules, vocabulary lists with translations and sentences for students to translate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sentences illustrated grammar, with no relation to actual communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• During lessons, the teacher presented grammar structures that were studied by students, who worked through translation activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Learners were often unable to speak the language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct method</td>
<td>• The direct method was influential into the 1950s and beyond, and its principles are still significant in language teaching today</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It was the first of many ‘natural’ methods that claimed to teach the additional language the way L1 was learnt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It emphasised proficiency in speaking the language through question and answer drills between teacher and student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The focus was on everyday vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lessons were taught exclusively in the target language, and teachers tended to use many demonstrations, pictures, gestures and associations of ideas to make meanings clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Grammar was carefully graded from simple to more complex grammar structures, and was taught through using examples chosen to help the student work out the rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The role of the teacher was very important in avoiding translation errors, and textbooks were not used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio-lingual method</td>
<td>• Speech was viewed as a habit to be acquired by using stimulus, response and reinforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dialogues and drills formed the basis of classroom activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dialogues were used for repetition and memorisation, and then specific grammatical patterns in the dialogue were selected to become the focus of drills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The role of the students in audio-lingual classes was almost entirely reactive—they had little control over the content, pace or style of learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The role of the teacher was central and active because he or she controlled the direction and pace of the lesson and monitored responses by focusing on pronunciation, intonation and fluency to immediately correct all mistakes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is currently a greater understanding of the student’s role in learning and the need for real communication as a key aspect in language learning. However, the audio-lingual method—in which the role of the teacher dominates—has remained popular in traditional classes.

The period from the 1970s to 1980s witnessed a major shift in language teaching. Searching for alternatives to grammar-based approaches and methods that highlighted the teacher-centred approach led to the movement of approaches and methods that were based on communicative features emphasising a learner-centred approach (Doyle, 2008). Three humanistic approaches—community language learning, Suggestopedia and the total physical response—had a considerable influence on language teaching. However, these approaches are rarely used as stand-alone approaches in mainstream teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). These approaches are briefly described below.
3.4.1.1 Community Language Learning

Community language learning (CLL) was developed by Curran (1972) by applying psychological counselling techniques to learning. For example, in the CLL class, students sit in a circle and decide what they want to talk about. A counsellor stands outside the circle to assist. A student says to another student from the circle what he or she wants to say—either in English or in his or her L1. If the utterance is in L1, the counsellor translates it to English. The first speaker repeats this statement or question in English. Later, when students are more confident with the language, they move into lines to face each other for paired discussions.

Students reflect on their learning experiences, lessons and activities (Koshy, 2005; Schmuck, 2000), and, at the end of each unit, they describe their favourite lessons and activities, and state which lesson, activity or section they found easiest or most difficult, and why. This reflection helps students think about their strengths and weaknesses, and effectively aids the evaluation of the content of the syllabus or curricula, as stated by Tomal (2003); Atweh, Weeks and Kemmis (2005); Sagor (2005) and Whitehead and McNiff (2006).

Teachers of CLL classes must be proficient in both L1 and L2, familiar with the role of the counsellors, resistant to the pressure of teaching in traditional classrooms and capable of operating without conversational resources, depending rather on student-generated topics (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). In CLL classes, the main role of the teacher is to facilitate, rather than teach. Students are encouraged to set their own goals, while the teacher offers support and council.

3.4.1.2 Suggestopedia

Suggestopedia is attributed to Lozanov (1978), who views the physical surroundings and atmosphere of the classroom as being of crucial importance. By ensuring that students are comfortable, confident and relaxed, he argues that the ‘effective filter’ is lowered and learning is enhanced. Lozanov believes that, by inducing a relaxed environment through music, classroom decoration and ritualised teacher behaviour, the power of memory is promoted. According to Lozanov and Gateva (1988), the instructor in this approach is expected to behave positively and
create situations where students are most suggestible. Ideally, teachers present material in a manner that encourages retention.

3.4.1.3 Total Physical Response

Total physical response (TPR) is a ‘natural’ method established by Asher (1981), based on the observation that students learn in stress-free environments by responding physically to commands before they begin speaking. Asher (1981) believes that organising classroom activities based on physical actions creates a positive mood in learners and facilitates learning by helping lower the ‘effective filter’. Adults’ additional language learning could be developed from speech directed at them in the form of commands to perform actions. While the first role of students in this approach is to listen and perform, they are encouraged to speak when they feel ready. The use of gesture, voice and mime are very important in TPR classroom activities.

Asher (1981) stresses that TPR should be used in association with other methods and teaching techniques. According to Krashen (1982), this was considered a weakness of TPR. In addition, TPR was criticised for being appropriate only for beginners. However, TPR techniques continue to be used across a variety of current approaches and methods because they encourage the importance of the pre-speaking phase and comprehensible input.

3.4.2 Current Communicative Approaches

Current communicative approaches marked the beginning of a major shift in language teaching in the twentieth century (Coyne, Kame’enui & Carnine, 2010). The general principles of current communicative approaches are widely accepted because they use the target language in meaningful communication. The natural approach; task-based language teaching; presentation, practice and production model; and communicative language teaching are outlined below.

3.4.2.1 The Natural Approach

The natural approach (NA) originated from Terrell’s (1982) experiences teaching Spanish, and his work with Krashen (1985) on how languages are learnt. Krashen and Terrell (1983) state that
NA belongs to a tradition of language teaching methods based on conversation and interpretation of how learners acquire L1 and L2 in non-formal settings.

Krashen (1982) states that LL is a subconscious process of acquisition, and that only exposure to comprehensible input can activate the acquisition process. In contrast, a consciously learnt language—which is achieved through formal study—acts as a monitor that allows people to self-correct and edit their speech. Based on this view, in the NA, a focus on comprehension and meaningful communication, as well as the provision of compressible input, provide the necessary and sufficient conditions for successful classroom SL and FL acquisition. Therefore, teachers adhering to the NA expose their students to comprehensible input by creating interactive activities and situations in which students determine meanings from context clues. Students are not expected to begin speaking until they are ready.

Similar to CLT, NA is evolutionary, rather than revolutionary, in its procedures (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). The NA emphasises comprehensible and meaningful practice, rather than the production of grammatically perfect utterances and sentences.

3.4.2.2 Task-based Language Teaching

Tasks are a feature of everyday life used to achieve certain goals, and communication is always part of the task process, whether the task involves creativity, problem solving, planning or completing a transaction (Willis, 2005). Task-based language teaching is based on the view that learners are likely to learn language if they are thinking about a non-linguistic problem when they are concentrating on a particular language form (Nunan, 2004). In addition, students become actively involved in communication when they are engaged in achieving a particular objective because they are likely to negotiate, express ideas and communicate their message in order to reach that objective. Bringing tasks into the classroom puts the focus of language learning on the meaning and the goal, rather than on the form of the communication. Authentic tasks are selected to make courses relevant to students. Willis (2005) suggests three basic stages: the pre-task, task cycle and language focus (Table 6).
Table 6: The Three Basic Stages from Willis (2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages of the task</th>
<th>Role of the teacher and students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Pre-task           | • Teacher explores the topic with the class  
                      • Teacher highlights useful words and phrases that help students to understand the task instructions |
| Task cycle         | • Students, in pairs or small groups, work on the task  
                      • Students solve a problem  
                      • Students ask and answer questions  
                      • Teacher monitors from a distance |
| Language focus     | • Teacher discusses with students the language used  
                      • Teacher evaluates the group work  
                      • Teacher offers feedback and correction  
                      • Students report on the task either orally or in a written form |

Focusing on language use after a task has been completed is widely accepted as an effective aid to acquisition, and task repetition gives students the chance to practise the new language (Leaver & Willis, 2004).

3.4.2.3 Presentation, Practice and Production Model

The presentation, practice and production (PPP) model is effective for lower levels of competency, and where students receive little input apart from their teacher and textbook (Harmer, 2001). In the presentation phase, the teacher acts as a model and presents or teaches the new aspect of the language (whether vocabulary or grammatical structure) to students. The role of the teacher is more active than that of the students. To keep students involved during this phase, the teacher may use elicitation techniques to ask questions to determine what students already know (Woodward, 1993).

In the practice phase, students use the new aspect of the language through controlled activities. The teacher models sentences, and students complete choral and individual repetitions (drilling). Students are given support and assurance that they can reproduce the language accurately. Students also engage in short written activities to reinforce their learning. Later in the practice phase, the teacher introduces less controlled activities that guide the students while they practise the language. In this phase, the teacher acts as a prompter, encouraging students to think about how to use the new language.

In the production phase, students use the new aspect of the language, along with other language structures they have already learnt, in pair and group discussions, role-plays and problem-solving
activities. During this phase, there is little direction from the teacher—the teacher is organiser, encourager and monitor. Prabpairee (2000) emphasises the importance of encouraging students to take advantage of rehearsal and peer feedback to help reduce their anxiety when giving presentations.

According to Harmer (2001), the PPP framework is simple, easy to use and adaptable. Speaking, listening and reading are integrated into the flexible PPP format. The three phases can fit into either one lesson period, or a whole series of lessons. If students have an advanced level of English and know sufficient grammar and vocabulary, the teacher can begin with the production phase because students are ready to practise less structured activities.

3.4.2.4 Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative language teaching (CLT) is based on the idea that communication involves ‘communicative competence’—the ability to make oneself understood in socially appropriate ways (Galloway, 1993). Language is a part of communication, and language competence can be achieved by using language in communication (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000; Orlich, Harder, Callahan, Trevisan & Brown, 2012). The CLT approach results in students achieving an advanced level of competence in speaking the target language by improving their fluency and communicative skills (Coyne et al., 2010; Dung, 1985; Hird, 1995; Lewis & McCook 2002; Liao, 2004; Stringer, 1998; Wuttipornpong, 2000; Zhi-Ling, 1983).

CLT activities motivate independence (Rotarwut, 2006). They typically involve students in real communication, where the accuracy of the language used is less important than the successful achievement of the communicative task they are performing. Thus, role-play activities and simulation are popular in CLT—for example, students simulate a television program or scene at an airport. Another strategy incorporating CLT is the information gap. For example, Student A directs Student B regarding the location of a bank on a map. Student B has a map that does not have the bank located, while Student B has a complete map showing the bank; thus, there is a gap between the knowledge of the students. In order for Student B to locate the bank on the map, that information gap needs to be closed. CLT also plays a major role in enhancing collaborative communication between students when sharing knowledge to solve a puzzle or problem.
The communicative approaches of the NA, task-based language teaching, PPP model and CLT play a major role in encouraging student engagement through collaborative, meaningful communication.

3.4.3 Large Classes and Communicative Approaches

Large classes can be an effective and productive learning environment for communicative approaches (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). One of the advantages of large classes is that there are sufficient students to share experiences, opinions and values. This encourages the creation of more activities and styles of learning that attract the students’ attention and keep them interested. The students learn from each other, with minimal assistance from the teacher (Hess, 2001). According to Urdan (2001) and Wardhaugh (2002), such a class atmosphere reinforces students’ ability to think, invent, cooperate and communicate effectively with others.

However, teachers have indicated a number of constraints that affect effective communicative approaches in large EFL classes (Hess, 2001; Lee & Salamon, 2004; Swan, 1985; Urdan, 2001; Wardhaugh, 2002). These constraints are as follows:

1. Teacher discomfort resulting from the demands of more physical work, such as needing to speak loudly and having a lack of room to move freely around the classroom (Ellis, 1996; Swan, 1985).

2. Discipline problems caused by increased noise, which can prevent learning and can cause the teacher to feel overwhelmed and unable to control the class (Lee & Salamon, 2004). To manage this, routines are essential, and delegating responsibility to learners and applying noise reduction strategies are possible solutions (Goodenow, 1993; Hughes, 2002), as are presenting topics and activities that arouse the students’ curiosity, such as CLT activities (Pintrich & Schrauben, 1992). Enlarging the circle of participation ensures accountability (Hayes, 1997). Students are often reluctant to speak in FLL classrooms, which makes it difficult to engage other students. Students should be encouraged to speak loudly during participation in order to be heard by all the students in the class (Nunan, 2001).

3. Ignoring individual needs because of space and time limitations (Hayes, 1997). Hess (2001) focuses on the obstacle of motivating passive students and encouraging all students to participate. Ryan and Patrick (2001) suggest that students need to be addressed
by name. Nicholls (1984) and Hayes (1997) propose that, from time to time, students need to express their own ideas and thoughts using self-selected methods of dealing with preferred topics, such as portfolios and personalised dictionaries (Anderman & Maehr, 1994). Hayes (1997) recommends that some students act as assistants to provide information on other learners’ needs and interests.

4. Evaluation: According to Hughes (2002), checking all students’ work is the only way to know their strengths and weaknesses, degree of improvement and learning difficulties. Unfortunately, some teachers struggle to evaluate all students effectively because of the demands of large classes and increased workload (Hess, 2001).

Evaluation needs to be integral to daily lessons (Coyne et al., 2010). Chu (2001) recommends that teachers ask questions that are interesting and encourage participation. Such questions could begin with ‘why?’ and be followed with an explanation—‘Could you clarify or explain what this means?’ For written evaluation, Lightbrown and Spada (1999) argue that teachers have to use both closed-ended and open-ended questions to evaluate students’ understanding. Brindley (2001) proposes that students correct each other’s work to decrease the teacher’s workload and encourage cooperation and responsibility among students. Hedge (2000) suggests that using controlled activities could assist with quick corrections.

According to Coyne et al. (2010), the school’s faculty is responsible for supporting effective teaching and learning in large classrooms. Teacher training encourages teachers to adapt to large classes by creating a supportive learning environment and assisting students to work in groups. In addition, providing educational resources facilitates communication between students and teachers (Church, Elliot & Gable, 2001).

3.4.4 Cultural Barriers to Language Learning

Cultural barriers to language learning can interfere with communication and contribute to decreased motivation. A speaker’s social status, gender, age and level of education can affect the language, specific words and level of formality used. A growing body of research is investigating the factors that promote students’ competence in speaking English (Ando, 1987; Fang, 1984; Huong, 1992; Songsiri, 2007; Thuoc, 1988; Varasarin, 2007; Wang, 1984). This research has examined how the classroom social environment influences student engagement and
performance. The findings suggest that some environments, including the Arab environment, are vastly different from the Western environment in relation to family, community, culture and religion, and these variables directly influence learners’ experience of FLL (Arani, 2004).

Harmer (2001) argues that many approaches and teaching methods (including CLT) are based on Western ideas regarding what constitutes ‘good’ learning. For example, these approaches and methods call for active participation in class, and students are asked to talk about themselves and their lives in potentially revealing ways. Moreover, students are sometimes expected to take charge of their learning, with the teacher acting as a helper and guide, rather than being the source of knowledge and authority. In traditional approaches, the teacher role is dominant (Brown, 2001). The English curriculum is intensive, and many learners find there is too much information to understand. In developing countries, it is not uncommon for there to be 40 to 100 students in one class. Students in these classes are often driven to earn good grades. Exams are usually written, thus improving writing skills is essential to pass the examination. As a result, both teachers and students feel that speaking skills are ignored or undervalued, with very limited time allocated to practising speaking in class (pilot study).

In traditional classrooms, it is common for students to remain silent until they are asked to speak by the teacher. Students are not encouraged to think critically, argue a personal point of view, or reflect on or justify their opinions. In addition, many students lack confidence and fluency in their mother tongue, which results in shy and hesitant speakers in an FL (pilot study). Burnaford, Fischer and Hobson (2001) and Mills (2007) suggest that teachers and students are two parties in a contract in which both parties must first agree on the terms. Teachers need to make adjustments to accommodate all students in the classroom (Mertler, 2005). According to Meyers and Rust (2003), this makes teaching a constant challenge.

Numerous researchers suggest that using reflective thinking through journal writing can help teachers apply their personal approaches, pedagogical knowledge and experiences of teaching in class, and evaluate the effectiveness and weakness of their teaching in meeting students’ needs (Beverly, 1993; Bradbury, 2001; Brown, 2005; Burns, 1999; Coles & Quirke, 2001; Flick, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; McLean, Herman & Herman, 2005; Miller, 2004; Murray, 2003; Patton, 2002; Richards & Ho, 1998; Rossman & Rallis, 2003; Schackne, 2002).
3.4.5 Language Learning Strategies

This study investigates a series of Language Learning Strategies (LLS) designed to support FL learning. Wenden and Rubin (1987) focus on three types of LLS: learning strategies, communication strategies and social strategies. O’Malley and Chamot (1990) classify these strategies similarly, into cognitive strategies, meta-cognitive strategies and social/affective strategies. Hedge (2000) expands these to include communication strategies as a fourth strategy. The definitions and examples of these strategies are presented below (Table 7).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LLS</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive strategies</td>
<td>Using different methods to understand the information presented</td>
<td>Using analogies, repetition, memorisation, reasoning and previous knowledge to help language learning; placing a word or phrase in a meaningful language sequence; guessing meanings by using available information; and asking for explanations or help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meta-cognitive strategies</td>
<td>Regulating learning</td>
<td>Planning the learning activity in advance, considering general aspects of a learning task, focusing on specific parts of the language input or situation that will help learning, arranging appropriate conditions for learning, self-monitoring and evaluating the success of a learning activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication strategies</td>
<td>Communicating with others</td>
<td>Gesture, mime, synonyms, paraphrases and cognate words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-affective strategies</td>
<td>Speaking or interacting with others using the target language</td>
<td>Collaborating with peers to complete classroom activities, listening to the radio, watching television and using a language laboratory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Independence, autonomy and control in learning experiences play a significant role in language education (Hurd & Lewis, 2008). Chamot and Kupper (1989), Oxford (1990), Fedderholdt (1997), Lessard-Clouston (1997) and Ranta (2005) emphasise that LLS are tools for active, self-directed involvement that are essential for developing communicative competence. LLS allow students to assess the situation, plan and select appropriate skills to understand, learn or remember new input presented and discussed in the language classroom (Bialystok, 1990; Dörnyei, 2005; Faerch & Kasper, 1983; White & Ranta, 2002). In addition, according to O’Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Kupper and Russo (1985) and Stern (1992), LLS are appreciated by language teachers because they indicate how students work on tasks and deal with problems in the process of language learning.

Graham (1997) suggests that language teachers help students understand effective LLS and train them to develop and implement these. He explains:
LLS training needs to be integrated into students’ regular classes if they are going to appreciate their relevance for language learning tasks; students need to constantly monitor and evaluate the strategies they develop and use; and they need to be aware of the nature, function and importance of such strategies. (Graham, 1997, p. 169)

Experienced language learners learn in a systematic manner and are usually successful in selecting appropriate strategies to accomplish a task. However, they require instruction regarding how to use strategies efficiently as a way to improve language learning and performance (Griffiths, 2008). A study by O’Malley and Chamot (1990) suggests that effective language learners are aware of the LLS they use and why they use them.

By investigating LLS in classroom setting, Griffiths (2003) claims that several methods of data collection need to be integrated to give insights into student learning. Interviews and questionnaires to elicit descriptions of the experiences of language learning are two suggestions. Learner’s self-reflection on the process and task is also considered valuable.

Finkbeiner (2006) argues that research into LLS is inevitably culturally biased by the minds of those who develop the instruments and tests. This bias is created by different underlying values, attitudes and beliefs about what is considered successful behaviour and action. According to Finkbeiner (2006), the bias is not simply the Western versus non-Western perspective. It also needs to be considered on a more subtle, sub-cultural level, taking into account the diversity of ethnicity, culture, language, religion, political viewpoint, philosophical belief, sexual orientation, age and gender.

### 3.4.6 Learning Styles

Learning styles are associated with LLS. Hartley (1998) distinguishes between the two terms by stating that learning styles are automatic, while LLS are optional. Several learning style models exist. For the purposes of this study, Fleming’s model of learning styles is used, as this is one of the most common and widely used categorisations of the various types of learning styles (Hawk & Shah, 2007). The basic three categories of Fleming’s model of learning styles are visual, auditory and tactile/kinaesthetic (De Bello, 1990; Sprenger, 2003). These three categories are explained below (Table 8).
Table 8: Characteristics of Fleming’s Model of Learning Styles—Visual, Auditory and Tactile/Kinaesthetic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning style</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual learner</td>
<td>• Appreciates images, diagrams, overhead slides, mind maps and handouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Experiences difficulty paying attention to someone talking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditory learner</td>
<td>• Appreciates listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prefers methods of repeating difficult words and concepts aloud, small group discussions, organising debates, listening to books on tape, writing oral reports and encouraging oral interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactile/kinaesthetic learner</td>
<td>• Appreciates learning through active exploration of the world, and ‘doing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Likes touching people when talking to them, and likes fiddling with objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prefers experimenting, assigning projects, having frequent breaks, using visual aids and objects, and completing role-play activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sullivan (1996), Park (1997) and Griffiths (2008) emphasise that a learning style is highly influenced by personality variables, sociocultural background and educational experience. A study conducted by Willing (1988) investigated the learning preferences of 517 adult English-as-second-language (ESL) learners based on variables of ethnic group, age group, level of previous education, length of residence in Australia, speaking proficiency level and type of learning program (fulltime or part time). The biographical variables were found to be irrelevant, while personality factors, sociocultural variables and educational background were significant.

Reid’s (1987) comparative study of college ESL students reported significant cultural differences in visual, auditory, tactile/kinaesthetic, group and individual learning styles among Korean, Chinese, Japanese, Malay, Arab and Spanish students. She found that college ESL students strongly preferred tactile/kinaesthetic learning and showed a negative preference for group learning. Reid also found that students who had been in the United States (US) for more than three years were significantly more auditory in their learning style preferences than those who had been in the US for shorter periods. In addition, the Korean, Chinese and Arab students were the most visual in their learning style preferences. The Japanese students were the least auditory of all learners. English speakers rated group work lower than all other language groups, and significantly lower than did Malay speakers.

However, many educational psychologists believe that there is little evidence for the efficacy of most learning style models, and, further, that the models often rest on doubtful theoretical reasoning (Mills, 2002). Coffield, Moseley, Hall and Ecclestone (2004) examined the scientific basis for 13 of the most influential learning style models and the theories on which they are
based. They found that none of the most popular learning style theories had been adequately validated through independent research, and suggested that everybody has a personal style for learning that must be accommodated in language learning.

3.5 Adolescent Learners and Language Learning

According to Meece (2002) and Moyer (2004), time and age are critical factors that affect language acquisition. The age of a student cohort is a major factor in deciding how and what to teach. Thus, the psychological and social developments of adolescents must be considered when teaching a language.

3.5.1 Psychological Development

For many years, psychologists believed that puberty was stressful for young adolescents because changes in hormones made them moody, irritable and depressed (Adams & Marshall, 1996; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Frydenberg & Lewis, 2002; Cohen & Wills, 1985; Compas, 1987). These adjectives, which are characteristic of adolescence, can themselves be a cause of conflict and hesitation in many aspects of teenagers’ lives, including learning generally and language learning specifically (Boldero & Fallon, 1995). Teenagers’ visions of themselves change over time, especially during early adolescence, but self-esteem increases during middle and late adolescence due to gaining greater confidence (Allison & Schultz, 2001; Bacchini & Magliulo, 2003; Yost, Stube & Bailey, 1992).

This study focuses on girls aged approximately 13, and the effects of early maturation on girls are often mixed. Early-maturing girls tend to be more popular with their peers; however, they are also more likely to feel awkward and self-conscious (Youngs, Rathge, Mullis & Mullis, 1990). Garton and Pratt (1995) suggest that this is because these girls are uncomfortable with the attention their new appearance draws. Female adolescents have the highest levels of stress, which is particularly related to anxiety, according to Ryan (2009). Ryan also claims that females may be more socialised into adopting a collaborative approach informed by a feminist perspective to express their feelings about their experiences, such as being humiliated, and can become sensitive and moody as a result.
According to Branscombe and Wann (1994) and Cameron (1999), cognitive development is rapid during this stage of life, and the thoughts, ideas and concepts developed during this period greatly influence individuals’ future lives and play a major role in the formation of adolescents’ character and personality. Adolescents solve many problems on their own or with assistance from their peers (Branscombe & Wann, 1994). Making decisions is influenced greatly by the person’s morality, religious beliefs and values. Hobfoll (2001) and Ryan (2009) found that adolescents do not differ in their feelings related to values and morals because they are still in a stage of developing their beliefs about these issues. In contrast, Simmons and Simmons (1994) conducted surveys to compare the personal and moral values of 89 Saudi and 96 British adolescents. The results found that Islam has a deep influence on the values of the Saudi students, while religious views have a limited effect on British students.

Another challenge facing teenagers is losing control, managing harm avoidance and being aggressive (Newman, Murray & Lussier, 2001). Ryan (2009) found that adolescents displayed significantly lower levels of control than did young adults. This aligns with Brandtstadter’s (1989) idea that adolescents are more likely to be impulsive and less likely to engage in planning or self-regulation.

3.5.2 Social Development

During early adolescence, conformity to parents begins to decline, while peer pressure and conformity to peers increases, particularly in junior high school (Beinstein & Lane, 1991; Mills, 2003; Noller & Callan, 1990). Adolescents display significantly higher levels of isolation than do young adults (Ryan, 2009). Ryan (2009) suggests that this may be related to the phenomenon of the imaginary audience, which is the feeling that one is being watched and judged by others. This explains why adolescents are suspicious of others, especially their parents.

Simmons and Simmons (1994) found that 14-year-old British and Saudi students in their studies place higher value on their family than on their peers, and view their family as the group with which they enjoy their greatest happiness. They added that the most important loss in their lives, and the cause of depression, was when their relationships with their parents deteriorate. The concept of family in Islam is very different to that in Western culture (Abukhattala, 2004; Hodge,
2002). The unique nature of interpersonal relationships among family members in Islamic society is a distinctive feature of Islamic culture (Abou Elfadi & Inati, 2004). Most Westerners become completely independent at the age of 18 and above, which weakens the bond between children and parents (Baumrind, 1991a). Therefore, according to Al-Kepaicy (1990), for Westerners—whose family relationships are often casual—it might be difficult to understand the closeness of Arabic family ties.

In contrast, according to adolescents, friends were regarded as more important and influential than parents (Baumrind, 1991b). Adolescents often imitate their friends’ behaviours, even if they are not socially acceptable, and they may follow their friends’ advice, even if it leads to trouble (Tremblay, Masse, Vitaro & Dobkin, 1995). The increasing importance of peers during early adolescence is consistent with an individual’s need for intimacy (White, 1996). A new sense of loyalty and commitment grows when adolescents start to share secrets with their friends (Cowie, 1999). According to adolescents, sharing mutual ways of thinking and feeling is an important basis for friendship, while participating in the same activities is essential for maintaining friendships (Buhrmester, 1990).

Muslim children and their families depend on and support each other all their lives. For example, children depend on their parents to support them physically, emotionally and financially whenever necessary. Mothers support their daughters during pregnancy and assist in the raising of children, while fathers support their sons financially. In turn, mothers depend on their daughters to receive and serve their guests at events. Daughters care for younger siblings and fulfil the mother’s duties when the mother is absent or busy. Fathers depend on their sons to buy groceries, fill the motor vehicle with petrol, and fulfil the father’s duties when the father is absent or busy. As a result, Arab teenagers have many responsibilities. The family provides guidance, support and advice for each other on all things (Al-Kepaicy, 1990).

Irrespective of cultural differences, adolescence is a critical age, both psychologically and socially. Adolescence is a stage of human development during which a young person must move from dependence to independence, and develop autonomy and maturity.
3.5.3 Teaching Adolescents

According to Ryan (2009), adolescence is a critical age, and, for inexperienced teachers, teaching adolescents can be daunting. Adolescents’ learning capacity is greater than that of younger students; however, they can be considerably more difficult to motivate and manage, and it takes longer to form trusting relationships (Cook Hirai et al., 2010).

Nowadays, according to Lamb and Reinders (2008), the learner-centred approach has captured all the attention, instead of the process of how knowledge is acquired. Students should be given the chance to experiment, ask questions, solve problems and set their own goals and method of assessment and draw conclusions and revisit those conclusions. Neuroscience has found that teenagers learn by actively constructing new knowledge based on their previous experiences and understandings (Pearson Education, 2011). A constructivist approach to teaching is based on connecting new information to beliefs, concepts and ideas that are already held, which is well suited to the adolescent way of learning (Alden, 2006). Constructivist perspectives have important applications for instruction and curriculum design (Schunk, 2007). According to Brooks and Brooks (1999), the goal of constructivist learning environments is to provide rich experiences that encourage students to learn by introducing a huge amount of data using much student activity, social interaction and authentic assessments. Class discussions, peer tutoring and cooperative learning are instructional methods that fit well with constructivism (Bigge & Shermis, 2004).

Self-regulation plays a great deal in constructivism. It includes the coordination of mental processes, such as memory, planning, synthesis and evaluation (Gboku & Lekoko, 2007). From a constructivist perspective, identity development and self-regulation cannot be separated, because self-identity includes being a student. Self-regulation involves a transition from responding to others to using speech and other tools to plan, monitor and direct one’s activities. As with motivation, students develop implicit theories of self-regulation that address their competence relative to peers, what produces success in different domains and how much control they have in academic situations. The role of the constructivist teacher is to coach, moderate and suggest. In addition, the teacher should tolerate multiple interpretations and expressions of learning and promote collaborative learning and taking advantage of peers as resources (Richard & Renandya, 2002).
Since learning activities play a great role in engaging the students’ full participation, the teacher should create activities that challenge students’ thinking and encourage them to construct new knowledge based on their prior knowledge and experiences (Blumberg & Weimer, 2009). Constructivism assumes that all knowledge is constructed based on the learner’s prior experience, without any consideration for the way one is taught. Therefore students, even when they are listening to a conversation, are trying to construct new knowledge (Bigge & Shermis, 2004). Simpson (2002) claims that all knowledge is subjective and produced by our cognition and rejects the suggestion that there are immutable truths. For example, one’s constructions of knowledge are true for that person but not necessarily for anyone else. This is because knowledge is developed from inside people based on their beliefs and experiences.

There are many benefits of constructivism (Schunk, 2007); namely:

- Students learn more and enjoy learning more when they are actively involved.
- Education works best when it concentrates on thinking and understanding, rather than on memorization.
- Constructivist learning is transferable. In constructivist classrooms, students create organizing principles that they can take with them to other learning settings.
- Constructivism gives students ownership of what they learn, since learning is based on students’ questions and explorations, and often the students help in designing the assessments as well, which might be journals, research reports, physical models, and artistic representations.
- Students in constructivist classrooms learn to question things and to apply their natural curiosity to the world.
- Constructivism promotes students’ social and communication skills since they learn in a collaborative environment. This is essential to success in the real world because they will always have to cooperate and navigate among the ideas of others in different contexts.

Variable activities that suit a variety of learning styles and engage students in a stimulating learning environment are necessary when teaching adolescents (Corbin, 2008). The teenage brain always seeks meaning and needs to make connections and develop patterns. Jensen (1998) suggests using integrated thematic, interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary instruction with adolescents because, in such models, both teachers and students are challenged to see the themes, connections and relationships of the wider fields of study. This can be undertaken by using
questioning techniques that require students to compare, contrast, sort, predict or seek relationships, associations and connections. In addition, these models are more effective when using patterning techniques and devices such as graphic organisers, charts, graphs, sequence charts, flow diagrams, concept maps or mind maps (Allison & Schultz, 2001).

Addressing the whole brain when teaching teenagers improves both creativity and problem-solving abilities (Corbin, 2008). However, according to Cameron (1999), many high schools and traditional classrooms focus merely on left-brain activities. Diverse and rich learning experiences that are relevant to real life and that engage whole-brain activity are recommended for adolescent learning (National Research Council, 2000). Whole-brain activities often combine visual and graphic devices, along with reading and writing activities. In addition, whole-brain activities involve concrete teaching as well as kinaesthetic approaches, such as movement and physical activity (Bacchini & Magliulo, 2003).

Adolescent learners need to process information through review and rehearsal (Corbin, 2008). The best way to do this is by reflecting on what new knowledge they have created, how they learn best and connecting this with what they already know. According to Cullen, Harris and Hill (2012), reflecting on what was learned and how it was learned makes the students experts and promotes confidence in their learning abilities. Research of Fazili (2007) and Doyle (2011) shows that students who believe learning is under their control expend greater effort, rehearse more and use better LLS.

Physical activity and movement greatly enhance learning for the teenage brain. According to Silva (1999), physical activity regulates energy, increases attention levels and encourages strong memory pathways. As a result, learners become more receptive to learning and more engaged in the learning experience. In addition, such activities help regulate the learners’ emotional condition and combat stress. When teaching adolescents, Ryan (2009) suggests using physical breaks; variable games, such as role-play activities, drama and physical representation; physical action as memory aids; and demonstrations of learning physically, such as performance assessment.

Memory and learning in the teenage brain can be significantly affected by emotion (Nakata, 2006). As mentioned earlier in this section, most teenagers misread the emotional environment
and signals around them, which causes them to overreact, make poor decisions or respond inappropriately (Green & Oxford, 1995; Saarni, 1999; Schutte, Malouff, Simunek, McKenley & Hollander, 2002). It is difficult to separate learning from emotion, which means that learners’ memory, attention and motivation are greatly influenced by their emotions; the condition of their mind; and individual characteristics, such as expectations and perceptions (Baddeley, 2003; Hannah, 1998; Reid, 2007).

Attracting learners’ attention and engaging the brain can potentially produce powerful and long-lasting learning (Buckley, Storino & Saarni, 2003). Motivation is an extremely important aspect of learning, with motivated students learning more quickly and more effectively (Chambers, 1999). According to Saarni (1990) and Goldstein (1999), learners must receive their learning experiences in a positive emotional environment where short-term extrinsic motivation is promoted through immediate and tangible rewards, and long-term intrinsic motivation is developed through task-based activities.

Teenagers learn best in a variety of social environments and social groupings (Corbin, 2008). As mentioned earlier in this section, the interests, commitments and loyalties of adolescents dramatically switch from their families to their peer groups. Consequently, their values, likes, dislikes and ways of behaving reflect this significant change (Wright & Forsyth, 1997). The constructivist classroom relies heavily on collaboration among students (Salovey & Sluyter, 1997). The main reason for encouraging collaboration among students in the classroom is that they learn about learning not only from themselves, but also from their peers, particularly when students solve problems and review and reflect on their LLS and methods (Sawyer & Ranta, 2001). According to Thoits (1995), encouraging a cooperative learning environment strongly increases the level of achievement in learning. Studies by Elias et al. (1997) and Petrides and Furnham (2000) have found that the more students are engaged in talk and sharing with others, or are involved in directly teaching others, the more they learn. Providing a range of social settings that encourage learners to learn individually and collaboratively with peers is recommended for adolescents (Bayton et al., 2000).
3.6 Gender and Language Learning

This case study involves female Grade 7 students in a Saudi public school. A number of studies have found that the gender factor greatly influences language learning, the effectiveness of LLS and styles, and the value placed on social interaction in learning. Woodward (2001) recommends that when designing curricula, students’ learning preferences be considered in relation to gender influence.

Studies by Chen (1996), Wapshere (1996) and Zammit (1993) conclude that female learners have high motivation in language learning. They achieve higher scores in language achievement tests, make fewer errors and show greater improvement over time than do boys. Oxford (1993) contends that female learners are motivated to understand the personal utility and social value of FLs, and to perform at the optimum level in class. Nyikos (1990) argues that females tend to view good grades as a sign of social approval and are likely to achieve the academic standard. In addition, they are generally intrinsically motivated.

Bacon (1992) identifies female students’ preferences for self-reporting, cognition, meta-cognition and social communication strategies. Nyikos (1990) concludes that female learners appreciate developing verbal and communicative abilities, make judgements based on personal or social values, and consider the feelings of others (Curry, 1990). Severiens and Ten Dam (1994) state that females favour concrete learning styles. Wren (1993) describes the preferences in learning styles of adolescent females based on the work of Gilligan, who views the female perspective as using a narrative, interdependent thinking style that depends on a network of personal relationships. However, no individual is exclusively a narrative or autonomous learner, as suggested by Berge and Ve (2000).

Alcon (1994), Eisikovits (1989) and Menzel (2005) found that female speakers interact in a distinctive manner when communicating with others in a classroom setting. Females tend to use socially prestigious speech and make few errors (Sadker & Sadker, 1985). They preserve the social significance of speech and gradually learn to modify their own speech in line with these perceptions. Maccoby (1990) stresses that females are competent at using social communication strategies, particularly when searching for meaning and responding to questions. They are less
dominant and supply great comprehensible input (Alcon, 1994). Menzel (2005) states that females are able to obtain a greater amount of comprehensible input than their male counterparts, initiating more meaningful negotiations. When investigating turn taking, Alcon (1994) found that females use their turns to clarify the input or answer questions. They accommodate speech by listening or answering, accepting topics and sustaining conversations.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter explored previous research that has examined the aspects of teaching and learning that affect the success of the FL learning experience. Learning styles, teaching approaches, teaching strategies and the classroom environment were some of the topics discussed. The nature, age, gender and cultural background of learners are factors that must be considered in terms of the level of curriculum and classroom implementation. The integrated program LSE attempts to accommodate these research findings by creating an innovative English speaking program built on the evidence and findings of this research.
Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Overview

This case study examined the introduction and implementation of the innovative English speaking curriculum, Let’s Speak English (LSE) (Appendix 1), in a Grade 7 Saudi classroom. LSE was implemented and evaluated daily for four months. The case study was set in the authentic context of a KSA classroom with 28 students; as such, it ‘explores a real-life contemporary bounded system involving multiple sources of information’ (Creswell, 2013). The voices of students, teachers and supervisors contribute to understanding the effect of LSE on students’ competence and confidence to speak English. The study took place at an intermediate public school located in the north region of Riyadh. Twenty-eight students, 21 teachers and four supervisors participated. The study systematically examined the development of the LSE curriculum, its classroom implementation, and its effect on the students as they engaged in speaking English.

According to the MoE, educators, parents, my personal observations and the pilot study, Saudi students graduate from public high schools lacking confidence in speaking English, despite 756 hours of English instruction over nine years of schooling. Thus, it appears that the current English speaking curriculum is inadequate for developing students’ proficiency and confidence in speaking English.

LSE was developed and implemented in order to promote Saudi students’ competence and confidence in speaking English. The case study students had limited experience of interacting in English, even though they had been learning English from textbooks since Grade 4. The focus of the study was to investigate the effect of the speech-based activities of LSE on students’ willingness to participate and engage in their English-speaking classroom. LSE consists of four theme-based activities: ‘My News’, ‘Islamic Chants’, ‘Stories in English’ and ‘Videos in English’. The associated activities are not traditionally found in Saudi classrooms. LSE emphasises a learner-centred paradigm in which students complete 46 activities over four months.
4.2 Study Questions

The questions that guided this case study included:

1. What is LSE?
2. Does LSE build confidence and increase the participation of female students in a Grade 7 English-speaking classroom? If so, how does it do this?
3. What teaching and learning strategies of LSE contributed to the improvement of spoken EL in a Grade 7 Saudi classroom?
4. What is the role of the LSE teacher in an English-speaking classroom?

4.3 Case Study Research

According to Yin (2003), a case study is neither ‘a data collection tactic nor merely a design feature alone, but a comprehensive research strategy which includes the logic of design, data collection techniques, and specific approaches to data analysis’ (p. 14). Case study research follows its own complete method in designing a study, collecting and analysing data and presenting and reporting the results (Bermel, 2008; Kui-Hee Song, 2004; Marvasti, 2008; Minichiello & Kottler, 2010; Munhall, 2001; Reid & Walker, 2012; Stark & Torrance, 2005).

This study is set within a unique context in which the phenomenon of curriculum change cannot be separated from the real world context of the Saudi classroom and its religious and cultural considerations. The case study is particularly appropriate to this context because it encourages participants to ‘construct reality and think about situations’ (Yin, 2012, p. 12). It incorporates six steps identified by Bailey, Curtis and Nunan (2001) including problem identification, preliminary investigation, a pilot study, hypothesis/question posing, intervention, evaluation and dissemination.

4.4 Characteristics of Case Study Research

Travers (2001), Yin (2009), Swanborn (2010), Thomas (2011) and Creswell (2013) describe the characteristics of case study research as follows. A case study:
1. is undertaken within the boundaries of one social system (the case), such as individuals or groups
2. employs a holistic, rather than single, method for collecting and analysing data, and allows several different research tools to be used as the study is conducted
3. is participatory because it allows collaborative investigation by teams of colleagues, practitioners and researchers
4. is self-evaluative because alterations are continuously evaluated, assessed and implemented, which enables the initiating researchers to openly acknowledge their bias to the other participants, and attain feedback
5. engages a method of transforming the people involved into researchers, which enables them to learn more and to willingly apply what they have learnt when they undertake the research themselves
6. provides a means of sustaining improvements in teaching and learning—for example, the participants of this study had opportunities to reflect on and assess current practices to explore new ideas, methods and resources, and to assess the success or lack of success of these new ideas, methods and resources.

4.5 Rationale for Case Study Research

Case study research was the most appropriate for this study because it:

1. is determined by the study’s descriptive questions, which start with ‘what’, and guides the participant researcher to formulate more precise research questions that enable understanding of unexpected aspects of the process
2. provides a systematic means of examining events, collecting data, analysing information and reporting the results, and allows for several different data sources to be used as the research is conducted, including direct observation, interviews and artefacts
3. encourages formalising knowledge through the sharing of different perspectives about teaching and learning experiences; I was able to consult closely, share feedback and seek the opinions of stakeholders who were willing to learn about the situation that needed to be changed
4. allows the researcher to focus on individuals in a manner that is rarely possible in group research, for the purpose of comparing and contrasting their values, expectations, opinions, perceptions, resources, controversies, mutual relationships and behaviours
5. recognises the role of the Saudi female student as the informant because the core goal of case study research is to create sustainable learning capacities and to give participants the option to increase control over their own situations. The research provided a unique experience for the Saudi female students to give their opinions and question the teacher’s performance; the more the students became familiar with case study research, the more they developed into autonomous learners
6. tolerates the option of inviting all participants (stakeholders) in the final stage of the research to share with them preliminary research conclusions in order to not only attain a more solid base for the final research report, but to clarify misunderstandings, ameliorate internal social relations and move everyone in the same direction.

4.6 Research Design

This case study took place on a daily basis over 16 weeks in a Grade 7 Saudi classroom. Initially, the study was designed as an action research study. However, after commencing the study, the Saudi MoHE imposed rigid rules for financial sponsorship and subsequently limited my visitations and the duration of my stay. I was limited to one trip to conduct research and collect data, and this trip could not exceed three months. When completing research, any extension of time is left to the consideration of the cultural attaché. Consequently, constraints placed on the study by the Saudi cultural attaché—including limiting the time and ability to collect data in classrooms, and not financing my trip to Saudi beyond three months—meant the study had to be reviewed and changes made based on these externally applied limitations. The initial research design was adjusted and modified to accommodate these changing circumstances, and a case study methodology was subsequently deemed most appropriate.

The six steps of research design developed by Bailey et al. (2001) were applied in this study, and are explained below.
4.6.1 Problem Identification

The study problem was Saudi students’ lack of competence and confidence in speaking English. This problem was evident based on a number of sources:

- the Saudi MoE (2005a) is aware of the failure of most of the Saudi curriculum, including the English curriculum
- educators relate student deficiencies in speaking English to the negative attitudes towards speaking held by students, teachers and peers
- there are limited opportunities for students to speak English, despite being taught from Grade 4, and the English speaking curriculum and teaching methods are considered inappropriate (Abu-Ghararah, 1990; Dukhayil, 2002)
- parents are concerned that the current strategies of teaching and learning English do not produce students who can communicate in English (Al-Abdallay, 2010)
- my 10-year experience as a public intermediate school teacher gave me firsthand insights into language-learning issues, such as students’ reluctance, avoidance, resistance and embarrassment related to speaking English.

A preliminary pilot study was conducted to investigate this initial problem, and to seek ways to improve the curriculum opportunities for KSA students in English-speaking classrooms.

4.6.2 Findings from the Preliminary Investigation: Pilot Study

The preliminary investigation involved a pilot study conducted in two public schools in Riyadh in 2007. Ninety students from Grades 7, 8 and 9 and their six teachers were surveyed (Appendices 2 and 3). The pilot study involved a three-part survey. Part 1 attempted to elicit data based on the teachers’ and students’ beliefs about successful English teaching and learning methods. Part 2 examined the strategies used in teaching and learning English. Part 3 elicited information about the teachers’ and students’ attitudes towards the Saudi-published textbooks.

As a result of the survey, it was found that both teachers and students agreed that the ability and confidence to interact in English for real communication purposes was seen as beneficial to the students’ future. They believed that learning English would be more interesting if it was for authentic reasons, and if the activities were interesting. The students stated that they enjoyed
talking about themselves, telling stories, watching English films and completing role-play activities. Eighty per cent of the students, and all six teachers, agreed that learning was most effective when it involved making choices in topics or tasks, and included guidance from the teacher.

There were discrepancies between the teachers’ and students’ opinions regarding the strategies used in the current English-speaking classrooms. While all the teachers stated that students practised role-play activities and telling stories, 85% of students said that they practised speaking by answering the teachers’ questions and memorising dialogue from textbooks. While 80% of the teachers stated that their students communicated meaningfully in English, 62% of students claimed the opposite. Both the students (35%) and teachers (50%) admitted that they were dissatisfied with the way English was taught and learnt. The majority agreed that they did not like the English textbook. The teachers emphasised that there should be more freedom in teaching, without having to adhere so closely to the textbook, and both agreed that more time should be devoted in class to practising the language in spoken communication.

The survey also indicated that the teachers’ beliefs and students’ needs, interests and expectations should be considered when designing an English speaking curriculum to ensure it is relevant and meaningful. The consensus was that the best results are achieved with a variety of methods, resources and interesting activities. Thus, LSE was designed to include the findings of the pilot study and survey results.

4.6.3 Hypothesis/Questions Posed

The following questions arose from the pilot study:

a. How can students be motivated to willingly participate in speaking activities?

b. What kind of resources, activities and learning environments can be used in classrooms to increase the students’ participation in speaking the target language?

c. What teaching and learning strategies contribute to enhancing the students’ competence and confidence in speaking English?

d. What are the roles of the teacher and students in the English-speaking classroom?
Consequently, LSE was designed as an integrated program for speaking English that carefully considered the pilot study findings, as well as evidence from research regarding how, what and why adolescents learn.

4.6.4 Intervention

LSE was based on four themes:
1. Theme 1: My News
2. Theme 2: Islamic Chants
3. Theme 3: Stories in English
4. Theme 4: Videos in English

Each of these themes includes 14 to 16 activities. They take into account the need for a supportive learning environment, comprehensible and meaningful activities, a learner-centred approach and interactive pedagogies, as well as the importance of cultural barriers.

4.6.5 Evaluation

The participant researcher, teachers, supervisors and students evaluated the activities, resources, classroom environment and teachers’ role during the development and implementation phases of LSE.

4.6.6 Dissemination

The results of this study were disseminated to stakeholders and the university supervisor. The Saudi MoE, as the sponsor of the study, will receive a final copy of the total study. Feedback from the MoE was sought throughout the development and implementation phases of LSE.

4.7 Timeline of the Study

This study occurred between February 2009 and February 2012 in terms of planning, acting and observing, reflecting and revising. It involved an intensive data collection process that occurred over 16 weeks on a daily basis. A summary is presented in Table 9.
Table 9: The Time Line, Events and Outcomes of the Steps of Planning, Acting, Observing, Reflecting and Revising

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Research cycle</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 February 2009 to</td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>• Plan sessions with the three English teachers and the supervisor of Altatwor School (the site of the study)</td>
<td>• Enable the teacher to anticipate any difficulty and create strategies to overcome the difficulties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 September 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Students plan their presentation every week, taking into account the assessment criteria</td>
<td>• Encourage students to be responsible participants in their own learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Guidance is given to students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 September 2010 to</td>
<td>Acting and observing</td>
<td>• Teach four activities of LSE and observe participants’ attitudes and progress. The three key teachers and the supervisor of Altatwor School observe some classes and document their reflections</td>
<td>• Provide authentic resources related to real-life situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 February 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Students observe their LLS and write their reflections</td>
<td>• Teach four activities focused on speaking English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• At the end of LSE, 18 teachers and three supervisors from other schools attend a seminar to explain the activities of LSE demonstrated by students’ performance. They complete their reflections on the outcomes</td>
<td>• Observe learning and teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 September 2010 to</td>
<td>Reflecting</td>
<td>• The participant researcher, 21 teachers, four supervisors and 28 students reflect on learning outcomes by answering the following questions: a. What strategies help students achieve their goals? b. What strategies help students overcome the difficulties involved?</td>
<td>• Reflect on teaching and learning by all participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 February 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 February 2011 to</td>
<td>Revising</td>
<td>• An evaluation of the activities was completed. Twenty-eight students were asked: What would you do if you had the chance to participate in the four activities again?</td>
<td>• Help the participant researcher, supervisors, teachers and students to change for the better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 February 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Students had to think back to what aspects prompted or inhibited them to speak, and then suggest ways to improve the activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Based on the data, the participant researcher, four supervisors and 21 teachers identified ways to improve learning and teaching strategies, and make recommendations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.8 Participants

There were four participant groups in this case study. These included 28 Saudi students in Grade 7, four supervisors and 21 teachers. I was also a researcher participant because I conducted the study while teaching the integrated program. All participants were female and lived in the wealthy north region of Riyadh. The students were enrolled at the Altatwor School and were at
all times well presented, polite and well educated, according to the KSA traditions. The first language of all participants was Arabic and the SL was English.

4.8.1 Participant Researcher

As a participant researcher, I taught the activities of LSE while collecting data through observing students’ reactions and evaluating their progress, conducting interviews and collecting artefacts. Prior to the study, I had 10 years of teaching experience at Altatwor School. I had well-established and collegial relationships with teaching staff and students, which allowed me to feel comfortable and welcomed by the school community. My Master’s Degree in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) gave me a sound research base, expertise, credibility and the confidence to conduct this study.

4.8.2 Students

Twenty-eight students participated in this study, who were all enrolled in Altatwor School and in Grade 7. The students practised the activities of LSE and completed reflective diaries, interviews and five surveys. The decision to include this cohort of students was determined by the principal of Altatwor School in consultation with the three English teachers of the school. The students were 13-year-old females enrolled at a Saudi government school. Nine of the students were from different Arab countries—four Sudanese, two Egyptians, one Syrian, one Jordanian and one Yemeni. Most students had been in Saudi for more than five years.

Based on the initial interviews with students, it was noted that the students had a beginner to lower-intermediate level of speaking English. There were notable differences in the levels of the students’ competence in speaking English, ranging from lacking in competence and confidence (four students) to confident, fluent users of English (five students). In addition, the results of the competency survey conducted before the introduction of LSE suggested that all students started learning English in Grade 6, and had been exposed to English for 84 hours. Some of these students (14%) had additional English classes by private tutors at home or private institutions.

According to the results of the students’ initial structured interviews, all students involved in this study lived within two kilometres of Altatwor School. The students socialised outside of school
and prayed together in the mosque. The parents of the students were professionals with occupations such as doctors, engineers, teachers, traders and soldiers. The nine non-Saudi students were from middle class families, whose parents were doctors, engineers and teachers. Most parents expressed interest in their daughters’ education and supported their progress in speaking English.

4.8.3 Supervisors

Four supervisors were involved in this study, all of whom had bachelor degrees in English literature from colleges of education. They had academic experience and practical training in teaching methodology before being full-time permanent employees at the MoE. All participant supervisors were between 50 to 60 years old and had 25 to 30 years of teaching and supervising experience.

Saudi supervisors are generally classroom teachers for several years before they are promoted to supervise other teachers of the same subject. They supervise by observing teachers’ classes, assessing teaching, providing feedback and reporting to the MoE about the teachers’ performance. In addition, they check the final exam questions of Semesters 1 and 2. They assess the students’ progress by comparing the students’ grades of the final exams from both semesters. They also investigate factors leading to students’ low grades.

The key English supervisor (Supervisor 1), who was in charge of supervising the English teachers of Altatwor School, had a total of 25 years of experience—11 years of teaching experience and 14 years of supervising experience. Supervisor 1 was a major informant, who observed me teaching the four activities of LSE. She observed eight lessons in total and provided feedback when attending the four formal group interviews at the completion of the four activities. She also informally chatted and provided feedback based on her observations.

An unexpected outcome of this research occurred when Supervisor 1 invited English supervisors and teachers from other schools in the north region of Riyadh to attend a seminar about LSE. Three supervisors (Supervisors 2, 3 and 4) attended the seminar. One of these supervisors (Supervisor 2) was the principal of the Education Department of the north region of Riyadh. The aim of the seminar was to explain the concept of the LSE program in general, and the nature of
the four activities in detail. The students participated in the presentation by sharing examples of each activity. The seminar achieved the following:

- informed other stakeholders of the LSE program
- demonstrated the LSE program from the students’ perspective
- attained the English teachers’ and supervisors’ feedback on the activities presented.

After the seminar, Supervisor 2 discussed the idea of LSE and its influence on the students’ confidence with the policy decision makers to develop the English curriculum, especially in terms of teaching English speaking. I was rewarded by Supervisor 2 with a Certificate of Appreciation for my initiative and effort (Appendix 5). In addition, a decision was made to use some of the activities in sample schools in the north region of Riyadh.

4.8.4 Teachers

A total of 21 teachers were involved in this study, 14 of whom had bachelor’s degrees in English literature from colleges of education, four of whom had bachelor’s degrees in English literature from colleges of arts, and three of whom had bachelor’s degrees in English–Arabic translation from colleges of arts. In other words, seven teachers out of 21 lacked exposure to teaching methodology or practical training prior to assuming their teaching positions.

Three key English teachers of Altatwor School (Teachers 1, 2 and 3) were prime informants. They observed me teaching the four activities of LSE, had ongoing discussions and completed reflections at the conclusion of lessons, and evaluated the progress and effectiveness of activities through formal weekly interviews and informal discussions. They also recorded their reflections.

The characteristics of these key teachers are described as follows:

- Teacher 1 had 16 years of experience teaching English. She had been at Altatwor School for six years. She was a qualified teacher who had good relationships with students. She was competent in using technology, and provided ongoing support for other teachers on the use of the smart-board. She was bored by the routine of teaching and wanted to upgrade to vice-principal. During the study, Teacher 1 taught the other three Grade 7 English classes.
• Teacher 2 had 15 years of experience teaching English. She moved to Altatwor School temporarily because the school where she usually worked was undergoing renovation. She was an enthusiastic and creative teacher who provided extra activities to encourage students to speak English by planning and teaching lessons of revision for the class at the middle and end of semester. Teacher 2 was the English teacher for four Grade 9 classes.

• Teacher 3 had only one year of teaching experience and did not have academic or practical experience in teaching before being hired. She lacked confidence in classroom instruction and was often absent from school due to illness; however, she was very enthusiastic to develop her strategies for teaching. Teacher 3 was the English teacher of four Grade 8 classes.

These teachers volunteered to participate in this study because they were aware that the present spoken curriculum and teaching methods were producing neither competence nor confidence in their students in speaking English. When introducing LSE, the teachers responded in the following ways:

Teacher 1: I am sure the students will like these activities because they are new and motivated. However, I am not sure if the students would be able to express their opinions.

Teacher 2: I used to give my students extra activities for speaking, but this program is well prepared and has a specific target, which is promoting the students’ confidence in speaking English.

Teacher 3: I like the idea of these activities; however, I am not sure if I would be able to apply these activities because I do not know how to start.

Eighteen English teachers invited from other schools in the north region of Riyadh attended a seminar on LSE. Upon completing this seminar, they wrote reflections on the activities from the four themes and commented on their observations of the students’ performances.

4.9 Study Site

The study took place at an intermediate public school that caters for girls in Grades 7 to 9. It is located in the north region of Riyadh and has a student population of 336 students. Thirty-five teachers are employed at this school, and they are supported by a principal and three vice-principals. The school is typical of KSA schools in that it caters only for girls, adheres to strict Muslim guidelines, and places religion firmly at the centre of teaching and learning. This site was chosen because:
1. The principal and head vice-principal were both highly motivated and supportive of potential improvements in the quality of education in the KSA.
2. The school was equipped with the facilities, educational resources and technology required for LSE.
3. I had previous teaching experience in this school and had strong support from my English-teaching colleagues.

The unique context for this study means that sociocultural concerns cannot be separated from the curriculum and schooling in the KSA. It is essential to understand how religion is embedded in all aspects of education. In the suburb where Altatwor School is located, the mosque is the central feature. The typical structure of a suburb includes the school being central to the houses and within a few kilometres of the mosque.

Altatwor School is surrounded by a two-metre wall and has two yards—one at the entrance and one in an inner yard. The inner yard is surrounded by a half-moon building consisting of three storeys, and all the staffrooms and most classrooms face this yard. This design is practical and allows easy supervision by staff from the ground floor. The ground floor houses the principal, principal secretary, head vice-principal, head vice-principal secretary and two large rooms for 35 teachers. The ground floor also includes the school facilities—a theatre, laboratory, specialised home economics room, kitchen and two bathrooms (for staff and students). Map 2 illustrates the organisation of the first floor.
Map 2: Design of the First Floor of Altatwor School

The physical appearance of all the classrooms is a traditional one. Desks are arranged in parallel rows in front of the teacher’s desk. All classrooms have air conditioning and many windows that allow light and fresh air to enter. The orientation week and Week 1 of LSE were conducted in Classroom 1.

4.9.1 School Demographics

At the time of the study, the total population of Altatwor School was 336 intermediate students (Grades 7, 8 and 9), with each grade having 112 students enrolled. There were four classes in each year level, with each class consisting of 28 students. There were three English teachers in the school, and each teacher taught one grade and had four classes.

4.9.2 School Environment

LSE was conducted in the smart-board room and resource centre, and scheduled at the beginning of each week. This schedule was available on a large board to be viewed by everyone.
Four LSE classes in Week 2 were conducted in the smart-board room (Image 9). Starting from Week 3, 36 LSE classes were conducted in the resource centre, taking advantage of both the collective-learning room and self-learning room. The resource centre was three-quarters of the size of the smart-board room. It consisted of a reception area and two rooms separated by transparent glass windows and a door. These two rooms were the self-learning and collective-learning rooms (Image 10). Two-thirds of the resource centre was occupied by the collective-learning room, and the remaining third was devoted to the self-learning room. A teacher can move easily between these two rooms through a connecting door, with the glass allowing observation of both rooms.
Image 10: Layout of the Self-learning and Collective-learning Rooms
The educational resources are made available for students, and included books, periodicals, newspapers and brochures. Non-print resources were also used, such as audio and visual resources (photographs, drawings, maps, models, slides, videos and audio tapes) and electronic resources, such as floppy disks, CD-ROMs and the internet. The electronic resources available in the school included a video player, a recorder, a television, computers, an overhead projector, a printer, scissors, a documentary camera and headphones.

The collective-learning room contained space for displays and group work. The LSE students completed the LSE group activities in this room. The self-learning room included space for individual reading and self-learning using technology and a library. The room was equipped with individual booths, shelves, tables and chairs. The participant students used this room to undertake individual work, such as planning for LSE presentations and completing the worksheets.

**4.10 Data Collection**

Data collection was ongoing over 16 weeks on a daily basis. Data were collected using a variety of methods that primarily consisted of observations, interviews and artefacts (Figure 8). The following sections describe these methods.
Figure 8: Data Collection Methods

**Observations**
- LSE classes (52)
- Observation conducted by the researcher (52), teachers (28) and supervisor 1 (8)
- Students completed language learning diaries after each presentation
- Supervisors and teachers from other schools attended the final seminar and observed the students’ performances

**Interviews**
- Formal:
  - structured
  - semi-structured
- Informal

**Artefacts**
- Language learning diaries were completed after each presentation
- Field notes were completed by me after observations and informal interviews
- Students’ work was collected after completed 46 activities
- Surveys were conducted before, during and after the implementation of LSE

**Surveys**
- Student self-evaluation survey before and at the end of LSE
- Students’ competency survey before LSE
- Students’ participation survey before and at the end of each theme
- Students’ evaluation of LSE at the end of LSE
- Students’ evaluations of the teacher role at the end of LSE
- Reflection on observation schedule after observing 52 lessons.
- Reflection on group responses after the weekly group interviews
- Teachers’ and supervisors’ initial survey before introducing LSE
- Teachers’ and supervisors’ evaluation of each theme after observation
- Teachers’ and supervisors’ evaluation of LSE at the end of the final seminar

**Before, during and after the implementation of LSE**
- Structured interviews conducted with:
  - students before implementing LSE
  - teachers (13 weekly structured group interviews and 4 interviews at the completion of the 4 themes)
  - Supervisor 1 (4 structured group interviews at the completion of the 4 themes)
- 19 semi-structured interviews conducted with teachers and Supervisor 1 at a negotiated time over the 13 weeks of LSE.
- Informal interviews conducted with:
  - students before, during and after classroom practices
  - teachers and Supervisor during lunchtime

**Daily for 3 months, 25 observations**
- Language learning diaries were completed after each presentation
- Field notes were completed by me after observations and informal interviews
- Students’ work was collected after completed 46 activities
- Surveys were conducted before, during and after the implementation of LSE
4.10.1 Observations

In 2010, 53 participants (four supervisors, 21 teachers and 28 students) were involved in direct observations. Direct observation happened in the classrooms and allowed me to witness events as they occurred, be present while the action was unfolding and obtain important non-verbal evidence (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). According to Stringer (2007), direct observations prove useful in confirming the data collected from interviews and surveys.

Observations were conducted in the following ways:

• Over 16 weeks on a daily basis, I taught and observed the implementation of LSE. The observations focused on everything that occurred in the English speaking classes. Data were recorded as field notes. In total, 52 classes were observed and field notes were completed.

• The three key English teachers and supervisor of Altatwor School observed me teaching LSE, and wrote their reflections. The focus of their observations was the students’ responses to strategies in relation to the students’ confidence and competence in speaking English. The teachers observed a total of 28 classes. They particularly observed the classes of the first and final weeks of each theme to compare the students’ progress. In addition, Supervisor 1 observed eight classes—the first and last of each theme—in order to note signs of progress.

• The observation sheets (Appendix 6) were completed by the teachers and supervisors while observing the classes. These observation sheets were the focus of the weekly group interviews (Figure 9).

• Twenty-eight students completed language-learning diaries and reflected on their LLS. They wrote in Arabic after participating in each LSE presentations and submitted their diaries in the following class.

• Three supervisors and 18 English teachers from other schools observed the students’ performance while attending the final LSE seminar, and wrote their reflections on this.
4.10.2 Interviews

During the 16 weeks of the study, formal (structured and semi-structured) and informal interviews were conducted with the 28 students, the teachers and Supervisor 1. These interviews allowed the participants to share their insights to the observations, and helped develop a deeper understanding of the students’ experiences of LSE. The questions that guided the structured and semi-structured interviews were informed by the literature, surveys and observations, as suggested by Armstrong (2007). The reflections of the structured and semi-structured interviews were transcribed, while the reflections of the informal interviews were recorded as field notes after conducting the interviews.

The formal structured interviews were conducted with students, teachers and Supervisor 1, and included the following:

1. An initial structured interview (Appendix 7) was conducted with the students prior to LSE. These interviews allowed the establishment of rapport with the participants and served as a way of assessing the students’ knowledge of and confidence in speaking English. Twenty-eight interviews of varying duration were conducted with all students.
Special considerations were necessary because these interviews could be threatening to Saudi students who have high levels of respect for teachers. The self-learning room in the resource centre was the chosen location for the interviewees to ensure privacy. I spent time gaining the trust of the students by asking them personal questions about their likes, dislikes and hobbies. The interviews included mostly open-ended questions to encourage the students to respond freely. The survey related to learning spoken English (Figure 10) and had five sections that discussed their:

- interest in learning English
- perceived relevance of English, by comparing English to maths and science
- previous assistance in learning English
- attitudes about speaking English in front of their peers
- response to the idea of LSE.

**Figure 10: Example of the Interview Survey**

In general, most students answered the questions briefly, and the answers were often biased towards pleasing me. For example, some students tried to demonstrate positive attitudes towards the language because they wanted to satisfy me. Due to the brevity of
their responses and their desire to please me, another survey in Arabic was devised that used multiple choice questions and open questions to elicit more information.

2. The teachers participated in 13 weekly structured group interviews (Appendix 8). These group interviews identified advantages and disadvantages that led to recommendations in terms of resources, classroom management and changes in the classroom environment (Figure 11). The implication of these recommendations was discussed. In addition, at the conclusion of each of the four themes, a structured group interview was undertaken with teachers and Supervisor 1. A total of four structured group interviews were conducted.

![Image of a weekly group interview](image)

**Figure 11: Example of the Weekly Group Interview**

3. Supervisor 1 participated in four structured group interviews at the conclusion of the four themes.

A total of 19 semi-structured interviews (ranging from 15 to 30 minutes) were conducted with teachers and Supervisor 1 at a negotiated time over the 16 weeks of LSE. The semi-structured interviews enabled access to the multiple views and realities of the participants related to teaching and learning associated with LSE.
Semi-structured interviews were guided by the following questions:

- What is the role of the English teacher in teaching LSE?
- What teaching strategies are required for English teachers to effectively implement LSE?
- What challenges would teachers encounter when using the LSE program in their classrooms, and how can they overcome these difficulties?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of LSE for teachers, students and supervisors?

In addition, I listened for and explored key words, ideas and themes by using follow-up questions to encourage the participants to expand on their observations.

Informal problem-solving interviews were conducted with the 28 students, three teachers and Supervisor 1. These included the following:

1. The students were interviewed before, during and after classroom practices. Most of these interviews were conducted during English speaking classes and lasted approximately three to five minutes. These interviews were often conducted on a needs-basis. For example, when it was noticed that Student 26 experienced considerable fear of the responsibility of being an LSE group leader, an individual conversation was necessary to encourage her to take responsibility and offer her support. Individual informal interviews were held with students with negative attitudes towards the changes in the learning environment. For example, Student 8 reflected in the first week:

   "It was a new activity, comprehensive and demanding. The class was noisy. My ability in speaking was less than the average and I have little confidence. Actually, I would appreciate if we focus on the main curriculum to have high marks in exams.

   It was explained to this student that improving speaking skills would improve the skills of writing needed to pass the exam.

2. Ongoing informal, reflective interviews with teachers and Supervisor 1 were conducted for clarification, building and refining theories, and following up. These interviews were conducted regularly during lunchtime and lasted five to 10 minutes. The teachers and Supervisor 1 informally chatted and gave feedback based on their observations and insights to significant events that occurred while implementing LSE.
4.10.3 Collection of Artefacts

Throughout the study, a variety of artefacts were collected, including language learning diaries, field notes, samples of students’ work and surveys. The language learning diaries (Appendix 9) were completed in Arabic after the students finished their presentations. These were submitted in the following class. Diaries were used based on O’Hanlon’s (2003) advice, and employing these diaries provided rich description from the students’ perspectives about their performance, confidence and ability in speaking. The students also commented on the role of the teacher and the classroom atmosphere (Figure 12).

![Figure 12: Example of a Student Diary](image)

The field notes recorded everything and anything that occurred in LSE. The field notes provided a running commentary on factors that contributed to effective language learning and student confidence as Hatch, White and Capitelli (2005), McIntyre (2005), Ruthven (2005) and Bailey (2006) comment. The field notes were recorded on a regular basis following every class (52 LSE lessons). Informal problem-solving interviews with students and informal reflective interviews with teachers and Supervisor 1 were recorded as field notes.

4.10.3.1 Samples of Student Work

During the 16 weeks of LSE, 46 activities were completed and students’ work samples were collected. These samples included drawings, writing, brochures, thinking maps (Figure 13), personal reflections and related resources. These were used to judge the students’ responses to LSE and their learning outcomes. They were collected at the end of each of the four themes to provide a snapshot of the student’s progress in learning English.
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4.10.3.2 Surveys

Ten surveys were completed with 28 students, 21 teachers and four supervisors at the beginning, at the end and during LSE. The participants provided a written response to questions designed to elicit information about LSE. The surveys provided a practical way to collect data from many respondents over a short timeframe (Taylor, Wilkie & Baser, 2006). Closed questions were used to gather demographic and attribute data about the participants’ age, length of learning English, highest educational qualification, experience and employment status. Open-ended questions were used to collect data about the participants’ perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of LSE in relation to the students’ competence and confidence in speaking English.

The survey details were as follows:

1. Five surveys were undertaken by 28 students. These were translated into Arabic to avoid misunderstanding and to give students greater freedom to answer and explain their ideas. The responses were later translated into English. Students were given 20 to 30 minutes to complete the questions. These surveys were as follows:
   a. A student self-evaluation survey (Appendix 10) was conducted at the beginning and end of LSE to compare the students’ initial expectations with their views of their ultimate achievements. This survey was used to record the students’ evaluation of their abilities in speaking English; their linguistic knowledge of English; and their confidence, enjoyment and feelings when speaking English.
b. A student competency survey (Appendix 11) was conducted before introducing LSE. This survey was used to support the students’ initial structured interviews, and gave insight to:
- the students’ interest in language learning and speaking English
- the students’ methods (if any) used to practise English outside the class
- the students’ strategies for communicating with others using English
- the students’ attitudes about the speaking activities in the Grade 7 textbook
- the students’ suggestions about the use of other resources to support the speaking activities in the textbook
- the students’ opinions about the factors that contribute to achieving successful language learning and promoting confidence in speaking English.

c. A student participation survey (Appendices 12a, b, c and d) provided a means of encouraging the students to reflect on their understandings and LSE (Figure 14). Survey 1 was completed before introducing each theme. Surveys 2, 3 and 4 were undertaken upon the completion of each theme. Each survey had a particular focus:
- Survey 1: planning for presentations by following instructions
- Survey 2: presenting (action) and observing what happened while presenting
- Survey 3: reflecting on the factors that promoted or hindered the students’ confidence in speaking English, LSE strategies or techniques
- Survey 4: reviewing by responding to the question, ‘If you had the chance to do the theme again, what would you change?’
d. Students’ evaluations of LSE (Appendix 13) were completed at the end of LSE. This assessed the students’ satisfaction with LSE and their preferences for themes.

e. Students’ evaluations of the teacher’s role (Appendix 14) were completed by students after implementation of the four themes. These surveys indicated the level of student satisfaction with the teacher’s role in supporting language learning in teaching LSE.

3. Teachers and Supervisor 1—the three key teachers and Supervisor 1 completed the

4. Reflection on observation schedule after observing 52 lessons. This included responses to teaching/learning questions regarding the classroom atmosphere, students’ performance, activities and teacher’s role.

5. Participant researcher—I documented the reflection on group responses after completing the weekly group interviews attended by the teachers, and the group interviews conducted after each theme and attended by the teachers and Supervisor 1. I completed a reflection sheet that allowed me to examine the recommendations in terms of the resources, teacher’s role, students’ attitudes and classroom management.

6. Teachers and supervisors—18 English teachers and three supervisors invited from other schools were surveyed before, during and after introducing the activities of LSE in a seminar held at the conclusion of LSE. These surveys were completed in English:

a. The teachers’ and supervisors’ initial survey (Appendix 15) was completed before introducing the activities of LSE. The survey was used to assess the teachers’ opinions regarding:
- the factors that contribute to students achieving successful language learning
- the Saudi public school students’ abilities to communicate meaningfully and confidently in English with others
- the speaking activities of the Grade 7 textbook.

b. The teachers’ and supervisors’ evaluation of each theme (Appendix 16) was completed after listening to the description of the four themes with the students’ demonstrations. The teachers and supervisors evaluated each theme in terms of (Figure 15):
- theme
- resources
- the students’ performance in English
- the students’ confidence and competence when presenting
- suggestions for change.

![Figure 15: Example of Supervisors’ Evaluation of Each Theme](image)

c. The teachers’ and supervisors’ evaluation of LSE (Appendix 17) survey examined levels of satisfaction and indicated the theme that was the most effective in encouraging the students’ participation and learning of English.
4.11 Data Analysis

A grounded theory approach was used as a systematic way to analyse data (Charmaz, 2006). The data were read and re-read to discover codes, concepts and categories to explain the benefits and shortcomings of LSE (Lichtman, 2010). Strauss and Corbin (1997) suggest four primary requirements to apply grounded theory to research. The research should:

1. suit the phenomenon and provide reasonable understanding of it
2. provide control conditions for the implementation of the theory
3. account for phenomena that are relevant to the participants’ concerns
4. be abstract enough to be applicable to a wide variety of contexts.

Over the 16 weeks of data collection, the analysis was ongoing—I was continually searching for relationships between concepts. In order to generate patterns and links, the aim was to create a theory that was grounded in this unique setting that has been largely unexplored by researchers. The theory shed light on the effect of the LSE and ways to improve KSA students’ confidence and competence to speak English.

Based on the ideas of Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh and Sorensen (2010); Birks and Mills (2011); Bryant and Charmaz (2010); Charmaz (2006) and Thomas (2011), the grounded theory methodology was most applicable to this study because it:

1. suited collecting and analysing the data about teaching and learning practices in a classroom setting
2. provided a powerful and vigorous method for constructing a theory in qualitative research
3. aimed to discover the participants’ main concerns and the ways they continually sought to resolve them. During the entire research process, the participant researcher considered questions such as ‘What is going on?’ and ‘What is the participants’ main problem and how are they trying to solve it?’
4. had many unique characteristics for collecting and analysing data by encouraging constant comparison of data throughout the research process. Constant comparison of data:
   a. helped me to constantly modify and sharpen the growing theory
   b. shaped the process of data collection, such as by increasing the density of categories
c. provided follow-up procedures for unanticipated results and clarified the parameters of the emerging theory

d. supported data collection and analyses before incorporating the knowledge of the literature

e. guaranteed that the analysis was based on the data and not influenced by pre-existing constructs.

Using the approach of Corbin and Strauss (2008) allowed a systematic investigation of the causal conditions, context, intervening conditions, action strategies and consequences in the data. Three distinct overlapping processes were followed to analyse the data: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. The coded information was manually written up in coloured tables, graphs and charts. A complex map of all the conceptual relationships was completed (Figure 16). The process of analysis included four constant comparisons, which are briefly described below.
Figure 16: Map of the Conceptual Relationships
Ary et al. (2010) cite the researcher’s life experiences, research and scholarship as knowledge that cannot be erased prior to conducting research. This was the case when I began this study. I was a teacher with 10 years of experience, and subsequently had inside information regarding students’ levels of engagement, confidence and interaction in English-speaking classrooms.

In open coding, each meaningful component in observations, structured and semi-structured interviews, and surveys is open-coded for major categories and themes (Glaser, 1996). The data contained in artefacts, which included language learning diaries and field notes, were also assigned open codes. Consequently, many categories (with some abstract) were created. Having quite abstract categories helps generate general theory (Bryant & Charmaz, 2010). These open codes were subject to change and revision as the research progressed and more data were analysed.

The open codes were represented in tables, graphs and charts to identify and match patterns and correspondences between and across the cases, enabling cross-case synthesis to occur and a grounded theory to emerge. In addition, coded information was developed into coloured cards, and then stacked into emerging categories. Thus, comparisons and contrasts were illustrated by simply looking at the different colours of the cards. In addition, as Charmaz (2000) advises, as the codes were developed, code notes were written to explain the process of coding to support later development into reports.

In the stage of axial coding, the data that were broken down during open coding were reassembled and coded into conceptual categories in order to make them more workable. I sought new ideas; described the category with all its properties, variations and processes, and established links or relationships between categories by employing a combination of inductive and deductive thinking (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The process of coding and categorising ceased when I could identify nothing new about a category of relevance for the developing theory.

In selective coding, conceptual categories were grouped into broader core categories that were linked to all other categories to indicate the connections between the isolated categories (Birks & Mills, 2011). Different types of categories emerged during the coding process. These categories were the:
• phenomenon—the concept that holds the pieces together
• causal conditions—the factors that have caused the core phenomenon
• context—the specific properties of the phenomenon and the certain conditions under which the sequences of the phenomenon take place
• intervening conditions—the broad and general conditions that influence the sequences of the phenomenon
• action strategies—the ways in which individuals or groups respond to the phenomenon in terms of the purposeful strategies they adopt to manage and deal with the phenomenon
• consequences of the core phenomenon (Creswell, 2013, p. 86).

During the selective coding stage, coloured cards enabled the study of the data line by line, which enabled the marking of words and phrases that were particularly relevant for strengthening and refining the emerging interpretation. In addition, I drew diagrams and a complex map of all the conceptual relationships. While gathering, coding and categorising new data, the new categories were constantly compared with those already established, and incoming data were checked for their fit within existing categories. For example, the core of ‘positive learning environment’ could be included within the broad core of ‘stimulating learning environment’.

Each incident in a category was compared with every other incident for similarities and differences. For example, the incident of ‘teacher role of encouragement’ shared similarities with all incidents of ‘teacher role’—particularly the incidents of the category ‘teaching strategies’ and ‘interactive pedagogy’. However, when comparing the incidents of these cores in hierarchy and horizontal levels, the differences were clear. Constant comparison when coding and categorising was useful for discovering the properties and dimensions of categories. It assisted me to examine the concepts critically because each concept was illuminated by the new incoming data.

Once coding and categorising were completed within, between and across the case analysis, hypotheses were created to describe the interrelationships of the different categories. The themes that emerged from the data are explained in Chapter 8. The process of identifying the original open codes, axial codes and emerging themes is displayed below (Figure 17).
**Open codes**
- Explains activity objective
- Instructs to complete activities
- Provides information

**Axial codes**
- Tutor

**Selective codes**
- Orientation
- Students’ needs
- Interesting tasks
- Modelling positive attitudes
- Respect
- Attracting attention
- Motivation

**Open codes**
- Organises classroom events
- Groups students
- Distributes work

**Axial codes**
- Organiser

**Selective codes**
- Inspires students
- Tolerates differences
- Motivates hesitant students
- Discovers effective LLS

**Open codes**
- Joins in activities
- Introduces new information
- Continuity of discussions
- Encourages creativity

**Axial codes**
- Encourager

**Selective codes**
- Gap activities
- Meaning
- Memorise
- Use the new words

**Open codes**
- Observes everything

**Axial codes**
- Observer

**Selective codes**
- Provides ideas, explanations
- Speaks or writes in English

**Open codes**
- Prompts when confused

**Axial codes**
- Prompter

**Selective codes**
- Assists with speaking
- Works with individuals/groups
- Overcomes difficulties
- Helps less competent students

**Open codes**
- Makes progress easier
- Learning strategies
- Learning styles
- Social and coping skills

**Axial codes**
- Facilitator

**Selective codes**
- Feedback and correction
- Students’ progress
- Effectiveness of materials

**Open codes**
- Stimulating learning environment
- Positive atmosphere
- Planning
- Timing
- Promoting fluency
- Collaboration
- Interactive pedagogy
- Authentic activities
- Learner-centred

**Axial codes**
- Supporter

**Selective codes**
- Extra classes
- Time for activities
- Remind students
- Finish on time
- Complete at home
- Commitment

**Open codes**
- Lack of control:
  - Attract attention
  - Enlarge participation
  - Open-ended questions
  - More participations
  - Signal when speaking
  - Speak loudly
  - Classroom routine

**Axial codes**
- Assessor

**Selective codes**
- Individual attention:
  - Address by names
  - Portfolio

**Open codes**
- Teaching strategies

**Axial codes**
- Teacher’s role

**Selective codes**
- Vocabulary and language

**Open codes**
- First language interference

**Axial codes**
- Motivation

**Selective codes**
- Insufficient time

**Open codes**
- Challenges for teachers and solutions

**Axial codes**
- Large classes

**Selective codes**
- Significant time

**Open codes**
- Significant time

**Axial codes**
- Expectations

**Selective codes**
- Consequences

**Open codes**
- Consequences

**Axial codes**
- Consequences

**Selective codes**
- Consequences

**Open codes**
- Consequences

**Axial codes**
- Consequences

**Selective codes**
- Consequences
Figure 8: Explanation of Open, Axial and Selective Codes of the Study
The themes that emerged were:

1. teaching strategies contributing to the improvement of spoken English
2. the teacher’s role in English-speaking classrooms
3. challenges for teachers
4. effective LLS
5. challenges for students
6. benefits for teachers and students.

These six themes are fully explored in the following chapters.

### 4.12 Establishing Trustworthiness

For this study to influence current practice in Saudi classrooms and to be used to inform policies at a system level, it was important to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings (Power, 2008). Sheehy, Nind, Rix and Simmons (2005) state that the trustworthiness of a study concerns the degree to which a reader can trust and believe in the quality of the study. Heigham and Croker (2009) define ‘trustworthiness’ as a set of standards that demonstrates that a research study has been conducted competently and ethically. For the purposes of this study, trustworthiness was established in the following ways.

#### 4.12.1 Extensive Engagement

The study was conducted over 16 weeks on a daily basis. Throughout the study, 52 hours of observations and 33 sessions of formal interviews and ongoing informal interviews were conducted. Ten surveys were completed with 28 students, 21 teachers and four supervisors from other schools at the beginning, at the end and during LSE.

#### 4.12.2 Persistent Observation

Over 16 weeks on a daily basis, I taught and observed 52 classes. In addition, a total of 53 participants were involved in direct observations that occurred in classrooms.
4.12.3 Triangulation

Fifty-three participants (four supervisors, 21 teachers and 28 students) from the site and neighbouring schools participated in this study. Multiple sources of data collection were used to collect and collate information, including observations, interviews and a variety of artefacts (such as language learning diaries, field notes and samples of students’ work).

4.12.4 Dependability

Dependability refers to the stability (reliability) of data over time and over conditions (Mauther, Birch, Jessop & Miller, 2002). Data were collected over 16 weeks in the same classroom with the same students on a regular daily basis for 46 activities. Classroom contexts in the KSA are very predictable and similar because teachers work from a rigid lock-step syllabus. It is likely that other students and teachers would respond similarly to those in this case study, irrespective of the class or school involved.

4.12.5 Confirmability

According to Mauther et al. (2002), confirmability (objectivity) relates to whether there is correspondence between what the study’s participants meant and what the researcher inferred. According to Carolyn and Moomaw (2006), for this criterion to be achieved, the findings must reflect the participants’ voices and the conditions of the enquiry, and not the biases, motivations or perspectives of the participant researcher. In order to meet this criterion, three principle groups of participants were included in this study, and opportunities for informal discussions, reflective group sessions and feedback were ongoing. In addition, sufficient detail was included directly from the participants.

4.12.6 Thick Description

A thick description was built over the 16 weeks of daily participation. The unique nature of the Saudi classroom gives the reader insight into a classroom context from which they are often excluded. Understanding the unique features of such classrooms can serve to enhance the teaching of EFL students, especially Saudi female students.
4.13 Conclusion

This case study of the implementation of the LSE program at a female intermediate public school over 16 weeks in 2010 involved 46 interactive activities based on the following themes: Theme 1—‘My News’, Theme 2—‘Islamic Chants’, Theme 3—‘Stories in English’ and Theme 4—‘Videos in English’.

LSE is a learner-centred program based on new content and new pedagogies that are different to those of the traditional Saudi classroom. Data were collected from multiple sources, including teacher, observers (21 English teachers and four supervisors) and 28 Grade 7 students. Data sources included observations, interviews and artefacts that included language learning diaries, field notes, samples of students’ work and surveys (student self-evaluation, competency, participation, evaluation of LSE and evaluation of the teacher role, and teacher and supervisor evaluation of each theme and LSE).

The data were analysed using a grounded theory approach, from which six themes emerged. The following chapters expand on these themes and identify ways to address the confidence and competence needs of Saudi students when speaking English.
Chapter 5: LSE—An Integrated Program

5.1 Overview

As opposed to traditional KSA English speaking classes, the integrated program—Let’s Speak English (LSE) (Appendix 1) places emphasis on creating a deeper understanding of communicating in English, and provides opportunities for collaboration and interaction in classrooms. LSE encourages moving from a teacher-centred approach to a learner-centred approach. The teacher’s role changes from director to facilitator, supporter and encourager of students’ independent learning and engaged participation. This is in complete contrast to current Saudi traditional pedagogy and English learning in classrooms, where textbooks drive instructional decisions.

LSE draws on the research of Hall and Hord (2005), Bermel (2008) and Reid and Walker (2012) by meeting the following criteria:

- explicit objectives that form the basis of selecting and ordering the components
- a clear framework of knowledge and capabilities selected to be appropriate to the overall aims
- content appropriate to the broader language curriculum, wider Saudi society, particular class of students and educational situation
- continuity and a sense of direction in classroom work for teachers and students
- a record for other teachers of what has been covered by LSE
- a basis for evaluating the students’ progress
- a foundation for evaluating the appropriateness of LSE in relation to the overall aims and students’ needs, as identified both before and during LSE.

Based on the ideas of Alptekin (2002), Moore (2005), Elyildirim and Ashton (2006), Killen (2006), Coyne et al. (2010), Norris (2011), Patanasorn (2011), Robinson (2011) and Cullen, Harris and Hill (2012), LSE is built on the following teaching and learning principles:

1. A supportive and stimulating learning environment that endorses positive and collaborative interactions: This learning environment provides comfortable
circumstances, practical classroom activities and rich experiences of learning. Students learn by observing, imitating and modelling behaviours and attitudes.

2. Comprehensible and meaningful activities to practise EL, rather than learning that is focused on the production of grammatically perfect utterances: The speaking activities of LSE are fluency-based and accuracy-based activities. The fluency-based activities of LSE include free discussion, role-play and gap activities. To achieve accurate production, students experience contextualised practice, the personalisation of language and the social use of language. The teacher creates situations that encourage students to determine the meanings from the context, and presents material in a way that encourages retention. Students are not expected to begin speaking until they are ready.

3. Accommodates and recognises cultural barriers to language learning and makes adjustments to overcome any issues that arise.

4. Employs a learner-centred approach that encourages students to plan, discuss ideas, participate in assessment and practise English outside the classroom.

5. Implements interactive pedagogies, such as the audio-lingual method, task-based language teaching, PPP model and CLT, as summarised below (Table 10).
Table 10: The Interactive Pedagogy of LSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interactive pedagogy</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Role of teacher and learner</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audio-lingual method</strong></td>
<td>Focusing on accurately mimicking the pronunciation and grammatical structure. These chants serve as a model to be repeated and memorised.</td>
<td><strong>Students:</strong> • have a role that is central and active (listening for specific information, translating words, discussing related issues and completing drill activities). <strong>Teacher:</strong> • has a role that is reactive.</td>
<td>Theme 2 • Modelled • Repeated • Memorised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task-based language teaching</strong></td>
<td>Students actively communicate and focus on the task.</td>
<td><strong>Pre-task</strong> <strong>Teacher:</strong> • creates the task and provides challenging and meaningful opportunities for students to accomplish it • informs students about the task, learning and performance requirements, and assessment criteria. <strong>Task cycle</strong> <strong>Students:</strong> • work on the task in pairs or small groups, by planning, negotiating, expressing ideas and solving problems. <strong>Teacher:</strong> • is an observer, participant, resource, prompter, supporter and facilitator. <strong>Pre-task</strong> <strong>Students:</strong> • evaluate the performance of each group. <strong>Teacher:</strong> • evaluates the performance of each group and provides feedback and correction.</td>
<td>Themes 1, 2, 3 and 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PPP model</strong></td>
<td>Teacher presents language feature or language function. Upon completion, the language used is discussed.</td>
<td><strong>Presentation</strong> <strong>Teacher:</strong> • introduces a language feature or function embedded in context of chant, story and video • asks questions to determine what students know. <strong>Practice</strong> <strong>Students:</strong> • complete controlled short activities to use in pairs or groups • learn the new language in transitional speaking to establish performance speech • practise the performance speech by repeating sentences individually and/or reading them aloud to each other and correcting any mistakes. <strong>Teacher:</strong> • checks the students’ work for accuracy of form. <strong>Production</strong> <strong>Students:</strong> • use the new aspect of the language just practised accurately in performance speaking, with little direction from the teacher • report on the task in a written form. <strong>Teacher:</strong> • encourages students and gives feedback • reports on the task in a written form</td>
<td>Themes 2, 3 and 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
individually discusses with students the language used.

CLT Real communication, where the accuracy of the language used is less important than the successful achievement of the communicative task. Themes 2, 3 and 4

Teacher: 
• encourages students to participate in group work and to make adjustments to overcome difficulties encountered 
• instructs students on planning and delivering oral presentations and assessment criteria based on effective communicative strategies.

Students: 
• work collaboratively to solve problems, share knowledge, discuss ideas, plan presentations and evaluate outcomes.

5.1.1 LSE Syllabus Design

LSE incorporates the form, function, task and process models of syllabus design (Breen, 2001; Graves, 2000; Gray, 2000; Harmer, 2001; Hyde & Thomas, 2005; Knapp, Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2009). The characteristics of the syllabus are explained below (Table 11).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal syllabus</td>
<td>Content moves from the simple to complex—for example, retelling a story from a DVD (Theme 3: Story 1) to constructing a story (Theme 3: Story 3). Knowledge is taught according to forms, systems of phonology, morphology, vocabulary, grammar and discourse text (such as Theme 2).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional syllabus</td>
<td>Content is organised according to functions of language and derived for special purposes (for example, in Theme 1, the social functions of EL include descriptions and explanations). There is emphasis on social appropriateness and reading, writing, listening and speaking related to purpose and need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task-based syllabus</td>
<td>The content is based on communicative everyday tasks, such as conserving water and energy (Theme 4). The sequence of items moves from general to less general tasks (for example, Theme 4 moves students from a video about cooking to writing a recipe). Knowledge is based on meaning that is derived and created through a unified system of linguistic forms and interpersonal conventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process syllabus</td>
<td>Overall knowledge focuses on identifying the immediate and long-term needs of learners. The sequence of activities and tasks is based on the assumption that learners refine their knowledge and abilities in a cyclic manner. A negotiation cycle is applied, which leads to ongoing evaluation and improvement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.2 Role of Teachers

With LSE, the teacher moves from the traditional KSA classroom model of being an imparter of knowledge and director of tasks to that of a teacher implementing a learner-centred classroom. Ten roles identified by Harmer (2001), Armstrong and Savage (2002) and Prodromou and Clandfield (2006) are incorporated: tutor, organiser, encourager, participant, observer, resource, prompter, supporter, facilitator and assessor. These roles are defined below (Table 12).
### Table 12: Teacher Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibility of teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutor</td>
<td>Instructs students on how to complete activities, and points them in new directions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organiser</td>
<td>Organises students to undertake activities—for example, provides information, explains, groups students and offers guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourager</td>
<td>Inspires students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Participates in activities to ensure the continuity of student engagement and achieve a creative atmosphere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observer</td>
<td>Observes the students’ work in order to provide feedback and evaluate resources and activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource</td>
<td>Supports learning by providing ideas or explanations as required, and assists students to speak and write in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prompter</td>
<td>Acts as a prompter when students are confused or lose fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporter</td>
<td>Contributes to the fulfilment of students attaining their goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitator</td>
<td>Makes students’ progress easier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor</td>
<td>Offers feedback and gentle correction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.1.3 Role of Students

LSE adopts a learner-centred approach that focuses on students’ needs, interests and relevant activities. In a learner-centred classroom, students are active and responsible participants in their own learning. Students contribute to the overall design of course content and the selection of learning procedures. They are involved in negotiating content and monitoring the progress of the course. Teachers encourage students to discuss ideas and opinions, plan presentations, participate in assessment, reflect on LLS and practise learning outside the class (Doyle, 2011).

### 5.2 Conclusion

In order to promote Saudi students confidence and competence in speaking English, the integrated program—LSE was developed. It consists of four themes: Theme 1—‘My News’, Theme 2—‘Islamic Chants’, Theme 3—‘Stories in English’ and Theme 4—‘Videos in English’ and involved 46 interactive activities. This program emphasises real English communication among students in classrooms. LSE encourages moving from a teacher-centred approach to a learner-centred approach where the student plays an active role in classroom practices and the teacher’s role is facilitator, supporter and encourager.
Chapter 6: The Implementation of LSE in Altatwor School

6.1 Overview

The implementation of the integrated program—Let’s Speak English (LSE) (Appendix 1) took place over 16 weeks on a daily basis in a Grade 7 classroom. LSE was implemented from 25 September 2010 to 4 February 2011. The Grade 7 students completed 46 theme-based activities. A learner-centred approach and interactive activities were central to this program. LSE provided a direct contrast to the traditional classroom experience of the Saudi students. They were encouraged to work in collaborative groups, speak only in English and present regularly to their peers. The teacher provided feedback and support. The students connected the themes and activities to their lives outside the classroom and shared their opinions, experiences and understandings. The process of implementing LSE is outlined below.

6.1.1 Gaining Access

Initially, I was responsible for negotiating the possibility of LSE with the Saudi MoE, which ultimately endorsed the study. After gaining support from the MoE, it was necessary to obtain support from the principal of the school, English teachers, primary supervisor, parents and students. Two weeks after arriving in the KSA, I met with the head vice-principal of Altatwor School—the site of the study. The vice-principal welcomed the idea of LSE and informed me that it would be a privilege for the school, including the students, to experience this program.

Returning to the school after five years away was quite stressful for me. Prior to starting the study, I decided to visit the school to reorientate myself to the setting, reacquaint myself with colleagues and new staff, and collect initial data about the students. While I had good relationships with the previous staff, most of these staff members had retired and been replaced by new teachers. The school staff usually begin their semester two weeks prior to the students; thus, the head vice-principal suggested visiting the school during this period. Meanwhile, she would briefly inform the school staff and supervisor about my visit and the purpose of my research. In addition, she suggested receiving me at the school gate at 8.00 am to introduce me to
the principal who moved to the school on September 2004—one month after I left the KSA to study in Canberra, Australia.

6.1.1.1 My First Day

I arrived at the school at 8.00 am, and wondered whether I would be treated as a colleague or as a researcher who would simply complete her task and leave. I waited for the gatekeeper to open the gate of the school. I took off my Abaya, headscarf and Niqab once I had arrived in the front yard. The head vice-principal welcomed me and took me to the principal’s office. When the principal saw us at the door of her office, she approached, greeted me with a smile and said, ‘I have heard about you—you are one of the best teachers in this school’. I described my study and gave her a copy of LSE. In addition, I gave her a consent form from the Saudi MoE (Appendix 18) and the relevant ethics forms (Appendices 19 and 20). The principal was supportive of the research. She confirmed the changes and improvement in education over the last five years, and that there was more authority vested in school principals.

A breakfast was arranged by the school staff to celebrate my return, during which I met the school staff, including the teachers and secretaries. I had a private conversation with my colleagues (the three English teachers) and the supervisor. The supervisor stressed that the Minister of Education and Deputy Minister of Girls’ Education were keen to do their best to meet the expectations of the King, who seeks to develop, upgrade and improve the educational system of the KSA to cope with the development of international education. To do so, they now work hard to follow the 10-year development plan currently under examination (2004 to 2014).

The three English teachers relayed that the current difficulties faced by teachers were curriculum intensity, class sizes and fear of change. Each textbook had been reduced from 14 units to eight units, and the number of students in each class was lowered from 40 to 30. Most of the teachers at this school used technology, and subsequently found lessons to be more productive and interesting for both the students and teachers.
6.2 Initial Seminar for Teachers and Parents

An initial seminar was conducted to give the parents additional information about LSE and its benefits. This seminar was led by the principal, who introduced the study and requested the support of the parents. It was held in the theatre of the school for one hour. The supervisor, teachers, parents and students responded positively to LSE, volunteered to participate and readily completed the consent forms.

6.3 LSE Begins: Orientation

Schools start at 7.00 am and end at 12.15 pm, five days a week. There are seven periods during the school day, each lasting 45 minutes. There is a break of 30 minutes after the third period. Since late classes are the least desired, subjects are distributed fairly throughout the week, except for maths and science, which always occupy the early time slots. English classes are scheduled for periods four and six. Grade 7 has four 45-minute English periods each week. During this study, 30 minutes were allocated to the normal English curriculum, while the remaining 15 minutes were allocated to LSE, for a 13-week period. In total, 52 lessons of English were taught.

Prior to commencing the four themes of LSE, the students completed an orientation week. During this orientation, the students completed the initial structured interviews, self-evaluation survey and competency survey. I established rapport with the students to assess their needs and interests. The vice-principal made this step easier for me by telling the students, ‘You are going to have the great honour, among all the other classes, of experiencing a wonderful program by a doctorate student. I want you to cooperate with her. I believe in you, so please do not disappoint me’. The students were excited and very interested, which was evident in their concentrated listening.

6.4 Day 1 of Teaching LSE: My Reflections

The first day was very difficult for the students and me because moving from a traditional mode of teaching based on a teacher-centred approach to a learner-centred approach was challenging. I felt that the students were as worried and nervous as I was, and I was waiting to see their reactions. The idea of learning while having fun and interactions with others was introduced from
day one. From my perspective, this aim was difficult to achieve and required patience and tolerance because the students were used to learning in a strictly controlled environment where they only spoke with permission from the teacher.

The students did not respond positively at first. They misbehaved by chatting in Arabic about unrelated topics, and by teasing each other while I spoke. They also ignored or spoke over their peers. There was little room to move around or group the students, and the activities were not clearly understood. I realised the need to establish ground rules and a routine, and knew I had to be patient. The following lesson excerpts from each of the four themes describe how the lessons changed and evolved over time.

6.4.1 Theme 1: ‘My News’—Lesson 1

Based on data collected from observation and included in the field notes and students’ diaries, Table 13 describes Lesson 1 from Theme 1.
Table 13: Description of the First Lesson of Theme 1—‘My News’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period: Four</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I reminded the students of the communicative strategies for speaking in front of the class, the way to begin and conclude speech, speaking within the allocated time (two minutes) and filling in their diary sheets in Arabic after each presentation. I decided to keep reminding them of these strategies until they could do them routinely. The students were also instructed how to plan their oral presentation (Appendix 21). I began the session by stating that I was very excited to hear their news. The seven students of Sunday’s news were chosen randomly, according to their readiness to present their topic. They were quite nervous and worried. Each student presented after giving me the worksheet for ‘My News’. I offered encouraging feedback after listening to the presenter, and we applauded her. I also wrote words of encouragement and notes on their worksheets for ‘My News’. Six students of this group spoke about Activity 1—‘Something about me you do not know’. This topic encouraged the use of personal language, such as name, age, family, home and hobbies. Most students read from papers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excerpt from student reflection, followed by my reflections

What follows are student diary entries and my written reflections on their attempts to speak English.

**Student 4 reflection:**
The theme was good and effective for speaking and reading, but exhausting. The atmosphere of the class was not encouraging because some students were talking and laughing at me. My ability of speaking was excellent because I was ready for the presentation. I was afraid in the beginning and my voice was very low then gradually I got some confidence. The teacher role was supportive and encouraging.

**My reflection:**
Student 4 talked about Activity 1 without a paper. She communicated with audiences using good eye contact, facial expressions and body language. She started and concluded the speech appropriately. Although she was hesitated in the beginning of the speech, she was more confident and relaxed by the end.

**Student 5 reflection:**
This theme is excellent for speaking and I hope to get the most from this program. My voice was low, but when the class was quiet, I raised my voice. The teacher role was perfect and she explained the nature of the program. She allows some time for having fun and chatting with other students, but there are other times when we should be quiet and listen to the others’ presentations. Even while having fun, we should be responsible and not annoy other students.

**My reflection:**
Student 5 talked about Activity 1 using notes. She did not communicate properly with audiences, particularly in the beginning; she made few hesitated eye contacts and spoke with a low voice. She was sensitive to the reactions of her peers. She became confident gradually and started to raise her voice and make good eye contact. Although she did not start the speech appropriately, she concluded well by saying: ‘I hope you enjoyed [My News]’.

I realised that some students (such as Student 5) were sensitive to the reactions of other students. They were distracted easily when some students were talking or laughing, as they preferred quiet classes. I did my best to encourage these students by explaining that they had to speak even if they made mistakes. I encouraged the audience to treat the speakers as they wanted to be treated by others, as our Prophet advised us. I explained that they would be in the same situation and they would want the audience to listen carefully and not to laugh when they make mistakes.

**Student 6 reflection:**
The theme was good and I am learning from my mistakes. The atmosphere of the class was encouraging, especially when the speaker communicates with the audience. My ability of speaking was very good because I practised a lot, but when I started talking, I felt a bit nervous because I feel nervous when speaking in public. The teacher role was very good and supportive.
My reflection:
Student 6 presented a poem. While her English use was excellent, she had little eye contact with the audience. This suggests that preparing for the presentation encouraged students to speak confidently. In addition, it suggests that communicating with the audience made the atmosphere encouraging for participation.

General reflection on Activity 1:
Most students noted that they were nervous because the theme presentations were in the last few minutes of the class. As a result, I decided to move the 15 minutes devoted to the theme to the beginning of the class, instead of the end. Since some presentations took longer, I decided to teach the class their normal lesson in addition to another period as a relief teacher for the rest of the week. This worked well for the students and me.

6.4.2 LSE Implementation of Theme 2: ‘Islamic Chants’

I explained the nature of Theme 2 and the assessment criteria, and told the students that Themes 2, 3 and 4 would be based mainly on working in groups. The students had little prior experience of working in groups. I suggested they form groups of six, encouraged them to choose their group members, and advised them to choose people who could work with them effectively because each group would be evaluated by the other groups. I then asked each group to write their names down and choose a group name. Each group also had to choose a leader who would be responsible for distributing the work among the members of the group, assisting less competent students and encouraging participation from all members of the group. The leaders would also have to lead discussions. Each week, the leader of the winning group would be rewarded a certificate.

I noticed that there was considerable fear among the students about the responsibility of being a leader; thus, I decided to give them some time to adjust to the idea. I also spoke to the more advanced students individually, encouraged them to take responsibility, and assured them I would offer support if they required it. In addition, I had a private conversation with the most energetic and advanced student (Student 6) who tried her best to attract my attention and show her peers how competent she was. I thought of a way to satisfy her interests and take advantage of her enthusiasm. I praised her competence and encouraged her to challenge herself by forming a group that included four students whose English skills were lacking. I encouraged her to invite these students to join her group and do her best to encourage them. I believed in this girl and believed that these students would feel privileged that she had chosen them because she had a friendly personality and was competent in English. Therefore, they would do their best not to let her down. She looked at me with a particular expression as if to say, ‘I accept the challenge, and you will see’. 
6.4.3 Theme 2: ‘Islamic Chants’—Lesson 1

Based on data collected from observations and included in the field notes and students’ diaries, Table 14 describes Lesson 1 from Theme 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period: Four</th>
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</table>
The students were very enthusiastic; they said: ‘Let’s hear the chant’, before I even asked them the planned introductory question, ‘Are you ready to hear the chant?’ I noticed that the students had adjusted to the idea of working as part of a group, and a leader had been chosen for each group. They gave me the name of each group, the names of their members and the name of the leader of that group. The total number of groups was six—four groups consisting of five students and two groups of four students. These groups were entitled Apple, Orange, Banana, Mango, Strawberry and Blueberry.

Student 6, who was proficient in English, after having chosen the four weaker English-speaking students, looked at me with a confident smile. Although the decision of forming groups was made by the students, some students were dissatisfied because they preferred to join the group of Student 6. I encouraged these students to believe in themselves and work hard. I thanked them for accepting the challenge and encouraged them to take responsibility and compete with others respectfully.

Listening to chants in classrooms was a significant change in the students’ routine at school. Therefore, I aimed to make the atmosphere of the class comfortable as possible. I turned off the lights and, while preparing the CD, said, ‘Close your eyes and relax while listening to the chant’. The chanter, Yusuf Islam, chanted softly and clearly. After listening to the chant, the students appeared relaxed and happy—they were sitting comfortably and smiling. This was far from the traditional class atmosphere in which students looked stressed and bored. I turned on the light and gave them some time to retrieve their energy. I asked them: ‘How was the chant?’ Student 6 replied, ‘That was an amazing chant about the Prophet’. Students 26, 22 and 15 all asked, ‘Who was the chanter?’ I wrote down his name and the majority followed me in writing his name to listen to his chant at home. This was a good way to encourage students to practise English outside the classroom. The atmosphere of the class was positive and the students were enthusiastic.

Every student was given a worksheet with a transcription of the chant, with some gaps in the text, and was instructed about what she should do. After students had some time to read the text, they listened to the chant. They experienced difficulties in filling in the gaps, and needed to listen to the chant a second time. Most students could not fill in the gaps, although they listened to the chant twice. In addition, when checking the answers in groups, there was an argument among the students about who was wrong and who was right. I gave individual support for each group to help them with some of the missing words, then wrote them on the board. Finally, we listened to the chant for the third time after the blanks had been filled.

The groups were asked to choose the part they preferred to perform, and to justify their choice. Most students were happy to choose the part they preferred to perform; however, they justified their choice by saying: ‘It is an easy part to perform’. Thus, I advised them to view the chosen part from a different point of view, such as by considering the main idea of the chosen part and the meaning of the vocabulary, or whether it reminded them of a similar experience. Finally, the students were advised to practise the chant whenever possible.

6.4.4 Theme 3: ‘Stories in English’—Lesson 1

Table 15 describes the first lesson of Theme 3—‘Stories in English’. It is based on data collected from observations and included in the field notes and students’ diaries.
Table 15: Explanation of the First Lesson of Theme 3—‘Stories in English’

**Theme 3: ‘Stories in English’**

**Period: Six**
I began Theme 3 with the question, ‘Do you like stories?’ All students replied positively. Then I asked some ‘warming up’ questions, such as ‘What kind of stories do you like?’ Some said they liked fiction stories, others preferred fairy tales, and some liked non-fiction. Most students were excited about stories—their eyes shone and they whispered to each other and smiled. I then explained the nature of this theme, particularly the first story and what was expected from them. At this stage, they looked confused and afraid, which was unsurprising because they were unfamiliar with retelling stories using their own words. To encourage them, I said, ‘Do not be afraid—it seems hard, but you are going to like it and I am going to help you whenever you need me’.

I gave each group a worksheet with five paragraphs. A topic and concluding sentence were written for each paragraph to specify the part of the story on which the students had to work. I distributed these parts according to the number of each group—for instance, group one took part one. After they had some time to go through the worksheet, I asked them to watch and listen carefully to the story and write down some comments. At that moment, I noticed fear in their eyes, and they were quiet. To minimise their fear, I advised them not to worry if they could not understand the meaning of the words because it was an easy story.

After watching the story, the students were happy because they liked the story. I encouraged each group to pool their information and understanding of the story, and discuss the events. I explained that they were free to create the dialogue, but they should maintain the main events of the story. The students were puzzled and worried. They were whispering with confused looks and frowns. I was used to this situation, especially when introducing each theme. I thought it would be wise if they had some time to adjust to the idea of the theme. The students were instructed about how to deliver their oral presentation (Appendix 22) and I concluded the lesson by saying, ‘I know you can do it—show me your creativity’.

6.4.5 Theme 4: ‘Videos in English’—Lesson 1

Table 16 describes the first lesson of Theme 4—‘Videos in English’. It is based on data collected from observations and included in the field notes and students’ diaries.
Table 16: Description of the First Lesson of Theme 4—‘Videos in English’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 4: ‘Videos in English’</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Period: Six</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I introduced this theme by saying, ‘Today, we will start Theme 4, which is “Videos in English”. Our video for this week is about cooking. Who likes cooking?’ Most of the students raised their hands. I explained the importance of healthy food for our bodies and way of life. I gave them worksheets titled with the name of the dish—‘Cream of broccoli soup’. In addition, there were two subheadings: ‘ingredients’ and ‘recipe’. I explained what would happen and what would be expected from them.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The students watched the video carefully and individually wrote down comments about the ingredients and recipe of the dish. Watching the video enabled the students to easily identify the ingredients; however, the majority wrote their comments in Arabic, with few words of English.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The following step involved sharing knowledge with members of the groups to write in English the ingredients and recipe of the dish. They did not have difficulty writing down the ingredients because they were familiar with the vocabulary; however, they struggled with writing the recipe. Therefore, I sat with each group to help them with this step. The following conversation was with Strawberry group:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: What was the recipe of the cream of broccoli soup?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 7: Cook onions and celery in butter حتي يليين [until tender].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: ‘Until tender’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 7: What is the spelling of ‘tender’?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: t-e-n-d-e-r.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 15: أﻀف [Add] broccoli, cover and cook for 10 minutes. What is أﻀف in English?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: ‘Add’. What is the following step?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 23: [Pour the soup into a pot and use a stick blender].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: ‘Pour the soup into a pot and use a stick blender’. What is next?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 27: ذوب ثلاثة ملاعق زبدة في مقلاة صغيرة و ضع الدقيق و الحليب و حرك حتى يصبح سميكًا وضفيه الحساء.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: Could anyone say it in English?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 10: ذوب [Melt] three spoons butter in small مقلاة [saucepan], put the flour and add the milk. حرك [stir] until thick and add to soup.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: Excellent, does anyone know how to say مقلاة, ذوب and حرك in English? Nobody knows. ذوب means ‘melt’, مقلاة means ‘saucepan’ and حرك means ‘stir’. What is the final step?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 7: زﯾّﻦ [Garnish] with parsley and serve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: زﯾّﻦ means ‘garnish’.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, they enjoyed themselves by drawing some pictures of this dish. To encourage fluency in discussions, the students were encouraged to say the Arabic words for the English words they did not know. I interrupted conversations with the English equivalent words only when it affected the meaning, or to encourage students to be consistent in using English. Afterwards, I asked other students if they knew the English equivalents. |

6.4.6 Summary of Outcomes of Themes

From these lessons, the following became apparent.

In Theme 1—‘My News’:

- The students were worried about practising new activities, and were sensitive to the reactions of the other students. The students were encouraged to speak even if they made mistakes, and the students who laughed when others made mistakes were discouraged with a quick ‘no’.
• The students overcame their fear of speaking in public when they concentrated on fluency. Most students reported that they were nervous and stressed at the beginning, but gradually gained confidence.
• The students enjoyed learning while having fun and interacting with others. Most responded well to taking responsibility.
• The first day required additional time to instruct the students how to use communicative strategies and how to reflect on their learning after their presentations. It was decided to take extra classes until the students understood the routine.
• Most students noted that they were nervous because the activity was in the last few minutes of the class. To meet their needs, the 15 minutes devoted to the activity were moved to the beginning of the scheduled time, instead of the end.
• Most students reported that preparing for the presentation encouraged them to speak confidently. In addition, they realised that communicating with an audience encourages participation.
• Positive feedback or/and clapping was significant for improving confidence, particularly for the shy students.
• The students appreciated having a teacher who treated them respectfully, was interested in hearing their ideas and opinions, and supported them in their learning.
• The presentations of some students were very short. Therefore, different strategies were used to encourage them to speak more by asking relevant questions. This encouraged them to be well prepared and ready for any question. Some students felt panicky and ill prepared to answer unexpected questions.
• To attract the students’ attention and encourage free discussion, the teacher discussed relevant topics between one presentation and another, and encouraged comments from other students.

In Theme 2—‘Islamic Chants’:
• The students were anxious about participating in group activities. There was disagreement among members of the groups, and some students expressed fear of leading the groups. Thus, strategies were introduced to alleviate the angst, including:
  – giving students time to adjust
  – encouraging students to form their groups
- enlisting the more competent students to lead groups, and distributing work among the members of the group to assist less confident students
- assigning the most energetic and advanced students to lead groups with less confident students.

- In Exercise 1, most students experienced difficulty in using the dictionary to look up unfamiliar words. Once students knew the meaning of the unfamiliar words, they were much more comfortable and confident when participating in the chant.
- Encouraging students to form opinions and make decisions proved successful.
- The students were instructed in the classroom about how to use a dictionary, and were asked later to complete this work at home.

In Theme 3—‘Stories in English’:
- The students were interested in listening to and telling stories.
- The students required time to adjust to the new theme and new activities.
- The students enjoyed watching the story, instead of listening to it. Watching the story proved effective, especially for retelling the stories. The students understood the events of the story, even when they had difficulty comprehending the vocabulary.

In Theme 4—‘Videos in English’:
- The students were interested in identifying the recipe of the dish—they watched the video carefully and wrote down their comments.
- Watching the video enabled the students to easily identify the ingredients and recipe of the dish; however, the majority wrote their comments in Arabic, with few words of English.
- The students did not experience difficulty in writing the ingredients in English because they were familiar with most of the vocabulary; however, they struggled to write the recipe. Therefore, each group was given individual assistance by the teacher with this step.
6.5 Conclusion

The students’ responses to the four themes varied. With the introduction of each new theme, the students expressed concern and were often anxious. It became apparent that the students needed clearly defined directions, and that routines needed to be established quickly. The students were not familiar with working in groups, and it took time for them to adjust to this. The establishment of ground rules and clear expectations regarding participation was necessary. The students adjusted quickly to different activities and, even though they expressed initial trepidation and uncertainty, the end result was one of satisfaction and enjoyment. They interacted and engaged in English speaking with their peers, and completed their presentations with support and confidence. They recognised the value of having a teacher who gave them meaningful feedback and assistance when needed.
Chapter 7: Findings

7.1 Overview

The integrated program—Let’s Speak English (LSE) (Appendix 1) was designed to encourage and promote students’ confidence and competence in speaking English. LSE is based on four themes: ‘My News’, ‘Islamic Chants’, ‘Stories in English’ and ‘Videos in English’. The activities of Theme 1 emphasise the use of the language to express ideas, feelings, preferences and opinions about familiar events. Theme 2 is based on Islamic chants to encourage students to recite and practise speaking English using vocabulary, grammar, sound production, linkage between words and sentences, and intonation and stress of the language. Theme 3 requires students to practise speaking English while planning to connect ideas coherently. The activities of Theme 4 encourage practising speaking English through rich, authentic activities that are reinforced by watching English videos. Across all themes, students complete activities while interacting with, engaging with and presenting to their peers.

In this chapter, the perspectives of all stakeholders—participant researcher, teachers, supervisors and students—are explored in relation to the classroom implementation of the integrated program. The issues and challenges that affect Saudi students’ confidence and competence in speaking English are also identified.

7.2 Commitment to Speaking English

According to the results of the structured interviews conducted with students before implementing LSE, as well as the students’ competency survey, the majority of students were interested in learning English. They stated that learning English gave them greater access to technology and was important for their continuation into higher education and for their career prospects. Of the 14% of students disinterested in speaking English, they justified their choice by stating, ‘It is a difficult language’, ‘We do not like it’ and ‘We do not use it in everyday life’. In terms of speaking English aloud in public, 46% of students expressed negative attitudes because of shyness (28%) and fear (18%). According to the results of the competency survey, only 11%
of students felt confident speaking to others, while 64% said they lacked confidence and 50% felt shy.

The interview results suggested that all students were interested in LSE. Forty per cent were sure that LSE would help them develop their abilities in speaking English. Some students saw it as ‘a good chance to practise speaking’ (30%), while others thought it sounded interesting and that they would have fun (30%).

Although the students had positive attitudes towards learning English, they identified five challenges related to speaking English:

1. Fear of change: Traditionally, Saudi students have a passive role in teacher-centred classrooms and, consequently—as observed during LSE—the students’ initial responses to student-centred activities that required collaboration and increased interaction was of fear. In the first week of each theme, most students were worried and nervous about practising new activities. Student 4 stated, ‘Doing many new activities while speaking in English is scary. I was afraid in the beginning and my voice was very low’ (Th1, W1).

Some students expressed dislike of the program. Student 7 reflected, ‘I do not like Theme 2; Theme 1 (My News) was better’ (Th2, W4). A few students claimed that the themes were ‘very difficult’ and ‘demanding’, while others initially wondered why they were no longer concentrating on the textbook and passing exams. This was expressed by Student 8: ‘Actually, I would appreciate if we focus on the main curriculum to have high marks in exams’ (Th1, W1).

2. For some students, embarrassment was the overwhelming feeling when first asked to speak for two minutes in front of their peers during Theme 1. The students reflected in their learning diaries that the most common concern was making mistakes while presenting in front of their peers. They often used words such as ‘panic’ (S18, Th1, W1) and ‘afraid’ (S11, Th1, W1) to describe their feelings. They expressed fear of criticism and losing face, as noted by Student 17: ‘I was confident, but when I did mistakes while presenting, I lost confidence and I panicked’ (Th2, W3).
3. Engaging the audience: Saudi students have little or no experience of presenting or talking to an audience, particularly their peers. The required two minutes in Theme 1 and three minutes in Themes 2, 3 and 4 of the LSE activities were challenging at first. However, they proved to provide adequate time for the students to develop a sense of their audience. The diversity of the LSE activities provided ample opportunities for the students to explore different ways to engage their audience, beginning with the less threatening activity of personal stories, and leading up to the more complex presentation of jokes and unfamiliar topics, such as water conservation.

The students expressed their awareness of the audience and how they adjusted their presentation according to the audience reaction. Student 13 reflected, ‘When the students started to smile, I raised up my voice’ (Th1, W2). For some students, the pressure of the audience response left them feeling disheartened, until they receive additional support from the teacher. For example, Student 18 explained her disappointment in the audience response and her appreciation of the teacher’s response:

Today, I was ready for the presentation. However, I was very embarrassed because no one understood my joke. The teacher helped me greatly to say the joke and be understood by others by encouraging me to say it in a simple way and raise my voice. (Th1, W2)

4. Lack of group work experience: The students were unfamiliar with group activities and often lacked tolerance of each other, particularly when it came to distributing work. According to the field notes and interviews with teachers, when completing group activities, it was not uncommon for the students to express dislike for the activities they were asked to complete. Student 23 was succinct in her opinion: ‘I do not like these group work activities’ (Th2, W4), as was Student 7: ‘I hate working with this group’ (Th3, W7).

The students were often confused and suspicious about the functions and effectiveness of the collaborative (interactive) classroom activities because they were unfamiliar with the process. A few students declined to take on any responsibility and leadership. Student 7 stated, ‘I was afraid to be the leader’ (Th3, W7).

5. Insufficient English vocabulary and inadequate grammar to communicate: The results of the competency survey suggested that the most serious difficulty experienced by 70% of
the students in communicating with others using English was the inability to use suitable vocabulary and correct grammar. They lacked sufficient demonstrations and did not have opportunities to practise vocabulary and grammar in classrooms.

The students reflected in their learning diaries that their insufficient vocabulary prevented them engaging in meaningful communication. For example, Student 22 reflected, ‘I do not know enough English words to use them in speaking’ (Th1, W3). The students’ lack of knowledge of English words was also evident when they confronted unusual or long words. They defined long words as words with more than two syllables, such as ‘broccoli’, ‘strawberry’, ‘dishwasher’ and ‘comfortable’. When confronted by these words, students often refused or baulked at pronouncing them. For example, Students 24 and 28 were hindered and embarrassed by unfamiliar words. Student 24 struggled to pronounce the words ‘remember’, ‘glimpse’ and ‘sparkling’ when completing the second chant in Theme 2. She stated that she ‘faced difficulty with long words’ (Th2, W5). In Theme 2, Student 28 claimed, ‘My speaking skill was good, but I was not able to pronounce long words’ (Th2, W5).

The students identified and discussed the five major challenges when speaking in English: fear of change, embarrassment, engaging the audience, lack of experience in group work, and insufficient English vocabulary and grammar to communicate. The fact that they willingly highlighted these challenges is a unique experience in itself for Saudi students. Through the variety of activities presented in LSE, the students had opportunities—with the support of the teacher and their groups—to face challenges and improve their participation.

7.3 Growing Confidence

Based on the observations of the students, interviews, surveys and language learning diaries, it was apparent that the students’ confidence increased and they showed increased willingness to participate. Based on the student’s self-evaluation surveys (pre- and post-) in relation to confidence, the students’ enjoyment increased, while their anxiety decreased. These changes in the students’ confidence are explained below, along with the factors that were identified as contributing to the students’ increased willingness to participate.
The students moved from choosing easy activities based on the use of personal language to the more complex and difficult task of telling jokes in Theme 4. Jokes require attention to tense, correct intonation, and correct word choice if they are to be funny. Telling jokes is a skill that demands following certain techniques to prompt listeners to laugh. Jokes need to be understood by the audience, and using the right volume, tone and pace to indicate emotions; making eye contact; and using suitable facial expressions and body language are all integral to creating the desired effect.

It appeared that selecting more challenging activities increased the students’ confidence. As Student 26 explained, ‘This time I am very confident; I presented without fear and hesitation. My confidence was better than before and I am satisfied with what I have achieved. The students understood my joke and they laughed’ (Th1, W2). The results of the weekly structured interviews with the three English teachers (Teachers 1, 2 and 3) and the supervisor (Supervisor 1) of Altatwor School confirmed that, although presenting in front of peers was a challenge for most students, as they gained confidence, they started to experiment and take greater risks when presenting.

Reviewing the students’ learning dairies in the first week of Theme 1—‘My News’, the students described talking in front of others as ‘a strong fear’ (S9, W1), a ‘difficult task’ (S14, W1) and ‘embarrassing’ (S25, W1). The students were ‘afraid’ (S2, W1), ‘nervous’ (S11, W1), ‘shy’ (S20, W1) and ‘hesitant’ (S18, W1). In the third week of Theme 1, according to the participation survey, the students described talking in front of others as ‘easier’ (S9, W3), ‘interesting’ (S14, W3) and ‘encouraging’ (S25, W3). The students felt ‘happy’ (S2, W3), ‘excited’ (S11, W3), ‘confident’ (S20, W3) and ‘competent in speaking in public’ (S18, W3).

With success, the students recognised their progress in various ways. The following comments are indicative of the improvement in the students’ confidence and competence in speaking English over the three weeks of Theme 1—‘My News’.

*Student 6:*
Week 1: My speaking ability is good because I am learning from my mistakes. I will do my best to do better next time.
Week 2: My speaking ability is amazing because my mistakes decreased significantly. I hope to do well next time.
Week 3: I presented confidently and the teacher provided a positive feedback. I am capable of speaking in public and my anxiety when speaking is much lower.

When comparing the reflections of Student 6 in her learning diary over the three weeks of Theme 1, her speaking ability improved from ‘good because I am learning from my mistakes’ in Week 1 to ‘amazing because my mistakes decreased significantly’ in Week 2. According to Student 6, by Week 3, she was ‘capable of speaking in public’ and her anxiety when speaking was ‘much lower’. Similarly, the majority of students reflected in the participation survey that their mistakes decreased when speaking English. They explained that being involved in the assessment of other students’ presentations encouraged them to avoid mistakes and develop competence in speaking.

Student 18:
Week 1: I know now how to speak but I feel nervous and I forget sentences. I hope I am getting better next time.
Week 2: At the beginning, I felt difficulties. I continue with the presentation because of the encouragement of the teacher and the class. Afterwards, the presentation in front of the class becomes easy and interesting.
Week 3: This time I am very confident; I present without fear and hesitation.

Although Student 18 reflected in her learning diary that she ‘felt nervous’ and ‘forgot sentences’ in Week 1, she stated she was willing to participate and improve in the following week. In Week 2, despite the difficulties, she continued to speak with ‘the encouragement of the teacher and the class’. According to Student 18, she was ‘confident’ in Week 3 to speak ‘without fear and hesitation’. Student 18 was not an exception—according to the participation survey, all the students reflected that they were nervous to speak, particularly in Week 1. It appeared that by encouraging the students’ to speak, even with mistakes, they developed confidence and were more willing to speak on subsequent occasions.

Student 21:
Week 1: I was shy. I spoke slowly and nervously and I did many mistakes.
Week 2: Knowing some vocabulary helped me to speak and made me confident.
Week 3: I think I know how to speak now.

According to her learning diary, Student 21 stated that she was ‘shy’ in the first week of Theme 1. She said, ‘I spoke slowly and nervously and did many mistakes’. In Week 2, she found that improving her vocabulary encouraged her to overcome difficulties in speaking and developed her confidence. In Week 3, she claimed that she knew ‘how to speak’. Similarly, 60% of students reported in the participation survey that shyness affected their ability to speak English in front of
their peers. They explained that by trying different LLS, they built their confidence to speak in front of their peers.

In the participation survey and learning diaries, the students reported that they were nervous and stressed at the beginning of LSE, but by speaking fluently for longer periods, they gained confidence. For example, Student 13 reflected, ‘The class was quiet, but I was nervous and hesitated because the girls were looking at me. In the beginning, I spoke slowly and nervously and I did many mistakes but gradually I was fine’ (Th1, W2). With the encouragement of the teacher and support of the students, the speakers achieved confidence and presented fluently. This was stated by Student 9: ‘At the beginning, I felt difficulty and had a strong fear, but I continued with the presentation because of the encouragement of the teacher and the class. Afterwards, the presentations in front of the class became easier and interesting’ (Th1, W1).

7.4 Developing Competence

Based on the survey results, observations, students’ reflection and levels of participation, the students were aware of their improvement in their linguistic competence and increased vocabulary relating to specific topics. Based on the students’ self-evaluation surveys (pre- and post-), the students acknowledged their improvement. The findings of the students’ evaluations of the teacher role survey (Table 19) suggest that 75% of the students believed that they acquired more knowledge of English (Item 22) in terms of vocabulary and language structure.

By the end of Theme 1—‘My News’, Teachers 1, 2 and 3 reflected that the students had increased linguistic competence when discussing personal topics of interest:

Teacher 1: At the end of Theme 1, the students are confident enough to communicate socially in English.
Teacher 2: In Theme 1, students had a lot of things to say!
Teacher 3: Theme 1 developed positive social relationships among students.

The students were also aware that their linguistic competence had developed to the point that they could talk about themselves using English. They felt comfortable talking about their families, homes, friends, hobbies, likes and dislikes. For example, Student 10 reflected, ‘Now I know how to talk about myself in English’ (Th1, W2).
In Themes 2, 3 and 4, the students’ linguistic competence increased, as did their understanding of specific topics. According to the reflection and observation schedules, the students acknowledged many intangible nouns and were able to retell, conclude and construct stories. They described ingredients and a favourite dish recipe. They discussed energy and water conservation. For example, in Theme 2—‘Islamic Chants’, the students used previously unfamiliar words and expanded their vocabularies to include such words as ‘tears’, ‘monster load’, ‘universe’ and ‘glimpse’. Student 28 confirmed, ‘After finishing Theme 2, I realised that I knew more words, phrases and sentences. Therefore, I was more confident in speaking’ (Th2, W3).

In Theme 3—‘Stories in English’, the students’ descriptions of characters, events and story lines improved. For example, they retold and concluded stories they had watched on video. They constructed and told new stories with a beginning, middle and end. In Theme 4—‘Videos in English’, the students responded to the activities by using the specific names of ingredients (such as ‘onions’ and ‘broccoli’) and describing a favourite recipe. In Theme 4, they were also observed using words to describe energy and water conservation, such as ‘washing machine’, ‘rinse cycles’, ‘detergent’ and ‘electricity’. For instance, Student 28 reflected in her learning diary, ‘It is interesting to speak with friends about favourite dishes’ (Th4, W11).

In summary, the students’ linguistic competence was evident in their increased vocabulary and confident use of English words that were content specific and previously unfamiliar to most students. They acknowledged that by increasing their vocabulary, they were better placed to communicate meaningfully in English. The supervisors and teachers recorded that the students were confident expressing themselves using personal language, and were able to talk about other topics of interest. My field notes documented the students’ use of vocabulary evident in the chants, stories and videos. In pairs or groups, the students used the new vocabulary. They practised the performance speech by repeating sentences individually and by saying them aloud to each other and correcting any mistakes. They used the new vocabulary appropriately and accurately when they gave speeches.
7.5 Factors Contributing to the Improvement of Spoken English

The supervisors, teachers and students identified a number of teaching factors that contributed to the students’ improvement of spoken English. These factors increased the students’ confidence and competence to speak English, and—as noted by Teachers 1, 2 and 3 and Supervisor 1—these factors increased the students’ willingness to participate. These factors were a stimulating learning environment, a positive atmosphere, planning, timing, promoting fluency, collaboration, interactive pedagogy, authentic activities and a learner-centred approach. These are each explained below.

7.5.1 Stimulating Learning Environment

A stimulating learning environment was considered essential, and included comfortable, sufficient space in which students could work in small groups and interact with each other. In general, traditional Saudi classrooms are not stimulating or supportive of interactive communication because the physical surroundings include desks arranged in parallel rows in front of the teacher’s desk.

With LSE, the classroom environment changed. Rather than being placed in traditional rows, the tables were organised in groups and enough space was available to practise group work, while fostering participation. When beginning to implement LSE, a decision was made to have the program in the traditional classroom where chairs were organised in rows until the students adjusted to the idea of learning with fun, communicating with peers and being responsible.

In the second week, the English sessions took place in the smart-board classroom. These sessions worked well because the tables were arranged in groups. According to the learning diaries, the students had positive attitudes towards the smart-board classroom. The smart-board classroom encouraged creativity in the students’ presentations because of the access to technology and the possibility of working in groups. However, the room was small, which was an issue for some. Student 15: ‘This room is better than our normal class, but it is small and we are sitting very close to each other’ (Th1, W2).
When moving to the resource centre in the third week, the sessions were even more effective, according to the learning diaries of the students and the casual interviews with the three English teachers (Teachers1, 2 and 3) and Supervisor 1. More space allowed for increased group participation. In addition, as was observed, this space led to greater concentration than in the smaller smart-board room, where it was too easy to get involved in the deliberations of neighbouring groups. This was confirmed by the reflection of Student 21: ‘I like the space in the resource centre—it is well considered to encourage group work and avoid the distraction of neighbouring groups’ (Th1, W3).

Based on the reflections of group responses, the physical surroundings of the resource centre were seen as comfortable and practical it was quiet, attractive and full of visual resources and technology. For these reasons, the students’ reflections in their learning diaries were positive:

Student 2: This room is very quiet; I cannot hear the voice of students outside. (Th1, W3)
Student 8: Working in this room is better than our classroom because it is good for group work. (Th1, W3)
Student 6: The atmosphere of the class was very encouraging and I felt comfortable because we moved to the resource centre. (Th1, W3)

The students were extremely positive about the change of rooms; thus, it was decided that all the English classes would remain in this room.

7.5.2 Positive Atmosphere

A positive learning atmosphere contributed to reducing the anxiety and fear associated with the introduction of new activities, presenting in public and working in groups. My role as teacher was critical to the way students perceived LSE, and a positive atmosphere was of prime importance. As commented by Student 15, ‘The role of the teacher was perfect in encouraging a positive atmosphere’ (Th1, W3). In general, the traditional Saudi classroom is not positive because teachers lack enthusiasm and do little to encourage students’ competence in speaking English. Most Saudi teachers do not create rapport with students because it is believed that respect and trust are reserved for older people; thus, teachers tend to be distant and students tend to be obedient. The positive learning atmosphere was established in LSE by providing a positive teacher model; building good relationships with the students; identifying the students’ needs,
problems and interests; creating interesting tasks; and providing extrinsic and intrinsic motivation.

As the teacher, I was determined to be positive, confident, enthusiastic and energetic. The findings of the teacher role survey indicate that I taught according to the lesson plan and was effective in my teaching. The students, teachers and Supervisor 1 reflected that I was generally enthusiastic and energetic, and they identified ways in which this influenced the class atmosphere. For example, Teacher 3 reflected, ‘The learning environment was full of energy and enthusiasm. All the students were involved in planning, discussing and negotiating. It was a very positive learning environment’. The students’ reflections indicated appreciation of the enthusiastic and energetic learning atmosphere. For example, Student 4 reflected, ‘The atmosphere of the class was very enthusiastic because many students were interested’ (Th1, W2).

Particularly in the first week of LSE, emphasis was placed on creating a positive atmosphere by discussing relevant topics between one presentation and another, and by encouraging comments from other students. As was observed, this strategy appeared encouraging for all the students and inspired them to participate. This is not the usual practice of a Saudi classroom teacher, where the role is much more focused on transmitting information from the textbook. Student 9 reflected, ‘The class was active and encouraging and I was interested and happy’ (Th3, W7).

However, there were some surprises when some students misinterpreted my enthusiasm and energy as meaning I was rushed or anxious. This was commented on by Student 13: ‘Today, the teacher was anxious and rushed. This made me uncomfortable’ (Th2, W4). In addition, Student 8 viewed an active class as a noisy class. I explained to Student 8 the difference between ‘naughty noise’, when students are getting out of control, and ‘busy noise’, when groups and pairs are talking at the same time in interactive communication. Student 8 was given attention and support until she adjusted to working in an environment that included enthusiastic students.

Critical to creating a positive environment was my relationship with the students. According to the interviews with the teachers and supervisors, developing strategies based on trust and sound relationships was essential for my teaching. Interacting with the students respectfully and honestly was not a typical experience in a Saudi public classroom, where high respect is devoted to teachers and there is little interaction between the two. I sought to encourage the students by
telling them I believed in their abilities. This was reflected by Student 15’s comment, ‘The teacher believes in me’ (Th2, W4).

I expected all students to succeed, and I provided support for them to do so (field notes). I conveyed my expectations to the students in many ways. For example, the following is an excerpt from my field notes for Story 1 (‘The Mice and the Elephants’):

Although many factors indicated that the students would not be ready for the presentation in the final day of the week because they were confused and worried and there was disagreement among members of groups, I assured the students that I expected them to succeed. In spite of the difficulties, the groups’ presentations were creative. The students appreciated the support often missing in traditional classes. In her learning diary, Student 26 noted my contribution: ‘The behaviour of the teacher was distinctive; she has a great respect and trust for me and I do the same’ (Th1, W2).

Creating relationships takes time and I had to spend time getting to know the students. Prior to and during implementing LSE, the students’ needs, problems and interests were identified by interviewing the students and conducting the student self-evaluation and competency surveys. By considering the students’ needs, problems and interests, I was able to create interesting and motivating teaching and learning tasks, as Student 23 reflected: ‘Theme 1 is excellent for speaking and interesting as well’ (Th1, W3).

While implementing LSE, I deliberately had casual conversations with students to acknowledge their needs, identify their difficulties and listen to their suggestions and criticisms. I let them know that I respected their opinions (field notes). For example, when the students who were dissatisfied with their performance of Chant 1 (‘I look I see’) asked for another chance to perform with the accompaniment of the CD, I respected their request.

I explained the aim and objectives of the program before implementing LSE in order to develop the students’ sense of responsibility. Student 8 confirmed this: ‘The teacher role was distinctive; good explanation and I appreciated her respect’ (Th1, W3). Eighty-six percent of the students believed that I had clearly identified the program contents and aims (item one of the survey of student evaluation of the teacher’s role).
Finally, I created a positive learning environment by using intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. In the first week of implementing LSE, I provided supportive feedback about the students’ efforts, and the students clapped after each presentation. Student 18 demonstrated confidence and courage to speak, despite her mistakes: ‘The class was quiet and I was afraid to make mistakes. I was encouraged because the teacher and the girls clapped for me’ (Th1, W1).

In Saudi classrooms, students generally receive feedback from teachers in a written form and usually in response to test items. It seemed that, for some students, giving them greater personal responsibility increased their efforts to improve their presentation. For some, winning the competitions became the goal because the winning groups related their success to their effort. For example, Student 6 (Leader, Blueberry) reflected, ‘All the students were listening to us because our performance was perfect. We won the competition and I am very proud of myself’ (Th2, W4). Student 10 reflected, ‘I think we did excellent work and our dish was the best’ (Th4, W10).

According to the students’ reflections in the participation survey, 60% sought and valued being rewarded. For example, Student 3 reflected, ‘I appreciated the effort of the teacher for encouraging me to speak, but I wish the teacher gave presents to the students to encourage them to speak’ (Th1, W2). Consequently, when students won the presentation competition in Themes 2, 3 and 4, the winning group was rewarded with lollies, certificates and computer access cards. The students were responsive to rewards and were competitive with each other (field notes).

Long-term extrinsic motivation was encouraged by giving the students progress reports at the end of the four themes. This aligned with the students’ expectations for other subjects. The progress reports were new in English speaking classes. They were a written document describing the students’ outcomes in the speaking classroom, but did not contain grades. The reports elicited positive responses from students and parents. For example, the parents of Student 5 sent a letter to express their appreciation for the chance to acknowledge the progress of their daughter. According to the learning diaries; field notes; and interviews with Teachers 1, 2 and 3 and Supervisor 1, the progress reports motivated the students to participate. They were especially effective for shy students who could share their report with peers and parents. For example, Student 5 reflected, ‘I was very proud to show my progress report to everyone in my classroom and every member of my family’.
Planning for lessons was necessary, particularly when moving from the teacher-centred to learner-centred approach. Ninety-three percent of students believed that I planned the lessons well (item 11 of the survey of student evaluations of the teacher’s role). Saudi teachers usually follow a predetermined teacher guidebook, with little flexibility to their teaching. When planning lessons, teachers summarise the instructions of the teacher guidebook just to show it to the supervisor as evidence of reading the teacher guidebook before lessons. To plan each lesson for a specific class, with flexibility in teacher strategies, is highly unusual in the Saudi teaching context. Prior to each lesson, I considered the content analysis, introduction, objectives, resources, classroom events and time allocated for each lesson and evaluation (Table 17).

### Table 17: Theme 1—Plan for Lesson 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content analysis</th>
<th>The more creative the presentation, the better. However, fluency is the main focus of Theme 1, to encourage students to speak up. Therefore, errors are corrected only if they affect the meaning and lead to misunderstanding.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Seven students perform, each for two minutes. In total, 14 minutes for the students’ presentations and one minute allocated to discuss relevant topics between one presentation and another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Looking at the seven students who would present that day, the teacher introduces the lesson by saying, ‘We are very excited to hear your news, aren’t we students?’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Classroom events</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students’ will:</td>
<td>Colourful instructional paper includes 14 exercises; each colour represents a specific day</td>
<td>The student whose turn is that day gives me her ‘My News’ paper, with the date written beside the activity that the student intends to perform. Comments by parents are also written in the space allocated for this</td>
<td>I give oral encouraging feedback and write comments in the space allocated for this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• choose a preferred topic</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Seven students perform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• create a two-minute presentation after reading the instructions carefully</td>
<td></td>
<td>• The other students listen and participate whenever possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• present the preferred topic in front of the class</td>
<td></td>
<td>• I organise the event of the class, participate whenever necessary, prompt and support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• use personalising language to express their ideas, feelings, preferences and opinions</td>
<td></td>
<td>• I discuss relevant topics between one presentation and another to create a positive atmosphere and encourage comments from students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• use communicative strategies to create an effect on the audience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson plans encouraged me to be confident while teaching, and assisted me in anticipating problems. As observed by Teacher 1, ‘The teacher is well prepared in the classroom and she is ready to handle any difficulty that might occur’. According to the observation schedule, the students expressed confidence because they believed that everything was under the teacher’s control. As commented by Teacher 2, ‘The teacher is well prepared and can lead the activity processes step by step. This helps students to be more confident and lessens their anxiety’.

According to the field notes, planning for lessons encouraged teaching events to move in a logical sequence in the allocated time. This was also observed by Supervisor 1, who reflected, ‘Lesson plans guided the teacher to begin from a determined point and move in an organised direction until reaching the end successfully’. According to the students’ evaluations of the teacher role survey, 89% of students believed that I followed a logical sequence in teaching, moving from easy to difficult stages. The three English teachers stressed in their weekly interviews that this logical sequence of teaching was very effective in making the process of learning easier.

7.5.4 Timing

Timing had an influence on encouraging LSE to meet its objectives. Students need time to practise speaking and to engage effectively. Insufficient time to practise speaking was one of the challenges facing teachers and students in FL education (pilot study). Choosing the right time for participation and using the time wisely appeared to increase the students’ positive responses and willingness to speak in English.

According to the field notes, choosing the right time increased the students’ levels of engagement in the class. If students, for any reason, lacked commitment and desire, the activity failed. For example, in the second story (Theme 3: ‘The Monkey and the Crocodile’), the students were less careful when planning their presentations and reused the same resources from the first story (observation). The performance of students was disappointing on the following day. Apple group presented without pictures, and their conclusion consisted of two sentences, while Mango group presented by imitating what the other group said. Orange group narrated a suitable conclusion, but the pictures were not relevant. Strawberry and Blueberry groups apologised for not presenting. It was clear that the students lacked commitment to their presentations. In their
learning diaries, the groups justified their carelessness and poor performances because they were stressed and busy studying for the mid-term exam. As a result, the Story 2 activity failed to meet its objectives.

In general, based on the field notes, the students cooperated well and participated in all the activities of LSE. The English classes were scheduled for periods four and six. Period four was after the students had a 30-minute break, and period six was before the last period of the day.

The students were encouraged to speak when they felt ready, and did so without coercion. Since most students were nervous and confused about practising new activities in the first week of each theme, they showed negative attitudes, as reflected by Student 4: ‘Theme 1 was good and effective for speaking, but exhausting’ (Th1, W1). Consequently, the students were given some time to adjust to the new ideas. The attitudes of Student 4 changed in the second and third week because she gained confidence as she became more familiar with the theme. Student 4 reflected in Week 2: ‘I like Theme 1 because it is getting easier to speak. I am more confident than last time and I am getting better in speaking because of this theme’ (Th1, W2). In Week 3, she enjoyed the activities: ‘Theme 1 is very interesting. I hope all the activities will be similar’ (Th1, W3).

Planning and timing were vital to the success of LSE. As commented by Supervisor 1, ‘The success of this program depends on running time wisely’. Adaptations were made to increase the time with students. I arranged to take extra classes as a relief teacher (for the classes of absent teachers), particularly in the beginning of implementing LSE, until the students adjusted. I planned the timing of activities carefully and informed the students about the allocated time for each activity at the beginning of the lesson. I encouraged the students to finish on time or complete unfinished work at home.

Other strategies were introduced to improve the effective use of time. For example, coloured papers were used for the activities of Theme 1, with each colour representing a specific day, to inform students of the order of their presentations. The colour coding also ensured that the students were committed to present on certain days (Table 18).
Establishing a classroom routine was necessary. According to the reflections on the observation schedule after observing 52 lessons, it appeared that the classroom events moved smoothly and the students were engaged in completing the activities. As observed by Supervisor 1, ‘The strategy of following a certain routine in class is very effective in encouraging commitment’.

The duration of themes was also an issue in relation to timing. Three weeks were allocated to each theme, except Theme 4, which lasted for two weeks. Interestingly, the findings of the survey of reflection on group responses suggested that a period of three weeks was insufficient. It seemed that students adjusted to a new theme and started to be creative just when it was time to move on. Supervisor 1 stressed that long-term participation affected the students’ achievements. She reflected, ‘Long-term group work running by the same students encourages Saudi female students to participate well in speaking’. The students requested more time for each theme in their learning diaries. As commented by Student 18, ‘I wish we could practise each theme for a semester’.

As a result, it was recommended by Teachers 2, 5, 7, 8 and 12 that each theme continue over an extended period to allow more opportunities to present and more time to adjust. For example, Teacher 7 reflected, ‘If all the themes of LSE are practised for a longer time, the result would be effective because students need more opportunities to practise speaking’.

### 7.5.5 Promoting Fluency

The students’ self-perceptions as English speakers appeared to be enhanced because of the emphasis on fluency, rather than grammatical correctness and accuracy. Focusing on fluency was achieved in a number of ways—by providing adequate time for students to speak; allowing students to select topics that were personal and familiar; only interrupting conversations when errors interfered with meaning; encouraging students to speak, even with mistakes; and allowing students to use Arabic words when facing difficulty.
Providing sufficient time for each speaker (two to three minutes per presentation) and encouraging students to speak within the allocated time was a factor that encouraged the students’ fluency, according to the observations. For example, the presentations of some speakers in Theme 1 were less than the required two minutes. I asked relevant questions to encourage these speakers to speak for the allocated time. This strategy was criticised by Student 27: ‘The teacher role was encouraging, but I did not like when she asked me questions after the presentation because I panicked’. Despite this criticism, asking relevant questions to encourage the speakers to speak within the allocated time motivated students to be well prepared and ready for unanticipated questions.

The four themes of LSE included fluency-based activities. For example, from the activities of Theme 1, students chose to describe people, animals or things, or used role-play activities to describe varied situations, feelings or relationships to present in front of peers. The students had a lot of freedom in their choices and could relate to and draw from their experiences. According to Supervisor 4, ‘Theme 1 is interesting and useful. Although the material is simple, it has a great influence in encouraging the students to speak and build confidence’.

In Themes 2, 3 and 4, the students were grouped and encouraged to speak fluently through free discussion, role-play and gap activities. To encourage fluency in discussions, the students were encouraged to speak, even if they made mistakes, and were allowed to substitute Arabic words for any English words they did not know. The conversations were interrupted for correction only when the meaning was impeded.

The students developed fluency in Theme 2 by chanting in front of peers along with the CD. Accompanying the students’ performances with the recorded chant encouraged the students to chant fluently. This was noted by Teacher 1: ‘The performance of Orange, Banana and Strawberry groups in Chant 1 was very poor, but when they performed with the accompaniment of the CD of the chant, their performances were much better’. Reading from the transcript of the chant while performing also encouraged the hesitant and shy students to be more confident and fluent. For example, Student 1 reflected:
I practised the chant and I was very ready to perform, but I forgot the transcript of the chant at home. Therefore, I did not know what to say when my group was performing. I was confident without the paper I was lost. (Th4, W4)

In Theme 3, the students developed fluency by telling the audience stories that were based on coherent events. As commented by Student 5, ‘Theme 3 encourages fluency. We focused in our presentation on the content and the events of the story instead of the grammar. The atmosphere was interesting and energetic’ (Th3, W7).

According to the findings of the surveys of reflection on group responses after the weekly group interviews, as well as reflection on the observation schedule after observing 52 lessons, by emphasising and promoting fluency through specific activities and offering levels of support, the majority of students overcame their fear of speaking in public. It was observed that the students appeared satisfied and successful when they achieved fluent levels of proficiency when communicating with others. They were willing to participate and interested to share their knowledge and experiences with an audience who was satisfied and happy to listen.

7.5.6 Collaboration

A collaborative environment was created and included learning by observing, imitating and modelling behaviours; promoting positive attitudes; and interacting with peers. In general, traditional Saudi classrooms are not collaborative, group work is non-existential and students learn individually. In a traditional English class, the students observe two students modelling a dialogue from the textbook, listen to the teacher explaining the grammatical structure that is included in the dialogue, answer the teacher’s questions, and complete some exercises from the workbook to practise the new grammatical structure. The collaborative environment of LSE helped eliminate the fear and anxiety of students. Student 18 explained, ‘I was confident because the group helped me’ (Th2, W4). Student 20 stated, ‘I performed with the group very consistently. I am very happy working with this group’ (Th2, W4).

Introducing group activities in a Saudi public class proved to be a challenge for me as the teacher and for the students because it was unknown strategy (field notes). As a result, it was necessary for us to practise tolerance and try different strategies. I encouraged the students from day one of LSE to have fun while communicating with peers. This idea was alien to their experiences and
different from the stereotypical classes in Saudi public schools, where students speak only when invited. Collaboration led to an optimistic attitude towards the English classes because the students appreciated having time to communicate with peers, instead of being silent for the duration of the lesson. For example, Student 17 reflected, ‘I liked learning with fun and speaking with peers because I enjoyed the lesson. I learn easily’ (Th2, W4). Student 9 also noted, ‘In contrast to other classes, English class is interesting because there is time for fun and there is other time for study’ (Th1, W1).

Different strategies were used to reduce the students’ anxiety of working in groups. One of these strategies involved encouraging proficient English speakers to lead the groups by distributing work among group members, assisting less proficient students, and encouraging participation from all group members. Apart from Student 6, who was happy with this responsibility, there was considerable fear of the responsibility of leading groups among the students. Although expressing trepidation, Students 1, 7 and 25 were willing to try this new experience. For example, Student 7 reflected, ‘I was afraid to be the leader, but now I am confident and happy’ (Th3, W7). Student 26 initially refused to assume this responsibility; however, I encouraged her to try and gave her time to think about the idea. As Student 26 stated, ‘I am afraid to be the leader but the teacher convinced me to challenge myself’ (Th2, W4). Surprisingly, Mango group led by Student 26 later won three competitions. In casual conversation, I congratulated Student 26 for accepting the responsibility of being a leader and in encouraging the group to work hard and win.

Another strategy to reduce the students’ anxiety of working in groups involved encouraging an energetic and proficient student (Student 6) to form a group (Blueberry group) that included less proficient English-speaking students. Student 6 was pleased to assume this responsibility, and the members of her group were encouraging. It is common for students to respond well to their peers, and Blueberry group won the competitions four times. I congratulated Student 6 for being a good leader and for encouraging the students who needed assistance.

The students were regrouped for Chant 2 (‘Allah Knows’) of Theme 2. For example, the oral performances of Orange group in the first week were inadequate—their voices were barely heard. Although Students 9 and 1 were competent in English, all the other students in this group were very shy. Thus, I decided to include a more confident student (Student 20) who could encourage them to participate.
To further encourage the students working in groups, members of the winning group were rewarded with prizes. The leader of the winning group was given a certificate, and hardworking individuals who performed confidently from each group were given reward cards to use with the computers in the self-learning room. This was considered satisfactory by everyone. According to Student 7, ‘It is fair enough to get presents. I worked hard. I do not want to be blamed for the bad performance of my group’ (Th2, W4).

Even after regrouping and rewarding the students, working in groups for seven weeks and being aware of the importance of teamwork, there was still some disharmony among the students. Often this was in relation to the workload. The reflection of Student 7 indicates how the distribution of tasks was often an issue of contention:

I volunteered to read the story. However, Student 10 said she would read it. In the following day, she was not ready. In addition, she said that she would bring some pictures but she forgot. Moreover, Student 27, who supposed to point at the relevant pictures on the poster while presenting, was absent. In spite of these obstacles, I was ready for unexpected situations. I practised speaking and I brought some pictures in case if we do not like the other pictures. Although the atmosphere was annoying, my speaking skill and my confidence were good. (Th3, W7)

Student 27 justified her absence by saying, ‘I was absent because it was an emergency’.

After working for nine weeks, the students had adjusted to working with each other and managed to complete the collaborative tasks. For example, in contrast to Story 1 (‘The Mice and the Elephants’), the reflections of Student 7 after the performance of Story 3 (‘My Favourite Story’) showed increased positive collaboration among the students in her group: ‘I presented the story. It was quiet and the students were listening. Although I did not practise enough, I think I did well because my group was cooperative’ (Th3, W9).

However, according to the field notes, there was still disharmony in two of the five groups. For instance, there were contradictions in the responses of members of the Apple group about levels of cooperation when completing Story 3. Students 18 and 14 stated that there was collaboration among members of the group. Student 18: ‘This activity is nice. My role was to hang the poster and point at according to the speaker demonstration. The group was cooperative’ (Th3, W9). Student 14: ‘We cooperated and this story was better than before’. In contrast, Students 25 and 4 indicated conflict among members of the group. Student 25: ‘I did not practise enough and the
group was not cooperative. Therefore, although the atmosphere of the class was encouraging, our presentation was poor’. Student 4: ‘The students did not understand the story, although it was a nice story, because of the carelessness of my group. Student 25 did not practise and Student 14 did not bring the pictures’.

In Theme 4, for Videos 1 (the recipe of cream of broccoli soup) and 2 (energy conservation and water usage tips), it was observed that the competition among the groups encouraged every member to work together to win. Student 6 stated, ‘We practised presentations whenever we have a chance. We performed very smoothly and clearly. We won the competition and I am very proud of myself’ (Th4, W10). It was observed that, even when working competitively, the students enjoyed the experience of success when they won the competition and were rewarded. The students who did not win were enthusiastic to progress by overcoming their difficulties and discovering effective LLS learning from their peers. Student 5 stated, ‘I look forward to more development’ (Th3, W7). Student 19 stated, ‘I am much better in speaking and I am more confident than before. I am looking for more development’ (Th4, W10).

However, the group competitions caused stress to Student 25 when her group did not win the competition of Story 3. She reflected, ‘I am very disappointed and the competition was very stressful’. In other activities, I supported the students who did not win to think of alternative strategies to succeed, such as choosing good topics, using communicative strategies and practising their presentations.

Teacher 1 summarised the students’ progress in group work in Themes 2, 3 and 4:

During the three weeks of Theme 2, the students struggled working in groups. In Stories 1 and 2 of Theme 3, the students had a huge disagreement while planning methods to support their presentation—particularly when it came to distributing work among individuals. In Story 3 of Theme 3, although there was still slight disagreement, the students worked in groups cooperatively and competitively; every member of each group participated. For example, some students narrated the story while other students presented the pictures. In Videos 1 and 2 of Theme 4, there was great competition among the groups, which encouraged every member of each group to participate to win.
7.5.6.1 Emphasising English

Encouraging students to speak English in small groups, rather than reverting to using L1, was a challenge, especially when these groups included the less disciplined and less motivated learners. After the discussions with teachers and supervisors based on the observations and students’ reflections, I used the following strategies to encourage the students to increase speaking English in their group work, and decrease their use of L1:

- Speaking English all the time and encouraging students to do so. Initially, I spoke English slowly, while using many gesture and facial expressions. Gradually, I increased the speaking rate. As observed by Teacher 3, ‘Generally, the teacher speaks clearly while using a lot of gesture and facial expressions. Students look that they understand the speech of the teacher as they respond’.
- Creating an English atmosphere. For example, I anglicised the students’ names.
- Providing opportunities for students to speak, and choosing tasks appropriate to the students’ level of competence.
- Making comparisons between L1 and L2.
- Appointing leaders of the groups to remind participants to use English.
- Setting clear guidelines about when L1 was permitted and when L2 was essential. As observed by Supervisor 1, ‘The students know when they should use English and when they are allowed to use L1’.
- Allowing the use of L1 in speaking, particularly in discussions when students experienced difficulty, and only correcting conversations when the errors interfered with the meaning.

The following is part of the conversation with Orange group in Story 1 (‘The Mice and the Elephants’) of Theme 3:

Student 14: They [stepped on] دعسوا علی houses of the mice.
Teacher: You mean they ’stepped on’.

- Allowing the use of L1 in writing when students experienced difficulty. Students were later encouraged to find the English equivalents using an Arabic–English dictionary.

By Theme 4, the students needed less support from me, and the use of Arabic decreased, while the use of English increased. For example, the following is part of my conversation with Apple group in Video 2 (energy conservation and water usage tips) of Theme 4, and demonstrates my
efforts to support describing behaviours, confirming information, justifying an opinion, clarifying understanding and making comparisons:

Student 4: We use water to have a shower and clean our clothes.
Student 18: We use water also to clean our houses.
Teacher: How do you use water to clean your house?
Student 18: We pour water on the floor then we sweep it with the rubber.
Teacher: Don’t you think it is a waste of water?
Student 25: Then how can we clean the floor of our homes?
Teacher: Does anyone know? [Silence.] If we use a wet sponge or cloth, we will clean the floor and we will save a lot of water at the same time.

7.5.7 Interactive Pedagogy

LSE offers a different approach to teaching English to that traditionally found in classes in Saudi public schools. The students in LSE were encouraged to use real communication to complete tasks based on a particular objective, rather than tasks related to solving a linguistic problem. The accuracy of the language used was less important than the successful achievement of the communicative task performed. This method encouraged the students’ intrinsic motivation and made the language relevant to students, especially when using real life tasks (field notes). Student 6 confirmed this in her learning diary: ‘I liked the idea of learning English while practising different tasks instead of focusing on learning grammar and vocabulary’ (Th2, W4).

In terms of the students’ beliefs in achieving successful language learning, 71% of the students were in favour of using EL in communication, 69% preferred practising dialogues from the textbook, and 61% preferred learning vocabulary and grammar and memorising useful sentences (competency survey).

In the first semester textbook of Grade 7, Say it in English, communicative activities encourage the students’ communicative skills by using question and answers between the teacher and students. Grammatical structure is taught through short dialogues. Saudi teachers employ a prescriptive pedagogy in following the teacher guidebook precisely (personal experience). As a result, a ridged schedule of teaching is employed in Saudi classrooms. When attempts have been made to use interactive pedagogy, teachers and students are confused about the functions and effectiveness of interactive classroom activities because the approach is foreign and unknown.
Accordingly, they implement a superficial demonstration of CLT by imitating the textbook dialogues.

With each activity associated with LSE, the students move through three stages of teaching and learning—namely, pre-task, task cycle and post-task. Based on the observations, the students responded positively and enthusiastically. All teachers and supervisors stressed in the formal interviews that these three task stages significantly engaged the students in real communication to accomplish a task, and encouraged the students’ and teachers’ positive attitudes towards communicative language pedagogy. An example of the task-based cycle of the first story (‘The Mice and the Elephants’) of Theme 3—‘Stories in English’ is illustrated below (Figure 18).

**Figure 18: Task-based Cycle for Story 1, Theme 3**

In the pre-task, the teacher created a task and provided challenging and meaningful opportunities for the students to accomplish it. The teacher informed the students about the task, learning and performance requirements and assessment criteria. In the task cycle, the students worked on the task in pairs or small groups by planning, negotiating, expressing ideas and solving problems. The teacher played the role of observer, participant, resource, prompter, supporter and facilitator in this stage. In the post-task, the teacher and students evaluated the performance of each group, and the teacher provided feedback and correction.
Focusing on language use after a task is completed is an unfamiliar strategy in the Saudi context, and proved to be an effective aid for language acquisition, according to the observations. The students’ reflections showed an awareness of some successful LLS, such as the importance of teamwork, practising before presenting, and using suitable communicative strategies in public speaking. Prior to these activities, these strategies were lacking or used incorrectly.

7.5.8 Authentic Activities

LSE adopted comprehensible and meaningful activities. The emphasis was on relevant tasks, rather than the production of grammatically perfect utterances or linguistic competency. In the survey of the students’ evaluations of the teacher’s role, 75% of students believed that I transmitted the subject matter using suitable activities (survey item four).

Based on the results of the students’ competency survey that was conducted before implementing the four themes of LSE, students had negative attitudes towards the speaking activities in the Grade 7 textbook, Say it in English. Seventy-seven percent of the students ranked the activities as ineffective. Surprisingly, in a traditional education environment, where the strategy of the single textbook was applied and the teacher-centred approach dominated, only 46% chose following a good textbook as a successful learning strategy, and 32% preferred to learn English by following the teacher instructions.

The students, teachers and supervisors shared their perspectives on each of the four themes. Upon completion of the four themes, they stressed that they were factors that encouraged the students’ confidence, competence and participation in classroom practices. The students responded positively to the four themes in relation to the relevance of authentic activities, as commented by Students 15, 4, 20, 26 and 25. Student 15: ‘Theme 1 is very practical because it includes a variety of activities and it has a definite aim. I started with a simple speech and I am getting better’ (Th1, W1). Student 4: ‘Theme 2 is fantastic and I am enthusiastic to listen to the new chant’ (Th2, W4). Student 20: ‘Theme 3 is practical because it encourages speaking, reading and writing’ (Th3, W7). Student 26: ‘I like Theme 4 more than Theme 3 because it is interesting and allows for creativity. My performance was excellent’ (Th4, W10). Student 25: ‘I was very confident in Theme 4 because I like cooking very much’ (Th4, W10).
After working through the task-based activities, the students were willing to participate in extracurricular activities and began to play a central role in classroom practices, rather than following the teacher’s instructions and the single textbook. According to the observations, interviews and artefacts, this study found that meaningful practice had a significant influence on students’ level of engagement, especially when related to topics of interest. The LSE activities were categorised under four themes—‘My News’, ‘Islamic Chants’, ‘Stories in English’ and ‘Videos in English’—that were deliberately selected because of their relevance to students, and were taught in a supportive, positive and collaborative atmosphere.

Building the students’ competence in LSE through using comprehensible input, integrated from various sources, such as chants, stories and videos, encouraged the students to compensate for their lack of English vocabulary. I planned and taught a language feature (such as verbs, nouns and adjectives) or function (such as making requests, describing processes, comparing or contrasting things or ideas, and classifying objects or ideas) by embedding the lesson in the context of a chant, story or video, and asking questions to determine what students knew and could predict.

In pairs or groups, the students completed activities using the new English words or concepts and other familiar language structures as a means of moving from transitional speaking to a performance speech. In these learning situations, the students determined the meaning from the context. They practised the performance speech by repeating sentences individually and reading them aloud to each other, and correcting any mistakes. Finally, they applied what they had learnt in their performance speech with little direction from the teacher. Other students reported on the presentation in a written form, and the teacher gave feedback to the students on an individual basis. Student 26 explained:

I realised that the teacher applies different ways of teaching. Every week, she gave us new vocabulary. Then we do many activities to practise these vocabularies. In the final day of the week, we use these vocabularies in our presentation. This makes me learn easily and in an effective way. (Th1, W3)

According to the survey of students’ evaluations of LSE, the students’ favourite theme was Theme 2—‘Islamic Chants’, followed by Theme 1—‘My News’, Theme 3—‘Stories in English’ and Theme 4—‘Videos in English’. Supervisor 2 explained her understanding of the students’ preferences:
Tacking account of the students’ level of competence, Themes 1 and 2 are very suitable for students of Year 7, while Themes 3 and 4 are practical for students of Years 8 and 9. However, when introducing Theme 3 for students of Years 8 and 9, the students should listen to the story instead of watching it because this will suit their level.

The students practised English fluently through activities such as free discussion, role-play and gap activities. The students’ accurate English speaking—in terms of grammatical structure, phonological features, conversational scheme, communicative function and time sequencers—was encouraged through personalising language (for example, Theme 1: ‘Something about me you do not know’), the social use of language (such as speaking as transaction and performance) and contextualised practice (for example, Theme 4: Energy conservation and water usage tips).

Although achieving both fluency and accuracy is difficult, the students demonstrated willingness to take responsibility and do their best to speak English in class. They expressed themselves when sharing their personal information with peers, and they used appropriate social behaviour when speaking. The following is an example of the Orange group discussion in the second chant (‘Allah Knows’) of Theme 2:

Student 1: What is your feeling and reaction when you know that Allah knows everything you do?
Student 20: I think because Allah knows everything I do, I feel afraid not to upset Him and I will do all the good things such as being honest, kind with family, relatives and all the people. How about you?
Student 1: For me, because Allah knows everything I do, I feel happy that someone is taking care of me.

7.5.8.1 Personalising Language

Personalising language proved to be an effective method for encouraging students to accurately express their ideas, feelings, preferences and opinions. As observed by Supervisor 2, ‘The activities of Theme 1 have a great influence in encouraging the students’ participation because it touches their feelings’. This was reinforced by Student 8: ‘Theme 1 is very motivated and useful because I learn how to gain confidence while speaking to express myself’ (Th1, W1). Among the 14 activities of Theme 1, the activities that encouraged personalising language included ‘Something about me you do not know’, ‘My personal news’, ‘Picture talk’, ‘Show and tell’, ‘Who am I?’ and ‘Share some writing’.
It appeared that personalising the language made the language more memorable and the activities more motivating for all students, even those who were less competent. For example, as cited in the field notes, Student 27 surprised me with her performance. Although she had only minimal competency and confidence in English and was sensitive to the reaction of peers, she spoke about herself with great detail. She described her hobbies, friends and favourite football team—she was well prepared for the presentation. She reflected, ‘The atmosphere of the class was not encouraging because some students were talking. My ability in speaking was not bad, but I do not have self-confidence and I always hesitate and am afraid not to make mistakes’.

As students gained confidence in the third week of Theme 1, there was variety in the chosen activities, such as ‘Some writing to share’, ‘Book review’, ‘Who am I?’, ‘Show and tell’ and ‘Picture talk’. For instance, Student 26 chose the activity ‘Show and tell’ to talk about her ring—where, when and how she had attained it. It was observed that Student 26 spoke about her ring by confidently giving sufficient details and presenting without notes. She wrote in her diary:

I did not prepare for the presentation because I did not have enough time the day before. I was panicked when the teacher called my name. At that moment, I thought of the exercise ‘Show and tell’ to tell the class about my ring. I presented confidently and the teacher provided positive feedback. I am very confident because of the teacher and I appreciate her effort in encouraging and supporting me.

7.5.8.2 Social Use of Language

LSE encourages students to practise real communication by using speaking as interaction, transaction and performance. By achieving accuracy in the social use of language, the students developed an understanding of what is appropriate social behaviour to exchange information while speaking, and explored ways to create an effect on the audience and maintain their attention. The first semester textbook of Grade 7, Say it in English, shares similar aims. It aims to develop students’ interactional speaking in order to establish and maintain social relations. However, the approaches adopted to achieve this common aim vary greatly.

Based on the results of the competency survey conducted before implementing LSE, the majority of students identified effective ways to understand spoken English communication. They asked for repetition (50%) and clarification (34%). The following is an example from Theme 3, when students asked for clarification:
Teacher: What are the events of your story?
Student 27: I didn’t understand your question.
Teacher: What are the important things that happened in your story?

The students also identified the strategies they used when they were not understood by others. They used paraphrasing (57%), gestures (54%) and requesting help (64%). The following conversation in Theme 3 demonstrates a student asking for help:

Teacher: This is a good idea, but make sure that the pictures are clear and illustrative.
Student 9: What does illustrative mean?
Teacher: It means [illustrative].

Speaking as transaction was observed when the students exchanged information in group discussions and problem-solving activities. They worked jointly to plan their presentations. The students developed an understanding of how to explain, describe, form questions, confirm information, justify an opinion, make suggestions, clarify, make comparisons, agree and disagree. The following example demonstrates how the students described behaviours, justified an opinion and clarified understanding. The following conversation took place with Strawberry group during Theme 4:

Student 7: I think using a poster will be very illustrative for this exercise.
Student 15: Using a poster is not a new idea!
Student 23: We will put some real objects of vegetables on the poster.
Student 27: I prefer if someone introduces and concludes the event of the presentation.

Speaking as performance requires accuracy, and this helped the students learn how to create an effect on the audience and maintain their attention. When preparing for and undertaking the performance, the students became aware of the need to use an appropriate format to begin and conclude the presentation; speak clearly and audibly; perform with varying voice, tone and pace to indicate emotions; make eye contact with the audience; use correct grammar and appropriate vocabulary; and use suitable resources to support the presentation. They also realised the importance of choosing interesting topics.

According to the interviews with Teachers 1, 2 and 3 and Supervisor 1, encouraging the students’ skills of speaking as a performance contributed to the development of positive attitudes towards speaking English. Student 6 stated, ‘The atmosphere of the class was encouraging, especially when the speaker speaks confidently, talks about interesting topic and communicates with the audience’ (Th1, W1). Choosing interesting topics encouraged the students to take risks, and resulted in positive responses from the audience. As noted by Student 18, ‘The atmosphere of the
class was encouraging and very enthusiastic; the class was active because the topics were very interesting’ (Th1, W2). Topics of religious characters, such as the Prophet and his wives, jokes, and ‘Do you know?’ proved effective in appealing to the audience and maintaining their interest.

Telling jokes, as in Theme 1, is more demanding in terms of English speaking and can be a challenge even for advanced students. Despite this challenge, most students chose this activity and were excited to tell their jokes—Saudi students are fond of telling jokes. For example, Student 18 (a shy and less competent student) told the class a joke. She justified her choice and explained her difficulties:

I like telling jokes. Today I was ready for the presentation to tell the class a joke. However, when I told the class my joke, the students did not understand what I had said. I experienced difficulty in pronouncing the English words and my voice was low. I was very embarrassed because no one understood my joke although it is very funny. (Th1, W2)

I encouraged Student 18 to repeat her joke and entice the audience by speaking clearly and audibly; making eye contact; and saying the joke in a simple manner, instead of reading it from a paper using difficult words. Student 18 responded positively:

The teacher helped me greatly to say the joke and be understood by others by encouraging me to say it in a simple way and raise my voice. I felt afraid, nervous and shy but when the students understood my joke and they started to smile, I was encouraged to continue. The role of the teacher was perfect and distinctive; I appreciated her effort. I hope to do better next time and to take advantage of the teacher’s advice. (Th1, W2)

The experience of Student 18 encouraged other students, such as Student 26, to tell their jokes in a manner that appealed to the audience. Student 26 explained:

I was interested in listening to the presentations of others and learning from their experiences. This time I am very confident; I presented without fear and hesitation. I am satisfied with what I have achieved; the students understood my joke and they laughed.

It was observed that most students discussed the popular topic in the KSA, ‘Do you know?’ in Week 3 of Theme 1. This topic, which provides explanation of strange phenomena around the world, ensured that the speaker spoke clearly and precisely and stressed the need for the audience to listen. For instance, Student 15 chose the activity ‘Share some writing’ to discuss the topic of ‘Do you know?’ The audience was attentive and asked her the meanings of the difficult words. I recorded in my field notes that Student 15 was proud because she attracted the attention of the
audience. I gave her positive feedback and we applauded her. Student 15 reflected on her experience:

I started Theme 1 with a simple speech. However, gradually I got better in speaking. The atmosphere of the class was interesting and encouraging because all students were interested in ‘My News’. The role of the teacher was perfect and encouraging and I appreciate her effort.

7.5.8.3 Contextualised Practice

Students were exposed to contextualised practice of everyday language in the four themes of LSE. Seventy-one per cent of students confirmed that they recognised the relationship between LSE content and its application to real-life situations (item 21 of the survey of student evaluations of the teacher’s role). According to the findings of the reflections on group responses after the weekly group interviews and observation schedules, using everyday language appeared to encourage students to develop positive attitudes towards the English speaking activities. The students confirmed this in their learning diaries. For example, Student 16 reflected, ‘Theme 4 is interesting and useful because I prefer to practise English using everyday language and now I know how to make this healthy salad’ (Th4, W11).

The contextualised practice in Theme 1—‘My News’ was practical for language learning and allowed the students choice in what they wanted to say. As observed by Supervisor 3, ‘The idea of Theme 1 may be not a new idea, but engaging all the students in class by using different activities in one theme makes it special and effective in encouraging the students’ participation’. In Theme 2—‘Islamic Chants’, contextualised practice was a significant factor in encouraging the students’ confidence, competence and participation in speaking English. Student 13 in the participation survey stated, ‘I like Theme 2 because chanting is interesting and encouraging. I am more confident and competent in speaking English with this theme’ (Th2, W6). Religious content is very inspiring for Saudi students, as observed by Teacher 19 and confirmed by Student 1. Teacher 19 reflected, ‘The chant motivates issues related to religion and culture’, and Student 1 noted, ‘It is nice to chant about Allah and the Prophet Muhammad’ (Th2, W4).

Relaxing while listening to the chants appeared to encourage the students to be open to the input. The supervisors and teachers observed that the students were sitting relaxed, and modelling the chants while listening to them. Supervisor 1 stated, ‘Almost all the students were very confident
and relaxed while chanting’. Supervisor 3 reflected, ‘Encouraging students to speak while relaxing was a great motive for developing the students’ confidence and competence in speaking’. Student 23 confirmed this: ‘This theme is interesting and motivated me because it encourages students to relax and to practise the language’ (Th2, W4).

According to the formal interviews with the teachers and supervisors and the students’ learning diaries, the activities of LSE contributed to the students’ competency in the following aspects of English:

- **Vocabulary and language structure**: The students practised vocabulary and language structure in a context based around a theme or a topic. Supervisor 4 explained, ‘Theme 2 developed both skills of speaking and listening to practise the language in context’, and Supervisor 3 stated, ‘Theme 2 was practical and useful since vocabulary and language structure were practised in a particular context’. According to observations, moving from easy to challenging activities proved effective. For example, Chant 1 (‘I look I see’) included monosyllabic vocabulary and simple sentence structures, while Chants 2 and 3 included more complex vocabulary and compound sentences.

- **Sound production and linkage**: While chanting, the students practised sound production and linkage, either between words or between sentences. Supervisor 2 commented, ‘Theme 2 developed the skills of listening to and practicing phonetics [speech sound], phonology [phonemes], morphology [words], syntax [phrases and sentences], semantics [the literal meaning of phrases and sentences] and pragmatics [meaning in context of discourse]’. In the interviews and surveys, the teachers and supervisors valued using chants for pronunciation practice. The students specifically practised the different sounds of vowels and consonants that cause difficulties for Arab learners of English. It was noted in the field notes that the pauses after each phrase were sufficient to allow the students to process the language while listening and practising.

- **Rhythms, intonation and stress of the language**: The students practised listening to different forms of English rhythms, intonation and stress, as English has a stress-timed rhythm. Listening to English rhythms, intonation and stress from a native speaker was an effective strategy, as noted by Teacher 6:

  Most English teachers and supervisors stressed in the evaluation of each theme that the speech patterns used in the chants proved useful for practising English
rhythm and stress. They suggested that listening to the chant repeatedly was less monotonous because of the rhythm and melody.

All the teachers and supervisors confirmed in the interviews and surveys that the repetition of listening and modelling chants over three weeks (a week for each chant) on a daily basis was beneficial in terms of vocabulary development, language structure, sound production and linkage, intonation, rhythm, tone and memorisation.

The contextualised practice in Theme 3—‘Stories in English’ encouraged the students to organise ideas and content coherently. As observed by Supervisor 2, ‘Theme 3 gives the students the chance to build correct sentences using an extended vocabulary and students learn to connect these sentences coherently’. This was confirmed by Student 9: ‘It is a useful theme because it helps students to organise ideas’ (Th3, W7). According to the findings of the competency survey conducted prior to LSE, 30% of students were unable to organise thoughts and ideas in a structured manner for English communication. Upon completion of LSE, the students could retell a story based on a video, and construct their own stories. They used a variety of skills, including paraphrasing, connecting sentences coherently, adjusting the general tone of the story, and constructing conclusions.

In general, telling stories proved an enjoyable and beneficial strategy. As commented by Teacher 1, ‘Telling stories is suitable for beginners and very motivating for the creativity of advanced students’. Supervisor 1 explained the progress students made:

Story 1 of Theme 3, which encouraged students to retell a story that had been watched, was a little challenging for the students. Although the students’ performances in the final day of the week were very good, most of the groups were confused and worried about the application of this activity. On the other hand, in Story 3, all students were excited the whole week to write their stories and narrate them to peers, and they write and narrate them easily.

Encouraging students to watch a video and experience language in use was also worthwhile. All teachers and supervisors agreed in the interviews and surveys that the contextualised practice of Theme 4, in which students responded to videos, was unique. It was completely different to the traditional learning experiences of the Saudi classrooms, and created positive attitudes towards speaking activities. Supervisor 1 explained, ‘Theme 4 illustrates the saying “Show me, I will forget; tell me, I will neglect; and involve me, I will remember forever”’. Students 5 and 12 confirmed this in the participation survey. Student 5 reflected, ‘Theme 4 is fantastic because I
enjoy learning English by watching useful videos, followed by interesting tasks’ (Th4, W11). Student 12 noted, ‘Theme 4 is interesting and useful because I prefer to practise English using everyday language’ (Th4, W11). Teacher 13 stated, ‘Theme 4 encouraged the students to enrich their vocabulary using authentic activities and speak English naturally’. The supervisors, teachers and students reflected that the quality and the length of the videos (two to four minutes) retained the students’ attention. It was observed that students watched attentively.

The students, teachers and supervisors agreed that the contextualised practice of Theme 4 encouraged group competition. For example, Student 7 (Leader, Strawberry) reflected, ‘This time, I am very happy and confident because everyone in the group was interested to be involved. This enthusiasm may be because they like cooking’ (Th4, W10). The students were observed cooperating and working hard to succeed in their presentation and win the competition.

7.5.9 Learner-centred Approach

Moving from a teacher-centred approach to a learner-centred approach had a significant effect on the students’ confidence and competence in speaking English. They used English to discuss ideas, form opinions, plan presentations, participate in assessment, reflect on LLS and interact in English outside the classroom. Implementing a learner-centred approach in LSE is a major shift in the role of the KSA teacher and the way students engage in learning. The teacher role changed from dominator to facilitator, supporter and encourager for students in their independent learning, while the students’ role in the learner-centred classroom was central and active because they were responsible participants in their own learning.

Implementing LSE required that I adopt and adapt a number of roles that endorsed a learner-centred approach. My main role was to ensure that the students had access to multiple interpretations and expressions of learning, and effective strategies for planning, performing, monitoring and directing their independent learning. The difference for me meant developing the students’ confidence and competence in speaking English, while having more freedom to establish activities, employ different resources, use interactive pedagogy, create a stimulating learning environment and play a reactive role to encourage successful learning. This led to me having an enjoyable, rich, qualitative experience of teaching.
It was noted by the three English teachers and Supervisor 1, and recorded in the field notes, that my roles changed according to the stage (before, during and after) of each of the LSE activities. Before the activities, I was tutor, organiser and encourager, with the following roles:

- **Tutor**: I explained the activities and instructed students on how to complete the activities and take advantage of the assessment criteria. I pointed them in directions they had not considered, such as communicating with the audience using eye contact, facial expressions and body language; starting and concluding the speech; and speaking within the limited time. Student 5 confirmed the effectiveness of the teacher role as a tutor: ‘The teacher role was perfect and she explained the nature of the program activities greatly’ (Th1, W1).

- **Organiser**: I organised students to complete the activities, such as giving students clear guidance on how to plan and deliver their oral presentations, explaining to them what to do, and organising them into pairs or groups. Based on the field notes, this role was critical because if the students did not understand what they should do and had not been engaged, the activity would be ineffective. The effectiveness of this role was explained by Student 9: ‘All the students understand what they should do and how. This does not allow any confusion or misinterpretation’ (Th1, W1).

- **Encourager**: I sought to inspire the students with hope, courage and confidence when they were hesitated to begin an activity. According to the teachers and supervisors, this role was significant because the students were afraid to play a central role in independent learning, present in front of peers and participate in group working. This role was appreciated by the students, as commented by Student 3: ‘I appreciated the effort of the teacher for encouraging me to speak’ (Th1, W2).

During the LSE activities, I had the following roles:

- I joined in the students’ discussions as a participant in order to introduce new information, ensure the continuity of the students’ engagement, encourage participation from all the students, and strive to achieve a creative atmosphere. It was taken into consideration when playing such a role that too much participation would dominate the conversation and attract all the attention (field notes). The following conversation, which was with Orange group in Story 2, illustrated my role in encouraging the students to start the discussion of planning presentations, and my suggestions to make their ideas more successful:
Teacher: How are you going to present your conclusion of the story?
Student 1: I think this time we will present some pictures using the overhead projector.
Teacher: This is a good idea, but make sure that the pictures are clear and illustrative.

- As a resource, I supported the learning process by providing information, ideas and explanation, as required, and assisted students to speak or write in English. The following is an example of this role in Theme 3:
  
  Student 25: Many of the mice جرحوا (injured).
  Teacher: You mean ‘injured’!
  Student 25: Yes, injured.

- I acted as a prompter when students were confused in discussions and could not think of what to say next. For example, in Activity 2, when the students were confused and afraid to retell the events of Story 1, I elicited a response to get them to start. From Theme 3:
  
  Teacher: Read the first introductory sentence.
  Student 4: Long, long ago, in a deep forest, there was a group of mice.
  Teacher: What happened next?

- As an observer, I noted the students’ behaviours and attitudes in order to give them feedback and judge the success of the different resources and activities in the classroom.

- As a supporter, I helped the students achieve their goals. This role was appreciated by the students, as reflected by Student 16: ‘I appreciate the teacher effort in encouraging and supporting me’ (Th1, W3) and Student 6:
  
  I have reached my aim of improving my speaking. My ability of speaking was amazing because my mistakes decreased significantly. I am very capable of speaking in public confidently and my anxiety when speaking is much lower. The teacher role was very supportive and encouraging. I would not be able to reach this development without her support. (Th1, W3)

- As a facilitator, I gave support and guidance whenever necessary. I encouraged group competition, and did what I could to reduce the students’ stress. By the end of the program, all groups had the opportunity to experience success, with the majority of groups having won several times, and all groups winning at least once.

After the LSE activities, I offered feedback and helpful, gentle correction to assist students with misunderstandings and hesitations. This role was important because, according to the students’ learning diaries, they expected me and wanted me to indicate whether their English was correct. Most students reflected that the positive feedback and recognition from the teacher encouraged them to be proud of themselves and work hard in the future. For example, in her learning diary,
Student 26 reflected, ‘I presented confidently and the teacher said “Excellent”. I am very proud of myself” (Th1, W3). Student 6 stated, ‘The teacher appreciates that I am working hard to learn while other teachers do not. This encouraged me to work hard’ (Th1, W1).

### 7.6 Effectiveness of My Role

Based on the students’ learning dairies, they were generally satisfied with my role. Student 9 commented simply that ‘the teacher did what she was committed to do’ (Th1, W2). In casual conversation, they shared with me their desires to learn; told me of their difficulties, particularly in group work; complained about the misbehaviour of their peers; and asked for advice. In addition, the findings of the survey of the student evaluations of the teacher’s role (Table 19) suggest that the students were generally happy with my role, and the majority of students felt that I was effective in the classroom as a teacher of English speaking.
Table 19: Survey for Student Evaluation of the Teacher’s Role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>To some extent (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Did the teacher clearly identify course content and aims?</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Did the teacher explain the teaching approach?</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Did the teacher explain how to evaluate the program clearly?</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Did the teacher provide a suitable number of activities?</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Did the teacher explain the contents clearly?</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Were the texts or documents suitable for the subject?</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Did the teacher teach content from easy to difficult?</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Did the teacher emphasise principles of reasoning more than learning by heart?</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Did the teacher use resources and equipment in appropriate ways?</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Did the teaching content cover the course as described?</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Did the teacher prepare the lessons well?</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Was the teacher’s voice clear?</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Did the teacher provide opportunities to think and answer?</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Did the teacher provide enough time to consult her and your group?</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Could the teacher identify students’ problems and solve them?</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Did the teacher give feedback to students regularly?</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Did the teacher teach morals and ethics at the proper time?</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Did the teacher provide clear criteria for evaluation?</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Did the teacher come to class regularly?</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Did the teacher teach for the whole period, according to the lesson plan?</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Could the contents be applied to real-life situations?</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Did you acquire more knowledge of English?</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.7 Strategies for Supporting Language Learners

During LSE, the students identified strategies or techniques that assisted them to improve in confidence and competence when speaking English

- Collaborating: By establishing a collaborative atmosphere, the students developed an understanding that helping each other was the way to success. For example, Student 25 (Leader, Apple) explained:

  I did hard work to encourage students in my group to chant confidently. We practised whenever it was possible. We were prepared and my group was supportive. We performed coherently. We won the competition and I am very happy working with this group.

Members of Mango group shared their perspectives. Student 26 reflected, ‘I performed with the group very smoothly. I was confident because my group was very helpful’.
Student 8 stated, ‘My group was cooperative. Working with this group is interesting and motivating’. Student 2 reflected, ‘My group encouraged me to speak confidently. My speaking skill was excellent and my confidence was very good’.

The students also realised that a lack of effective leadership and cooperation among individuals in the groups negatively influenced their performance and attitudes towards speaking activities. For instance, Apple group failed the competition of Story 1 because they faced difficulties in group work. Student 4 stated, ‘I and Students 25 and 14 did the all the work, while Students 18 and 19 did not do anything. I hate group work’. Student 18 justified her behaviour by saying, ‘My group did not want me to share work with them’. Student 19 reported, ‘I was prepared, but the group was not cooperative’.

- **Being patient and allowing time to adjust:** When afraid of change, the students understood that they should allow some time to adjust to the different teacher expectations and new student-centred activities. Student 13 commented, ‘At the beginning, I was afraid to present in front of the class, but when I got used to it, the presentations in front of my peers became easy’. Student 16 noted, ‘I am confident. Before I was afraid from other students, but now I am not afraid anymore’ (Th3, W7). Student 6 concurred: ‘This time, I was confident and not nervous because I am used to speaking in public now. My skill in speaking was perfect’ (Th4, W10). The students appreciated the teacher’s role in allowing some time to adjust. Student 9 stated, ‘The teacher role was excellent and supportive and I appreciated it because she made me love the subject’ (Th1, W1).

- **Appealing to the audience:** The majority of students understood that choosing interesting topics and using effective communicative strategies attracted and maintained the audience’s interest. Student 23 remarked, ‘My joke was funny and I raised my voice while presenting. I was very happy when all the class laughed’ (Th1, W2). Orange group related their success in winning the competition of Theme 4 to choosing interesting topics. Student 1 (the leader) explained, ‘We have chosen this dish [mushroom soup] because we liked it very much and I think all students like it too. We have also chosen a very simple way of cooking this dish’ (Th4, W10).
The students tried different strategies to attract the audience interest (such as using puppets) and maintain their engagement (such as asking the audience relevant questions), and they assessed the audience responses. As commented by Student 26, ‘The students liked my idea of using the puppets in the presentation’ (Th3, W9), and Student 2: ‘Asking some questions about the story was a good idea to encourage students to listen carefully and participate’ (Th3, W9).

- Preparation and practice: The students valued the importance of practising their presentations for the audience. Student 26 claimed, ‘Practising the presentation encouraged me to be confident while speaking. I was enthusiastic and focused’ (S6, Th3, W7). As a member of the audience, Student 25 said, ‘It was very encouraging and interesting to listen to other students presenting confidently’ (Th1, W2). Student 19 claimed, ‘I spoke fluently because I practised’ (Th1, W3). The opposite feelings arose when there was little or no practice. Student 21 reflected, ‘I did not practise the presentation very well; therefore, I made some mistakes’ (Th1, W1). Student 26 reflected, ‘I did not prepare for the presentation and I was panicked when presenting’ (Th1, W1).

Practising the presentation also allowed the students to overcome any difficulties in pronouncing complex words. Student 19 explained the way her progress enhanced through practice:

- Week 1: I can speak English but I experience difficulty in pronouncing long English words.
- Week 2: I learnt that with practising, I can pronounce the difficult words easily.
- Week 3: I never come to the class without practising.

Practice also reassured the students who were unfamiliar with the English vocabulary. As stated by Student 7, ‘I am confident if I am sure of what I am saying’ (Th2, W4), and Student 28, ‘After finishing Theme 2, I realised that I knew more words, phrases and sentences. Therefore, I was more confident in speaking’ (Th2, W6).
7.8 Challenges for the LSE Teacher

Before and during implementing LSE, I faced many challenges. These challenges included finding ways to minimise the students’ fear of change, particularly in relation to group work; to eliminate first language interference; to overcome insufficient time and limited student opportunities to speak English; and to introduce a new and interactive pedagogy.

King Abdullah’s project, Tatweer (2004 to 2014), made the implementation of LSE much easier because of the decrease in the number of units in each textbook (from 14 units to 10), a reduction in the number of students in each class from 40 to 30, and encouraging and supporting the use of technology. With these changes, students had more time to understand and consolidate what they were being taught, and the difficulties of large classes were minimised, including discomfort, control issues, individual attention, evaluation and learning effectiveness. In addition, using technology made the lessons more interesting and productive for both the learners and teachers. However, although the improvement was significant, the fear of change still confronted the students and me.

Group work activities and oral presentations were new to the students, and it took time and patience to introduce the strategies and have students feel comfortable to work and present to each other. Overcoming panic and fear, developing tolerance of others, presenting in public, ensuring equal distribution of work and taking responsibilities were issues that impinged on the adoption of LSE and affected the speaking of English.

Time was also critical. There was insufficient time for teaching, and limited opportunities for student participation. For example, at times, I had to teach a 45-minute English class, in which I taught a lesson from the current English curriculum, *Say it in English*, for 30 minutes, then a lesson from the integrated program LSE for 15 minutes.

Changing the teaching and learning strategies from a focus on the textbook to a focus on learning was disconcerting for the students. In addition, the students initially confused ‘naughty noise’ and ‘busy noise’. When employing interactive pedagogy, it is essential to balance the strategy of learning with fun, while communicating with other students, and being responsible and
committed. From the teacher’s perspective, this aim was difficult to achieve, and required patience and tolerance because the students were accustomed to learning in a very strict and controlled environment.

7.9 Student Role in the LSE Classroom

Students’ self-regulation in LSE transited from responding to others, to using speech and other tools to discuss ideas and form opinions, plan presentations, participate in assessment, reflect on LSE and practise English outside the classroom. The following describes the role of the student in LSE.

7.9.1 Students as Active Participants

Over the eight weeks of implementing Theme 2—‘Islamic Chants’, Theme 3—‘Stories in English’ and Theme 4—‘Videos in English’, the students practised English by discussing ideas and forming opinions. This opportunity positively enhanced the students’ personalities and motivated their independence in expressing and negotiating ideas to convey their message.

The students developed confidence in asking questions, solving problems, justifying preferences, taking notes to form sentences and connecting ideas logically to share with others. In the interviews, Teachers 1, 2 and 3 and Supervisor 1 confirmed that my interference decreased and the students’ participation increased. The use of Arabic lessened and the use of English became more frequent, according to the field notes.

7.9.2 Students as Planners

During Theme 3—‘Stories in English’ and Theme 4—‘Videos in English’, the students planned their presentations to engage and entertain an audience. They planned their presentations by following instructions in the participation survey before each theme. I monitored the group discussions, provided support when necessary and encouraged participation from all members of the groups. In addition, I sat with each group to listen to their ideas and gave suggestions on how to make their ideas work.
According to the field notes and interviews with Teachers 1, 2 and 3 and Supervisor 1, the students were more confident, competent and creative as time progressed. Their ideas included posters, concrete objects, puppets and the use of technology. As well as introducing resources, posters, graphs and performing, the groups asked related questions after the presentation and rewarded the audience for listening. Their use of English increased and use of Arabic decreased, according to the field notes.

7.9.3 Students as Reflective Participants

The students reflected on their LLS as an important part of the learning process. After each presentation, the students reflected in learning diaries about the activity, the classroom atmosphere, my role and their abilities and confidence in speaking. They also reflected after each theme in the participation survey about the factors that promoted or hindered their confidence in speaking English, the strategies or techniques that suited them best, and the teacher’s role.

Reflective practices appeared to encourage students’ independent thinking as they reflected on and shared solutions with peers. The students’ reflections also gave insights that are not normally expressed in Saudi classrooms. They shared their fear of change, embarrassment of public speaking, and difficulties related to the group work and communicating in English. They explained in detail what happened when presenting in front of their peers; reflected on the factors that hindered or encouraged them; and expressed their attitudes towards the learning environment, LSE activities, teaching strategies and my role. They explained their growth in confidence and their developing ability to speak English.

7.9.4 Students as Users of English Outside the Classroom

According to the field notes and interviews with the three teachers and Supervisor 1, the students followed up on activities at home by using the internet, such as searching for the chants, translating and practising the difficult vocabulary. Student 26 reflected, ‘I was happy to practise the chant using the internet. Using the internet in education is fantastic and encouraging’ (Th2, W4). Student 16 said, ‘Theme 2 is useful. I like using the internet in learning. I am confident more than before’ (Th2, W4).
The results of the competency survey conducted before the implementation of LSE suggest that 82% of the students practised English outside the classroom by watching programs or movies on television (79%), both on a daily basis (39%) and during the weekend (29%). Talking with English speakers was another way to practise English outside the classroom (43%), with 29% of students practising this on a daily basis.

According to the interviews conducted before the implementation of LSE, all students received assistance in English from their families. Forty percent of the students noted that most of their families spoke English fluently, while 60% stated that there was at least one person in their family who could give some support in English. Some students asked for their families’ support when practising English outside classroom. For example, Student 14 said, ‘My father helped me in practising. I felt afraid and shy when speaking’ (Th1, W3). Student 1 reflected, ‘I like the chant. My brother helped me to use the internet and search for this chant. I practised the chant and I was very ready to perform’ (Th2, W5).

**7.9.5 Students as Evaluators of LSE**

The students participated in evaluating LSE before, during and after the implementation. The students initially completed a self-evaluation survey to assess their abilities in speaking, linguistic knowledge, and confidence and feelings (enjoyment and anxiety) related to speaking English. The students also completed this survey at the end of LSE to compare their progress. Throughout LSE, the students participated in 23 sessions of assessment. They worked cooperatively to critique other groups’ performances using predetermined assessment criteria.

The students also participated in a survey to evaluate LSE (the four themes) and the teacher’s role. This experience of evaluation was new to the Saudi students. Saudi traditional classrooms are test oriented, with students often driven to earn good grades in their written exams. English assessment includes comprehensive written exams conducted twice each year, and these exams are supervised by the MoE. Grammatical rules and writing composition are awarded the highest grade. Self-assessment and evaluation input are not traditionally expected in Saudi classrooms.
Being involved in assessing the performance speaking of other groups encouraged the students to think about their own presentations. As commented by Teacher 3, ‘Participating in assessment is very effective in encouraging group working’. According to the observations, identifying the mistakes of others encouraged the students to improve their presentations by avoiding those mistakes. In contrast, acknowledging the strengths of the presentations of others motivated the students to model their behaviour. Teacher 2 confirmed this by reflecting, ‘Participating in assessment is very effective to encourage students to learn from each other’.

It was apparent that, through assessing the efforts of others, there was marked improvement and attention to detail among the students. The students applied various formats and techniques to open and close their speeches, spoke clearly and audibly, varied their voices, paced their presentations, made eye contact, used correct grammar and appropriate vocabulary, presented information in an appropriate sequence, used suitable resources to support their presentation (posters, concrete objects, the overhead projector and Microsoft PowerPoint) and worked cooperatively as a group. The students moved from using posters to trying other creative strategies to influence the audience, such as performances and scenes.

In Activity 4 in Theme 1, it became necessary to make adjustments to the assessment. The following strategies were introduced to further clarify my expectations regarding the assessment of group presentations:

- writing the assessment criteria on the board
- reviewing the criteria with the students
- distributing the paper of assessment to students to tick what best described the group performance
- encouraging the students to discuss the results as a group
- going through all criteria and asking each group to assess them—for example, ‘Do you think the group spoke clearly and audibly on most occasions?’
- taking the opinion of the majority to decide who won the competition
- rewarding the leaders and individuals of the winning groups, as well as hardworking individuals from other groups.
These strategies proved effective in encouraging the students to be reasonable in their responses and have a clearer understanding of the role of assessment. These strategies of assessment were followed in Themes 2, 3 and 4. The teachers and supervisors emphasised that the students adjusted to the needs of the assessment by Theme 3, and improved their presentations as a result of watching and critiquing others. According to the field notes, in Themes 3 and 4, the students were creative in establishing and presenting their materials. For example, in ‘My Favourite Story’ in Theme 3, ‘Mango group created a great effect on the audience by using puppets to illustrate the characters of the story and maintained the audience engagement while asking questions about the story’ (excerpt from field notes). In addition, in Theme 4—‘Videos in English’, ‘Orange, Strawberry and Blueberry groups created creative and attractive brochures of the ingredients and recipe of their favourite dishes’ (these brochures were added to other resources in the resource centre) (excerpt from field notes).

The three English teachers and Supervisor 1 confirmed in the formal interviews that the presentations of the Orange, Strawberry and Blueberry groups were fluent, and they presented the instructions for cooking in sequential order using suitable resources, such as posters and real objects. More importantly, according to the observations, they attracted the audience’s attention and maintained their engagement by keeping the presentation formal and organised by assigning someone to introduce and conclude the events of the presentation.

**7.10 Conclusion**

According to the observations, interviews and survey results, the interactive pedagogy and group work, innovative and challenging activities, support of the teacher, supportive classroom environment, established routine and regular presentations resulted in increased confidence and improved competence in the students’ English speaking. Positive changes were noted in the Saudi students’ attitudes and reactions to undertaking English speaking classes. The students were willing to try new experiences and participate in activities uncommon in their past school experiences. Self-doubt, anxiety, resistance, uncooperative group members and lack of English vocabulary were a few of the challenges that the students faced.
Implementing a learner-centred approach in LSE was viewed by the students, teachers and supervisors as a significant change in the role of the teacher and students. The teacher and students adapted to different strategies, introduced new resources and activities, and used reflective teaching and learning to evaluate the effectiveness of LSE in the classroom context.

The students, teachers and supervisors stressed that, by experiencing LSE, the students became responsible participants and had more opportunities to speak English than in traditional Saudi classes. They discussed their ideas and formed opinions, planned presentations, participated in assessment, reflected on LLS and used the internet to complete classroom activities at home.

Over time, the students gradually decreased their dependence on the teacher and moved towards becoming autonomous learners. They demonstrated responsibility in language learning, were self-regulating, and showed evidence of being problem solvers and collaborative workers. In LSE, the students had more opportunities to use English in communication and to build their confidence and competence than in their past experiences of learning English from a textbook, guided by a teacher whose qualification in FL and experience of speaking English may have been deficient.
Chapter 8: Discussion and Implications

8.1 Overview

This study set out to develop, implement and evaluate the effect of the integrated program—Let’s Speak English (LSE) (Appendix 1) on an English-speaking classroom in the KSA. Classrooms in the KSA are traditionally teacher-directed and textbook-oriented. Teachers follow a rigid, standardised curriculum with prescriptive content, and passive students complete workbooks and rarely have the opportunity to speak English aloud.

This case study investigated the introduction and implementation of LSE in a Grade 7 English-speaking classroom. It examined students’ responses to LSE. The influence of LSE on the students’ competence and confidence to speak English was investigated, primarily because students complete English speaking classes from Grades 4 to 10, but the majority of students have difficulty communicating in English upon leaving school. This situation in KSA schools demands the exploration and development of English speaking programs that better support students to leave school able to confidently communicate in English.

This case study introduced LSE to a class of Grade 7 girls on a daily basis over four months. LSE is an integrated program incorporating four themes: ‘My News’, ‘Islamic Chants’, ‘Stories in English’ and ‘Videos in English’. LSE aims to move teaching practices from being teacher-centred to learner-centred by using a variety of interactive strategies.

A case study approach was used and multiple data sources were employed, including observations, interviews and the collection of artefacts, such as language learning diaries, field notes, samples of students’ work and surveys. The findings from this research seek to improve classroom practices and inform policymakers regarding the teaching of spoken English in Saudi classrooms.

The teachers, supervisors and students in the case study acknowledged the improvement in the students’ confidence and competence in speaking English. The students were aware that their
confidence and competence had improved, despite their initial reluctance and resistance to the changes in their education program. They recognised their attitudes to speaking English had changed positively. While the students were initially fearful and hesitant, by the second week, they participated willingly in the LSE activities and communicated meaningfully with their peers in English.

The English teachers and supervisors confirmed that the students overcame their fears of speaking in public, willingly participated in new and different activities based on a learner-centred approach, and appeared to enjoy working in group activities. They stated that they had witnessed positive attitudes to EL learning.

All stakeholders appreciated the differences between the current curriculum driven by the textbook, *Say it in English*, and LSE. The students’ high levels of participation, interaction and commitment were observed on a daily basis in the LSE classroom activities. In contrast to the textbook, *Say it in English*, LSE emphasises realistic and contextualised interaction among students to complete tasks that encourage meaningful communication, rather than the completion or practise of isolated linguistic skills. The LSE activities were designed to accommodate students’ varying competencies in English speaking, and encouraged them to explore a range of learning styles.

There was a significant difference in the way the learning environment was constructed in LSE. As opposed to the more rigid and authoritarian structure of the typical KSA English-speaking classroom, LSE encouraged a supportive, positive and collaborative learning environment.

Essential to the Saudi way of life is the acknowledgement of religion in all aspects of learning. While the pictures of the textbook, *Say it in English*, reflect the religious identity and cultural beliefs, LSE acknowledges the religious and cultural beliefs and embraces students’ interests by introducing a variety of activities. For example, Theme 2 involves Islamic chants and, in Theme 1 (such as in ‘Share some writing’ and ‘Who am I?’), the students chose to speak about religious figures, such as the Prophet Mohammad and his wives. The students participated in authentic activities using interactive pedagogies to speak proudly about religious characters. Through their regular oral presentations, they focused on engaging with their audience and maintaining
audience interest. The students were encouraged to discuss and express opinions about relevant topics, while endorsing their religious and cultural values.

8.2 Implications of this Study

8.2.1 The Need for Ongoing Classroom-based Research

Research in KSA classrooms is minimal, and case study research is non-existent. To date, there has not been one research project conducted to promote student confidence in speaking English in the Saudi context. Increased research would be most beneficial to education officers and decision makers in preparing curriculum policies. Currently, Saudi curriculum decision makers lack immediate contact with teachers and classroom practices; thus, they rely heavily on supervisors’ reports. These reports and research studies often reflect an inaccurate picture of classroom settings because supervisors observe only a few classes and do not regularly communicate with students.

Teachers are encouraged to submit recommendations to the Saudi MoE, especially in terms of textbooks. However, these recommendations generally are not considered because English teachers lack relevant qualifications and academic knowledge about FL education (Abu-Ghararah, 1990). The MoE determines that the role of the teacher is to transmit the content of the textbook to students.

Classroom-based research would provide an added benefit for Saudi teachers. Saudi teachers rarely reflect on their teaching practices because of the predetermined nature of teaching content from a textbook—they follow a prescriptive curriculum. Providing Saudi teachers in English-speaking classrooms the opportunity to network and reflect on their teaching would result in the sharing of innovative ideas and up-to-date resources. Teachers would be better prepared to make informed instructional decisions and cater to the individual needs of students. They would be more informed about effective teaching strategies that are research based, and could contribute to the improvement of English speaking. An added outcome of teacher reflection would be teachers’ investigations of their own competency as English speakers. With improved teacher confidence and competence to speak English, students would benefit from more effective demonstrations and teacher modelling.
Arani (2004) argues that, even when reforms are planned through the Tatweer project (2004 to 2014), they very often meet with great resistance from parents, teachers’ unions and sometimes students themselves. In addition, educational reforms are not always implemented or managed properly. However, Saudi education stakeholders would benefit from participating in the systematic collection and analysis of data to inform change in classrooms, make improvements and solve problems relating to the teaching of English in KSA classrooms.

In order for research to be sustained, effective and beneficial to students, there must be support from all stakeholder groups. This case study was unique because the principals, teachers, parents and students had not engaged in any previous research studies. It was a new experience for all stakeholders, and they valued the opportunity to share their views and experiences in order to improve the English-speaking classroom.

8.2.2 The Need for Supportive Learning Environments

This study highlights the difference that a supportive, collaborative learning environment can have for students’ engagement and participation. In their previous English speaking classes, the students were not encouraged to participate. Their learning was textbook-driven, and completing the written tasks in workbooks was primarily their experience of learning English. By creating a stimulating learning environment through LSE, positive attitudes replaced negative attitudes. The students had fun interacting with others, and enjoyment and enthusiasm replaced fear, anxiety, doubt and hesitation. Over time, the students felt comfortable and confident speaking English with their peers.

Providing sufficient space for individual and small group work was necessary. Arranging tables in groups encouraged interaction and group involvement. In addition, in contemporary classrooms, technology is invaluable because it can lead to increased creativity and greater opportunities for individual interpretations, such as when the students accessed technology as a way of supporting their learning in LSE.

Trusting and supportive relationships between the teacher and students were essential for LSE. In typical Saudi classrooms, teachers remain distant as a result of cultural and social respect. LSE
emphasises the need for Saudi teachers to consider their roles to reduce student anxiety in order to encourage increased participation, positive attitudes and elimination of fear. In such a context, students’ confidence and participation in English-speaking classrooms is enhanced.

Employing an interactive pedagogy contributed to the improvement of the students’ engagement in the classroom language learning practices. The adoption of an interactive pedagogy in LSE is completely different from the typical classes in Saudi public schools, and, in this case study, it resulted in an increase in students’ positive attitudes towards their English speaking classes. The students had more opportunities to listen, engage with and apply their developing English speaking skills by interacting with and learning from their peers.

8.2.3 The Need for Planning

While the typical Saudi teacher is dependent on the textbook for planning, LSE highlights the need for the teacher to plan to meet the individual learning needs of students. Students vary in their levels of English competency, and no single textbook can cater for such diversity. The Saudi curriculum assumes that all learners start at the same place and progress at the same rate. In LSE, lesson plans are flexible and can be adjusted to accommodate all learners, irrespective of their levels of competence. While the teaching activities move in a logical sequence and are planned, the teacher is expected to reflect and adjust teaching to ensure students are given adequate assistance or challenged as required.

With LSE, it was found that planning added a layer of assurance for the teacher and contributed to the teacher’s confidence. Planning allowed the teacher time to think about options and alternatives to deal with issues that may arise. From my own perspective, when conducting LSE, I realised that the more confident I became with the pedagogy and content, the more confident were the students.

8.2.4 The Need for Time to Participate

Saudi classrooms revolve around rigid schedules, and 30 minutes of the weekly three hours allocated to teaching English were devoted to encouraging students to speak. Being well planned and conscious of time use was critical to the success of LSE. Establishing a classroom routine
was necessary to allow the classroom activities to move smoothly. Each theme continued over an extended period to allow more opportunities to present and more time to adjust. It is recommended that:

- English speaking classes be held early in the day when the students are active and ready for learning
- A minimum of a one-hour period per week be devoted to English speaking
- English speaking activities be focused on a theme.

8.2.5 The Need to Promote Communication and Fluency

Students’ fluency improved when they had ongoing and daily experiences of speaking aloud about topics that were relevant and interesting. In typical Saudi classrooms, students have limited opportunities to speak English, and learn primarily from a prescribed textbook. It became apparent in LSE that, by increasing the opportunities for students to speak English with their peers, the students’ self-perceptions as English speakers were enhanced, and the fear of speaking in public dissipated. It is recommended that all students have the opportunity to participate in free discussions, role-plays and gap activities as a means of encouraging meaningful communication.

With LSE, the classroom environment was encouraging and students were expected to speak, even if they made mistakes. They were also allowed to substitute Arabic words for unfamiliar English words. Their conversations were only corrected when the errors impeded the meaning. Generally, in traditional KSA English-speaking classrooms, students avoid participating when they lack confidence or understanding. With LSE, these strategies are ineffective and contrary to assisting students develop their confidence and competence to speak English.

8.2.6 The Need for Collaboration

Typically, a collaborative classroom is uncommon in Saudi Arabia. In contrast, LSE emphasises the need for and benefits of collaboration between students to practise and master English speaking. Collaborating to complete group tasks encouraged the students’ confidence to speak and complete public presentations. Initially, the students expressed mixed emotions about the
experience; however, over time, their anxieties reduced and they willingly engaged with each other in speaking English.

In a collaborative learning environment, students learn by observing, imitating and modelling the behaviours and attitudes of their peers. Working in groups proved a challenge for the students in this study because of their uncertainty regarding the process. However, the overall benefits far outweighed the initial reluctance of students. Through collaboration, the students engaged more than they had previously in any English-speaking classroom.

Addressing group work difficulties and challenges as they arise is the responsibility of the teacher. The teacher and students together learn to practise tolerance and make adjustments. In LSE, it became apparent that long-term group work—particularly when groups included the same students—had a significant influence on encouraging participation, commitment and competition in the Saudi-speaking classroom. Group competition—particularly through presentations—proved a motivation for students to try new strategies, attract the audience’s attention and maintain the audience’s interest. It is recommended that Saudi classroom teachers receive support and guidance in using collaborative approaches in English-speaking classrooms, with the intention that such an approach may filter into other disciplines and teaching areas, to the benefit of all students.

A major concern raised by the MoE and parents is Saudi students’ lack of English-speaking confidence and competence upon completing their schooling. In order to address this, it is essential that English speaking occurs both within and beyond the classroom walls. Students require regular and ongoing opportunities to speak with peers, friends and family using English. In the LSE classroom, it was found that anglicising students’ names, varying tasks to suit the students’ levels of competence, peer mentoring, and ensuring clearly articulated guidelines about when L1 was permitted and when English was essential assisted in increasing the level of engagement with English.

8.2.7 The Need for Authentic Reasons to Engage with English Speaking

The current KSA English speaking curriculum focuses on grammatically perfect utterances in a written format. In contrast, LSE focuses on encouraging students’ confidence and competence in
speaking English through the use of authentic and relevant communication. According to the students, their preferences were for Theme 2—‘Islamic Chants’ and Theme 1—‘My News’ because these themes were based on authentic, interactive activities, and were relevant to the students. Theme 1 developed the students’ ability to express ideas in English and allowed them to speak about family, home, preferences, likes and dislikes. Theme 2 encouraged the students to express opinions and discuss issues related to everyday language that reflected religious and cultural values.

LSE found that when the speaking activities were comprehensible and designed to accommodate the students’ level of linguistic competency and learning styles, acknowledged their religious and cultural beliefs, embraced their interests, and related to real-life situations, the students showed greater willingness to participate in the activities. They became more confident and their competence increased in terms of fluency and accuracy. Thus, it is recommended that Saudi students understand the relevance of what they are learning, and that curriculum content be related to their experiences, cultural backgrounds and interests. When content is meaningful, students are more likely to take risks and try, rather than succumb to the obstacles of insufficient or inadequate input.

8.2.8 The Need for a Learner-centred Approach

When implementing a learner-centred approach in LSE, a significant change occurred in the role of the teacher and students, compared to the typical classroom experience of the Saudi student. The teacher role changed from that of the dominator and director of learning to the facilitator and supporter of the students’ independent learning. The role of the students changed dramatically from passive responders to textbook learning and teacher direction to active participants and independent learners.

The learner-centred approach is an uncommon experience for Saudi students, but it is recommended by this study. It was found that, through increased opportunities for learner participation, the students’ personalities blossomed and they willingly shared their feelings, insights and understandings with the teacher and each other. This was obvious to all who observed the participation of students during the 16 weeks of LSE. The students adjusted how they participated and the frequency with which they engaged with each other. The LSE activities
motivated them to work in groups, as well as seek individual solutions. This subsequently promoted the students’ competence and confidence to participate in the English-speaking classroom.

In a learning-centred classroom, students’ roles are central and active. Students have ample opportunity to practise English by discussing ideas, forming opinions, solving problems, planning presentations, reflecting on LLS, interacting in English outside the classroom and participating in speaking assessments. The internet proved a significant motive for students to practise English outside the classroom. The students gradually decreased their dependence on the teacher as they became autonomous students who were more responsible and self-regulating. This positively enhanced the students’ personalities and motivated independence in learning. The students’ participation was greater and the teacher support was less. The use of English increased and the use of Arabic decreased.

This study recommends that Saudi teachers be encouraged with support to explore the advantages of a learner-centred classroom. When students are given more opportunities to be independent and to think and reflect on their learning, their confidence to participate is enhanced. In this study, learning-centred activities, oral presentations and participation in group work assisted the students to overcome their sensitivity to speaking in front of their peers, and decreased their fear of practising English.

When considering a shift to a learner-centred approach in English-speaking classrooms, it is necessary for Saudi teachers to consider their multiple roles. Their roles change before, during and after implementing the speaking activities. Before introducing the activity, the teacher’s role is that of tutor, organiser, encourager and supporter. During the activity, the teacher’s role is that of participant, resource, prompter, observer and facilitator. After the speaking activity, the teacher’s role is that of assessor and provider of feedback. The teacher’s role is always helpful and, when necessary, the teacher gives gentle correction to assist students with misunderstandings and hesitations.
8.2.9 The Need for a Systemic Approach to Overcome Current Constraints

The continued development of English speaking programs, such as LSE, in public schools is constrained primarily because teachers lack the academic knowledge and necessary skills to teach English as an FL. According to Al-Ahaydib (1986) and Abu-Ghararrah (1990), most English teachers are not qualified to teach English because they lack subject knowledge, language proficiency and competence in FL teaching methodology. In addition, pre-service and in-service education for EFL teacher education programs is unplanned and inconsistent. In order to address this primary concern, this study recommends that a systematic approach to improving pre-service and in-service education for EFL teacher education programs be instigated.

KSA education is dominated by a textbook-driven curriculum that prescribes what is taught and how it is taught. The MoE plans, establishes and develops educational resources. It is mandatory for all schools at all levels to use the same methods of instruction, textbooks, evaluation techniques and educational policy. English teachers for each grade are required to adhere to identical syllabus guidelines and deadlines, and all students of the same age start from the same point. As is evident from this case study, students exhibit a range of EL proficiencies and, while some students require assistance, others need to be challenged. In addition, the students’ high levels of participation and interaction in this study indicated that group work and interesting activities promoted a higher level of learning than did passively following a textbook and completing a workbook. Thus, this study recommends that a review of the English speaking curriculum and prescribed textbook be undertaken to enable accommodation of the range of student needs, interests and learning styles.

At a system level, improvement in the English speaking curriculum requires collaboration between all stakeholders, including students, teachers, supervisors, researchers, curriculum specialists, program managers and administrators (Nunan, 1993). A system-wide research agenda in effective English speaking approaches is paramount, and the extension of LSE as a possible model to be adopted by other neighbouring schools is highly recommended.
8.3 Conclusion

This case study investigated the introduction, implementation and evaluation of LSE in a Grade 7 English-speaking classroom in the KSA. It investigated the influence of the theme-based activities of LSE on students’ confidence and competence in participating and engaging in English speaking on a daily basis over four months.

Saudi public schools aim to educate learners to use English in real-life communication. Parents desire this and students who pursue further academic studies beyond school require this. However, the current spoken English syllabus curriculum does not meet these expectations. Current teaching practices and the Saudi curriculum provide insufficient and ineffective opportunities for students to interact in English with their peers and teachers, even though all students attend regular English classes from Grade 4. Large numbers of Saudi high school students graduate lacking the confidence to speak English. This disappointing outcome demands the exploration and development of English speaking programs, such as LSE, to incorporate communicative and interactive pedagogies, rather than teacher-centred, worksheet-based instruction.

The integrated program, LSE, emphasises that a learner-centred approach contributes positively to students’ confidence and linguistic competence. The students engaged with authentic activities in a stimulating and supportive learning environment. The students adjusted to their changing roles from passive learners to active participants, and reaped the benefits of increased participation and engagement. They spoke in English with each other and the teacher. They experimented when they were unsure, rather than being fearful or anxious. They developed positive attitudes towards learning English, and made connections between English and their lives both within and outside the classroom, while respecting and adhering to their cultural and religious values.

An English speaking program that embraces active engagement in speaking English on a regular basis is ground-breaking in the Saudi context. This study has the potential to change classroom
English speaking practices, and the LSE curriculum is now available to be trialled in neighbouring schools of Altatwor School in Riyadh.

LSE and the findings of the study will contribute to improved classroom practices and inform policymakers about teaching spoken English in Saudi classrooms. Engaging, interactive and learner-centred programs, such as LSE, are necessary if the commitment to producing confident and competent English-speaking students is to be realised. This study highlights the need for ongoing research and evaluation of current instruction in English-speaking classrooms in Saudi public schools.
References


Munhall, P. (2001). *Nursing research: A qualitative perspective*. Mississauga, Canada: Jones and Bartlett Publisher.


Appendices

Appendix 1

Let’s Speak English (LSE): An Integrated Program for Saudi Students
INTRODUCTION

“Let’s Speak English” (LSE) is designed to encourage and promote students’ confidence in speaking English. This program is for use in Saudi Arabian intermediate classrooms and provides opportunities for Saudi students to practise English while interacting with their peers. It is designed for small groups and whole classroom presentations. Activities are designed to suit students’ academic standards and learning styles, acknowledge their religious and cultural beliefs and embrace their interests. Activities accommodate students’ level of linguistic competency. Materials are interesting, fun and related to everyday life.

THEMES

MY NEWS
These activities emphasise the use of the language to express ideas, feelings, preferences and opinions about familiar events.

ISLAMIC CHANTS
These activities use Islamic chants to encourage students to recite and practise speaking English using vocabulary, grammar, sound production, intonation, and linkages between words and sentences.

STORIES IN ENGLISH
These activities require students to practise speaking English while planning to connect ideas coherently.

VIDEOS IN ENGLISH
These activities encourage practising speaking English through rich, authentic activities reinforced through the watching of English videos.
DURATION

LSE is completed in 12 weeks. A minimum of three weeks is recommended for each of the four themes and 15 minutes a day is required over four classes per week. However, the more opportunities students have to participate and practise, the greater the benefits over time.

LEARNER-CENTRED

LSE encourages moving from a teacher-centred paradigm to a learner-centred paradigm. It is anticipated that students who are encouraged to take responsibility when learning expend greater effort, rehearse more and use more effective learning strategies.

In this programme, student self-regulation involves a transition from responding to others to using speech to plan, discuss, solve problems and monitor independent learning. The teacher’s role changes from domineering and directing to facilitating learning. Teachers ensure that students use effective learning strategies and that they understand multiple interpretations and expressions of learning. In other words, during activities, the student’s role is central and active while the teacher’s role is one of support and guidance.

The learner-centred methodology promotes students’ competence and confidence in language learning by having students engage and actively make learning choices.

AIM

This program aims to:

- encourage and build the confidence and competence of non-English speakers to interact in English
- build positive attitudes towards speaking English
- promote the speaking of English as a means of self-expression and communication with others
- increase students’ knowledge in language learning
- generate an awareness of cultural differences and similarities
- support group-work strategies
• establish a learning and teaching environment based on collaboration that supports participation and engagement of all learners of English.

RATIONALE

To become confident and fluent English speakers, students require activities that encourage speaking and interacting among their peers. Motivating activities and student participation are the features of LSE. These features are generally overlooked in the current curriculum, in which students have limited opportunities to speak in English about topics of interest and to reflect on the classroom activities and pedagogy. Further, training for teachers of spoken English is under-resourced and the use of a course-book predetermines what and how lessons are taught.

This programme is organised according to four themes: Theme 1: My News; Theme 2: Islamic Chants; Theme 3: Videos in English; and Theme 4: Stories in English. It provides opportunities for interaction and creativity using 46 activities. The resources of Themes 1, 2, 3 and 4 serve as a model. Teachers can choose other resources from reliable websites.
LET’S SPEAK ENGLISH: PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES

Eight pedagogical principles underpin LSE and inform classroom instruction.

1. INTERACTIVE PEDAGOGY

Via the use of interactive teaching methods, students have opportunities to practise speaking and to participate in classroom activities. A positive and collaborative atmosphere is encouraged in a comfortable and supportive environment. LSE strives to foster positive attitudes to speaking English. The classroom environment is to be organised to cater for group work.

2. TASK BASED LANGUAGE

Task-based language learning affects students’ intrinsic motivation, especially when using ‘real-life’ and meaningful tasks. Students work cooperatively on tasks for a week in order to present their individual and group efforts on the final day. Using transaction speaking, which refers to situations in which the focus is primarily on what is said or achieved, students negotiate, express ideas and communicate messages, meanings and understandings.

3. SPEAKING AS PERFORMANCE

Students practise speaking in the form of public presentation. The focus is on both the message and the audience. Students are responsible for presenting their ideas in an organised and sequential manner.

In Themes 2, 3 and 4, students work in groups to plan their presentations. The teacher monitors group discussions and provide support to encourage creativity in using materials. Students participate in the assessment of the task and reflect on their learning. Student presentations must take into consideration audience response and maintain engagement.
4. REFLECTIVE LEARNING

Students require opportunities to reflect on their activities and to interact with peers and teachers. Students keep diaries and reflect on their speaking abilities and confidence, activities, classroom atmosphere and the teacher role. From time to time, the teacher reads these diaries and confers with each student. Together, the teacher and the student explore what new knowledge the student has created, how the student learns best, and the positives and negatives of activities, the learning environment and the teacher role.

5. BUILDING POSITIVE ATTITUDE

In LSE, the teacher promotes positive attitudes towards learning English by behaving positively, being enthusiastic and creating effective relationships based on respect and trust. Dealing with students respectfully and honestly is unusual in Saudi classrooms, where educational authority is treated with great respect. Respect and trust are crucial to encouraging students to cooperate positively with the teacher.

The teacher builds students’ self-confidence through positive early experiences. The teacher promotes students' perceptions of their developing proficiency and links their learning success to personal responsibility. More confident English speakers are encouraged to assist their peers while less competent students are encouraged by positive input from the teacher.

The setting of long- and short-term goals, integrated with authentic content, enhances students’ intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. (High levels of motivation are not the norm in Saudi classrooms.) Long-term goals are rewarded with progress reports. Short-term goals are acknowledged through immediate feedback, including applause and the provision of positive oral feedback, gifts (e.g., lollies) and reward cards for computer use. In Saudi classrooms, short-term goals and recognition encourage participation.
6. PLANNING

Planning is essential; it allows an easier transition from a teacher-centred to a learner-centred classroom and enables teaching events to move in a logical sequence. It supports the teacher’s confidence and provides them with assistance in dealing with issues as they arise. A confident teacher instils confidence in the students. At the same time, within their planned lessons, teachers need to accommodate and encourage students' responses and inquiry; for this reason, flexibility in teaching and learning is also essential.

Planning also takes into consideration place and time. Planning ahead to use facilities such as the smart-board room and resource centre is important. A supportive environment allows space for communicative language teaching (CLT) strategies and group work. Arranging seating in groups promotes interaction and group involvement. Teachers plan for the allocated 15 minutes of LSE to occur at either the beginning or the end of the class, depending on students’ needs and content to be covered.

7. COLLABORATION

In collaborative classrooms, students learn by observing, imitating and modelling the behaviours, attitudes and outcomes of their peers. Introducing group activities (Themes 2, 3 and 4) in Saudi classrooms could be challenging for both the teacher and the students because it is an unfamiliar strategy. When introducing group work, it is necessary to allow time for students to adjust and try different strategies. The following strategies assist students to adjust to group work:

1. Students form groups of five to six. Groups are given a label (e.g., orange) and placed in a sequential order for presentations.
2. Proficient English speakers are encouraged to take leadership roles and assist less proficient students. Leaders encourage participation of all group members.
3. Group stability is created by long-term group membership.
4. Each week, a winning group is identified. The group is acknowledged for its leadership and hardworking individuals.
8. TEACHER ROLE

To meet the objectives of LSE, the teacher plays several roles before, during and after introducing the activities for each of the four themes. The teacher’s main aim is to create strategies to promote students’ willingness and confidence to speak English and develop positive attitudes to speaking. The teacher also works to decrease students' anxiety as they practise speaking English.

When introducing each activity, the teacher instructs students how to complete the activity. This could be done by pointing them in new directions. Students are put into pairs or groups for class work. The teacher assists students when they are hesitant to start.

During the activity, the teacher participates in students’ discussions and, when necessary, introduces new information to support the continuity of students’ engagement. A supportive atmosphere is created and students requiring assistance to speak or write in English are encouraged by the teacher. The teacher prompts students when they are confused or cannot think of what to say next. The teacher observes the students’ behaviours and attitudes and provides feedback. The teacher evaluates the success of the different materials and activities at the end of each lesson. The teacher's role is to assist, support and encourage the achievement of students’ goals.

After the activity, the teacher offers feedback including helpful and gentle correction. Misunderstandings are clarified and demonstrations are given where there is a lack of knowledge or incorrect responses. The teacher is reflective about the activity, the teaching and the learning.

EMPHASISING SPEAKING IN ENGLISH

Students speak in English for most of the class period. Arabic is used only when students’ discussions and conversations are interrupted by saying the English equivalents when meaning is affected. The teacher introduces English equivalents by calling on other students for assistance. Students are also encouraged to use an English–Arabic dictionary.
Theme 1: My News

INTRODUCTION

This theme is an orientation for the themes Islamic Chants, Stories in English and Videos in English. It includes 14 different activities designed to motivate students to:

- use English for personal communication
- express ideas, feelings, preferences and opinions
- speak in front of their peers
- build fluency in expressing ideas (in particular, all students are encouraged to ‘speak up’, and errors are corrected only if they affect the meaning and could lead to misunderstandings)
- increase participation.
### ACTIVITIES FOR THEME 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Something about me you do not</td>
<td>Students tell the class something about themselves, such as their family, home, room, friends, hobby and what they like or dislike.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My personal news</td>
<td>Students describe to their peers something they have done with their family or friends, or something they will be doing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture talk</td>
<td>Students describe to the class a picture in which they are interested and why.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show and tell</td>
<td>Students bring to the class something to show their class and talk about it. Class members ask them questions about the object, such as: What is it?, Where did you get it?, When did you get it?, Who gave it to you? and How long have you had it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book review</td>
<td>Students tell the class about a book they have read recently. Class members ask questions such as: What is the title? Who is the author? Who are the main characters? What happens in the story? Why do you like this story?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What am I?</td>
<td>Students make up four clues about an animal or object and give the clues to the class. Class members guess what the animal or object might be. The presenter answers ‘yes’ or ‘no’ and provides more clues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Questions</td>
<td>Students think of something that lives in the sea or on land. Class members ask up to 20 questions to try to work out what the thing is. The presenter is only allowed to answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach us a game</td>
<td>Students teach the class a simple game. The class is required to learn and play the game.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions: how to make something</td>
<td>Students bring to the class something from home that they have made. They explain the steps used in making the object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poem</td>
<td>Students read a simple poem or tell the class about a poem. Class members ask questions such as: What is the title? Who is the author? What is the main idea of the poem? Why do you like this poem?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who am I?</td>
<td>Like 20 questions, but students make up clues about a person or cartoon character rather than an animal or object. Class members guess the name of the person or cartoon character.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mime</td>
<td>Students act out one of their favourite activities. The class guesses what it might be. This activity encourages very shy hesitant students to start participate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share some writing</td>
<td>Students bring some of their writing to the class to share. This might be a short story, a letter to someone, a suggestion or a criticism. The students read their writing aloud to the class in English. Students bring some of their writing to the class to share. This might be a short story, a letter to someone, a suggestion or a criticism. The students read their writing aloud to the class in English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joke</td>
<td>Students tell the class a joke.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ORGANISATION OF THEME 1

The 14 activities of Theme 1: My News are designed to teach students public-speaking strategies, including communicating with an audience, using eye contact, facial expressions and body language, speaking audibly and clearly, beginning and concluding the speech and keeping to the time limit.

Each activity is described on the back of Worksheet 1: Student topic selection. Two notes are included on Worksheets 1: one for students, to support them in the activity, and one for parents, to encourage them to assist their daughters. Students read the information and plan their presentations carefully. Students are encouraged to be creative in their presentations.

It is essential that teachers remind students about how to present information to an audience, particularly in the first week. Adjustments regarding the timing of presentations should be made until students are familiar with the procedures.

Students are encouraged to speak even when they make mistakes. The audience is encouraged to listen carefully to speakers and not to laugh when they make mistakes. To help them to speak confidently, students are encouraged to practise their presentations.

Activities for Theme 1: My News are conducted for 15 minutes for four days per week. Every student is scheduled to present the topic of choice in front of their peers. Each student presents once per week for at least two minutes. By the end of the week, every student in the class will have spoken for two minutes on a selected topic. If the theme extends for three weeks, each student will practise three activities in the theme. Using the LSE guidelines, the teacher follows a set routine to ensure that the events run smoothly.

Students are grouped (e.g., seven students per group) and each group is scheduled to present on a specific day according to group colours. For example, Worksheets 1: Student topic selection are produced in four colours with each colour representing a specific presentation day. The colour of Worksheet 1 determines the day of the presentation. For
instance, students with yellow worksheets present on Sunday. The names of the presenters are listed under the chosen day on the whiteboard, as shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student 1</td>
<td>Student 8</td>
<td>Student 15</td>
<td>Student 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2</td>
<td>Student 9</td>
<td>Student 16</td>
<td>Student 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3</td>
<td>Student 10</td>
<td>Student 17</td>
<td>Student 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4</td>
<td>Student 11</td>
<td>Student 18</td>
<td>Student 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5</td>
<td>Student 12</td>
<td>Student 19</td>
<td>Student 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 6</td>
<td>Student 13</td>
<td>Student 20</td>
<td>Student 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 7</td>
<td>Student 14</td>
<td>Student 21</td>
<td>Student 28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**THEME 1 - MY NEWS**

**WORKSHEET 1: STUDENT TOPIC SELECTION**

**ORIENTATION**

Worksheet 1: Student topic selection outlines the 14 activities and explains the options from which students can choose (e.g., picture talk, poem, mime). Each week, students choose one topic from Worksheets 1. A different topic is chosen each week for three weeks. Each week, the student is scheduled to present on their chosen topic for two minutes.
AIM

WEEK 1 AIMS: ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO OVERCOME THEIR FEAR AND GAIN CONFIDENCE WHEN SPEAKING IN PUBLIC. ENJOY LEARNING WHILE COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS. DEVELOP RESPONSIBILITY THROUGH CHOICE.

Typically, KSA students do not associate fun with communicating in English. Having fun while learning creates a positive attitude towards English speaking classes. Patience and tolerance is important as students are used to learning in strict educational environments where they are not allowed to speak unless they have permission from the teacher.

Week 2 activities aim to improve the students’ communication strategies by focusing on the students’ responses and the accuracy of their spoken presentations.

In the second week, students are less anxious and more responsive. Tables are arranged in groups. The sessions are interactive and the group discussions lead to greater participation than in the traditional classroom. Students have adjusted to the activity and there is variety and interest in the chosen topics. For example, students who choose the topic ‘My personal news’ might tell their peers about something they have done with their family or friends. Other students might choose to talk about something they will do in the future. Note that using the future tense is often easier than using the past tense.

Students are encouraged to choose interesting topics and to speak clearly and audibly to make their presentation entertaining to their peers. Being aware of their mistakes and the mistakes of others encourages students to adjust their presentations. In week 2, the teacher critiques each presentation orally and emphasises positive points.

Week 3 activities aim to encourage students to vary their presentations and select different topics.
Students select a different topic from the list on *Worksheets 1: Student topic selection*, such as ‘Share some writing’, ‘Book review’, ‘Who am I?’ or ‘Show and tell’. Students listen to the presentations of others. The teacher critiques each presentation orally and emphasizes positive points. These positive points could include:

- opening and closing the presentation appropriately
- speaking clearly and audibly Making eye contact with audience
- using correct grammar and appropriate vocabulary
- choosing interesting topics.
RESOURCES FOR THEME 1

Worksheet 1: Student topic selection

Name:.................................................................

News day:............................................................

A NOTE TO STUDENTS:

Choose a different activity each week in your ‘news’ time. Write a date next to the activity you are going to present. Talk to your parents about what you are going to do and how you are going to do it. Practise and be ready to talk to the class on your ‘news’ day. Your teacher and your parent will write a comment in the box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Parent comment</th>
<th>Teacher comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Something about me you do not know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My personal news</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture talk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Show and tell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book review</td>
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<tr>
<td>What am I?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>20 questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teach us a game</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructions: How to make something</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poem</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Who am I?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share some writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joke</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A NOTE TO PARENTS:

It can sometimes be difficult for students to think of interesting ‘news’ to share with their peers. To provide some variety in this theme, we would like students to choose from the following activities. Please assist your daughter to create her presentation using the list below. Please write your comments in the box provided before the presentation is made.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Something about me you do not know:</th>
<th>20 Questions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tell the class anything about yourself such as your family, home, room, friends, hobby or what you like and dislike.</td>
<td>Think of something that lives in the sea or on land. The class can ask you up to 20 questions to try to work out what you are thinking of. You are only allowed to answer questions with ‘yes’ or ‘no’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My personal news:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Teach us a game:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell the class about something you have done with your family or friends, or something you will be doing.</td>
<td>Teach us a simple game so that we can play it with you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Picture talk:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Instructions: how to make something:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find a picture in which you are interested. Tell the class about it and why it interests you.</td>
<td>Bring in something from home that you have made. Explain the steps involved in making it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Show and tell:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Poem:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring in something that you would like to show and tell the class about. Please make sure that you give us as much information as you can. For example: What is it? Where did you get it? When did you get it? Who gave it to you? How long have you had it?</td>
<td>Read a simple poem or tell us about a poem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Book review:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Who am I?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell the class about a book you have read recently. What is the title? Who is the author? Who are the main characters? What happens in the story? Why did you like this story?</td>
<td>This is the same as ‘What am I’, but you make up clues about a person or cartoon character rather than an animal or object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What am I?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mime:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make up four clues about an animal or object and tell them to the class. Then choose some students to take a guess at what the animal or object is.</td>
<td>Act out one of your favourite activities and choose some class members to guess what it might be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Share some writing:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Joke:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring in some of your writing and share it with the class. You may have written a short story, a letter to someone, a suggestion or a criticism.</td>
<td>Tell us a joke. (Remember it must be funny!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poem:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can sometimes be difficult for students to think of interesting ‘news’ to share with their peers. To provide some variety in this theme, we would like students to choose from the following activities. Please assist your daughter to create her presentation using the list below. Please write your comments in the box provided before the presentation is made.
ORIENTATION FOR THEMES 2,3,4

Theme 2: Islamic Chants, Theme 3: Stories in English and Theme 4: Videos in English share the same orientation processes. It is as follows:

- Students are provided with language input such as sounds, vocabulary, sentence patterns or a framework of language usage from various sources such as English chants, stories and videos.
- Students work on language input in pairs and/or groups in unstructured discussions and/or problem-solving tasks.
- The teacher explains the assessment criteria for the presentations and students are provided with time to plan.
- Finally, each student presents to their peers for two minutes.
INTRODUCTION

The aim of Theme 2: Islamic Chants is to encourage students to relax and speak in English. Theme 2 is an appropriate theme for learning in English-speaking classrooms because students:

- are familiar with the content and religious connection of the chants
- use and practise vocabulary, grammar, listening and communication skills
- practise sound production and connections between familiar words or sentences
- relax and receive input focused on positive outcomes and enjoyment
- focus on rhythm and intonation of the language
- students respond well to chants based on rhythms (without musical instruments) because of the positive influence of religion on Saudi society.

Theme 2: Islamic Chants in English provides a unique way of teaching and practising the English language in Saudi classrooms.
CHANTS FOR THEME 2

Theme 2: *Islamic Chants* involves three chants:

- Chant 1: ‘I look, I see’
- Chant 2: ‘Allah Knows’
- Chant 3: ‘Sing children of the world’

These chants are downloaded from CDs. The transcripts are included in Text-sheets 1, 2 and 3.

ORGANISATION OF THEME 2

The three chants are practised for 15 minutes in each of the four weekly classes. Theme 2: Islamic Chants is taught over three weeks. Each week, students are introduced to a new chant and each group chooses a part of the chant. By the end of the week, each group works on their selected part of the chant for an hour. Four activities accompany the three chants:

1. Activity 1: Listening
2. Activity 2: Translating
3. Activity 3: Conversing

ACTIVITIES FOR THEME 2

Activity 1: Listening

Students listen to the chants and complete the chosen part of each chant using *Worksheet 2: Filling-Gaps*, which includes a transcription of the chant and some empty spaces. The chant transcription is divided into five parts (part 1, part 2, etc.). Specific worksheets are provided for each chant as follows:
1. Worksheet 2/a (‘I look, I see’): Filling-Gaps
2. Worksheet 2/b (‘Allah Knows’): Filling-Gaps

**Activity 2: Translating**

Students translate their part of each chant by looking up the difficult words in a dictionary. They complete the translation at home. Familiarity with the words promotes students’ confidence before begin the next activity.

**Activity 3: Conversing**

Conversation activity revolving around identification of the main idea of their chosen part of each chant encourages students to communicate with others. It stimulates them to use English to express and discuss their ideas regarding issues related to the topics and to justify their opinions. There are three worksheets as follows:

1. Worksheet 3/a (I look, I see): Discussion
2. Worksheet 3/b (Allah Knows): Discussion

**Activity 4: Presenting**

In groups, students are given time to rehearse their selected part of the chants. Then, each group performs in front of their peers, with each group presenting a part of the chant. Using **Worksheets 4: Chant assessment**, students critique the groups’ presentations.
THEME 2 - ISLAMIC CHANTS

ACTIVITY 1 – LISTENING

WORKSHEET 2 (a,b,c): FILLING-GAPS

CHANTS 1, 2 AND 3

AIM

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- choose a preferred part of the chant from Worksheet 2 (a,b,c): Filling-Gaps and justify their choices
- listen to the chant carefully for specific information
- identify the missing words of the chant
- review their progress in groups and with the whole class.

PROCEDURES

- Teacher distributes Worksheets 2 (a,b,c) and encourages groups to choose which of the five parts of the chant transcription they would like to perform, justifying their choices.
- Students are given time to go through Worksheets 2 (a,b,c).
- The teacher listens to the students’ justifications and writes the numbers of their preferred parts of the chant on the board beside the groups’ names.
- The teacher introduces the activity by asking: ‘Are you ready to hear the chant?’
- The teacher instructs students to listen to the chant, listening especially carefully for the words in their chosen part. Students listen to the chant twice and then fill in the gaps on Worksheets 2 (a,b,c). They then listen to the chant for the third time to check and discuss their work in groups and with the whole class.
- The teacher checks students’ work with the whole class by selecting answers from groups and writing the correct words on the board.
Students fill in the gaps of all parts of the chant.

Students listen to the chant for the fourth time, after the missing words have been completed, and practise by repeating the words.

The teacher plays the role of tutor, organiser, observer, assessor, supporter and encourager.

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**THEME 2 - ISLAMIC CHANTS**

**ACTIVITY 2 – TRANSLATING**

**WORKSHEET 2 (a,b,c): FILLING-GAPS**

**CHANTS 1, 2 AND 3**

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**AIM**

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- use a dictionary to translate difficult words in Worksheet 2 (a,b,c): Filling-Gaps after the gaps have been completed
- check work in groups and with the whole class.

---

**PROCEDURES**

- The teacher asks: ‘Do you understand the meaning of the words in this chant?’
- Individually, students translate the difficult words in the chosen part of the chant (Worksheet 2 (a,b,c)) using the dictionary.
- In groups of 5–6, students check the words of the chant.
- The teacher asks each group the meaning of selected words in the chosen part of the chant. Words are written on the board and discussed.
- Students practise the chant while listening to it on CD.
- The teacher participates as a supporter, resource, prompter and encourager.
Please note:

- If there is insufficient time, students complete the translation at home.
- Knowing the meaning of difficult words assists students to become more comfortable and confident in speaking the words in English.

### THEME 2 - ISLAMIC CHANTS

**ACTIVITY 3 – CONVERSING**

**WORKSHEET 3 (a,b,c): DISCUSSION**

### CHANTS 1, 2 AND 3

**AIM**

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- identify the main idea underlying the chosen part of the chant using Worksheet 3 (a,b,c): Discussion
- express ideas related to the topic
- discuss and justify these ideas
- practise the chant.

**PROCEDURES**

- The teacher introduces the activity by asking: ‘What do you think your part of the chant is about?’
- The teacher distributes Worksheets 3 (a,b,c) and goes through the questions with the class.
- The teacher explains that students should listen to the chant carefully to answer Questions 1 and 2 individually, identifying the main idea of their chosen part of the chant and expressing ideas related to the topic (later, they will use these answers in
a conversation).

- The teacher encourages students to connect to their previous experience and knowledge in order to express their ideas.
- Students listen to the chant.
- Students answer Questions 1 and 2 individually, identifying the main idea of the chosen part and expressing ideas related to the topic.
- In pairs, students share their ideas and justify them using the suggested patterns of conversation in *Worksheets 3 (a,b,c)* or by creating their own patterns.
- While listening to their partners, students complete the ‘Partner’s’ section on *Worksheets 3 (a,b,c)*.
- Students change partners within their groups to share their ideas.
- One student from each group speaks in front of the class to give the group’s conclusion.
- Students practise the chant in sections while listening to it on the CD.
- The teacher’s role is a participant, observer, organiser, supporter and encourager.

Please note:

- Students who experience difficulties in expressing their ideas or discussing them in English often lack previous experience or knowledge of the English translation. These students should start by using their mother tongue and then translate their ideas into English.
- The teacher should support students to begin speaking by providing the necessary language patterns.
- Students adjust to these activities over the following two weeks and incomplete work is completed at home.
- Students rehearse in groups and prepare to perform for their peers at their group’s scheduled time.
# THEME 2 - ISLAMIC CHANTS

## ACTIVITY 4 – PRESENTING

### WORKSHEET 4: CHANT ASSESSMENT

## CHANTS 1, 2 AND 3

### AIM

The aim of this activity is to: encourage students to perform the chant in front of their peers, taking into account the impact on the audience. Specifically, students will:

- speak clearly and audibly and perform with varying voice, tone and pace to indicate emotions
- use correct pronunciation, grammar and appropriate vocabulary
- work cooperatively as a group.

### PROCEDURES

- The teacher distributes **Worksheets 4: Chant assessment**.
- The teacher asks: ‘Are you ready to present the chant in front of the class?’
- The assessment criteria for the presentation include speaking clearly and audibly; performing with varying voice, tone and pace; using correct pronunciation and grammar, and appropriate vocabulary; and working cooperatively as a group. These criteria are written on a poster and located on the board.
- The teacher asks: ‘What is your opinion about the criteria?’
- The teacher creates physical space.
- The groups present their selected part of the chant in order and in front of the class.
- The class votes on the most successful presentation according to the assessment criteria and the winning group and hardworking students from other groups are rewarded.

Please note:

- Students can practise whenever possible—for example, at the beginning of the class, at the end of the class or at morning assembly in front of the whole school.
RESOURCES FOR THEME 2: ISLAMIC CHANTS

Text-sheet 1: Chant 1 (I look, I see)

Words and melody by Yusuf Islam

Part 1:
I look, I look, I look, I see,
I see a world of beauty.
I touch, I touch, I touch, I feel,
I feel a world around so real.
And everything I do,
I dedicate to You.
‘Cause You made me,
I am for you.

Part 2:
I listen, listen, listen, I hear,
I hear the words of God so clear.
I read, I read, I read, I know.
It helps my knowledge grow.
And everything we do,
We dedicate to You.
‘Cause You made us,
We are for You.
I listen, listen, listen, I hear.

Part 3:
He sent the Prophet to show us the way.
He made Religion perfect that Day. Peace be upon him, upon him we pray.
Salatullah, wa salamu alyhi.

Part 4:
I sleep I sleep, I sleep, I dream,
I dream I am in a garden green.
I wish, I wish, I wish I pray,
I pray to be here every day.
And everything I do,
I dedicate to You.
‘Cause You made me,
I am for You.

Part 5:
I work, I work, I work, I strive
to make something of my life.
I seek, I seek, I seek, I find,
I find another hill to climb.
And everything we do,
We dedicate to You.
‘Cause You made us,
We are for You.
I look, I look, I look, I see.

Part 3:
He sent the Prophet to show us the way.
He made Religion perfect that Day. Peace be upon him, upon him we pray.
Salatullah, wa salamu alyhi. (x2)
Text-sheet 2: Chant 2 (Allah Knows)

Words and melody by Zain Bhikha.
Performed by Zain Bhikha & Dawud Wharnsby

**Part 1:**
When you feel all alone in this world,  
And there’s nobody to count your tears,  
Just remember, no matter where you are,  

When you carrying a monster load,  
And you wonder how far you can go,  
With every step on that road that you take,  

**Part 2:**
No matter what inside or out,  
There’s one thing of which there’s no doubt, Allah Knows. Allah Knows.

And whatever lies in the heavens and the earth,  
Every star in this whole universe, Allah Knows. Allah Knows.

**Part 3:**
When you find that special someone,  
Feel your whole life has barely begun,  
You can walk on the moon, shout it to everyone, Allah Knows. Allah Knows

When you gaze with love in your eyes,  
Catch a glimpse of paradise,  
And you see your child take the first breath of Allah Knows. Allah Knows.

**Part 4:**
When you lose someone close to your heart,  
See your whole world fall apart,  
And you try to go on but it seems so hard, Allah Knows. Allah Knows.

You see we all have a path to choose.  
Through the valleys and hills we go.  
With the ups and the downs, never fret, never frown. Allah Knows. Allah Knows

**Part 5:**
Every grain of sand,  
In every desert land, He Knows.  
Every shade of palm,  
Every closed hand, He Knows.  
Every sparkling tear,  
On every eyelash, He Knows.  
Every thought I have,  
And every word I share, He Knows.  
Allah Knows.
Text-sheet 3: Chant 3 (Sing children of the world)

Words and melody by Yusuf Islam

**Part 1:**
Walking through the crowded streets of a market in Morocco.
Sitting on a smiling camel in the desert of Arabia.
Chasing 'round the bamboo trees abandoned in Indonesia.
Gathering brightly coloured leaves in a forest of Canada.
Napping beneath the date palm shade under blue skies of Tunisia.
Sweeping out his parents' shop on a side street in Pakistan.
Planting rows of beans and maize on a small farm in Uganda.
Laying back to count the stars from somewhere in Afghanistan.

**Part 2:**
Oh Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Come together and hear the call.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Islam will unite us all.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Come together and hear the call.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Islam will unite us all.
Subhanallah, Wa Alhamdullillah Wa Allahu Akbar!

**Part 3:**
Splashing through the pouring rain in a village of Guyana.
Nibbling cakes from picnic plates on a mountain top in Switzerland.
Tending to a flock of sheep down under in Australia.
Greeting morning with a prayer on the golden Egyptian Sand.
Oh Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Come together and hear the call.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Islam will unite us all.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Come together and hear the call.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Islam will unite us all.
Subhanallah, Wa Alhamdullillah Wa Allahu Akbar!
Part 4:
Crying himself to sleep with no hope left for dreaming.
Begging in the burning sun, holding out her hand.
Palms held tightly on his ears to muffle all the screaming.
Sitting where her house once stood trying hard to understand.
See the Children of the World (Subhannallah).
All the Children of the World (Subhannallah).
Sing for the Children of the World (Subhannallah).
Pray for the Children of the World (Subhannallah).

Part 5:
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Come together and hear the call.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Islam will unite us all.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Come together and hear the call.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Islam will unite us all.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Come together and hear the call.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Islam will unite us all.
Subhanallah, Wa Alhamdullillah Wa Allahu Akbar!
Subhanallah, Wa Alhamdullillah Wa Allahu Akbar!
RESOURCES FOR THEME 2: ISLAMIC CHANTS

Worksheet 2/a (Chant 1: I look, I see): Filling-Gaps

Words and melody by Yusuf Islam

Part 1:
I look, I look, I look, I ..............,
I see a world of beauty.
I touch, I touch, I touch, I ..............,
I feel a world around so real.
And ................. I do,
I dedicate to You.
‘Cause You made me,
I am for ................. .

Part 2:
I listen, listen, listen, I .................,
I hear the words of God so clear.
I read, I read, I read, I know.
It ................ my knowledge grow.
And everything we do,
We dedicate to You.
‘Cause You ................. us,
We are for You.
I listen, listen, listen, I hear.

Part 3:
*He sent the Prophet to show us* the ..............
*He made Religion* .............. *that Day. Peace be upon him, upon him we pray.*
*Salatullah, wa salamu alyhi.*

Part 4:
I sleep I sleep, I sleep, I ..............,
I dream I am in a garden green.
I wish, I wish, I wish I ..............,
I pray to be here every day.
And everything I do,
I dedicate to You.
‘Cause You made me,
I am for You.

Part 5:
I work, I work, I work, I strive
to make ..................of my life.
I seek, I seek, I seek, I find,
I find another .............. to climb.
And everything we do,
We dedicate to You.
‘Cause You made us,
We are for You.
I look, I look, I look, I see.

Part 3:
*He sent the Prophet to* .............. *us the way.*
*He made Religion perfect that Day.*
*Peace be........... him, upon him we pray.*
*Salatullah, wa salamu alyhi. (x2)*
Worksheet 2/b (Chant 2: Allah Knows): Filling-Gaps

Words and melody by Zain Bhikha.
Performed by Zain Bhikha & Dawud Wharnsby

**Part 1:**
When you feel all alone in this ..........,
And there’s nobody to count your ........,
Just remember, no matter where you are,

When you carrying a monster load,
And you .................. how far you can go,
With every step on that road that you ........,

**Part 2:**
No ..................... what inside or out,
There’s one thing of which there’s no doubt,

And whatever lies in the ..................., and the earth,
Every star in this whole ..................., Allah Knows. Allah Knows.

**Part 3:**
When you find that special ................,
Feel your whole life has barely begun,
You can walk on the ..................., shout it to ......................, Allah Knows. Allah Knows.

When you gaze with ..........in your eyes,
Catch a glimpse of ....................,
And you ............ your child take the first breath of life, Allah Knows. Allah Knows.

**Part 4:**
When you .................someone close to your heart,
See your whole world fall ................,
And you try to ................ on but it seems so hard, Allah Knows. Allah Knows.

You see we all have a path to ............
Through the valleys and hills we go.

**Part 5:**
Every grain of .....................,
In every desert land, He Knows.
Every ............... of palm,
Every closed hand, He Knows.
Every sparkling tear,
On every eyelash, He Knows.
Every ..................... I have,
And every word I share, He Knows.
Allah Knows.
Worksheet 2/c (Chant 3: Sing children of the world): Filling-Gaps

Words and melody by Zain Bhikha.

**Part 1:**
Walking through the ..................... streets of a market in Morocco.
Sitting on a smiling ..................... in the desert of Arabia.
Chasing 'round the bamboo trees abandoned in .....................
Gathering brightly coloured leaves in a ..................... of Canada.
Napping beneath the date palm shade under .............. skies of Tunisia.
Sweeping out his parents' shop on a side street in Pakistan.
Planting rows of beans and maize on a ..................... farm in Uganda.
Laying back to count the ..................... from somewhere in Afghanistan.

**Part 2:**
Oh Sing Children of the ..................... (Sing along).
Come together and hear the call.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
..................... will unite us all.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Come together and hear the .....................
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Islam will ..................... us all.
Subhanallah, Wa Alhamdullillah Wa Allahu Akbar!

**Part 3:**
Splashing through the pouring rain in a ..................... of Guyana.
Nibbling cakes from picnic plates on a ..................... top in Switzerland.
Tending to a flock of ..................... down under in Australia.
Greeting morning with a prayer on the ..................... Egyptian Sand.
Oh Sing Children of the ..................... (Sing along).
Come together and ..................... the call.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Islam will ..................... us all.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Come together and hear the call.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
..................... will unite us all.
Subhanallah, Wa Alhamdullillah Wa Allahu Akbar!
Part 4:
Crying himself to sleep with no ……………… left for dreaming.
Begging in the burning sun, holding out her ……………….
Palms held tightly on his ears to ……………… all the screaming.
Sitting where her house once ……………… trying hard to understand.
See the ……………… of the World (Subhannallah).
All the Children of the ……………… (Subhannallah).
Sing for the Children of the World (Subhannallah).
…………………… for the Children of the World (Subhannallah).

Part 5:
Sing ……………… of the World (Sing along).
Come together and hear the ……………….
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Islam will ……………… us all.
…………………… Children of the World (Sing along).
Come ……………… and hear the call.
Sing Children of the ……………… (Sing along).
…………………… will unite us all.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Come together and ……………… the call.
Sing Children of the World (Sing along).
Islam will unite ……………… all.
Subhanallah, Wa Alhamdullillah Wa Allahu Akbar!
Subhanallah, Wa Alhamdullillah Wa Allahu Akbar!
RESOURCES FOR THEME 2: ISLAMIC CHANTS

Worksheet 3a (Chant 1: I look, I see): Discussion

Based on the chant, answer the following questions individually then share your ideas with your group:

1. What is the main idea expressed in your part of the chant?
   ...........................................................................................................................
   ...........................................................................................................................

2. What is your aim in life? How will you try to achieve this aim?
   My aim is
   ...........................................................................................................................
   ...........................................................................................................................
   ...........................................................................................................................
   To achieve this aim, I will ..................................................................................
   ...........................................................................................................................

Talk to your partner using the patterns below or create the patterns yourself (you are A and your partner is B). While listening to your partner, complete section B.

A: My aim is ...........................................................................................................
   To achieve this aim, I will .................................................................................
   And how about you?
B: My aim is ........................................................................................................
   ...........................................................................................................................
   To achieve this aim, I will
   ...........................................................................................................................

Change partners in your group.

One student from each group will speak in front of the class to give the conclusion that the group has reached in their discussions.
Worksheet 3/b (Chant 2: Allah Knows): Discussion

Based on the chant, answer the following questions individually then share your ideas with your group:

1. What is the main idea expressed in your part of the chant?

..............................................................................................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................

2. Complete the following sentences to explain your feeling and reaction when you know that Allah knows everything you do?

As Allah knows everything I do, I feel .................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................

As Allah knows everything I do, I will .................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................

Talk to your partner using the patterns below or create the patterns yourself (you are A and your partner is B). While listening to your partner, complete section B.

A: For me/In my opinion, because Allah knows everything I do, I feel
................................................................. Therefore, I will .................................................................
And how about you?
B: I think/In my opinion, because Allah knows everything I do, I feel
..............................................................................................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................
And because Allah knows everything I do, I will .................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................

Change partners in your group.

One student from each group will speak in front of the class to give the conclusion that the group has reached in their discussions.
Worksheet 3/c (Chant 3: Sing children of the world): Discussion

Based on the chant, answer the following questions individually then share your ideas with your group:

1. What is the main idea expressed in your part of the chant?
   ..................................................................................................................................................
   ..................................................................................................................................................

   We know that so much in the news is completely opposed to what Islam really is. Therefore, we remind ourselves that the word ‘Islam’ actually comes from the word ‘salam’ which means peace. So we would like to hear from you some ideas on how to create peace in the world.

2. Work individually to answer the question: How do you think we can create peace in the world?
   ..................................................................................................................................................
   ..................................................................................................................................................
   ..................................................................................................................................................
   ..................................................................................................................................................

   Talk to your partner using the patterns below or create the patterns yourself (you are A and your partner is B). While listening to your partner, complete section B.

   A: From my point of view/In my opinion/I think ..............................................
   A: How do you think we can create peace in the world?
   B: Here are some ideas of how to create peace:
   ..................................................................................................................................................
   ..................................................................................................................................................

   Change partners in your group.

   One student from each group will speak in front of the class to express the conclusion they reached in their discussion.
RESOURCES FOR THEME 2: ISLAMIC CHANTS

Worksheet 4: Chant assessment

Group Name: ………………………

Task: Each group will perform in front of the class. Presentations will be critiqued by other groups.
Listen to each group’s presentation, then put an ‘x’ in the box that you think best describes their performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups were able to:</th>
<th>A Very good</th>
<th>B Good</th>
<th>C Need help</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work effectively in groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak clearly and confidently</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak audibly on most occasions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use the best volume, tone and pace to indicate emotions</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make eye contact with the audience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results: To find the result for each group, put 3 marks for A, 2 marks for B, and 1 mark for C. Put the total marks in the box.
Theme 3: Stories in English

INTRODUCTION

Presenting a favourite story (narrative) helps students to organise ideas or content coherently and accurately. Telling stories is often easier for students than talking about topics because the story has a familiar construct: beginning, middle and end. Ideas are familiar and connected by the storyline.

Theme 3: Stories in English encourages students to use their creativity to retell a story based on a video, construct the end of another story or construct a new story. Beginner English speakers benefit from watching repeats of the same video.

STORIES FOR THEME 3

Theme 3: Stories in English includes three stories:

- Story 1: ‘The Mice and the Elephants’
- Story 2: ‘The Monkey and the Crocodile’
- Story 3: My Favourite Story

Stories 1 and 2 are downloaded from the internet.
Story 1 is available from:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kltGRRzKOVw.
Story 2 is available from:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mXuWiTisgBI.

The transcript of stories 1 and 2 are included in Text-sheet 4: Story 1 (The mice and the elephants) and Text-sheet 5: Story 2 (The monkey and the crocodile).

ORGANISATION OF THEME 3

Theme 3: *Stories in English* is practised for 15 minutes of each class for three weeks. Each week, there is a new story—Story 1: ‘The Mice and the Elephants’, Story 2: ‘The Monkey and the Crocodile’ and Story 3: ‘My Favourite Story’.

The students work on the story over four lesson periods in a week. Each story has a different aim:

1. Aim of Story 1: retelling a story after watching it
2. Aim of Story 2: drawing a conclusion to a story that has been watched
3. Aim of Story 1: creating a story.

However, the same procedure is followed with all the activities for each story, except activities 1 and 2 Story 3. These procedures are watching and/or listening, checking, planning and presenting. Activities 1 and 2 for Story 3 include choosing and discussing.

ACTIVITIES FOR THEME 3

**Story 1: The Mice and the Elephants**

- Activity 1 (Watching and/or listening): Students watch and/or listen to a four-minute story and identify the main ideas, characters, events and general tone (Worksheet 5: Story paragraphs).
- Activity 2 (Checking): Students watch and/or listen to the story for a second time to identify any details they may have missed (Worksheet 5: Story paragraphs).
- **Activity 3 (Planning):** Students work on the materials to present the story in front of the class.
- **Activity 4 (Presenting):** The groups retell their parts of the story in front of their peers, taking into account the assessment criteria (Worksheet 7: Story assessment).

**Story 2: The Monkey and the Crocodile**

- **Activity 1 (Watching and/or listening):** Students watch and/or listen to the story carefully, in order to identify the main ideas, characters, events and general tone.
- **Activity 2 (Checking):** Students watch and/or listen to the story for a second time to check any details they may have missed.
- **Activity 3 (Planning):** Students work on the materials to present the conclusion of the story in front of the class in an attractive and illustrative way.
- **Activity 4 (Presenting):** Students present the conclusion of the story in front of their peers, taking into account the assessment criteria (Worksheet 7: Story assessment).

**Story 3: My Favourite Story**

- **Activity 1 (Choosing):** Students decide on a topic or theme and discuss the main ideas, characters, events and general tone (Worksheet 6: Thinking map).
- **Activity 2 (Discussing):** Students discuss details of the story with their peers in order to construct an attractive and interesting story (Worksheet 6: Thinking map).
- **Activity 3 (Planning):** Students work on methods of presentation.
- **Activity 4 (Presenting):** Students narrate the story in front of their peers, taking into account the assessment criteria (Worksheet 7: Story assessment).
THEME 3 - STORIES IN ENGLISH

ACTIVITY 1 – WATCHING AND/OR LISTENING
WORKSHEET 5: STORY PARAGRAPHS

STORY 1: THE MICE AND THE ELEPHANTS

AIM

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- choose a preferred paragraph of the story (Worksheet 5: Story paragraphs) and justify their choice
- watch and/or listen for specific information
- write comments
- share understandings and knowledge
- discuss the events of the story with peers.

PROCEDURES

- The teacher asks: ‘Do you like stories? What kind of stories do you like?’
- Teacher distributes Worksheets 5, which include five paragraphs; a topic and a concluding sentence written for each paragraph.
- The teacher explains that each group works on a paragraph of the story after watching and/or listening to the story by writing down comments and discussing the events of the story with peers.
- The teacher encourages groups to choose the paragraph they prefer from the five paragraphs of the story, to justify their choice and to retell the paragraph.
- The teacher allows time for students to go through Worksheets 5.
- The teacher writes the numbers of the students' preferred paragraphs on the board beside the groups' names and listens to their justifications.
- Students watch and/or listen to the story and write comments.
Students share their understandings and knowledge with peers by discussing the story events.

The teacher provides each group with individual attention by participating in discussions, and providing support and encouragement when necessary.

To guide the discussion, the teacher asks questions such as: ‘What is the topic sentence?’, ‘What happened next?’ and ‘Who said that?’

Please note:

✓ Retelling stories is a suitable activity for ‘competent to advanced’ students. If the teacher decides to use this activity with beginner students, watching the story instead of listening to it is necessary to encourage students to participate.

### THEME 3 - STORIES IN ENGLISH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY 2 – CHECKING WORKSHEET 5: STORY PARAGRAPHS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### STORY 1: THE MICE AND THE ELEPHANTS

**AIM**

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- watch and/or listen to the story for the second time
- check details they may have missed
- discuss the story as a whole
- write the story paragraphs (Worksheet 5: Story paragraphs).

**PROCEDURES**

- Students watch and/or listen to the story for the second time to check understandings and clarify interpretations.
In groups of 5–6, based on the students' notes and discussions of the story events in the previous lesson and after checking understandings and clarifying interpretations, students discuss the story as a whole.

Using Worksheets 5, students complete the story paragraphs, which include the topic and concluding sentences.

The teacher sits with each group to provide support and encouragement and to check students’ progress. Students are reminded that their final presentation must maintain the integrity of the storyline.

THEME 3 - STORIES IN ENGLISH

ACTIVITY 1 – WATCHING AND/OR LISTENING

STORY 2: THE MONKEY AND THE CROCODILE

AIM

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- watch and/or listen for specific information
- write comments
- share understandings and knowledge
- discuss the events of the story with peers.

PROCEDURES

- The teacher asks: ‘Do you know how to conclude a story?’
- The teacher explains that each group works on writing a conclusion to the story that is watched and/or listened to, writes comments and shares understandings and knowledge with peers by discussing the events of the story.
- Students watch and/or listen to the story and write comments.
- Students share understandings and knowledge with peers and discuss the story events.
- The teacher participates in discussions, providing support and encouragement when necessary.
- Students watch and/or listen to the story and write comments.
- Students share understandings and knowledge with peers and discuss the story events.
- The teacher participates in discussions, providing support and encouragement when necessary.

**THEME 3 - STORIES IN ENGLISH**

**ACTIVITY 2 – CHECKING**

**STORY 2: THE MONKEY AND THE CROCODILE**

**AIM**

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- watch and/or listen to the story for the second time
- check details they may have missed
- discuss the story as a whole
- write a suitable conclusion for the story based on the general events of the story.

**PROCEDURES**

- Students watch and/or listen to the story for the second time to check understandings and clarify interpretations.
- In groups of 5-6, based on the students’ notes and discussions of the story events in the previous lesson and after checking understandings and clarifying interpretations, students write a suitable conclusion for the story.
- The teacher sits with each group to provide support and encouragement and checks their progress.
THEME 3 - STORIES IN ENGLISH

ACTIVITY 1 – CHOOSING
WORKSHEET 6: THINKING MAP

STORY 3: MY FAVOURITE STORY

AIM

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- decide on a topic or theme
- use a thinking map (Worksheet 6: Thinking map)
- discuss the main ideas, characters, events and tone of their story
- complete written comments.

PROCEDURES

- The teacher introduces students to the idea of a thinking map and demonstrates how to use a thinking map to structure a story.
- In groups of 5-6, students complete Worksheets 6 for a story they will construct.
- Students discuss with their peers the main idea of their stories, characters, events and tone.
- The teacher sits with each group to listen to their ideas, lead the direction of discussion and encourage them to write using the thinking map as a guide.
THEME 3 - STORIES IN ENGLISH

ACTIVITY 2 – DISCUSSING WORKSHEET 6: THINKING MAP

STORIES 3: MY FAVOURITE STORY

AIM

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- discuss the details of the story using Worksheet 6: Thinking map
- write the story.

PROCEDURES

- Groups discuss the details of the story guided by the Worksheets 6.
- Write the story by constructing sentences and paragraphs.
- The teacher provides support and encouragement and checks on groups' progress.

THEME 3 - STORIES IN ENGLISH

ACTIVITY 3 – PLANNING

STORIES 1, 2, 3

AIM

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- work in small groups
- plan their presentations
• discuss attractive and illustrative ways of presenting the story.

PROCEDURES

 The teacher asks: ‘How are you going to present this story?’
 The teacher reminds students of the criteria for assessment.
 Students discuss ways of presenting the story in an attractive and illustrative way.
 Groups distribute work among individuals.
 The teacher supports groups by listening to their ideas and giving suggestions.

THEME 3 - STORIES IN ENGLISH

ACTIVITY 4 – PRESENTING
WORKSHEET 7: STORY ASSESSMENT

STORIES 1, 2, 3

AIM

The aim of this activity is for students to:
• take into consideration their audience
• use the appropriate format to begin and conclude their presentation
• present for three minutes using a sequenced ideas, correct pronunciation and grammar, and appropriate vocabulary
• assess the presentations of other groups
• work cooperatively.

PROCEDURES

 Worksheets 7: Story assessment are distributed for each group.
Assessment criteria is written on a poster and put on the board. They include: working in groups effectively; telling events in logical order, supporting the presentation by using technology or creative educational materials (ads, posters real objects), speaking clearly and audibly; using the best volume, tone, and pace to indicate emotions; and making eye contact with the audience.

The teacher provides a model and writes it on the board to help students to begin—for example, ‘Good morning/afternoon teacher and friends. Today I would like to talk about the story of........................................ It starts.......... Thank you for listening.’

The sequence of group presentations is determined.

Every group presents in front of the class for three minutes using materials, resources, props and whatever other supports they find useful.

The teacher helps students with technology.

Every member of each group participates in the presentation.

Students vote for presentation that best met the assessment criteria.

The winning group and hardworking students from other groups are rewarded.
RESOURCES FOR THEME 3: STORIES IN ENGLISH

**Text-sheet 4: Story 1 (The mice and the elephants)**

**Part 1**
Long, long ago, in a deep forest, there was a group of mice. They lived at the foot of a large tree that was at the edge of a pond. One day, a herd of elephants visited the pond. Carelessly, they destroyed the houses of the mice. They left many mice injured.

**Part 2**
The mice held an assembly. They said to their chief: ‘Your Majesty, those elephants have destroyed everything. Help us!’ So, the mouse chief met the king of the elephants and said: ‘Mighty King, I have come to beg for mercy. Today, your elephants destroyed many of our houses and wounded my subjects.’

**Part 3**
The kind king elephant said: ‘I am truly sorry. I promise that they will not pass by your tree again.’ The mouse chief was grateful and promised to help the elephants if ever they required it. He then returned to his subjects. The mice were ecstatic and cried: ‘Long live our chief. Long live the kind king elephant.’ Everything was peaceful.

**Part 4**
One day, a group of hunters came to the forest. They set traps by the pond. The elephants came and were caught in the traps. The king of the elephants remembered the mouse chief’s pledge and told the elephant to ask the mouse chief for help. The elephant rushed to the mouse chief and said: ‘Sir, our king is caught in a trap and asks for your help. Please hurry!’

**Part 5**
When the mouse chief heard this, he assembled his mice and rushed to the aid of his friend. When they reached the spot, they rushed towards the net. The mice worked hard, chewing at the net with their sharp teeth. Soon, the net was cut and the elephant king was free. The elephant king thanked the mice and said to his elephant: ‘One good deed brings another.’
RESOURCES FOR THEME 3: STORIES IN ENGLISH

Text-sheet 5: Story 2 (The monkey and the crocodile)

Once upon time, in a river, lived a couple—a husband and wife but not a man and women. This couple were crocodiles. The male crocodile would come every morning to the bank of the river to rest in the soft rays of the sun. On the bank of the river, there were a lot of mango trees. During summer, all the mango trees were full of bright and juicy apple mangoes.

A monkey who lived in trees would come regularly to feast on the ripe juicy mangoes. The monkey and the crocodile noticed one another every day. As the days went by, they became friendly. The monkey would pluck the sweet mangoes from the trees and offer them to crocodile, who relished the delicious fruit. One fine day, the monkey gave the crocodile some extra mangoes and said: ‘Take these for your wife. I am sure she will love them.’

The crocodile took the mangoes to his wife. She was very happy to see them and found them delicious. However, the female crocodile had a wicked mind. She thought: ‘If the monkey eats these tasty mangoes daily, his heart must be just as delicious to eat.’ She shared her thought with her husband. The male crocodile was furious. He said: ‘You fool! The little monkey is a good friend of mine. Do not you even dare to let these wicked thoughts cross your mind.’

The female crocodile was stubborn. She stopped eating all together and did not put a single fish in her mouth. She did not want to compromise. She said: ‘All I want is to have the monkey's heart and I want you to bring it for me.’ Finally, her husband gave up and decided to do what she wanted. Sadly, he walked up to the bank of the river. Now he was forced to lie to the monkey. He knew that the monkey would never come with him if he told him the truth. So, he said to the monkey: ‘My wife really enjoyed the delicious mangoes that you sent for her. She wants to invite you to our place for lunch, to say thank you.’
The monkey had no idea about the crocodiles’ wicked plan and immediately accepted the invitation. He jumped on his friend’s back and they were on their way. However, when they were halfway across the river, the crocodile could not resist telling his friend the truth, saying: ‘I am sorry, my dear monkey. It is my wife who forced me to ask you to come home. I have betrayed you. It was her wicked plan to ask you to come for lunch, but the truth is that she wants to have your heart for lunch instead. What else could I do? Oh, God.’ The monkey started shivering on hearing this.
Worksheet 5 (Story 1: The mice and the elephants): Story paragraphs

Part 1
Long, long ago, in a deep forest, there was a group of mice. ............................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
They left many mice injured.

Part 2
The mice held an assembly. .................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
‘Today, your elephants destroyed many of our houses and wounded my subjects.’

Part 3
The kind king elephant said: ‘I am truly sorry’ .................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
Everything was peaceful.

Part 4
One day a group of hunters came to the forest. .................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
They said: ‘Sir our king is caught in a trap and ask for your help, please hurry’.

Part 5
When the mouse heard this, he got his mice and rushed to the aid of his friend.
............................................................................................................................................... 
............................................................................................................................................... 
............................................................................................................................................... 
The elephant king thanked the mice and said to his elephant: ‘One good deed brings another’.
RESOURCES FOR THEME 3: STORIES IN ENGLISH

Worksheet 6: Thinking map

Main ideas

Events

Characters
RESOURCES FOR THEME 3: STORIES IN ENGLISH

Worksheet 7: Story assessment

Group Name: ………………………

Task: Each group will perform in front of the class. Presentations will be critiqued by other groups. Listen to each group’s presentation, then put an ‘x’ in the box that you think best describes their performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups were able to:</th>
<th>A Very good</th>
<th>B Good</th>
<th>C Need help</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work effectively in groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell events in logical order</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement sequence ideas in speech using ‘and’, ‘then’ or ‘but’ to link ideas</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support presentation by using technology or creative educational material (ads, posters, real objects)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak clearly and confidently</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak audibly on most occasions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Use the best volume, tone, and pace to indicate emotions</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make eye contact with the audience.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Results: To find the result for each group, put 3 marks for A, 2 marks for B and 1 mark for C. Put the total marks in the box.
Theme 4: Videos in English

INTRODUCTION

There are many advantages to using videos to teach students English. These include:

- English-speaking films and television programmes provide a rich source of authentic, real, natural English.
- Videos can show learners language in use. This greatly supports learners’ comprehension since expression, gesture and other visual clues are demonstrated.
- Learners hear intonation matched by facial expressions.
- Film builds cross-cultural awareness.
- Videos encourage enjoyable learning experience and can lead to interesting tasks.

When teaching with video, teachers should consider the following:

a. Video activities must be linked to learning and not simply replicate a home television show.

b. The quality of the video must attract the learners’ attention.

c. The video must be able to be seen or heard by all students.

d. Multiple stops of the video and missing conclusions are upsetting for learners.
e. The length of the video influences the learners’ behaviour. One to four minutes is ideal for both attracting the learners’ attention and involving them in the speaking activities.

Theme 4: *Videos in English* includes two videos. These videos are based on everyday language and include common topics: cooking, and conserving water and energy.

**VIDEOS FOR THEME 4**

Theme 4: *Videos in English* includes two videos:

- Video 1: Recipe of cream of broccoli soup
- Video 2: Energy conservation and water usage tips.

These videos can be downloaded from the internet.

Video 1: *Recipe of cream of broccoli soup* is available from:
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AHAV4FNrUpw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AHAV4FNrUpw).

Video 2: *Energy conservation and water usage tips* is available from
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xz8sVG6GVWw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xz8sVG6GVWw).

The transcripts of these videos are included in Text-sheet 6: Video 1 (Recipe of cream of broccoli soup) and Text-sheet 7: Video 2 (Energy conservation and water usage tips).

**ORGANISATION OF THEME 4**

Theme 4: *Videos in English* is practised for 15 minutes in each of the four weekly classes for two weeks. Each week, students are introduced to a new video. In groups students, watch the video and experience new vocabulary, undertake related activities, plan their presentation and present on the final day of the week.
ACTIVITIES OF THEME 4

**Video 1: Recipe of Cream of Broccoli Soup**

- **Activity 1 (Watching):** Students watch the video (approximately 2 minutes) about cooking. It is based on a sequence of instructions. In groups, students complete Worksheets 8/a (Video 1: Recipe of cream of broccoli soup): Watch and write. Worksheet 8/a involves writing down the ingredients and the cooking steps.
- **Activity 2 (Planning):** Groups write down the ingredients and recipe of their favourite dish, illustrated by pictures, to present to the class.
- **Activity 3 (Practicing):** Students plan presentations.
- **Activity 4 (Presenting):** Students present the recipe of a chosen dish to their peers, taking into account the assessment criteria (Worksheet 9: Video assessment).

**Video 2: Energy Conservation and Water Usage Tips**

- **Activity 1 (Orientating):** Students are introduced to the vocabulary of energy and water usages (e.g., they draw pictures to make the meaning clear).
- **Activity 3 (Practicing and planning):** Groups discuss two positive and two negative behaviours for using energy and water. They plan and work on the materials to present to the class.
- **Activity 4 (Presenting):** Students present to their peers considering the assessment criteria (Worksheet 9: Video assessment).
THEME 4 - VIDEOS IN ENGLISH

ACTIVITY 1 – WATCHING
WORKSHEET 8/A (VIDEO 1: RECIPE OF CREAM OF BROCCOLI SOUP): WATCH AND WRITE

VIDEO 1: RECIPE OF CREAM OF BROCCOLI SOUP

AIM

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- watch a video that is based on a sequence of instructions for specific information (ingredients and recipe)
- write comments
- share understandings and knowledge
- complete Worksheet 8/a (Video 1, recipe of cream of broccoli soup): Watch and write.

PROCEDURES

- Teacher introduces the activity: ‘Our video for this week is about cooking. Who likes cooking?’
- Worksheets 8/a, listing ingredients and recipe are distributed.
- The teacher asks students to watch a short video about cooking and to complete Worksheets 8/a.
- Students watch the video and write comments.
- The teacher moves around the class to observe the students’ progress and provide support when necessary.
- In groups, students share knowledge and complete Worksheets 8/a, writing down the ingredients and the cooking steps. They draw pictures to support their understandings.
- The teacher collects the groups’ worksheets, to be included in their portfolios.
AIM

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- identify a favourite dish
- discuss with peers how this dish is cooked by their families
- write the ingredients and recipe for their favourite dish.

PROCEDURES

- Teacher asks: ‘What is your favourite dish?’
- Students decide on a favourite dish and discuss with their peers the recipe for cooking this dish.
- Each group to take notes while discussing.
- In groups of 5–6, students write down the recipe for cooking their favourite dish and draw pictures to support it.
- The teacher moves around the class and sits with each group to guide the discussion and to encourage students.
THEME 4 - VIDEOS IN ENGLISH

ACTIVITY 3 – PRACTICING

VIDEO 1: RECIPE OF CREAM OF BROCCOLI SOUP

AIM

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- plan for their presentations
- discuss how and what to present that is attractive and illustrative
- include aids to support their presentations
- distribute work among individuals.

PROCEDURES

- The teacher asks: ‘How are you going to present the ingredients and recipe of the dish?’
- The teacher encourages the groups to start thinking of ways to present the ingredients and recipe in an attractive and illustrative way.
- The teacher explains the criteria of assessment: using appropriate format for opening and closing a speech, making an impact on the audience and maintaining their engagement, presenting information in an appropriate sequence, using correct pronunciation and grammar, and appropriate vocabulary.
- Students discuss attractive and illustrative ways of presenting.
- Groups distribute work among individuals.
- Teacher sits with each group to listen to their ideas and provide support.
THEME 4 - VIDEOS IN ENGLISH

ACTIVITY 4 – PRESENTING

WORKSHET 9: VIDEO ASSESSMENT

VIDEO 1: RECIPE OF CREAM OF BROCCOLI SOUP

AIM

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- present the recipe of a chosen dish to their peers
- use an appropriate format for opening and closing a speech
- make an impact on the audience and maintain their engagement
- present information in an appropriate sequence
- use correct pronunciation and grammar, and appropriate vocabulary.

procedures

- Worksheets 9: video assessment are distributed to each group.
- Groups are selected for order of presentation.
- Each group comes in front of the class.
- Students perform, using different resources/materials to support their presentations.
- Every group member participates.
- Assessment criteria are displayed on a poster and located on the board. They include working in groups effectively, telling events in logical order, using creative materials to support presentation, speaking clearly and audibly, using the best volume, tone and pace to indicate emotions and making eye contact with the audience.
- Every member of each group participates in the presentation.
- Groups critique each other and the most successful group is selected on the majority vote.
- The winning group and hard working students from other groups are rewarded.
AIM

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- brainstorm and engage with ‘water usage’ vocabulary
- name the activities/objects that require energy
- name the ways in which we use water
- share understandings with other groups.

PROCEDURES

- The teacher explains: ‘Our video for this week is about energy conservation and water usage. However, before we watch this video, we will look at the vocabulary associated with energy and water usage.’
- The teacher draws two columns labelled ‘Energy’ and ‘Water Usage’.
- Students name the activities/objects that require energy to work and answers are written on the board in the ‘Energy’ column.
- Students name the ways in which we use water and answers are written in the ‘Water Usage’ column.
- The teacher asks: ‘Are there any words that you don’t understand?’
- Finally, students copy the word lists from the board, to be used the following day.
THEME 4 - VIDEOS IN ENGLISH

ACTIVITY 2 – WATCHING

WORKSHEET 8/b (VIDEO 2: ENERGY CONSERVATION AND WATER USAGE TIPS): WATCH AND WRITE

VIDEO 2 – ENERGY CONSERVATION AND WATER USAGE TIPS

AIM

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- critically interpret and construct texts
- watch a video to reinforce the use of specific terminology
- write comments
- work in groups to share understandings and knowledge using the language introduced in the video and class discussions
- complete Worksheet 8/b (Video 2: Energy conservation and water usage tips): Watch and write, identifying ways to conserve water and energy.

PROCEDURES

- The teacher says: ‘Let’s read through the lists of words from [the previous day]. Use these words in your responses. Do you know how to conserve energy and use water wisely?’
- Worksheets 8/b are distributed to groups and students are given some time to go through it.
- Students watch a short video (approximately two minutes) about energy conservation and water usage.
- Based on the video, students complete Worksheets 8/b, identifying how to conserve energy and use water wisely.
- The teacher sits with each group to encourage the students.
- The teacher asks each group a question from Worksheet 8/b.
THEME 4 - VIDEOS IN ENGLISH

ACTIVITY 3 – PRACTICING AND PLANNING

VIDEO 2: ENERGY CONSERVATION AND WATER USAGE TIPS

AIM

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- identify two right and two wrong behaviours practised by their families, relatives or neighbours regarding energy and water use
- express their opinions about these behaviours
- share knowledge with peers using everyday language
- in groups, work on improving methods of presentation.

PROCEDURES

- The teacher asks: ‘What two right and two wrong behaviours regarding energy or water use have you identified?’
- In groups, students think of two right and two wrong behaviours practised by their families, relatives or neighbours regarding energy or water use and discuss them.
- The teacher moves around the class, encouraging students to begin by asking them questions such as: ‘How do your parents wash clothes and dishes?’
- In their groups, student write down two right and two wrong behaviours regarding energy or water use and express their opinions about these behaviours.
- The teacher encourages the groups to think about their presentations: ‘How are you going to present these behaviours in an attractive and illustrative way?’
- In their groups, students discuss ways of presenting in an attractive and illustrative way and distribute work among individuals.
THEME 4 - VIDEOS IN ENGLISH

ACTIVITY 4 – PRESENTING
WORKSHEET 9: VIDEO ASSESSMENT

VIDEO 2: ENERGY CONSERVATION AND WATER USAGE TIPS

AIM

The aim of this activity is for students to:

- express their opinions to peers
- use suitable aids to support their presentations and use of English
- speak clearly, confidently and audibly
- vary voice, tone, and pace to indicate emotions and connect with their audience
- make eye contact with the audience.

PROCEDURES

- While distributing Worksheets 9: Video assessment, the teacher says: ‘We are happy to hear from each group the right and wrong behaviours they have identifies regarding energy or water use.’
- Assessment criteria is written on a poster located on the board and include: working effectively in groups, telling events in logical order, using creative materials to support presentation, speaking clearly and audibly, using the best volume, tone and pace to indicate emotions; and making eye contact with the audience.
- Groups present in order and come to the front of class.
- Students express their opinions about the two right and the two wrong behaviours regarding energy or water use, taking into account the assessment criteria.
- Groups critique each other and the most successful group is selected on the majority vote.
- The winning group and hardworking students from other groups are rewarded.
RESOURCES FOR THEME 4: VIDEOS IN ENGLISH

Text-sheet 6: Video 1 (Recipe of cream of broccoli soup)

Ingredients:

- 5 tablespoons butter.
- 1 onion (chopped).
- 1 stalk celery (chopped).
- 3 cups chicken broth.
- 8 cups broccoli broken into florets.
- 3 tablespoons flour.
- 2 cups milk.
- Ground black pepper.

Recipe:

1. Melt 2 tablespoons of the butter in medium-sized stock pot, and sauté onion and celery until tender. Add broth and broccoli, cover and simmer for 10 minutes.
2. Pour the soup into a blender, filling the jug no more than halfway. Hold down the lid of the blender with a folded kitchen towel and carefully start the blender, using a few quick pulses to get the soup moving. Puree soup in batches until smooth and pour into a clean pot. Alternately, use a stick blender to puree the soup in the cooking pot.
3. In small saucepan, over medium heat, melt the remaining 3 tablespoons of butter, then stir in flour and add milk. Stir until thick and bubbly, and add to soup. Season with pepper and serve.
Low Flow Shower Head: Which uses less water—a shower or a bath?
Sink: A bath.
Low Flow Shower Head: Wrong! Wrong! Wrong! The correct answer is a shower. A bath uses 65 to 110 litres of hot water. A five-minute shower using a low-flow shower head uses only 45 litres. You can get plenty clean in 5 minutes!
Sink: Hey!
Low Flow Shower Head: I forgot how much water you can save. The old shower head spread water all over the place. And my new irritator gets better pressure and uses less water—that’s a saving on water and the energy used to heat the water for small wash-ups. By the way, do me a favour—don't let the water run while you're brushing your teeth.
Whispering Sound: But don’t forget to flush the toilet and wash your hands.
Dishwasher: That was Mom; she’s a wise power user. She knows not to start me up until I’m full. I can save water and energy, just like the shower.
Old Washing Machine: That’s goes for me too. Wait until I have a full load but don't overload me.
Young Washing Machine: But hey, New Washing Machine, is it my turn yet?
Old Washing Machine: You know—the best way to save energy is to use cold water for the wash and rinse cycles.
New Washing Machine: Is it my turn yet?
Old Washing Machine: As a front-loader washing machine, I use less water and detergent, and I spin clothes almost dry.
New Washing Machine: Is it my turn yet?
Old Washing Machine: Actually we’re going to hang the clothes outside to dry. We save lots of energy by doing that.
Whispering Sound: And the clothes smell so fresh that way too.
New Washing Machine: It’s never going to be my turn.
Sink: So kids, think about how much water and energy you're saving by having a shower instead of a bath, and by not starting the dishwasher or washing machine until they have a full load.
Worksheet 8/a (Video 1: Recipe of cream of broccoli soup): Watch and write

Watch the video ‘Recipe of Cream of Broccoli Soup’ and, in groups, complete the following:

a. Ingredients:
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......................................................................................................................................................

b. Recipe:
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Worksheet 8/b (Video 2: Energy conservation and water usage tips): Watch and write

Watch the video ‘Energy conservation and water usage tips’ and answer the following questions:

1. Which uses less water a shower or a bath?

2. Circle the correct answer:
   a. A bath uses 56 to 110 litres of hot water.
   b. A bath uses 65 to 110 litres of hot water.
   c. A bath uses 65 to 130 litres of hot water.

3. From the video, how can water be saved?

4. From the video, how can energy be saved?
### Worksheet 9: Video assessment

**Group Name: ………………………**

**Task:** Each group will perform in front of the class. Presentations will be critiqued by other groups.

Listen to each group’s presentation, then put an ‘x’ in the box that you think best describes their performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups were able to:</th>
<th>A Very good</th>
<th>B Good</th>
<th>C Need help</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group work</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work effectively in groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell events in logical order</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using sequence ideas in speech using ‘and’, ‘then’ or ‘but’ to link ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Material</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support presentation by using technology or creative educational material (ads, posters, real objects)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak clearly and confidently</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak audibly on most occasions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use the best volume, tone, and pace to indicate emotions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make eye contact with the audience.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Results:** To find the result for each group, put 3 marks for A, 2 marks for B, and 1 mark for C. Put the total marks in the box.
Appendix 2

Saudi Students’ and Teachers’ Beliefs and Strategies for Learning and Teaching English in Saudi Arabia

This survey was organised by a Saudi English teacher who is undertaking a Master of TESOL at the University of Canberra. This survey seeks to find answers to the following questions. Achieving my target can be accomplished with your support. I would be grateful if you could answer the following questions. All the information in this survey is confidential and will not be used for any other purposes.

Part I

1. What grade are you in at school?

____________________________________________________________________________________

2. Are you interested in learning English?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Explain

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

3. How many years have you been learning English at school?

____________________________________________________________________________________

4. How do you think successful learning can be achieved?

(You can tick more than one answer)

☐ Following a good textbook
☐ Following the teacher’s instructions
☐ Using the language to communicate with others
☐ Learning vocabulary and grammar
☐ Memorising some useful sentences

Other (please specify) _________________________________________________________________
5. Which way do you prefer to learn English?
   [ ] Follow the teacher and the textbook
   OR
   [ ] Under the guidance of the teacher, but choose what and how to learn myself

**Part II**

1. How do you practise speaking in class?
   (You can tick more than one answer)
   - [ ] By free discussions
   - [ ] By unplanned activities
   - [ ] By organised activities
   - [ ] By answering the teacher’s questions regarding the lessons
   - [ ] By practising activities from the textbook
   - [ ] By practising dialogues about everyday life
   - [ ] By telling stories and discussing events
   Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

2. Do you practise speaking outside the class?
   [ ] Yes  [ ] No
   If the answer is ‘yes’, how often do you practise English via the following activities?
   a. daily  b. twice a week  c. on the weekends  d. once a month
   (You can tick more than one answer then write the number to indicate how often)
   - [ ] Watch programs or movies on TV _______
   - [ ] Listen to the radio _______
   - [ ] Talk with English-speaking friends _______
   - [ ] Talk with non-English speakers _______
   - [ ] Practise dialogues from the textbook _______
   Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

3. Can you communicate meaningfully in English with others?
   [ ] Yes  [ ] No
If the answer is ‘no’, why do you think it is difficult to express yourself and be understood by others?

(Rank your answers 1 to 6, using 1 for the most difficult one)

____ Unable to find suitable vocabulary
____ Unable to express a cultural concept
____ Unable to use correct grammar
____ Unable to organise my thoughts in a structured manner
____ Unable to pronounce the words well
____ Lack of knowledge in the topic of discussion
Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

4. How do you feel when talking to others using English?

(You can tick more than one answer)

☐ I feel shy
☐ I am not confident due to my limited English competence
☐ I feel confident in talking to native speakers of English
Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

5. What do you do when you do not understand others speaking English?

(You can tick more than one answer)

☐ Ask for clarification
☐ Ask for repetition
☐ Pretend that you understand to avoid embarrassment
Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

6. What do you do when you cannot be understood by others?

(You can tick more than one answer)

☐ Change the topic
☐ Use some of the first language words
☐ Try to paraphrase it in a simple way
☐ Ask for help
☐ Use gestures such as body language and facial expressions
7. Are you happy with the way you learn English?
   - [ ] Yes  [ ] No
   Why or why not?
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

Part III

1. Do you like your English textbook?
   - [ ] Yes  [ ] No

2. What are the strengths of your English textbook?
   (Rank your answers 1 to 5, using 1 for the thing you most like)
   - [ ] Interesting topics
   - [ ] Attractive pictures
   - [ ] Useful activities
   - [ ] Useful vocabulary
   - [ ] Easy to use
   Other (please specify) __________________________________________________________

3. What other resources are being used in class in addition to the textbook?
   (You can tick more than one answer)
   - [ ] Posters
   - [ ] Overhead projector
   - [ ] Flash cards
   - [ ] Language lab
   - [ ] Computer
   - [ ] Tape recorder
   - [ ] Video
   - [ ] Television
   Other (please specify) __________________________________________________________
Part VI

1. How can you improve the way you learn English?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. How can you improve the way you communicate in English?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your time.

Eiman Nather
Appendix 3

Saudi Students’ and Teachers’ Beliefs and Strategies for Learning and Teaching English in Saudi Arabia

This survey was organised by a Saudi English teacher who is completing a Master of TESOL at the University of Canberra. This survey seeks to find answers to the following questions. Achieving my target can be accomplished with your support. I would be grateful if you could answer the following questions. All the information in this survey is confidential and will not be used for any other purposes.

Part I

1. What is your qualification?

________________________________________________________________________

2. How many years have you been teaching English at school?

________________________________________________________________________

3. Are you interested in teaching English?
   □ Yes □ No
   Explain

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

4. How do you think successful learning can be achieved?
   (You can tick more than one answer)
   □ Following a good textbook
   □ Following the teacher’s instructions
   □ Using the language to communicate with others
   □ Learning vocabulary and grammar
   □ Memorising some useful sentences
   Other (please specify) ___________________________________________________
5. Which do you think is the best way to teach English?
   ☐ Follow the textbook
   OR
   ☐ Under the guidance of the teacher, but students have to choose what and how to learn themselves

Part II

1. How do your students practise English in class?
   (You can tick more than one answer)
   ☐ By free discussions
   ☐ By unplanned activities
   ☐ By organised activities
   ☐ By answering the teacher’s questions about the lessons
   ☐ By practising activities from the textbook
   ☐ By practising dialogues about everyday life
   ☐ By telling stories and discussing events
   Other (please specify) _______________________________________________________

2. Do you encourage your students to practise English outside the class?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No
   If the answer is ‘yes’, how often do they practise English via the following activities?
   a. daily    b. twice a week    c. on the weekends    d. once a month
   (You can tick more than one answer, then write the number to indicate how often)
   ☐ Watch programs or movies on TV _______
   ☐ Listen to the radio _______
   ☐ Talk with English-speaking friends _______
   ☐ Talk with non-English speakers _______
   ☐ Practise dialogues from the textbook _______
   Other (please specify) ________________________________

3. Can most of your students communicate meaningfully in English with others?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No
If the answer is ‘no’, why do you think it is difficult to express themselves and be understood by others?

(Rank your answers 1 to 6, using 1 for the most difficult one)

____ Unable to find suitable vocabulary
____ Unable to express a cultural concept
____ Unable to use correct grammar
____ Unable to organise thoughts in a structured manner
____ Unable to pronounce the words well
____ Lack of knowledge in the topic of discussion
Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

4. How do you think most of your students feel when talking to others using English?

(You can tick more than one answer)

☐ They feel shy
☐ They are not confident due to their limited English competence
☐ They feel confident in talking to native speakers of English
Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

5. What do most of your students do when they do not understand others speaking English?

(You can tick more than one answer)

☐ Ask for clarification
☐ Ask for repetition
☐ Pretend that they understand to avoid embarrassment
Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

6. What do your students do when they cannot be understood by others?

(You can tick more than one answer)

☐ Change the topic
☐ Use some of the first language words
☐ Try to paraphrase it in a simple way
☐ Ask for help
☐ Use gestures such as body language and facial expressions
7. Are you happy with the way you teach English?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

   Explain
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

Part III

1. Do you like the English textbook?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. What are the strengths of the English textbook?
   (Rank your answers 1 to 5, using 1 for the thing you most like)
   ___ Interesting topics
   ___ Attractive pictures
   ___ Useful activities
   ___ Useful vocabulary
   ___ Easy to use

   Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

3. What other resources are being used in class in addition to the textbook?
   (You can tick more than one answer)
   ☐ Posters ☐ Overhead projector
   ☐ Flash cards ☐ Language lab
   ☐ Computer ☐ Tape recorder
   ☐ Video ☐ Television

   Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

Part VI

1. How do you think you can improve your methods of teaching English?
2. How could you improve the way your students communicate in English?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your time. If you would like a copy of the results, please write your e-mail address on the bottom of the page.
Appendix 4

King Abdullah’s Project (Tatweer)

Introduction

The Tatweer project is a 10-year plan to guarantee that the availability and planning processes of the educational reform are characterised by continuity and connection. Taking advantage of the experience of international educational institutions, King Abdullah’s project Tatweer—in partnership with Oxford University—is planning to implement the Saudi Oxford Program for educational leadership. The Educational Development Holding Company, which is authorised to implement and supervise the progress of the Tatweer project programs, is a Saudi company specialising in developing education. This company is wholly owned by a public investment fund.

The Tatweer project is expected to promote significant quality improvements in education because it includes comprehensive development in many educational aspects, such as:

- training and improving the qualifications of school leaders and teachers
- developing the curricula and establishing extracurricular activities
- improving the school environment
- activating the role of the student in the classroom.

The General Stages of the 10-year Plan

The general administration of the MoE has been commissioned to establish the planning processes, considering the nature, dimensions, location and timeframe of each stage. This plan consists of seven stages, which are described as follows.

First Stage: Preparation

This step involves diagnosing the current situation in terms of the factors affecting it negatively or positively, by conducting detailed studies of the existing educational system and the
requirements for its development and quantitative and qualitative growth. The following aspects were taken into consideration in this stage:

- extending participation to embrace all those people who would benefit from the program’s outcome
- focusing on the benefits from the results of previous experiences, innovations in the future of education, labour market’s needs and relationships among the factors
- coordinating with authorities of various types and levels to secure the vision’s development and plan’s requirements
- establishing the vision based on the outcomes of general education and the beneficiary parties on one side, and the educational institutions that may serve the community’s needs on the other
- allowing for flexibility to accommodate continuous changes and innovations in order to meet the persistent needs of educational development.

Second Stage: Forming Goals

Based on the data collected, the team established general and detailed goals for the 10-year plan. While specifying the goals, the team confirmed that they were scientifically accurate. Moreover, they also specified the methodology to be adopted to achieve these goals. The following aspects were taken into consideration while forming the goals:

- Saudi society’s particular nature and its Islamic and social privacy
- a focus on the student as a pivot for the educational process
- the flexibility of the goals and their ability to cope with future changes and innovations.

These proposed goals were presented to a consultant team composed of representatives from society, educational leaders (male and female) who represented the party that makes educational decisions to achieve goals and objectives, and a group of specialists for further analysis and suggestions to enrich the project and determine connections between the specialisations. These proposed goals were carefully examined to extract fundamental points from them, and to modify the original project in view of the new data gathered.
Third Stage: Determining an Action Plan

At this stage, the goals were translated into objectives by:

- establishing detailed work programs and projects, and organising them according to priority
- achieving coordination and integration between the programs and projects
- specifying timeframes, costs and funding sources.

Fourth Stage: Sending the Plan to Sectors

The Ministry’s approval of the plan’s goals and programs was followed by a comprehensive coordination process with the supporting bodies in order to determine specific roles and tasks, and to estimate the supply of human resources and financial requirements.

Fifth Stage: Introducing the Plan to the Experts

At this stage, the plan was submitted to a group of experts from Arab countries and other international experts to assess the validity of its scientific structure and the new methods adopted in setting plans for the development of the educational system.

Sixth Stage: Estimating the Financial Requirements

At this stage, the cost of the program was estimated and the project received from the Ministry sectors was revised by a team formed for this purpose. The team was composed of:

- the General Director of Education Budget (for the male sector)
- the Budget’s General Assistant Director (for the female sector)
- the Director of Educational Planning
- the Director of Administrative Planning

Afterwards, the team created a list indicating every requirement for the programs and projects to be completed in the plan’s 10 years.
Seventh Stage: Approval, Dissemination and Execution of the Plan

This stage entailed the delivery of the 10-year plan to the MoE. The Minister’s decision no. 1581/1/5 dated 18 May 2003 approved the 10-year plan. The decision stated that the application of the plan would be effective in 2004 to coincide with the state’s eighth development plan. The general administration of education planning was authorised to include the publication and distribution of the plan to the concerned parties and to design a website to be placed in the Ministry’s site for the plan’s follow-up.

Schools that Apply Tatweer

The schools that apply the Tatweer program are within 13 regions and 12 governorates. Two schools have been chosen from each region and governorate—one for boys and one for girls.

The Programs of Tatweer

According to the objectives of the program, Tatweer consists of four programs:

- a training program to improve the qualifications of school leaders and teachers
- a program for school improvement
- a program to develop the curricula and establish extracurricular activities
- a program to promote the active role of students in classrooms.

Qualification and Training Program

Professional development in Tatweer is based on the following policies. Professional development is:

- a right for those who occupy educational and administrative positions without discrimination, according to each one’s need
- characterised by continuity so that male and female teachers and administrators keep in touch with the latest developments in education
- characterised by comprehensiveness
• not only remedial, but also designed to keep abreast of new developments in the fields of education and science
• aimed at associating training processes with the syllabi, and satisfying the requirements of the educational institution
• focused on the persistent assessment of training and its outcomes, according to set standards.

According to the Saudi MoE (2005a), the MoE agreed to establish a national centre to train educational leaders in the KSA in December 2010. According to the Minister, this centre is the first of its kind in the Middle East because:
• it will develop leadership competencies; settle experiences; and promote theories, cultures and standards of excellent leadership in education
• it will grow to become a consultative body for leaders, individuals, educational entities and other sectors of society
• it will provide a range of direct and indirect programs through online programs, such as distance education, and the use of modern technologies, such as podcast, to ensure access to educational leaders at various levels to achieve the desired success
• it will perform these roles through adopting global experience in the field of educational leadership, such as the Saudi Oxford Educational Leadership Project, with the participation of the prestigious Oxford University, the national school for educational leadership in the United Kingdom, as well as benefiting from the experience of Singapore and other countries to form the centre’s objectives and mechanisms.

The Program of School Environment

The aim of the program is to improve the educational environment and make it a technical and interactive one. This can be achieved by an amalgamation of technology with education and enhancing technical progressive applications in all educational settings, such as books, activities and constant training. In addition, a model of the class structure is presented by Tatweer to make the desired change. This program is based on several elements:
• the existence of a base for networks and communication equipment
the establishment of systems and basic applications for technology, such as operating systems and world net applications of information, in addition to the existence of high security in the exchanged information. Examples of these educational applications are conferencing applications and remote conversing. This will enable the members of the educational community to communicate constantly and exchange information

education using the internet for information

defining subjects of education according to needs and based on priorities to clarify concepts that students find difficult to learn, and to help the teacher easily present information to students with minimum time and effort, by using:

- visual educational shows, such as video, on request
- digital libraries
- content management systems
- learning management systems

the availability of interface applications to all members of the educational community, such as the students, teachers, parents and administrators, to achieve the concept of a knowledge society. One interface can be accessed at any time and from any place, while another interface can be accessed at a specific time and at any place.

Comprehensive Curriculum Development Project

According to the Minister, curriculum development has been the top education priority of the MoE both in the past and present because this is one of the most important elements of the education process. The comprehensive curriculum development project in Tatweer aims to:

- form general curricula that are based on developing the educational, practical and thinking skills of the students
- provide suitable education for students’ abilities and preferences
- develop a fully interactive digital curricula that helps activate self-learning and balances the knowledge provided in light of the needs of students and the requirements of this era
- shift from focusing on knowledge content to learning processes, which ensures that the learner applies and interprets what he or she has learnt into life skills, by employing knowledge to solve real problems
• invest global expertise in forming and building curricula, and preparing Saudi experts to create curricula
• develop primary level curricula that enhance a stable personality and values and develop life skills for students
• develop secondary school curricula to contribute to preparing for the labour market
• train educational staff in creating the curricula.

**Extracurricular Activities Support Program**

This program aims to integrate extracurricular activities to enrich the experience of both male and female students and polish their experience and talent within a motivating environment. The extracurricular activities are intended to be useful, attractive, comprehensive and high quality. The objectives of creating the extracurricular activities are to:

• deepen the values of the Islamic religion
• reinforce the allegiance and sense of belonging to the home country and preserve its benefits
• integrate values, trends and positive practices from the social, psychic, mental and hygienic aspects
• support cooperation between school, family and other social institutions
• provide a suitable environment for discovering and enhancing male and female students’ talents and trends at an early stage of education
• enrich the positive, practical and theoretical aspects of academic subjects in all specialisations
• invest spare time in purposeful, educational and entertaining programs
• prepare male and female students to play a pioneering role in the process of building and developing the country.

**Activating the Role of the Student in the Classroom**

The program of Tatweer aims to change the character and role of the students from passive to interactive in a progressive educational environment by achieving the following objectives:

• acquiring learning skills
• taking part in building the educational community
• acquiring positive values, trends and practices
• acquiring enhanced social and communication skills
• acquiring enhanced reasoning and problem-solving skills
• acquiring advanced leadership skills
• participating in a partnership community.

King Abdullah was aware of the fact that this project is challenging, and its success depends on the contributions of all involved people. Therefore, he stated in a general meeting with the MoE and his staff:

I hope you will bear this responsibility with diligence and persistence, and I want you to show a sense of responsibility, and I do believe, Allah willing, you have that. Yet, I hope for more responsibility and I want you to bring up the present and the coming generations on the basis of charity, justice and equity so as to serve their religion and country with patience and action (Saudi MoE, 2005a).
Appendix 5

A Certificate of Appreciation

I was awarded by MoE a Certificate of Appreciation for my initiative and efforts, and for my decision to use some of the activities on sample schools in the north region of Riyadh.
Appendix 6

Observation Sheets

(To be filled in by observers while observing the class)

Observer’s name _____________________
Date ______________ Time _________________
Name of the theme_____________________________________________________________

1. Express your opinion about:
   a. Classroom atmosphere
       ________________________________________________________________________
       ________________________________________________________________________
       ________________________________________________________________________
   b. Students’ performance
       ________________________________________________________________________
       ________________________________________________________________________
       ________________________________________________________________________
   c. Events that happened while students were participating in the activity
       ________________________________________________________________________
       ________________________________________________________________________
       ________________________________________________________________________
   d. Teacher’s performance
       ________________________________________________________________________
       ________________________________________________________________________
       ________________________________________________________________________
   e. Activities
       ________________________________________________________________________
       ________________________________________________________________________
       ________________________________________________________________________
f. Other comments

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
Appendix 7

Student Interview

(To be conducted at the beginning of LSE)

Name_____________________________ Date ____________________________

A student’s attitudes, needs and favourites may be assessed by their answers to the following questions.

Part I

1. Are you interested in learning English? Why or why not?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. Do you consider English class as important as maths and science class? Why or why not?

________________________________________________________________________

Part II

1. Is there anyone in your family who can help you with the activities of this program?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

If the answer is yes, who?

☐ Father  ☐ Mother  ☐ Sister  ☐ Brother  ☐ Uncle  ☐ Aunt

Part III

1. How do you feel about talking in front of the class?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Part IV

1. Do you like the idea of the activities of the new program? Why or why not?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Appendix 8

Weekly Group Interview

(To be conducted every week by the researcher, the three English teachers and the supervisor of Altatwor School)

Name of the theme ________________________________

Week ___________________________ Date ___________________

Resources

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Classroom management

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Atmosphere

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________
Other comments

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Advantages

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Disadvantages

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Recommendations

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Note: All recommendations and ideas will be conscientiously considered, though not all may be used.
Appendix 9

Student Language Learning Diary

(To be completed after the students’ presentations)

Express your opinion about the following:

a. The activity
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

b. The classroom atmosphere
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

c. Your speaking
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

d. Your confidence
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

e. The teacher’s performance in class
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
f. Any other ideas or comments

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Appendix 10

Student Self-evaluation Survey

(To be conducted at the beginning and the end of LSE)

Name_______________________________________ Date __________________________

The aim of this survey is to identify how students involved in this program evaluate their ability to speak English, their understanding of English grammar and vocabulary, their confidence and enjoyment when speaking this language, and their feelings when speaking with others in English.

Read the following, then put an ‘x’ in the box that best matches your opinion. The capital letters in the table below stand for:

A. Very good
B. Good
C. Only a little
D. Very little

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you rate your:</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ability to speak English?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Understanding of English grammar and vocabulary?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Confidence in speaking English?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Enjoyment when you speak English?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Anxiety when speaking with others in English?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for your cooperation.

Eiman Nather
Appendix 11

Student Competency Survey

(To be conducted at the beginning of LSE)

Name ______________________________ Date ________________________________

This survey was organised to know more about you in order to find ways to encourage you to speak English confidently. Achieving my target can be done by your support. I would be grateful if you could answer the following questions. All the information in this survey is confidential and will not be used for any other purposes.

Part I

1. Are you interested in learning English?
   □ Yes □ No

2. Are you interested in speaking English?
   □ Yes □ No
   Explain

3. How many years have you been learning English at school?

4. Do you practise English outside the class?
   □ Yes □ No
   If the answer is ‘yes’, with which of the following activities do you practise English, and how often do you practise your English via these activities?
      a. daily   b. twice a week   c. on the weekends   d. once a month
   (You can tick more than one answer then write the number to indicate how often)
Watch programs or movies on TV
Listen to the radio
Talk with English speakers
Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

Part II

1. Can you communicate meaningfully in English with others?
   □ Yes □ No
   If the answer is ‘no’, why do you think it is difficult to express yourself and be understood by others?
   (Rank your answers 1 to 6, using 1 for the most difficult one).
   ___ Unable to find suitable vocabulary
   ___ Unable to express a cultural concept
   ___ Unable to use correct grammar
   ___ Unable to organise my thoughts in a structured manner
   ___ Unable to pronounce the words well
   ___ Lack of knowledge in the topic of discussion
   Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

2. How do you feel when talking to others using English?
   (You can tick more than one answer)
   □ I feel shy
   □ I am not confident due to my limited English competence
   □ I feel confident in talking to native speakers of English
   Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

3. What do you do when you do not understand others speaking English?
   (You can tick more than one answer)
   □ Ask for repetition
   □ Ask for clarification
   □ Pretend that you understand to avoid embarrassment
   Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________
4. What do you do when you cannot be understood by others?

(You can tick more than one answer)

- Ask for help
- Use gestures such as body language and facial expressions
- Paraphrase it in a simple way
- Use some of the first language words
- Change the topic

Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

Part III

1. Please mark an ‘x’ on the line to indicate your opinion about the speaking activities of *Say it in English*.

Very effective                                                                                  Very ineffective

2. What other resources would you prefer to use in class to support the speaking activities of LSE?

(You can tick more than one answer)

- Posters
- Flash cards
- Computer
- Video
- Dictionary
- Overhead projector
- Language lab
- Tape recorder
- Television
- Self-access centre

Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

Part VI

1. How do you think successful language learning can be achieved?

(You can tick more than one answer)

- Following a good textbook
- Following the teacher’s instructions
- Using the language to communicate with others
- Learning vocabulary and grammar
- Memorising some useful sentences
Making comparisons between Arabic and English
Practising dialogues from the textbook
Other (please specify) ________________________________________________

2. What are the factors that promote your confidence in speaking English?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your time.
Eiman Nather
Appendix 12a

Student Participation Survey: ‘My News’

1. Carefully read the instructions in Step 1 before completing this theme in order to plan your presentation.

**Step 1: Plan**

Your task is to get your message across in an interesting way within the time allotted (two minutes). Plan your presentation:

- Choose a topic you know well.
- Use as much of your vocabulary as you can.
- Let yourself be creative with supporting resources.

2. Complete the following steps at the end of this theme.

**Step 2: Action and Observation**

- What happened while you were participating in the theme?

  ________________________________________________

  ________________________________________________

**Step 3: Reflection**

- What are the factors that promote your confidence in speaking English?

  ________________________________________________

  ________________________________________________

- What are the difficulties that hinder you from achieving confidence in speaking?

  ________________________________________________

  ________________________________________________
- What strategies or techniques suit you best?

- How does the teacher help you to identify strategies that support your learning?

---

**Step 4: Revision**
- If you had had a chance to do the theme again, what would you change?

---
Appendix 12b

Student Participation Survey: ‘Islamic Chants’

1. Carefully read the instructions in Step 1 before doing this theme in order to plan your presentation.

Step 1: Plan
Your task is to chant in an interesting way within the time allotted (three minutes). Plan your presentation:
- Choose your group and choose a leader for the group.
- Choose a segment of the chant.
- Explain why you have made this choice.
- Choose a person to deliver this introduction.
- Translate the difficult words.
- Practise your presentation.

2. Complete the following steps at the end of this theme.

Step 2: Action and Observation
- What happened while you were participating in the theme?

Step 3: Reflection
- What are the factors that promote your confidence in speaking English?
- What are the difficulties that hinder you from achieving confidence in speaking?
• What strategies or techniques suit you best?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

• How does the teacher help you to identify strategies that support your learning?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

Step 4: Revision

• If you had had a chance to do the theme again, what would you change?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
Appendix 12c

Student Participation Survey: ‘Stories in English’

1. Carefully read the instructions in Step 1 before doing this theme in order to plan your presentation.

Step 1: Plan
Your task is to make your presentation interesting, informative, memorable and enjoyable within the time allotted (three minutes). Plan your presentation:
- Cooperate with your group, and every member should participate.
- Check that everyone has the same understanding of the story.
- Translate the difficult words.
- Use as much of your vocabulary as you can to write your presentation.
- Let yourself be creative with supporting resources.
- Practise your presentation.

2. Complete the following steps at the end of this theme.

Step 2: Action and Observation
- What happened while you were participating in the theme?

Step 3: Reflection
- What are the factors that promote your confidence in speaking English?

- What are the difficulties that hinder you from achieving confidence in speaking?
- What strategies or techniques suit you best?
  
  
- How does the teacher help you to identify strategies that support your learning?
  
  
Step 4: Revision
- If you had had a chance to do the theme again, what would you change?
  
  

Appendix 12d

Student Participation Survey: ‘Videos in English’

1. Carefully read the instructions in Step 1 before doing this theme in order to plan your presentation.

**Step 1: Plan**

Your task is to make your presentation interesting, informative, memorable and enjoyable within the time allotted (three minutes). Plan your presentation:

- Cooperate with your group, and every member should participate.
- Gain agreement on main points made in the video.
- Translate the difficult words.
- Use as much of your vocabulary as you can to write your presentation.
- Let yourself be creative with supporting resources.
- Practise your presentation.

2. Complete the following steps at the end of this theme.

**Step 2: Action and Observation**

- What happened while you were participating in the theme?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

**Step 3: Reflection**

- What are the factors that promote your confidence in speaking English?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

- What are the difficulties that hinder you from achieving confidence in speaking?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
• What strategies or techniques suit you best?

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

• How does the teacher help you to identify strategies that support your learning?

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

Step 4: Revision

• If you had had a chance to do the theme again, what would you change?

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________
Appendix 13

Student Evaluation of LSE

(To be filled in by students at the end of LSE)

Name ________________________________ Date ________________________________

Answer the following questions:

1. Are you interested in LSE?
   - [ ] Yes  [ ] No
   Explain
   ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________

2. Which do you think is the best theme of LSE?
   (Rank your answers 1 to 4, using 1 for the best).
   ____ Theme1: My News
   ____ Theme2: Islamic Chants
   ____ Theme3: Stories in English
   ____ Theme4: Videos in English

(Explain your choice of favourite and least favourite)
   ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your time.

Eiman Nather
Appendix 14

Student Evaluation of the Teacher Role

(To be filled in by students at the end of LSE)

Name ____________________________________ Date _______________________________

Read the following and place an ‘x’ in the box that best matches your opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - Did the teacher clearly identify the course content and aims?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - Did the teacher explain the teaching approach?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - Did the teacher clearly explain how to evaluate the program?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - Did the teacher provide a suitable number of activities?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - Did the teacher explain the contents clearly?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - Were the texts or documents suitable for the subject?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - Did the teacher teach content from easy to difficult?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 - Did the teacher emphasise principles of reasoning more than learning by heart?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 - Did the teacher use resources and equipment in appropriate ways?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - Did the teaching content cover the course as described?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - Did the teacher prepare the lessons well?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - Was the teacher’s voice clear?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - Did the teacher provide opportunity to think and answer?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 - Did the teacher provide enough time to consult her and your group?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - Could the teacher identify students’ problems and solve them?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 - Did the teacher give feedback to students regularly?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 - Did the teacher teach morals and ethics at the proper time?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 - Did the teacher provide clear criteria for evaluation?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 - Did the teacher come to class regularly?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - Did the teacher teach for the whole period, according to the lesson plan?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - Could the contents be applied to real-life situations?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 - Did you acquire more knowledge of English?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 15

An Initial Survey for English Supervisors and Teachers

(To be filled in by supervisors and teachers from other schools before introducing the activities of LSE in a seminar held at the conclusion of LSE)

Name ___________________________ Qualification ___________________________

This survey was organised to know your opinions regarding the Saudi students’ difficulties in speaking and your beliefs about successful language learning. I would be grateful if you could answer the following questions. All the information in this survey is confidential and will not be used for any other purposes.

Part I

1. How many years have you been an English teacher (if any)?
   __________________________________________________________

2. How many years have you been an English supervisor (if any)?
   __________________________________________________________

Part II

1. Can Saudi public school students communicate meaningfully in English with others?
   - [ ] Yes  - [ ] No

   If the answer is ‘no’, why do you think it is difficult to express themselves and be understood by others?

   (Rank your answers 1 to 6, using 1 for the most difficult one).
   ____ Unable to find suitable vocabulary
   ____ Unable to express a cultural concept
   ____ Unable to use correct grammar
   ____ Unable to organise their thoughts in a structured manner
   ____ Unable to pronounce the words well
Lack of knowledge in the topic of discussion

Other (please specify) ____________________________________________________________

Part III

1. Please mark an ‘x’ on the line to indicate your opinion about the speaking activities in the current textbook.

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10
   Very effective                     Very ineffective

Part IV

1. How do you think successful language learning can be achieved?

   (You can tick more than one answer)
   □ Following a good textbook
   □ Following the teacher’s instructions
   □ Using the language to communicate with others
   □ Learning vocabulary and grammar
   □ Memorising some useful sentences
   □ Making comparisons between Arabic and English
   □ Practising dialogues from the textbook
   Other (please specify) ______________________________________________________

2. What are the factors that promote students’ confidence in speaking English?

   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

Thank you for your time.

Eiman Nather
Appendix 16

English Supervisors’ and Teachers’ Evaluation of Each Theme

(To be filled in by supervisors and teachers from other schools after listening to the description of each theme in the seminar held at the conclusion of LSE)

Name _____________________________ Qualification________________________

This survey was organised to know your evaluation for each theme. Achieving my target can be done with your support. All the information on this survey is confidential and will not be used for any other purposes.

Please answer the following questions:

1. Express your opinion about Theme ( ____________ ) in terms of:
   a. The idea of this theme:
      _____________________________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________________________
   b. The resources:
      _____________________________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________________________
   c. Its strengths:
      _____________________________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________________________
d. Its weaknesses:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

e. The students’ performance in this theme:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

f. The students’ confidence while presenting some activities of this theme:

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

2. Do you have any other ideas or comments?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

3. If the students had a chance to do the theme again, what would you suggest be changed?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your time.

Eiman Nather
Appendix 17

English Supervisors’ and Teachers’ Evaluation of LSE

(To be filled in by the supervisors and teachers after the final seminar explaining the nature of all the four activities with the students’ demonstration)

Name ________________________________ Qualification ________________________

1. Are you interested in LSE?
   ■ Yes  ■ No
   Explain
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________

2. Which do you think is the best theme?
   (Rank your answers 1 to 4, using 1 for the best).
   ____ Theme 1: My News
   ____ Theme 2: Islamic Chants
   ____ Theme 3: Stories in English
   ____ Theme 4: Videos in English

3. Explain your choice of your favourite and least favourite:
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________
Thank you for your time.

Eiman Nather
Appendix 18

Approval from the Saudi MoE
Appendix 19

Approval from the Committee for Ethics in Human Research at the University of Canberra

30th October 2010

COMMITTEE FOR ETHICS IN HUMAN RESEARCH
Project number: 10-90

APPROVED

Mrs Eiman Nather
Faculty of Education
University of Canberra
BRUCE ACT 2617

Dear Eiman,

The Committee for Ethics in Human Research has considered your application to conduct research with human subjects for the project entitled Developing an integrated program to promote Saudi students’ confidence in speaking English.

The Committee made the following evaluation:

Approval is granted until 04/02/11 the anticipated completion date stated in the application.

The following general conditions apply to your approval.

These requirements are determined by University policy and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2007).

Monitoring:
You, in conjunction with your supervisor, must assist the Committee to monitor the conduct of approved research by completing and promptly returning project review forms, which will be sent to you at the end of your project and, in the case of extended research, at least annually during the approval period.

Discontinuation of research:
You, in conjunction with your supervisor, must inform the Committee, giving reasons, if the research is not conducted or is discontinued before the expected date of completion.

Extension of approval:
If your project will not be complete by the expiry date stated above, you must apply in writing for extension of approval. Application should be made before current approval expires; should specify a new completion date; should include reasons for your request.

Retention and storage of data:
University policy states that all research data must be stored securely, on University premises, for a minimum of five years. You and your supervisor must ensure that all records are transferred to the University when the project is complete.

Changes in contact details:
You should advise the Committee of any change of address during or soon after the approval period including, if appropriate, email address(es).

Please add the Contact Complaints form (attached) for distribution with your project.

Yours sincerely

Michelita Dalgleish - Research Ethics Secretariat
Letter from the Committee for Ethics in Human Research at the University of Canberra

This letter provides the contacts for information for the study, as well as the independent complaints procedure.

CONTACTS FOR INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT AND INDEPENDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The following study has been reviewed and approved by the Committee for Ethics in Human Research.

Project title: Developing an integrated program to promote Saudi students' confidence in speaking English.
Project number: 10-90
Principal researcher: Mrs Elman Nather

1. As a participant or potential participant in research, you will have received written information about the research project. If you have questions or problems which are not answered in the information you have been given, you should consult the researcher or (if the researcher is a student) the research supervisor. For this project, the appropriate person is:
   Name: A/Prof Kaye Lowe
   Contact details: Faculty of Education
   UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA
   Phone: (02) 6201 5870

2. If you wish to discuss with an independent person a complaint relating to:
   • conduct of the project, or
   • your rights as a participant, or
   • University policy on research involving human participants,
   Contact the Secretary of the University Research Committee
   Telephone (02) 6201 5870
   Room 1 D116
   UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA ACT 2601

Providing research participants with this information is a requirement of the National Health and Medical Research Council National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans, which applies to all research with human participants conducted in Australia. Further information on University of Canberra research policy is available in University of Canberra Guidelines for Responsible Practice in Research and Dealing with Problems of Research Misconduct and the Committee for Ethics in Human Research Human Ethics Manual. These documents are available from the Research Services Office at the above address or on the University’s web site at https://guard.canberra.edu.au/policy/policy.php?pol_id=3136 (Research Guidelines)
Appendix 21

Planning your Oral Presentation

(To be explained to students at the beginning of LSE)

When you plan your oral presentation, you need to consider the following questions:

1. How long does your presentation need to be?
A good guide to how much you need to say is that 100 words = about one minute of talking.
For a longer presentation, you will need more paragraphs in the body of your essay; for a shorter presentation, just have a shorter introduction and conclusion.

2. How are you going to deliver your presentation?
For instance:
   - Are you going to assign roles to different students?
   - Are you going to use visual aids?
Feel free to use your imagination.

3. A presentation is not about reading your work—it is about communicating with your audience, so the less reading you do, the better. Follow these instructions to communicate effectively with your audience:
   - If you are very confident, you may be able to speak directly from your three-point outline. (Cut it up into separate paragraphs—large pieces of paper are distracting for the audience.)
   - If you are not confident enough to do this yet, you can easily expand your plan into a speech just by putting the key words/phrases into sentences and linking them appropriately. Then put your speech onto cue cards.
   - Practise the speech, paying particular attention to new or difficult words. Check your pronunciation.
   - Practise, practise, practise! Think how you will cope with cue cards and visual aids. It can help to practise in front of a mirror.
Remember: the way you look and the way you deliver your speech are as important as the content of the speech. Try to relax and smile. Look at the audience; try to connect with them.

Good luck! You can do it.
## Appendix 22

### Delivering Your Speech

(To be explained to students at the beginning of Themes 3 and 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Start in an interesting way then introduce your topic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body</th>
<th>Discussion points</th>
<th>Sub-points, key words, supporting information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is the main part of your speech, where you give all the facts and supporting information.</td>
<td>(first point)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose three important points of discussion and write key words/phrases for the topics.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Then choose two to three sub-points for each topic (as key words) and two to three examples or details to support these.</td>
<td>(second point)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(third point)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conclusion</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refer back to the information in the introduction and tie it all together.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Appendix 2

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