An Investigation into Arab Students’ Perceptions of Effective EFL Teachers at University Level

Submitted by

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To the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education

September 2005

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate Arab students’ perceptions concerning the teaching attitudes and behaviours that contribute to effective EFL teaching and learning in the United Arab Emirates. Adopting an interpretative approach to the research, the data was collected in three phases. In Phase One an interview was used. 17 university students studying English in Intensive English programs were interviewed. In Phase Two a questionnaire was used. 165 students responded to it. In Phase Three four students were interviewed for further information about the effective teaching characteristics identified in phases one and two. Findings from the study indicated that effective EFL teaching had two main dimensions: instructional skills and human characteristics. A wide range of categories and subcategories were classified under each dimension. Bearing in mind the descriptions and information the respondents gave throughout the Three Phases, I started to have a new understanding of what constituted effective English language teaching in the UAE universities. This considered effective EFL teachers as creators of an effective learning culture. I found that the broader picture of effective teaching that the core of the data built highlighted the significance of a learning culture in effective English teaching. The respondents talked about a web of instructional behaviour and practices as well as personal and interpersonal characteristics of effective teachers and most of which revolved around the significance of creating a learning culture that they found suitable for enhancing their learning of English. This study contributes to the knowledge of what constitutes acceptable teaching behaviour. The more that is known about successful EFL teaching and learning, the more likely FL teachers, administrators, and curriculum developers benefit in teacher preparation and evaluation.
Acknowledgement

It is truly right and good that I acknowledge those who were instrumental in helping me complete this thesis. I owe deep thanks to my main supervisor Dr. Malcolm MacDonald, School of Education and Lifelong Learning, University of Exeter for his guidance, support, patience, energy and timely feedback. I would like to thank him for the time and energy he spent in reading and offering suggestions to improve each chapter.

I would also like to thank Dr. Keith Postlethwaite for his expert advice, critical and constructive comments, support and more importantly his sincere kindness. He gave his time to consult with me. I have learned so many things from him, and I am so grateful for all of his help.

I would like also to thank my colleague William Feruson for his feedback on different issues especially his useful feedback on the effective teaching categorization of effective teaching qualities.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife for being patient, supportive and for taking care of our children so I could write my dissertation. My special appreciation also goes to other members of my family for their support.
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Chapter One

Introduction

This study investigates the perceptions of Arab tertiary students regarding the qualities of effective teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL teachers) at the United Arab Emirates (UAE) higher education institutions. Teacher characteristics and teaching behaviours are enormously important elements in student motivation and learning. Research findings suggest teaching practices may, in fact, impact on student achievement (Brophy, 1979; Brophy & Good, 1986; Everston, 1986; Gage, 1984a; National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1994; Rosenshine & Furst 1971; Rouche & Baker, 1986; Woolfolk, 1990). The teacher is recognized as the person in the classroom who orchestrates a complex network of classroom interactions, all of which may impact on student achievement (Gage, 1984b; Greene, 1984; Jackson, 1968; Millies, 1992; Woolfolk, 1990). However, the relationship between teacher behaviour and student learning is very complex (Evertson & Weade, 1991; Johansen, Collins, & Johnson, 1990). I should indicate that although the teachers play an important role in the teaching and learning process, there are limits to their influence. There are other factors that impact on learning such as culture as emphasized by Vygotsky (1978) with reference to making meaning by learners. People refer to ‘culture’ in different ways depending on the context they are involved in. They may refer to it as a ‘large’ entity such as a national, religious or community cultures. They may also refer to it as a small entity such as family, institutional or classroom cultures (Holliday, 1999). In this research, I refer to ‘culture’ as a broad entity that can be influenced by large entities such as Arabic and Islamic culture as well as small entities such as family, classroom or university
culture. ‘Culture’ in this study encompasses all kinds of variables that affect the language learning of students such as positions and dispositions of students and teachers, classroom atmosphere, social contexts, real learning settings and communities outside the classroom, ways of presenting materials, teachers’ treatment with students, university policies and curriculum. There has been a recent rise in the interest of culture and its impact on learning. James & Bloomer (2001: 7) are among those who highlight the significance of culture in learning. They suggest that “research and scholarship must recognize learning not simply as occurring within a cultural context but as a culture practice. It must take as its focus the practices of people in their authentic learning sites and avoid the alchemy that so readily turns students and teachers into instances of a category, into a species, or alternatively has them as the mere carriers of cultures or cognitive operations.” Another factor is the way students learn things. Learners learn things in different ways; this could mean that the teaching methods that suit one learner may not necessarily be as effective as they are for somebody else (Williams & Burden, 1997). Other factors in learning include students’ life history, background, environment, the linguistic ‘capital’ they bring to their learning, their preferences, the expectations that they themselves will be influenced by; also deep seated factors such as their gender and position in society and finally, the resources available to the teachers, as well as the policy context of the institution within which they teach. These things will affect learning and the teacher has little control over them; but at the same time they may also influence students’ perceptions of effective teaching. Moreover, teachers have different personalities and what makes one teacher good will not be appropriate for another (Williams & Burden, op. cit).

The identification of effective teachers is not an easy task. Attempts to identify effective teachers and effective teaching behaviours began early in history and formal attempts continue today (Brandt, 1992; Brophy, 1979; Council of Chief State School Officers, 1992;
Demmon-Berger, 1986; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Research dealing with the question of what makes a “good” teacher has appeared in the literature since 1896 (Medley, 1972). Frequently, early studies seeking to identify effective teachers relied on informal observations of teaching behaviours in the classroom. These informal observations were recorded in diaries and logs (Medley, 1972). Gradually, research became concerned with the identification of effective teachers focused on specific teaching behaviours. This research frequently used instruments designed to provide objective measures of teaching behaviour (Simon & Boyer, 1974). Some authors (Brandt, 1992; Flanders & Nuthall, 1972) question the value of such research methods and stress that the objective and precise identification of teaching behaviours is not necessarily the most appropriate way to identify and evaluate expert and effective teaching. Apart from having to decide how to map teaching behaviour, another problem is agreeing what will be used as outcome measures. In other words what does an effective teacher have to produce – is it learners with high test scores, learners with a great interest in the subject; learners able to criticize ideas in the subject, learners who apply their learning in their lives or all of these?

1.1 Background and Rationale

English is a very important language to learn in the Arab world in general and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in particular. English is taught at the UAE government schools from grade one until grade twelve after which students are entitled to join different universities and colleges. The UAE higher education institutions established a foundation program mainly to upgrade the level of new students and prepare them for the career programs. The vast majority of university students are placed in an English foundation program for a year before they can start their career programs. English teaching at the UAE universities and colleges has two main goals. The first goal is helping students overcome language difficulties that
they might face in their career programs. The second goal is developing the communicative skills of students that they need in their life. From my experience in the UAE higher education, it is evident that there is a lack of English competence among new university students. After sitting a placement test, the vast majority of students will have to attend an intensive English program at their universities and colleges. They spend in average about one year in this program. It is important to indicate here that most of the EFL teachers at the UAE higher education institutions are not Arabs (mainly British, Americans, Canadians and Australians) and have different backgrounds and cultures from their students. In the light of the importance the UAE government gives to English learning, the discrepancy between the cultures and backgrounds of teachers and students, the lack of research on effective EFL teaching in the UAE, and the lack of English competence among students in the UAE, I found it necessary to conduct this study on EFL effective teaching from the perspective of Arab students in the UAE.

1.2 The Need for Research on EFL Teacher Effectiveness in the UAE

No research on effective teaching in general and EFL teaching in particular has been conducted in the UAE (except for the study that I conducted in 1999, see 3.3 in Chapter 3). It is worth mentioning here that the history of higher education in the UAE is recent. The first university in the UAE was established in 1976. In general, little research has been conducted regarding discipline-specific teaching behaviours and attitudes of teachers (Franklin & Theall, 1995; Murray & Renaud, 1995; Schulz, 2000). Because every teaching and learning situation is context-specific and because disciplines differ, some teaching behaviours and attitudes are considered more effective in one discipline than in another (Murray & Renaud, 1995). For example, lecturing may be effective in a history course but not in a beginning foreign language course. Yet, in most
cases, the history teacher and FL teacher might be evaluated using the same criteria (Sternberg & Horvath, 1995) - (cited in Teresa, 2001). FL teachers exhibit aspects of teaching that are specific to FLs and that are not relevant to the teaching of any other discipline. Brosh (1996) points out that FL teaching differs from teaching other subjects “where the means of instruction is also the subject of instruction” (p. 125). For instance, practitioners of the Communicative Approach (CA) to Language Teaching and second language acquisition (SLA) theorists view language acquisition as occurring via a combination of explicit and implicit means (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Rutherford & Sharwood Smith, 1988; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992). Thus, language can be acquired as part of a course of study, through interaction with other speakers, and indirectly through the study of other content areas (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989; Crandall, 1987; Snow & Brinton, 1988). Knowledge of language is demonstrated by a series of interrelated competencies (Canale & Swain, 1988; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992) that are tied not only to knowledge of the language itself, but also to its appropriate use in a given context (Brown & Levinson, 1978; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Consequently, language teaching and its subsequent effectiveness must be reviewed according to its own unique qualities.


Schrier and Hammadou (1994) indicated that in order to evaluate effective foreign language teaching, qualities of effective teaching should first be identified, should be agreed upon as
being worth evaluating, should be identified on repeated occasions, and should be proved worthwhile in many settings. It should be emphasized that I am not following a generalization model in this study. I believe that what is deemed to be effective in the context of my study may not necessarily be the same in other contexts. Given the various views that I mentioned above that may influence the process of teaching and learning, it is important to highlight the context-specific teaching that may be highly effective and may give valuable insights on which to base major shifts in teachers' practice. In other words we don’t need to know that X works everywhere, we need to understand why Y works in a particular setting and then to think creatively about what this might mean for other settings. This will be a reflective transfer model rather than a generalization model.

1.3 Asking the Real Audience Directly

Much of the research focuses on specific teaching behaviours identified by teachers and educational experts, but it does not focus enough on the perceptions of students on effective teaching qualities. Good (1981) claimed that most of the research on teacher expectations has focused on the direct effects of differential teacher behaviour toward students; however, the research has not focused on student perceptions of teacher behaviour and student inferences about teacher behaviour. A teacher may employ every specific behaviour recommended by experts to increase teacher effectiveness and still not be effective with certain groups of students or in certain situations. For example, a teacher may be funny, smart and caring and still not be effective with certain groups of students or in certain situations (Johnson & Roelke, 1999). To be effective, teachers need to consider the roles, biases and general mood of their students before planning how to teach them (Crowley, 1995; McCaslin & Good, 1996). This again supports the above context specific argument that is consistent with socio-cultural concerns about such factors as dispositions,
expectations, culture, way of learning, background and environment. Increasingly, teachers are teaching prescribed curricula but not students. To be effective, teachers must be aware of what their students want and what their students feel are important (Good & Brophy, 2001). Therefore, in order for us to improve instruction and increase teacher effectiveness we should ask students what they think and what they want.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

As mentioned above, there is almost no research on EFL effective teaching from the perspective of Arab students in the UAE (except for the study that I conducted in 1999, see 3.2 in Chapter 3). There is therefore scope for investigating the characteristics of EFL effective teaching within the UAE culture. Additionally, most teachers who teach English at the English Foundation Programs of the UAE universities are not Arabs. They are mainly British, Americans, Canadians or Australians. To be effective, teachers must have the ability to teach increasing numbers of students who display educational and social characteristics different from their own (Delpit, 1995; Good & Brophy, 2001). Many of these students have different learning needs, cultural backgrounds, family structures, and beliefs about the value of schooling than students in the past (Goodlad, 1990; Haberman, 1995; Koerner, 1992; Wells, 1990). Students coming from backgrounds different from the teachers’ exhibit a wide range of behavioural and academic characteristics about which many practising teachers are uninformed (Goodlad, 1990). Uninformed teachers may not be as effective as they are in their own countries teaching students who have the same background. From my experience, there are newly recruited teachers who were judged to be ineffective by their students and in consequence were asked to leave the university or college by the end of their first year or even by the end of their first semester.
Opportunities to develop awareness of and responses to the increasingly varied and conflicting demands of students of the 21st century must be provided to teachers (Allington, 1991; Gotch & Bridges, 1990; Haberman, 1995). Determining student perceptions of effective EFL teachers may increase their awareness. By asking students for their opinions, we may be able to increase teacher awareness and improve instruction in the classroom (McCaslin & Good, 1996). Moreover, the identification of effective teaching behaviours may impact on the selection of individuals for teachers' education programs and coursework in teachers education programs, including supervision and professional development activities provided for preservice and practising teachers (Gross & Gross, 1985; Ornstein, 1995).

Most educational research conducted prior to 1987 focused on the relationship between effective teaching behaviours and student academic achievement (Berliner, 1976; Brandt, 1992; Ornstein, 1986, 1995; Rosenshine, 1971). Much of this early research used student achievement as the measure of teacher effectiveness (Gage, 1984b). Frequently, such research was founded on a positivistic paradigm and used quantitative methods of data collection and analyses (Borich, 1986; Shulman, 1986a). In contrast, the approach used in the current study was to ask students to describe the teaching behaviours and attitudes of EFL teachers from their perspective.

In order to gather information necessary to address the problem, natural in-depth interviews in phase one and a questionnaire of open ended questions in phase two were the primary methods of data collection. A naturalistic, qualitative study was deemed appropriate to examine teaching behaviours because of its perceptive and interpersonal nature (Ayers, 1992; Brandt, 1992; Stake, 1994).
1.5 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the knowledge of what acceptable classroom teaching behaviour is in the UAE EFL context. The findings of this study can be of benefit to EFL teachers in understanding what their students expect and in understanding students themselves. They can even help curriculum designers to revise the teaching materials. Furthermore, the results of this study may have implications for teacher preparation programs and the selection of applicants for these programs.

What makes the UAE students’ perceptions of EFL teaching effectiveness especially important is that the students’ feedback on teachers’ performance is used as a major part of teacher evaluation in the UAE higher education institutions. The vast majority of teachers in the UAE are contract teachers from other countries. For the purpose of improving the quality of teaching and in an attempt to recruit the most effective teachers, the performance of teachers is evaluated annually and student evaluation of teacher effectiveness is used to assist managers in making decisions regarding promotions, continuity, and contract renewal.

1.6 The Research Questions

Given the researcher’s specific interest in investigating behaviours and attitudes of effective EFL teachers, the following main research question was formulated:

How do Arab students perceive effective EFL teachers at university level?

The other subordinate questions are:

a) In what ways do cultural factors operate to influence the views of Arab students of effective EFL teachers at university level?

b) To what extent are student perceptions of teacher effectiveness in UAE Universities unitary or heterogeneous?
c) What are the implications of student perceptions of teacher effectiveness for formal evaluation procedures of language classrooms in UAE universities?

d) What is the broader context that the overall findings might draw for making English language learning more effective for Arab university students?

Since there is no variation in age among the participants, the age factor is not going to be addressed in this study. As for the gender factor, I addressed this factor in my 1999 study that I conducted on effective EFL teaching in similar locations and on participants from a similar population using qualitative method; I found no significant differences between the perspectives of males and females on effective EFL teaching. Therefore, I will address the factor of culture only in this study. In chapter ten, I will highlight any participants’ views of effective teaching behaviours that constitute a culture.

To address the research questions, responses of students in interviews, open-ended questionnaires and follow up interviews were examined.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This study is organized in nine chapters. The current chapter has presented an introduction to the study including the background and rationale and has outlined the need for research on EFL teacher effectiveness.

Chapter two provides the reader with a background about the country where the research takes place in relation to education, the status of English and teacher performance evaluation in the UAE universities and colleges.

Chapter three discusses the main learning theories that have different perspectives of teaching and learning and their implications for effective English language teachers. I
discuss the major theoretical perspectives that have been influential in language learning and teaching: the behaviourist, cognitive, humanistic and social constructivist.

Chapter four presents a review of the literature related to effective teaching in general education as well as in FL teaching. It also addresses different models of teacher evaluation, the common English teaching methods, and reviews the definitions of effective teaching.

Chapter five presents the methodology used in this study. I first justify the qualitative approach used in this study. I then describe the data collection methods in the three phases of the research and the data analysis procedures. At the end I discuss the credibility and trustworthiness of this study.

Chapters six and seven report the findings of the qualitative data collected from the interviews, questionnaires and follow up interviews. They present the themes and the categories that I constructed on the basis of the respondents’ responses.

Chapter eight elaborates on the voices of individual participants through samples from their interviews in Phase One and follow-up interviews in Phase three.

Chapter nine provides a discussion of the findings based on the results presented in chapters six and seven and the implications for further research.
Chapter Two

Context of the Study

2.1 Introduction

Chapter two provides the reader with a background about the country in which the current research study is conducted. In the first part I will talk about the general profile of the country to give the reader an idea about the broad context of the study. In the second part I will talk about education in the UAE. In the third part I will discuss the status of English in the UAE. In the last part I will talk about evaluating teacher performance in the UAE universities and colleges.

2.2. Country Profile

The UAE is a newly born country. It consists of seven emirates which are Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras Al Khaima, Fujairah, Ajman and Umm Al Qaiwain. The rulers of these emirates decided to establish a federation to be known as the United Arab Emirates. Therefore, on 2 December 1972 the UAE state was declared and Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan became the president of the country.

The UAE is surrounded by the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman in the north and north west, Saudi Arabia in the south west and Qater in the west. The UAE has approximately 83,600 square kilometers in size and 700 kilometers of coastline along the Arabian Gulf. The UAE is mainly a desert country. It is very hot in summer; the temperature in summer reaches 48 degrees Celsius. Therefore, people in the UAE depend heavily on air-conditioning. The
weather is pleasant in winter; the temperature in this season reaches 30 degrees Celsius. There is very little rain in the UAE; the average rainfall is 6.5 cm (Ghanem, 1992).

The population of the UAE has increased dramatically since oil was discovered in this country in 1958. According to the Statistical Department of the Ministry of Planning the population of the UAE increased from 557887 to 3,108,000 in 2000. Due to the dramatic change in the economy of the UAE in the light of discovering oil, and due to the lack of qualified locals, the country depends heavily on foreign manpower. Before discovering oil, the UAE people had a hard life because of the bare nature of the land and the lack of rain. They earned their living from pearl diving, fishing and trading activities (Rumaithi, 1980; Ghanem, 1992). After oil was discovered in 1958, the economy of the UAE changed dramatically. The UAE depended on oil as a single source of income during the sixties and seventies. As a result the government managed to develop the physical and social infrastructure of the country (Ghanem, 1992). Then the economy has diversified through other sources such as non-oil exports and re-exports, and as a result the country started to have very important incomes other than the oil income (Al Mansoori, 2001).

2.3 Education in the UAE

2.3.1 School Education

The age of modern education in the UAE is short; it is about forty years old. Education before that time was traditional. It was provided in Quraan schools (Kuttab) which provided education to people for hundreds of years; it was known for its simplicity. One teacher (Mutawa’a) taught a group of children who sat around him; girls as well as boys received education at those schools. The curriculum consisted mainly of three parts: reciting the Holy Quraan, learning how to read and write, and arithmetic. Pupils advanced according to their
abilities, so there were pupils with different levels of attainment in the same room. They were supervised and promoted on an individual basis by the teacher. Modern education began in the 1950’s; at that time some Arab governments sponsored teachers as a part of their aid educational programs. When the federation was established, education was given top priority (Al Mansoori, 2001).

The leadership of the UAE aimed at modernizing the country and educating the people. Therefore, it has given a lot of support for education and this has boosted the progress in education here. Nowadays, the Ministry of Education (MOE) is responsible for school education. There are mainly two types of schools: government schools and private schools. The UAE government funds its schools through the MOE. The education system is centralized. The MOE is responsible for drawing up policies and overall plans. The regional educational districts are held responsible for the implementation and supervision of these plans. In 1972 education was considered fundamental and became compulsory for elementary level and free at all levels for Emirati children (Taryam, 1987). The MOE is responsible for commissioning the writing of the textbooks used at all government schools. Authors that the MOE nominates are teachers and inspectors from the UAE MOE and university lecturers. As far as the EFL course books are concerned, British or USA experts together with Arab practitioners who know the UAE culture very well are involved in designing these books. English is the only foreign language that is taught in the UAE government schools.

Government schools managed to cope with the local needs of the UAE community in terms of providing school education for all Emiratis. According to the Education Statistical Bulletin Ministry of Education, the number of students increased from 179,276 distributed in 395 government schools in 1985 to 300,412 distributed in 773 schools in 2003/2004. The number of school teachers and administrators also increased from 13,320 in 1985 to 28267 in
2003/2004. This indicates how fast the education system in the UAE has developed. The UAE government gives special allowances to the nationals to encourage them to join teacher training programs and become teachers. The priority is given to UAE nationals in getting teaching and administrative jobs in government schools. However, the national teachers are still a minority, especially the male teachers. Teachers from different Arab countries have been recruited by the Ministry of Education to teach in different government schools at different levels in different places.

As for the private schools, they are self funded. Their source of income is the tuition fees collected from the students who attend them. There is a wide range of private schools in the country. Nowadays, admission to government schools is restricted to UAE nationals. Another reason is that the non-national population is large and of different nationalities. To accommodate all the non-national students and meet their cultural needs, different ethnic schools such as Iranian, Indian, Pakistani, British and American schools have been established in the UAE. There is an important portion of the national and non-national people, mainly Arabs, who are interested in giving their children a high quality education, so they send their children to some prestigious expensive schools that usually follow the British or American curriculum and mostly have its teaching and administrative staff from England and the USA.

The school education in the UAE consists of the following stages:

1. Kindergarten (a stage of 1-2 years: KG1 and KG2)
2. Elementary (a six year stage)
3. Intermediate (a three year stage)
4. Secondary (a three year stage)

The students in the last two years of the secondary stage have to choose either the scientific stream or the arts stream. Their grade average in the first secondary school is taken into
consideration in choosing one of these two streams. At the end of the third secondary year, which is the last year of school education, students sit for the General Secondary Certificate Examination (GSCE). The results of this exam are crucial in deciding the kind of university a student is entitled to attend and the kind of specialization he/she can choose. Those students who get less than 60% in this exam will face some difficulties in pursing their higher education because universities and colleges in the UAE do not accept students whose grade average is below 60%. Those who get higher grades will have a wider range of universities and colleges to select from and will have a wider range of study fields he/she can choose from. Due to the importance of the GSCE the results are published in the local newspapers and through the local radio, internet and Etisalat (telecommunication) company.

2.3.2 Higher Education in the UAE

The Ministry of Higher Education is responsible for post secondary school education, however, higher education institutions are independent in selecting and developing its programs, hiring staff, drawing and implementing their own policies, etc. The first university was established in the UAE in 1975. This university is called UAE University and it is located in Al Ain city. To meet the increasing demand of qualified people for jobs in business and technology areas, the second higher educational institution was founded in 1988. This institution is called Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT). It started with four colleges and now it has 14 colleges in seven sites. These colleges succeeded within a few years to establish a very good reputation among the UAE higher education institutions. This is because the graduates of these colleges are well qualified. They face no difficulties in getting jobs in different sectors. The employers in general in the UAE say that the (HCT) graduates are capable of carrying out the job duties. Moreover, they say that their English language skills are good enough to enable them function efficiently in their jobs. In the same
year Ajman University of Science and Technology was established in Ajman. In 1997 a very important step was taken in developing higher education in the UAE. The University City was founded in Sharjah. This city composes the American University of Sharjah, Sharjah University, Sharjah Higher Colleges of Technology (which belongs to the Higher Colleges of Technology mentioned above), Police College and Etistalat University. In 1998 Zayed University was founded in Abu Dhabi (the capital) and it has two branches: one in Abu Dhabi and another in Dubai. Finally, in 2003 Abu Dhabi University was founded in Abu Dhabi.

The federal institutions (UAE University, Higher Colleges of Technology and Zayed University) are funded by the UAE government and they are non-fee paying. The UAE university accepts a very limited number of non-national students (mainly Arabs whose families live in the UAE; while admission to the other two institutions is restricted to the UAE nationals. The private universities such as Ajman University of Science and Technology, the American University of Sharjah, the American University in Dubai and Abu Dhabi University are self funded. They depend mainly on the tuition fees paid by the students who join these institutions. The University of Sharjah is a local government institution which is funded from two sources: the students’ tuition fees and Sharjah government. All students, nationals and non-nationals should have at least 60% average in their general secondary school examinations in order for them to be able to apply for one of these universities and colleges.

The higher education institutions have managed to develop a wide range of career programs that aim at meeting the needs of the country like training nurses, computer technicians, lab technicians, x ray specialists, office secretaries and teachers. These are mainly in the fields of technology, engineering, computing, business and health sciences. Many educational cooperation agreements have been reached between the UAE higher education institutions
and international universities and colleges in the USA, Canada, Australia, Britain and others. For example, there is an agreement between the University of Exeter in the England and the University of Sharjah in the UAE in the engineering field. Another example is an agreement between Cardiff University and the University of Sharjah in the medicine field. This has given the universities and colleges here a good opportunity to have newly well developed career programs. Highly qualified teaching and administrative staff have been hired from all over the world to contribute to the achievement of the mission of these institutions. A lot of Arab students from different Arab countries - attend the non-federal UAE universities.

2.4 The English Language in the UAE

2.4.1 English Language Status

English has become a very important language in the UAE in the light of discovering oil, the big multinational manpower in the country and the fast growth of education and economy in the UAE. It is widely used in different places such as banks, companies, factories, shopping centres, hospitals, airports. Most non-Arabs who work in the UAE do not know Arabic; they use English as a tool of communication among them as well as in their communication with Arabs, so English is used a lot in the everyday life in the UAE. It has also become fundamental in the business field. Those who plan to start a business in this country or apply for a job need to know English; most employers in the UAE consider fluency in English as an important condition for getting a job; this is evident in the job advertisements in the local newspapers. This is a significant incentive for Arab students (nationals and non-nationals) to learn English so that they can have a good career. Being aware of the importance of this language for having a good career, many people here, nationals and non-nationals, prefer to send their children to the schools that have very good English programs. Most of these
schools are very expensive; however parents spend large amounts of money so that their children can master English and as a result have a better chance of future career.

It is important to state that study fields such as business, computing and engineering have very good market in the UAE, so in the universities where the current research is conducted, the vast majority of students choose to study subjects such as management of information systems, computer sciences, electronic and electric engineering, business administration, accounting, etc. and shun studying academic fields. These fields are taught in English at these universities; this is another incentive for students to learn English.

2.4.2 Intensive English Programs in UAE Universities and Colleges

As I mentioned above, there is an increasing interest in studying fields that are taught only in English at the UAE universities and colleges, however, most new students who join these universities are weak in English; therefore all new students sit for a placement English test which are either in-house tests or international tests such as TOEFL. Those who get the right score (around 500 in case of TOEFL) are exempted from the English language requirements and start their career programs directly. In the light of these placement tests the vast majority of the candidates are placed in one of the levels in the intensive English program (IEP) at the university or college they apply for so that they can improve their English and be prepared to join the career programs. The number and names of levels is different from one program to another. They range between two and five and each level is taught for a four month semester. One of these programs has eight levels, but each level is taught in a two month semester. Each program has its own regulations regarding promoting students from one level to another.

The UAE universities and colleges under investigation have established their own IEPs so that they can meet the increasing demand of learning English. The IEPs have different
names in different universities. Regardless of these different names, they in general have the same goal which is to develop the communicative English skills of students and prepare them for their career program. In these IEPs students are mainly taught English. They study about 18 hours of English per week and usually need about one year to finish their intensive period. The teaching materials used in the IEPs are either textbooks or in house authored materials or both. In each level students are taught four skill courses: listening and speaking, reading, writing and grammar. Some of the IEPs integrate writing and grammar in one course. These skills are usually taught by different teachers. Employing technology is considered very important in all these IPEs. Teachers are expected use computers in teaching English. Some of these IEPs have their own computer labs and others equip their all classrooms with computers so that students can use them whenever they have computer based tasks.

2.5 Evaluating Teacher Performance

The UAE universities and colleges under investigation have hired a lot of qualified and experienced teachers to teach English in their IEPs; most of them are English native speakers from Britain, USA and Canada and Australia; they are contract teachers whose performance is evaluated every year. Shanon (2003), a director of one of the IEPs where the research takes place, indicates that there are five reasons for conducting an evaluation of faculty performance:

1. To manage the quality of teaching and learning in a language program;
2. To obtain information that can be used in making contract renewal decisions;
3. To provide guidance to teachers who need professional development;
4. To recognize and reward outstanding teachers;
5. To provide information for accreditation purposes.
The performance evaluation in the IEPs under study consists of three components:

1. **Self evaluation:** Teachers are asked to complete a form in which they write a self-evaluation that covers the following points:
   - Classes taught in under the period of review
   - Service to the English Program
   - Self development
   - Professional activities

2. **Observation of Classroom Instruction:** This is done through classroom visits. The IEPs where the research takes place use either a detailed form that consists of a long list of items or a descriptive form that consists of certain items (see Appendix A).

3. **Student Evaluation:** This is done by asking the students to complete questionnaires about their teachers. Each of the four IEP’s where this study was conducted uses its own questionnaire form (see Appendix B).

As we can see the components of the evaluation performance report and the items of the forms used in this evaluation reflect the importance of teaching effectiveness for the IEPs, in particular the teaching effectiveness feedback collected from students. Such evaluation performance reports give administrators insights into the effectiveness of instruction in their programs. Decisions regarding renewing the contracts of teachers (and merit increases in some of the IEPs) are made in the light of the annual evaluation performance report. It also guides the teachers in need for professional development in certain areas. Since the students’ perspective of the effectiveness of their teachers is crucial in making decisions regarding the continuity of teachers in their jobs, teachers give students’ opinion on their teaching effectiveness a special consideration.
It is noticeable that there is no consensus among these English programs neither on the components of the observation forms nor on the items of the questionnaires used to get student feedback on the teacher effectiveness. Although these universities are in the same country and their student populations are theoretically supposed to have similar aptitudes and backgrounds and learn English under similar conditions, the teaching effectiveness tools are not always the same. From my experience in more than one UAE university, I know that these observation forms or questionnaires were either borrowed and adapted from different sources or constructed by the faculty and administrators working in these centres. Students were not consulted and as a result their perspective on effective teaching might not be completely represented in these forms. As we will see from the literature reviewed in chapter three, students are good raters of their teachers, so I believe that in order for these observation forms and questionnaire forms to achieve what they are constructed for, they should consider the perceptions of students of the effectiveness of their EFL teachers. This is not to say that whatever students consider effective is an ideal prescription for effective teaching and therefore it should be added to these forms, but rather I think that their perceptions should be insightful for form constructors. I think there should be common grounds on effective teaching between educationalists and students.

2.6 Summary

This chapter gave the reader a clear idea about the context of the study. I first talked about the profile of the UAE in which the main features of the UAE country were presented. Then I talked about education in the UAE and mentioned that modern education in this country is new; it is the discovery of oil and the availability of funds that boosted the modern educational systems. Hundreds of public and private schools have been established in the
last thirty years. As for higher education, several modern universities and colleges were established.

After that, I discussed the English language status in the UAE; it is the second important language in the country. English has become a very important language in the UAE in the light of discovering oil and the big multinational manpower in the country and the fast growth of education and economy in the UAE. The UAE universities and colleges under investigation have established their own IEPs so that they can meet the increasing demand of learning English. They have hired a lot of qualified and experienced teachers to teach English in their IEPs. They are contract teachers and their continuity is decided in the light of their performance evaluation which consists of self evaluation, classroom observation and student evaluation. Although students’ perceptions on effective teaching is important for both teachers and IEPs, the tools constructed to collect students feedback on effective teaching were developed by practitioners and/or adapted from other sources.

In the next chapter I am going to discuss the perspectives of the main learning theories and there implications for effective EFL teachers.
Chapter Three

Teacher Effectiveness

3.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature pertinent to this study. It is organized into five categories of research: (1) teacher effectiveness research in general education; (2) teacher effectiveness research in FL teaching; (3) models of teacher evaluation; (4) EFL teacher evaluation in the UAE and (5) defining effective FL teaching.

3.2 Teacher Effectiveness Research in General Education

This study investigates the perceptions of Arab students of effective EFL teachers; it aims at identifying the characteristics and teaching behaviours of effective teachers as perceived by students. Whether or not these qualities and practices represent actual teaching effectiveness is however hugely problematic; that is the perceptions of the respondents of this study may not necessarily be an accurate reflection of the behaviours of their teachers. In fact, as we are going to see in the following sections, there is no consensus on the characteristics and behaviours of effective teaching. However, one of the important steps toward understanding what is meant by effective teaching must be by investigating the perceptions of students who are the ‘clients’ whose learning is influenced as a result of the teaching quality. The perceptions of other people like teachers and supervisors are also important in helping to understand what actual teaching effectiveness is. The characteristics of teachers perceived effective in many cases might represent actual effective teaching objectively, but in some
cases they might be subjective and far from reality. I believe that effective teaching may be mainly derived from the perceptions of effective teaching. This could happen when the perceptions of all people involved in the teaching and learning process are investigated through a number of empirical studies that reach a high degree of consensus. In fact, it is not only the people who are involved directly or indirectly in this teaching process decide what makes teachers effective. There are also many other factors that can influence the perceptions of effective teaching such as the cultural, social, political, age, gender, physical settings of schools and classrooms factors.

The improving of learning outcomes is an important goal that teachers and educational institutions want to achieve. Research indicates that effective teaching is one of the factors that influence the quality of learning (Perkins & Solomon, 1989). However, in order for practitioners and institutions to be able to invest in effective teaching so that they can improve the learning of their students, they should first know what effective teaching means for them. The following phenomena may be indicators of effective teaching: achieving good exam marks; getting good feedback from students on the performance of their teachers; getting good feedback from the supervisors who evaluate the teaching of their teachers; how things are taught; what is taught. What is considered to be effective for a student at a certain age may not be suitable for another at a different age. Effective teaching is not necessarily the same for good and less capable students. What is effective in a certain location or culture may not be considered the same for another. Effective teaching could be all of the above or some of the above. What effective teaching is and who decides if teaching is effective or not are important questions that educationalists and learning theorists (as we saw in chapter 4) have been always trying to answer; however, there is no consensus on it among them as we are going to see in this chapter.
In order to increase the effectiveness of teachers, it has been suggested that teaching is research based. Muijs & Reynolds (2001) write, “… teaching needs to be firmly research based, as only this approach will maximize the effectiveness of all teachers and the learning and development of all learners.” One field of research has concentrated on identifying the characteristics of effective teachers. Most researchers agree that several core teaching behaviours must be evident if teaching is to be considered effective (Doyle, 1975; Dunkin & Biddle, 1974; Murray, 1991; Rosenshine & Furst, 1971). In the same sense, Richards (2001) emphasized the importance of ongoing research into effective teaching: “… the investigation of effective teaching and learning strategies is a central and ongoing component of the process of teaching. This is the core of a process-oriented methodology of teaching.”

Hamachek (1969) reviewed the available literature about the characteristics of good teachers. In early studies (Hamachek, 1969) ‘effective teachers’ and ‘good teachers’ are synonymous. Hamachek listed several personal characteristics of good teachers: a sense of humour, a personal style in communicating, sense of fairness, empathy, the ability to relate students one-to-one or in a group, and always being respectful of their students' point of view. Walter (1990) concluded that humour in the classroom can provide relief to both teachers and students during what frequently is very stressful experience.

McCabe (1995) examined the preferences of students regarding the teaching characteristics of their teachers. McCabe used structured interviews to obtain the responses of 12 high school students regarding the characteristics of the teachers that they liked the best. According to the students, the best-liked and most effective teachers commonly utilized humour. They were lively in their interactions with students and their presentation of content and they engaged in a variety of instructional techniques.

Bergman and Gaitskill (1990) studied the teacher characteristics believed to be most important to nursing students. The findings of their study led the authors to conclude that the
interpersonal skills of the teacher (i.e., instructor-student relationships, genuine interest in patients, and patient care) are highly important to their clinical relationships with students. According to Noddings (1992) classrooms need to provide family-like support to students. Noddings asserts that those teachers governed by the ethic of caring take the time to know students, often interacting with their students beyond the limits of the classroom and continually manifesting high expectations of their students' capabilities and performances. Rogers and Webb (1991) agree with Noddings (1992) that an ethic of caring is fundamental to effective teaching. As part of the caring study, the authors conducted interviews with and observations of elementary teachers and students. The study findings support the authors' belief that caring should be a central concern of teacher education.

Wong and Wong (1991) indicated that there are basically three characteristics of an effective teacher: an effective teacher has positive expectations for student success, an effective teacher is an extremely good classroom manager and an effective teacher knows how to design lessons for student mastery. According to Page (1992), one way that teachers can increase their effectiveness is by engaging and encouraging dialogue in the classroom. Lower achieving students do not get many opportunities to express themselves or to share their opinions and feedback. Another way of improving instruction and maximizing student achievement is that teachers should try to get to know their students on a human level by asking questions about students' outside interests, families, and other areas outside the classroom. A third way proposed by Page was that teachers need to replace heavy-handed control with more ambiguity and freedom. Too much control may have the opposite effect. Instead of concentrating on being authority figures, teachers should approach classroom management as a process of establishing and maintaining an effective learning environment (Gettinger, 1988; Jones, 1996; McCaslin & Good, 1992). Good and Brophy (2001) stated,
“Teachers are authority figures and need to require their students to conform to certain rules and procedures. However, these rules and procedures are not ends in themselves but are means for organizing the classroom to support teaching and learning. Thus, classroom management should be designed to support instruction and to help students to gain in capacity for self-control” (p. 123).

Teaching is an interpersonal endeavor; in order to build better relationships with students and colleagues, Reissman (1999) suggests that the teacher should (a) take time to ask about extracurricular/non-school related interests and hobbies, (b) compliment others on what they do well, (c) offer assistance to new students and teachers, (d) share ideas and opinions with students and colleagues, and (e) spend time socializing with students and colleagues to get to know them on another level. According to Collinson (1999) interpersonal skills go beyond simple social skills to include empathy, trust, respect, tolerance, honesty, and political awareness. She asserted that teacher education programs teach preservice teachers how to communicate and collaborate with children but not adults. According to Tobin and Fraser (1991) exemplary teachers develop and maintain a supportive, respectful, and non-threatening classroom environment providing "safety nets" for their students.

Johnson and Roellke (1999) surveyed a group of secondary school teachers and undergraduate education faculty members investigating perspectives of qualities of effective teachers. Their findings showed that communication skills of teachers and attributes such as poise and enthusiasm were reported as significant criteria for effective teaching. Communication skills consist of interpersonal communication skills and oral communication skills. Attributes consist of poise and enthusiasm. Johnson and Roellke indicated that teacher education programs focus on teaching methods and not on other important areas such as communication and personal attributes.

Medley (1979) found in an analysis of 289 empirical studies that effective and ineffective teachers differ on a large number of actual classroom behaviours in three main areas:
maintenance of the learning environment, use of student time, and method of instruction. Murray (1991) provides a review of studies on teaching effectiveness at the college-and university-levels. Three dimensions of teaching behaviour have consistently emerged as strong predictors of instructional outcomes: enthusiasm/expressiveness, clarity of explanation, and rapport/interaction. Guskey and Easton (1983) investigated the characteristics and behaviours of effective teachers. A sample of 28 professors who were deemed to be effective was selected from six colleges. They found that effective teachers: (a) spend considerable time planning and organizing their courses, objectives and criteria; (b) express a positive regard for students; (c) encourage student involvement throughout lectures and in group discussions; and (d) provide students regular feedback on their learning progress.

In a thorough review of teacher effectiveness research Rosenshine and Furst (1971) found that effective and ineffective teachers could be distinguished on the basis of ten variables: (a) clarity of presentation; (b) enthusiasm; (c) variety of activities during the lesson; (d) task-oriented and business-like behaviours in the classroom; (e) the amount of content covered by class; (f) teachers’ acknowledgement and encouragement of students’ ideas during discussion; (g) criticism of students (negatively related to achievement); (h) use of structuring comments at the start of and during lesson; (i) use of various types of questions; (j) probing of students’ responses by the teacher.

In a comprehensive survey on the research on effective schooling, Blum (1984) (cited in Richards, 2001, p. 169) summarizes effective teaching practices as follows:

a) preplanned curriculum is to guide classroom instruction;
b) teachers should have high expectations for student learning;
c) teachers should carefully orient students to lessons;
d) teachers should give clear and focused instruction;
e) teachers should monitor learning progress of their students;
f) teachers should teach again when students don’t understand;
g) there should be smooth classroom routine;
h) the groups formed in the classroom should fit instructional needs;
i) class time should be used for learning;
j) standards for classroom behaviour should be high;
k) teachers should have positive personal interactions with students;
l) teachers should use incentives and rewards for students to promote excellence.

Ramsden (1992) conducted a qualitative analysis of research studies on effective teaching. He identified six key principles of effective teaching at a university level from the teacher’s perspective:

a) explains things clearly;
b) gives appropriate assessment and feedback;
c) encourages independence and active engagement;
d) is willing to set clear goals and intellectual challenge;
e) is respectful for students;
f) is willing to learn from students.

Patrick & Smart (1998) conducted a study that aimed at clarifying the nature of teacher effectiveness and developing a measure for evaluating teacher effectiveness. They conducted the study in two phases. In the first phase 148 undergraduate students were asked to identify the characteristics of effective teachers. In the second phase a meta-inventory was formed from a combination of items generated from students in the qualitative phase and quantitative items selected from existing instruments intended to measure effective teaching. This
inventory which consisted of 72 statements was administered on 266 undergraduate psychology students. The students were asked to think of a teacher whom they found to be most effective from any stage in their education. With this teacher in mind, they were asked to rate each of the 72 items using a 5-point Likert scale. Using SPSS software, factor analysis revealed that teacher effectiveness is multi-dimensional in nature, comprising three factors: (1) respect for students, (2) ability to challenge students and (3) organisation and presentation skills.

Verner (2000) conducted a qualitative study in which she investigated the qualities of effective teaching from the perspective of 17 teachers identified as outstanding and effective based on criteria used by the Illinois State Board of Education. Formal open-ended interviews were used to secure information about the participating teachers and their classroom teaching behaviour. Six themes were developed through analyses of all the data. The participants:

a) have a passion for teaching;
b) provide support for their students during their learning process;
c) emphasize positive interpersonal dynamics in their classrooms;
d) are available to their students;
e) routinely participate in a variety of activities beyond classroom;
f) use humour in their interactions with students.

Ruddell (1997) and Pilgreen (2000) suggested that to improve student comprehension, to increase literacy abilities, and to increase student achievement, teachers should limit lecture time, use technology in the classroom, use cooperative learning, incorporate sustained silent reading into the daily schedule, and use a variety of instructional methods. Berliner (1986) indicates that flexibility is a component of teaching effectiveness and suggests that the ability
to quickly assess situations and respond appropriately contribute to expert teachers’ flexibility. The following table summarizes all the teaching behaviours and characteristics of effective teachers that I found in the studies I reviewed above.

**Table 3.1: A summary of the reviewed studies on effective teaching in general education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Kind of Study</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Methods of Research</th>
<th>Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hamachek</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>review studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medley</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>review studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blum</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>review studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murray</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>review studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramsden</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>review studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berliner</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gettinger</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walter</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobin and Fraser</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wong and Wong</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCaslin &amp; Good</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noddings</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruddell</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collinson</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reissman</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilgreen</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good and Brophy</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>theoretical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenshine and Furst</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>empirical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gusky and Easton</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>empirical</td>
<td>28 professors</td>
<td></td>
<td>university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bergman &amp; Gaitskill</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>empirical</td>
<td>nursing students</td>
<td></td>
<td>nursing college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rogers and Webb</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>empirical</td>
<td>elementary teachers and students</td>
<td>interview and classroom observation</td>
<td>elementary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCabe</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>empirical</td>
<td>12 high school students and undergraduate faculty members</td>
<td>structured interview</td>
<td>High school and education college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick &amp; Smart</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>empirical</td>
<td>Phase 1: 148 undergraduate psychology students Phase 2: 266 undergraduate psychology students</td>
<td>Phase 1: open Question Phase 2: quantitative questionnaire</td>
<td>Griffith University, Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson &amp; Roellke</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>empirical</td>
<td>secondary school students</td>
<td></td>
<td>secondary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verner</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>empirical</td>
<td>17 school teachers</td>
<td>open-ended interview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.1 shows a mixture of theoretical, empirical and review studies. Two empirical ones used single research method for collecting data while the other two used two research methods. One study only used two qualitative methods (interviews and observations) for collecting data. The dominant research method used in these studies was interviews. However, none of the above reviewed studies investigated the perceptions of students at a university level using interviews as a major tool of data collection. As we are going to see in chapter five, the interview is a very convenient tool of data collection when the research investigates the perceptions of people. This is what I am going to do in this study; I am going to conduct face to face interviews with university students and try to investigate their perceptions of effective teachers’ characteristics from them directly. In addition, Table 3.1 contains a list of studies that investigated the perceptions of different subjects: school learners, university learners, school teachers and university teachers. Two out of six studies investigated the perceptions of university students of effective teaching. It is noticeable that none of these studies was conducted in an Arabic context. The reviewed studies in this table were conducted in the period between 1969 and 2001 which is longer than the period of time in which the reviewed FL studies were conducted in the section below. Table 3.2 summarizes the findings of these studies.

Table 3.2 Teaching behaviours and characteristics of effective teachers found in the reviewed general education empirical and theoretical studies

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>is respectful to students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>explains things clearly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>interacts with their students beyond the limits of the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>has interpersonal skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>has a sense of humour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>replaces heavy-handed control with more ambiguity and freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>uses a variety of instructional methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>encourages student involvement throughout lectures and in group discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>manifests high expectations of their students’ capabilities and performances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>has enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>limits lecture time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>develops a non-threatening/learning classroom environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>is a good classroom manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>uses class time for learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>uses technology in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>uses cooperative learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>incorporates sustained silent reading into the daily schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>provides support for their students during their learning process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>plans and organizes his/her courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>has empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>uses incentives and rewards for students to promote excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>has a personal style in communicating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>has sense of fairness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>uses a variety of activities during the lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>is task-oriented and business-like behaviours in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>acknowledges and encourages students’ ideas during discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>uses various types of questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>probes of students’ responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>avoids criticizing students’ achievement negatively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>uses of structuring comments at the start and during the lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Provides students regular feedback on the learning progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>teaches again when students don’t understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>monitors learning progress of their students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>has smooth classroom routine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>maintains high standards for classroom behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>orients students to lessons carefully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>is flexible (the ability to quickly assess situations and respond appropriately)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>cares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>knows how to design lessons for student mastery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>encourages dialogue in the classroom so that lower students can get more opportunities to express themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Providing family-like support to students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>gives appropriate assessment and feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.2: (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>encourages independence and active engagement</td>
<td>(Ramsden, 1992)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>is willing to set clear goals and intellectual challenge</td>
<td>(Ramsden, 1992)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45.</td>
<td>is willing to learn from students</td>
<td>(Ramsden, 1992)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>is lively in his/her interactions with students and his/her presentation of content</td>
<td>(McCabe, 1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47.</td>
<td>has the ability to challenge students</td>
<td>(Patrick &amp; Smart, 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.</td>
<td>shares ideas and opinions with students and colleagues</td>
<td>(Reissman, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49.</td>
<td>shows trust</td>
<td>(Collinson, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.</td>
<td>shows honesty</td>
<td>(Collinson, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51.</td>
<td>shows political awareness</td>
<td>(Collinson, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52.</td>
<td>shows tolerance</td>
<td>(Collinson, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53.</td>
<td>has oral communication skills</td>
<td>(Johnson and Roellke, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54.</td>
<td>has a passion for teaching</td>
<td>(Verner, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55.</td>
<td>is available to their students</td>
<td>(Verner, 2000)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2 contains a wide variety of teaching practices and teachers’ characteristics found in the FLT studies reviewed above. It is noticeable that there is no consensus among these studies on what makes teachers effective. However, the table shows that some qualities were identified in more than one study:

a) is respectful to students;
b) explains things clearly;
c) interacts with their students beyond the limits of the classroom;
d) has interpersonal skills;
e) has a sense of humour;
f) replaces heavy-handed control with more ambiguity and freedom;
g) uses a variety of instructional methods;
h) encourages student involvement throughout lectures and in group discussions has empathy;
i) manifests high expectations of their students' capabilities and performances;
j) has enthusiasm;
k) limits lecture time;
l) develops a non-threatening/learning classroom environment;
m) is a good classroom manager;
n) uses class time for learning;
o) uses technology in the classroom;
p) uses cooperative learning;
q) incorporates sustained silent reading into the daily schedule;
r) provides support for their students during their learning process;
s) plans and organizes his/her courses, objectives and criteria;
t) has empathy;
u) uses incentives and rewards for students to promote excellence.

About 49% of the identified items were mentioned for more than one time in more than one study, while 61% of the items were mentioned for one time by one of the reviewed studies. This could be as a result of using different research methods and scales in investigating this topic. This also could mean that more research on effective teaching is needed so that we can validate those items that describe effective teachers from among a very long list of characteristics and teaching practices.

3.3 Teacher Effectiveness Research in FL Teaching

Predictably, there is not as much research on discipline-specific teacher effectiveness as on effective teaching in general education. In this section, I am not referring exclusively to the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL); I am referring to the teaching of foreign languages generally (FL); these include English which is taught in the UAE as a foreign language. Since this study aims at identifying the characteristics of effective FL teachers, it
is necessary to examine discipline-specific research on teacher effectiveness FL teaching, where this is available.

An empirical study by Brosh (1996) identified the characteristics of effective FL teachers from the perspective of FL teachers and students. Two hundred FL teachers of English, French, Arabic and Hebrew and 406 ninth grade high school students from ten schools participated in the study. Data were collected using questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire items were drawn from the literature and a pilot questionnaire asking students and teachers to select from the list the most important three characteristics. Interviews were conducted with few respondents to better understand questionnaire responses. The results show that there is a high degree of agreement between the perceptions of teachers and students. Both teachers and students agreed that the command of subject matter (the teacher’s mastery of the FL) was the most important characteristic. They also agreed that the second most important characteristic was the teacher’s ability to transmit knowledge in a way that is easy to understand. However, students differ from teachers for the third priority by emphasizing the importance of treating students fairly and equally and the teacher’s availability after class time; on the other hand, teachers highlighted the importance of providing students with experiences of success.

In his research study Berlin (2000) investigates the perceptions of effective English teachers of 47 international students in an EFL program at the University of Arizona; He interviewed them and then asked them to complete a qualitative questionnaire. These themes are from the voices of the students:

a) individual differences: the effective teachers of English should take into consideration the individual differences of learners in English classes;

b) real world/diversity: students affirm the need for English teachers to make connections to the real world;
c) student-teacher relationship: mutual respect, meeting students’ expectations regarding their personal and professional interactions and making connections to the external world the students find themselves in;

d) humour: an essential element in the repertoire of the effective English teacher;

e) love: students recognized the importance of love and suggested that it has a connection to learning.

Hubbard (2001) investigated 101 students’ perceptions of effective teaching; the participants are from six classes of eleventh grade English students in public schools in Alabama. Open-ended questions were used for collecting data; they yielded responses in two broad categories: the affective/emotional characteristics of effective teachers and the behavioural characteristics of effective teachers. In the affective category, participants indicated that effective teachers should be funny, friendly, caring, helpful, nice, respectful, interesting, understanding, patient, easygoing, willing to compromise and have good personality. In the behaviour category, participants indicated that effective teachers should enjoy teaching, be dependable, take time to explain things, be strict but fair, be intellectual and smart, listen to students, be organized and prepared, use a variety of teaching methods and activities, teach at students’ level and pace, and be good communicators.

Reber (2001) conducted a quantitative study in which she investigated the teaching behaviours and attitudes of effective teachers as perceived by foreign language teachers. A quantitative questionnaire of 80 items was used to collect the data, 457 post-secondary FL teachers of Spanish, French, and German completed this questionnaire. The results indicated that the twelve items that yielded the highest agreement are:

a) the effective FL teacher shows personal involvement in or enthusiasm for TL and culture;
the effective FL teacher bases at least some parts of students’ grades on their actual use of the TL;

c) the effective FL teacher uses the TL competently;

d) the effective FL teacher frequently uses authentic materials to illustrate features of the TL and culture;

e) the effective FL teacher uses small groups to help learners experience a greater degree of involvement;

f) the teacher adjusts learning activities to meet the needs of FL students with a variety of interests;

g) the effective FL teacher uses the TL as the predominant means of classroom communication;

h) the effective FL teacher provides learners with concrete tasks to complete while reading or listening to texts in the TL;

i) the effective FL teacher teaches idiomatic expressions and language routines to help learners successfully engage in conversations in the TL;

j) the effective FL teacher gives learners a time limit to complete small group activities;

k) the effective FL teacher provides opportunities for students to use the TL both within and beyond the school setting;

l) in general, teachers who responded to the questionnaire agreed that interaction with native speakers is beneficial for FL learners.

Murdoch (1997) conducted a quantitative study in which he investigated the qualities of good teachers of English as perceived by two groups of experienced teaching professionals working in the UAE: the first group comprised 22 Ministry of Education school supervisors;
the second group comprised 15 teachers, teaching on the three-level English program for all students entering the UAE University. An extensive quantitative questionnaire of 56 items based on an inventory of skills, behaviours and attitudes which were collected from a different resources – teacher observation forms; teacher assessment forms; teacher training syllabi, etc. This study highlighted the following key features of good classroom practice:

a) presents a varied package of language activities;
b) uses different approaches/techniques for presenting language items;
c) contextualizes language work in relation to students’ interests;
d) provides ‘space’ for students to interact and ask/answer questions;
e) plans carefully and flexibly;
f) develops a culture of student responsibility for language learning.

While the above study investigated the views of experienced professionals (supervisors and teachers) of effective EFL teachers, the study of Saafin (1999) identified the characteristics of the effective EFL teacher as perceived by Arab tertiary students attending an intensive English program at the University of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates. One hundred and thirty six freshman students were asked to record the qualities of effective teachers. After that 10 participants were selected for unstructured interviews in order to obtain more in-depth information. The analysis revealed that the effective teacher qualities comprise two major dimensions of effective teaching: interpersonal rapport with students and teaching and organization skills. With regard to the interpersonal rapport with students, participants said that the effective teacher should treat students with respect; have a sense of humour; advise students in academic and personal matters; permit students to freely express their opinions and ask questions; be understanding, develop a friendly relationship with students; perform duties faithfully; be fair; be flexible; be a role model; care for students; be patient and have
amiable countenance. With regard to the teaching and organization skills participants said that the teacher should provide understandable explanations; use a variety of teaching methods; be knowledgeable about her/his subject; check for understanding and explain again if necessary; give reasonable homework and examinations regularly; understand students in terms of their abilities and the difficulties they face; go beyond the curriculum and gives additional information. Table 3.3 below summarizes the reviewed studies on foreign language teaching.

### Table 3.3: A summary of the reviewed studies on FL effective teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Kind of Study</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Methods of Research</th>
<th>Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Brosh</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>empirical</td>
<td>200 FL teachers of English, French, Arabic and Hebrew ninth grade high school students</td>
<td>quantitative questionnaire and interview</td>
<td>schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Murdoch</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>empirical</td>
<td>22 Ministry of Education school supervisors and 15 school teachers</td>
<td>quantitative questionnaire</td>
<td>schools in the UAE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Saafin</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>empirical</td>
<td>One hundred and thirty six Arab freshman students in Phase 1 and 10 in Phase 2</td>
<td>qualitative questionnaire and interview</td>
<td>university in the UAE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Berlin</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>empirical</td>
<td>47 international students in an EFL program</td>
<td>Interview and qualitative questionnaire</td>
<td>university in the USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Reber</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>empirical</td>
<td>457 post-secondary FL teachers of Spanish, French, and German</td>
<td>quantitative questionnaire</td>
<td>Universities in the USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Hubbard</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>empirical</td>
<td>101 eleventh grade students</td>
<td>qualitative questionnaire</td>
<td>schools in the USA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the reviewed studies in Table 3.3 are empirical. However, they did not follow the same research methods. Some of them used quantitative methods while others used qualitative methods; while some also used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The interview questions as well as the quantitative questionnaire items used in these studies were not the same. I think that this is one of the important reasons why the results of these studies are mostly different from each other. As a result, the findings of these studies reflected a lot of variations in the perceptions of the subjects of these studies. Table 3.3 also shows that all the reviewed studies were recent; they were conducted in the last 9 years. Two studies out of
six were conducted in an Arabic context; they are the only two studies I found among the studies I reviewed in this chapter. Another observation is that three of the studies were conducted at school settings, whereas the other three studies were conducted at university settings. The table contains more studies that depended on learners’ perceptions of effective teaching. Three of these studies investigated the students’ perceptions of effective teaching, while two others investigated the perceptions of teachers and professionals. One study investigated the perceptions of both students and teachers. This means that I will be able to discuss the results of my study, which investigates the perceptions of learners as well, in relation to the findings of studies most of which depended on learners’ perceptions. The findings of these studies are summarized in Table 3.4 below.

Table 3.4 Teaching behaviours and characteristics of effective teachers found in the reviewed foreign language studies

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>has the ability of transmitting knowledge in a way that is easy to understand</td>
<td>(Brosh, 1996; Saafin, 1999; Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>uses different approaches/techniques for presenting language items</td>
<td>(Murdoch, 1997; Saafin, 1999; Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>shows respect</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999; Berlin, 2000; Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>develops a friendly relationship with students</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999; Berlin, 2000; Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>has a sense of humour</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999; Berlin, 2000; Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>is kind</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999; Berlin, 2000; Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>masters the foreign language</td>
<td>(Brosh, 1996; Saafin, 1999; Reber, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>cares for students</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999; Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>helps students on academic and personal matters</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999; Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>is understanding</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999; Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>is patient</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999; Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>is flexible/willing to compromise</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999; Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>is fair</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999; Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>is a good communicator</td>
<td>(Berlin, 2000; Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>teaches at students’ level and pace</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999; Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>presents a varied package of language activities</td>
<td>(Murdoch, 1997; Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>contextualizes language work in relation to students’ interests</td>
<td>(Murdoch, 1997; Reber, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>provides ‘space’ for students to interact and ask/answer questions</td>
<td>(Murdoch, 1997; Saafin, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>plans carefully and flexibly</td>
<td>(Murdoch, 1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>develops a culture of student responsibility for language learning</td>
<td>(Murdoch, 1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>is dedicated</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>is a role model</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>checks for understanding and explains again if necessary</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>gives homework and examinations regularly</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 3.4: (Continued)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>goes beyond the curriculum and gives additional information.</td>
<td>(Saafin, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>makes connection to the real world of students</td>
<td>(Berlin, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>takes into consideration the individual differences of learners</td>
<td>(Berlin, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>shows personal involvement in or enthusiasm for TL and culture</td>
<td>(Reber, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>uses authentic materials</td>
<td>(Reber, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>uses small groups</td>
<td>(Reber, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>uses the TL as the predominant means of classroom communication</td>
<td>(Reber, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>provides learners with concrete tasks to complete while reading or listening to texts in the TL</td>
<td>(Reber, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>teaches idiomatic expressions and language routines to help learners successfully engage in conversations in the TL</td>
<td>(Reber, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>provides opportunities for students to use the TL both within and beyond the school setting</td>
<td>(Reber, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>is organized and prepared</td>
<td>(Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>listens to students</td>
<td>(Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>enjoys teaching</td>
<td>(Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>is dependable</td>
<td>(Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>is interesting</td>
<td>(Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>has a good personality</td>
<td>(Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>is easy going</td>
<td>(Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>is intellectual and smart</td>
<td>(Hubbard, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>meet the needs of FL students with a variety of interests</td>
<td>(Reber, 2001)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.4 shows a list of 42 characteristics and practices of effective language teachers identified by the reviewed studies on effective FL teaching. Some of the items were identified by more than one study:

a) has the ability of transmitting knowledge in a way that is easy to understand;

b) uses different approaches/techniques for presenting language items;

c) shows respect;

d) develops a friendly relationship with students;

e) has a sense of humour;

f) is kind;

g) masters the foreign language;

h) cares for students;

i) helps students on academic and personal matters;
j) is understanding;
k) is patient;
l) is flexible/willing to compromise;
m) is fair;
n) is a good communicator;
o) teaches at students’ level and pace;
p) presents a varied package of language activities;
q) contextualizes language work in relation to students’ interests;
r) provides ‘space’ for students to interact and ask/answer questions.

About 42% of the identified items in table 3.4 were mentioned for more than one time in more than one study while about 58% of these items were mentioned for one time by one of the reviewed studies. It can be clearly seen that more than half of the items in both general education and foreign language research were identified for one time only. They were not validated by any other studies. In order to consider these items representative of effective teaching they should be identified by several studies. This would pave the way for being able to construct the correct classroom observation forms as well as student evaluation questionnaires.

Having an overall look at the Tables 3.2 and 3.4, I found the following set of teaching behaviours and qualities are shared between effective teaching in general education and effective FL teaching:

a) uses a variety of teaching approaches and techniques;
b) uses a variety of language activities;
c) enables students to work in groups;
d) meets students interests;
e) provides speaking opportunities/provide space for students to interact; and ask/answer questions;

f) plans/prepared;

g) helps/supportive;

h) interacts with students beyond the limits of the classroom;

i) is a good communicator/personal style of communicating;

j) enjoys teaching;

k) is respectful;

l) has a sense of humour;

m) establishes friendly relationship with students;

n) is fair;

o) cares for students;

p) shows enthusiasm;

q) is patient.

The findings of the reviewed studies show that there are two effective teaching qualities that appear to be peculiar to the UAE context. I noticed that although the characteristic ‘flexibility’ [مرونة] was identified in general education, international EFL and EFL in the UAE effectiveness research, I believe that meaning of this term in the UAE research is different. It does not mean teachers’ flexibility in for example implementing lesson plans or producing teaching materials. It means that EFL teachers should not be strict in implementing the rules and policies of the universities they work for. For example, a teacher is expected not to mark students late or absent when they come late or absent themselves from classes as long as the students have good reasons for that. Teachers are expected to give make up exams for those students who missed their exams for acceptable reasons.
Students expect this degree of flexibility from their teachers in spite of the fact that they are informed from day one that attendance excuses are not acceptable and that there is no make up for those students who absent themselves from classes. I think this perspective of flexibility is a cultural issue. In the Arab culture this kind of flexibility is common and may be desirable. Another characteristic that appeared only in the UAE EFL research was teachers’ ‘dedication’ [الاخلاص] in teaching. Dedication in any job is an important Islamic value in the UAE and Arab community. This term means that people do what they are supposed to do. When students say that teachers should be dedicated, they mean that they are expected to do their best in teaching their students and helping them to learn. Those teachers who waste the class time and do not exert enough effort to help learners are perceived by them as people who are not dedicated and do not do their job.

In the light of the literature reviewed above, we can see that although there is little consensus on what makes a teacher effective, there are some qualities that are identified more frequently than others such as clarity of teaching, humour and classroom management. This might indicate that these qualities appear to be universal and not confined to a certain setting.

The above sections also show that there is a little research on effective EFL teaching in the UAE at a university level. Therefore, there is a need for an empirical study that investigates the perceptions of Arab students of the qualities of effective EFL teachers in the UAE.

The differences in the findings of the reviewed studies in general education as well as in FL teaching show that there is no consensus on what makes teachers effective; therefore, there is no definition of effective teaching that is acceptable by all or most of educationalists and practitioners. I believe that research on effective teaching is necessary; it is the major source of information that helps us to understand effective teaching. Muijs and Reynolds (2001) stated that.
“The view that teaching is purely an art and can never be a science is clearly no longer tenable, as our knowledge on what makes for effective teaching becomes ever larger. …teaching needs to be firmly research based, as only this approach will maximize the effectiveness of all teachers and the learning and development of all learners” (p.211).

As for the current study, I expect that the findings will help to shed light on what makes teachers effective. I should mention here that the study I did on effective teaching in 1999 will be very useful because it was conducted under similar conditions and used similar research methods. If the results of the current research are strongly supported by the results of the 1999 study, my claim then regarding the possibility of identifying what makes effective teaching is more tangible.

3.4 Models of Teacher Evaluation

Teacher evaluation measures the quality of teaching. This is not an easy task because, as we have seen above, there is no consensus on what exactly makes teaching effective. Researchers have emphasized that in order to be able to measure the quality of teaching, effective teaching behaviours must be (a) identifiable, (b) stable, and (c) reasonably consistent across contexts (Andrew & Barnes, 1990, p. 572). In the past, teachers were evaluated by means of paper-and-pencil tests that mainly evaluate teachers’ knowledge, but they rarely predict whether or not teachers will be able to demonstrate their knowledge in their teaching performance (Hammadou, 1994). Over the past few decades teacher evaluation fluctuated between teachers’ knowledge of the subjects they teach and their knowledge of the classrooms and learners (Shulman, 1986b). With the appearance of research into effective teaching, models for evaluating effective teaching were necessary to
provide teachers with feedback and therefore several models of teacher evaluation exist in teacher education (Teresa, 2001).

According to Teresa, (2001), over the past two or three decades, research in teacher evaluation has received increased attention. Several criteria have been used in evaluating teachers; many of the criteria and procedures used to evaluate teaching are applicable across disciplines, and models of FL teacher evaluation are usually based on models of evaluation used in teacher evaluation in general and in student teacher training (Jarvis, 1968; Wragg, 1970; Moskowitz, 1976; Gebhard, Gaitan, & Oprandy, 1990). Millman (1981a) notes the following reasons teaching is evaluated: to improve teacher performance, to meet state and institutional directives, to promote research on teaching, and to assist in selecting instructors (p. 13).

As mentioned above, one of the original teacher evaluation techniques was done by means of written tests and/or classroom observations; however, these tests could rarely predict future teaching performance of teachers because they assess only the teachers’ knowledge on the subjects they teach. Another model was introduced by Haefele (1981) who suggests teacher appraisal interviews as an effective component of teacher evaluation. Here, an evaluator advises a teacher regarding improving teaching and recognizes effective teaching. Student achievement has also been proposed as a measure of effective teaching (Millman, 1981b). In considering student achievement, it is important to keep in mind that some factors can influence student achievement in addition to the teacher’s performance. These factors include the way achievement is measured as well as individual student differences.

One of the common approaches to evaluating teaching is classroom observation. Sheal (1989) and Evertson and Holley (1981) discuss the importance of training classroom observers and of selecting an appropriate and valid observation form. Sheal notes that much of the teacher observation that goes on is unsystematic and subjective. Observers are not
always trained in observation or the use of systematic observation forms, and as a result, observers tend to use themselves as a standard, and their observations are often impressionistic rather than supported by data. The purposes of observation forms are to increase observer objectivity and to increase consistency among observers.

Over 200 instruments have been developed for describing classroom behaviours as well as classroom settings (Allwright, 1988; Borich & Madden, 1977; Chaudron, 1988; Dunkin & Biddle, 1974; Flanders, 1970; Bellack, Kliebard, Hyman, & Smith, 1966; Wright & Nuthall, 1970). There are several types of observation forms: frequency tabulation (used to describe objectively teacher/student behaviours in the classroom); structured description (a descriptive narrative of what goes on in the classroom); a checklist (recording the presence or absence of certain types of behaviour as well as an attempt to provide comprehensive, systematic, and objective evaluation); and rating scales.

Another method of evaluating teaching is by means of student ratings of teaching (Aleamoni, 1981; Marsh & Dunkin, 1992; Murray & Renaud, 1995). One of the purposes of the ratings of students is to evaluate the performance of teachers so that the teaching quality can be improved. Student evaluation of teaching effectiveness has been used for a long time. Marsh (1987) notes that students' evaluation procedures were introduced at several major US universities in the 1920s. Measuring teaching effectiveness from the perspective of students has been increasingly used in different educational institutions as a major component in teacher evaluation (Waters, Kemp, & Pucci, 1988); and this trend is likely to continue in the light of increased emphasis on teaching quality (Feldman, 1997).

Student ratings of instruction are considered to be a valid measurement of teaching quality for three main reasons: (1) students are the main source of information about the accomplishment of education goals, the domains of rapport, degrees of communication, and problems between students and the teacher; (2) students (rather than an observer) are able to
evaluate the teacher, textbooks, homework, course content, method of instruction, level of student interest, and student attitude toward the course; (3) students can communicate anonymously with the teacher (based on Aleamon, 1981).

On the other hand, some teachers question the actual validity of students’ evaluations. It is questionable whether students can really judge the teachers and their teaching or not, given their lack of pedagogical training and possible desire to retaliate because of bad grade. It is worth considering that students may give good teaching a poor evaluation because it makes greater demands on them than more traditional forms. Aleamon (1981) cites several studies that look at reliability in student ratings and found that if instruments are used that reflect the institutional teaching goals, if the instrument is validated, and if the results are correctly interpreted and used, student ratings of instruction can be an integral part of teacher evaluation. Many researchers believe that students are capable of evaluating teachers’ performance and that their feedback can be useful in improving teaching effectiveness and developing the course content. Ramsden (1991) believes that students are an important source of information about teacher effectiveness, and they are capable of identifying effective teaching characteristics from their perspective.

Jackson et al. (1999) similarly believe that students are a convenient choice for raters, and their ‘candid reaction’ can be useful in refining teaching styles and course structures. Marsh (1987) also concludes that students are capable of distinguishing between effective teachers and bad teachers. He contends that student evaluations are the only indicator of teaching effectiveness whose validity has been thoroughly established. Marsh (1984) points out that although findings are sometimes contradictory, the weight of evidence indicates that students’ evaluation of a teacher’s performance is reasonably stable across items, raters and time period. From my own personal experience and my daily interaction with students, their
informal comments about effective teaching do indicate that they have the ability to identify some of the traits of effective teachers.

It is also of interest that although student ratings of instruction have been shown to be stable across items, raters, and time, they differ depending on academic discipline. Feldman (1978) and Cashin (1990) found that student ratings are highest for arts and humanities teachers and lowest for mathematics, science, and engineering teachers. The reasons for the differences in ratings have not yet been determined (Franklin & Theall, 1992; Murray & Renaud, 1995). Franklin and Theall (1992) conjectured that humanities teachers tend to stress “thought” goals more than “fact” goals and tend to use discussion and independent projects rather than lecturing. That student ratings of instruction vary according to discipline leads to the assumption that there are teaching behaviours specific to various disciplines and that all teachers behaviours found in teacher effectiveness research may not apply to every discipline.

Teachers, educational managers and students might have different views of what effective teaching is. Students play an important part in the teaching and learning process. They are the ones who interact directly and regularly with teachers in classrooms and they are the most negatively or positively affected people of bad or effective teaching. Since their opinions on the performance of teachers is taken into consideration in the evaluations carried out in the UAE, this study focuses only on the students’ conceptions of effective teaching regardless of whether or not practitioners or other stakeholders agree with their perceptions. Therefore, the source of the criteria for effectiveness addressed in this study is the qualities and practices of effective teachers that are rated by tertiary students. However there are of course limitations in not making use of teachers' views.

As can be seen from the review of different models to teacher evaluation, different forms of evaluation came from different perspectives. This section shows that there is little consensus
about how to evaluate teachers how best to assess whether a particular teacher has those characteristics.

3.5 EFL Teacher Evaluation in the UAE

EFL teachers in the UAE universities are mainly evaluated by their supervisors, their students and themselves. Supervisors visit teachers’ classroom and complete one of the observation forms (see Appendix A). The second part of teachers’ evaluation is that by the end of each semester, students are asked to complete a questionnaire in which they evaluate the effectiveness of their teachers (see Appendix B). It is made clear for the students in these questionnaires that the purpose of these questionnaires is to evaluate the effectiveness of the performance of teachers from the perspective of students. The third part is that teachers are invited to evaluate themselves; they mainly talk about their strengths, achievements, areas that they think the need to improve on and their goals for the following year (see section 2.5 in Chapter 2).

I review teacher evaluation methods because the core of these methods is based on effective teaching behaviours. Moreover, the second question in this research asks to what extent the qualities of effective teachers from the perspective of Arab students are addressed in the instructors' performance evaluation in the universities and colleges where the participants study. The students in the institutions where the current study was conducted are involved in evaluating teachers and the feedback collected from them is used for making important decisions regarding the continuity of teachers and their professional development plans. The important thing is whether or not the characteristics of effective teachers used in these evaluation forms match the perceptions of students of effective EFL teachers. Therefore, I
believe that identifying the characteristics of effective teaching is important not only for teacher training purposes, but also for teaching evaluation purposes.

### 3.6 Defining Effective Teaching

A great deal of research has investigated the characteristics of effective teaching. However, the nature of effective teaching is still unclear. The professional literature suggests little empirical evidence to help formulate a single definition of effective teaching (Aleamoni, 1981; Combs, 1989; Delamere, 1986; Doyle, 1977; Griffith, 1973; King, 1981; Medley, Coker, & Soar, 1984; Nerenz & Knop, 1982; Perry & Rog, 1992; Travers, 1981) – (cited in Teresa, 2001). Roberts (1998) indicates that there is a problem in defining good teaching, and points out that the literature on effective teaching suggests that there is no particular set of strategies or practices which can be claimed as effective. Patrick & Smart (1998: p. 165) state: “While many researchers have formulated working definitions of effective teaching, with a noticeable overlap in definitions, it is not certain that any one researcher has effectively tapped the whole domain of effective teaching.” Studies conducted on effective teaching have revealed some factors that are directly relevant to effective teaching but others that are more indirectly related. The different studies appear to give somewhat different results. Empirical studies show a discrepancy between the number of effective teaching factors and the nature of these factors and in consequence there is no consistency in the findings of these studies “Although students’ perceptions of instructional quality are generally agreed to be multidimensional in nature, less consensus has developed concerning the number and nature of the dimensions” (Jackson et al., 1999, p. 581). Gallagher (1994) and Nussbaum (1992) further argue that future research should aim to clarify the nature of effective teaching.
Hansen (1981) argues that educators and educational researchers have pursued the identification of teaching effectiveness for a long time arguing that such identification is not a simple thing. Like Hansen (1981) and others, Ornstein (1985) recognizes the difficulty in identifying the components of effective teaching. He argues that the presence of so many confounding variables, conflicting and ambiguous terminology, and disagreement about the effects the teacher is to produce in the classroom are all obstacles to the identification of effective teaching. Tuckman (1995) claims the lack of universal agreement about the characteristics of effective teaching is an obstacle in their identification. He believes that "…effective teachers are those teachers whose students learn and grow the most" (p.127). However, he did not identify the criteria for determining student learning and growth. Good (1979) described effective teaching as teaching that results in higher scores than expected on achievement tests.

Less research exists on attempting to define effective teaching in the FL field (Nerenz & Knop, 1982; Brosh, 1996). Several aspects of FL teaching are distinctly different from teaching in other disciplines. Brosh (1996) notes that FL teaching differs from the teaching of most other disciplines in that the “means of instruction is also the subject of instruction” (p.125).

Met (1994) defines effective FL teaching as follows:

“Effective foreign language instruction is holistic, performance oriented, and based on constructivist views of learning. It requires collaborative learning and practice, connects to other areas of the curriculum, and is enhanced through explicit instruction in metacognitive and cognitive learning strategies” (p. 87).

Another definition was given by Penner (1992) who said that effective FL teaching is “the ability of the teacher to adequately communicate to the student and the student’s ability an
opportunity to respond and demonstrate some competence in reproducing what he has learned by formulating in his own words the facts and concepts that now illuminate his mind” (p. 16). Eble, (1988); Harris, (1981) indicated that a teacher may be well qualified to teach; however, effective learning is not guaranteed. Thought, speech and manners are a reflection of a teacher’s personality and as a result teaching styles vary with the personality of each teacher. What is taken in by the learner may not depend on the content or skill but on the personality of the teacher or the nature of the personal relationship between the teacher and the learner.

Effective FL teaching has been a topic of discussion ever since FLs entered the school curriculum (Schulz, 1988). Various standards for effective FL teaching are used in different educational institutions. Some of the characteristics and practices that are considered effective are based on research in general education. Some other teaching behaviours and qualities that are specific for FL teaching are not always sufficiently described. This study aims at identifying the characteristics of effective teachers that are specific to FL teaching based on empirical qualitative research. We rely on professional consensus to know what constitutes good teaching and this study contributes to this consensus about what acceptable classroom teaching behaviour is.

3.7 Summary

This review of literature has examined several areas of research that have possible applications to effective teaching. In this Chapter I focused on five other categories in addition to the FL effective teaching. This wide range of categories, together with the theoretical perspectives on language learning and teaching reviewed in Chapter 4, helped in broadening the understanding of effective teaching and gave a bigger picture of it. The five categories I reviewed have a long list of effective teaching behaviours and characteristics.
As we have seen in this Chapter, some of these practices and qualities are of higher frequency rate than others. Although many researchers researched effective teaching, they did not reach a consensus on what makes a teacher effective. Many of the reviewed studies used different quantitative scales and ended up with different findings. It might be more appropriate to investigate effective teaching using qualitative research methods. I also believe that in order to be able to have a clear concept of effective teaching, a number of effective teaching studies using qualitative methods need to be conducted under similar research conditions. This may give researchers a better chance to investigate this problematic subject.
Chapter Four

Theoretical Perspectives on Language Learning and Teaching

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss three major themes. I will first consider four dominant theoretical perspectives that have been influential in language learning and teaching. I will highlight the implications of these theories for language learning and teaching. This theoretical background also sheds light on the evolution of common teaching methods that arose from different learning theories. Then I will talk about eight major language teaching approaches. I will also discuss the implications of these approaches for effective teaching as well as the shortcomings of these methods. Finally, I will talk about the implications of second language learning research for FL teachers. The conceptual framework provided in this chapter will assist in understanding, interpreting and making sense of the research findings related to the characteristics of effective English language teachers.

4.2 Theoretical Learning Perspectives

This section gives a brief overview of four dominant theoretical perspectives that have been influential in language learning and teaching: behaviourist, cognitive, humanistic and social constructivist theories. I will highlight the implications of these theories for the behaviours of effective English language teachers.

Teachers played different roles throughout these approaches. In the behaviourist approach, they play a central role in the whole teaching and learning process. They orchestrate all
learning activities and control their learners externally by encouraging and rewarding the desired behaviours and discouraging and punishing the unwanted behaviours. This role has changed in the other three approaches in which teachers collaborate more with their students in their learning. It becomes the responsibility of the learner in the cognitive approach to learn using their mental abilities. Teachers’ teach the rules that enable students generate their own sentences and create their own conversations. In the humanistic approach, it becomes the responsibility of the learners to identify their weaknesses and ask their teachers for consultations and assistance. It becomes a consultant-client relationship. The role the teacher has changed again in the social constructivism approach in which teachers play the role of a facilitator as well as a partner. They create the social context in which learners can interact with others and learn. Teachers are among those people with whom learners can interact. They are the learners’ partners in their learning process.

4.2.1 Behaviourist Perspective

Behaviourism is an approach to psychology in which learning is explained in terms of conditioning and association. A well known example is that of Pavlov who demonstrated with animals that a response (salivation) which is generated by one stimulus (food) could be produced by a second stimulus (bell) at the same time. This was known as stimulus-response theory or classical conditioning. Experiments with animals convinced researchers of the importance of the use of rewards and punishments to elicit the desired behaviours. These findings were tested with human beings and became influential in teaching and learning (Williams and Burden, 1997).

Skinner (1957) is the founder of modern behaviourism. He explained learning in terms of his idea of operant conditioning: an individual responds to a stimulus by behaving in a certain way. Whatever happens subsequently will affect the possibility that behaviour happen again.
Pleasurable consequences strengthen behaviours while unpleasant consequences weaken behaviours. In this way any behaviours could be gradually increased by reinforcing them. Reinforcement is very important in the learning process. It increases the likelihood of the desired behaviour occurring again and becoming a habit (Richards and Rodgers, 1986).

As far as language learning and teaching is concerned, this viewpoint implies that:

a) Learning is sequenced and hierarchical;
b) Learning occurs by accumulating bits of knowledge and therefore teachers should break down tasks into small steps so that students can be helped to understand;
c) Motivation is external and depends on positive reinforcements (Shepard, 2000).

The behaviourist approach perceives language learning as acquiring a set of reinforced mechanical habits (Brown, 1987). Richard and Rodgers (1986) said that as a result of the influence of behaviourism, a set of learning principles emerged and became the psychological foundations of audiolingualism:

a) Foreign language learning is a mechanical process of habit formation;
b) Analogy (generalization and discrimination) provides a better foundation for language learning than analysis. Drills help learners to form correct analogies;
c) Language is primarily speech not writing. Language is learned better if speech is presented before writing;
d) Speaking and listening are the most important language skills.

These principles link to behaviourism because they are based on the supposition that learning a language is like learning any other behaviour and therefore drilling and repeating language items and rewarding correct responses is the best way for learners to learn a language.
Audiolingualism has a number of shortcomings. The language learner is viewed as ‘a language-producing machine’ Ellis (1985); and language learning is seen the same as learning how to ride a bicycle or work a puzzle (Naremore & Robert, 1990). Learners are not engaged in analyzing the language; the cognitive process is not given enough emphasis. Learners can repeat the drills without attending to the meaning. There is no place for interaction and negotiation of meaning. There is a lot of emphasis on correct responses in audiolingualism which does not allow for learning from mistakes. Behaviourism was also strongly criticized for concentrating on observable behaviours and overlooking the mental processes that the learners bring to the task of learning. This made psychologists and language acquisition researchers move on to more learning theories that are more concerned with learners’ creativity (Lightbown and Spada, 1993). Noam Chomsky (1959) argued that applying technical terms like ‘reinforcement’ or operant response’ to language acquisition was meaningless. He believed that the mind has a key role in learning. He believed that children’s minds are not blank slates to be filled as a result of imitating language structures, but that they possess innate ability known as Language Acquisition Device. He believed that children are biologically programmed for language learning and that language develops in children in a similar way to walking or any other biological functions. He also believed that children learn far more about L1 structures than they would be ever expected to learn based only on the input they received from those around them. His rejection of behaviourist language acquisition theory marked a shift from behaviourism to cognitivism. This means that teachers can not be effective if they just deal with language as a group of behaviours that are acquired in a mechanical manner and can be used in specific situations. Language can not be extracted into a number of behaviours that are shaped for certain situations. Effective teachers are to involve the mental abilities of learners and enable them to create the language they need to communicate with others in different situations.
4.2.2 Cognitive Perspective

In contrast to behaviourism, the cognitive approach was concerned with the mental processes used by learners. It emphasized the role of the learner and his/her mental processes involved in learning. Factors such as brain, perception, memory, personality and motivation were seen as essential in learning behaviour. According to Williams and Burden (1997) one of the approaches to of cognitive psychology is information processing. In information processing cognitivists are concerned with the way learners take in information, process it and act according to it. One of the human functions that became the focus of the work of information processing was attention which affected learning. The ability to pay attention is different from one age to another and from one person to another. Also, the amount of attention needed for tasks is different from one task to another depending on the degree of learners’ familiarity with the task. The implication of this for language teachers is that they have to take into consideration that full attention is needed when introducing a new lesson or material that students are not familiar, while less attention is needed in doing or practising things that they are already familiar with. Also, they should take into consideration the relationship between the age and the ability of learners to pay attention. For example, the older learners are the more focusing ability they have (Williams and Burden, 1997).

Another area that the cognitive approach paid attention to was memory. One of the successful applications of memory was using the ‘linkword’ method. This technique involves relating words from the first and second languages to help learners construct a picture in their minds and remember these words (Williams and Burden, 1997). Another strategy for teachers to help their students memorize information is what Ausubel (1968) calls ‘advance organizers’. The teacher relates new learning to what learners already learned. This technique is especially useful when teachers introduce new topics or ideas. However, ‘advance organizers’ work best for less able learners and may hamper the more able learners.
The language teacher should provide incentives to help learners memorize and retrieve information (Brown, 1987).

In the light of the criticism of information processing approaches, the concept of constructivism was introduced in the cognitive approach. It is concerned with the ways individuals make sense of their own world. However, it does not consider the social context which, as we are going to see, is considered very important in social constructivism. Piaget’s work on child development, in which he emphasized the constructive aspect of learning, originated the constructivist approach (Roberts, 1998). People are from birth involved in constructing their own personal meanings from their experiences. He was interested in the way people learn things from childhood to adulthood. His theory is based on learners passing through a series of stages in which they make sense of the experiences in different stages of their lives. Children can develop cognitive representations of their experience through exploring their environment (Savage, 1998). There are two processes that underlie the cognitive development of children: assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation involves modifying incoming information in children’s minds so that they can fit it in with what they already know about the world. In contrast, accommodation involves modifying what they already know to include new information (Ellis, 1986).

One of the criticisms made of the cognitive approach is that it minimized the role of the language teacher in the classroom which is providing suitable input to help learning take place. Another criticism is that it put a lot of emphasis on individual development and overlooked the social context in which learning takes place (Williams and Burden, 1997). It deals with learners without taking into consideration the environment in which they live in. It also overlooks the individual differences between learners.

Williams and Burden (1997) and Wong-Fillmore (1995) identified several implications of the cognitive psychology for language teaching methodology. First, in a cognitive approach, the
learner is considered as an active participant who is involved in the learning process of the target language using different mental strategies and in accordance teachers should encourage them in this learning process as active learners and not passive ones. Second, teachers at an early stage should not expect children to sort out language rules. It is more appropriate to provide them things in the target language that is related to their own life. Third, teachers should match the cognitive abilities of the learners with the requirements of any language task. Fourth, learning activities should be graded from concrete to abstract and from simple to difficult. Fifth, children can learn a language more readily if they are engaged in meaningful activities in which they use the target language.

4.2.3 Humanistic Perspective

Humanistic psychology appeared in the 1950s with the establishment of the American Association for Humanistic Psychology whose founders included Rogers and Maslow (Roberts, 1998). The involvement of the whole person in the learning process is what distinguishes the humanistic approach from others. Humanistic approaches emphasize the inner world of the learner and put his/her feelings, thoughts and emotions at the forefront of all human development. Richards and Rodgers (1986) cite Moskowitz (1978) saying that “…. humanistic techniques engage the whole person, including the emotions and feelings as well as linguistic knowledge and behavioural skills” (p. 114).

Rogers (1969) is a major contributor to the humanistic position. He developed his humanistic approach in the context of psychotherapist-client relationships. That means that in education context the teachers should deal with their students as clients who need help in something specific. In the light of his approach the relationship between teachers and learners should be characterized with warmth and cooperation. Besides offering students unconditional regard, Rogers suggests that the inner world of learners should be valued so
that they can become open to their true feelings and capable of diagnosing their illness. According to Rogers’ approach, in order for learning to take place, it should be seen of personal relevance for the learners and in which they play an active role in their learning. It involves both their feelings and cognition. Rogers’ approach considers the whole person and recognizes his/her autonomy and individual needs. Accordingly, the learning is to be internally influenced and determined rather than externally controlled. To enhance learning a friendly atmosphere should be created and students should be given the opportunity to rely on themselves.

Another contributor to the humanistic approach is Abraham Maslow (1968) who explained human behaviour in terms of meeting basic needs. He suggested a hierarchy of needs. He classified these needs under two main categories: deficiency needs and being needs. The deficiency needs contain consist of basic physiological needs, safety and security needs, interpersonal closeness needs and self-esteem needs. These deficiency needs are related to psychological and biological needs that human beings struggle to meet. If any of these needs is not met, a person will not be able to carry on and attempt to meet the being needs in the second category. If a person is for example hungry or has pain or feel insecure, he/she will be engaged in trying to fulfill these needs. He/she is not expected to be engaged in trying to fulfill other needs. In other words being unable to meet any of these basic needs, will hinder a person’s ability to meet other needs further up the hierarchy. The being needs category of Maslow’s hierarchy consists of cognitive needs, aesthetic needs and self-actualization needs. These needs are of a higher level than the other needs in his hierarchy and they are related to the fulfillment of individual potential. Maslow’s theory has an important message for teachers: teachers should understand that children may have fewer motivation problems because their basic needs are not fulfilled at home or in the classroom. Therefore teachers should help them by creating a secure environment in which children feel they belong and
are respected by others. Teachers also should encourage learners to think (cognitive need) and praise them for being different and creative (aesthetic needs). Moreover, teachers have to give challenging classroom tasks to encourage curiosity to help learners know their full potential (Williams and Burden, 1997).

Roberts (1998) indicated that the humanistic theory has influenced ELT. There was a shift in the language acquisition theory from behaviourist views in which learners are controlled externally by teachers to constructivist views of language learning in which teachers collaborate with learners in determining their own learning.

As far as English language teaching approaches are concerned, four language teaching methodologies have been developed based on the humanistic approach: the Silent way, Suggestopedia, Total Physical Response and Community Language Learning. These methodologies focus on the affective aspects of learning and deal with the learner as a whole person. Moreover, according to Moskowitz (1978) the communicative approach has common grounds with the humanistic approach. He indicated that in both of them learners are not seen as ‘linguistic objects’ but rather as persons whose human aspects and needs should be taken into consideration. Williams and Burden (1997) summarized the implications of humanism for language teachers include:

a) relate the subject to the learner’s life;
b) involve the whole person in the learning process;
c) help students have self esteem;
d) involve the feelings and emotions of the learner;
e) minimize criticism that may affect learning negatively;
f) encourage learners’ creativity;
g) allow for choice and avoid imposing things on the learner.
These implications emphasize the importance of learners’ experience. Also, the development of learners’ personalities and encouragement of positive feelings and good learning environment are as important as learning the foreign language itself. These are important implications in EFL context in which meeting learners’ needs, encouraging them and creating a learning environment in which the learners feel secured and comfortable are as important as the cognitive abilities of the learner.

4.2.4 The Social Constructivist Perspective

The insights of cognitive and humanistic learning approaches are recognized in the social constructivist model. This model recognizes the constructivist view of the cognitivists and the central role of the learner as a meaning maker. However, constructivists think that understanding how human minds process things is not enough to explain what happens in the learning process. Social constructivism, emphasizes the importance of the whole person in educational settings. It also highlights the significance of social interactions between learners, teachers and tasks in the learning process. In addition, the social constructivist model recognizes the importance of the social context in which learning takes place. It is a coherent framework that considers different aspects of learning and teaching process (Williams and Burden, 1997).

Accordingly, children learn through their interaction with their teachers who are more knowledgeable than them. The interaction between learners and teachers is expressed in Vygotsky’s (1978) concept of a ‘Zone of Proximal Development’ (ZPD) which describes how effective learning takes place. The ZPD represents the learning that the child already masters or the learning that is above the learner’s level and which he/she can master with the help of an adult or a teacher. The role of other people with the most knowledge in helping the learners to learn is known as mediation in the psychology of Vygotsky. Mediation refers to
the role that important people like the teachers or the adults who help the learners to learn. Through the interaction with more knowledgeable teachers or adults, children can acquire the necessary cognitive, social and communicative skills that enable them to function in their culture in socially appropriate ways (Fox, 1995).

According to Mercer (2002), a social constructivist view of the classroom is as a community in which its members communicate and interact with each other. Both teachers and learners are involved in co-constructing the classroom activities. In order for the students to learn a language, they need to practise it with others in the classroom and outside the classroom in social contexts. The social constructivist perspective considers group activities in classroom very useful in the sense that they give learners a good chance to practise, use the language in different ways and think collectively. However, the learners need first some guidance from the teacher (Mercer, et al).

Social constructivists view language as a social product and not an inborn mechanism (Pinker, 1994). Vygotsky emphasized the importance of language in the social interaction process. According to Mercer (2002), Vygotsky believes that language is an ongoing human activity that has a dual role both for communication and developing mental processes in learners. The teaching and learning process of a language does not only involve the mental workings as, but also communication or social interaction between the teacher and the learners and among the learners themselves.

The implications of the social constructivist perspective for language teaching and learning include:

a) Language is mainly communication and so it is not enough to know it; but rather to use it;

b) Language teachers should encourage learners to interact with each other in pairs and groups;
c) Language skills are to be integrated. Vygotsky’s approach is holistic; he rejected the view that what is to be learned should be broken down into small sub-components and taught as discrete items and skills (Williams and Burden, 1997);

d) Language teachers provide learners with real-life situations for communication so that they can be familiar with the culture of the foreign language;

e) Learners have different abilities and in accordance classroom activities should match individual differences amongst students;

f) Learning should be authentic and related to the world outside the classroom. It is not enough to make classes more interesting. Students should be able to use knowledge in real-world settings (Sheperd, 2000).

The features of the communicative approach are clearly reflected throughout these implications of the social constructivist perspective for language teaching and learning. In this way, the communicative approaches owe a lot to the social constructivist approach. The social constructivist perspective has a considerable influence on the communicative approach which emphasizes the importance of using the language in a meaningful interaction with other people. Effective teachers use language to support classroom activities. They also encourage learners to participate in dialogue.

As we can see the four learning theories discussed above have different implications for FL teachers. In addition, it is noticed that some of the common teaching approaches like the audiolingual approach, cognitive approach, communicative approach, were clearly based on one of these theories. These teaching approaches, which were also established mainly by theorists for teachers to teach languages, have also their own perspectives of effective FL teachers. In the following section, I will discuss eight major teaching approaches and highlight their perspectives of effective language teaching behaviours and qualities.
4.3 Approaches to FL Teaching and Their Implications for Effective EFL Teachers

The purpose of this section is not to give a detailed description of teaching approaches but rather in order to give an insight into desirable teacher behaviours from the perspectives of these approaches. It will review the major methods of FL teaching in order to identify their characteristics and the implications for the behaviours of the teacher from the perspective of each method. This may provide insights into whether or not these methods have any bearing upon the teacher behaviours implied by these identified as effective in this study.

It can be noticed that the role of the teacher in some of the reviewed teaching approaches (grammar-translation method, direct method, audiolingual method and cognitive-code method) was more central than in the ones that were introduced later (natural method, communicative language teaching and community language learning). Although the degree of the centrality of the teacher’s role could vary among these methods, the teacher’s role is considered to be crucial in all of these methods in order to teach learners and help them to learn the language. Learners almost rely completely in their learning on their teachers and do what their teachers ask them to do. In the light of the principles of these methods, teachers do not engage themselves in developing their teaching skills or reflecting on their teaching.

What is important in these methods is that teachers should master the knowledge and transmit it to students. However, as educationalists become dissatisfied with the role of the teacher in these methods, they became more interested in adjusting the role of the teaching and changing the learning focus from teacher-centred learning into student-centred learning with which they give more responsibility for learners in learning the language. In the reviewed communicative methods (the natural approach, communicative language teaching and community language learning), the role of both the teacher and the learner changed. The role of the teacher becomes less central. The teacher plays the role of an advisor or a facilitator who advises students and facilitates their learning. They may prepare the materials
and activities, supply the necessary vocabulary for communication, help learners when necessary and create a good learning atmosphere in the classroom. The learners’ role in these communicative approaches becomes more important. Student centred learning becomes one of the important features of these approaches. In a communicative classroom, the teacher plays the role of advisor and gives the learners the responsibility of learning the target language. The problematic issues regarding the interpretation, application and effectiveness of these established teaching methods will be discussed in section 4.9 ‘beyond methods.’

In this section, the following methods of FL teaching and learning will be reviewed: the Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method, the Audiolingual Method, the Natural Approach and communicative language teaching, a cognitive approach to FL teaching and learning, the Cognitive-Code Method, and Community Language Learning.

### 4.3.1 The Grammar-Translation Method

The Grammar Translation Method is based on the belief that FL learning is an intellectual process of analyzing and translating texts and memorizing vocabulary lists and explicit grammar rules. It emphasizes explanations of grammatical points because it is based on the view that FL learning is the acquisition of conscious knowledge about rules. The goal of FL study under this method is that learners learn a FL in order to read its literature or to benefit from the mental discipline and intellectual development that FL study has to offer (Stern, 1983). In order to learn a language the grammar rules of this language should be analyzed. These rules are to be learned and followed in translating sentences and texts into and out of the FL. Reading and writing are emphasized while listening and speaking are overlooked in this method. Words are only taken from the reading texts and are taught through bilingual word lists and memorization (Richards, & Rogers, 2001). Accuracy is essential and the
student’s native language is the language of instruction. According to Teresa (2001) effective teachers in this method are those who know the grammar of the FL, are the authority in the classroom and control the learning activities. Students should follow what their teachers ask them to do so that they can learn what their teachers teach. Teachers do not necessarily have to be proficient in the target language.

4.3.2 The Direct Method

L. Sauveur (1826-1907) was one of those reformers who used intensive oral interaction in the target language. He believed that a foreign language could be learned without translation or the use of the first language of the learner if the meaning is conveyed directly using target language. These natural principles of language learning provided the foundation for the Direct Method. It was first introduced in France and Germany and then it became widely known in other countries. It was very successful in commercial language schools such as those of Berlitz chains. The Direct Method uses the target language as medium of instruction and listening and speaking skills were emphasized. This method encourages learners to make direct associations between meanings of FL words and their L1 equivalents. The purpose of learning in this method is not exclusively to be able to read materials in the target language but also to be able to communicate using the target language. Grammar in this method was taught inductively. Larsen-Freeman (1986) points out that an explicit grammar rule may never be provided or explained and the culture is also an important aspect of FL learning. According to Teresa (2001) effective teachers in this method are expected to encourage their students to think and communicate in the target language. However, classroom activities are still mainly teacher-centred and focus on students’ active involvement using the target language.
4.3.3 The Audiolingual Method

The Audiolingual Method is based on behaviourist theories of learning that stress habit formation through mimicry, memorization, and repeated practice drills (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). Behaviourists believed that languages can be learned by imitation and habit formation. This belief stems from the notion that children acquire their L1 by imitating the sounds and patterns they hear around them. The rules are explained only after the language item is well practised (Williams and Burden 1997). The L1 and TL have different language systems that should be kept separate so that errors of L1 interference can be minimized. Correct TL production is necessary to learn the FL, so the teacher should be able to model the TL in a native-like manner. According to the Audiolingual Method, the teacher is like the conductor of an orchestra who controls the FL output of students (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). If learners produce wrong structures in the TL, bad habits may be formed and the TL can not be successfully learned. Therefore, errors must be corrected in order to learn the TL.

According to Teresa (2001) effective audiolingual teachers are native speakers-like who can model and correct the FL grammar using the TL. Their role is developing the learners’ good language habits through pattern drills, memorization of dialogue or choral repetition of structural pattern. The teacher gives immediate feedback to enhance desired responses and diminish the undesired ones. The verbal communication between the teacher and the learners helps in learning the language.

4.3.4 The Cognitive-Code Method

The main goal of the Cognitive-Code Method is for FL learners to acquire abilities in the FL similar to those of native speakers (Chastain, 1976). To attain this goal, learners learn grammar rules which enable them to create the language they need when encountering a
situation for which they are not linguistically prepared. That is competence must precede performance. Grammar rules should be explicitly explained (usually in the L1) and activities in the FL should be meaningful to the students and they should always understand what they are asked to do. The disadvantage of this approach is that teachers might spend a lot of time in giving grammar explanations. Moreover, teachers might spend too much time in speaking L1.

The theoretical underpinnings to the Cognitive-Code Method come from the cognitive research in L2 learning. In the 1970s, SLA researchers concentrated on describing the linguistic systems of L2 learners. Later, SLA researchers were concerned to describe how L2 learners learn the L2. For cognitive psychologists, SLA is the development of knowledge systems that will ultimately become automatically available for comprehension and production of written and spoken language (McLaughlin, 1987). The effective FL teacher according to the Cognitive-Code approach helps learners to acquire the same abilities native speakers have by helping them to control the FL rules so that they can create their own language in any situation appropriately. Also the teacher is expected to introduce situations that encourage students into working creatively with the TL. In addition, the teacher should make the teaching material meaningful and comprehensible to learners and should organize new material so that learners can relate it to their existing cognitive structure (Chastain, 1976) – (cited in Teresa, 2001).

4.3.5 The Natural Approach

In 1977 Tracy Terrell introduced a new philosophy of language teaching and called it the Natural approach. She developed it out of her experience in teaching Spanish language. At the same time she worked with Stephen Krashen, an applied linguist, in elaborating a theoretical rationale for the Natural Approach, drawing on Krashen's influential theory of
second language acquisition. Krashen and Terrell's combined statement of the principles and practices of the Natural Approach appeared in their book The Natural Approach, published in 1983 (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.178). Krashen and Terrell believe that communication is the main function of a language and therefore the main objective of their approach is that FL learners learn to communicate in the TL and make comprehensible speeches to a native speaker. Terrell suggested that “If we are to raise our expectations of oral competence in communication we must lower our expectations for structural accuracy” (Terrell, 1977, p.326). Classroom activities should encourage communication and minimize the time spent on correcting errors. Students should be allowed to respond in either the L1 or TL. Teachers should concentrate more on giving students large amounts of ‘comprehensible input’ or input that is slightly above students’ level of competency in the TL, than practising features of the TL. They should expose their learners to language and give them the chance to understand it before they ask them to produce the language. The teacher's role in the Natural Approach is to give comprehensible input, create a friendly classroom environment and select activities that meet the needs and interests of students (Richards & Rodgers, 2001) – (cited in Teresa, 2001).

4.3.6 Communicative Language Teaching

Omaggio (1993) and Richards and Rodgers (2001) point out that three main theoretical premises are implied in Communicative Language Teaching: the principle of communication (activities that include communication promote FL learning), the principle of task (activities that require learners to complete real-life tasks promote FL learning), and the principle of meaningfulness (learners must be engaged in meaningful and authentic FL use in order for learning to take place). Meaning and contextualization of vocabulary and grammar are of primary importance in communicative language teaching. Learners are encouraged to
communicate using the TL from the beginning of instruction, and the L1 is only to be used judiciously. Fluency and comprehensible language use are the main goal. The teacher's role in communicative language teaching is to facilitate the communication process between all learners in the classroom, to act as an independent participant within the learning-teaching group, to organize resources, and to act as a resource (Breen & Candlin, 1980). According to Teresa, (2001) the effective CLT teacher develops learning materials that focus on communication in the TL. The teacher also introduces to the learner large amounts of vocabulary. Finally, the teacher creates a comfortable classroom environment.

4.3.7 Community Language Learning

Developed by Curran (1976), Community Language Learning uses Counseling-Learning theory to teach languages. The teacher is seen as the counselor who gives the clients advice and assistance and the learner is seen as the client who has a problem and needs the counselor’s advice and assistance. This method employs humanistic techniques that engage the learner’s “emotions and feelings (the affective realm) as well as linguistic knowledge and behavioural skills” (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 90). The teacher’s role is to provide the learners with the necessary language so that they can communicate their ideas. The learners sit in a small circle to provide a relaxing atmosphere and foster communication. The learning process proceeds as follows: a learner presents a message in L1 to the teacher who comes up behind the learner and whispers the translation in the learner’s ear. The learner then repeats the translation addressing it to another learner with whom he or she would like to communicate. According to Teresa (2001) effective Community Language Learning teachers must build a close relationship with the learner. They also should have a native-like command of the TL. Finally, they should give corrective feedback to students in a non-threatening supportive environment which is crucial for successful learning.
4.3.8 Critical Pedagogy

The areas of concern of critical pedagogy can be anything that has to do with schooling and the wider culture. This may include areas like multiculturalism, leadership, educational reform, popular culture, and even spirituality (Kanpol, 1997, p.5). According to Giroux (1983) critical pedagogy is essential in reforming schools and having good education. He said that:

“Equally important is the necessity for teachers and other educators to reject educational theories that reduce schooling either to the domain of learning theory or to forms of technocratic rationality that ignore the central concerns of social change, power relations, and conflicts both within and outside of schools” (p.62).

Talking more specifically about L2 education, Auerbach (1995) emphasized the centrality of power and politics in ESL teaching. She argued that:

“Although dynamics of power and domination may be invisible, they permeate the fabric of classroom life. The day-to-day decisions that practitioners make inside the classroom both shape and are shaped by the social order outside the classroom. Pedagogical choices about curriculum development, contents, materials, classroom processes, and language use ….are in fact, inherently ideological in nature, with significant implications for learners’ socioeconomic roles. Put simply, our choices as educators play a role in shaping students’ choices” (p.9).

However, there is another opinion that recognizes that schooling is political in nature and that understanding the working of power in educational systems is important. Yet, for critical pedagogy, teaching is not primarily about power or politics. It is about the moral relation between teacher and students (Johnston, 1999; Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen, 1993;
Johnston, Juhasz, Marken, & Ruiz, 1998; Noblit & Dempsey, 1993; Noddings, 1984). It seems to me that this opinion is more reasonable. It is no doubt that political and power factors influence what goes on in the ESL classroom, but it is not to the extent that the political and power dimensions in the education process are overemphasized, instead they can be considered as a part of a bigger picture. The teaching and learning process is more complex and involves other dimensions. Therefore, I do not think critical pedagogy is a question of disempowering teachers and empowering students in education in general and L2 education in particular, but rather it is a matter of students’ involvement in the whole process of language teaching and learning. They can be involved, for example, in selecting topics for classroom discussion. They can be given full freedom to express their opinions. A student needs analysis can be administered and students’ feedback on the curriculum on a regular basis can be collected. Teachers, who have a lot of experience and knowledge in language teaching, should always have some power in the teaching process so that they can keep the whole teaching process in the right track.

From the perspective of critical pedagogy, effective teachers are those who delegate power to students and enable them to participate in the L2 education process. Their voices are to be heard and teachers listen to them and try to respond to their needs. Teachers do not look upon themselves as those who always know what is best for their students otherwise they may run the risk of imposing things that do not meet their needs. In the critical pedagogy classroom, students are no longer the recipients of a pre-packaged education, but learn how to become critical thinkers and full participants in the educational process (Auerbach & Burgess, 1987; Shor, 1980, 1987, 1992; Wink, 1997). By developing their critical thinking, students can begin to transform their world to be more democratic and socially just, both inside and outside the classroom.
The eight approaches reviewed in this section showed that neither the teacher’s role nor the responsibilities and teaching behaviours of the teacher were the same in all approaches. The following table summarizes the teacher’s roles and paradigmatic behaviours in the reviewed approaches.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Role of teacher</th>
<th>Paradigmatic behaviours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammar-Translation Method</td>
<td>Authority figure</td>
<td>- controls learning activities;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- uses L1 in teaching L2;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- focuses on teaching grammar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Direct Method</td>
<td>Authority figure</td>
<td>- controls classroom activities;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- uses the TL as a medium of instruction;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- involves students in activities through which they use the TL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Audiolingual Method</td>
<td>Authority figure</td>
<td>- models the TL;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- controls the FL output of students;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- gives immediate feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cognitive-Code Method</td>
<td>Authority figure</td>
<td>- helps students to control the FL rules;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- introduces situations that encourage students into working creatively with the TL;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- makes the teaching material meaningful and comprehensible to learners;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- organizes new material so that learners can relate it to their existing cognitive structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Natural Approach</td>
<td>Facilitator</td>
<td>- allows students to respond in either the L1 or TL;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- does not often detect errors;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- creates a friendly classroom environment;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- selects activities that meet the needs and interests of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicative Language Teaching</td>
<td>Facilitator</td>
<td>- develops learning materials that focus on communication in the TL;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- introduces to the learner large amounts of vocabulary;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- creates a comfortable classroom environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Language Learning</td>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>- gives the students advice and assistance;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- builds a close relationship with the students;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- gives corrective feedback to students in a non-threatening supportive environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Pedagogy</td>
<td>Democratic</td>
<td>- delegates power to students and enable them to participate in the L2 education process;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- listens to students and try to respond to their needs;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- involves students in selecting topics for classroom discussion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- gives students freedom to express their opinions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 shows decreasing levels of foreign language teachers’ control for different methods. Their role has changed from the teacher as an authority figure who completely controls the whole teaching and learning process to a facilitator and provider of materials and
activities that involves students in learning the TL and using it to a counselor who gives students more responsibility of learning the language and treats students in a more friendly manner and finally to a democratic person who considers students as partners, gives them more power and more responsibility of their learning and involves them in the whole education process. The role of the learner also changed. They have started to play a more active role in the learning process. They have become the centre of learning. This might imply that effective FL teachers should be less dominant in FL classrooms and involve language learners in practising or using the language, selecting the materials and the language activities. The Table also shows different teaching behaviours were considered effective in different teaching approaches. However, it can be noticed that some teaching approaches have some recommended teaching behaviours in common. This might be an indication that these teaching practices are more effective than others in teaching the TL.

Today, there is no method that prescribes exactly how a FL language should be taught or how effective FL teaching should be evaluated (Alderson, 1992; Musumeci, 1997). As we are going to see below, the clarity and effectiveness of these teaching methods are questioned by modern educationalists. Therefore, I do not expect that the data of this research will reveal that effective teachers use one of these teaching methods in the light of the recent trends of teaching methodology that revolves around student centrality, cooperative learning and computer technology. However, some of the teaching practices and teachers’ characteristics that were considered effective by these teaching methods might be supported by the findings of the current research.

4.3.9 Beyond Methods

As we saw in the above sections, there is a wide range of teaching methods that have been established and used by different teachers in different educational institutions in different
parts of the world; however, there is still no clear indication that a certain method or a group of methods is the most effective one for teaching languages. According to Kumaravadivelu (2003), the term method does not tell us what teachers exactly do in their classrooms. It refers to a set of methods that were established by experts in the field. Teachers found it difficult to use any of the established teaching methods as designed to them. Therefore, using the same teaching method, teachers might use different techniques in their teaching because their understanding of that teaching method could be different or because the teaching principles that were prescribed by theorists for using that particular method are not sometimes applicable. Kumaravadivelu identified several shortcomings of the concept of method:

a) methods are based on idealized concepts geared toward idealized contexts. Because language learning and teaching requirements and situations are many and unpredictable, no teaching method can visualize all variables in advance in order to provide teachers with situation-specific suggestions that enable them to confront the challenges they face in teaching languages;

b) methods are supposed to suit all students and assume them to have common goals;

c) methods tend to drift from one theoretical extreme to another; at one time to focus on grammar; at another swing to communicative tasks; this results in emphasizing certain learning aspects and overlooking others;

d) methods are not adequate to deal with the complexity of language teaching operations and limited its operation to the classroom instruction; they overlooked the fact that classroom teaching is affected by other unstated factors such as teachers’ skills, learners needs, social and cultural contexts, economic imperatives, institutional policies that are all interrelated. (pp. 28-29)
The dissatisfaction of teachers with the concept of method has been expressed in different ways. Studies (cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2003) by Janet Swaffer, Katherine Arens, and Martha Morgan (1982), Michael Legutke and Howard Thomas (1991), and others showed that:

a) teachers who are supposed to use a particular method do not conform to its principles;

b) teachers who claim that they use different teaching methods, use the same ones;

c) over time, teachers start to develop their own teaching methods that may not necessarily related to any established method.

The vagueness and inadequacy of received conceptualization of method does not make the language teacher’s job easy. This highlights the importance of identifying what makes a language teacher effective which is, in fact, what the current study is investigating. In the light of the limitations of the established methods and teachers’ dissatisfaction with them and the complexity of language teaching and learning process, the results of this research might not identify any specific established method or group of methods that effective EFL teachers use in their teaching. That is, I will not be surprised if the respondents did not give any data that indicate that their EFL teachers they perceived as effective used any of the reviewed teaching methods. However, some insights of these methods regarding effective teaching behaviours and teachers’ characteristics might be supported by the results of my study and this is why I reviewed those methods in the sections above.

So far, I discussed the major learning theories and teaching approaches and highlighted their implications for effective language teaching. Besides these implications, I am going to discuss the implications of another relevant area in the following section which is second
language research. In this case, this chapter identifies the implications for effective FL teaching from three different sources.

4.4 Implications of Second Language Learning Research for FL Teachers

While research in psychology attempts to explain learning in general terms and it is left to educationalists to identify its implications for language learning, the SLA research focuses only on language learning and studies how the L2 is acquired in a classroom setting. Three categories of SLA theory and research will be discussed: (a) the effect of group work in SLA, (b) the re-emergence of formal grammar instruction, and (c) types of feedback in classroom SLA.

4.4.1 Group Work in SLA

SLA research puts a lot of emphasis on the significance of group work in teaching and learning a language. The role of group work in classroom FL learning has been found to enhance SLA from a pedagogical perspective (Long & Porter, 1985). Some of the pedagogical reasons that support group work are that it: (1) provides FL learners more time to practise the TL (Fanselow, 1977); (2) gives a better chance to FL learners to improve their speech in the TL (Long, 1975; Fanselow, 1977; Long, Adams, McLean, & Castanos, 1976); (3) helps in creating a positive, affective environment (White & Lightbown, 1983); (4) and increases student motivation (Littlejohn, 1982, 1983)- (cited in Teresa, 2001).

When a learner has the information that another learner does not have, he or she is likely to make sure that the other learner knows it so that they can complete the task (Long, 1980; Long, 1981; Long, 1983; Pica & Doughty, 1985a). Also, learners would correct themselves or others in group work more than in teacher-fronted discussions (Pica & Doughty, 1985b).
Porter (1983) pointed out that learners can provide each other with authentic communicative practice. She also found that learners can produce more speech with each other than with native speakers and that they can produce more speech with more advanced level learners than with learners their level. Similarly, Varonis and Gass (1983; 1985) investigated native speaker-native speaker, native speaker-non-native speaker, and non-native speaker-non-native speaker conversational interactions. They found out that negotiation of meaning is most prevalent among non-native speaker-non-native speaker pairs. This negotiation can provide FL learners with a greater amount of understandable input and allows them to practise the TL. They indicate that non-native speaker, non-native speaker interactions provide learners with a relaxing environment that encourages learners to practise the FL. Some SLA theorists believe that one of the important conditions for successful SLA is being in a state of relaxation in a learning environment (Hall, 1999; Krashen, 1982; Terrell, Tschirner, Nikolai, & Genzmer, 1996; Tschirner, 1996) – (cited in Teresa, 2001).

In addition, as we saw in section 4.2.4, one of the implications of the social constructivist perspective for language teaching and learning is that language teachers should encourage learners to interact with each other in pairs and groups. Also, in the reviewed literature in Chapter 3, group work in classroom was identified as a teaching behaviour of effective teachers in several studies (Hamachek, 1969; Gusky and Easton, 1983; Blum, 1984; Reber, 2001).

**4.4.2 The Re-emergence of Grammar Instruction**

A second outcome of the SLA research is the re-emergence of grammar instruction. The study and teaching of grammar is experiencing a renewed interest (Bygate, Tonkyn, & Williams, 1994). Focusing on communication using the TL and overlooking grammar appeared to be not as effective in teaching target languages as when both grammar and
communication are emphasized. Lyster & Ranta (1997) based on classroom data support the view that focus-on-form instruction in combination with corrective feedback in a communicative setting is more effective than focus on instruction in linguistic form on its own or communicative language teaching on its own. Lightbown and Spada (1993) indicated that two important pieces of evidence should be taken into consideration by FL teachers: FL learners continue to have grammar problems with basic structures in the programs that do not focus on form instruction, and the FL learners who are given opportunities to interact in the TL have better chances to improve their fluency and ability to manage conversations (cited in Teresa, 2001).

Several studies (cited in Teresa, 2001) examined the effect of focus on form instruction in FL instruction and found that focus on form activities can lead to more effective classroom (Dekeyser, 1998; Doughty & Varela, 1998; Doughty & Williams, 1998; Harley 1998; Swain, 1998; Long & Robinson, 1998). Ellis (1991) and Schmidt (1990; 1993) found out that making students aware of new TL items, rules, or regularities would enhance their acquisition of those features by drawing attention to them. Williams & Evans (1998) found that without any attention to form, learners demonstrated little progress in the use of participial adverbs and passive. Also, Lightbown and Spada (1990) found that learners in the FL classroom who received the most focus on form instruction were the most accurate in using the progressive –ing and using the possessive determiners his and her. White (1991) found that the treatment group that received instruction on question formation formed questions correctly while those in the control group formed questions with subject-verb inversion incorrectly. In a follow-up test five weeks later, the learners who received the instruction were still forming the questions correctly. The question that is still unanswered in recent research is when and how focus on form activities should be implemented.
In the light of the recent trends of teaching TL, teachers can make their language classes more effective if they focus on grammar in combination with communicative language teaching. They should focus on both of them for improving the accuracy and fluency of their students.

### 4.4.3 Corrective Feedback in SLA Classroom

A third outcome of SLA research examines the usefulness of corrective feedback in language learning. Corrective feedback could be either implicit or explicit. In an experimental study (cited in Teresa, 2001) Carroll & Swain (1993), indicated that explicit forms of negative feedback include any feedback that clearly declares that a learner's output is not part of the TL; and implicit forms of feedback would include recasts, requests for clarification, confirmation checks, and failure to understand. In their study Carroll and Swain wanted to determine the extent to which explicit types of feedback are helpful in learning grammatical generalizations. One hundred adult ESL learners (with Spanish as their primary language) enrolled in various low-intermediate ESL classes in the Toronto area participated in this study. Subjects were placed in five groups according to the type of feedback they received. Subjects in Group 1 were told they were wrong whenever they made a mistake and were given a semantic or phonological explanation for the error (explicit hypothesis rejection). Those in Group 2 were merely told they were wrong (explicit utterance rejection). Subjects in Group 3 received a reformulated correct response whenever they made a mistake. Subjects in Group 4 were asked if they were sure their response was correct when it was not (implicit/indirect metalinguistic feedback). Group 5 was the control group and received no error correction. Findings indicated that the treatment groups outperformed the control group. They conclude that not only the explicit forms but also implicit forms of feedback led to learning.
According to Teresa (2001), recent studies on implicit negative feedback in child and adult SLA have begun to produce findings similar to those found in child L1 acquisition. In child L1 acquisition, children often receive correct reformulations of learners' speech from which learners are more apt to notice correct reformulations than from models only (Oliver, 1995; Long, 1997). It has also been found that adults benefit more from recasts than children. Lightbown and Spada (1990) found that individual teachers' non-verbal reactions to certain types of errors were related to greater accuracy on those types of errors. Lyster and Ranta (1997) found in investigation of types of negative feedback provided in the classroom that recasts were the most common type used by FL teachers.

As the above mentioned studies have shown, it would appear that effective teachers should give corrective feedback to their students when they make mistakes because it can help FL learners produce more correct utterances in the TL. However, questions still remain what types of feedback work best, who benefit from each type of feedback and when feedback is most effective.

4.5 Summary

In the first section of this chapter, I provided an overview of four major theoretical perspectives on teaching and learning: behaviourist, cognitivist, humanistic and constructivist approaches. I considered the implications of each of these theories for language teaching and learning.

In the second section, I reviewed the major teaching approaches and identified the teachers’ roles and teaching behaviours and qualities perceived to be effective.

In the third section, I discussed the implications of second language learning research for FL teachers. In this section I highlighted three important categories of SLA which are group work, grammar instruction and types of feedback in classroom.
The overview of the main learning theories, established teaching approaches and the second learning research allows me to trace the evolution of teaching methods and highlight the prominent trends and ideas that marked different periods. The overview of these three areas and identifying their implications for EFL teachers’ roles, behaviours and characteristics is also significant for the purpose of the study since in the light of these perspectives and implications the participants’ perspectives of the EFL teachers they perceived as effective will be interpreted.
Chapter Five
Methodology

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology used in this study. I begin by talking about the qualitative approach and its appropriateness for investigating the topic of the current study. Then I present the qualitative design followed in this study and then describe the sample for the study and the sites where the study took place. The data collection took place in three phases. In Phase One I used a semi-structured interview, but in Phase Two I used an open-ended questionnaire. In Phase Three I used a follow-up interview. I describe the development of the interview schedules and questionnaires, the pilot study and the way I administered the instruments. After that I describe the procedures I followed to analyze the collected data. At the end of the chapter I talk about the credibility and trustworthiness of the methods I followed in collecting my data and include a discussion of ethical issues.

Before presenting the methodology of this study, I would like to indicate that the term ‘effective teachers’ may be interpreted differently by different people. It is not easy to define what is exactly meant by this term. It could be interpreted as having a wide range of subject knowledge. It could also mean having the right teaching skills that help learners understand and learn. A third interpretation could be that the good teachers are friendly with their students and create a peaceful and warm atmosphere in the classroom. A fourth meaning could be being able to enable larger numbers of students to pass exams and get higher marks. These are considered as indications of students’ achievements as well as teachers’
effectiveness and success. A fifth interpretation could be those teachers who can control the classroom and know how to manage trouble making students. Other possibilities are that effective teachers are those who develop positive attitudes towards learning amongst their students, or who inspire and excite students, or those who adhere fully to the policies and values of their employer. It could be that to be considered as effective in the fullest sense a teacher would have to display all of these characteristics. The purpose of this study is not to begin with a clear view of what constitutes an effective teacher but to explore what students see as characteristic of such a teacher. In doing so, I do not assume that students have a complete view, or even that their view must necessarily take precedence over those of teachers, of senior staff or of institutional or national policy makers. I do, though, assume that any attempt to improve practice must take account of student views – even if one consequence of understanding those views is to realise that they need to be changed.

5.2 The Research Approach Followed in the Study

In order for me to be able to get a deeper understanding of the perspective of Arab university students of effective English teachers, I approached the participants who were students in the Intensive English Program (IEP) of the UAE universities and asked them to describe the English language teachers they believed to have been effective. Teachers, educational managers and students might have different visions of what effective teaching is. However arguably, students play the most important part in the teaching and learning process. They are the ones who interact directly with teachers in classrooms and they are the people most negatively or positively affected by effective or ineffective teaching. Moreover, their opinions on the performance of teachers are taken into consideration in the evaluations carried out in the UAE. Therefore, this study focuses only on the students’ perceptions of effective teaching regardless of whether or not practitioners and other stakeholders agree
with them. Therefore, the criteria of effectiveness in this study are derived from the qualities and practices of effective teachers that are valued by tertiary students. There may be limitations in not making use of teachers' views, but these are not the focus of this study.

As we will see in section 5.6, the interpretative approach enables me to get a deeper understanding from the participants’ perceptions and views that they have created as a result of their experience of learning English and their interaction with different English teachers. Creswell (1994:2) defines the interpretative approach as an “inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting.” According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) the perceptions of the participants can be better understood through this approach, which seeks understanding of the phenomenon from the perspective of human participants who produce it. Denzin & Lincoln (2000) indicate that the qualitative approach can capture the individual’s point of view through detailed interviews and observations. It also can provide rich and valuable descriptions of the social world. The interpretation of meanings in the social world is an essential concern of the qualitative approach: “the interpretative approach rests on the premise that in social life there is only interpretation” (Radnor, 2002:4).

The qualitative approach provides the researcher opportunities for working with, rather than on, the respondents and getting data from them directly rather than through the perspective of outsiders. The researcher in the interpretative approach is a key instrument (Radnor, 2002).

“The qualitative researcher does more than observe history; he or she plays a part in it. New tales from the field will now be written, and they will reflect the researcher’s direct and personal engagement with this historical period.” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:12)
Quantitative research is based on the assumption that there is one reality that can be measured and observed, and hence a single truth, but the qualitative approach is based on the assumption that there are multiple social realities, and hence multiple truths that can be obtained from the interaction of humans with each other and their environment. According to Guba & Lincoln (1985) the interpretative paradigm asserts the existence of multiple, socially constructed realities which, in their view, are not governed by natural laws. Similarly, Mertens (1998:11) states that reality in the interpretative paradigm:

“is socially constructed. Therefore, multiple mental constructions can be apprehended, some of which may be in conflict with each other, and perceptions of reality may change throughout the process of the study.”

Also, Radnor (2002) indicates that in the social world we deal with human behaviour which means that individuals might give different opinions or perceptions even though they live in the same context. Recognizing these multiple realities through a qualitative approach enables me to get the different views and perceptions of different individuals and have a better interpretation. In order to obtain this multiplicity of views, I investigated the views of a large sample of both males and females in four different settings. Effective teaching is a topic that can best be interpreted subjectively in the light of the participants’ perceptions and views which might differ from one person to another.

The qualitative approach is progressively focused. The organization of concepts frequently changes as the study progresses (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990; Spradley, 1979; Stake, 1995). To gain rich qualitative data multiple methods are to be used in investigating the phenomena under study. According to Patton (1990) adopting more than one method helps in providing a comprehensive perspective. Also Craft (1996:75) stated that, “the reliability of findings is likely to be increased by using more than one method.”
Historically, most educational research has been carried out using the quantitative approach. Most research prior to 1987 used quantitative methods (Ornstein, 1995). The nature of various assessment scales used in the quantitative research conducted on effective teaching will influence the responses of the subjects, and this also adds to the lack of clarity on the nature of effective teaching. The questionnaire items are bound to lead respondents to select particular responses that the researcher has chosen to include. In other words, the nature of these items leads the students to respond in a certain way, e.g., a student is likely to respond positively to items such as:

- An effective teacher is the teacher who respects you.
- An effective teacher is the teacher who is well prepared.
- An effective teacher is the teacher who helps you inside and outside the classroom.

On the other hand, the qualitative method enables the participants in the study to express their perspective of effective teaching freely. Embracing qualitative techniques results in findings that are more likely to be trustworthy, credible and transferable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

5.3 Research Design

This study focuses on the perceptions of Arab students of the characteristics of effective EFL teachers at university level. As mentioned in Chapter one, the major question addressed in this study was:

How do Arab students perceive effective EFL teachers at university level?

The other subordinate questions were:

a) In what ways do cultural factors operate to influence the views of Arab students of effective EFL teachers at university level?
b) To what extent are student perceptions of teacher effectiveness in UAE Universities unitary or heterogeneous?

c) What are the implications of student perceptions of teacher effectiveness for formal evaluation procedures of language classrooms in UAE universities?

d) What is the broader context that the overall findings might draw for making English language learning more effective for Arab university students?

A qualitative study design was used to secure the information required to answer the research questions. The design is characterized by a particular focus in that I am going to concentrate on Arab university students. This study was conducted in three phases (Figure 5.1). In Phase One I used a semi-structured interview to obtain in-depth information necessary to describe the characteristics of effective EFL university teachers. There were 17 participants in this phase who came from four different higher educational institutions. In Phase Two, I used a questionnaire that consisted of 3 open-ended questions. These questions were used in the interviews in Phase One and proved to be the best informing questions. The first purpose of this questionnaire is to see to what extent the data collected from interviews represent the views of a broader group of students. The second purpose is to find out if the qualities of effective teacher drawn from literature match the qualities of effective EFL teachers seen from the perspective of Arab tertiary students. The sample of Phase Two consisted of 163 participants from the four institutions who did not participate in Phase One. In Phase Three I conducted follow up-interviews. The aim of these interviews is to further investigate some of the categories shared by participants in Phases One and Phase Two. I interviewed four participants in this phase.
5.3.1 Sites and Samples

The present study was carried out in four Intensive English Programs (IEPs) in four major universities in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The population of this study is the Arab students who attend intensive English courses for one year on average before joining their vocational programs which are taught in English. The objective of the study is not to generalize results from the sample to the whole population nor to other populations, but rather to understand the perceptions of this group of Arab students of effective English teachers. In the light of this, purposive sampling was used in Phases One and Three. Since supervisors are the only ethical and managerial means of access to those students, I asked them to recruit students. Questions of manners and ethics may constrain this process. I insisted that their participation was not enforced, but rather was on a voluntary basis.
worried that this might bring in the bias of the supervisor and as result critical students might be excluded from the group of interviewees. However, in the event, when I interviewed them, most of them were serious and critically reflective, and they talked about good teachers and bad teachers. According to some of the teachers of the students whom I met, some of the sample students were not necessarily the best students in terms of academic achievement. Although there is a risk of bias in selecting those students, most of them were able to give a lot of information about effective EFL teachers that enriched my data. They were selected from different levels (in the light of the results of the placement tests that the IEPs give to their candidates, students are sent to levels that range from one to four or five). Although those students were expected by their teachers to be outspoken students, few of them were timid and not very informative. This gave me some opportunity to look at a fuller range of participants. Males and females were represented in the three phases. Opportunistic sampling was used in Phase Two. The IEP supervisors selected the whole class as a sample, and class groups were selected in the light of their schedule, my schedule and the schedule of the program supervisors or the people they nominated to accompany me to the designated classes (after they introduced me to the class, they left the classroom). Seventeen students constituted the interview sample in Phase One, one hundred sixty-three for the questionnaire sample in Phase Two and four for the interview sample in Phase Three. Table 5.1 contains details about the numbers of males, females, Emiratis and Arabs from other Arab countries in each phase.

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<td>Phase Two</td>
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Arab students who participated in this study had been living in the UAE for a long time and got their school education in the UAE under similar conditions as the Emirati students. The criteria for students were that they were currently enrolled in one of these four IEPs. Ages ranged between 18 and 20. To maintain anonymity and respect the privacy of the participants, as well as to document the findings, number codes were assigned to each participant and IEP site. Permission to conduct this study was granted by the respective universities and colleges. I made it clear to all participants that their participation was absolutely voluntary and any one of them could withdraw at anytime.

5.4 Data Collection

I used the following methods in this study to gather data: interviews, questionnaires and follow-up interviews. Using three data collection approaches helps the researcher to provide valid findings. This iterative development of the research instruments made me confident that no single method would color my data. Observations could have been a very good method of data collection in this research. However, as a teacher at a university level, I knew that observing teachers’ classes by an outsider might be upsetting for the relevant IEP management as well as for those teachers who worked on contract basis and it was only their supervisors who observed them for evaluation and contract renewal purposes.

5.4.1 Phase One: Interviews

I used interviews to collect data in Phase One. The interview is considered to be a major research instrument that explores the interviewees’ views of the world (Brown and Dowling, 1998). The interview helped me to gain a clearer understanding of the perspectives of my
interviewees. Interviews also gave the participants as well the freedom to express themselves and provide their own perceptions. Interviews:

“enable participants to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live from their point of view” (Cohen et al., 2000:267).

According to Cohen and Manion (1994) there are four types of interview: the structured, unstructured, non-directive and focused. I used semi-structured interviews for Phases One and Three because this enabled me to control the interview direction and focus the inquiry on the topic of the study. These interviews were directed by a set of general themes rather than a list of predetermined questions (see Appendix J). This gave me more freedom to explore the interviewees’ responses and capture the perceptions of the participants about effective teaching.

Interviews enabled me to probe questions and elicit more details and elaborations on what the interviewees said. According to Tuckman (1972):

“Open–ended questions have a number of advantages: they are flexible; they allow the interviewer to probe so that she may go into more in-depth if she chooses, or to clear up any misunderstanding” (p.277).

Similarly, Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) indicate that interviews allow for greater depth since the interviewer can probe and expand the interviewees’ responses. Also, Patton (1987) states that interviews allow free and in-depth responses. According to Radnor (1994) interviews help interviewers to go beyond the intellectual to encompass the emotions, values and beliefs that make up the life experience of individuals in a social context. The interview also gives me the chance as a researcher to be involved directly in interacting with the participants and collect data.
“The interview is a process of reality construction to which both parties contribute and by which both are affected” (Woods, 1996:53).

However, there are difficulties in this approach. Interviews are time consuming in both data collection and analysis. Time is needed for planning and preparing questions, and for contacting interviewees (Oppenheim, 2000). One of the weaknesses associated with interviewing is the possibility of bias. As an interviewer, I did my best to minimize these effects. I avoided putting words into the interviewees’ mouths, repeating what they said, concluding things from what they said, or giving information and asking them to say ‘yes’ or ‘no’. It was also a big challenge for me in terms of time and effort, not only in conducting the interviews but also in analyzing the data.

The process of designing my interview schedule for Phase One took several months. I constructed a list of interview questions and ensured that the data obtained reflected the research questions. I designed the interview schedule in a certain format (see Appendix D) that would enable the participants to provide sufficient data to address the focus of my research. I asked some of my colleagues at work as well as Exeter University staff to read the list of questions and give their feedback. In the light of their feedback I made the necessary changes and additions. Then I sent my interview questions to my supervisors who gave their final feedback. I modified and edited some questions based on my supervisor’s feedback and the first copy of the students’ interview was ready to be piloted. I piloted the interview questions on three university students from the same population as the study sample. The three interviews took from thirty-five to fifty minutes. This gave me an idea about the time needed for interviews and therefore asked for one class session of fifty minutes for each interview. After obtaining permission from the participants, I used an audio tape to record the interviews. After I listened to the three tapes, I was confident that
questions were understandable. The participants did not ask what I meant and they gave answers that made sense in relation to the questions. The administration of these interviews enabled me to achieve my objective of eliciting sufficient relevant data. However, inevitably some new questions emerged during the interviews. These questions were not originally included in the interview schedules, but the context of the interview entailed asking them in order to obtain a certain piece of information or verify another.

5.4.1.1 Conducting the interviews

The interviews were carried out in March 2002. All interviews were conducted in Arabic so that I could make sure that the language did not hinder their ability to express themselves. I translated the interview questions into Arabic and then asked one of my colleagues who was an Arabic English bilingual to translate it back into English. There were no essential differences between both versions (see Appendix E). I sent a permission letter (see Appendix A) to the supervisors of the IEPs in the universities where the study took place. All the four higher education institutions agreed to allow me to involve some of their students in my study. After that, I identified participants. I asked each supervisor to recruit five students, who were likely to be able to engage fully in the task, for interviews. I asked them that the involvement of students in interviews should be on a voluntary basis. I asked them to allocate 50 minutes for each interview. I also asked for the time and place to be selected that suited the interviewees as much as possible. Since female students were involved in this study, I interviewed them either in the presence of a third person or in a glass room. This procedure agrees with the Islamic culture which prohibits men from being alone for a long time in a separate room with a female. Interviews took place at the universities where the interviewees study. I tried to create a friendly atmosphere and make students feel relaxed as much as possible. I introduced myself to each interviewee as a teacher of English and
explained the purpose of the research and that the data collected would be used for research purposes. I emphasized the element of confidentiality: that nobody except me would access the data I collected from them; also nobody would listen to the recorded tapes except me. Being a teacher who taught female and male students, like those in my sample, as well as the age difference between me and them, helped in minimize cultural sensitivities regarding the difference in gender with female interviewees. I spent a few minutes talking with the respondents about general things at the beginning of each interview so that I could build rapport. As the interviews continued, the questions asked of the interviewees occasionally changed in response to additional information provided either by interviewees themselves or a ‘contextual condition’ (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). I also used different probes frequently so that I could elicit as much information as possible.

The interviewees were very informative, frank and motivated to talk about what makes English teachers effective, possibly because the phenomenon they talked about in the interviews was relevant to the situation, time and setting of the interviews. This enabled me to collect very rich data. As an Arab, I believe I had the advantage of linguistic and cultural knowledge and as a result understood their responses and cues. As a teacher who works in a similar context under similar conditions, I was able fully to understand the interview situations and interactions. Recording interviews enabled me to get a more reliable record of the interview than taking notes (Burton, 2000). The procedure of the qualitative analysis will be explained in detail in section 5.5. The analysis of the interview data was completed before the start of Phase Two of the study.

5.4.2 Phase Two: Open-Ended Questionnaires

The second method of collecting data was the open-ended questionnaire. The questionnaire is one of the most frequent research tools that have been used in general education research
(Oppenheim, 1992). The aim of this questionnaire is to get a deeper understanding of the perceptions of effective English teachers of a larger sample of Arab students. I wanted to involve a bigger number of participants and identify their perceptions of effective teaching and check whether they shared the perceptions of the seventeen interviewees (small group) in Phase One. A questionnaire can provide a suitable means for the respondents to express themselves and answer questions at their convenience without fear of embarrassment (Oppenheim, 1992). Another advantage of using a questionnaire is that they are inexpensive and can be distributed and collected in a short time (Patton, 1987). However, using questionnaires has some limitations. Since there were no conversations, I could not correct any misunderstandings or probe responses. This may result in a lack of deep information. Considering the advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires, I designed a questionnaire in a way that enabled me to gather sufficient and clear data that were verified by some of the respondents. The respondents would describe who they thought were effective EFL teachers and demonstrate why they thought they were effective. It used examples to elaborate how their teachers were effective.

5.4.2.1 Questionnaire administration

After I finished analyzing the data collected from the interviews in Phase One, I constructed an open-ended questionnaire whose questions were extracted from the interview questions used in Phase One. I chose not to include a lot of questions so as not to discourage the participants to complete it and take the matter seriously. I also followed the same procedure I followed when I conducted the interviews in Phase One which guarantees protecting the confidentiality of the teachers who were described as effective or ineffective (see Appendix F). I prepared the Arabic version (see Appendix G) and then piloted the questionnaire with two of my students who were not involved in the study and two of my colleagues. The pilot
results revealed that the questions were clear and understandable and the answers made sense in relation to the questions; in fact I expected this because these questions were tried before in the interviews. The results also supported what I found in the twenty interviews. This made for a certain reliability in my study. According to Craft (1996) the reliability is achieved when we get the same results from another technique. It took respondents from 20 to 35 minutes to complete the questionnaire. This gave me an indication of the time I need in administering the questionnaires in different classrooms in different sites.

To administer the questionnaire I referred to the same IEP supervisors who helped me to recruit students for Phase One and arranged to interview them. I asked for help in administering the questionnaire in two classrooms in each of the four sites. I made it clear to them that those students whom I interviewed in the first phase had not to be among those students who would complete the questionnaire. I also asked them to recruit students on a voluntary basis. I administered all of the questionnaires myself in all sites in June 2002.

I introduced myself to the students who volunteered to complete the questionnaire and explained the aim of the questionnaire. I assured them that the data collected would be used only for research purposes. I also asked them not to write their names on the questionnaires. I tried to create a relaxed atmosphere in class. I asked them to express their own point of view and not to influence each other’s opinion. They had enough time to finish. They took it seriously and most of them provided a considerable amount of data.

5.4.3 Phase Three: Follow up Interviews

The aim of the follow up interviews was to get a deeper understanding of the characteristics of effective teachers that were extracted from the data of interviews and questionnaires in Phases One and Two. I wanted to know exactly what students meant when they said, for example, that an effective EFL teacher should be an understanding person.
Since there were many characteristics that were identified as important from the perspective of Arab students, I could not cover all of them in my four interviews. Therefore, I selected the high frequency categories for more elaboration. I constructed questions that investigated these common characteristics. Then I revised them in the light of the comments of two of my colleagues and my research supervisor (see Appendix H). After I translated the questions into Arabic I asked one of my colleagues who was a bilingual speaker of Arabic and English to translate them back to English. There were no essential differences between the two versions (see Appendix I). The interview was piloted with two respondents before it was used with the actual sample.

5.4.3.1 Conducting the follow up interviews

The follow up interviews were carried out December 2002. I asked each IEP supervisor of the four universities to recruit two informative students for an interview on a voluntary basis. After I introduced myself I explained the purpose of the interview to each participant. I also assured the four participants that their data will not be accessed by anybody else except the researcher and that they will be used for research purposes. The interviews started with a general introduction which made them feel relaxed and helped in creating a friendly atmosphere. They were motivated to talk about such characteristics which they all agreed on. The interviews lasted between 20-30 minutes each and were recorded after getting the participants’ permission.
5.5 Qualitative Data Analysis

I opted for an analysis of data by hand because I wanted to absorb the data completely, become totally engaged with what the respondents said, and to read what was between the lines. I felt a computer program for qualitative analysis might distract my attention: part of my attention would go to the computer program and the other part would be on the data itself. Moreover, qualitative data contain quotations of respondents’ opinions, experiences and feelings (Patton, 1990) which may not lend themselves to computer analysis.

In analyzing the data gathered by means of the semi-structured interviews, open-ended questionnaires and follow-up interviews, I used the grounded theory methods recommended by Strauss and Corbin (1998) so that I could identify the relevant information that answer the questions posed in chapter one. Glaser and Strauss introduced the grounded theory method for the first time in their book “The Discovery of Grounded Theory” (1967). However, since then they have presented various versions on grounded analysis. Glaser (1992) indicated that questions should appear from the grounded analyses, but Strauss and Corbin (1998) believe that the identification of questions should be the first step in analysis and this is what the current research followed. The questions were identified first (see Chapter 1, p. 21), followed by the analysis for the purpose of finding answers to these questions.

I started analyzing the qualitative data while interviews were being conducted, so that I could direct further exploration. As a result some issues that require further inquiry were discovered and I clarified them in the subsequent interviews. The analysis procedure consisted of six steps:

a) I transcribed each interview (in case of interviews).

b) I then translated the transcripts into English. For translation accuracy, I asked two of my colleagues who were bilingual speakers of Arabic and English to check samples of transcriptions. No major differences were found.
c) I carried out open coding (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). This is a process of asking questions, making comparisons, labeling phenomena, extracting categories from the data (called themes in the current research) and naming them. Once satisfied that these themes reflect the data and promise to be useful descriptive tools, I looked for the conceptual elements of these themes or properties (Strauss and Corbin, 1998) which might elaborate on the characteristics of each theme in a particular situation and increase its applicability and explanatory power (cited in Seddon 2003). Accordingly, I reviewed all transcripts in order to identify the themes that appeared in them and gave each theme a code. For example I gave the theme ‘instructional presentation skills’ the code IPS. Then, I looked for words and concepts that constituted the dimensions and characteristics of these themes and defined their meanings. In order to find these conceptual elements, I read each interview carefully and identified the materials relevant to the focus of this study by highlighting key words and concepts. Based on this, I constructed a number of categories within each theme and gave each a code. For example if the category was ‘the teacher reviewed previous materials before starting the new lessons,’ it was classified under the appropriate theme and given the code IPS9 which means that this category is category number 9 that is classified under the theme instructional presentation skills.

d) I asked the interviewees on Phases one and three to verify whether or not they agreed with interpretations and categories I gave to their responses. They confirmed that their responses agreed with the categories I gave.

e) I put these themes and their categories into a table (see Appendix J) which I used as a key for coding and classifying the data I highlighted within the transcripts.
constructed additional themes and categories and added them to this key table as the analysis revealed new ideas and concepts.

f) All themes and categories were verified and refined by involving another researcher in this process.

5.5.1 Example of Categorization

The following excerpt from interview one illustrates the procedures I used for my analysis:

S: What words would you use to describe teacher number 1 whom you rated as an effective teacher? Tell me why and how she was effective.

S1: She is well organized in teaching. (AS1) When she comes to class, she knows what to give us. She is prepared. (AS19) She likes to teach a lot. (PQ3) She gives us extra information. (AS18) She counsels weaker students and if they are weak for example in writing and need more help in this skill, she would send them to the writing centre. (AS2)

The first highlighted concept is “She is well organized in teaching.” The code given to this concept according to the key table of themes and categories (see Appendix E) is AS1. ‘AS’ refers to the topic ‘Administrative Skills’ and ‘1’ refers to category number one under ‘Administrative Skills’ which is ‘well organized’. The second highlighted concept is “She is prepared.” The code given to this concept is AS19 which refers to the theme ‘Administrative Skills’ and category number 19 which is ‘is well prepared’. The third highlighted concept was “she likes to teach a lot.” The code given to this concept is PQ3 which refers to the theme ‘Personal Qualities’ and category number 3 which is ‘likes teaching’. The third concept is “She gives us extra information.” The code of this concept is AS18 which refers to the theme ‘Administrative Skills and category number 18 which is
‘gives handouts, worksheets, exercises and extra information from outside the book.’ The last highlighted concept of this excerpt is “she counsels weaker students.” The code given to this concept is AS2 which refers to ‘Administrative Skills’, category number 2 which is ‘advises students what to do and what they need to improve in English.

5.5.2 Thematization of Categories

After I finished analyzing the data, I employed one of my colleagues, who was a student in the Educational Doctorate program to verify the categories and themes that emerged from the data. He came up with some useful suggestions regarding: relocating some categories under appropriate themes; joining categories that have very similar meanings and rephrasing/refining few categories.

A large number of categories were identified in the analysis. These categories were classified under three major themes: instructional skills, interpersonal rapport with students and administrative skills. However, when my supervisors and I discussed the results of my research and the classification of the data it appeared to be that the results would be well presented if I carried out thematic restructuring of the categories within each major theme rather than presenting them according to their rate of frequency. Within each thematic group, categories can still be put in order according to their rate of frequency. The highest rated categories are presented first and the least frequent categories were presented next. It is not that I undervalue the infrequently used categories but rather it shows the rate of frequency of different categories. It should be indicated here that since the participants in each interview or questionnaire described several effective and ineffective teachers, more than one response for the same category could be collected from each interview or questionnaire. For example, if a participant described three effective English teachers and mentioned that two of them had a sense of humour, then this is considered to be two instances of the category 'sense of
humour’. After doing the thematic restructuring of the categories across the three identified major themes, I ended up with two major themes, instead of three, with several thematic groups of categories under each major theme. These two major themes are Instructional Skills and Human Characteristics.

An analysis of each of these themes will be presented in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 respectively. I present the instructional skills theme in chapter seven and the human characteristics theme in chapter eight. The codes used with the comments used with the categories in the following chapters are of three types:

- Comments collected from interviews in Phase One.
  
  Example: the code (I12) means that the comment was quoted from interview number 12.

- Comments collected from questionnaires in phase two.
  
  Example: the code (Q42) means that the comment was quoted from questionnaire number 43.

- Comments collected from the follow up interviews in phase three.
  
  Example: the code (FI6) means that the comment was quoted from the follow up interview number 6.

5.6 Trustworthiness of the Qualitative Data

Using an interpretative inquiry a vast amount of data can be yielded from the detailed descriptions and analysis. However, due to the constraint of time and space, it is not always possible to present all the accounts within the findings (Nunan, 1992:58). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) the terms ‘validity’ and ‘reliability’ which are used in the quantitative approach can not be applied in the interpretative approach due to the different assumptions about the nature of reality and the different approach to research. What concerns
me as a researcher is to come up with as findings which are as trustworthy as possible. The main instrument in the interpretative approach is the researcher who may make changes to the research procedures if necessary. Moreover, the ‘truth’ may not be captured, but approximated. Lincoln and Guba (1985) use the term ‘trustworthiness’ for qualitative data as a replacement for ‘reliability’ and ‘validity’ used for quantitative data. They suggest that the researcher should establish the ‘credibility’, ‘transferability’, ‘dependability’ and ‘conformability’ of a study. According to Altheidi and Johnson (1998:286-287) the ‘reliability’ or the stability of methods and findings, is an indicator of ‘validity’ or the accuracy and truthfulness of the findings. Since the data was qualitative, I interpreted it according to my experience. This means that there is the possibility of multiple interpretations of the data. Therefore, in order for me to ensure the trustworthiness of my interpretations and data analysis, I took a number of measures:

a) I explained the purpose of this study to all participants in the three phases and assured them that the data collected from them will be dealt with confidentially and that they will not be accessed by anybody else except me.

b) I provided an explicit description of how I collected the data and analyzed them.

c) I classified the data into as many categories as possible so that I might not lose the richness of the data.

d) Although I tried to be as honest as I could, I should acknowledge that personal bias is something inevitable in interpreting the data. Therefore, I cross-validated the data with a validator who was a teacher of English and a postgraduate research student. As a result, I refined the phrasing of some categories and adjusted a few others.

e) I used three data collection approaches so that I could collect sufficient data, establish confidence in my findings and establish credibility.
I asked the interviewees of Phases one and three to verify whether or not they agreed with interpretations and categories I gave to their responses. All of them confirmed that their responses agree with the categories I gave.

5.7 Ethical Issues

Ethical issues constituted an important matter in my research methodology. The following ethical issues were taken into consideration in my study.

a) Cohen and Manion (1994) assert that much social research necessitates obtaining the consent and the co-operation of the subjects who are to assist in the investigations, and of significant others in the institutions and organizations providing the research facilities. Accordingly, I cleared official channels by sending a permission letter (Bell, 1993) (see appendix C) to all IEP supervisors in the four universities where the study took place. In order to convince them of the value of the research, I talked to them in my letter about the nature of my study and its goals. In response to my letter, permission was granted to enable me to interview their students and ask them to complete my questionnaire. Permission was given in the form of email messages or orally on the telephone. Since these messages include names of supervisors and names of institutions, I do not include copies of them in the Appendix for confidentiality reasons. One of the supervisors said that I could interview the female students as long as there is another female staff member in the room. Another one indicated that his female students should be interviewed in the glass room. I agreed to their conditions even though this might affect the flow of information from students.

b) Although I got the permission to involve students from the places where my study took place, I could not access them directly for ethical and managerial reasons. I
asked the IEP supervisors to recruit students on a voluntary basis for my interviews and questionnaires.

c) According to Sieber (1992), the learners should be given the power to refuse to participate in the research. Therefore, to make sure that the students recruited were participating on a voluntary basis, I emphasized to each one of them when I interviewed them, and later on when I asked them to complete the questionnaire, that their involvement is completely on a voluntary basis and they can withdraw at any stage if they chose to. I also explained the aims of my study to all participants in the three phases and assured them that the data I collect from them would be dealt with confidentially. Therefore, I believe that they were honest in their responses and gave all the information they had about the topic of the research. Most of them had a lot to say and they were able to describe, discuss and give examples of effective teaching in EFL.

d) I also assured the study participants that I would retain anonymity in this study. This also applies to the four universities in the study. I did not identify the participants or their universities. I used codes instead of the participants’ names.

e) At the beginning of every interview in Phase One and Phase Two, I explained to them that I need to tape record their interviews so that I can be able to catch everything they said and analyze it later on. I assured them that nobody would listen to these tapes except me. All of them gave their consent for tape recording the interviews.

5.8 Summary

In this chapter I presented the methodology work followed in this study. I started the chapter with discussing the appropriateness of the qualitative paradigm for investigating the research
phenomenon and gave my justification for using it. I also introduced the qualitative design of the study. I talked about the three phases of data collection and the data collection methods used in them. After that I described the steps I followed in analyzing the qualitative data collected in the three phases. I ended the chapter by talking about the trustworthiness of my qualitative data and the ethical issues I considered during the process of collecting the data.
Chapter Six

Theme One: Instructional Skills

6.1 Introduction

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, I classified the categories which I identified from the interviews in Phase One and questionnaires in Phase Two under two major themes each of which is described in a separate chapter: instructional skills and human characteristics. This chapter presents the theme of instructional skills which consists of four main dimensions: teaching approach, learning resources, interaction and management. Each of these dimensions consists of a number of teaching practices that the respondents considered effective. In the light of the grounded theory method outlined by Strauss and Corbin (1998), I analyzed the qualitative data. The data analysis process used was described in chapter five. In the present chapter and the following chapter, the findings are reported under headings that relate to Strauss and Corbin’s notions of open coding and properties coding. In the open coding process, I extracted the major themes from the data and named them. After that, I looked for the conceptual elements of these themes; I identified the categories that represent the components or characteristics of the major themes. Before presenting these themes and their categories, I am going to highlight the fact that students’ language does not always map with the professional language. I need to clarify for the reader in what ways this occurred and the logic behind following students’ discourse when it does not match with the professional one.
6.2 Students’ Discourse Versus Professional Discourse

Students’ discourse mostly mapped onto the professional discourse when talking about categories whose wording is clear, straightforward and simple: e.g. using examples in teaching, reviewing the lesson before starting a new one, being friendly, having a sense of humour, making students work in groups, etc. However, the respondents, being unaware of professional discourse, used their own words in expressing their perceptions of their classroom experience that does not exactly match with their equivalent professional words. For example, the respondents used the phrase ‘teaching ways’ (طرق تدريس) to refer to various approaches teachers used in their teaching so that students who could not understand something by one approach, they might get it through another. This included teaching vocabulary in which teachers may teach a new word by giving its definition, using it in a sentence, acting, pictures and drawing on the board. They also used ‘teaching ways’ to talk about teachers who use different teaching aids such as computer technology, projectors, videos, acting and pictures.

I found myself in a situation in which I could choose either the students’ terms or their closest professional equivalent. When I started analyzing the data and came across this concept, I translated it into its exact meaning in English which was ‘teaching ways’. When I had an overview of the identified categories, I felt that teaching ways did not look like a professional term. Therefore, I changed it to the phrase teaching methods. At a later stage, I found out that the term teaching methods was misleading because it might refer the reader to the established teaching methods in teaching languages that I reviewed in Chapter 3 such as grammar translation method, cognitive method, natural method and communicative method. Therefore, I decided to get back to the students’ term and used it all way through. I used inverted commas to mark any word borrowed from students’ discourse. Since my concern in this study is investigating the students’ perceptions of effective teaching and describing as
accurate as possible, I thought that their perceptions would be better reflected using their own words that they used when they described effective and ineffective teachers.

Another aspect of mismatch between students’ discourse and professional discourse was that students may use the exact word that is used in professional talk, but they mean completely different meaning. For example, students’ phrase ‘being flexible’ (مرونة) matches the professional one accurately. However, as I explained in Chapter 7, p.209, while students meant that effective teachers should be willing to reach a compromise with students regarding the deadline for assignments, giving make up exams, absence rules, etc., professionally, it could mean teachers’ ability to adjust their teaching plans, making changes on the teaching material so that it may meet the interests and needs of learners and/or matching between what they are supposed to cover and the amount of available time.

Coming from the same culture of the respondents and interacting, as a researcher, directly with them helped me to understand the mismatch areas between students’ discourse and professional discourse.

Table 6.1 gives an overview of the results of this study. It contains all themes, dimensions, categories and subcategories that were identified from the data. These items will be presented in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Teaching approach</th>
<th>Human characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Using suitable teaching ways</td>
<td>A. Has a friendly manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Using a variety of teaching ways</td>
<td>1. Building bridges between them and their students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Using examples</td>
<td>2. Interacting with students outside the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Using a variety of teaching aids</td>
<td>3. Informal interaction with students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Holding student’s attention</td>
<td>4. Socializing with students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Asking questions</td>
<td>5. Treating students as friends or family members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Caring for teaching words</td>
<td>6. Smiling at the students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Willing to repeat explanation</td>
<td>7. Friendliness enhances students’ learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Asking students to do things they did not teach</td>
<td>B. Helps students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Giving no actual teaching</td>
<td>1. Giving advice to students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Following a lecturing style</td>
<td>2. Helping students in academic related issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Helping students understand</td>
<td>3. Helping weaker students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Checking students’ understanding</td>
<td>4. Giving good marks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Simplifying things</td>
<td>5. Helping in personal matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Taking into consideration individual differences</td>
<td>C. Encouraging students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reviewing previous lessons</td>
<td>D. Flexible and willing to compromise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Speaking clearly at a suitable speed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### C. Giving interesting classes
1. Selecting a diversity of interesting topics
2. Not following the same teaching routine
3. Minimizing lecturing time
4. Organizing competition in classroom
5. Having fun

### D. Efficient in testing
1. Giving appropriate assessment
2. Giving exams on a regular basis
3. Providing test practice

### E. Giving homework

### F. Benefited students

### G. Investing class time efficiently

### H. Being well prepared

#### II. Learning resources

A. Giving handouts and worksheets
1. Diversity of materials
2. Found to be more useful for learning English than textbooks
3. Containing a lot of practice

B. Using computer technology

C. Investing the library

#### III. Interactions

A. Enabling students to practice speaking
1. Facilitating classroom discussions
2. Giving the chance for the students to talk about themselves
3. Involving students in authentic speaking projects
4. Allowing students to ask and answer questions
5. Communicating with students in English
6. Correcting students’ speaking mistakes

B. Making students work in groups

C. Getting everyone involved

#### IV. Management

A. Classroom control
B. Punctuality
C. Implementation of rules

### E. Respects students

### F. Creates a good atmosphere

### G. Treats students as equal

### H. Listens to students

### I. Identifies/meets students’ needs

#### II. Personal characteristics

A. Has a sense of humour
B. Is dedicated
C. Is energetic
D. Is patient
E. Is likeable

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### 6.3 Teaching Approach

I identified eight categories of teaching behaviours and practices of EFL teachers that the respondents found to be effective in helping them to learn English. The following table shows these categories and their frequency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Using suitable teaching ways</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Helping students understand</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Giving interesting classes</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Table 6.2: The categories classified under the methodology dimension and their frequency
Table 6.2 (Continued)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Efficient in testing</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Giving homework</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Benefited students</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Investing class time efficiently</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Being well prepared</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.3.1 Using Suitable Teaching Ways

The first three categories are the most frequently mentioned among the eight categories classified under the methodology dimension. The number of responses identified in the data collected from students on ‘using suitable teaching ways’ (استعمال طرق تعليم مناسبة) was 194. My analysis of the data showed different subcategories of effective teaching practices that the participants considered helpful in learning English: a) using a variety of teaching ‘ways’; b) using examples; c) using different up-to-date teaching aids; d) holding students’ attention; e) asking questions; f) caring for teaching words; g) willing to repeat explanations. The respondents were also invited to talk not only about the good teaching behaviours and practices of teachers but also about the bad ones. Identifying the characteristics and teaching behaviours of ineffective teachers is equally important; when teachers or practitioners are aware of what makes bad teaching, they will avoid it. Some of the responses that the participants gave were about bad teaching practices that characterized ineffective teachers of English. They talked about some of the problems they actually experienced with some of the teachers whom they considered to be ineffective. The data showed that the respondents had three main concerns: a) asking students to do things they did not teach; b) giving no actual teaching; c) following a lecturing style.
a) Using a variety of teaching ways

The respondents mentioned that the EFL teachers who taught them effectively tended to use a variety of different ‘teaching ways’. Most of the responses talked about varieties of teaching ways in general terms, without specifying these ways.

“He uses a variety of teaching ways in order for students to be able to get what the teacher says.” (I1)

“He tried to explain a point using different simple ways so that we can understand the meaning.” (I15)

Some went a little further by saying:

“He shouldn’t always teach in the same way as the textbook.” (Q63)

The EFL teachers that the respondents considered effective did not employ a diversity of teaching methods in response to a certain situation or a request from students to elaborate more on a certain point, but rather they tended to use more than one method of teaching (in explaining things) as a part of their teaching style. The respondents did not specify any particular area in which effective teachers tended to use a variety of ways in their teaching, but some of their responses talked about the teaching of vocabulary. Explaining the meaning of new words in more than way, when necessary, was considered helpful in learning new words. Some of the responses in the area of teaching vocabulary specified some of the methods that were used in explaining the new words. They talked about giving the definition of new words, giving the derivatives of the word (the adjective, noun, adverb, etc.) acting, using pictures and using games.

“For example in reading when the teacher explains the meaning of a new word, he gives us its equivalent meaning in English. Another method could be using a picture. This simplifies the meaning. Sometimes the teacher acts so that we can understand.” (F2)

When we came across a difficult word, he explained it and he would also give us the derivatives of the word” (I15)
“She once gave us games in class so that we can learn new words. She sometimes acts them for us” (I9)

“She acts in order to make students understand.” (Q23)

Since students only talked about the teaching methods pertaining to the teaching of vocabulary I concluded with some caution that this diversity in the style of teaching that the respondents highlighted might lend itself best to the area of vocabulary teaching in English language teaching. If we put ourselves in the shoes of students in learning new words in a foreign language and the teacher is in front of us trying to explain the meaning of an abstract word, we may experience difficulties in understanding or at least guessing the meaning. Therefore, using different methods and examples would be very helpful in maximizing the chance of understanding the meaning of new words. Students want to increase their store of vocabulary in particular so that they can upgrade their level in English; this is why they attend the Intensive English program. Therefore, students would be grateful to the teachers who try to teach them as many words as possible (as we are going to see in section f caring for teaching words).

“He gives sufficient explanation and explains the meaning of every new word in a good way.” (I20)

“She explains the meaning of all the new words in a simplified way. (Q32)

Since the respondents mostly did not give enough data on what they meant exactly by a variety of teaching ways, other than the ways of vocabulary teaching, I thought it would be useful if I do further investigation on this point in Phase Three. The findings revealed that the following four items represented the respondents’ conception of using different methods in teaching:

- teaching materials in different ways (this was elaborated on above);
• teaching components of lessons in different order;
• using up-to-date teaching aids;
• using different class activities.

The second aspect regards presenting the components of the lesson in different orders. For example, in reading or listening classes, teachers may give their students the questions before they read or listen; at other times they may give them the questions after reading or during listening.

“When teaching reading, teachers should sometimes teach the new words before reading the passage and in other times they can teach them after reading it. Also in listening, the teacher can sometimes let us read the questions before listening and in other times while listening. In this case I know what my level is when I read the questions before listening and have an idea about the listening and what my level is when reading the questions while listening without having an idea about the listening. The same thing applies in writing. The teacher gives me a topic (writing prompt) that I should write about one day before the test. On the following day she gives me a test in which she asks me to write about that topic that I already have an idea about. In other times the teacher gives me a topic and asks me to write a composition about it in the same class. In this case the teachers can change their teaching methods. (F1)"

The third aspect of variety of teaching ways is using different teaching aids in teaching English. The respondents considered the teaching aids as being one aspect of teaching ways. They mentioned here computer technology, films, cassettes, overhead projectors and the white board. They were especially interested in the use of computer technology in learning English. They practised a variety of exercises in different language skills through English internet sites like www.esl-lab.com, www.readingmatrix.com and http://esl.about.com/cs/listening. They also had the chance to type their compositions and benefited from some electronic features in checking their spelling, grammar and punctuation.

“One of his effective practices was taking us to the computer lab frequently and asking us to access English internet sites.” (FI3)"
“He urges us to use the computer in writing our compositions and papers.” (FI5)

The respondents like to go to the computer labs and use computers; they found learning English through computer technology interesting. It increases their motivation for learning English.

“He should take the students to the computer lab and use computers in teaching because I like studying using computers.” (I15)

“We go to the computer lab two or three times a week so that the class routine might be changed and the class might become more interesting and useful.” (I5)

“She depended on the overhead projector and the powerpoint in her teaching. I believe that this method is successful.” (F12)

“He used modern teaching aids like the computer, video, recorder and the overhead projector which are very important for listening classes.” (I19)

The fourth item regards using different activities in class such as group work, competitions, games, interviews, oral presentations, debates and discussions.

“Among these activities are competitions that helped us for example in grammar.” (I19)

“What makes me understand is the way of teaching such as grouping, teaching aids and teacher’s explanation.” (I7)

“He used video films and other games.” (Q67)

“The teacher made you understand the subject very well and you didn’t need to study it again. What makes me understand is the method of teaching such as grouping, teaching aids and teacher’s explanation.” (FI7)

As we can see, diversifying the teaching methods helped the respondents in understanding better what their teachers presented in the classroom and achieving the desired learning outcomes. Therefore, EFL teachers’ choice of the teaching methodology was seen to be important from the perspective of the participants.

“He uses a variety of teaching methods in order for students to be able to get what the teacher says.” (I1)
He tried to explain a point using different simple methods so that we can understand the meaning.” (115)

From my experience as a teacher I would also like to add that diversifying the teaching methods increases students’ motivation and makes the classes more interesting for them. The fact that the respondents found that using different teaching ways is effective in helping them to understand and learn English may lead to the conclusion that students learn things in different ways. What suits one student may not suit another; they have individual differences that teachers should take into consideration when they choose their teaching ways. This result also reflects the views of McCabe (1995), Hubbard 2001), Murdoch (1997) and Saafin (1999) that using a variety of teaching methods is an important aspect of effective EFL teaching. Teachers should use a variety of suitable instructional methods to keep students interested in the material and meet individual learning styles and preferences (Ruddell, 1997; Pilgreen, 2000). The result is also in line with the view that teachers should use a variety of language activities (Rosenshine and Furst, 1971; Murdoch, 1997; Hubbard, 2001).

b) Using examples

Using examples in teaching was the second sub-category which students commented on as being a suitable teaching way. The respondents valued using as many examples as possible in teaching English.

“She teaches every point and gives examples of it.” (Q39)

“He gives a lot of examples.” (Q43)

Some specified the kind of examples teachers used. They were examples from real life.

“She explains grammar by giving examples from your real life.” (I10)
They indicated that examples clarified ideas and helped them to understand English better.

“He simplified the material and used examples to help us understand.” (F12)

Through examples teachers could make it easier for the participants to understand what is being explained. They might use a word in the right context or use a certain grammatical item in expressing a situation in the real lives of students and making it more personalized.

c) Using a variety of up-to-date teaching aids

Many participants valued the use of teaching aids, especially modern ones. The data collected in Phase Three also indicated that using a variety of teaching ways can mean using different teaching aids. Respondents mentioned several up-to-date teaching aids that good teachers would use in their teaching.

“She depended on the overhead projector and the power point in explaining the points she wanted to talk about. This would increase the enthusiasm of the students and make them like the course.” (F112)

They also mentioned some other kinds of teaching aids such as acting, pictures and the board.

“She acts in order to make students understand.” (Q23)

“Every class he tended to bring with him things to use in his teaching like pictures.” (I14)

“She uses the board in her teaching.” (Q10)

The responses collected from the data indicated that the up-to-date teaching aids attract the learners’ attention and make them more motivated and enthusiastic to learn English. This is consistent with the suggestions of Ruddell (1997) and Pilgreen (2000) that using technology
in classroom helps improve student comprehension and increases their achievement. However, the respondents of the current study actually specified the kinds of technological aids they found useful which were the computer technology, overhead projector, films and cassettes.

d) Holding students’ attention

The respondents perceived effective EFL teachers as being able to hold the attention of their students. They indicated that teachers achieve that through their individual way of teaching. The data showed that one way of holding students’ attention is by giving interesting classes.

“His way of explaining the lessons, ideas and new words is attractive and forces the students to pay attention and listen to him.” (16)

“He has a wonderful style of teaching. He holds my attention. His classes can never be boring.” (Q36)

Also using new ways of teaching that students did not experience before, according to the respondents, held their attention.

“He uses new and unfamiliar ways that holds the attention of students.” (Q 43)

Another thing they mentioned was that teachers could attract their attention when they stopped talking about the lesson for few minutes. This was when the teacher realized that students started to feel bored, and talked about something completely different. In that way, according to the respondents, teachers could hold students’ attention again and resume the lesson.

“She overcomes boredom of repeating things by talking from time to time about something that doesn’t have to do with the class subject. As a result she holds again the attention of students.” (FI1)
Holding students’ attention makes them invest most of their time in learning. They concentrate on what their teachers teach and as a result have a better chance for learning.

“She got hold of the attention of students so they followed what she said until the end. She made you concentrate with her.” (15)

On the other hand, the data showed that failing to get hold of students’ attention may result in losing class control and in consequence failing to achieve the desired learning outcomes.

“Students didn’t pay attention and they chat with each other. He couldn’t hold students’ attention because of his style.” (113)

Paying attention during the lesson is a prerequisite for enabling the teacher to convey the teaching points and for the learner to able to focus and understand what their teachers explained. There are no specific ways that teachers should use in order to hold the attention of their students. Different teachers may follow different ways of doing that. In fact, sometimes it is the style of teaching that is peculiar to a certain teacher that the students find attractive.

e) Asking questions

Some participants considered asking questions as a useful method of teaching in two ways: i) questions involve students in the learning process; ii) they help in holding students’ attention.

“She starts her class everyday by asking a list of questions or giving each student a list of questions to ask her partner.” (115)

“He holds the attention of students by asking questions.” (Q12)

The students who were expected to answer questions may not indulge themselves in any irrelevant and distracting activities such as carrying out private conversations with other
students, but rather they get ready for answering teachers’ questions. In this case students’ involvement changes from passive into active and become directly involved in using or practising English. The perspective that effective teachers use questions is supported by Rosenshine and Furst (1971) in their review of teacher effectiveness research. One of the variables that are seen to distinguish effective and ineffective teachers was using various types of questions. The data in this study though highlighted the importance of both academic questions and general questions through which teachers can interact with students. Through this informal interaction students can use the target language and at the same time make the class more meaningful.

**f) Caring for teaching words**

The respondents considered the teachers who helped them to learn as many words as possible as effective teachers. It was an essential student criterion for teachers’ effectiveness.

“She explains the meaning of all the new words in a simplified way.” (Q32)

It is not only a matter of introducing a wide range of words, but also a matter of how these words are introduced. The teachers should also know how to help students understand the meaning of new words.

“He gives sufficient explanation and explains the meaning of every new word in a good way.” (I20)

When students join the Intensive English Program, the English words are mostly limited and they needed to increase them.

“She gave us words because we needed words a lot so that we can write.” (I5)
Increasing students’ English words would help them in upgrading their level in English. They would be able to express themselves better in speaking and writing and improve their reading and listening comprehension. Words are a very important element in language communication. In fact, a person can communicate with others using words only.

g) Willing to repeat explanations

Many participants indicated that an effective EFL teacher was the one who was willing to repeat explanations. They explain again when students do not understand something. The students might say they do not understand and ask for repetition or the teacher might check whether or not students understand.

“She repeats her explanation when necessary.” (Q13)

“He was willing to repeat his explanations several times until he knows that we understood the lesson.” (I6)

Repetition of teaching is not always in response to a students’ request or because they found out that their students did not understand a certain point. It is an aspect of some teachers’ teaching style. They tend to repeat themselves when explaining things for their students.

“He tended to repeat things during his explanation so that he can make sure that the students understand.” (I3)

Repeating explanation helps students to understand the things they could not understand at the first time and may also improve the understanding of other students who did not face difficulties in understanding things from the first time. Some participants talked about experiencing difficulties in learning English and therefore they believed that students needed their teachers to repeat a part or more of their explanations. When teachers repeat their explanations, they might change the teaching method they used the first time so that students
can understand the lesson. This view coincides with the findings of Blum (1984) in his survey on the research on effective schooling. One of the effective teaching practices he described was that teachers should teach again when students do not understand. Also Saafin (1999) found out that effective teachers would explain again when necessary.

The following three categories represent practices of EFL teachers perceived as ineffective or undesirable by the respondents:

**h) Asking students to do things they did not teach**

The participants mentioned that some teachers sometimes ‘ask students to do things they did not teach’ (يطلب من الطلاب عمل اشياء لم يقوم بتدريسه). They asked students to do certain tasks without giving them the necessary details or explaining how to do them. The students might have not done such tasks before.

“He should teach students how to do things before asking them to do these things. He asked us for example to access the university site or the library site, but he didn’t tell us how.” (I11)

To be able to do certain kinds of task, students need to be shown first how to do them.

“We have never done a presentation before and he didn’t teach us how to do a presentation.” (I18)

Either showing a videotape of students giving presentations or acting as a presenter in front of students in order to demonstrate how to give a good presentation would be very useful for students in this case.

“Every girl should give a presentation. She gave us practice how a student can stand in front of the class.” (I2)
Supposing that students know things is regarded as poor teaching practice. This may result in them doing the tasks inefficiently and inconsistently or even failing to do the task completely. This means failing to achieve the expected learning outcomes.

**i) Giving no actual teaching**

Teachers who did not actually teach what they were supposed to teach were also perceived as ineffective. The participants indicated that some teachers did not really teach. They just ask their students to do exercises or listen to cassettes. This is not enough from students’ perspective. They want their teachers actively to teach, interact and discuss things with them.

“She just stood, opened the book and read. She didn’t explain to us the main rule. She just gave exercises. She should explain the rule and write it on the board.” (I19)

“The teacher should teach and not just ask students to read and then do exercises.” (Q22)

“He should develop his style of teaching. He just put the cassette in the recorder and played it. Then we listen and answer the questions and that’s it. He didn’t try to interact and discuss things with you.” (I12)

The participants expected their teachers to teach in the classroom and exert some effort to help them learn. In order for the teaching and learning process to be effective both teachers and students should be involved.

**j) Following a lecturing style**

As mentioned above, teaching and learning is a two way process. The participants indicated in the previous category that teachers should be involved in teaching and not just leave everything for students to do. At the same time, students did not want teachers to dominate
the class and take up all the class time talking. They want to be involved in learning English through classroom activities.

“There was no method of teaching. We sat down in class and he talked.” (Q55)

“He had lecturing style.” (Q48)

The lecturing style deprives students from playing an active role in the process of learning. Moreover, as indicated in the category ‘minimizing lecturing time’ (6.2.3-a) introduced below, the respondents did not like the lecturing style; they believed it was boring. They wanted their teachers to minimize the lecturing time so that they can have the opportunity to apply what they learned and practise English. This view is consistent with the findings of Ruddell (1997) and Pilgreen (2000) that effective teachers limit the teaching teacher talking time.

6.3.2 Helping Students Understand

‘Helping students to understand’ (يفهم الطلاب) is the second most frequently mentioned category. Almost all the participants emphasized the importance of a teacher’s ability to help students understand. The number of responses classified under this category was 181. There is a consensus among the participants that to judge that a teacher of English as being effective, he/she should be able to make the students understand the lessons or the materials being taught. In fact, there is a strong relationship between this category and the category of teaching ‘ways’ presented above. Both of them aim in some way at helping students understand and learn what they are supposed to learn through adopting different teaching ways. The vast majority of the participants described effective teachers by simply saying that he or she helps them to understand. This view is consistent with the findings of an empirical study by Brosh (1996) that the ability of the teacher to transmit knowledge in a
way that is easy to understand is one of the characteristics of successful FL teachers. Similarly, this result is in line with the findings of Brosh (1996), Saafin (1999) and Hubbard (2001) that effective EFL teachers should be able to provide understandable explanations. Teachers who were perceived as effective practised the following in order to help their students understand better:

a) Checking the understanding of students;
b) Simplifying things;
c) Taking into consideration individual differences and students’ level;
d) Reviewing previous lessons;
e) Speaking clearly at a suitable speed.

a) Checking students’ understanding

Respondents perceived their teachers as effective if they ‘check students’ understanding’ (يتاؤد من فهم الطلاب). They would not explain the next point or lesson before they made sure that students understood what they explained.

“He shouldn’t go to the next lesson until he makes sure that all students understand the current lesson.” (I13)

“He wouldn’t go to the next point until he makes sure that they understood the one before.” (Q56)

Effective teachers may check the understanding of their students by asking them directly whether or not they understood what they explained before moving to the second point.

“He checks the understanding of students.” (I2)

“She would ask if anyone didn’t understand.” (I10)
Checking the understanding of students means that teachers would explain things again in case they find out that students did not understand something. As a result this will help improve students’ language learning. This is especially useful for those students who are sometimes reluctant or feel embarrassed to raise their hands in the classroom in the presence of their classmates and say that they did not understand. Therefore, they like their teachers to check their understanding from time to time.

**b) Simplifying things**

‘Simplifying things’ (بسيط الأشياء) for students is another perceived practice of effective teachers perceived. Respondents mainly talked about simplifying the teaching of materials.

“*She teaches in a simplified and clear way.*” (I7)

“*He simplifies materials.*” (Q6)

Some specified the area in which teacher should simplify things. For them, good teachers simplified teaching difficult words (new words).

“*He makes students understand the meaning of difficult words. He explains them in a simple way.*” (I6)

Respondents found that simplifying the ways of teaching helped them to understand and learn English better. However, although this is in general a fair request, it should not discourage teachers to give challenging materials from time to time. Giving students something above their level is a kind of mental incitement that may make them think more and make their learning experience richer and more interesting.
c) **Taking into consideration individual differences**

Teachers who were perceived as effective had taken students’ individual differences and their level into consideration.

“She takes into consideration students’ level.” (I13)

“He takes into consideration individual differences.” (Q119)

Some of the participants mentioned straightforwardly that students in class did not have the same abilities and same aptitudes and they wanted their teachers to be aware of this and teach them accordingly.

“He knows the abilities of his students. He knows for example you are good at listening and not good at writing.” (I2)

They often stressed that effective teachers would not overlook weak students in the class, but would rather give them special attention and teach them according to their level.

“He tried to develop the abilities of weak students by giving them exercises that suit their level and he helped the stronger students by giving them more difficult exercises.” (FI4)

“He talks at the level of good students and overlooks the weaker ones because they can’t understand.” (I20)

In the light of the group’s level and the individual differences within the group members, teachers who were perceived as effective chose the kind of language, materials and teaching methods that matched students’ abilities.

“He gave us reading comprehension passages that suit our level.” (I24)

“He speaks in a way that suits our level.” (Q162)
Teachers who were perceived as effective considered the abilities and weaknesses of individual students and their paces of learning as well as the level of the whole group and use the language that suits the average level of the class. As a result, the chances of improving the learning of students would be better. This is consistent with the findings of Hubbard’s (2001) research indicating that effective teachers should teach at the different levels and paces of students. Berlin (2001) also states that the effective teachers of English should take into consideration the individual differences of learners in English classes. The view that teachers should give attention to weak students is consistent with the perspective of Page (1992) that teachers should encourage dialogue in the classroom so that lower students can get more opportunities to express themselves.

**d) Reviewing previous lessons**

The respondents mentioned that the teachers that they found effective tended to review previous lessons.

“At the beginning of the class, she reviews what we took before.” (I8)

“He reviews previous material.” (I10)

The participants indicated that having a brief review of the previous lesson at the beginning of the class was useful for them; it helped them to remember, get things clarified and understand previous materials in a better way.

**e) Speaking clearly at a suitable speed**

The vast majority of the teachers who taught in the intensive English programs in the four universities where this research was conducted were native speakers of English from Britain,
the USA, Canada and Australia. Therefore, one of the problems that foreign language learners can face is coping with the rate of speech of the speaker. The participants said that some teachers speak faster than they could follow and as a result students would not be able to understand what their teachers said even if what they said was about something easy.

“One of his problems is that he speaks fast.” (Q23)

On the other hand, the participants indicated that effective EFL teachers made sure that they spoke at a reasonable speed so their students could understand them.

“She speaks clearly and at suitable speed.” (I17)

Another issue of concern was clarity of speech. Students expected good teachers to pronounce words clearly so that they could understand what their teachers say or teach.

“Her words are simple and clear; she pronounces every letter. So you understand what she says.” (FI5)

“Her language is clear and understandable.” (Q45)

As we can see, speaking clearly at a suitable rate helps students to understand what is said to them. Effective teachers take this important issue into consideration when they find out that it hinders their students learning. However, at a later stage, when students have sufficient language competence, I believe that exposing them to different accents and different rates of speech is an advantage because this helps them to understand people from different countries who have different accents and different rates of speech.
6.3.3 Giving Interesting Classes

The third most frequently mentioned category is ‘giving interesting classes’ (الخصائص ممتعة). 147 responses were classified under this category. One of the important differences between effective EFL teachers and ineffective ones is whether or not their classes were seen as interesting. Boredom in English classes is a major concern which the respondents mentioned frequently. It can result in their attention being distracted to other things. The teacher might encounter some class problems; or students would wait impatiently for the class to finish. On the other hand, interesting classes create a better learning atmosphere, engage the attention of students and make them more enthusiastic to participate and exert more effort to learn. This view is in line with Murdoch (1997) and Reber (2001) who state that effective teachers contextualize language work in relation to students’ interest. Also, Hubbard (2001) mentions that effective teachers are interesting. Similarly, McCabe (1995) indicates that teachers should be lively in their interactions with students and their presentation of content.

The participants made it clear what they mean by interesting or boring classes. They mentioned several ways that made the classes of their effective EFL teachers interesting:

a) Selecting a diversity of interesting topics;
b) Not following the same teaching routine;
c) Minimizing lecturing time;
d) Organizing competitions in classroom;
e) Having fun.

Making classes interesting involves exposing learners to a variety of materials and enabling them to use the language in stimulating situations and contexts. The emphasis here is on both making classes interesting and improving the learning outcomes. According to Sheperd
(2000) it is not enough to make classes more interesting. Students should be able to use knowledge in real-world settings.

**a) Selecting a diversity of interesting topics**

Diversifying the materials was perceived as one of the factors in making classes interesting. Students enjoy talking about or researching on the topics that are new and related to their interests and real life. They liked to read about or discuss things about real people and real characters; they enjoyed talking about the traditions of their countries.

“He chooses useful and interesting topics for his classes such as topics about presidents of different countries, the traditions of different people, myths and scientific information.” (FI6)

“She discusses with us interesting and various topics on science, sports, health and art.” (Q29)

“He selected interesting topics for discussion such as marriage in your country that attract you.” (I6)

“He gives us handouts that contain interesting reading topics that make us like reading. For example we read about the famous local football player Adnan Al Tiliani and old industry of ships.” (F5)

As we can see, when the contents are related to the learners’ lives, classes become more enjoyable. These topics, as some of the participants said, attracted them to listen to what the teacher said and motivated them to be involved in classroom discussions. This agrees with the perspective of social constructivism that language teachers provide learners with real-life situations for communication so that they can become familiar with the culture of the foreign language (Williams and Burden, 1997). Selecting interesting materials is also expected from teachers in the natural approach. According to Richards & Rodgers (2001), one of the teacher's roles in the natural approach is to select activities that meet the needs and interest of students.
b) Not following the same teaching routine

Another way of making classes more interesting according to the participants was by ‘not following the same teaching routine’ (لا يدرس بطريقة روتينيه). They indicated that the teacher should not always follow the same teaching ‘ways’ or the same procedures as suggested in the textbook. The data showed that effective teachers were seen by the respondents to change their teaching routine by varying their way of presenting materials.

“He should present the materials in different ways for fear students feel bored.” (Q14)

“He should try to change his way of teaching because routine makes students feel bored.” (I7)

“When students feel bored he would tell us some stories that we enjoy.” (F17)

Even changing the place of teaching was also considered a change of routine. Students do not like to study English the whole day or the whole week in the classroom. They like to go to the computer lab, library, television room, etc.

“She takes us to the television room so that we can develop our listening skills.” (I10)

“She should change the atmosphere of the class by changing the place of the class.” (Q44)

It is clear that teaching students following the same routine all the way through in the same place might make classes boring which might in turn have a negative effect on the language learning outcome. Respondents found that presenting materials in different ways as well as changing the learning physical setting from time to time helped in maintaining their interest in classes.
c) Minimizing lecturing time

In following a lecturing style (6.2.1-a), the respondents indicated that one of the practices of ineffective teachers was talking all the time and leaving the students no chance to discuss, interact or practice English. On the contrary, when teachers avoid talking too much or giving too lengthy explanations, this may contribute to making the class more interesting.

“He shouldn’t give a lengthy explanation.” (I13)

“Long explanation of some teachers was considered a disadvantage. It may lead to boredom and lack of interest.” (Q112)

It would be more useful for learners if teachers minimize their teaching time and let their students do language tasks in their own.

“If the teacher explains and explains, the class will be very boring. We do the exercise and he would help us.” (I18)

Minimizing teaching time gives learners the chance to be involved actively in learning English. They want to have time for active involvement in learning English through practice or doing certain tasks. This implies that the participants wanted to have learner-centred classrooms instead of having teacher-centred classrooms. They should make sure that their classes are interesting enough to attract the attention of their students. This is supported by the view of Good & Brophy (2001) that teachers need to vary activities and limit lecture time to maximize student attention. It is also supported by Ruddell (1997) and Pilgreen (2000). They suggested that to improve student comprehension, to increase literacy abilities, and to increase student achievement, one of the things teachers should do is to limit lecture time.
**d) Organizing competitions in classroom**

Some of the participants talked about having competitions in class. Teachers who were perceived as effective appeared to make students compete with each other.

“He made the class active by holding competitions on what we study. The competition questions helped us a lot in the final exam.” (FI8)

“He organized grammar competitions so that students can benefit and also enjoy the class.” (Q32)

“She organized competitions among groups. This encourages students to respond to lessons and prepare for them.” (I13)

Classroom competitions helped in making the classes more interesting and at the same time motivated students and give them the chance to practise English. In fact, this is one of the important ways in which teachers can create a favourable learning environment that is full of student enthusiasm and in which students can practise the language in a more enjoyable way.

There are several valuable concepts that can be identified in this category and should be highlighted. First, the element of entertainment is perceived as necessary in English classes. Second, language learners preferred materials that are relevant to their real life. Third, teachers should not dominate classes and consume all the class time in talking. Teaching and learning is a two way process in which both students and teachers should be involved.

**e) Having fun**

Many participants emphasized that effective teachers did not make them feel bored in class. From time to time they would use different kinds of activities that have the element of entertainment.

“He should avoid whatever makes the student feel bored. He gives us some entertaining and educational activities.” (Q25)
Beside the entertainment element, these activities give the students a chance to practise speaking English.

“There were a lot of fun and entertainment activities that benefited us and helped us to develop our abilities in the language.” (Q38)

Language games were among those entertaining activities that the participants mentioned. Students could practise English through those games and also enjoy their time in class.

“He should give us interesting and useful games in which students use language skills.” (Q76)

“His classes are interesting. He would ask two students to stand in front of the class and ask them to write English words on the board. The girl who makes a mistake will sit down and another student will compete with the winner.” (F13)

Language learning needs a lot of attention and a lot of practice and this may entail a need for having fun or doing some entertaining activities from time to time so that teachers can continue holding the attention of their students and maintain an interesting learning atmosphere in the classroom. Effective teachers would know when, how long and how often to use entertaining activities in class.

6.3.4 Efficient in Testing

The next three categories are far less frequently mentioned than the categories we had just discussed. The responses classified under this category were 82. Testing is a major issue of concern for students. The score that they get on their exams is of great importance for them. The respondents highlighted the importance of this issue for them in each of the three phases. They identified three testing practices of their perceived teachers:

a) Giving appropriate assessment;

b) Giving exams on a regular basis;
c) Providing test practice.

a) Giving appropriate assessment

One of the concerns of the participants was that the tests should be appropriate. Respondents indicated that the teachers they perceived as effective gave tests that suited their level or ability. The students judge the appropriateness of exams according to their level of difficulty.

“The exams should be within the abilities of students.” (I2)

“Her exams shouldn’t be easy or difficult. They should be average.” (I7)

Another criterion the respondents gave was whether or not the exam was based on what they studied.

“Her exams were based on what we studied in the textbook.” (Q14)

This mainly applies on grammar courses in which teachers are expected to test students on the grammar items they taught in class. However, this may not be always possible in testing other skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking. This is because what concerns teachers and the management after all is the standard of students in English rather than the textbook contents and what they can remember from them. This view that emphasized the importance of exam appropriateness giving is supported by the research of Ramsden (1992) who mentions that effective teachers give appropriate assessment and feedback. However, in this research I identified what the students meant by exam appropriateness. As we saw above, respondents considered exams appropriate when they suit the average level of students and also when they are based on what is actually taught in class.


*b) Giving exams on a regular basis*

The respondents mentioned that they like to have a number of tests during the semester and considered this as one of the practices of effective teachers.

“She gave us vocabulary tests on a weekly basis.” (Q54)

Having a number of tests during the semester appeared to be an incentive for making students work harder and get ready before each test.

“He provides exam practice on a regular basis and this makes us study and do well.” (I10)

Tests also gave students continuous feedback. They identified their weaknesses and then students would work on them.

“He tests us regularly and shows us our weakness points so that we can work on them.” (I12)

Besides, the more exams students had the better chance they would have to improve their grades because many teachers who gave a number of tests or quizzes would count the best three or four ones.

“He gave us exams on a weekly basis so that we can have better chances to raise our marks. We had eleven tests in a sixteen week semester.” (I4)

Giving exams on a regular basis was seen to be useful. Regular exams make students keep up their hard work and continue preparing for them. They also give them feedback on their learning of English. This view is in line with the research of Gusky and Easton (1983) who found that effective teachers provide students regular feedback on their learning progress. This is also consistent with the findings of Saafin (1999) that Arab students in the UAE consider those teachers who give examinations regularly as effective.
c) Providing test practice

‘Providing test practice’ (٨ب٨٢٨٢٨٢٨١٤٠٢٠٢١٢٨٠٨١٤٠٢٨٢٨١٤٠) refers to giving tests to students before major exams (midterm and final exams) for practising purposes only (not necessarily giving scores that are considered as part of students’ official performance evaluation). Providing test practice was appreciated by the respondents and considered to be an effective teaching behaviour. Respondents could be in the form of old but real tests or mock tests. These tests make students familiar with expected exams and the questions that they might include. They believe that these tests made them ready for the major exams.

“He gives us TOEFL exam samples.” (I12)

“Giving us mock exams helps us so that we become familiar with the expected exam questions.” (I19)

“ She provided us with forms and exercises that contain questions expected in the exam.” (Q13)

Exam practice helps students in developing their exam skills and giving them more confidence in themselves. It also makes them ready for their exams and gives them a better chance to do well in them.

The respondents in this category were concerned very much with exam results which were used in making passing and failing decision as well as staying in the intensive English program or exiting from it and starting their career programs which they aspired to. Therefore, the respondents highlighted the importance of suitability, regularity and practice of exams that may help them to get better results.
6.3.5 Giving Homework

The second category that was far less mentioned than other categories is giving homework. The responses classified under this category were 62. The respondents indicated that good teachers would give them homework and other forms of assignments. One of the practices that the respondents highlighted was giving homework on a regular basis.

“She gave us homework on daily basis so that we can improve in English.” (I13)

Another practice was marking homework which was considered important. Some respondents believe that giving homework without checking it was a waste of time for them.

“He gave us homework, marked it and asked us to do it again.” (Q41)

“He gives a lot of homework and class activities that help the student to learn and understand. He would follow them up.” (I17)

“He gives a lot of homework but he doesn’t check it. We just waste our time.” (I9)

Some said that giving marks on homework encouraged them to do it. This supports what was mentioned in the above category that scores are very important for the students.

“He encourages students to do the homework. He gives a mark one each homework.” (I19)

Some students may not work or study at home unless they are given something to do. Some respondents indicated that homework made them work harder.

“She gives special care to homework and this makes the students work harder.” (Q94)

Some teachers went further by discussing the homework with their students. The respondents found homework discussion useful because they gave them feedback on their work and gave them the chance to participate in classroom discussions and use the language.
“He gives homework and discusses it in class. This makes students participate actively in class.” (I2)

The respondents appeared to recognize the benefits of homework in improving their English. It gave them the chance to apply or practise what they learned in class. This result is consistent with the findings of Saafin (1999) that effective EFL teachers give homework on a regular basis. However, in this study I talked about the usefulness of homework from the perspective of learners and also highlighted some favoured practices in administering homework.

6.3.6 Benefited Students in Learning English

The third category that was far less mentioned than the categories I had discussed is ‘benefiting students’ (فائدته منا الطلاب). The responses classified under this category were 56. These responses talked about the importance of students ending up with learning or improving their English as a result of their teachers’ teaching. It is like a summary or conclusion of the productivity of their teachers. The fruitfulness of the teaching skills of teachers counts after all as an important aspect of teaching effectiveness. Whether or not teachers managed to help students improve their English is one of the ways students use to judge the effectiveness of their teachers.

“We improved a lot as a result of the teaching practices and activities.” (Q10)

“He helped a lot in upgrading the level of students.” (Q32)

“Students start to feel that their level in English starts to improve.” (I10)

The respondents sometimes talked about this in a more specific way. They gave examples of what they learned as a result of the effective teaching of certain teachers. They would say a certain teacher was an effective teacher because s/he benefited them a lot in improving their
writing skill. Now we can write different kinds of compositions. They might also say that another teacher was a bad teacher because s/he did not help them in improving their English. They might say that they did not learn anything from her/him.

“I benefited a lot in this course. Now I can write different compositions.” (I19)

“My writing skill has developed. At the beginning of the semester my mark was 40% but at the end of the semester it was 85%.” (I16)

“Every day, he provides us with new words and expressions that benefit us in our daily life and our writings.” (Q119)

“He helped me a lot in increasing my vocabulary.” (Q121)

As we can see, when respondents managed to upgrade their level in English in a certain course, they would say that this was due to the good teaching skills of their teachers and would in this case consider them effective. On the other hand, when they felt that they gained very little during the English course, they would say that the teachers were useless. The respondents expected their teachers to be useful and productive after all.

6.3.7 Investing Class Time Efficiently

The next two categories are the least frequently mentioned among the categories I had discussed above. The number of responses given for investing class time efficiently was 31. According to the respondents, good teachers would devote class time for the process of teaching and learning in the classroom. The respondents said that good teachers spend class time in teaching and helping students in their learning.

“She cares about time; she doesn’t waste time because she wants to do her job.” (I3)

“He didn’t talk about things that are irrelevant to the subject.” (Q161)
The respondents also experienced ineffective teachers and gave examples of how those teachers wasted class time. They mostly wasted the time by talking about irrelevant things such as personal matters.

“This teacher was not effective. She tended to teach in the last five minutes and talk about her personal life in the rest of the class.” (I10)

“He likes to speak a lot in class about his family and waste the time of the class.” (I12)

“She kept sitting down. She was curious to know about us in the United Arab Emirates. If we talked about something that doesn’t have to do with our lesson she couldn’t get back to the lesson.” (I9)

Some mentioned that some of the ineffective teachers tended not to give complete classes. A class is supposed to be 50 minutes, but they taught for less than this.

“She was careless in teaching the course. She didn’t give us complete classes. She gave half an hour or forty minutes and that’s it.” (I5)

The core of the responses collected was about the necessity of investing the time in teaching and learning. Good teachers would devote all class time for teaching and learning English. This would maximize students’ opportunities to benefit from the assigned time and learn English. This is consistent with the findings of Medley (1979) that effective and ineffective teachers differ on use of student time. It is also supported by Blum’s (1984) comprehensive survey of research on effective schooling that mentioned that one of the effective teaching practices was that class time should be used for learning.

6.3.8 Being Well Prepared

Interestingly, being well prepared was the category mentioned least frequently. The number of responses given under this category was 29. In this category, the respondents indicated directly that effective teachers were well prepared.
“He prepares the lesson well before he comes to class.” (Q23)

“The teacher should prepare something for us.” (I15)

“When he got into the class, he would sit down for ten minutes flipping the pages of the book. He didn’t have any specific thing to give us.” (I13)

The importance of teachers’ preparation is supported by Easton’s (1983) research who found that effective teachers spend considerable time planning and organizing their courses, objectives and criteria. Hubbard’s (2001) research was consistent with this outcome. It stated stating that effective teachers should be organized and prepared. Similarly, Murdoch (1997) indicated that one of the features of effective EFL teaching was planning carefully and flexibly.

The low frequency of this category should not mean though that students underestimate teachers’ preparedness; it could mean that learners have priorities. What is important for them after all is teachers’ ability to teach, help them to understand and improve in English. Being well prepared may help the teachers in increasing the effectiveness of their teaching, but it does not necessarily guarantee they will achieve this effectiveness. However, I can say that many of the categories that the respondents identified as very important characteristics and practices of effective EFL teachers needed preparation from the teachers if they are to be done or practised correctly and effectively.

It can be reasonably concluded from my research that respondents considered the teachers’ choice of ‘teaching ways’ as one of the aspects of their effectiveness. It is extremely important for the EFL teachers perceived as effective, in order for them to be seen as effective, that they use the ‘teaching ways’ that suit students and help them to learn English.
6.4 Learning Resources

Although the teaching skills of teachers were very important parameters for effective teaching from the perspective of Arab students, respondents of this study also highlighted four other dimensions that constituted the theme of instructional skills. Learning resources is one of these dimensions. Respondents expected effective teachers to be not only good at teaching English but also to enable them to benefit from different learning resources beside the textbook so that they could have a better opportunity to develop their English language skills and upgrade their level in this language. The following Table shows the categories classified under the learning resource dimension and their frequency. As we can see in Table 6.2, the category of giving handouts and worksheets is the most frequently mentioned category, while the other two categories were much less frequent. However, their frequencies can still be considered high.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Giving handouts and worksheets</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Using computer technology</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Investing library resources</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.4.1 Giving Handouts and Worksheets

Giving handouts and worksheets from outside the textbook was emphasized by most of the participants in this study. This category was given 177 responses. Respondents found that these materials matched with their level and met their needs better than the textbook. These materials were either photocopied from other resources or created by their teachers. The
respondents described the aspects of the handouts and worksheets they got from their teachers as follows:

a) Diversity of materials;
b) Found to be more useful for learning English than textbooks;
c) Containing a lot of practice.

**a) Diversity of materials**

One of the aspects of the handouts the respondents talked about was that they contained a diversity of materials. They appreciated it when their teachers tried to diversify the learning resources.

“He uses a diversity of the learning resources.” (Q12)

“She brought us reading materials from the internet, magazines and the newspapers.” (Q12)

The topics and information that those materials contained were most likely to be up-to-date because the resources that they were collected from were periodicals such as magazines and newspapers or updated regularly such as the computer internet. The respondents found these materials useful in learning English. Through this diversity of material students were exposed to a variety of learning resources through which the contents were presented to them in different styles and different methods. Handouts and worksheets may meet the needs of certain groups of students, match their level, expose them to new information and give them a better chance to learn English. This is supported by the findings of Saafin (1999) that teachers should go beyond the curriculum and give additional information.
b) Found to be more useful for learning English than textbooks

The four places where the study was conducted used different textbooks for different levels which means that the students talked about a great variety of textbooks which were mostly published by international publishers and they were common among intensive English programs. Moreover, the management of these programs often changed some of the textbooks annually in response to the feedback mainly collected from teachers. This means that the students were giving their opinion on a wide range of textbooks. Although these textbooks are changed and updated on regular basis, the students still did not like most of them and considered them not very useful or interesting.

“He shouldn’t be a slave of the textbook.” (I19)

“He gave us lessons from outside the boring textbook.” (Q101)

One of criticisms of textbooks was that textbooks have the same components and follow the same procedures and the same teaching routine in each chapter or unit.

“...textbooks follow the same style.” (I1)

In addition, respondents believed that textbooks might not have all the advantages that handouts have. They said that their perceived effective teachers gave them handouts that helped them to understand better and improve their English.

“He gives easy handouts from outside the textbook that help all students understand.” (Q55)

“He gives us worksheets that help us in conversation.” (Q42)

“She gives students reading materials from outside the book as homework. This would help students to improve their reading skill and increase their vocabulary.” (I6)

“She let us listen to texts from outside the textbook.” (Q23)
The respondents talked about the usefulness of these handouts in helping them to understand things, developing their reading and listening skills and increasing their vocabulary. The handouts addressed the participants’ needs much better than textbooks and this affected their learning positively. They contained a wide range of different materials that they liked and made them more enthusiastic and interested in learning English. The view of the participants on the little usefulness of the available textbooks is supported by the view of Anderson (2003) who explained in the introduction of his four reading textbooks why he decided to write the ACTIVE reading textbook series.

“In May 2000, I was sitting at a swimming pool in Melaka, Malaysia, with my colleague and friend David Nunan, and John Lowe from Thomson Learning. We started talking about my interest in reading, and in the lack of a good EFL reading series. That’s when the idea for ACTIVE Skills for Reading began.”

This does not necessarily mean that that student will like his books. The important issue here is that one of the textbook authors admitted that reading textbooks are not very good. This might be the case with textbooks on other skills.

c) **Containing a lot of practice**

The respondents believed that handouts enable them to practise the language more than their own textbooks.

“He should use as many exercises and practices as he can from outside the textbook. These materials are more useful than the textbook itself.” (I13)

“He gave us a lot of exercises and activities that helped us to understand.” (I1)
“He gave us class activities from outside the textbook. He didn’t use the textbook a lot because it was useless.” (I12)

“She gave us a lot of exercises on reading passages and this helped us a lot in leaning English.” (FI6)

Having ample practice was crucial for developing the respondents’ English language skills. They favoured the handouts and worksheets that contained a lot of exercises and activities that they found more useful and interesting than the textbooks and provided them with better practice opportunities that help them to improve their English. Engaging learners in a variety of language tasks and maximizing language practice through different kinds of activities that handouts contained was very vital for the respondents in learning English. This perspective is supported by the findings of Rosenshine and Furst (1971) and Hubbard (2001) that revealed that teachers should give a variety of activities. This was also supported by Murdoch’s (1997) research conducted in the UAE that effective teachers would present a varied package of language activities. Teachers need to vary activities and limit lecture time to maximize student attention (Good & Brophy, 2001). However, they did not indicate that their findings question the appropriateness or usefulness of EFL textbooks.

**6.4.2 Using Computer Technology**

The next two categories were less frequently mentioned than the first category that we have just discussed. Ninety-four responses were collected under this category. This frequency is still considered high. It reflects how important computer technology in learning English is from the perspective of the study participants. In fact, the four universities where the current study was conducted provided computer technology service to all students. This means that the respondents’ views about this category were based on practical experience. They considered the EFL teachers who used computer technology in teaching English and enabled

“One of his effective practices was taking us to the computer lab frequently and asking us to access English internet sites.” (FI3)

The respondents indicated that they used word processing programs in producing their compositions. They also used the internet in researching certain topics and collecting the necessary information for English language projects such as presentations, discussions and research papers.

“He asks us to use the computer in writing our compositions [using word processing] and papers [using internet for securing information].” (FI5)

In some of the universities where the respondents came from the computer service was not provided in the same classroom, as some of them did, but rather they had to go to the computer labs that belong to the English language centres. The change of the classroom or the physical location was considered by the respondents to be a change of the classroom routine and this was what students liked to do from time to time.

“We go to the computer lab two or three times a week so that the class routine might be changed and the class might become more interesting and useful.” (I5)

Some said that they just liked to study using the computer. The computer technology makes them more enthusiastic to learn English.
He should take the students to the computer lab and use computers in teaching because I like studying using computers.” (I15)

The respondents liked to use computer technology for two main reasons. First, they believed that it was one of the useful learning resources through which they can improve their English. Second, it was something very interesting for them to use. It is very clear that they enjoyed using the computers. This technology made them more enthusiastic and motivated to learn. This was supported by the view of Ruddell (1997) and Pilgreen (2000) who state that to improve student comprehension, to increase literacy abilities, and to increase student achievement, one of the things that teachers should do is use technology in the classroom.

6.4.3 Investing Library Resources

84 responses were collected under this category. According to the participants, effective teachers would help their students to benefit from the library resources through different activities; the most emphasized activity was doing extensive reading, which students could not do through their textbooks. It was mainly reading stories and may be writing a book report about each story they read.

“He takes us on Mondays to the library to read books in English and we benefit a lot from this” (I6)

Another way their teachers tended to follow was showing students films from the library, discussing them afterwards and maybe asking students to write a summary of these films.

“He gives us stories to read and discuss and shows us films and we give a summary of the film.” (I17)

“She takes us to the television room so that we can develop our listening skills.” (I4)
A third way was giving them an assignment in which they should collect information about a certain topic.

“She takes us to the library and asks us to look for the information she wants.” (Q21)

“She also took us to the library and we would for example write a report about it.” (I16)

The participants recognized the fruitfulness of the library learning resources in learning English. They appreciated it when teachers got them to the library and enabled them to use its English learning resources. At the same time, moving from the classroom to the library was considered to be a necessary change of the classroom routine and atmosphere than may give learners more energy for learning.

6.5 Interaction

The third dimension of instructional skills theme is interaction. Respondents highlighted the importance of interaction in learning English. They talked continuously about the usefulness of enabling them to interact with others using the target language. As we are going to see below, respondents straightforwardly said that if they did not use English, they would not be able to learn it. They also found the activities in which they had the chance to interact with others more interesting than other learning activities. The following Table shows the categories classified under the interaction dimension and their frequency. As we can see in Table 6.3, the category of enabling students to practise speaking English is the most frequently mentioned category, while the other two categories were much less frequent.
### Table 6.4: The categories classified under the interaction dimension and their rate of frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Enabling students to practise speaking English</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Making students work in groups</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Getting everyone involved</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.5.1 Enabling Students to Practise Speaking English

The number of responses given for this category was 123. It was the highest frequency, over twice as many as the other categories under the same dimension. According to the participants, those teachers who gave the chance to students to speak English (يعطى الفرصة للطلاب للتحدث باللغة الإنجليزية) were deemed to be effective. The participants strongly emphasized the significance of practising speaking English inside and outside class. They indicated that using English helped them to develop their language. You may not be able to learn the language if you do not have the chance to speak it. Learners could employ what they learned in a variety of speaking activities.

“If I do not speak, I will not be able to learn the language, but if I speak and make mistakes and the teacher corrects my mistakes constantly I then will learn from my mistakes and learn the language.” (F2)

Some respondents went a little further and considered speaking as the most important one among other language skills.

“What I need after all is to be able to speak English more than anything else. I learn reading and writing, but after all the most important thing is speaking.” (F1)

They were especially interested in authentic tasks such as oral presentations, interviews, debates and discussions that enable students to create meaning, show their creativity and practise in higher level thinking skills. They had a sense of joy when they use a different
language in communicating with others; they became involved in using the language in a more authentic style; this because they started to use English in talking about real things or situations.

“T: Do you remember one of her successful classes?”
“SI: Yes, debating class in which students choose one of the exciting topics. She divides up the class into four groups and we talk for example about using animals in circus or the man’s responsibility of the extinction of certain animals. Each two groups have the same subject. She gives us five minutes to talk with our group members and write down the main points and after that we start debating.” (II)

The respondents of this study believed that the best way of developing speaking skill is by enabling learners to use it in interacting with others and expressing their feeling and talking about their interests, ideas, opinions and personal life with minimum interference from their teachers. The more they practise the target language and are involved in real situations and authentic interaction such as discussions, group work and interviews, the better learning outcomes they would achieve. This is consistent with one of the implications of social constructivism that language is mainly communication and so it is not enough to know it, but rather to use it (Williams and Burden, 1997). This matches with what the respondents said above, “If I do not speak, I will not be able to learn the language.” It is not enough for them to know grammar rules, write well and understand English; they wanted to communicate with others in English. They believed that by using the target language they could learn it better. This is also consistent with Reber’s (2001) research stating that the effective FL teacher provides opportunities for students to use the TL both within and beyond the school setting. Besides, as we are going to see below, the findings of this study gave specific speaking practices that the respondents considered very useful in helping them to learn English.

Respondents indicated that enabling them to speak English and communicate with others does not only help them to improve their language and learn from the mistakes they made but
also they found it something interesting to use the language and talk with others. It is like learning how to drive a car. When trainees move from the theoretical phase in which they learn traffic rules and other mechanical issues to practising driving the car in the city streets, they start driving with a lot of fear, anxiety and lack of confidence. By time they would gain confidence and find it exciting to drive the car on their own and go anywhere they like to go to. Language learning from the perspective of the respondents appeared to be similar to driving a car. They first learn words, grammar rules, etc. and then they wanted to use what they learned. However, when they start using the language, some of them felt worried especially when they make mistakes and needed their teachers’ support, but later on they would find it useful to use the language in their interaction with others and upgrading their level in it as well as interesting because they could talk about anything they wanted to talk about. EFL teachers who were perceived as being effective, used the following ways so that they could enable their students to practise the speaking skills:

a) Facilitating classroom discussions;

b) Giving the chance for students to talk about themselves;

c) Involving students in authentic speaking projects;

d) Allowing students to ask and answer questions;

e) Communicating with students in English;

f) Correcting students’ speaking mistakes.

**a) Facilitating classroom discussions**

Facilitating classroom discussions is one of the things that effective teachers would do. The respondents mentioned that their good teachers selected topics from real life that they found interesting to discuss.
“She would give us topics to discuss from our present life. For example we visited women in prison and then discussed that issue. What would make a woman deviate from the right track. I like it. What we discussed were new issues because we learn about something happened. She gave us interesting things.” (I16)

“He gave us the chance to express our opinion and discuss interesting topics such as body organ donation and common diseases.” (I11)

The participants found classroom discussions useful in learning English. They help them in increasing their vocabulary.

“When I have an English lesson, it will be limited and I will not learn words other than the ones included in the lesson, but when I try to express my opinion I will learn new words.” (I12)

Some indicated that these discussions were not only useful, but also encourage them to speak in English.

“He invites the students for discussion and expressing their opinions. In this case students learn how to use the language and would be brave enough to speak in English.” (I17)

The participants would like to be involved in classroom discussions through which they can express their opinions using the target language. What made such discussions interesting and enjoyable for them was when they talk about topics from their real life. Classroom discussions gave them the chance to develop their speaking skill and improve their English. They also made them take more risks in speaking in English with other students. Some language learners may feel worried when they start using the target language at the presence of their teachers and classmates and they would even become more worried when they make mistakes or stumble in words, but when they are given the chance to discuss and say their opinions on a regular basis with full support from their teachers, they would be encouraged to speak and interact with others. Hamachek (1969), Gusky and Easton (1983) and Blum (1984) agree that effective teachers would encourage student involvement throughout
lectures and in group discussions. Rosenshine and Furst (1971) also state that good teachers acknowledge and encourage students’ ideas during discussion. The findings of the current study elaborated more on how classroom discussions are useful for students and what kind of topics the students found more interesting to talk about.

b) **Giving the chance for the students to talk about themselves**

Another effective teacher behaviour that respondents mentioned was giving them the chance to talk about themselves in the classroom.

“He would sit down with us and let us express ourselves.” (I15)

“She let us talk about what happened to us the day before.” (Q83)

“He tended to ask each student every Saturday, the beginning of the week, to talk about what he or she did on the weekend. This was a chance to practise speaking, so there was a chance for talking.” (I3)

Some mentioned that one of their preferred teachers tended to go with them to the cafeteria where they talked about themselves and other personal issues.

“Every three weeks we tended to go with our teacher to the cafeteria and talk about our food or our life.” (I17)

The participants were interested in talking about themselves using the target language inside and outside the classroom. It was important for them to be able to express their feelings or personal life in English. Personalization of the language made learning more realistic as well as interesting for language learners. They used the language in this case in a genuine manner to express themselves and talk about their own life. They did not talk here about other countries or other people. They talked about themselves in English. They used the language for a more realistic function which was communication and expressing their needs, feelings,
thoughts, and families and not for academic reasons as they usually do in classrooms. The findings here show that other places outside the classroom are also good places for learning. Going to the cafeteria with their teacher might not appear to be of any learning value, but in fact the respondents found it to be a comfortable setting where they could talk about their life and interact with others in a more realistic situation in a real location. This is another good opportunity for the students to practise speaking English.

This is supported by Murdoch’s (1997) research stating that effective teachers provide ‘space’ for students to interact and ask/answer questions. They are also consistent with the view of Page (1992) that one way that teachers can increase their effectiveness is by engaging and encouraging dialogue in the classroom. Less able students do not get many opportunities to express themselves or to share their opinions and feedback. According to Rogers’ (1969) humanistic approach, in order for learning to take place, it should be seen of personal relevance for the learners who should play an active role in their learning. Also Mercer (2002) indicated that in order for the students to learn a language, they need to practise it with others in classroom and outside the classroom in social contexts.

c) Involving students in authentic speaking projects

Speaking projects were highlighted by the respondents. One of these speaking projects is the presentation. The students were asked to give a presentation on a certain topic. After collecting the necessary information about these topics, the students were expected to stand in front of their class and give their presentations.

“Every girl should give a presentation. She gave us practice how a student can stand in front of the class and speak about her friend. On the day of the presentation she would give us a list of questions about the presentation. After the presentation we see if her voice was loud enough and if the information was ok.” (117)
Another form of these speaking projects was interviews. The students are asked to prepare a list of questions and interview one of the teachers, staff, students or people from outside the university. After doing these interviews, they report them to the class.

“She asks us to interview one of the teachers; we give a presentation to the class on it.” (I15)

A third form of these projects was internet research. The students were asked to collect information on a certain topic from the internet and then come to class and discuss it with other students.

“He would ask us to do a small internet research on one of these interesting topics and then bring the research to class for discussion. We studied these topics and learned words. This was wonderful and made us enjoy it.” (I20)

These projects were seen to help them in improving their English and developing their speaking skills. They benefited the respondents in increasing their vocabulary in the topics they researched and then presented in class. Also interviewing people encouraged them to talk to other people in groups and individually using the target language. The respondents indicated that these projects are exciting for them. As we mentioned above, making classes interesting is one of the characteristics of effective teaching. According to Sheperd (2000), learning should be authentic and related to the world outside the classroom. It is not enough to make classes more interesting. Students should be able to use knowledge in real-world settings. This view is also consistent with the perspective of the cognitive approach in which the learner is considered as an active participant who is involved in the learning process of the target language. Learners can learn a language more readily if they are engaged in meaningful activities in which they use the target language (Williams and Burden, 1997; Wong-Fillmore, 1985).
d) Allowing students to ask and answer questions

As it was shown in ‘uses suitable teaching methods’ (6.2.1) the participants liked the teachers who ask questions. Similarly here, they liked the teachers who let them ask and answer questions.

“She accepts all kinds of questions even if they were repeated.” (Q32)

“She gives each student the chance to ask and answer questions.” (Q86)

“When we ask him a question, he would be angry or give you a certain look. He considered our questions silly.” (I7)

Effective EFL teachers welcomed all kinds of students’ questions. Through questions learners can get the necessary knowledge from teachers and at the same time answering questions by students give them the chance to communicate in English and thus practise the target language. This result is in line with Murdoch’s (1997) and Saafin’s (1999) research findings that one of the key features of good classroom practices is providing ‘space’ for students to interact and ask/answer questions.

e) Communicating with students in English

Some participants said that good teachers would not communicate with them in Arabic, in case they were native speakers of Arabic.

“She speaks with us in English only and as a result she forces us to deal with her in English.” (I5)

“She doesn’t allow students to speak Arabic in class and this helped us to develop our speaking skill.” (I16)

One of the major purposes of dividing up the class into small groups is to enable as many students as possible practise the target language. However, some students would abuse this
opportunity and resort to their mother tongue which was Arabic. Some respondents mentioned that their perceived effective teachers would not allow them to speak Arabic in class or when they worked in groups.

“He shouldn’t allow students to speak Arabic especially when they are divided into groups.” (Q33)

Communicating with students in English and making students communicate with each other in class in English gives students a better chance to practice speaking the target language. Respondents considered it necessary for teachers to discourage students to resort to Arabic instead of English in group discussions or any other forms of classroom interactions, otherwise students will be deprived from one of the few opportunities to practice English. This agrees with the perspective of the direct method of teaching. Effective teachers in this method are expected to encourage their students to think and communicate in the target language. This view is also consistent with the findings of Reber (2001) that good teachers use the target language as the predominant means of classroom communication.

f) Correcting students’ speaking mistakes

Some respondents mentioned that the EFL teachers they perceive as being effective tended to correct their mistakes that they made when they spoke English.

“He would correct our speaking mistakes.” (I14)

“Whenever we speak English she tended to correct our grammar.” (I8)

“If one of us made a mistake in grammar she would correct it and explain the rule.” (I9)

The respondents would like their teachers to correct their mistakes. They did not mind correcting them when they occur and in front of the class. They said that they came to class
to learn and if their teachers did not correct their mistakes directly and told them what was correct, they might not learn.

“If I do not speak, I will not be able to learn the language, but if I speak and make mistakes and the teacher corrects my mistakes constantly, I then will learn from my mistakes and learn the language.” (F2)

“What is required from the teacher is to teach you and if he does not correct your mistakes, he in this case did nothing.” (F3)

Some said that some teachers would correct their mistakes indirectly.

“There was a teacher who tended to collect the common mistakes we make and type them on a sheet of paper and asks us to correct them.” (Q35)

The respondents wanted their teachers to correct their mistakes when they occurred. They considered correcting their mistakes useful for them in improving their English. This view is consistent with one of the outcomes of SLA research regarding the usefulness of corrective feedback in language learning. It would appear that effective teachers should give corrective feedback to their students when they make mistakes because it can help FL learners produce more correct utterances in the TL. For example, Carroll & Swain, (1993) concluded in their study that not only the explicit forms but also implicit forms of feedback led to learning. This view is also in line with the perspective of the community language learning method of teaching in which teachers should give corrective feedback to students in a non-threatening supportive environment.

As we can see, the respondents emphasized the speaking skill more any other. They greatly appreciated speaking in English and would appreciate it highly when teachers give them the chance to speaking in the target language especially when they personalize the language and talk about themselves and their own life. This highlights the importance of giving some of
the class time for learners to learn on their own. The role of the teacher in this case will change into that of a consultant role rather than an authoritative figure.

6.5.2 Making Students Work in Groups

The results of this research showed that effective teachers would make their students work in groups. The data contained 51 responses under this category. In these responses respondents talked about making students work in groups as one of the effective teaching behaviours of their teachers.

“He divided the class into groups and then one of us reported our discussion to the class.” (I14)

Many respondents strongly stressed the usefulness of group work in learning English. Some indicated that group work gave them a better chance to speak in English and discuss things. Everybody in groups have the chance to talk and participate while in class work fewer students have the chance to speak. They also felt more comfortable to speak in a group rather than talking to the whole class. Group work encourages timid or shy students who shun from classroom participation to speak and interact with the members of their group.

“She divides up the class into two groups that discuss a certain topic or ask general information questions. This helps us to speak better and makes us more courageous to do any thing.” (I17)

Some indicated that group work helped them to understand the lesson or point being taught.

“He sometimes divides up the class into groups and this helps us to understand better.” (Q44)

Some others indicated that students could help each other through group work. It is a very good chance for weak students to get the amount of help they needed from more able peers.
“He divides up the class into groups and let them help each other especially weak students.” (I3)

The participants found group work very useful in learning English. It gave them a good chance to practise the language and help each other. This perspective is supported by Hamachek (1969) who reviewed the available literature about the characteristics of good teachers and listed several personal characteristics one of which was the ability to relate students one-to-one or in a group. It is also in line with the view of Gusky and Easton’s (1983), Blum (1984) and Reber’s (2001) that effective teachers encourage student involvement throughout lectures and in group discussions. This also coincided with the findings of Ruddell (1997) and Pilgreen (2000) who state that effective teachers use cooperative learning. In addition, the SLA research perspective puts a lot of emphasis on the importance of group work in teaching and learning a language. The role of group work in classroom FL learning has been found to enhance SLA from a pedagogical perspective (Long & Porter, 1985). When a learner has the information that another learner doesn't have, he or she is likely to make sure that the other learner knows it so that they can complete the task (Long, 1980; Long, 1981; Long, 1983; Pica & Doughty, 1985a). The social constructivist approach is also in line with this perspective. According to Mercer (2002), the social constructivist perspective considers group activities in classroom very useful in the sense that they give learners a good chance to practise, use the language in different ways and think collectively.

6.5.3 Gets Everyone Involved

The number of responses given under this category was 50. Many respondents mentioned that they would like to be active participants in English classes and not passive ones.
“She tries to involve all students. She doesn’t want students to listen only but rather listen and participate.” (I9)

Playing an active role in learning English made them more excited about learning English while being passive learners may make them feel bored and lose interest in class.

“He should ask the students and involve them in discussion otherwise his class will be boring.” (I6)

“We listened to what he said but there was no participation. He asked and answered at the same time.” (I8)

Some talked about how their teachers involved them.

“We spend the time of the class in working, answering and practicing.” (Q85)

“He asks questions or gives exercises and this makes students interact with him.” (I5)

“After explaining the lesson, she involves us by writing on the board.” (Q30)

The respondents found that involving them in classroom activities and keeping them busy was interesting and useful in learning English. Effective teachers would try to make all students participate and interact with their teachers and classmates. Student involvement is considered to be necessary by language learners as well as it is one of the basic teaching principles in teacher training programs. This is supported by the view of Hamachek (1969), Gusky and Easton (1983) and Blum (1984) who state that effective teachers encourage student involvement. It is also supported by Ramsden’s (1992) research that one of the principles of effective teaching at a university level is encouraging active engagement.
6.6 Management

The following table shows the categories and their rate of frequency that I classified under the management dimension. These categories reflected the effectiveness of EFL teachers from the perspective of the participants.

Table 6.5: The categories classified under the management dimension and their rate of frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Classroom control</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Punctuality</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Implementation of rules</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These categories were far less mentioned overall than those categories in the other discussions. However, they are still important from the perspective of management people and teaching training programs. That some respondents talked about such categories reflected their ability to give feedback on important issues that concern the management and trainers as well as students.

6.6.1 Classroom Control

Classroom control is the major category under the dimension management. This category is the most frequently mentioned among other categories classified under management dimension. The number of responses I collected from the data under this category was 41 which indicated that the most important aspect of the management of EFL effective teachers from the respondents’ perspective was their ability to maintain class control. They indicated that the teachers’ personality is a major element in helping them to control their classrooms.
“He should control the class and manifest his strong personality from day one.” (I13)

“They would not let you talk with your neighbour; they held our attention.” (I13)

“He had a weak personality. We sat down at the back joking, laughing and talking.” (I11)

Some said that good teachers know how to deal with disruptive students in the classroom.

“He should control the students. Some students are out of control and talk a lot. He should be strict with them.” (I15)

“He didn’t like noise and if a student tries to make noise he knows how to deal with him.” (I19)

The respondents believed that maintaining class control creates a suitable atmosphere for learning English.

“She had the ability to control the class. I also noticed that she managed to control those students who tend to chat in other classes and this gives the class a better chance for learning.” (I14)

“I didn’t like teacher number eight. There was no class control. If there is class control learning will occur.” (I17)

When teachers control their classes, they can maintain a good learning atmosphere in the classroom. You cannot learn properly when you have some students who make noise in class and distract the rest of the class. Therefore, it was significant for the respondents that their teachers could maintain class control so that they can maintain learning environment in which they can learn English. This is in line with the view of Good and Brophy (2001) who state that teachers should be able to make students conform to certain rules and procedures that are designed to support instruction. Wong and Wong (1991) indicate an effective teacher is a good class manager who organizes students, materials and time so that teaching and learning can take place. However, this does not mean that teachers should maintain an absolute class control with which students may not be able to interact with each other or with...
the teacher. Teachers should control their classes as much as it is necessary for maintaining a good learning environment. In other words, there is no need for over controlling the class and excessive use of teachers’ authority especially in dealing with students at a university level. Students need to have a sense of freedom in their class. According to Page (1992) one way that teachers can increase their effectiveness is by replacing heavy-handed control with more ambiguity and freedom. Gettinger (1988) and Jones (1996) also state that in stead of concentrating on being authority figures, teachers should approach classroom management as a process of establishing and maintaining an effective learning environment.

6.6.2 Punctuality

The next two categories were far less frequently mentioned than the category I have just discussed. I collected 21 responses under this category. However, it was still an issue for some respondents.

“He tended to come to class on time.” (I1)

“He starts the class on time and finishes it on time.” (I4)

“He was punctual in coming to class.” (Q25)

Punctuality is a sign of effectiveness from the perspective of some of the respondents. Effective teachers set good examples for their students by being punctual. If teachers expect students to be punctual, teachers as well should be punctual. At the same time, as it was indicated under the category ‘invest class time’, many students don’t like their class time to be wasted.
6.6.3 Implementation of Rules

As we are going to see in chapter 7 the category 7.2.5 ‘being flexible and willing to compromise’, 60 responses were classified under that category which means a wider range of the respondents wanted their teachers to be willing to compromise especially in implanting attendance rules and considered this as an aspect of effective teachers. However, I collected 17 responses that opposed this tendency and highlighted the need for teachers to be strict in observing the rules.

“He was strict in observing the rules.” (Q34)

“He implemented the rules of the university accurately.” (Q49)

Some other respondents specified the rules they expect good teachers to implement. They were mainly the attendance rules.

“He insists on taking attendance regularly.” (I6)

“He was a little bit strict. When we came to class late teacher number one would mark us late.” (I9)

“When we leave and come back during the class time, he didn’t say anything. I don’t like the teacher who is not strict. It is good that the teacher is easy, but too much flexibility is not good.” (I12)

Although many participants considered strictness important for teachers to be effective, they emphasized the element of friendliness in implementing the rules strictly. Some respondents’ comments highlighted this issue clearly by saying that students may accept from one implementing the rules and marking them for example absent or late, but may not accept it from another. This was because the first teacher was a person who did not really want to punish students but rather conform to the university rules while the second
teacher appeared as a person who managed to catch the student doing something wrong and therefore he/she was glad to punish that student.

When students understand that rules are there not for the purpose of punishing them but rather to serve the teaching and learning process, and when teachers try to avoid being unfriendly with students when implementing the rules, the reaction of students could be different and the students would more likely accept them. Teachers can say, ‘no’ but with a smile.

“He shouldn’t be too strict. He can observe the rules, but at the same time he shouldn’t be too strict. He can mark you absent and at the same time he doesn’t make the student unhappy. It is his right, but you know students feel unhappy because of anything. In general he can mark him absent and talk with him, but not in front of the students; he should talk with him in private.” (I8)

“Although she was friendly, she was strict.” (Q102)

Some talked about the reflection of implementing the rules on their behaviour.

“He was strict in class. He will mark you late if you come late. This was good because it taught me to be punctual in my life.” (I20)

This was consistent with the view of Good and Brophy (2001) stating that

“Teachers … need to require their students to conform to certain rules and procedures. However, these rules and procedures are not ends in themselves but are means for organizing the classroom to support teaching and learning. Thus, classroom management should be designed to support instruction and to help students gain in capacity for self-control.” (p. 123).

Accordingly, it should be made clear to the students that these rules are necessary for supporting their learning.

The findings of this study revealed two different perspectives on the issue of whether teachers should be strict and implement the rules or to be flexible and willing to compromise
in implementing the rules. While some participants indicated that their teachers should be strict in observing the rules and policies of the IEP and the university, many others said completely the opposite. The background behind the persistence of many students that teachers should not be very strict in implementing the attendance rules was that the attendance policies of the IEPs where the study was conducted were strict and those students who failed to conform to these rules suffered severe consequences. For example, in one of the IEP when students’ absence record reaches 20%, they are asked to leave the program and given a failing mark. In fact, this happened every semester to a number of students. Moreover, some teachers give some marks for students’ attendance. All of this might make a large number of students favour teachers’ willingness to compromise. The same thing applies on giving making up exams. Exams and marks were important for them because in the light of these exams decisions were made whether or not students should be promoted.

6.7 Concluding Remarks

It can be reasonably concluded from this chapter that ‘instructional skills’ define an important factor of effective EFL teaching. The respondents focused on the teaching skills and practices of effective EFL teachers. It is clear that the common theme among these aspects is facilitating things for students and enabling them to understand and succeed in learning English. The findings of this study showed that students consider the teachers’ choice of the teaching approaches and techniques as one of the significant skills of the EFL teachers the respondents perceived as effective. The teaching methods themselves are of different levels of effectiveness; some might be very effective and others might be less effective in helping learners to learn. Teachers might not be completely aware to what extent one method helps students to understand more than another. The method that the teachers use might be good from their perspective, but in practice it is not. Teachers should use a
variety of instructional methods to keep students interested in the material and meet individual learning styles and preferences. This is related to the social constructivism learning theory which is concerned with learners constructing their own understandings in ways that are personal to them and in accordance every learner learns things differently, and ‘what is known will depend on who is doing the knowing’ (Williams, 1997, p. 3).

It can also be concluded that one of the significant elements in English language teaching and learning is students’ involvement; enabling students to practise the language is crucial for learning English especially the oral aspect of this practice. Through practising speaking and using the target language in real situations, students could develop their language skills. Lecturing style is not effective in teaching English; teachers should limit their lecturing time and give the arena for the students to interact and work on learning the language through a variety of activities and practices. Another thing that the data revealed is giving homework, assignments and exams on a regular basis. These tasks could engage students in learning activities and give them feedback on their progress. In addition, the findings revealed it is important for teachers not to rely completely on textbooks, which many respondents questioned their usefulness, but rather invest other learning resources in helping students to learn English. Computer technology, handouts and worksheets and libraries are highly recommended to be used in English classes.

6.8 Summary

This chapter introduces the instructional skills theme as a major theme of the findings of this study. This theme was divided up into for major dimensions which were methodology, interaction, learning resources and management. Under each dimension a number of categories were classified; in these categories, the respondents put a lot of emphasis on the significance of the teaching skills and practices in teaching English that the EFL teachers
they perceived as effective used; they found them to be useful and helped them in improving
their English. This chapter ended with a number of conclusions that are important for
preservice as well as inservice teachers to learn from.
7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the second theme extracted from the qualitative data which reflects the perceptions of Arab tertiary students of an effective EFL teacher. It is the human characteristics. I present the result classified under this theme in two main dimensions: interpersonal characteristics and personal characteristics. The categories classified under these themes highlight the significance of the human element in the teaching and learning process. This is clearly reflected through the respondents’ comments used in this chapter.

7.2 Interpersonal Characteristics

This is a highly important dimension of effective EFL teaching that the respondents highlighted. Effective EFL teachers know how to deal with students and make them interested in learning through them. The results revealed that the human element in the teaching and learning process is crucial from the perspective of Arab students in the UAE universities. Many of the respondents’ responses are supported by views of Bergman and Gaitskill (1990), Reissman (1999), Collinson (1999) and Verner (2000) that effective teachers have interpersonal skills. Their responses are also supported by Hamackek (1969) and Johnson and Roelke’s (1999) research stating that effective teachers are good communicators. The categories emerging from the qualitative data that were classified under the interpersonal characteristics dimension are shown in table 7.1 below.
Table 7.1: The categories classified under the interpersonal characteristics dimension and their rate of frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Has a friendly manner</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Helps students</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Encourages and motivates students</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Flexible and willing to compromise</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Respects students</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Creates a good atmosphere</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Treats students as equals</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Listens to students</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Identifies/meeting students’ needs</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.2.1 Has a Friendly Manner

The first two categories are the most frequently mentioned among the eight categories classified under the interpersonal characteristics dimension. The number of responses identified in the data collected from students on this category was 161. This clearly indicates that teachers’ friendliness is of high value for Arab students. There was a perfect consensus among the participants in all three phases that friendliness of EFL teachers was very necessary. The research findings of Saafin (1999), Berlin (2000) and Hubbard (2001) agree with this view that in order for teachers to be effective they should develop a friendly relationship with their students. Also in the community learning approach teachers must build a close relationship with the learner.

The participants highly appreciated teachers who were friendly with them inside and outside the classroom and indicated that this helped them in learning and improving their English. If teachers are friendly, this will help the students to learn things from them, whereas if the
teachers are not friendly or are tough with students, they may not be able to gain, benefit or understand what their teachers teach, no matter how effective these teachers are. One of the reasons could be because the language has a social aspect. It is the tool of communication between the teachers and students. To have a social context without friendliness is something not expected or desirable. Another thing could be cultural influence that made students emphasize teachers’ friendliness and expecting a lot from teachers in this particular issue. The Arab culture values friendliness and considers it as one of the important characteristics of ‘a good person’. The data revealed several aspects of the friendliness the participants talked about:

a) building bridges between them and their students;
b) interacting with students outside the classroom;
c) informal interaction with students;
d) socializing with students;
e) treating students as friends or family members;
f) smiling at the students;
g) friendliness enhances students learning.

**a) Building bridges between them and their students**

The first aspect of friendliness that was highlighted was that the effective teachers try to be close to students by ‘building bridges between them and their students’ (بناء الجسور بينهم وبين طلابهم). Good teachers are expected to take the initiative and try to establish a friendly relationship with their students.

“She should try to build bridges between her and her students.” (Q7)

“She treats students in a good way and tries to be close to them.” (I5)
“He established a friendly relationship with students from the beginning.” (I10)

Some talked about the usefulness of establishing a good relationship with them. They indicated that it would help in making teachers easier to approach and interact with them.

“He should have a good relation with his students. He shouldn’t be tough with students. There was interaction between her and the students. The relation was easy with her.” (FI3)

By establishing this kind of relationship, students would feel that their teachers are close to them and this closeness is likely to bridge the gap between them, make teachers easier to access and pave the way for a better communication between teachers and students. It has a positive influence on the students as learners who receive their knowledge from somebody who is friendly and close to them.

b) Interacting with students outside the classroom

The second aspect of teachers’ friendly manner the respondents expressed was that the perceived effective teachers were willing to communicate with their students at a personal level outside the classroom boarders. This was seen to be a symptom of teachers’ friendliness.

“He should keep in touch with them and ask them about themselves. When he meets a student, he can ask him about his family so that he can have some sort of relation with the students.” (I19)

“When we met this teacher outside the class, she would speak with us and would smile.” (FI4)

“He should deal with students outside the class like a friend or a brother and not just a teacher who doesn’t joke and laugh with students.” (FI2)
Some talked about the effect of interacting with students outside the classroom on them. It breaks the ice between teachers and their students and makes students feel more comfortable when communicating with their teachers at an informal level.

“He has a friendly relationship with students inside and outside the class. This gives the student a sense of security.” (Q98)

“He was kind. He would say hello. This made me like the teacher.” (I19)

Effective teachers interacted with their students at an informal level outside the classroom by talking about personal matters, general things or being humorous with students. Even saying ‘hello’ and smiling at students when meeting them outside the classroom are friendly behaviours that students appreciate. The respondents found that teachers’ friendliness and informal interaction with students outside the classroom helped in developing a friendly relationship between them and created positive feelings toward teachers which in turn may have a positive reflection on learning English. Another benefit is that students have the chance to use the target language in more realistic situations. Noddings (1992), Page (1992), Reissman (1999), Murray (1991), Blum (1984) and Verner (2000) agree with the view that effective teachers interact with their students beyond the limits of the classroom.

c) Informal interaction with students

The third aspect of this friendliness was informal interaction or communication with students. Teachers might talk with their students about nonacademic issues that have to do with students’ personal lives. Respondents appreciated this and found it to be another sign of teachers’ friendliness.

“She was informal with us in class. She tended to interact with us. ... She made us feel that she was like a friend.” (I6)
Some elaborated on when they talk informally and what they talk about. They indicated that at the beginning of classes, their teachers gave them the chance to talk about things that were mainly related to students’ personal experience such as the food they ate, their weekends, etc.

“She knew how to interact and communicate with students. ...Her class was full of life. She let us talk about ourselves. She would ask us what we did in the weekend. In this case I improve my English. After that she would start the lesson.” (FI5)

“Other teachers got into the class smiling and ask the students about what they did the day before and what they ate. Then they would start the class.” (I8)

“When she got into the class she chatted with us freely. She would talk about anything and gave us the chance to talk at the same time.” (I16)

As we can see, respondents found this kind of informal communication not only a friendly behaviour but also something useful in improving their English. They had a good chance to speak English and talk about themselves and their lives in real situations.

**d) Socializing with students**

The fourth aspect of the friendly manner that the respondents talked about was that good teachers would socialize with their students.

“We interacted with her. We talked about our personal life and other current issues. She knew the circumstances of every student.” (FI1)

“He was friendly. He gave me the chance to meet him outside the class and talk with him.” (I11)

Several respondents mentioned the cafeteria as one of the favourite settings where the perceived effective teachers tended to mingle and socialize with their students. What made students interested in meeting their teachers in the cafeteria was that it was a genuine place away from the classroom where they can talk freely with their teachers and classmates. They
were involved in using the target language in a social context to talk about real things that match with their interests, feelings and real life.

“We talked with him in class and outside the class. He was a friend of us; he tended to sit with us in the cafeteria and ask us about our life in our society. This would make the student like the class and the subject matter and encourage him to work harder.” (FI3)

“He met us in the cafeteria in the evening several times and talked with us.” (FI5)

“She interacted with us a lot in the class and outside the class. She tended to come to the cafeteria.” (Q57)

On the other hand, respondents considered that the lack of this kind of communication between students and teachers resulted in failure to understand each other which might result in minimizing cooperation between them and again this would have a negative reflection on the whole teaching and learning process.

“We were in different worlds. He didn’t mix with the students” (I17)

Respondents appreciated it very much to see their teachers among them and like them. Socializing with teachers was something that students enjoy. It made the teacher more acceptable for them. In addition, students again would have a good opportunity to speak English and express themselves using the target language. At the same time teachers would be able to explore the academic as well as the social difficulties that their students face in learning English. In line with this, social constructivist perspective is that it highlights the significance of social interactions between learners, teachers and tasks in the learning process. In addition, the social constructivist model recognizes the importance of the social context in which learning takes place (Williams and Burden, 1997).
e) Treating students as friends or family members

The fifth aspect of the friendliness was that their effective teachers ‘treated them like friends or family members’ (بتعامل مع الطلاب كأصدقاء أو أفراد من العائلة).

“She treated with students as friends. She even talked to us about herself and her family.” (FI3)

“He likes his students and considers them like his children.” (I12)

“He treats us as an older brother.” (Q1)

“She should treat us as sisters of her and not as teacher.” (I3)

Respondents considered that creating a family atmosphere in the class was something necessary in language classes. It had a positive effect on their learning of English.

“She treated us like a mother, so I liked her a lot and this made me improve in her course.” (I13)

This kind of treatment is characterized with kindness, warmth and openness that make students feel more comfortable and maximize cooperation between teachers and their students. This is consistent with the view of Noddings (1992) indicating that classrooms need to provide family-like support to students.

f) Smiling at the students

The sixth aspect of good teachers’ friendliness is smiling. The respondents appreciated it when their teachers smile at them and consider it as a sign of friendliness.

“He gets into the class with a big smile and this is the most important thing.” (I15)

“He tended to smile.” (Q36)

“She always smiles and she is a friend for all. She never disputes with any student.” (I7)
Some talked about the benefit of smiling behaviour on the learning atmosphere in the classroom.

“He should smile during class time so that there can be a good atmosphere for studying and we can be ready for the class.” (I17)

Some others considered that it was not enough for teachers to be good in teaching if they did not smile.

“She taught efficiently but she didn’t smile.” (Q29)

Having teachers who can smile to their students inside and outside the classroom was seen as an important behaviour by the respondents. It eased the relationship between teachers and students and might make teachers more acceptable and their classes more delightful for students.

**g) Friendliness enhances students’ learning**

The respondents clearly mentioned that ‘teachers’ friendliness helped them learn’ (الصداقه، تساعد على التعليم). It has a good effect on the whole teaching and learning process. It made students ready to learn and ‘buy what their teachers sell’.

“In my opinion if the student liked the teacher, he would follow him even if the subject was silly. The student would be interested in the course and benefit from it. He should try to make the student like him so that he can benefit the students.” (FI2)

“She treated us like a mother, so I liked her a lot and this made me improve in her course.” (I13)

“He treats students as friends, so he makes students like him and they would pay attention to him when he explains the lesson.” (I10)

Some considered that friendliness made classes enjoyable.
“Her friendliness makes her classes interesting” (Q112)

Some other respondents found friendliness useful for students’ learning in the sense that it removed barriers between teachers and students made students more frank and more courageous with their teachers regarding their teaching. They could give their teachers feedback on the usefulness of the teaching materials they provided them with and the appropriateness of their teaching methods that they used in teaching English.

“They should be a good relationship between the teacher and the students so that the students can criticize the teacher and ask him to change some of his teaching methods or practices that students don’t like or feel they are of little benefit.” (I15)

On the other hand, some respondents made it very clear that unfriendliness would affect their learning negatively. They said in more than one occasion that they might not understand what unfriendly teachers explain in class; it seems to be a psychological issue.

“She should try to be a friend of us more than a teacher. Her relationship with us was formal. We could not understand her classes as long as we feel that we are not close with each other.” (I4)

As we can see, the respondents considered the friendly manner of effective EFL teachers as the most important quality of effective EFL teachers under the dimension of ‘interpersonal characteristics’. Teachers’ friendliness had a positive reflection on students’ learning, while teachers’ unfriendliness was found to hinder the learning of English language which itself has social aspects that entail reasonable friendly social contexts. This is supported by the findings of Saafin (1999), Bergman and Gaitskill (1990), Page (1992), Murray (1991), Blum (1984), Berlin (2000) and Hubbard (2001). Similarly, according to Rogers’ (1969) humanistic approach, to enhance learning a friendly atmosphere should be created.
7.2.2 Helps Students

Helping students is the second most frequently mentioned category. The number of responses classified under this category was 121. The respondents expected different kinds of help from their teachers inside and outside the classroom. This is supported by Hubbard’s (2001) research findings that effective teachers should be helpful. It is also consistent with Verner’s (2000) research that effective teachers should provide support for their students during their learning process and should also be available to their students. The data of this current study revealed that teachers helped their students in different ways.

a) giving advice to students;

b) helping students in academic related issues;

c) helping weaker students;

d) giving good marks;

e) helping in personal matters.

a) Giving advice to students

The first kind of help was that the perceived effective teachers tended to give advice to their students.

“She always gives us advice.” (Q29)

Respondents mainly talked about academic advice. They mentioned that the perceived effective teachers tended to give them advice on how to improve their English.

“He advises students what to do and what they need to improve in English.” (I15)

“He advises the students how they can practise English and which good learning resources they can refer to.” (I20)
“He guides us how to learn English.” (Q55)

“He tries to solve the studying problems of students.” (Q76)

Some talked about helping weaker students and counseling them on how they could upgrade their level.

“She counsels weaker students.” (I10)

Respondents considered teachers’ advice, especially the advice to weaker ones, useful in learning English because it guided them how to learn English and what learning resources they should refer to. In other words, students wanted their teachers to be both teachers and academic advisers.

**b) Helping students in academic related issues**

Another kind of help is helping students in academic issues in class and outside the class. Effective teachers were expected to go beyond advising students and give help when needed.

“She tries to help us when we face a problem in learning English.” (Q56)

“She gives the students what they need to improve their level in English.” (Q23)

“He helps students in class.” (Q45)

“He answers all the questions the students ask in class.” (I3)

Some other respondents talked about getting help in teachers’ offices.

“He asks students to go to his office if they need to know a certain thing about the subject and he would explain to them.” (I2)

Some respondents indicated that some other teachers maintained contact with students and continued giving help to them even if they no longer taught them. They were willing to help
them not only in the subject matter they taught them in a certain semester, but also in other courses that they did not teach.

“She was a very good teacher because she helped us not only in the subject she taught us but also in all other subjects.” (I19)

“He helps me until now even though he is no longer my teacher.” (I6)

This kind of academic help in different areas and in different courses was very appreciated by the respondents who found it very useful in helping them develop their English language skills.

c) Helping weak students

Weak students need teachers’ assistance more than anybody else. The respondents indicated that the perceived effective teachers took care of weak students. One way they helped them was taking into consideration their level when teaching.

“He should take into consideration the weak students when he explains the lesson.” (I15)

Another way of helping weak students was by giving them more attention and trying to help them understand the lessons.

“He should focus in his class on weak students.” (Q30)

“He should accept weak students and help them.” (I12)

A third way of helping them was by enabling them to receive assistance from stronger peers when they work in groups or pairs.

“He lets each weak student sit down with stronger one so that he can help him.” (Q5)
It is common that each class has weak students. Respondents believed that effective teachers would not overlook those students and consider them hopeless cases, but rather should accept them and deal with them according to their capacity. Respondents provided several ways in which teachers helped weaker students.

**d) Giving good marks**

The fourth category was ‘giving good marks’. Effective teachers would enable their students to get higher marks in different ways. One of these ways was repeating exams that students did badly on.

“He repeats exams if students get bad marks on them. This makes students like him.” (I6)

Another way was by giving several tests and canceling the worst two or three ones.

“If a student’s mark is low, he should increase the number of tests so that the students’ mark may increase.” (I1)

“He makes the students feel that he wants to help them. He should give them the chance to get better marks.” (I19)

Some teachers were more generous than others in giving marks especially when it had to do with participation and homework marks. Students knew those who gave high marks and those who did not; they preferred to take courses by those teachers who were generous in giving marks.

“He gives us good marks.” (Q12)

Passing and failing were very serious issues for the respondents. Getting good marks helped them to pass and move from the Intensive English Program (IEP) to the career program. This was something that every student in the IEP aspired to. Therefore, respondents
appreciated it very much when their teachers enabled them to improve their situation and get higher marks, especially those who got low marks in previous exams.

e) Helping students in personal matters

The fifth category was being willing to help students even in personal matter. Respondents appreciated this kind of help from their teachers.

“He tries to help students in all aspects and not just in the course. If you have a problem not related to the class, you can discuss it with him at any time.” (I3)

“She helped students in all areas.” (Q61)

Some considered this kind of assistance develop a friendly relationship between teachers and their students.

“He helped some students in solving their personal problems and as a result he had good relationship with them.” (I7)

Students sometimes had personal problems and those problems might affect their achievement in the course. Therefore, they expected their teachers whom they considered more knowledgeable and experienced to counsel them so that they could solve their problems. According to the respondents, some of the perceived effective teachers were open to any kind of help in academic and personal issues.

7.2.3 Encouraging Students

The next four categories are far less frequently mentioned than the categories we had just discussed. The responses classified under this category were 70. These responses showed that the perceived effective teachers tended to encourage their students in different ways.
One of these ways was that they encouraged students’ involvement in classroom activities especially those who refrain from participation.

“Some students are interested and some others aren’t. He should continue working with them until they like the subject.” (13)

“She encouraged students to participate. She would also try to encourage careless students.” (I18)

Another way was by urging students to work harder and try to do better in learning English. This could be an incentive for students exert more efforts or continue their hard work in learning English.

“If there is a student who didn’t pass the midterm exam, he would encourage her and give her more help.” (I9)

“He encouraged all students to work hard.” (I7)

“He encourages the students to do better.” (Q10)

“She urged us to learn the language.” (Q30)

A third way of encouragement was providing a safe atmosphere for students to speak in English and not to worry about the mistakes they made. Students love to speak in English and considered it very necessary for learning the target language. However, when they attempted to speak, they felt worried for fear of being laughed at by their classmates or blamed by their teachers for mistakes. Therefore, they needed their teachers’ support and ‘protection’.

“She made us feel safe when we speak. We don’t get afraid when we speak. She would encourage us to speak and not to worry about our mistakes. She would smile and give us the chance to speak. She didn’t get angry with us. ... She made us feel that English language was easy and that by practice you would learn it.” (I10)

“She encouraged us to speak.” (Q112)

“He shouldn’t allow other students to laugh at those who try to speak in English.” (I6)
“He doesn’t make fun of us when we speak but rather he appreciates what we say even if it is wrong and he would correct our mistakes in a polite way.” (I16)

“We didn’t have the courage to speak.” (I3)

A fourth way of encouragement the respondents mentioned was rewarding students. They rewarded good work or answers by giving simple gifts, marks or encouraging words. This made them feel that they were rewarded and that their work was appreciated by their teachers.

“He would give us questions and those who can answer them first were rewarded and given marks.” (I8)

“He gave gifts to those students who got high marks in the exam. He tried to make us do our best.” (I13)

“She would say to us after we finish speaking good and excellent. This would make us happy.” (I11)

“He encourages us by using words like very good and excellent.” (Q35)

Some respondents talked about the usefulness of teachers’ encouragement at personal and academic levels.

“He helped us to have confidence on ourselves and insists that we can do some important things.” (Q44)

“He taught us to be brave.” (Q90)

“She makes us feel confident.” (I7)

Learning a second language is not an easy matter and as a result students might experience some learning difficulties and sometimes feelings of frustration while learning a language. Therefore, respondents valued teachers’ encouragement which they found supportive for them and helped them to gain more confidence and feel better. This result is consistent with Blum’s (1984) comprehensive survey on the research on effective schooling indicating that
effective teachers should use incentives and rewards for students to promote excellence. Similarly, it is in line with Shepard’s (2000) view that motivation is external and depends on positive reinforcements. It is also supported by Ramsden’s (1992) research stating that one of the key principles of effective teaching is encouraging independence and active engagement. It is also consistent with Easton’s (1983) research findings that effective teachers encourage student involvement throughout lectures and in group discussions.

7.2.4 Flexible and Willing to Compromise

The second category that was far less mentioned than other categories is teachers’ ‘flexibility’ in dealing with students. The responses classified under this category were 60. When respondents use the word flexibility they meant that teachers should not be very strict with them and willing to compromise in implementing rules and meeting deadlines. Teachers’ willingness to compromise was highly appreciated by the respondents. They considered it as one of the important criteria of the EFL teachers they perceived as effective. Respondents talked about teachers’ flexibility in different ways. The most emphasized way was teachers’ willingness to compromise in implanting attendance policies of the IEP. In fact, the core of the respondents’ responses in this category emphasized the necessity for the EFL teachers they perceived as effective to be lenient in implementing the attendance rules.

“*The teacher must be flexible in things like attendance and lateness.*” (FI4)

“*He is flexible in the issues of attendance and homework.*” (Q77)

“*He takes attendance regularly and would only help those students who have very difficult circumstances.*” (I4)

“If a student came late he would give him a chance but if he came late again, he would be punished.” (FI5)
Some talked about the effect of teachers’ flexibility on the relationship between them and their students.

“He was flexible. For example, when a student came late or misses an exam, he would be flexible. His flexibility would make him close to the students.” (I10)

The reason why respondents put a lot of emphasis on teachers’ flexibility on implementing attendance rules was because the IEPs where this study was conducted were strict and serious in implementing the attendance rules and as a result the students who did not stick to these rules suffered severe consequences. For example, in one of these IEPs if students came to class less than 15 minutes late, they would be marked late; coming to class three times late was counted as one class absence. When students missed 10% of the total of their English classes, they would get their first warning letter. When they reached 15% they would get the second warning letter. When they reached 20%, they would be asked to leave the course and a failing mark would be given to them. As a result of implementing this attendance policy, a number of students were asked to leave the IEP every semester. In addition, some teachers would assign a certain percentage of marks for attendance; and therefore even those who did not reach 20% but their attendance was poor, would be penalized. Therefore, these attendance rules caused many students a lot of worries.

I believe that those students who favored teachers’ flexibility in implementing the rules needed to be counseled. They should be helped to understand that it was for their benefit and the program’s advantage that policies and rules of the university were respected and properly implemented. When implementing the rules, teachers should appear as people who conform to the rules that aimed at regulating and organizing the teaching and learning process for the interest of students themselves. At the same time, implementing the rules, especially the ones that deal with students’ attendance and punctuality, would help students to acquire good
habits that they would benefit from in their career. Students who got the habit of coming to class on time were also expected to go to their work on time.

A second way the perceived effective teachers were ‘flexible’ was that they were easy-going with their students. Respondents mentioned that teachers should not use or overuse their authorities.

“He shouldn’t be strict too much; he should be lenient. He shouldn’t give instructions.” (I17)

“If she discovered somebody chewing gum, she wouldn't shout at her.” (I2)

“He shouldn’t be strict with the girls.” (I11)

“He shouldn’t be too strict with the students. He should be easy with them.” (I18)

“He takes into consideration our circumstances.” (Q54)

“He should accept personal excuses like sickness.” (I11)

Some considered teachers’ strictness in dealing with them as a sign of unfriendliness that would have a negative reflection on the learning outcomes of the subject being taught.

“He shouldn’t try to use his authority with students; otherwise the students would hate the subject.” (I15)

“Some students don’t like the teacher to be strict; otherwise the students will be afraid of the teacher and would hate the subject.” (I12)

A third way was that they liked the teachers who were flexible on the deadlines they gave for assignments.

“He was flexible, not rigid. He didn’t impose his opinion on the class. For example, if a student misses a test, he would consider his reason of missing the test and if it is a very good reason he would let him sit for a make up exam.” (FI3)

“It was ok for her if we do not turn in our homework on time in case we were busy.” (I6)

“He was lenient; when a student for example handed in her project after the deadline.” (FI1)
Saafin (1999) and Habbard (2001) supported this view that teachers should be flexible and willing to compromise. However, the aspects of teachers’ flexibility from the perspective of students were identified in this study.

### 7.2.5 Respecting Students

The third category that was far less mentioned than other categories is respecting students. The responses classified under this category were 57. Respondents elaborated on how teachers should respect them. They talked about showing respect to students in general terms and considered it as an aspect of teachers’ friendliness.

“*He respects students and treats them friendly.*” (Q33)

“*We respected her and she respected us.*” (I14)

“*He considered me sneaky.*” (I9)

“He would insult you but in a funny way.” (I15)

Another way of teachers showed respect to their students was by avoiding embarrassing them in the presence of their students. Some Arab students find it embarrassing and consider it insulting when their teachers question them in the classroom in front of their classmates why they came to class late.

“She didn’t make you feel embarrassed in front of your classmates by asking you about the reason of your lateness.” (I8)

A third way was by showing tolerance when students make mistakes otherwise, students will shun from participating in classroom for fear of making mistakes and this would affect students’ learning.
“We were afraid of him. If a student made a mistake he would insult her.” (I12)

A fourth way teachers showed respect to their students was by respecting their opinions even if they disagree with them.

“...he should respect students and their opinions instead of saying ‘ok I know’ or giving a negative comment on the opinion of students; he should know that some girls are sensitive.” (I19)

A fifth way was by respecting students’ culture by choosing teaching materials that were acceptable from the perspective of Arab Islamic culture.

“He chose a collection of films that didn’t contradict with our culture. He is learning Arabic and he knows our traditions and respects them. There are scenes in the films that he didn’t show them to us.” (I11)

Arab students considered mutual respect between teachers and students as something valuable that might help in establishing a good relationship between them. This result is supported by Hamachek (1969), Fraser (1991), Gusky and Easton (1983), Ramsden (1992), Collinson (1999), Tobin and Fraser (1991), Berlin (2000), Hubbard (2001) and Saafin (1999). Similarly, according to Abraham Maslow’s (1968) approach, teachers should help learners by creating a secure environment in which they feel they belong and are respected by others. However, the findings of this study showed us what is meant exactly by respect from students’ point of view; it identified the aspects of respect that the EFL teachers perceived as effective showed to their students.

7.2.6 Creates a Good Atmosphere

The fourth category that was far less mentioned than other categories is creating a good atmosphere. The responses classified under this category were 57. Creating a good
atmosphere was seen by the respondents as a factor that affected the teaching and learning process. Respondents identified three ways that their perceived effective teachers followed in order for them to create a suitable learning environment. One of these ways was giving time for entertainment which helped students to resist boredom, concentrate better and as result learn better. Entertainment could be in a form of a game.

“She once gave us a game in the form of a circle and gave each student a paper with a number. Then one of us stood up and tried to remember the number of each student. After that she gave each student a color and asked another student to try to remember the color and the number. Then she added something else. There was a nice atmosphere.” (I11)

Talking about something different from the class subject or joking was another form of entertainment.

“When the teacher felt that students started to feel bored, he changed the atmosphere of the class for five minutes by for example talking about something different: ‘where did you go yesterday?’ ‘What did you do?’ Then we get back to the lesson after this entertainment.” (I12)

“He avoids boring atmosphere in his classes by including the humour element and telling stories. This is a good way for the teacher to get the students back to the lesson.” (I10)

“He also didn’t talk about something else other than the class subject; he doesn’t try to change the atmosphere of the class. Other experienced teachers gave the students a five minutes break when they feel bored or they said something to make you laugh.” (I13)

A second way of creating a good learning atmosphere was by changing the classroom routine by changing the teaching location. They took their students to the library, computer lab, etc. Some believed that having all classes in the same classroom might lead to a feeling of boredom, while leaving their own classroom and going to other places such as the computer lab or library would help in maintaining a good learning atmosphere.

“She should change the atmosphere of the class by changing the place of the class.” (Q8)
“He gives his classes in different places. We have classes in the classroom, the computer lab, library and the multipurpose room. This breaks the routine and renews the settings.” (I19)

“We go to the computer lab two or three times a week so that the class routine might be changed and the class might become more interesting and useful.” (I7)

A third way was changing the seating layout in the classroom. Some of them indicated that they did not like to have the same seating layout all the time. They felt that changing the seating plan helped in changing the classroom environment and making it better.

“He shouldn't teach all the time; he should stop and change the class atmosphere like changing the seating layout.” (I17)

“We didn't sit down in the same way all the time.” (Q60)

Some preferred the u-shaped layout of seats in the classroom.

“He uses the u shape layout which is better.” (I1)

This result was consistent with the view of Medley (1979) and Tobin and Fraser (1991) stating that the exemplary teachers develop and maintain a supportive, respectful, and non-threatening classroom environment. It is also in line with the humanistic perspective of Maslow (1968) and Rogers (1969) that a friendly atmosphere should be created so that learning could be enhanced. Also, in the natural approach of teaching, as well as the communicative language teaching approach, one of the roles of teachers is to create a friendly classroom environment (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). What the current study added to what those researchers said was that it described how the EFL teachers perceived as effective created the learning environment that respondents found convenient.
7.2.7 Treats Students as Equals

The next three categories are the least frequently mentioned among the categories I had discussed above. The number of responses given for ‘treating students as equals’ was 37. Some of the respondents expressed their concern regarding teachers’ bias and considered that fairness as one of the characteristics of the perceived effective teachers.

“He shouldn’t give his attention to a certain student he knows before because this annoys other students.” (I2)

“He should be fair with students.” (Q59)

“He shouldn’t discriminate between students. This would influence the level of the weak student. He should take care of weak students and encourage them.” (I13)

Some went further and specified the area in which they expected teachers to be fair. They talked about fairness in giving marks.

“He should be fair in giving marks to students.” (I9)

“He gives every body what she deserves.” (Q7)

Some others talked about fairness in giving equal opportunities in answering questions.

“He gives the students equal opportunities to answer questions.” (I5)

Respondents expected their teachers to be fair with them and gave specific examples of teachers’ fairness. This result is supported by Hamachek (1969), Hubbard (2001), and Saafin (1999) stating that effective teachers should be fair and treat students as equals.
7.2.8 Listening to Students

Listening to students was the second least frequently mentioned category. The number of responses given under this category was 13. Listening to students is one of the qualities of a good teacher. The perceived effective teachers tended to listen and respond to their students’ concerns.

“She listens to our problems and tries to find solutions for them.” (Q87)

“He listens to our opinions and tries to respond positively.” (Q90)

“If a student has a concern, he should listen to her and try to give her what she wants.” (I2)

Some specified what their teachers should listen to. They believed that teachers should listen to students’ feedback on their teaching and try to improve it in the light of students’ suggestions.

“He should listen to our opinions regarding the teaching methods and homework so that we can learn in a better way.” (I7)

“She should listen to the students regarding developing her style of teaching and the kinds of activities students would like to do so that they don’t feel bored.” (I18)

Mere listening to students’ concerns was found to be useful for both students and teachers. It is a relieving thing for the students that teachers listen to them and at the same time students could express their concerns to their teachers who in turn might help them in that regard. Teachers would also have the chance to collect informal feedback on their teaching and the ways it could be improved. This result is in line with Hubbard’s (2001) research stating that listening to students is one of the practices of effective teachers.
7.2.9. Identifying/Meeting Students’ Needs

Identifying/meeting students’ needs is the least frequently mentioned category. The number of responses given under this category was only 12. The EFL teachers they perceived as effective would identify students’ needs and work on responding to them.

“She should try to know what the students need and work on meeting these needs.” (I10)

“Students like her because she asks about our concerns and problems.” (Q34)

Some went further and elaborated on the kinds of needs and problems they expected their teachers to identify. They were regarding English learning needs.

“He should try to identify the weaknesses of the students and try to help them in these areas.” (I19)

“He noticed that our reading ability was ok but our speaking ability was not ok so he gave us presentation lessons.” (I13)

“He should know the kinds of problems that a student faces when learning English.” (I1)

According to respondents, teachers should not only listen to students’ concerns as mentioned above but also go further and investigate about students needs. This result is consistent with perspective of critical pedagogy that effective teachers are those who delegate power to students and enable them to participate in the L2 education process. Their voices are to be heard and teachers listen to them and try to respond to their needs (Auerbach & Burgess, 1987; Shor, 1980, 1987, 1992; Wink, 1997).

7.3 Personal Characteristics

The second dimension is personal characteristics. In addition to the interpersonal characteristics that have been discussed above, the respondents identified some personal
characteristics that influenced the teaching and learning process. It is noticeable that the respondents did not mention any physical characteristics of teachers, but rather they talked about the ones that might affect their language learning. These characteristics are shown in table 7.2 below.

Table 7.2: The categories classified under the personal characteristics dimension and their rate of frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Has a sense of humour</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Is dedicated</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Is energetic</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Is patient</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Is likeable</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.3.1 Has a Sense of Humour

Having a sense of humour is the most frequently mentioned category under the dimension of personal characteristics. The number of responses given under this category was 84. Learning a language is different from learning other subjects in the sense that it has a social aspect and the sense of humour is usually a part of our social life. Therefore, no wonder that respondents highlighted the effect of humour in the teaching and learning process of English. They mentioned that their perceived effective teachers were able to maintain their interest in class and create a good learning atmosphere through their sense of humour. They identified several ways that their perceived effective teachers demonstrated their sense of humour. One of these ways was by joking with their students.

“She joked with us so that students can be active and we do not sleep.” (Q55)
“He spends five to ten minutes in joking and laughing and then he spends the rest of the time on hard work.” (FI1)

“He would joke with students in class and outside the class.” (FI3)

Another way was by giving comments.

“He makes nice and funny comments.” (FI4)

A third way was by making body movements.

“His special movements created a good atmosphere in class and helped in holding the attention of students.” (FI1)

Respondents also talked about the usefulness of teachers’ sense of humour in teaching and learning English. One of these benefits was that it helped in creating a suitable learning atmosphere in the classroom.

“He uses fun and joking in his teaching and as a result he creates an interesting atmosphere and makes the students like the class.” (FI6)

“He tries in the morning classes to create a fun atmosphere and include the humour element. This is very important because students in the morning are not really ready to learn.” (I12)

Another benefit was making classes interesting.

“There should be a joke on the morning so that students can accept the class.” (I5)

“His sense of humour helps in making the students come to his classes.” (Q33)

“The class shouldn’t be only teaching. There should be time for fun and entertainment that make the student like the class.” (I2)

“He is the one whom you cannot interact with. There should be a fun element. When you have two consecutive classes forty-five minutes each, you will feel bored if there is no humour element.” (I15)
A third benefit was that it helped in holding students’ attention and making them more interested in the class.

“She joked with us so that students can be active and we do not sleep.” (Q55)

“I sometimes feel sleepy because this teacher doesn’t joke with us.” (I5)

A fourth benefit was enabling learning to occur. Some respondents went further and said that they could not learn things from those teachers or accept what their teachers teach because they did not have a sense of humour and their classes were more serious than they should be.

“He was funny with us so that we may not feel bored. Some other teachers are boring to the extent that we benefit nothing from them and we wanted their classes to finish quickly so that we can leave.” (FI4)

“A serious teacher doesn’t always benefit the students. It is better to be somewhere in the middle between seriousness and having fun.” (I7)

As we can see, the respondents emphasized the necessity that teachers had a sense of humour which would enable teachers make their classes more interesting to students and at the same time help in resisting the boredom feelings that students might have for one reason or another. This perspective is supported by the research findings of Hamachek (1969), Walter (1990), McCabe (1995), Verner (2000), Berlin (2000), Hubbard (2001) and Saafin (1999).

7.3.2 Is Dedicated

This category is far less frequently mentioned than the above category we had just discussed. The number of responses given under this category was 42. Respondents valued the dedication of their teachers. They indicated that their EFL teachers they perceived as effective were ‘dedicated’ (مخلص في عمله). They very well invested the time assigned for teaching and did their best in teaching their students.
“He was a dedicated person.” (Q36)

“I felt she didn’t give any care to the class; she tended to just explain quickly and leave.” (I6)

Some respondents associated between teachers’ dedication in teaching and improving their English.

“He exerts efforts in teaching. His main goal is benefiting his class as much as possible.” (Q90)

“She does what she is supposed to do and tries to upgrade the level of students.” (I9)

“She did her best to help us learn English.” (Q23)

Respondents expected teachers to do their best in helping them learn English and not waste the time assigned for teaching. This view is in line with the research findings of Saafin (1999) that teachers should be ‘faithful’ from the perspective of Arab tertiary students in doing their jobs.

7.3.3 Is Energetic

The next three categories are the least frequently mentioned ones. The number of responses given under this category was 29. Respondents observed that the perceived effective teachers were energetic and full of life.

“He was very active.” (Q76)

Some considered that sitting down while teaching was a sign of not being energetic.

“He shouldn’t just sit down; he should be active.” (Q15)

Another sign of being unenergetic was being cool with students and speaking very slowly.
“He behaved, spoke and talked in a cool manner. I mean he spoke very slowly.” (I8)

Some talked about the effect of being energetic or unenergetic on the students.

“She was energetic and this made us active.” (Q65)

“He was cool. I mean his classes made me feel sleepy.” (I13)

This result is supported by McCabe’s (1995) research indicating that effective teachers were lively in their interactions with students and their presentation of content.

7.3.4 Is Patient

The number of responses given under this category was 25. Respondents focused only on one aspect of patience which was showing tolerance when dealing with students. They considered teachers who failed to show self control and got angry at their students as ineffective teachers.

“He doesn’t get angry.” (I10)

“He shows self control.” (I1)

“He shouldn’t lose his temper easily.” (I17)

“He should not get angry quickly; he should be normal.” (I5)

Some respondents described some situations in which teachers failed to show tolerance and as a result classes were cancelled. This would adversely affect students’ learning.

“There are many situations in which he has an argument with his students. Once, he asked one of his students to leave the class and he opened the door for him but the student refused and closed the door. Then he said to the student again either he leaves the class or the teacher would leave it. The student said to the teacher that he could leave the class. Teacher left the class and the student remained seated and in this case the class was canceled.” (I8)
“He expected students to be ideal. Once he got into the class on time. Some students were still talking. Then he left the class without saying anything.” (I8)

When teachers’ lose self control, they may ruin the classroom learning environment and create a kind of ill feelings towards them from the side of their students. This result is consistent with the findings of Collinson (1999) that effective teachers should show tolerance.

7.3.5 Is Likeable

Being likeable is the least frequently mentioned category. The number of responses given under this category was 5. Respondents found that the perceived effective teachers are liked by their students.

“He was likeable.” (Q22)

“I liked that teacher.” (I16)

Some respondents mentioned why they liked certain teachers.

“All students liked them because of their treatment.” (I4)

“He was kind. He joked with us. He would say hello. This made me like the teacher.” (I15)

Some talked about the effects of liking a teacher on their learning outcomes as well as on their relation with their teachers.

“In my opinion if the student liked the teacher, he would follow him even if the subject was silly. The student would be interested in the course and benefit from it. He should try to make the student like him so that he can benefit the students.” (I10)

The low frequency of this category should not be interpreted that liking teachers is the least important thing for most of the respondents, but rather it was one of the essential things for
them. I believe that respondents in a way or another talked about the effect of their feelings towards their teachers on their learning in most of the categories that we have discussed. Teachers’ friendliness, respect, kindness, sense of humour, assistance in academic and personal issues, etc. are all characterized with likeness.

7.4 Summary

As it is clear from the number of responses classified under each category, these categories are put in order according to their rate of frequency. All of them received enough responses to consider them as distinctive characteristics of effective EFL teachers. However, a special emphasis was put on the first two categories under the dimension ‘interpersonal characteristics’. Teachers’ friendliness was the most frequent category; this indicates that treating students in a friendly manner was considered extremely important by the study respondents. Helping students inside and outside the class is also a very important quality of effective EFL teachers. The respondents experienced this with good teachers. They also highly emphasized the significance of the sense of humour as a personal characteristic in creating a convenient learning environment in class and helping students to learn better.
Chapter Eight

Insights for the Separate Sources of Data

8.1 Introduction

In the previous two chapters we have been looking collectively at information that was given by the respondents in all three phases. This information was mainly about the effective teaching practices and characteristics which lent themselves to stable categories. The fact that the respondents identified similar effective teaching qualities showed that they had a lot in common and that their perceptions of effective teaching was in essence homogenous. However, some differences did emerge among the respondents that indicated their realities and perceptions were not always the same. For example, we saw in Chapter 6 that many students perceived effective teachers as ‘flexible’ and willing to compromise the rules, while a smaller number of other respondents believed that teachers’ strictness was necessary to make their classes successful. We also noticed that the characteristics of effective teachers had different frequency rates. This could mean several things. First, some categories were more common, though not necessarily more important, among some respondents than others. Second, some students did not mention some of the characteristics that were identified by others. This could mean that they did not remember these characteristics when they were interviewed or asked to complete the questionnaire. It could also mean that they were not very important from their perspectives. It could even mean that they disagreed with one or more of these characteristics. Moreover, we could also see some other kinds of differences among the respondents within the categories they agreed on. That is, although they agreed on certain characteristics, they did not always give the same details, examples, descriptions
or practices that supported these characteristics. As we can see, although the respondents agreed on most characteristics of effective teaching identified, there were also some differences among them that reflected their multiple realities.

While the previous two chapters examined both homogeneous and heterogeneous aspects of the respondents, this chapter will highlight their heterogeneity elaborating more vividly the voices of individual participants. To do that, I selected four cases: two from Phase 1 and two from Phase 3. Although these four cases appeared to have in essence homogenous perceptions of what makes EFL teachers effective the same as other participants in the three phases - they at the same time disclosed some heterogeneous information that reflected their multiple realities. This is consistent with Radnor’s (2002) perspective that in the social world we deal with human behaviour which means that individuals might give different opinions or perceptions even though they live in the same context. To be able to understand learners’ perceptions of effective teaching that might not be always the same for the study respondents, I used different qualitative tools in three different phases. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000) can capture the individual’s point of view and provide rich and valuable descriptions of the social world.

8.2 Sample Interview One from Phase One

The following interview (see Appendix H) was the fourth in the list of the interviews I made in Phase One. The interviewee, Laila (this is a pseudonym that was given to this interviewee as well as the case for the other three interviewees), was a female student who came from Yemen. Originally, she was not in my list of interviewees. She was only a companion of one of my interviewees. However, I felt that she was interested in being interviewed and talking about effective and ineffective teachers. When I asked her if she would be willing to be interviewed, she was excited and agreed without any hesitation. She was fluent and had a
lot to say. She was satisfied with her progress in learning English. She was also satisfied with the performance of many of the EFL teachers who taught her English. In her interview (see Appendix H), she was inclined to talk more about effective practices of her teachers. Twelve teachers had taught her English in one of the IEPs by the time she was interviewed. She perceived 6 of them as effective teachers, 3 as normal, 2 as ineffective and was not sure about one of them.

8.2.1 Laila’s Perspective of Effective EFL Teachers

Laila gave a rich description of what makes a teacher effective from her perspective. Having an overview of all qualities she mentioned in her interview (see Appendix H) under different themes and dimensions, we can see that there are 5 categories that she emphasized most. These categories are:

a) Helping students understand;
b) Being able to control the class;
c) Making students work in groups;
d) Having a sense of humour;
e) Giving handouts and worksheets.

a) Helping students understand

Helping students understanding was the most frequently mentioned category. She mentioned this category 14 times in one interview. She considered it very necessary that teachers that they enable their students understand. In her comments, Laila emphasized two things. She found that one way teachers can help students understand was by repeating the lesson or teaching point.
“He did his best so that students can understand the lesson. We sometimes asked him to repeat the lesson and he would repeat it. He tried to make us understand.”

“He liked to help students and explain again and again until they understand.”

“If students didn’t understand he would repeat again and again. If we didn’t understand he would give us exercises and ask us to do them. He would explain to us our mistakes until we understand.”

“He would say, “Do you understand?”

The second thing was that she found that when teachers care that their students understand and exert enough efforts in teaching and clarifying thing would help students understand.

“They did their best to make students understand.”

“If a student didn’t understand, he would do his best to make him understand.”

“He did his best to make us understand and learn.”

“He didn’t care to help us understand.”

**b) Being able to control the classroom**

Laila mentioned classroom control 12 times. She believed that it was very important for teachers to be able to control the classroom. Teachers could do that without necessarily being disrespectful or rude with their students.

“He should know how to deal with students. Threatening should be the last resort.”

“They knew how to deal with the students. They were able to make students respect themselves without resorting to using bad word or threatening.”

In her comments, she mainly talked about managing the behaviours of trouble makers in most of her comments under this category. She said that the teachers she perceived as effective knew how to deal with troublesome elements in class. She gave different examples of how those teachers deal with this kind of students.
“If he noticed that one of the students is irresponsible, he should be strict with him from the beginning and he shouldn’t be flexible with him.”

“He was strict with silly students.”

c) Making students work in groups

This is the third most frequently mentioned category in interview 4. Laila mentioned group work 9 times. She strongly emphasized group work and found it very useful for students in learning English.

“He tended to divide up the class into groups. The best thing is grouping. Because when I don’t understand something, I ask another student. We ask each other and if we didn’t understand, we ask the teacher. But when you are alone and you don’t understand, you may not ask. There are things in English we haven’t studied before and my English was not good. So I asked students to help me to understand.”

“He divided us into two groups. One group is girls and one group is boys. Each group wanted to be better than the other. We girls did the exercises and tried to know what our mistakes were. He gave questions to the two groups. It was like a competition. Groups were the best thing. I think that to be in a group is better than being alone. When you are alone, you might have some mistakes or you might be absent minded or you might haven’t understood what the teacher said. But when you are in a group, students ask each other.”

“He should divide up the class into groups because students always like groups. We like to ask each other and see what is correct and what is wrong.”

Laila elaborated on how group work can be useful for her and her classmates as English learners. She mentioned that students could help each other to understand the lesson. Also, she found it more exciting to work in groups than working individually.

d) Having a sense of humour

Laila mentioned the teachers’ sense of humour 8 times. She considered it necessary in a language class. This was reflected when she mentioned that all the teachers she perceived effective had a sense of humour.
“He had a sense of humour. All the effective teachers I mentioned have a sense of humour.”

She considered that teachers’ sense of humour helped in creating a good learning atmosphere in the classroom, otherwise the class would be boring and students might lose interest in it.

“He had a sense of humour. We had fun which made the atmosphere of the class interesting. Students need to have some fun in class. It shouldn’t be always serious. The student will feel bored even if she is a bright one. He shouldn’t be all the time funny. He can see when students feel sleepy, he would change the atmosphere of the class directly.”

“His class was boring.”

One way her teachers manifested their since of humour was by joking with students which would make students laugh and have some fun.

“He was not strict. He laughed and joked with us.”

“He was funny. When he got into the class, he joked with us.”

As we can see, Laila valued the fact that teachers had a sense of humour. She showed how this helped in making classes more interesting and holding students’ attention.

e) Giving handouts and worksheets

Laila mentioned teachers’ handouts in interview 4 6 times. She found that the handouts and worksheets she got from her teachers useful in learning English and enriched her knowledge.

“He gave us handouts from outside the textbook.”

“He would always give us handouts.”

“He gave us handouts of grammar exercises from outside our book.”

“He gave us things that are not available in the textbook. That is to say he gave us extra information.”
It is clear that Laila preferred materials from outside the textbooks. She favoured handouts and worksheets from outside textbooks because they were more understandable materials or they contained information that was not available in her textbooks.

Beside the above five categories that Laila put a lot of emphasis on, this interview (see Appendix H) contained a wide range of other instructional as well as human qualities. The following table summarizes the effective teaching and human qualities that were identified in this interview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional skills</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Human characteristics</th>
<th>F</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Teaching approach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Using suitable teaching ways</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A. Treating students as friends or family members</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Using a variety of teaching aids</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>B. Helping students in academic related issues</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Holding student’s attention</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>C. Flexible and willing to compromise</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Asking questions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Following a lecturing style</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Helping students understand</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Giving interesting classes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Giving homework</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Benefited students in learning English</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Learning resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Giving handouts and worksheets</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Interactions</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Facilitating classroom discussions</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Making students work in groups</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Getting everyone involved</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>IV. Management</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Classroom control</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Implementation of rules</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.1 contains 21 qualities that Laila mentioned. This indicates that she had a lot to say about effective EFL teachers. Although she considered both the instructional and human themes as important for teachers to be effective, she talked more about the instructional theme and identified a wider range of teaching behaviours of the teachers she perceived as effective.
8.3 Sample Interview Two from Phase One

This interview (see Appendix I) was the eighth in the list of the interviews I made in Phase One. The interviewee, Salim, was a male student. He was of a Palestinian origin with a Jordanian nationality. The above interviewee and this one studied English in two different IEPs in different places. That is to say that they were exposed to different teachers, materials, learning environment, etc. It was the second year for him in the IEP. He was not very happy that it took him two years to graduate from the IEP. He was inclined to talk more about teachers’ management of classrooms and their treatment of students. He was taught English by 8 teachers. He perceived 2 of them as effective teachers, 4 as normal, 1 as ineffective and was not sure about one of them.

8.3.1 Salim’s Perspective of Effective EFL Teachers

In interview 8 (see appendix I) Salim talked about the teaching practices and qualities of the teachers he perceived as effective which could be classified under the instructional and human themes. Having an overview of all qualities he mentioned under different themes and dimensions, we can see that there are 3 categories that he emphasized most. These categories are:

a) Treating students in a friendly manner

This category was the most frequently mentioned among the three highest rated categories. Salim emphasized teachers’ friendliness more than any other aspects of effective teaching. He mentioned it seven times in his interview.

“I have a good relation with him.”
“There should be a good relationship between the teacher and the students.”

“He established a friendly relationship with students from the beginning.”

One way of showing friendliness to students was by avoiding overusing authority. He even considered that using teachers’ authority as a sign of unfriendliness and it might create ill feelings toward the teachers.

“He shouldn’t try to use his authority with students otherwise the students would hate the subject.”

It is the teacher who should start working on creating a friendly relationship with their students and not the opposite. It is teachers’ friendliness that makes students like their teachers that will influence the teaching and learning process.

b) Being flexible

The second most highly rated category was teachers’ ‘flexibility’. It was mentioned for 6 times in the interview. Salem perceived effective teachers as ‘flexible’ in dealing with lateness, exams and other things. He did not expect effective teachers to be strict in these matters.

“He was flexible. For example, when a student came late or misses an exam, he would be flexible.”

“He was flexible, not rigid. He didn’t impose his opinion on the class. For example, if a student misses a test, he would consider his reason of missing the test and if it is a very good reason he would let him sit for a make up exam.”

Salim considered teachers’ ‘flexibility’ as a way of making students like their teachers and fostering a good relationship between them.

“His flexibility would make him close to the students.”
Salem elaborated on some practices of ‘flexible’ teachers. He also talked about the good effect of their flexibility on the relationship between teachers and their students.

c) Giving handouts and worksheets

The third highest rated category was giving students handouts and worksheets. Salim mentioned it 5 times. This category strongly correlated with the same category in interview 4 in which this category was mentioned for 6 times. This could mean that both Laila and Salim had a strong opinion about the usefulness of teachers’ handouts and the limited usefulness of the textbooks used in the IEPs where they studied English.

“The most useful thing was the things he gave us from outside.”

“He should give outside materials for practice.”

Salim strongly believed that handouts and any other forms of extra materials were much useful for him in learning English than textbooks.

“He tended to take us to the Multi Purpose Room and showed us Films in English. Then, he would ask us what we understood from the film. I benefited a lot from this. The textbook has the basics and doesn’t give you things from outside.”

“He didn’t rely a lot on the textbook. He gave us the chance to listen to outside materials.”

“He didn’t stick too much to the curriculum. We met five times a week. He gave us something from outside in two classes every week.”

It is clear that Salim strongly favoured the handouts and extra materials than the textbooks. He considered them much more useful and suitable than the textbooks.

In addition to the above three most emphasized categories, this interview (see Appendix I) contained many other categories. The following table summarizes the effective teaching and human qualities that were identified in the above interview.
Table 8.2: The characteristics of effective EFL teachers and their frequency from the perspective of Salim

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional skills</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Human characteristics</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Teaching approach</td>
<td></td>
<td>I. Interpersonal characteristics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Using suitable teaching ways</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>A. Treating students as friends or family</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Using a variety of teaching aids</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Giving interesting classes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>B. Helping students in academic related issues</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Benefited students in learning English</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Efficient in testing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>C. Flexible and willing to compromise</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Learning resources</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>II. Personal characteristics</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Giving handouts and worksheets</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>A. Is likeable</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Interactions</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Facilitating classroom discussions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Getting everyone involved</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>IV. Management</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Classroom control</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Implementation of rules</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.2 contains 14 qualities of effective teachers that Salim mentioned, 10 under the instructional theme and 4 under the human theme. In fact, he mentioned far less categories than Laila who identified 22 qualities of effective teachers. Both Laila and Salim identified a wider range of effective teaching qualities under the instructional theme than the human one. However, while Laila gave more attention to the instructional theme than the human one, Salim put more emphasis on the human theme than the instructional one. The total responses classified under the four human characteristics that Salim identified was 18, whereas the total number of responses classified under the 10 instructional practices was 15.

8.4 Realities of Laila and Salim from Phase One

Laila and Salem were given an equal opportunity to talk about their perceptions of effective EFL teachers and as we saw they gave rich data on this matter. Having an overview of the effective teaching qualities that were identified by each of them and which are contained in Tables 8.1 and 8.2 above, we will find that a number of qualities were identified by both of them. Table 8.5 contains the qualities that were identified by both interviewees and their frequencies in each interview.
Table 8.3: The characteristics of effective EFL teachers that Laila and Salim identified

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional skills</th>
<th>F4</th>
<th>F8</th>
<th>Human characteristics</th>
<th>F4</th>
<th>F8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Teaching approach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I. Interpersonal characteristics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Using suitable teaching ways</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A. Treating students as friends or family members</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Using a variety of teaching aids</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>B. Helping students in academic related issues</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Giving interesting classes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>C. Flexible and willing to compromise</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Benefited students in learning English</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>II. Personal characteristics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Learning resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A. Is likeable</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Giving handouts and worksheets</td>
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<tr>
<td>III. Interactions</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Facilitating classroom discussions</td>
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<td>B. Getting everyone involved</td>
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<td>IV. Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Classroom control</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Implementation of rules</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.4: The characteristics of effective EFL teachers that were identified by Laila and were not mentioned by Salim

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional skills</th>
<th>Human characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Teaching approach</td>
<td>I. Personal characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Holding student’s attention</td>
<td>A. Has a sense of humour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Asking questions</td>
<td>B. Is energetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Following a lecturing style</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Helping students understand</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Giving homework</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>II. Interactions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Making students work in groups</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 8.4 contains 8 qualities that were not identified by Salim. 6 of them were related to teaching and 2 were humanistic qualities. It was observable that Laila was enthusiastic with actual teaching practices of EFL teachers. The essence of these teaching practices she mentioned was about enabling students to understand and learn English. While Salim mentioned two of these behaviours that Laila mentioned as well, she mentioned 6 more that Salim did not identify. In these 6 teaching behaviours, she elaborated how her teachers whom she considered effective helped students to understand. She first highlighted the importance of teachers’ ability to hold their students’ attention. Holding students’ attention was a prerequisite for enabling students understand.

“He should attract students’ attention to the class and not make them feel bored especially in the first class. Students in the first class feel sleepy and in the last class feel tired.”

The second teaching behaviour Laila’s identified was asking questions. Such questions gave students the chance to discuss different issues and understand things better.

“After the show and after answering the questions of the handout, she would also ask us questions.”

“He sometimes would not give questions for discussion. We just complete the form he gave us and that’s it.”

The third way she mentioned was avoiding lecturing style. In the light of what Laila said, as well as what other respondents mentioned, language classes do not lend themselves to lecturing. Learners wanted to have the chance to practise the language and take the responsibility of learning it.

“If the teacher explains and explains, the class will be very boring. We do the exercise and he would help us. For example, after we finish, each student would say his answer. If it is wrong, he would correct it and if it is correct we say to him it is correct. That the teacher explains from the beginning to the end of the class is very boring.”
The fourth way Laila identified in teachers’ attempt to help students understand was being willing to repeat the lesson when necessary.

“He liked to help students and explain again and again until they understand. If there was no time for that, he would ask them to go to his office.”

“If students didn’t understand he would repeat again and again. If we didn’t understand he would give us exercises and ask us to do them. He would explain to us our mistakes until we understand.”

“He didn’t care to help us understand. When we ask him a question, he would be angry or give you a certain look.”

The fifth way that Laila mentioned was giving students homework. She found homework useful in helping her understand better.

“He gave us homework daily, but not too much. You can do it in five or ten minutes. Homework is very important.”

“He tried to make us understand. He gave us homework.”

The sixth way she identified was making students work in groups. She was enthusiastic with groupwork. She found it very useful

“Because when I don’t understand something, I ask another student. We ask each other and if we didn’t understand, we ask the teacher. But when you are alone and you don’t understand, you may not ask. There are things in English we haven’t studied before and my English was not good. So I asked students to help me to understand.”

“He tended to divide up the class into groups. The best thing is grouping.”

Regarding the two human characteristics that were identified by Laila, but not by Salim, she considered teachers’ sense of humour as an important characteristic of effective teachers. It helped in resisting students’ feelings of boredom and creating a better learning atmosphere in the classroom.

“He had a sense of humour. All the effective teachers I mentioned have a sense of humour.”
“He had a sense of humour. We had fun which made the atmosphere of the class interesting. Students need to have some fun in class. It shouldn’t be always serious. The student will feel bored even if she is a bright one. He shouldn’t be all the time funny. He can see when students feel sleepy, he would change the atmosphere of the class directly.”

The second personal quality that Laila mentioned was being energetic. She talked about this quality in the context of keeping students busy and exerting a lot of efforts in enabling students understand and learn English.

“She would exhaust the student.”

“If a student didn’t understand, he would do his best to make him understand. If a student didn’t understand in class, he would go to his office. He would always give handouts.”

As we can see, Laila identified eight more qualities of effective teaching that Salim did not mention in his interview. The differences in qualities between the two interviewees might not due to the fact that they had different realities but rather because they might not remember them during the interviews. At the same time, it is likely that they might disagree on few of the qualities contained in Table 8.4 if they were asked about them. This kind of disagreement then would reflect differences in the realities of Laila and Salim. For example, they were studying English in two different IEPs in different universities where the institutional environment as well as the learning environment was not the same in these two places. They were taught by different teachers and were also exposed to different numbers of teachers. While Laila was taught English by 12 different teachers Salim was taught English by 8 teachers. They mixed with different classmates. While Laila studied in a co-education system where she studied English in a mixed gender environment, Salim studied in a place where males and females studied separately. In addition, the teaching hours, curriculum, policies and systems were also different in the places where they studied English. This would contribute in making the realities of those two students different from each other which in turn would influence their preferences and perceptions of effective teaching.
However, these differences, as shown in the above table, were limited. The two interviewees agreed on most of the qualities of effective EFL teachers.

8.5 Sample Follow-up Interview One from Phase Three

This interview (see Appendix J) was the first in the list of the interviews I made in Phase Three. The first interviewee, Hala, was a female student. She was a Palestinian who came from Syria. It was the second year for her in the IEP. She was interviewed in the last couple of weeks of her attendance in the IEP. She was eager to finish the English program and start her professional studies. She had a lot of experience as a student learning English in the IEP. She did not hesitate or face any difficulties in answering my questions. She was a good student lawyer who tended to defend students’ behaviours and practices. In this interview (see Appendix J), she was not expected to identify the characteristics of effective teachers, but rather she was asked to give more details, descriptions and elaboration on some of the highly rated categories that were identified in Phases One and Two.

8.5.1 Hala’s Perspective on Selected Qualities of Effective EFL Teachers

In her attempt to elaborate on the qualities and teaching practices Hala was asked about, she emphasized some categories more than others. Having an overview of all qualities she mentioned in this interview (see Appendix J) under different themes and dimensions, we can see that there are 5 categories whose frequency rate was significantly higher than the other categories. These 5 categories are put in an order according to their frequency rate.
a) Giving interesting classes

This category is the highest rated one among the other categories. Hala gave 9 responses on this category. In these responses, she gave factors that helped in making classes interesting for her.

“The topic could be interesting and as a result you feel that the time flies quickly; the lesson in this case is light and interesting.”

“The classes we tended to take in the library were interesting. We watched foreign films there.”

“Also giving presentations in speaking classes was interesting for us. This reduces the pressure on the students.”

“Also the teacher himself can create an interesting atmosphere through his sense of humour.”

Hala had a lot to say about what made classes effective. She highlighted the effects of the learning conditions and atmosphere on making classes interesting. She also talked about the role of diversification in making classes interesting. She talked about going to the library, watching films, discussing interesting topics in class and giving presentations.

b) Using a variety of teaching ways

Hala gave 8 responses under this category. In her elaboration on using a variety of teaching ‘ways’ (طرق تدريس) she perceived that teaching ‘ways’ did not only contain different ways of presenting materials but also included using different teaching aids and materials. Regarding the first component which was teaching things in different ‘ways’, she gave examples on presenting or teaching reading, listening and vocabulary in different ways.

“They can also use different ways in explaining the meaning of difficult words.”
“When teaching reading, teachers should sometimes teach the new words before reading the passage and in other times they can teach them after reading it.”

“In listening, the teacher can sometimes let us read the questions before listening and in other times while listening.”

The second component was using different teaching aids, activities and materials.

“They sometimes use the overhead projector and other times give oral explanations.”

“They also can teach using the whiteboard.”

“They let us watch films or listen to cassettes.”

“In reading for example they can give us reading passages from outside the reading textbook. These passages could be easier or more difficult than the ones in the textbook.”

As we can see, the issue of students’ language versus professional language that was discussed in the introduction of Chapter 6 is reflected in this category. While professionals might believe that teaching aids and supplementary materials could not be classified under teaching techniques, this student considered them as a part of teaching ‘ways’. I think that Hala wanted to highlight the usefulness of diversification of teaching ‘ways’ (طرق تدريس), teaching aids and supplementary materials more than talking peculiarly about teaching techniques.

c) Creating a good learning atmosphere

Hala gave five responses on this category. She indicated that teachers could create a good learning environment if there is a humour element in class.

‘The teacher should not be very serious. There should be time for fun.’

‘He should give a chance for laughing in the classroom.’

‘The sense of humour makes the student interested in the class.’
Another way of creating a good learning atmosphere was by having a disciplined class.

“There should be no noise in class; there should be order in class so that students can understand the lesson.”

She also considered that using technology in teaching English as one of creating a good environment. As indicated in Chapter 6, respondents showed a strong interest in using computer technology in teaching and learning English.

“A good learning environment includes a lot of things. It includes using the computer and the overhead projector and anything else that help students in learning.”

Hala mentioned several factors that help in creating a good learning environment. The most important factor for her was having fun and having a sense of humour in class.

d) Being flexible

Hala talked about four situations in which teachers were expected to be flexible: mobiles ringing in the classroom, students talking in the classroom, giving make up exams and missing classes or coming to classes late.

“Teachers would tolerate it when the mobile goes off for one or two times.”

“Teachers should tolerate it having a student talking or laughing with her friend in class.”

“If the student was sick, it won’t hurt the teacher if he gives the student a make up exam.”

“Allowing one absence or one lateness or giving a make up exam is considered a kind of assistance for the student and encouragement for her. We hate many teachers because they are very strict in taking attendance and do not give make up exams.”

There could be some other situations in which students wanted their teachers to be flexible, but the situations that interviewee 1 elaborated on were the most common ones among the respondents in Phases One and Two.
e) Enabling students to practise English

Hala gave several practices of the teachers she as perceived effective which enabled their students to practise English. She considered practicing speaking English as her first priority because she believed speaking was the most important skill after all.

“What I need to learn after all is speaking English more anything else. Speaking is the most important thing. I like to be able of expressing my opinion in English because it is an international language.”

In addition to speaking, she also talked about practising other language skills. She showed how her teachers enabled her to practise English.

“I work with my partner; I listen to what she says and draw something accordingly. This is practice. It is listening and speaking.”

“The teacher gives us activities and stories from outside the textbook and as a result change occurs.”

“We tended to access the internet websites of reading or writing; this was class work. For example, the teacher asks us to find answers for certain questions. I should give the answers to her at the end of the class as a class work.”

Hala perceived that practising all language skills as necessary for learning English. However, she believed that the practising speaking was the most useful for her in developing her English language skills.

In addition to the above categories that were emphasized most by Hala, this interview (see Appendix J) contained elaborations on other teaching practices that were investigated in Phase Three. The following table shows the frequency of the effective teaching qualities in this interview.
Table 8.5: The frequency of the characteristics of effective EFL teachers that Hala elaborated on

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional skills</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Human characteristics</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Teaching approach</td>
<td></td>
<td>I. Interpersonal characteristics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Simplifying teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A. Has a friendly manner</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Using a variety of teaching ways</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>B. Creating a good learning atmosphere</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Giving interesting classes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>C. Helping students in academic related issues</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Correcting mistakes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>D. Flexible and willing to compromise</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Interactions</td>
<td></td>
<td>E. Has a sense of humour</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Practising English</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.5 contains 10 qualities of effective teachers that Hala was asked to shed more light on. The table shows that she had a lot more to say about the instructional qualities than the human ones. She identified 24 teaching practices under the instructional skills theme, while she identified 14 qualities under the human characteristics theme.

8.6 Sample Follow-up Interview Two from Phase Three

This interview (see Appendix K) was the second in the list of the interviews I made in Phase Three. Sameera was a female student. She came from Saudi Arabia. It was the second year for her in the IEP. As the above interviewee, she was interviewed in the last couple of weeks of her time in the IEP. She was quiet and tended to talk to the point. She was interested in practicing English especially beyond the borders of the classroom in a real-world. She was asked to elaborate on the same effective teaching qualities that interviewee one in the above section had talked about.

8.6.1 Sameera’s Perspective on Selected Qualities of Effective EFL Teachers

Sameera in this interview (see Appendix K) gave different amounts of elaborations on different effective teaching qualities that emerged from this investigation. Having an overview of all the qualities she mentioned under different themes and dimensions, we can
see that there are 3 categories whose frequency rate was higher than the other categories. She gave 4 responses under each of these 3 categories.

a) *Enabling students to practise English*

Sameera highlighted the necessity of practising speaking English. She believed that one way of improving her English was by practising speaking.

“If I do not speak, I won’t be able to learn the language, but if I practise speaking it and make mistakes, I will learn from my mistakes and the teacher will correct my mistakes and then I speak again and in this case I learn.”

According to Sameera, one way of practising speaking and developing students’ conversational skills was by being involved in real life situations in which they could interact with people in real places such as markets and shopping centres.

“... going to one of the shopping centres so that we can improve our conversational skills. There is nothing wrong if we go with our teacher to markets and talk with sales assistants.”

Besides practising speaking, Sameera also talked about practising other language areas.

“There should also be activities inside the university, inside and outside the classroom. We can go to the computer lab and use the internet. This is an activity. We access English language sites and learn words and other things.”

“...going to the cinema with our teacher and watching a film.”

It is clear that Sameera considered it useful to practise English inside and outside the classroom. However, she elaborated mainly on practising English outside the classroom which might imply that the outside world provides students a better and more interesting opportunity to practise the language. She was especially interested in practising the language in real contexts with people from our real life such as sales assistants.
b) Has a friendly manner

The second category that Sameera put more emphasis on was teachers’ friendliness. She talked about friendliness as a consequence of teachers’ practices and not as a result of good treatment. She considered being understanding, helpful and willing to accept students’ questions as signs of teachers’ friendliness.

“A teacher is considered friendly when he helps students by giving them advice for example.”

“Teachers should listen to us.”

“The friendly teacher would allow us to ask questions and when we ask him he would not get angry with us.”

“He should also take into consideration students’ circumstances.”

As we can see Sameera judged teachers’ friendliness indirectly through certain practices. She did not talk about teachers’ friendliness in terms of good treatment, having a friendly relationship with students and showing respect to their students.

c) Creating a good learning atmosphere

The third category that Sameera gave more elaboration on than other categories was creating a good learning atmosphere. She talked mostly about creating a desirable environment outside the classroom. She considered that changing the physical setting of learning helped in creating a good environment. She talked about watching films, going to markets and going to computer labs.

“For example, a teacher can take his students to watch a film outside the classroom or even outside the university.”

“There should be trips for students. There is not conversation. They do not care much for conversation. Therefore, there is nothing wrong if we go with our teacher to markets and
talk with sales assistants. There should also be activities inside the university, inside and outside the classroom."

“For example, we can go to the computer lab and use the internet. This is an activity. We access English language sites and learn words and other things.”

She also mentioned the classroom environment. She considered that having an interaction in the classroom between teachers and students was one way of creating a good learning atmosphere. Students should play an active role in this environment.

“When the teacher and students arrive the classroom, the class becomes active. You will not find sleeping students in the classroom, but rather there is interaction in the class.”

Sameera gave a special attention to the learning environment outside the classroom but at the same time did not overlook the importance of the good learning environment inside the classroom.

Beside the above 5 categories, Sameera shed some light on other investigated teaching qualities. The following table shows the frequency of the effective teaching qualities in this interview (see Appendix K).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional skills</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Human characteristics</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Teaching approach</td>
<td></td>
<td>I. Interpersonal characteristics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Simplifying teaching</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A. Has a friendly manner</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Using a variety of teaching ways</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>B. Creating a good learning atmosphere</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Correcting mistakes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>C. Helping students in academic related issues</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Interactions</td>
<td></td>
<td>D. Flexible and willing to compromise</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Practising English</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.6 contains 7 qualities of effective teachers that Sameera elaborated on. The table shows that she had more to say about the human qualities than the instructional ones. She identified 11 teaching practices under the human theme, while she identified 7 qualities under the instructional skills theme.
8.7 Realities of Hala and Sameera from Phase Three

Hala and Sameera were asked to give more information about a number of effective teaching qualities that were identified in Phases 1 and 2. Having an overview of the effective teaching qualities that the interviewees were asked to elaborate on and which are contained in Tables 8.3 and 8.4 above, we will find they gave details on most of these qualities. Table 8.7 contains the qualities that both of them talked about together with their frequencies.

Table 8.7: The qualities of effective EFL teachers and their frequencies that Hala and Sameera elaborated on

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional skills</th>
<th>F1</th>
<th>F2</th>
<th>Human characteristics</th>
<th>F1</th>
<th>F2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Teaching approach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I. Interpersonal characteristics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Simplifying teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A. Has a friendly manner</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Using a variety of teaching ways</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>B. Creating a good learning atmosphere</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Correcting mistakes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>C. Helping students in academic related issues</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Interactions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D. Flexible and willing to compromise</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.7 shows that both Hala and Sameera gave some of information on 8 qualities of effective teachers. In general, the frequencies of these categories of both of them were similar except with one teaching practice which was using a variety of teaching ‘ways’. While Sameera gave 1 example of this quality, Hala gave 8 examples of it. Also, the kinds of examples, descriptions and practices they mentioned in their interviewees were mostly different even though they were used to describe the same qualities. For example both of them considered practising English was important for them. However, while Hala perceived practising English to occur within the university physical settings, mainly classrooms and computer labs, Sameera considered both inside and outside places as important for practising English. In fact, Sameera put more emphasis on practising English in real-world contexts outside the university premises. She found it very useful for her to practise English in genuine situations with people from real community such as sales assistants in shopping centres.
Another indicator of having divergent realities for Hala and Sameera is that each of them had a different perspective of two qualities: giving interesting classes and having a sense of humour. While Hala gave 9 practices on how teachers make classes interesting, Sameera did not basically mention any examples or specific details about how teachers could make classes interesting. Also, whereas Hala considered teachers’ sense of humour necessary, Sameera clearly stated that it was not important for her whether or not her teachers had a sense of humour.

As we can see, the realities of Hala and Sameera as well as interviewees 4 and 8 were not always the same. They had many similarities, but at the same time they had some differences. Despite having both similarities and differences at an individual level, chapters 6 and 7 showed mostly similarities and few differences among the respondents at a group level. We saw in the previous two chapters that the respondents basically appeared to agree on what made their EFL teachers effective. However, occasionally they did not agree. For example, most of the respondents preferred their teachers not to be strict with them, while a smaller group of the respondents considered it necessary that their teachers deal with students strictly. They considered this important for controlling the class and creating a suitable learning environment. These differences at individual levels and group levels reflected respondents’ differences in their experiences, needs and perceptions. This is consistent with the implications of social constructivism that learners have different abilities and in accordance classroom activities should match individual differences amongst students (Sheperd, 2000). This is also in line with Rogers’ humanistic approach (1969) that considers the whole person and recognizes his/her autonomy and individual needs. However, the differences in the needs of language learners were perhaps not as large as these approaches suggested. We have now seen in the preceding three chapters 6, 7 and 8 the limited needs and preferences that were different among different individuals which would make EFL
teachers’ task easier in addressing them. The findings reflected that the respondents mostly identified similar needs and interests in learning English.

8.8 Summary

In this chapter, two interviews from Phase One and two other interviews from Phase Three were discussed. The purpose of discussing four different interviews of four different respondents was mainly to elaborate on the perceptions of individual respondents. Interpreting a complete interview gives a full picture of the perceptions of effective teaching of individual respondents. Moreover, reviewing these interviews separately has shown how each individual's perceptions of effective teaching perceptions of each individual is distinctive from others. These interviews have reflected the multiple realities of the respondents. They have shown that each individual had his/her own experience, understanding and perceptions, which were not always the same among respondents.
Chapter Nine

Towards a Language Learning Culture

9.1 Introduction

The data collected from the Three Phases did not show any major variations in the perspectives of the participants. The main themes and their relevant categories and subcategories that were identified in the data collected from the first phase appeared again in the data collected in the second phase. That is to say that the data collected in Phase One were consistent with the data collected in Phase Two. No new categories emerged from the data collected in Phase Two, in spite of the fact that the sample of Phase One was much smaller than the sample of Phase Two. However, as we saw in Chapter 8, the realities of the respondents did not always match. As one might expect, there were some differences and disagreements among them. Also as expected, the data collected in Phase One using interviews were deeper, much richer and more detailed than the data collected in Phase Two using questionnaires. The interviewees in Phase One had the chance to talk about private or personal things. The discussion in this chapter is based on the research aims and questions and their outcomes. Therefore, it is important to revisit both the research questions and the aims of the study. The main research question of this study was:

How do Arab students perceive effective EFL teachers at university level?

The other subordinate questions are:

a) In what ways do cultural factors operate to influence the views of Arab students of effective EFL teachers at university level?
b) To what extent are student perceptions of teacher effectiveness in UAE Universities unitary or heterogeneous?

c) What are the implications of student perceptions of teacher effectiveness for formal evaluation procedures of language classrooms in UAE universities?

d) What is the broader context that the overall findings might draw for making English language learning more effective for Arab university students?

The study aimed at looking in depth at the perceptions of effective EFL teaching at the UAE universities. The discussion of the overall findings in this chapter is structured according to two interrelated themes of effective EFL teaching that were derived from the data in Chapters 6 and 7. These themes are instructional skills and human characteristics. They will be discussed in the light of a new understanding of effective teaching; the notion of effective teachers maintaining an effective learning culture. In developing the notion of a learning culture I have recognised that students’ views of effective teachers go beyond a list of specific skills that the teacher must display, and are closer to a description of the complex way in which an effective teacher manages all the factors within their control to support the learning of their students. In this view teachers who take their students to the refectory to talk informally over coffee are doing much more than simply being friendly and approachable. They are contributing to the developing learning culture of their classroom just as much as they do when they structure activities in class or respond to students’ writing. Part of this construction of an effective learning culture will depend on the teachers’ pedagogical sophistication, but part will reflect how sensitively they can understand and respond to the range of attitudes, expectations and preferred ways of working that their students have; how they can recognise and respond to the different goals of those students and be sensitive to the different effects of failure (or of success) on each of their students.
These sensitivities will be dependent on a full understanding of how factors such as students’ family backgrounds, religious or national identities, and gender might affect these attitudes, expectations etc. The development of an effective learning culture in the classroom is therefore dependent, at least in part, on the recognition of the impact of the other kinds of culture referred to in Ch1. It may be that it is through this relationship between other cultures and classroom cultures that other cultures have their powerful influences on education. This idea of an effective learning culture, and insights into the characteristics of that culture, were derived from the findings of the research and perhaps reveal an emerging theory of effective teaching and learning of English as a foreign language in the UAE context. I will then review a new literature on effective learning cultures in other contexts and discuss my findings in the light of this literature. I will then discuss the implications of my research results for EFL teacher development and finally propose recommendations for further research.

9.2 New Understanding of Effective Teaching

A new understanding of effective teaching considers effective EFL teachers as creators of an effective English language learning culture. Having an overview of the descriptions and information the respondents gave throughout the Three Phases, I started to see that the essence of the data was its orientation towards the idea of a learning culture and this made me adjust my understanding. I realized that the bigger picture of effective teaching and that the core of the data highlighted the significance of the idea of a learning culture for effective English teaching. The respondents talked about a web of instructional behaviours and practices as well as personal and interpersonal characteristics of effective teachers. Most of this revolved around the significance of creating a learning culture that respondents found suitable for enhancing their learning of English. Some of what they highlighted was formally
recognized and recommended by policy makers and senior staff, while some other things were done informally by their effective teachers but were not recognized within official assumptions.

Students’ perceptions of what is effective and what is not effective and what is desirable and what is not desirable can be used to increase understanding of teaching and learning situations and to provide guidance for EFL teachers. The value of what the students favoured or considered useful should first be analyzed against all the other influences that the teacher knows to be relevant to teaching in the particular context (e.g. factors such as curriculum or college policy that the students may not be fully aware of). One of the roles of the teacher might in fact be to mediate the learning culture – to help students understand how far this culture can match their wishes, why there may be things that cannot be done and to work with the students to decide what kinds of compromise might be possible. In order to do that (e.g. to act on some student views of effective teaching and to mediate around others) they might find themselves doing things that lie outside the job description, and outside the official structures and procedures of the college where he/she worked. If this view of teaching is recognized and supported, major further improvements in learning would follow. On the other hand, there may be situations where the teacher feels that there is little scope for compromise. Maintaining an effective learning culture may in such a situation mean deciding not to take any action on a particular student request. (For example the teacher should not compromise if the things that the students ask for would disadvantage other students).

The data reviewed in this study showed that the respondents expected a lot from their teachers in helping them to improve their English. At the same time, in general they wanted to be more involved in learning English and play an active role in the whole teaching and learning process. They wanted their needs, interests and ways of learning to be taken into
consideration; however, some of their views might be at odds with official assumptions, such as teachers’ willingness to compromise in implementing the rules. Therefore, beside taking account of students’ view in deciding how to work towards being an effective teacher, teachers will also need to take account of other views that students might not be aware of such as curriculum requirements, exam syllabus, college policies, etc. They sometimes also need to mediate the differences between students’ views and other views that students are less aware of.

Understanding that students perceive effective teaching as behaviours and practices embedded in an effective English language learning culture is significant because it implies a new view of effective EFL teaching. This tells teachers that effective EFL teaching is not just a specific skill or area that qualifies teachers to be effective while other skills are supplementary or of less importance, but rather includes a wide range of factors that may assist or influence students’ learning. Teachers should orchestrate all these factors in order to be able to create an effective English language learning culture. Therefore, teaching can be seen as managing a learning culture and effective teaching is sustaining an effective learning culture.

This study was conducted in an Arabic context. Therefore, the Arab learners’ culture played a role in shaping the kind of learning culture that the participants talked about in this study. I found out that the human element appeared to be as important for the learners as other academic elements. Friendliness, respect, generosity and willingness to compromise are some aspects of the Arabic culture. They were strongly emphasized by the participants. These aspects gave an Arabic color to the respondents’ perceptions of an effective English language learning culture. They were considered important for creating a good classroom environment, establishing a good rapport between teachers and students and maximizing the cooperation between them in doing the ‘teaching and learning business.’ However, the
participants sometimes wanted to overgeneralize some of these aspects and use them in contradictory contexts. For example, if the teacher is willing to compromise in things like changing the date of an examination upon the request of students, this might be deemed as a sign of cooperation and flexibility in the light of the students’ culture, but when students want their teachers to be flexible in implementing the university rules such as attendance rules, in this case it will be incorrect to consider this as a part of the learners’ culture. As we are going to see later, this should be seen as an indication that the learners need some orientation on this area.

In the light of this new understanding of students’ perceptions of effective EFL teachers, Arab students learn English better when teachers create and maintain a learning culture they perceived to be effective; and in accordance they considered those teachers who appeared to maintain an effective English language learning culture and sustain it as effective EFL teachers. Being aware of the importance of the learning culture for performing effective teaching could be useful for teaching in general and teaching English in particular.

Since the notion of an effective learning culture emerged from my engagement with the data and was not part of my original thinking about the research, I did not do a literature review on the topic. This implies a need for a new literature review on this subject at this stage of the thesis, before the discussion.

**9.3 Further Probing**

In chapter four I reviewed four dominant theoretical perspectives that have been influential in language learning and teaching: behaviourist, cognitive, humanistic and social constructivist theories. In behaviourism the learners are viewed as ‘a language-producing machine’ Ellis (1985). The role of the learners is passive since they are not engaged in analyzing the language; there is no place for interaction and negotiation of meaning. Regarding the
cognitive perspective, it places a lot of emphasis on individual development and had little regard for the social context in which learning takes place. As for the humanistic approaches, it is based upon a highly individual model of human development and gave little consideration for the social and cultural aspects of learning.

Social constructivism which has been inspired partly by the work of Vygotsky, recognized that knowledge is socially constructed and emphasized the importance of the social context in the learning process and gave some recognition to the cultural dimensions of learning; however, it maintained a conceptual dichotomy between individual activity and social processes and failed to show their dialectical interdependence (John-Steiner and Mahn, 1996). Moreover, according to James and Bloomer (2001) it has been limited to the educational institution settings. It did not emphasize the other outside real contexts where learning naturally takes place in an informal mode. They stated that

“… much of its [social constructivism] research has been conducted within the confines of formally designed educational programs and institutions. For these reasons, the capacity of social constructivism to relate questions of learning to wider cultural concerns must be considered limited.” (pp. 2, 3)

One of the theories that have contributed to the recent rise of interest in culture was the activity theory which originated in the former Soviet Union as part of the cultural-historical school of psychology founded by Vygotsky, Leontjev and Lurija. According to Bannon and Bodker (1991) it highlights the dialectical relations binding the individual and the social, cultural and historical context. Rodriguez (1998, p.2) stated that “Context is constituted through the enactment of an activity involving people and artifacts …(which) carry with them a particular culture and history and are persistent structures that stretch across activities through time and space.” However, the question whether activity theory succeeded to relate
learning to the wider context of culture remains persistent. James and Bloomer (2001, p 4) state that

“There is evidently a wide range of interpretations and applications of activity theory and, while a regard for the cultural-historical dynamics of sociocultural processes and for the individual-context dialectic is evident in some works, others display a marked mentalist tendency or a failure to relate the complexities of learning to their wider cultural contexts.”

The shortcomings of the above mentioned learning theories are important concerns that the recent sociocultural thinking tries to respond to. In the recent years, educationalists placed more emphasis on the importance of culture in learning. Lave and Wenger (1991) viewed learning as an integral part of social practice. They emphasized that learning occurs through legitimate peripheral participation no matter which educational form provides the learning context, or whether there is any intentional instruction at all. By legitimate peripheral participation Lave and Wenger mean “to draw attention to the point that learners inevitably participate in communities of practitioners and that the mastery of knowledge and skill requires newcomers to move toward full participation in the sociocultural practices of a community” (p.29). They stated that learning is an integral part of social practice, closely related to what might be termed the culture of the place of learning. They placed emphasis on the sociocultural characters of learning that help in constituting learning in communities of practice. In line with Lave and Wenger, Bruner, (1996, p.4) indicated that “learning and thinking are always situated in a cultural setting, and always dependent upon the utilization of cultural resources.”

Brown et al (1989) stated that what is learned can not be separated from how it is learned. They indicated that situations are an integral part of learning. They said that
“Situations might be said to co-produce knowledge through activity. Learning and cognition, it is now possible to argue, are fundamentally situated. … We suggest that, by ignoring the situated nature of cognition, education defeats its own goal of providing useable, robust knowledge.” (p. 32)

The work of Miller and Gildea (cited in Brown et al, 1987) highlight the importance of situations in structuring cognition. It shows the difference between knowing and doing in learning vocabulary. Their work compared learning vocabulary through word definitions and exemplary sentences with learning vocabulary through communication. Miller and Gildea’s work shows that by listening, reading and speaking the seventeen year old students managed to learn 5000 words per year, but learning words from abstract definitions and sentences out of the normal context they learned 100 to 200 words per year. Even much of what they learned was not very useful in practice; they are likely to make silly mistakes such as:

- *I was meticulous about falling off the cliff.*

- *Mrs. Morrow stimulated the soup* (p.32).

Such mistakes are made because word definitions and exemplary sentences are dealt with as self-sufficient. What is ignored is the fact that using a language involves extralinguistic props such as metaphors, ambiguity, polysemy, nuance, etc. that can be resolved through the context of communicative situations which help in acquiring new words and increasing vocabulary. This means that the dictionaries are not enough to learn words because words are situated and they should not be learned independently of authentic situations. Learning words depends not only on dictionary support but also on situations and social negotiations. Brown et al believe that all forms of knowledge are like language. Like words, concepts are not self-contained entities but rather they are both situated and progressively developed through activity. Allan, et al argue that
“… knowledge is situated, being in part a product of the activity, context, and culture in which it is developed and used. … Activity, concept, and culture are interdependent. No one can be totally understood without the other two. Learning must involve all three” (1987, pp. 32, 33).

An effective learning culture is to be created not only in the classroom but also outside it. Creating the appropriate culture in real contexts helps in giving students informal learning. As indicated in chapter four, learning should be authentic and related to the world outside school. It is not enough to make classes more interesting; students should be able to use knowledge in real-world settings (Shepherd, 2000). According to Mercer (2002) language teachers should provide learners with real-life situations so that they can be familiar with the foreign language culture. Colley et al (2003) put a lot of emphasis on informal as well as formal learning. Also, the project team for the Transforming Learning Cultures in Further Education (TLC) project (2003) (of which Colley was part) emphasized the importance of informal learning. They indicated that there was formal as well as informal learning in all the learning situations (which they called learning sites) where their research was conducted. They also highlighted the significance of creating a positive learning culture and that good tutors are those who can create such cultures. But they also indicated that teachers are not the only factors that influence the learning culture. They stated that:

“All our research suggests that tutors can and do exert a strong influence on the cultures of sites where they teach, and that better teachers are relatively more able to sustain positive learning cultures. However, our research also shows that most of the factors that influence site cultures lie outside tutor control.” (p. 26)

The TLC project team (2003) developed six principles of effective learning and teaching in further education:
a) Individual needs should be balanced against other priorities and constraints, in the maintenance of an effective learning culture.
b) Learning involves informal as well as formal aspects.
c) The essence of good teaching is the creation of a positive learning culture.
d) What works well in one teaching context may not work in another, or may not in the same way.
e) Teachers are important in improving the learning of students, but some other factors influence their learning as well.
f) Where retention and achievement are used as indicators of quality, much that is important about learning is deemphasized.

The detail of the last of these points is particular to the context of further education in the UK, but the others can be directly related to the findings of the current research in ways that will now be explored.

A learning culture constitutes a number of elements including student and teacher expectations, student, teacher and institutional history, student and teacher preferred ways of working as well as the formal issues of local and notional policy etc. According to Hodkinson, Biesta, and James (2004, p. 3), a learning culture involves the following dimensions that contribute to learning:

a) The positions, dispositions and actions of the students (i.e. students’ preferred ways of working their expectations and their normal ways of working – all of which are influenced by their personal history, their gender, their social class etc)
b) The positions, dispositions and actions of the tutors (ditto above for tutors).
c) The location and resources of the site, which are not neutral, but enable some
approaches and attitudes, and constrain or prevent others.

d) The syllabus or course specification, the assessment and qualification specifications
and requirements.

e) The time tutors and students spend together, their interrelationships, and the range
of other learning sites students are engaged with.

f) Issues of college management and procedures, together with funding and inspection
body procedures and regulations, and government policy.

g) Wider vocational and academic cultures, of which any course or site is part.

h) Wider social and cultural values and practices, for example around issues of social
class, gender and ethnicity, the nature of employment opportunities, social and
family life, and the perceived status of FE as a sector.

This was carried out in UK FE sector earlier. As we can see, a learning culture is a very
broad concept. We cannot prescribe certain elements as components of a learning culture
that we can follow in order to create and maintain it but rather it constitutes a wide range of
interrelated factors that contribute to learning.

9.4 Effective EFL teachers as Creators of Effective Learning Culture

As I indicated in the literature review in chapter four, language is a social phenomenon, and
the research data frequently reflected this. The findings of this study showed that the social
context and the interaction between the students and teachers and among the students
themselves are important in teaching and learning English language. Therefore, in the light of
the research findings, the social constructivist approach was more suitable for effective
teaching and learning of English in the UAE context. However, as was shown above, the
capacity of social constructivism to relate questions of learning to wider cultural concerns was limited. The details of the points raised by the participants highlighted the importance of the whole context in which learning occurs; this includes all aspects of teaching practices, classroom activities, classroom environment, informal opportunities for interaction outside the classroom, the classroom environment, students’ expectations, the resources, the context of the institution in which the learning takes place as well as the wider culture. In this case this is the Arab-Islamic culture in which learning takes place. Nevertheless, the findings of this research have reflected many of the elements of effective learning cultures outlined above. These details were classified under two major themes that represented the perceptions of the participants of effective EFL teachers: instructional skills theme and human characteristics theme; the features of the learning culture were highlighted in both themes.

9.4.1 Instructional Theme

The instructional skills theme concentrates mainly on the teaching skills and practices of effective teachers. There are three main components of effective learning culture that can be extracted from these teaching skills and practices.

a) Diversification;

b) Maximizing the use of English inside and outside the classroom;

c) Classroom control.

a) Diversification

Diversification was one of the most significant components of the effective learning culture of language learning that the findings reflected in various contexts. The respondents
repeatedly emphasized in the three phases the importance of diversification in two main areas: enabling respondents to understand and making classes more interesting.

Regarding diversification in the context of helping language learners understand and facilitating learning, the respondents highlighted the importance of diversification in making teachers’ instruction more understandable and learnable. Diversification in this context mainly encompassed four areas: teaching ways, teaching aids, classroom activities and learning resources. As for the area of teaching ways, the respondents found that diversifying the ways of presenting materials would help them understand better.

“He uses a variety of teaching methods in order for students to be able to get what the teacher says.” (I1)

On the contrary, a lack of diversity might minimize students’ learning opportunities and create a boring atmosphere and compromise the learning culture. The second area that respondents’ conceptions of diversification included was using various modern teaching aids. They found that modern teaching aids especially computer technology was very useful and interesting in learning English.

“We go to the computer lab two or three times a week so that the class routine might be changed and the class might become more interesting and useful.” (I5)

“She depended on the overhead projector and the power point in explaining the points she wanted to talk about. This would increase the enthusiasm of the students and make them like the course.” (I12)

The third area was using a diversity of classroom activities such as group work, competitions, games, interviews, oral presentations, debates and discussions. Respondents clearly stated that such activities helped them to understand better.

“What makes me understand is the way of teaching such as grouping, teaching aids and teacher’s explanation.” (I7)
“He organized grammar competitions so that students can benefit and also enjoy the class.” (Q32)

The fourth area of diversification was using various learning resources. The respondents indicated that they found it more useful when their teachers collected materials from various learning resources in stead of depending on one learning resource which is the textbook.

“He uses a diversity of learning resources.” (Q12)

“She brought us reading materials from the internet, magazines and the newspapers.” (Q12)

“He gives easy handouts from outside the textbook that help all students understand.” (Q55)

In fact, most respondents criticized severely the textbooks used in the IEPs where they studied English. They expressed two concerns: textbook contents and material presentation. In terms of materials, they should diversify the resources and give students more worksheets and handouts from other learning resources.

“He gave us lessons from outside the boring textbook.” (Q101)

In terms of material presentation, teachers should not stick to the prescribed teaching procedures for presenting the textbook lessons otherwise they would end up with a boring teaching routine.

“…textbooks follow the same style.” (I1)

Textbooks made some teachers fall into the trap of sticking exactly to the teaching methods recommended in these textbooks. They would cover the same components in each chapter on a daily basis. For example, in a reading class they would start every reading class with teaching the new words and then ask the students read the reading comprehension passage silently and then loudly. After that they would ask them to do the exercises on the reading
comprehension in the textbook and then check the answers of students on each exercise. All the chapters of the textbook would have the same kind and order of these exercises. Therefore, respondents did not want their teachers to stick to textbooks.

“He shouldn’t be a slave of the textbook.” (I19)

As we can see, diversification in the above mentioned four areas was seen to be of absolute importance for creating an effective English language learning culture. It helped the respondents in learning and making English language learning a more enjoyable experience. Regarding the second area of diversification, the respondents emphasized the importance of making learning an enjoyable experience. This is an important component of the diversification that was seen as a crucial factor for enabling teachers to create effective language learning culture and providing learners with a better learning opportunity. One way of enhancing students’ learning and making their class interesting is making their learning of English more meaningful by trying to relate what they learn to real life.

“She explains grammar by giving examples from your real life.” (I10)

The participants described the materials that are from their real life as interesting and useful. Their perceived effective teachers collected materials more relevant to their lives and interests from different resources such as internet sites, newspapers, magazines and other books. They would select topics such as presidents of different countries, marriage in your country, famous athletes in your country, and old industry of ship building in the UAE.

“He selected interesting topics for discussion such as marriage in your country that attract you.” (I6)

“He gives us handouts that contain interesting reading topics that make us like reading. For example we read about the famous local football player Adnan Al Tiliani and old industry of ships.” (F5)
Students like new things to study. Maintaining the relationship between the teaching materials and the students’ real life would make classes more interesting and enjoyable. For example, football was a popular game among the respondents. Talking about one of the famous football players in the UAE was something very interesting. The teachers were expected to select one of the contemporary football players who were still alive and who probably still played football and the students still saw him from time to time in football matches on television. This is what meant by selecting materials that are relevant to the students’ real life. This might require talking about new topics; newness was something that the participants clearly favoured. Teachers were not expected to select one of the famous football players in the UAE twenty years ago if they really wanted to relate what they taught to the students’ real life. Some students might not be at all interested in football so routine reliance on this topic is unhelpful. It is the idea behind talking about football that is valuable. By relating students’ learning to their real life, we link them to the community of practice outside the classroom – which links in directly to issues of engaging students in authentic language situations. It also perhaps relates to their reasons for studying language which are to do with functioning effectively in the real world not (predominantly) about academic grasp of linguistic detail.

“What I need to learn after all is speaking English more anything else. I learn reading and writing, but speaking and a wealth of vocabulary are the most important for me at the end. I need to be able to express my opinion in English” (FI1)

“When students have the chance to practise of speaking English [with teachers and students within the boarders of the classroom], they will be able to use it outside. All people outside can speak English.” (FI3)

“When you can speak English, a lot of doors will open for you [you will have a lot of opportunities].” (FI4)

Relating learning to the real life of the learners as an important dimension of the learning culture is in line with the perspective of James and David (2003) who considered that activity
theory failed in some of its works to relate the complexities of learning to their wider cultural contexts.

Another way of making classes interesting, as indicated above, was by avoiding relying heavily on textbooks and sticking literally to the routine teaching procedures suggested in textbooks. The contents of these textbooks used in their IEPs were not very interesting for the respondents and rarely matched with their real life. Also following exactly the same teaching techniques suggested in the textbooks on regular basis would make classes full of routine and less interesting.

“He should try to change his way of teaching because routine makes students feel bored.”
(17)

In the light of what the respondents said, it seems that some teachers fell in this kind of ‘textbook trap’. They stuck exactly to the teaching methods recommended in these textbooks. They also covered the same components in each chapter on a daily basis. For example, in a reading class they would start every reading class with teaching the new words and then ask the students read the reading comprehension passage silently and then loudly. After that they would ask them to do the exercises on the reading comprehension in the textbook and then check the answers of students on each exercise. All the chapters of the textbook would have the same kind and order of these exercises. For example, one of the books that I taught has the same exercises and the same order all way through until the end of the book. Each chapter starts with the reading comprehension passage followed by a vocabulary exercise, comprehension exercise, discussion exercise, writing exercise and spelling and punctuation exercise. There was a lot of routine and this very likely would make students less motivated and less active in class. It would create a boring culture that might inhibit students’ learning. According to the respondents, teachers should not be slaves of the textbooks in terms of the contents as well as in terms of material presentation. Respondents, who were studying
English in four different IEPs, were not talking about a certain textbook or a few collections of textbooks; they were talking about a wide range of textbooks. The participants of the study were from four different learning sites that use different curricula and different up to date international textbooks which are revised annually and as a result of the feedback some of them are changed. What does this mean? Although the books employ the most recent theories of learning and curriculum development, the students still felt textbooks were boring and did not help them a lot in learning English. One reason, as could be concluded from the feedback of the participants, is because textbooks in general are not very relevant to students’ real life. A textbook may meet the needs of students partially; one or two units of a certain textbook could be useful and interesting to students, but the rest are not. Does this mean that the best way of teaching students English is to be objectives oriented rather than textbook oriented? If the answer is yes, then teachers should be eclectic, which means that they should select their materials from a group of textbooks in addition to using other resources and creating some of their own materials that suit their own students in particular? This is an area that needs to be researched further.

Other ways of making classes more interesting which were discussed above was the diversification of teaching ways, classroom activities, modern teaching aids and learning materials. In addition, as we are going to see when we discuss the human theme, some human characteristics such as teachers’ friendliness and sense of humour help in making classes interesting and enjoyable.

b) Maximizing use of English inside and outside the classroom

The second component of effective learning culture identified under the instructional theme was enabling students to use the English language in formal and informal situations. As the comments above show, the students learn English to be able to use it as a means of
communication and unless they were given enough opportunity to practise speaking English through communicating with others, they might not be able to develop their oral communicative skills as much as they were expected to. This is in line with one of the implications of the social constructivist perspective of language teaching and learning that says that language is mainly communication and so it is not enough to know it; but rather to use it (Mercer, 2002).

Regarding using English inside the classroom, the target language should be used in an atmosphere that was characterized with sociability, friendliness, openness and encouragement. The study respondents identified several techniques that effective EFL teachers used to enable their students to practise speaking English. One way they use to enable their students to practise speaking English was by asking students questions about things that they liked to talk about such as inviting them to talk about themselves, their families or their personal life or anything else that could be interesting to students. This kind of personalization made English become real and not just a tool. As some respondents said, these kinds of questions helped in holding the attention of students and encouraged them to interact with others. According to one of the participants describing her effective teacher, she said her teacher:

“She starts her class everyday by asking a list of questions or giving each student a list of questions to ask her partner.” (I10)

Another student said:

“He tended to ask each student every Saturday, the beginning of the week, to talk about what he or she did on the weekend. This was a chance to practise speaking, so there was a chance for talking.” (I15)

Students, who as learners might know better than others what helped them develop their language skills, believed that practising speaking English was very useful for them.
Speaking led to interaction and interaction helped students to learn. This concept is in line with the essence of social constructivism. This was reflected in one of the comments of one of the participants who said:

“When I have an English lesson, it will be limited and I will not learn words other than the ones included in the lesson, but when I try to express my opinion I will learn new words.” (I3)

Moreover, speaking in class kept the students active and busy which could mean that the class was more interesting and less boring. Another way effective teachers helped students to speak was by involving them in discussing some interesting topics such as body organ donation and body diseases. Students here had the chance to not only speak English, but also express their opinions on a certain topic. It also, as some of them said, made them take risks in speaking in English. It should be indicated here that speaking in target language, especially in the early stages and in front of new students and new teacher, did need some courage.

“New students are shy to speak English and worried of making mistakes.” (FI3)

The vast majority of students said effective teachers were those who enabled them to express their opinions freely. This was the kind of culture the English learners wanted. All sorts of things that made impact on how to learn a language or exchange thoughts were components of this learning culture. Other examples include going on trips with their teachers, having competitions in class, language games, taking the students to the computer labs and enabling students to practise different language skills and access the kind of information they like to discuss in class. These were all exemplified in the research data on the effective learning culture for learning English in the UAE universities. The findings
showed that one of the major differences between effective and ineffective EFL teachers was teachers’ ability to create a working learning culture inside and outside the classroom. Regarding enabling students to use the language outside the classroom, effective teachers were perceived to enable students practise speaking English and gain informal learning outside the classroom boundaries in more realistic settings. Teachers tried to link students’ community to the community of practice outside the classroom. It could be in the teachers’ offices, in the corridor, on a trip or even in the cafeteria. For example one of the participants who highly appreciated what his teacher did with his class said:

“Every three weeks we tended to go with our teacher to the cafeteria and talk about our food or our life.” (I10)

The teacher here enabled the students to learn in the real context where they could interact informally and freely with others and talk about themselves and any other things they that were of special interest for the students. Going with the students to the cafeteria might look on the surface trivial and of little use, but it was in fact, besides manifesting teachers’ friendliness, an informal opportunity for students to practise and learn the target language which was English. It would only make sense if you look upon it within a learning culture. It was just as important as learning in class. Enabling students to talk about themselves in a relaxed manner (social context) or in the cafeteria, (a real physical context), was an important element of the effective language learning culture. The participants considered this kind of situated learning as very useful for their learning of English. Students would always prefer to go outside the class with their teachers. They were passionate about the outside culture. This could be because it was more authentic. The data collected supported this; one of the participants’ comments in this regard was:

“She should change the atmosphere of the class by changing the place of the class.” (I5)
Another example of learning in real situations was this quotation

“This teacher involves us in many activities. One of these activities is taking us on a trip outside the university; this trip was a teaching trip. For example, we went to the bowling club. This teacher explained in English how to play the game. On the following day he asked us to explain in the same way how other games are played.” (Q22)

Again, another effective teacher here used the real place, a bowling club, to teach them the sports English language. A third example was

“The teacher should take us to cinema and watch a film. They can take students on trips. We don’t have conversation. They [teachers] don’t give enough conversation and therefore there is nothing wrong if we go to the markets with the teacher and talk with the salespersons in English.” (I11)

The respondent here believed that they should be in real conversations in real situations so that they could improve their conversational skills. This is consistent with the perspective of Colley et al (2003) and Transforming Learning Culture (TLC) project team (2003) who emphasized the importance of informal learning. This is also in line with the perspective of Shepherd (2000) who indicates that learning should be authentic and related to the outside world of school.

A fourth characteristic of an effective learning culture as indicated by the students in my study was making students work in groups. Most the respondents made it clear that working in groups was one of the best ways of learning English. Through groups students could learn from each other. Weaker students could get help from stronger students and shy students who refrained from asking the teacher for help would find it easier to ask their peers. This is in line with the perspective of Long, Adams, McLean, & Castanos (1976) as second language acquisition researchers that individual learners use different language functions (i.e., rhetorical, pedagogic, interpersonal) in group work more than in teacher fronted activities. It is also consistent with Pica & Doughty (1985b) who stated that learners would correct
themselves or others in group work more than in teacher-fronted discussions. Students interact with each other within groups in a relaxing atmosphere in which teachers do not practise any authority on students. This is supported by some SLA theorists believe that one of the important conditions for successful SLA is being in a relaxation state in a learning environment (Hall, 1999; Krashen, 1982; Terrell, Tschirner, Nikolai, & Genzmer, 1996; Tschirner, 1996). In this kind of environment students are usually more motivated and may be more responsible for their learning; it is a kind of authentic situation which is an aspect of a good learning culture. This is also consistent with the perspective of Porter (1983) who pointed out that learners can provide each other with authentic communicative practice. All group members interact with each other in problem solving, answering questions using the target language and this is in fact the major objective. As indicated earlier, enabling students to use the target language is an extremely important aspect of the language learning culture. As we can see by dividing up the class into groups, teachers have busy classrooms and busy students. It was a busy culture in which students have the chance to help each other and have the maximum opportunity of practising speaking English which they themselves consider very crucial for learning English. The usefulness of group work is emphasized by Long and Porter (1985) who believed that group work in the FL classroom is useful from both pedagogical and perspective, but also from psycholinguistic perspectives. It is not only the SLA theorists who highlighted the usefulness of group work but also the social constructivists who consider group activities in classroom very useful in the sense that they give learners a good chance to practise, use the language in different ways and think collectively; and therefore language teachers should encourage learners to interact with each other in pairs and groups (Mercer, 2002).
c) Classroom control

The findings showed that teachers’ ability to control the class is important in order for learning to take place. If there is no class control, disorder will prevail in the classroom and learning in this case the learning culture will be affected adversely.

“She had the ability to control the class. I also noticed that she managed to control those students who tend to chat in other classes and this gives the class a better chance for learning.” (I4)

“I didn’t like teacher number eight. There was no class control. If there is class control learning will occur.” (I17)

However, this does not mean that the teacher should completely control the behaviour of students in the class. This is something that the students hate. It may not help in creating a suitable classroom atmosphere. The effective EFL teacher should show sensitivity to students’ expectations and therefore they should control the classroom in a way that does not offend the students or make their life difficult and at the same time facilitate learning. The purpose of class control is to facilitate learning. This is in line with the perspective of Good and Brophy (2001) who indicated that students need to conform to certain rules that help in organizing the classroom and supporting the teaching and learning process.

9.4.2 Human Theme

The theme of interpersonal rapport with students necessarily means that effective teachers should create the kind of culture that mainly satisfies the affective domain of students and as a result provides better learning chances for students. This theme highlights an important factor of the effective language learning culture that is created by effective EFL teachers. It contains a bigger number of the components of the learning culture than the theme of instructional skills. The data collected under this theme showed that the human element in
teaching Arab students English is extremely important. There are five main components of effective learning culture that can be extracted from the human aspects of effective teaching:

a) Teachers’ friendliness;
b) Teachers’ as creators of a good learning environment;
c) Teachers’ flexibility;
d) Encouraging students;
e) Helping students inside and outside the classroom.

These components of effective English language learning culture as well as major characteristics and practices of effective EFL teachers will be discussed below in detail.

**a) Teachers’ friendliness**

The data showed that friendliness was an important component of the language learning culture that the participants drew through their descriptions of effective EFL teachers. Taking the students and their overall circumstances and personality seriously helps in maintaining friendliness. Teachers might not be able to create a good learning environment when students do not like them because they do not show them respect and friendliness. Some of the participants made a direct relation between teachers’ friendliness and learning.

“She should try to be a friend. Her relationship with us was formal. We could not understand her classes as long as we feel that we are not close with each other.” (I6)

This was empirical evidence that friendliness helped in creating and maintaining an effective language learning culture. Another benefit of teachers’ friendliness was that it bridged the gap between teachers and students and made students feel that their teachers were close to them.
He had good relationship with students. You can talk with him and shake hands with him.” (18)

He established a friendly relationship with students from the beginning.” (110)

This was necessary for paving the way for establishing interaction between teachers and students inside and outside the classroom and as a result learning occurs. As for interaction inside the classroom, effective teachers might start some of their classes by having informal social interaction with students. Both teachers and students may talk about their weekends, personal matters and other issues that are of common interest. One of the comments in this regard was

“She knew how to interact and communicate with students. … Her class was full of life. She let us talk about ourselves. She would ask us what we did in the weekend. In this case I improve my English. After that she would start the lesson.” (FI5)

The respondents considered this kind of interaction as an aspect of teachers’ friendliness as well as a learning practice in which they used the target language. Regarding teachers’ friendliness outside the classroom, it helped in creating authentic situations in more real settings through which students had the chance to interact with teachers and use the target language.

“He was friendly. He gave me the chance to meet him outside the class and talk with him.” (111)

“We talked with him in class and outside the class. He was a friend of us; he tended to sit with us in the cafeteria and ask us about our life in our society. This would make the student like the class and the subject matter and encourage him to work harder.” (FI3)

“She interacted with us a lot in the class and outside the class. She tended to come to the cafeteria.” (Q57)

This was an informal learning through social contexts in authentic physical settings. These informal meetings outside the borders of the classroom serve two goals: enhancing a friendly
relationship between teachers and students and giving students the chance to use the target language and talk about themselves and their lives (personalization of the language) in real situations.

A third benefit of friendliness was that it gave students a sense of security and this was also an important part of the learning culture. You cannot create a good learning culture under threatening or frightening circumstances. The data highlighted the importance of this kind of security. One of these comments in this regard was:

“He has a friendly relationship with students in and outside the class. This gives the student a sense of security.” (I10)

As we can see, teachers’ friendliness was a major aspect of the human theme of effective teaching. It was also crucial for creating an effective learning culture and enabling students to interact with their teachers and use the target language in informal realistic situations.

b) Teachers’ as creators of a good learning environment

Another component of an effective learning culture was creating a good learning atmosphere that would facilitate learning English. In fact, all of the human categories identified in chapter 7 under interpersonal and personal characteristics were important components of the learning environment the participants talked about. ‘Having fun’ was prescribed by the respondents as a major factor for creating a good learning atmosphere. One way of having fun was through the teachers’ sense of humour.

“He tries in the morning classes to create a fun atmosphere and include the humour element. This is very important because students in the morning are not really ready to learn.” (I12)

“He spends five to ten minutes in joking and laughing and then he spends the rest of the time on hard work.” (FI1)
Another way of having fun was through teachers’ comments.

“He makes nice and funny comments.” (FI4)

A third way was through teachers’ acting.

“His special movements created a good atmosphere in class and helped in holding the attention of students.” (FI1)

The respondents made a direct relation between learning English and having fun. A common opinion among the participants was that if there was fun there would be less distraction and more concentration and more eagerness to learn and more active learning; on the other hand, if there is no fun there might be boredom and in consequence more distraction and less concentration and less eagerness to learn and less active learning occurs. The participants made it clear that they did not want teachers who were serious all the time; instead they want teachers who from time to time joked and had some fun with them. This made classes more interesting and attractive to the language learners and more useful.

Learning a language is different from learning other subjects in the sense that it has a social aspect and fun is usually a part of our real social life. In social constructivism as well as effective learning culture theories, relating learning to real life is considered to be an important aspect of an effective learning culture.

c) Teachers’ flexibility

Teachers’ flexibility and willingness to compromise were highly appreciated by the respondents. The respondents talked about a number of aspects of the desired flexibility most of which might be useful in enhancing the learning culture. One way the teachers who were perceived as effective could be flexible was by giving make up exams.
“He was flexible, not rigid. He didn’t impose his opinion on the class. For example, if a student misses a test, he would consider his reason of missing the test and if it is a very good reason he would let him sit for a make up exam.” (FI3)

Another way effective teachers were flexible was in meeting their deadline that they decided for handing in assignments.

“It was ok for her if we do not turn in our homework on time in case we were busy.” (I6)

However, teachers need to be very careful when they show flexibility over deadlines because it might not be fair to other students. This would link in to the point about need to combine individualisation with concern about the group situation. A third aspect of teachers’ flexibility was in managing students’ behaviour in the classroom. The respondents indicated that the teachers they perceived as effective would not be very strict or use their authority in dealing with students.

“He shouldn’t try to use his authority with students; otherwise the students would hate the subject.” (I15)

“Some students don’t like the teacher to be strict; otherwise the students will be afraid of the teacher and would hate the subject.” (I12)

“He shouldn’t be strict too much; he should be lenient. He shouldn’t give instructions.” (I17)

Some respondents gave specific situations in which teachers were lenient and showed a degree of flexibility. Flexible teachers would be willing to change the date of the exam upon the request of their students. They also would not overreact when they see a couple of students talking or laughing, or when the mobile telephone of a student goes off or when they see one of the students chewing gum. All these were real examples of teachers’ flexibility and willingness to compromise that the respondents appreciated.

“For example, the mobile is not allowed in the classroom. In case the mobile goes off, the teacher takes the mobile from the student and keeps it for one month, but other teachers
tolerate it for one or two times. The student switches off the mobile and things go ok. Also teacher can tolerate having a student talking or laughing with her friend in class. ... The teacher in this case helps the student. The teacher should warn the student for the first time and explain to her that what she did or happened was not allowed. In contrary, some other teachers do not allow students to move; they ask students to look toward the teacher and say to the students that they don’t want to hear any sound.” (FI1)

“If she discovered somebody chewing gum, she wouldn’t shout at her.” (I2)

However, as we saw in chapter 7, there were other aspects of flexibility that should be discouraged in spite of the fact that the respondents appreciated them. This was due to the fact that these kinds of flexibility contradicted with the institutions’ policies. While the management expected teachers to conform to these policies, students expected their teachers not to. Moreover, responding to what students favoured in this regard could be against the interest of students themselves. For example, the respondents mentioned persistently that teachers should be flexible in implementing the attendance rules.

“The teacher must be flexible in things like attendance and lateness.” (FI4)

Some other respondents were aware that implementing the attendance rules was necessary. However, they still expected teachers to give their students a chance especially when they have very good reasons. They think that the teachers could still implement the university rules and at the same time be to some extent flexible.

“He takes attendance regularly and would only help those students who have very difficult circumstances.” (I4)

“If a student came late he would give him a chance but if he came late again, he would be punished.” (FI5)

I think that this limited flexibility is worth taking into consideration since teachers in essence implement the rules. They only give a chance to students with good reasons. It is worth to mentioning here that when teachers implement the attendance policy, they should appear as
people who conform to the university rules and not just punishing students. Teachers sometimes need to explain this to their students.

As we can see, teachers’ flexibility in the above contexts helped in minimizing the worries and anxieties of students and making them like their teachers. With less anxieties and resentment and with more relaxation and appreciations of teachers’ flexibility a better English language learning culture can be created.

d) Encouraging students

The learning culture that suited the participants was also characterized by encouragement. The data revealed that English learners need a lot of encouragement which supplies them with more energy that they need to exert in learning English. Effective teachers encouraged their students to work harder and try to do better.

“She encouraged students to participate. She would also try to encourage careless students.” (I18)

“If there is a student who didn’t pass the midterm exam, he would encourage her and give her more help.” (I9)

They also encouraged them to speak in English without fear of making mistakes. At the same time they discouraged students from laughing at or making fun of those students who make mistakes when they try to use the language. Teachers themselves should not get angry at their students or blame them when they make mistakes. They should make their students feel that they are in a safe culture. They should help their student to be more confident of themselves and maintain this confidence.

“She made us feel safe when we speak. We don’t get afraid when we speak. She would encourage us to speak and not to worry about our mistakes. She would smile and give us the chance to speak. She didn’t get angry with us. ... She made us feel that English language was easy and that by practice you would learn it.” (I10)
“A good teacher would encourage you to speak English. New students are shy to speak English and worried of making mistakes.” (F13)

“He shouldn’t allow other students to laugh at those who try to speak in English.” (I6)

The data revealed that many effective EFL teachers used the rewarding method in encouraging their students. They gave material rewards such as simple gifts, gave marks to students and use encouraging words such as good, excellent and well done.

“He would give us questions and those who can answer them first were rewarded and given marks.” (I8)

“He gave gifts to those students who got high marks in the exam. He tried to make us do our best.” (I13)

“He encourages us by using words like very good and excellent.” (Q35)

The respondents indicated they needed encouragement. It urged them to work harder and made them feel more confident in learning English. Language learners needed their teachers to help them maintain confidence in themselves that they could learn English and that they should not give up.

“He helped us to have confidence on ourselves and insists that we can do some important things.” (Q44)

All these aspects of teachers’ encouragement were seen by the respondents as necessary elements in an effective English language learning culture. It made them more willing to participate, use the language, and exert more efforts in learning the language.

e) Helping students inside and outside the classroom

The findings of this research reflected that effective teachers were expected to help students whenever and wherever necessary. The effective learning culture that emerged from the data
was also characterized by an open-doors practice. Students could access their teachers any time and anywhere and get the kind of help they needed.

“He asks students to go to his office if they need to know a certain thing about the subject and he would explain to them.” (I2)

“She was a very good teacher because she helped us not only in the subject she taught us but also in all other subjects.” (I19)

“He helps me until now even though he is no longer my teacher.” (I6)

When students know that particular teachers are always willing to help, they will not be hesitant or feel embarrassed to approach such teachers not only in class but also outside the class, in their offices, in the corridor, at the library or even at the cafeteria. It was a learning culture that did not have any barriers between teachers and their students.

As we can see, the data presented above does constitute a description of an effective language learning culture, and it has also described what such a culture might involve in the Arab EFL teaching context. We saw that both the professional and the human aspects were equally important in maintaining this culture. Under the instructional theme, we found that diversification was one of the most significant aspects. Other important aspects that were considered were enabling students to use the language inside and outside the classroom and controlling the classroom in a way that helps in maintaining a suitable learning environment.

Under the human theme, friendliness was considered of great importance for creating a good learning culture from students’ perspective. Other important components were creating a good learning environment, teachers’ flexibility, helping students inside and outside the classroom and encouraging students.
9.5 Limitations of the Study

No research is without its limitations.

a) The main research question (How do Arab students perceive effective EFL teachers at university level?) was answered in considerable detail. The perceptions of students were identified under two major themes and in each theme a number of categories and subcategories were extracted and presented in a separate chapter. The instructional skills theme was presented in Chapter 6 and the human characteristics theme was presented in Chapter 7.

As for, the other subordinate questions, they were answered to different levels of satisfaction. The first one (In what ways do cultural factors operate to influence the views of Arab students of effective EFL teachers at university level?) was answered, but the details I got for this question were not many. The views I was able to attribute with confidence to the influence of cultural factors were few. As an Arab who has the same culture of the respondents, I relied on my cultural background in deciding that these factors were culturally influenced.

The second subordinate question (To what extent are student perceptions of teacher effectiveness in UAE Universities unitary or heterogeneous?) was answered thoroughly in one complete chapter (Chapter 8). However, I should say here that the purpose of that chapter is not only to reflect the unitary and heterogeneous aspects of student perception but more importantly to voice the perception of participants so that the readers can be aware of what respondents say and feel at individual level as well as understanding the qualities of effective teachers that were extracted from the whole data set that was collected in all three phases. This was thought to give a clearer picture to the readers of the respondents’ perceptions.
The third subordinate question (What are the implications of student perceptions of teacher effectiveness for formal evaluation procedures of language classrooms in UAE universities?) was addressed thematically. The findings showed that the student evaluation forms used to evaluate the effectiveness of teachers did not include some of the qualities and teaching practices of EFL teachers perceived as effective by Arab students. However, I refrained from listing them and suggesting adding them to student evaluation forms. We are not interested in increasing the list of items in these evaluation forms because this might not be the best way for appraising teachers’ effectiveness. The findings of this study do not prescribe the qualities of good teachers or suggest better student evaluation forms, but rather they give insights for teachers as well as educational administrators that might help them in increasing the effectiveness of EFL teaching.

The fourth subordinate question (What is the broader context that the overall findings might draw for making English language more effective for Arab university students?) was completely and thoroughly answered. This question, which refers to the effective language learning culture, was answered in Chapter 9.

b) The language used in collecting the data was Arabic. This was because some of the respondents were not very confident in using English; I also wanted to make sure that the language was not an obstacle for gaining the right and exact data. It is inevitable that the translator would lose a certain percentage of the meaning no matter what precautionary procedures he/she takes.

c) Being of a different gender might have also affected the flow of the discussion of some female students. However, most of them showed interest and enthusiasm to talk about this particular subject.
9.6 Implications of the Study

This study represents the first attempt to explore the perceptions of Arab university students of effective EFL teachers at a university level by adopting an interpretative mode of inquiry. The findings of this study carry a number of implications.

a) English language teachers should be helped to adopt a view of learning as culture. The results of this study showed that in order for EFL teachers to be effective they should create the effective learning culture that was described in this study based on the participants’ responses.

b) English language teachers should be helped to understand what the findings say about what an effective language learning culture might look like in the Arab EFL context.

c) English language teachers should recognise that this is descriptive and not prescriptive – i.e. that my work doesn’t give them a checklist of lots of things to do, but the basis for understanding their classroom and then changing it appropriately.

d) The English language learning curriculum should better address students’ needs and interests. There was a consensus among the participants that the textbooks used in the IEPs were not satisfactory.

9.7 Methodological Issues

I was not familiar with the qualitative research before joining Exeter University. The interpretative approach is not common in the United Arab Emirates, where quantitative research has been dominant in academic institutions. The nature of this research requires an approach that enables the researcher to get a deeper understanding of the perceptions of Arab students of effective teaching. I believed that using a quantitative inquiry would not enable
me to get deeper to the understanding of the participants of effective teaching. They had the chance to express their feelings and opinions and provide a description of effective EFL teachers. When I was a student, and was asked to complete questionnaires in which I should evaluate teachers, I found myself in a situation in which I would agree or disagree with a large number of questionnaire items. The answers I tended to give did not always represent my opinions. I had many things I wanted to say but these quantitative questionnaires just ‘shut my mouth’. Therefore, I chose to use the qualitative inquiry in this study so that I could give the opportunity for the respondents to freely express their perceptions of effective English language teaching. At the same time I did not want to impose my opinion or the opinion of others on the respondents through the items of the quantitative questionnaires. As I said in Chapter 5, some items lead the respondents to say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ because they are self evident and people may not disagree on them. However, I felt that I overloaded myself by administering 20 interviews in Phase One, 165 qualitative questionnaires in the Phase Two and 4 follow up interviews in Phase Three. I collected a great deal of data which took a great deal of time to analyze. Nevertheless, the reward I got was the consistency I found in the data collected from different places across the three phases which enabled me to confirm the categories of effective EFL teachers and come up with the learning theory that teaching English effectively to Arab students requires creating an effective language learning culture. I believe this is the first time that the significance of the learning culture in learning English has been talked about in research into EFL teaching effectiveness. This means that this new theory of English language learning is extended by subsequent research; it will provide fresh insights for all both the producers and receivers of English language learning.


9.8 Recommendations for Further Research

I recommend a number of possibilities for further research.

a) While this study contributes to the research agenda, the fact that there is very little empirical data available about the effective teaching especially in the field of EFL, I recommend further studies of the theory advanced through this study. The theory advanced by this study holds that the effective EFL teachers are those who can create an effective language learning culture. Teaching effectiveness within a suitable learning culture has two major dimensions: (a) instructional skills and (b) interpersonal rapport with students. Each dimension has a number of categories some of which have subcategories. There is a cause for optimism that following the same qualitative procedures outlined in Chapter Five of this study, one would arrive at similar conclusions. Nevertheless, using a qualitative methodology, I recommend further research to confirm the conclusions and theory advanced by this study. This is useful because it helps in testing the robustness of the ideas when using a different approach so that we can be sure that the findings are not unduly distorted by the procedures I used.

b) This study focused on the perceptions of students; research into the perceptions of EFL teachers as well as administrators involved in IEPs is recommended.

c) This study investigated the characteristics of effective EFL teachers through the eyes of students. In other words, effective teaching was described by the students. Research in which the behaviours, practices and characteristics of effective EFL teachers are observed directly inside the classroom by the researcher is recommended.

d) Research should be carried out into why students prefer handouts and work sheets to textbooks and why they find textbooks less useful.
Different studies use different words or terms for similar concepts which may confuse researchers and make their lives more difficult when it comes to the data analysis and categorization stage. Sometimes the terms that express certain concepts do not even exist in the literature. I suggest some kind of forum (web based or conference based) where researchers can debate the key concepts. This is one of the important issues that should be pursued. It may pave the way for reaching a kind of consensus regarding what the characteristics and practices of effective teachers are. How can these qualities of effective teaching be identified if each researcher uses different terminology and may interpret each term differently? When observable behaviours and characteristics of effective EFL teachers have been agreed upon, they can be identified as stable and reasonably consistent in different settings. Once this has been undertaken, an observation scheme for evaluating the effectiveness of EFL teachers can be created and implemented.

One useful approach to this continuation might be action research. This might be to try to improve teaching and learning by using my findings and then observing the impact on student performance.

9.9 Conclusion

This section contains the conclusions drawn from the findings of the study. The first conclusion is that most of the characteristics identified can be taught to practitioners. Having an overview of the categories contained in Table 6.1 (pp.127, 128) which represented the findings of the current research, we can see that most of them are learnable, trainable or acquirable. For example, teachers who want to improve their teaching performance can review previous lessons, use computer technology in teaching, minimize lecturing time and giving more time for students to practise English, make students work in groups, be friendlier.
with students and show them respect, etc. What helps in making most of these skills and practices acquirable is that I tried to be as specific as possible and avoided giving general descriptions that practitioners might not be able to understand what they exactly mean and as a result would not be able to benefit much from them. As we saw in Chapters 6 and 7, I constructed many specific categories and subcategories and gave detailed descriptions about them. I highlighted wherever and whenever possible the ways or procedures followed the teachers perceived as effective when they practised these teaching practices. This was to show others how to do or practise these beneficial practices. However, these need to be taught alongside an understanding of a cultural view of learning so that they are not simply seen as prescription. What works in one classroom won’t necessarily work in another. The teacher has to learn how to select from amongst the (now increased) range of tools available to her/him.

The second conclusion is that in order to be able to provide effective teaching, teachers should create an effective learning culture. Taking the perspective of an effective learning culture to understand the students’ perceptions of effective EFL teachers has enabled me within this study to provide a more holistic picture of effective EFL teaching. Initially, the social constructivist perspective was the most appropriate for interpreting my findings; however, at a later stage I discovered that although the social perspective was indeed be suitable for much of my data, the idea of a learning culture gives a more rounded big picture of what can make EFL teachers effective. In this case the social perspective becomes subsumed into the idea of learning culture. It is necessary here to highlight the fact that this conclusion was extracted from the data given by the learners themselves and not by supervisors or educationalists or learning theorists; I went directly to the students and asked them what they think makes an effective EFL teacher. I believe that learners are at the heart of the teaching and learning process and their perspective should be invested in to improve
this process and gain better outcomes. The findings of the study indicated a number of
aspects of the effective language learning culture that the participants favoured:

1. It has family atmosphere where students feel safe;

2. Students are to be respected and treated students friendly;

3. It emphasizes the use of language inside and outside the classroom;

4. Learning of English occurs not only at formal level but also at informal level;

5. It highlights the importance of the real contexts in learning English;

6. There is no place for routine teaching methods;

7. Classes are interesting; teachers select interesting materials that are relevant to real
   life;

8. The element of competition is one of the aspects of an effective English language
   learning culture;

9. Language games help in creating an effective learning culture in class;

10. The teacher’s sense of humour is essential;

11. Teachers should be flexible and willing to compromise;

12. Helping students at any time anywhere is an aspect of this culture;

13. Students can express their opinions freely;

14. Students are involved in cooperative learning such as oral presentations, interviews,
    group work and class discussions;

15. Teachers should maintain class control that help in creating the right environment
    and at the same time enable the students to be active learners.
The third conclusion is that while many effective teacher behaviours are not discipline specific, there are certain behaviours and attitudes that are specific to effective FL teaching. In order to evaluate effective EFL teaching, attributes of effective EFL teaching must first be identified, must then be agreed upon as being worth evaluating by current EFL teachers, must be identified on repeated occasions, and must be proved worthwhile in many settings (Schrier & Hammadou, 1994). This study sought to undertake the first step by identifying the qualities and practices of EFL teachers deemed to be effective from the perspective of EFL students in UAE universities. The findings of this study highlighted the idea that effective EFL teachers are those who can create an effective language learning culture. This has the potential to provide valuable insights in the field of EFL that, after further research, could have an important effect on language teaching and learning, teacher preparation and evaluation, and curriculum development.
Appendix A
Observation Forms of Classroom Instruction

Form One

The following is an example of the detailed form; it consists of the following components:

1. Introductory Activities
   - How does the instructor meet the class?
   - Outline/objectives/overview for the session given? Tie with previous session?

2. Presentation
   - Is the instructor organized and logical in the presentation?
   - Are complex ideas explained clearly?
   - Are key concepts/important points emphasized?
   - Speaking skills/mannerisms?
   - Variety of techniques/aids?
   - Use of blackboard/overhead?
   - Use of questions or feedback techniques?
   - Response to student questions. Is the instructor responsive to individuals?
   - Pace of presentation
   - Use of examples
   - Confidence/enthusiasm of instructor
   - Student participation. Active/passive
   - Class control
   - Variety of student activities?
   - Class organization? Class groups/pairs
   - Class focus? Teacher/student/board/overhead

3. Wrap Up
   - Instructor’s expectations/student responsibilities clear?
   - Summary
   - Time for questions

4. Overall performance
   - Satisfactory
   - Unsatisfactory
   - Suggestions for development
Form Two

This form consists of four review of teaching record forms. The following procedure was followed in administering these forms.

Form RT2

It is a preparation form. It is completed by the teacher and given to the reviewer at least one day before the class. Before the teaching observation, the teacher and reviewer should meet to discuss session. This form remains confidential to the teacher and reviewer and it should be retained by the teacher. It consists of the following items:

- **Broad aims of this class in the program:** How does it link backwards/forwards/sideways to other classes in this or other skill/subject areas?

- **Specific intended learning outcomes of this class:** What do you want to achieve from this class in terms of skill/subject-specific outcomes and/or core academic outcomes and/or personal skills outcomes? How do you propose to check the extent to which these have been achieved?

- **Students’ preparation for this class:** How were the students expected to prepare for this class – general reading, specific reading, specific assignment, assignment given to selected students…? How serious are you about that expectation?

- **Assessment of the intended learning outcomes:** How/when will these be assessed? How will the students know the criteria of assessment?

Form RT3

It is an observation form. After the class, the reviewer should provide immediate verbal feedback and complete Form RT3 and give this to the teacher within the following two days. This form remains confidential to the teacher and reviewer. It consists of the following items:

- **Opening the class:** Clarity of purpose/intended learning outcomes – review of previous work – links to other classes/skill/subject areas/programs/activities expected of the students in the class – reference to assessment?

- **Main part of the class:** Appropriateness of structure, presentation and pace – sensitivity to students’ reactions – making use of opportunities – conveying enthusiasm? Engagement of students in active learning?

- **Closing the class:** Summary of learning outcomes achieved – achievement of planned outcomes – further linking to later/parallel work - expectation of learning activity to be undertaken after the class?

- **Overview:** Appropriateness of structure/pace – effectiveness of presentation – encouragement of personal skills development – appropriate use of resources – rapport with students – motivation/engagement of students?

- **Quality of the student learning experience in this class:** Excellent/Good/Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory

- **Points of good practice worthy of wider dissemination:**

- **Suggestions, if any, for areas of development:**
Form RT4

It is a reflection form. Following feedback on the session the teacher completes Form RT4. This form remains confidential to the teacher. This form consists of the following items:

- **Reflection on achievement:** Extent to which you achieved your intended learning outcomes for this class – what were you pleased with - what were you disappointed with?

- **Reflection on Planning:** If anything did not go as planned was it a problem or a benefit - what is there to learn from it?

- **Reflection on reviewer’s comments:** Are these fair comments – did anything here surprise you?

- **Reflection on students’ learning experience:** What action will you take to build on the points of good practice, to correct areas of weakness and to follow up the reviewer’s suggestions for improvement?

Form RT1

The reviewer must complete Form RT1 which provides evidence of review having taken place and identifies good practice and any training or development needs. The teacher is asked to agree and countersign the form. In the event of a failure to reach agreement, the both reviewer and teacher must sign the form and the teacher must indicate in writing on the form the reason(s) for the disagreement. This form must be submitted to the Director within one week of review taking place. Form RT1 consists of the following items:

- **Name of person reviewed**
- **Skill/subject of lesson**
- **Level of class (1-4)**
- **Location of class within the semester (e.g. Week number within the total weeks)**
- **Type of class (language class, lab session, seminar …)**
- **Number of students and gender**
- **Duration observed as a percentage of the scheduled duration of the class**
- **Name of reviewer**
- **Date of review**
- **Recommendations for action, agreed during the review (link with points identified on Form RT3)**
  (a) Points of good practice worthy of wider dissemination:
  (b) Suggestions, if any, for areas of development:

- Is support required for specific Staff Development activities? **YES/NO**
- Is a follow-up observation/review recommended by the reviewer? **YES/NO**
- Is the Director required to respond to items on this Action Plan? **YES/NO**

Teacher’s comments, if any, on review process and on reviewer’s comments:

Reviewer’s comments, if any, on review process and on teacher’s comments:

Signatures: Teacher Date

Reviewer Date
Appendix B
Student Evaluation Forms

Form One

COURSE AND INSTRUCTOR EVALUATION

Instructions: This questionnaire is designed to help the University and its faculty assess course offerings and the quality of teaching. Mark your answers for items 1-20 on the Optical Scan form (answer sheet) only.

1. The course materials were interesting.
   a. strongly agree  b. agree  c. neutral  d. disagree  e. strongly disagree

2. Classroom activities helped to develop your ability in this skill.
   a. strongly agree  b. agree  c. neutral  d. disagree  e. strongly disagree

3. The quizzes fairly measured your ability in this skill.
   a. strongly agree  b. agree  c. neutral  d. disagree  e. strongly disagree

4. The midterm examination fairly measured your ability in this skill.
   a. strongly agree  b. agree  c. neutral  d. disagree  e. strongly disagree

5. The textbook used in this course helped you learn.
   a. strongly agree  b. agree  c. neutral  d. disagree  e. strongly disagree

6. The textbook was clear and easy to understand.
   a. strongly agree  b. agree  c. neutral  d. disagree  e. strongly disagree

7. Overall, your ability in the course skill improved as a result of this course.
   a. strongly agree  b. agree  c. neutral  d. disagree  e. strongly disagree

8. The instructor treated you with respect.
   a. strongly agree  b. agree  c. neutral  d. disagree  e. strongly disagree

9. The instructor was available for scheduled office hours.
   a. strongly agree  b. agree  c. neutral  d. disagree  e. strongly disagree

10. The instructor was well prepared for the class.
    a. strongly agree  b. agree  c. neutral  d. disagree  e. strongly disagree

11. The instructor stayed on the subject of the lecture.
    a. strongly agree  b. agree  c. neutral  d. disagree  e. strongly disagree

12. The instructor presented the course clearly.
    a. strongly agree  b. agree  c. neutral  d. disagree  e. strongly disagree

13. The instructor followed the attendance policy.
    a. strongly agree  b. agree  c. neutral  d. disagree  e. strongly disagree

14. The instructor showed good classroom control so that everyone had the opportunity to learn.
    a. strongly agree  b. agree  c. neutral  d. disagree  e. strongly disagree
15. The instructor started class on time.
   a. strongly agree          b. agree          c. neutral          d. disagree          e. strongly disagree

16. The instructor used class time efficiently.
   a. strongly agree          b. agree          c. neutral          d. disagree          e. strongly disagree

17. The instructor was concerned about the students' understanding and progress.
   a. strongly agree          b. agree          c. neutral          d. disagree          e. strongly disagree

18. The instructor treated each student fairly.
   a. strongly agree          b. agree          c. neutral          d. disagree          e. strongly disagree

19. The instructor encouraged student participation and discussion in class.
   a. strongly agree          b. agree          c. neutral          d. disagree          e. strongly disagree

20. I would recommend this instructor to a friend.
   a. strongly agree          b. agree          c. neutral          d. disagree          e. strongly disagree

DO YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER COMMENTS? PLEASE WRITE THEM IN THE SPACE PROVIDED IN ENGLISH ON THE BACK OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE. BE SURE TO INCLUDE THE LEVEL, SECTION, AND SKILL.

PLEASE WRITE YOUR COMMENTS IN ENGLISH ONLY

Level _________
Section _________
Skill _________

1. What did you like best about this course?
2. What did you like least about this course?
3. What would you like to have added/changed /removed to make this course better?
Form Two

Student Feedback on Instructor Effectiveness

*Please place a check mark in the box indicating the response which most closely corresponds with your opinion.*

1. This instructor is well prepared for class.
   a. strongly agree  
   b. agree  
   c. neutral  
   d. disagree  
   e. strongly disagree

2. This instructor explains the usefulness of the topics being studied.
   a. strongly agree  
   b. agree  
   c. neutral  
   d. disagree  
   e. strongly disagree

3. This instructor presents the lesson clearly.
   a. strongly agree  
   b. agree  
   c. neutral  
   d. disagree  
   e. strongly disagree

4. The things we do in class help me to learn.
   a. strongly agree  
   b. agree  
   c. neutral  
   d. disagree  
   e. strongly disagree

5. This instructor gives us a chance to ask questions and express our ideas freely.
   a. strongly agree  
   b. agree  
   c. neutral  
   d. disagree  
   e. strongly disagree

6. This instructor shows an interest in my learning and treats me with respect.
   a. strongly agree  
   b. agree  
   c. neutral  
   d. disagree  
   e. strongly disagree

7. This instructor gives assignments that help me learn.
   a. strongly agree  
   b. agree  
   c. neutral  
   d. disagree  
   e. strongly disagree

8. This instructor marks and returns tests/assignments within a reasonable period of time.
   a. strongly agree  
   b. agree  
   c. neutral  
   d. disagree  
   e. strongly disagree

9. This instructor discusses the tests/assignments with us after they have been marked.
   a. strongly agree  
   b. agree  
   c. neutral  
   d. disagree  
   e. strongly disagree

10. The instructor makes this course interesting and challenging.
    a. strongly agree  
    b. agree  
    c. neutral  
    d. disagree  
    e. strongly disagree

11. I would to take another course with this instructor.
    a. strongly agree  
    b. agree  
    c. neutral  
    d. disagree  
    e. strongly disagree

12. This instructor is effective because (Please Comment):

13. In order to improve student learning, this instructor could (Please Comment):

14. Other Comments:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Form Three

Student Evaluation of the Learning Environment

Please complete the following survey using the pencil provided. If you wish to change an answer, use an eraser. Your responses will be used to improve the quality of your learning experience. Your answers are important. Please consider each question carefully before answering. Your individual answers are confidential.

Questions about your instructor

1. Instructor shows enthusiasm when teaching.
   a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

2. Instructor’s way of teaching holds my interest.
   a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

3. Instructor’s explanations are clear.
   a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

4. Instructor is prepared for the lessons.
   a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

5. The overall effectiveness of the instructor is:
   Excellent  Good  Average  Weak  Poor  N/A

6. Students are encouraged to participate in class discussions.
   a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

7. Students are encouraged to ask questions.
   a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

8. Instructor’s answers to questions are helpful.
   a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

9. Instructor makes students feel welcome for help outside of class.
   a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

10. Instructor shows interest in student success.
    a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

11. I would tell other students that the instructor is:
    Excellent  Good  Average  Weak  Poor  N/A

Questions about the course

12. I am learning something valuable.
    a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

13. I find the course interesting.
    a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

14. Feedback given on assessments and graded materials is helpful.
    a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

15. Methods of evaluating student work are fair.
16. Homework and labs are helping me to learn.
   a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

17. The course textbook and assigned readings are helping me to learn.
   a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

18. Other assigned materials are helping me to learn.
   a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

19. Course workload, relative to other courses is appropriate.
   a. Strongly Agree  b. Agree  c. Neutral  d. Disagree  e. Strongly Disagree  N/A

20. The quality of this course is:
    Excellent  Good  Average  Weak  Poor  N/A

21. Circle the grade you expect to receive in this course
    A  B  B+  C+  C  D+  D  F

   Write any additional comments you would like to make in the box below:
Form Four

Intensive English Program

Course Evaluation

Instructions: This questionnaire is designed to help the University and its faculty assess course offerings and the quality of teaching. When responding to the comment section at the end of the questionnaire, please write in English.

Section A: Student Information

1. What is your gender?
   a. Female    b. Male

2. Approximately what percentage of classes did you attend for this course?
   a. 100%     b. 95%      c. 90%     d. 85%     e. 80%

3. What is your expected final letter grade for this course?
   a. Grade A     b. Grade B     c. Grade C    d. Grade D     e. Grade F

Section B: Course Items

4. The course syllabus, including objectives and student responsibilities, was clear and fully explained in the beginning of the course.
   a. Strongly agree; b. Agree; c. Neutral; d. Disagree; e. Strongly disagree

5. Classroom activities and assignments contributed to greater understanding of course content and development in the course skill area.
   a. Strongly agree; b. Agree; c. Neutral; d. Disagree; e. Strongly disagree

6. Graded assignments and exams fairly measured what was taught.
   a. Strongly agree; b. Agree; c. Neutral; d. Disagree; e. Strongly disagree

7. The textbook used in this course supported the objectives of the course and helped you learn.
   a. Strongly agree; b. Agree; c. Neutral; d. Disagree; e. Strongly disagree

8. Overall, your ability in the course skill area improved as a result of this course.
   a. Strongly agree; b. Agree; c. Neutral; d. Disagree; e. Strongly disagree

Section C: Instructor Items

9. The instructor treated you politely and with respect.
   a. Strongly agree; b. Agree; c. Neutral; d. Disagree; e. Strongly disagree

10. The instructor was willing to help you learn outside the classroom.
    a. Strongly agree; b. Agree; c. Neutral; d. Disagree; e. Strongly disagree

11. The instructor was well prepared for the class.
    a. Strongly agree; b. Agree; c. Neutral; d. Disagree; e. Strongly disagree

12. The instructor presented the course subject matter clearly.
    a. Strongly agree; b. Agree; c. Neutral; d. Disagree; e. Strongly disagree
13. The instructor made the course content interesting.
   a. Strongly agree; b. Agree; c. Neutral; d. Disagree; e. Strongly disagree

14. The instructor evaluated your work fairly.
   a. Strongly agree; b. Agree; c. Neutral; d. Disagree; e. Strongly disagree

15. The instructor demonstrated good classroom control and helped to create a positive learning environment.
   a. Strongly agree; b. Agree; c. Neutral; d. Disagree; e. Strongly disagree

16. The instructor started and ended the classes on time.
   a. Strongly agree; b. Agree; c. Neutral; d. Disagree; e. Strongly disagree

17. The instructor encouraged student participation and discussion in class.
   a. Strongly agree; b. Agree; c. Neutral; d. Disagree; e. Strongly disagree

18. Overall, the instructor was effective.
   a. Strongly agree; b. Agree; c. Neutral; d. Disagree; e. Strongly disagree

DO YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER COMMENTS? WRITE YOUR COMMENTS IN ENGLISH ON THE BACK OF THE ANSWER SHEET IN THE SPACE PROVIDED.
March 12, 2002

Dear Mr. …….,

Hello! My name is Saleh Saafin. I am a doctoral student in the School of Education at Exeter University. I am conducting a study about effective teaching. The purpose of the study is to investigate the qualities and practices of effective EFL teachers from the perspective of Arab students. In order to obtain the information needed for this study, I have decided to interview some students from the University City: the University of Sharjah, Sharjah Colleges of the Higher Colleges of Technology, and the American University of Sharjah. Participation in this study requires one in person interview with each student. The interview will last approximately thirty-five minutes and it will be in Arabic. This is to make sure that they have no difficulties in expressing their ideas. Each interview will be recorded. The content of the tapes will be confidential and will be used for research purposes only. No one, other than myself, will have access to their contents. If any student is not willing to be audiotaped, notes will be taken instead. Participation in this study is totally voluntary.

I wonder if it is at all possible for you to recruit five Arab informative students who studied English in your Intensive English Program last semester and they are still studying English in the second semester. Based on the data collected from these interviews, I will develop a questionnaire. Therefore, I have to get back to you in order to administer the questionnaire on three sections from the Readiness Program. My final stage will be interviewing two students for further investigations.

Anytime after 11:00 am is suitable for me to interview these students. (I also need about thirty minutes to arrive Zayed University).

With many thanks and sincere appreciation,

Saleh Saafin
Appendix D
Interview Questions of Phase One

Student Code: __________
University/College Code: ____________________
Date: __________

N.B. It will be made clear to the interviewees that the main purpose of these interviews is to investigate the qualities and practices of effective EFL teachers who have taught the participants English in the Intensive English Programs in one of the four universities involved. They will also be informed that the data collected from them will be confidential and will be used for research purposes only. Participating in these interviews is completely voluntary.

Because I don’t want to know or take the names of your teachers for confidentiality reasons, please write down the names you your teachers of English in the first and second semesters in this form. At the end of the interview, please don’t show me the list of names and at the end of the interview you can take the form with you. (The interviewees were given the following form in a separate piece of paper).

Form 1

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Now I am going to give you my form that I am going to collect from you after you complete it.

Form 2

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1. What words would you use to describe teacher number __ whom you rated as a more effective teacher?

2. Tell me why and how she/he is/was effective. Tell me about his/her way or method of teaching English. Can you describe one of his/her classes (sessions) you found effective? Give me examples of his/her teaching practices that helped you to learn English (the question is to be asked again if more than one teacher is rated as effective).

3. What words would you use to describe teacher number __ whom you rated as a less effective teacher. Tell me how and why she/he is/was effective. Tell me about his/her way or method of teaching English. Can you describe one of his/her classes (sessions) you found not effective? Give me examples of his/her teaching practices that didn’t help you to learn English. (The question is to be asked again if more than one teacher is rated as ineffective).

4. Who was/is your favourite teacher among this list of teachers? What is his/her number? Why did you like him/her? Was he/she the most effective teacher among the list?

5. Who was/is your least favourite English teacher among them? Give number only. Why didn’t you like him/her? Was he/she the least effective teacher among the list?

6. What advice would you give a person who wanted to be a university teacher of English?

Probes (i.e., tell me more, give examples, explain, what else, etc.) will be used throughout the interviews whenever I feel it is necessary to encourage interviewees to say more in response to the interview questions.
## Appendix E
### Arabic Translation of Interview Questions of Phase One

مر绪 الطالب: 
رقم الجامعه/الكلية: 
التاريخ: 

ملاحظة: سيتم التوضيح للمرشحين للمقابلة بأن الهدف الرئيسي من هذه المقابلات هو الاستقصاء عن صفات ومهارات مدرس اللغة الإنجليزية الفعال. ويقصد بمدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية هنا تلك الذين درسوا هؤلاء الطلاب أو يتزامنون معهم اللغة الإنجليزية كلهاء اجتهابي من خلال البراءات التاسيسية التي تقوم بإعداد الطلاب لدراسة التخصصات المختلفة التي تدرس باللغة الإنجليزية. كما سينتمي محطه الطلاب علماء بان المعلومات التي سيتم الحصول عليها من الطلاب المشتركين في هذه المقابلات ستكون سرية. وتستعمل فقط للاعتراف بالمهارة. كما أن استفادة الطلاب في هذه المقابلات هو اختياري.

بما الذي لا أرغب في معرفته أو أخذ اسماء مدرسيك ارجو كتابي اسماء تلك الذين درسوك اللغة الإنجليزية فالفصل الأول أو هذا الفصل في هذه المقابلة. ارجو عدم اطلاع على قائمة الاسماء وفي نهاية المقابلة يمكنك اخذ النموذج معك. (اعطى الطالب المرشحين للمقابلة النموذج التالي بصورة منفصلة)

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الآن سأطلب النموذج الذي يخصني والذي ساخذه منك بعد الانتهاء من تعيينه.

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ما هي الصفات التي تجرب استخدامها في وصف المدرس رقم ______ والذي صفتته على أنه مدرسًا فعالًا؟ أخبرني لماذا و كيف كان فعالًا؟ أخبرني عن أساليب أو تدريسه في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية. هل يمكنك أن تصف لي أحدى حصصه التي وجدتها فعال؟ أعطني مثال على ممارساته التدريسية والتي ساعدتك على تعلم الإنجليزية.

ما هي الصفات التي تجرب استخدامها في وصف المدرس رقم ______ والذي صفتته على أنه مدرسًا غير فعال. أخبرني لماذا وكيف كان غير فعالًا؟ أخبرني عن أساليب أو تدريسه في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية. هل يمكنك أن تصف لي أحدى حصصه التي وجدتها غير فعال؟ أعطني مثال على ممارساته التدريسية والتي لم تساعدتك على تعلم الإنجليزية.

من هو مدرسك المفضل في هذه السنة؟ ما هو رقمه؟ لماذا احببت هذا المدرس؟ هل كان المدرس الأكثر فعاله في التدريس ضمن القائمة؟

من هو المدرس الأقل فعالًا في تلك السنة؟ الرجاء إعطاء رقمه فقط. لماذا لم تحب هذا المدرس؟ هل كان المدرس الأقل فعاله ضمن القائمة؟

ما هي النصيحة التي تنسخها للشخص الذي يجب أن يكون مدرس لغة الإنجليزية على مستوى جامعي؟

سيتم استخدام استساهمه سابره اثناء المقابلات (من مثل: أعطى مزيدًا من المعلومات وأعطى أمثلة ووضح وماذا أيضًا) كلمات دعت الحاجة وذلك تشجيع الطلاب على إعطاء المزيد من المعلومات ردًا على استئنال المقابلات.
Appendix F
Open-Ended Questionnaire of Phase Two

Code: __________
University/College Code: _______________
Date: __________

Dear Student,

The main objective of this questionnaire is to investigate the qualities and practices of effective English teachers who taught you or are still teaching you English in the intensive English program. The information collected from these questionnaires will be confidential and will be used for research purposes only.

Because I don’t want to know or take the names of your teachers for confidentiality reasons, please fill in form one (attached) with the names of your teachers who taught you English since you joined your university or college. Please don’t show me the list of names and you can take it with you after you complete this questionnaire (Form one was given separately to students).

Form one

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Based on the list of teachers you put in form one, complete form two. Notice here that you refer to the numbers of teachers and not their names. For example if the first name in form one is Barrie Wray, you rate him in row 1 of form two as effective, normal, not effective or not sure. Please don’t write names in form two.

Form 2

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1. Now describe separately each EFL teacher you rated as effective in form 2. Write down why and how he/she is/was effective as follows:

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2. What are the effective teaching practices which benefited you a lot in learning English and which were practised by these effective teachers? Please describe these practices of each teacher separately.

Teacher #___ Effective Teaching Practices

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3. What advice would you give a person who wanted to be a university EFL teacher?

Please use the back of the page if you need more space.
Appendix G
Arabic Translation of the Questionnaire of Phase Two

رمز الطالب: ____________________
رمز الجامعـة/ الكليـة: ____________________
التاريخ: ____________________

عزيزي الطالب:

إن الهدف الرئيـسي من هذه الاستبيان هو الاستقصاء عن صفات ومهارات مدرس اللغة الإنجـليزية الفعال. ويقصد بـمدرس اللغة الإنجليزية هنا التلاميذ الذين درسوا أو لا يزالوا درسونـك اللغة الإنجليزية من خلال برنامج اللغة الإنجليزية المكلف. كما تحاولك عـلاً بـأن المعلومات التي ستُعـلَّمها من خلال هذا الاستبيان ستُعـدـم لـإغراض بحـثية فقط. نشـكركم على تعاونكم منـنا.

إذا لا أرغب فـبالإطلاع على اسم مدرس ينتمي إلى أرجو كتابه اسمه التلاميذ الذين درسوا اللغة الإنجليزية في الفصل الأول أو هذا الفصل في النموذج رقم واحد والذي توجه مرفقاً مع هذا الاستبيان. بعد الانتهاء من تعين الاستبيان أرجو الاحتفاظ بالنموذج رقم واحد وعدم اعداده. (النموذج الثاني هو النموذج رقم 1 الذي أعطي للطلاب بصورته منفصلة).

نموذج رقم 1

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الآن وبعد الانتهاء من كتابة اسماء المدرسين في نموذج رقم واحد أرجو تصنيف هؤلاء المدرسين حسب مدى فعالـيتـه كل واحد منهم وفقاً على النموذج رقم الثاني. فمثلاً لو كان اسم المدرس رقم واحد هو بارـى في فـعلـه، أن تصفه حسب مدى فـعالـيته في الحياة رقم واحد في نموذج رقم 2 دون ذكر اسمه.

نموذج رقم الثاني

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<th>مدى معاليـة المدرس</th>
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<td>غـير فعال</td>
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</table>
1. الآن صف لي فقط مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية الذين اعتبرتهم فعالين كل على حدة. اكتب لماذا وكيف كانوا فعالين على النحو التالي:

المدرس رقم __________ سباب فاعليه هذا المدرس

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2. ما هي الممارسات التدريسية الفعالة التي فادتك كثيراً في تعلم الإنجليزية والتي كان يقوم بها هؤلاء المدرسين الفعالين؟ اشرح وصف هذه الممارسات التدريسية لكل مدرس على حدة.

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المدرس رقم __________ ممارسات التدريسية الفعالة

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3. ما هي النصائح التي تدديها للشخص الذي يرغب ان يكون مدرس لغة انجليزية فعال علي مستوى جامعي؟

ارجو الكتابة على خلف الورقة اذا لزم الأمر.
Appendix H
Follow-up Interview Questions of Phase Three

Follow up Interview Questions

Student Code: _____ University/College Code: _____ Date: _____

N.B. It will be made clear to the interviewees that the main purpose of these interviews is to investigate the qualities and practices of effective EFL teachers. They will also be informed that the data collected from them will be confidential and will be used for research purposes only. Participating in these interviews is completely voluntary. EFL teachers of the participants are those who have taught the participants English in the Intensive English Programs in the four universities involved.

16. Students said that effective EFL teachers create a good classroom atmosphere. Is this important in learning English? What should the teacher do so that he/she can create a suitable learning environment? Is this kind of atmosphere restricted to the classroom or goes beyond that? How?

17. Are there any teachers who have a sense of humour? What do they do? Does the teachers’ sense of humour affect your learning? How?

18. Are there any of your teachers who give interesting classes? What makes you say that the classes are interesting? What does the teacher do in order to make his/her classes interesting? Can you give me an example of an interesting class you had?

19. Do you know any of your teachers who were friendly with you? What do they do? Give examples of their friendliness.

20. Do you know any of your teachers who help students inside and outside the class? What kind of help do they give? Where do your teachers help you outside the classroom?

21. Are any of your teachers flexible in the implementation of rules and willing to compromise? Can you give examples? Don’t you think that this kind of flexibility may affect negatively the class as well as the learning of students?

22. When we say that an effective teacher is the one who uses simple teaching methods, how do teachers achieve this simplicity? Do you have examples? Students also say that good teachers use various teaching methods. Can you tell me what kinds of diversity you value?

23. Students consider that effective EFL teachers give a lot of exercises and activities that give a very good chance for students to practise English and use it in expressing their opinions and experiences in different topics. Why do students put a strong emphasis on using English?

24. Do you prefer that your teacher corrects your speaking mistakes? Do you want your teacher to correct your mistakes directly and on the spot? To what extent do you want your teacher to correct your mistakes?
Appendix I

Arabic Translation of the Follow-up Interview Questions of Phase Three

رمز الطالب: __________________
رمز الجامعة/الكلية: ______________
التاريخ: _______________________

ملاحظة: سيتم التوضيح للمشاركين للمقابلة بأن الهدف الرئيسي من هذه المقابلات هو الاستقصاء عن صفات وممارسات مدرس اللغة الإنجليزية الفعل. ويقصد بمدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية هذا النكذ الذين درسوا هؤلاء الطلاب أو لا يزالوا يدرسونهم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من خلال الدراسة التاسيسية التي تقوم بإعداد الطلاب لدراسة التخصصات المختلفة التي يدرسون باللغة الإنجليزية. كما سيتم إعطاء الطلاب أعلاً من المعلومات التي سيتم الحصول عليها من الطلاب المشاركين في هذه المقابلات ستكون سرية وستستخدم فقط لأغراض بحثية. كما أن أشراك الطلاب في هذه المقابلات هو اختياري.

1. يقول الطلاب أن المدرس الفعل هو الذي يخلق جو مناسب في الفصل. هل هذا في رأيك مهم في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟ لماذا؟ ماذا يفعل المدرس؟ كيف يفعل المدرس؟ كيف يمكن لهذا المدرس أن يخلق جو مناسب للتعلم؟ هل تقتصر أهمية جو تعليمي على الصف أم تبتعد إلى خارج حدود الفصل؟

2. هل يوجد هناك مدرسين لديهم الحسن الفكاهي؟ لماذا يفعل ذلك المدرس؟ هل يثير الحسن الفكاهي على التعلم؟ كيف؟

3. هل يوجد هناك أي من مدرسيك يعطي دروس ممتعة؟ ما الذي يجعلك تقول أن دروس ممتعة؟ ما الذي يقوم به المدرس لكي يجعل دروسه ممتعة؟ أعطني مثال تفصيلي عن هذه الجملة.

4. هل تعرف أي من مدرسيك الذين كانوا يعملون معامل صدامه؟ لماذا كانوا يعانون؟ أعطني أمثلة على ذلك.

5. هل هناك أي من مدرسيك الذين كانوا يساعدوك داخل الصف وخارجه؟ ما هو نوع تلك المساعدة؟ ما كنت تتلقى المساعدة؟

6. هل أي من مدرسيك مرت في طلب الفائنين وعلمهم استخدام أموالهم؟ هل يمكنك أن تعطي صورة مفصلة عن تلك الأموال؟ كم اتفعت ببعض الأموال؟

7. عندما تقول أن المدرس الجيد هو الذي يستخدم أساليب تدريس بسيطة كيف يمكن للمدرس أن يصبح أساليب التدريس؟ هل لديك أمثلة؟ يقول الطلاب أيضاً أن المدرس الجيد هو الذي يستخدم أساليب تدريس متنوعة. ما هي تلك الأساليب المتنوعة التي تفضيلها؟

8. يعتبر بعض الطلاب أن المدرس الفعل هو ذلك المدرس الذي يعطي الكثير من التمارين والأنشطة التي تعني الطلاب فرصه جيدة لتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية واستخدامها أو التعبير عن خبراتهم وارثاتهم في أمور مختلفة. لماذا يعطي الطلاب مسالة ممارسه اللغة الإنجليزية اهتماماً كبيراً.

9. هل تفضل أن يقوم المدرس بتصحيح اختطافك الشفوي؟ كيف ترغب أن يصحح مدرس اختطافك الكلامي؟ هل يصححها بطريقة مباشرة وفي وقت حصول الخطأ أم إذا كان هناك حدث مشابه؟
# Appendix J
## Key for Coding Actual Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants’ Perception of Effective English Teachers: Themes, Codes and Categories</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Themes</td>
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**Personal Qualities (PQ)**

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<td>Has a charismatic personality</td>
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<td>Cares for student</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Likes teaching</td>
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<td>Is patient</td>
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<td>Shows enthusiasm</td>
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<td>Is a role model for students</td>
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<td>Is self confident</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Is dedicated</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Good hearted person</td>
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<td>Energetic teacher</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Kind</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Takes care of his/her appearance</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Smiles</td>
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<td>punctual</td>
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<td>Doesn’t lose his/her temper quickly</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>Is happy</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>likes his/her students</td>
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**Interpersonal Rapport with students (IRS)**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Is open to students</td>
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<td>Respects students</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Has a sense of humour</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Develops a friendly relationship with students</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Is understanding</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Is flexible in the administration of rules/ willing to compromise</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Treats students as equals</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Listens to students</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Willing to help students in personal matters</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Makes students feel safe and comfortable in the class</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>likeable</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Friendly manner</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Respects students’ culture</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Understands his students</td>
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Appendix K
Sample Interview One from Phase One

S: Describe teacher number one whom you rated as an effective teacher. Why did consider him as an effective teacher?

S4: Frankly to speak he did his best so that students can understand the lesson. We sometimes asked him to repeat the lesson and he would repeat it. (IPS1) He tried to make us understand. He gave us homework. (AS24) He gave us handouts from outside the textbook. (AS18) Frankly, I benefited from him a lot. (AS27) He gave us things that are not available in the textbook. That is to say he gave us extra information. (AS18)

S: Can you give examples about how he taught when he got into the classroom?

S4: He tended to divide up the class into groups. The best thing is grouping.

S: Why?

S4: Because when I don’t understand something, I ask another student. We ask each other and if we didn’t understand, we ask the teacher. But when you are alone and you don’t understand, you may not ask. There are things in English we haven’t studied before and my English was not good. So I asked students to help me to understand. (AS25) The teacher himself tried to make us understand.

S: What else?

S4: When we didn’t understand something, he repeats it again and again. (IPS1)

S: Do you remember one of his interesting classes?

S4: All his classes were interesting. (IPS16) I didn’t absent myself from any of his classes because they were useful. (AS27)

S: Tell me more?

S4: He tended to ask us to read in class to see how we read (ETP3) and then asked us to write the words we pronounce wrongly on the board and asks us to read them again.

S: What else?

S4: He gave us homework daily, (AS24) but not too much. You can do it in five or ten minutes. Homework is very important.

S: Tell me more.

S4: He gave us words from outside the textbook. (ETP6) For example he when he would give us an article, explain some words, write down some other words on a sheet of paper and ask us to find their meanings. He would give us one week to do that. The number of words didn’t exceed 12 words. Then we look up the meaning of the assigned words from the dictionary. (ETP6) He taught us how to use the dictionary. It was English English dictionary. I personally used English English Arabic dictionary so that I can understand the meanings.

S: Do you want to say anything else about this teacher?

S4: The most important thing about him is that he was a good hearted man. (PQ9) He did his best to make us understand and learn. (IPS1) He didn’t let us leave the class without understanding the lesson. He would feel guilty if we leave the class without understanding the lesson.

S: How would he know that you didn’t understand the lesson?

S4: He would know this from the homework and quizzes.

S: What else?

S4: He was an old man. He knew how to deal with students. (AS6) He didn’t ask students to leave the class. His classes were interesting, (IPS8) but they were 8 o’clock classes.

S: Why interesting?

S4: Because he tended to ask questions, (IPS11) divide us into groups (AS25) and give us paper sheets. He always made us active. (AS28) After he finished presenting the lesson, he would ask us if we understood the lesson or not. (AS29) Of course students would say yes we understood. However, he tended to ask us a question or two to make sure we understood.
S: What else?
S4: Nothing.
S: Can you describe teacher number 2? Why and how did you rate him as an effective teacher?
S4: He was excellent.
S: Why?
S4: He was funny. When he got into the class, he joked with us. (IRS3) He also was excellent in his way of explaining the lesson. (IPS4) If we didn’t understand the lesson, he would repeat the lesson again. (IPS1) He would always ask us to do the exercises of the textbook in the class after he finishes explaining the lesson. He made us as students compete with each other. (AS30) He divided us into two groups. One group is girls and one group is boys. Each group wanted to be better than the other. We girls did the exercises and tried to know what our mistakes were. He gave questions to the two groups. It was like a competition. Groups were the best thing. I think that to be in a group is better that being alone. When you are alone, you might have some mistakes or you might be absent minded or you might haven’t understood what the teacher said. But when you are in a group, students ask each other. (AS25)
S: Any examples of his teaching practices?
S4: He gave us handouts of grammar exercises from outside our book. (AS18) He tended to give us homework (AS24) and on the following day he would divide up the class into a group of boys and a group of girls (AS25) and we participate in doing the homework. The first question is for girls. If girls make a mistake, the question will be given to boys. He sometimes gave us exercises to do in these groups. When he gave us the choice of working individually or working in groups, we chose to work in groups.
S: Anything else about this teacher?
S4: He was understanding. (IRS5) He knew how to deal with students. (AS6) He never asked any student to leave the class. His way was making students like the class. He had a sense of humour. We had fun which made the atmosphere of the class interesting. Students need to have some fun in class. It shouldn’t be always serious. The student will feel bored even if she is a bright one. He shouldn’t be all the time funny. He can see when students feel sleepy, he would change the atmosphere of the class directly. (IRS3)
S: What else?
S4: Nothing
S: You rated teacher number seven as an effective teacher. Can you describe him for me. Why and how was he effective?
S4: He was very active and effective. (PQ10)
S: How?
S4: For example when he gave us an article to read, he gave us time limit to finish reading the article. (ETP3) Then he asked us some questions on what was the article about. He said to us you are level four and you should read the article in five minutes, but we didn’t finish in five minutes for the first time. In the second time we should read faster and finish it in five minutes. After the second reading he would ask us about vocabulary. He would ask us for example, “any vocabulary?” and then he would use the words in sentences. (ETP6) After that he would talk about the lesson.
S: Tell me about his way of teaching.
S4: He would ask us to work in groups (AS25) and individually. If the task is not difficult such as making a summary or writing down the main idea, he would ask us to work individually because this kind of task doesn’t need groups. Every one would work on her own. However, when the question is long, he would divide up the class into groups and every group has a question to discuss. Then the representative of each group would give the answer of her group.
S: What else?
S4: He would ask us to read a story. He would assign us a certain number of pages that we should read in a week. Then we made a summary of what we read and give our opinion on it. Then, after one week we hand in the assignment and he would read it and give his opinion. (ETP3) Then he would assign a certain number of pages for us to read for the next
He wouldn’t check the grammar or spelling. He would only check our writing style and our opinion.

S: What else?
S4: **He was strict in observing the rules**, (AS31) but in teaching he was o.k. with us.
S: Tell me more.
S4: **He sometimes would have a sense of humour**, (IRS3)
S: Anything else?
S4: No.
S: What about teacher number eight? You rated him as an effective teacher. Describe him for me.
S4: He taught us grammar. **He would always give us handouts**, (AS18) He didn’t rely completely on the textbook. The textbook was not very helpful to me. He would always explain things especially grammar and if students didn’t understand he would repeat again and again. If we didn’t understand he would give us exercises and ask us to do them. He would explain to us our mistakes until we understand. (IPS1)
S: What would he do in class?
S4: He would give every group a blank paper and assign a leader for each group. Then **he would give us verbs and we write down the past simple and past participle of the verb**. (ETP5) We should agree among each other in the group before we write the words. After that he would ask the students to correct the words. This helped us in the spelling.
S: What else?
S4: He was not strict. He laughed and joked with us, (IRS3) but he was strict with silly students. (AS6)
S: Anything else?
S4: He divided us into two groups. (AS25) Each student has a paper and I ask the student who is in front of me questions such as “Do you like driving cars?” and I write down the answers. Then he would collect the papers and check our grammar. So the teacher would give me a list of questions. I ask one of my classmates and after I finish he would ask me. After we finish asking each other, each student would summarize what he wrote in a paragraph form and give it to the teacher to check our grammar. (ETP5) He did this for one time.
S: What else?
S4: **He would always ask us to do exercises in class**, (AS18) **He would also ask us questions**. (IPS13) He didn’t give homework because all exercises are done in class.
S: What else would you like to add about this teacher?
S4: **He liked to help students and explain again and again until they understand**. (IPS1) If there was no time for that, he would ask them to go to his office. (AS20)
S: How would he know that a student didn’t understand?
S4: From the students themselves. **He would say, “do you understand?”** (AS29)
S: Anything else?
S4: No.
S: You rated teacher number ten as an effective teacher. Describe her for me. Tell me how and why she was effective.
S4: **She was very effective**, (PQ10) She would exhaust the student. (AS28) For example she would show us action films which we liked. (ETP1) She taught us video lab. She met us one class a week for six weeks. For example she would show us a film and after watching it she would give us a handout that we should work on it. (ETP1) I felt that I improved. (AS27) She wouldn’t discuss things with us during the show. After the show and after answering the questions of the handout, she would also ask us questions. (IPS13)
S: Anything else?
S4: No.
S: Describe teacher number 12 whom you considered effective.
S4: **He was very effective**, (PQ10) If a student didn’t understand, he would do his best to make him understand. (IPS1) If a student didn’t understand in class, he would go to his office. (AS20) **He would always give handouts**, (AS18) These handouts benefited us a lot and they were more useful than the textbook. In the handouts you find examples and in the textbook there are no examples.
Can you give me examples about these handouts?
For example, one of them was about how to write an essay. The handout was from another book. He would sometimes discuss the common mistakes made by students without mentioning their names. He would always us the board.

What else?

He was a good man and flexible. He was understanding. He would always explain. He would always give homework.

How was his teaching style?
He would sometimes divide up the class into groups and ask us to do the exercises in the textbook. He would explain all important points.

He would deal strictly with irresponsible students. He had a sense of humour. All the effective teachers I mentioned have a sense of humour.

What else?

You rated teacher number six as an ineffective teacher. Can you describe him for me? Tell me why you consider him ineffective.

He taught is video lab. He didn’t care to help us understand. When we ask him a question, he would be angry or give you a certain look. He considered our questions silly.

He would insult you but in a funny way. He sometimes would not give questions for discussion. We just complete the form he gave us and that’s it.

Even when there is a chance for discussion, we tended to refrain from these discussions to protect ourselves from his observations. As a result of his observations, we tended not to say our opinions.

What else?

I liked dividing up the class into groups. Their treatment with students was very good. They knew how to deal with the students. They were able to make students respect themselves without resorting to using bad word or threatening.

All students liked them because of their treatment.

Who was the least favourite teacher among the list?

He was strict and there was no fun in class. I once talked with my neighbour, he threatened to dismiss us from class.

His class was boring.

I didn’t understand his way of teaching. He would explain the lesson, but he didn’t make us understand like other teachers.

What advice would you give a person who wanted to be a university teacher of English?
S4: I advice him that he should know how to deal with students. Threatening should be the last resort. (AS6) There should be a humour element in class. (IRS3) He should deal with students according to their mentality and how those students think. (AS6)
S: What else?
S4: He should divide up the class into groups because students always like groups. We like to ask each other and see what is correct and what is wrong. (AS25) He also should give handouts. The best thing is the exercises in class. (AS18) If the teacher explains and explains, the class will be very boring. We do the exercise and he would help us. (AS26) For example, after we finish, each student would say his answer. (AS3) If it is wrong, he would correct it and if it is correct we say to him its correct. That the teacher explains from the beginning to the end of the class is very boring. (AS26)
S: What else?
S4: If he noticed that one of the students is irresponsible, he should be strict with him from the beginning and he shouldn’t be flexible with him. (AS6)
S: What else?
S4: He should attract students’ attention to the class and not make them feel bored (AS11) especially in the first class. Students in the first class feel sleepy and in the last class feel tired.
S: Anything else?
S4: No.
S: Thank you very much
Appendix L
Sample interview Two from Phase One

S: What words would you use to describe teacher number four whom you rated as an effective teacher. Tell me why and how he was effective.

S8: He established a friendly relationship with students from the beginning. (IRS4) He was flexible, not rigid. He didn’t impose his opinion on the class. For example, if a student misses a test, he would consider his reason of missing the test and if it is a very good reason he would let him sit for a make up exam. (IRS6) He didn’t stick too much to the curriculum. We met five times a week. He gave us something from outside in two classes every week. (AS18)

S: What did he teach you?
S8: He taught us listening. He tended to take us to the Multi Purpose Room and showed us Films in English. Then, he would ask us what we understood from the film. I benefited a lot from this. The textbook has the basics and doesn’t give you things from outside. (AS18)

S: What else?
S8: He was flexible. For example, when a student came late or misses an exam, he would be flexible. His flexibility would make him close to the students. (IRS6) There should be a good relationship between the teacher and the students and as a result the teacher and the students would understand each other. If you have a problem, you can discuss it with him in class or outside the class. (AS20) For example, if you came late to the exam, he would ask you about the reason of lateness and give you a solution for this. There should be a friendly relationship between you and him. (IRS4) It is not just he is a teacher and you are a student.

S: What else?
S8: Nothing.

S: Can you describe teacher number two? Why did you consider him an effective teacher?
S8: Although he doesn’t teach me at present, I have a good relation with him. (IRS4) When I meet him, we talk.

S: How was his teaching style?
S8: Good.

S: How?
S8: The most useful thing was the things he gave us from outside. (AS18) He tended to take us to the Multi Purpose room, show us films and ask us to talk about what we understood. (ETP1)

S: Do you remember one of his successful classes?
S8: When he changed the atmosphere of the class by giving things from outside the book, we participated more. He showed us films that we liked and characters that we are familiar with. (IPS17)

S: Do you have examples about his teaching practices that helped you to learn?
S8: Yes, he gave us the meaning and synonyms of every new word. He would let one of the students who managed to understand the meaning of the word to say its meaning in Arabic (ETP6) because some students will not understand the meaning of the word unless it is given to them in Arabic.

S: What else?
S8: That’s it.

S: Describe teacher number seven. Why and how you rated him as an effective teacher?
S8: He taught us reading last semester. There were a lot of difficult words in reading. He gave us the reading passage in jumbled paragraphs. After explaining the title, he asked us to put these paragraphs in correct order. (ETP3) We tried to find relation between paragraphs. This
made us think. We discuss why we put them in this order. Students may not have the same order. So students say their opinions. (AS12)

S: What else do you want to say about this teacher?

S8: He tried to give us words and explain them. (ETP6) He explained grammar in reading. He didn't separate the parts of English. (IPS18) As for examinations, he gave us difficult exams. The highest mark was thirty out of fifty. He said he gave us difficult exams to make us ready for the major exams. (IPS19)

S: Any other examples of his teaching activities?

S8: He took us the lab. (AS34) He was strict. (AS31) If you come late, he would mark you late.

S: Do you have other examples about his teaching method?

S8: When we came across a difficult word, he explained it and he would also give us the derivatives of the word. (ETP6) This helped me in using the word correctly.

S: What else?

S8: He was a good man. (PQ9) He was understanding. (IRS5) He had good relationship with students. (IRS4) You can talk with him and shake hands with him. He would invite certain students to his office (AS20) to discuss with them their mistakes and guide them.

S: What else?

S8: That’s it.

S: Who is your favourite teacher in the list?

S8: Teacher number eight.

S: Why?

S8: He taught us listening. He didn’t rely a lot on the textbook. He gave us the chance to listen to outside materials. (AS18) He tended to take us the Multi Purpose Room and show us a film. He would explain the title prepare us to listen the film. He would let us listen for five or six minutes and then he would ask us to write down our notes and then let us say to the class what we understood. He tended to do this two or three times a week. He would also get the recorder to the class and let us listen instead of watching a film. (ETP1) He wanted us to learn English through practice and not from the book.

S: What else?

S8: He was understanding and knew students’ problems. (IRS5) He tried to help students in their study. (AS20)

S: What else?

S8: Nothing.

S: Who was your least favourite teacher in the list?

S8: Teacher number three.

S: Why?

S8: I didn’t like him at all. He expected ideal students, so he had arguments with the students. He once got into class on time and found some students talking. He left the class without saying anything. He had arguments with the students and as a result asked students to leave the class. He would open the door of the class and say to the student either you leave or I would leave. The student would say to him you leave. So he would leave and the student would stay in class and the class would be canceled. (IRS11 NE) This happened several times.

S: What about his teaching?

S8: He stuck to the curriculum 100%.

S: How was his teaching?

S8: His teaching is ok if these arguments don’t happen. The number of our class was 23 but the number of the students who actually attended his classes was not more than 12 or 13. Students absent themselves from his class especially those who don’t like the teacher to talk with them. The teacher who is not psychologically happy in class is not very productive. He is not happy (PQ16) and we attend the class against our will. We listened to what he said but there was no participation. He asked and answered at the same time. (AS3)

S: Why didn’t you participate?

S8: We just sit down. If we participate we might have an argument with him.

S: What else?
S8: Nothing.
S: What advice would you give a person who wanted to be a university teacher of English?
S8: First he should be understanding. (IRS5) He shouldn’t try to use his authority with students otherwise the students would hate the subject. (IRS12) They wouldn’t participate in class. He shouldn’t be too strict or too flexible. The teacher shouldn’t stick to the curriculum. He should give outside materials for practice. (AS18) The teachers themselves say that you can not learn English through textbooks. You need practice. (AS33)
S: What else?
S8: That’s it.
S: Thank you very much.
Appendix M

Sample Follow-up Interview One from Phase Three

S: Students said that effective EFL teachers create a good classroom atmosphere. What should the teachers do so that he/she can create a suitable learning environment?

S1: A good learning environment includes a lot of things. It includes using the computer and the overhead projector and anything else that help students in learning. This is the good learning atmosphere. It also means that the teacher should not be very serious. There should be time for fun so that the student can love the course and attend the classes and not wait impatiently for the end of the class.

S: What else?

S1: There should be no noise in class; there should be order in class so that students can understand the lesson.

S: What is meant by teacher’s sense of humour? If a teacher wants to have a sense of humour, what should he do?

S1: He should give a chance for laughing in the classroom. For example he can give a funny comment on a sentence in a book or comment on something a student said. The sense of humour makes the student interested in the class, it makes him like the class, work harder and do his best not to miss any classes. On the other hand if the student feels bored of the class, his absences will increase, this because he doesn’t like these classes. This will affect his learning negatively.

S: An effective teacher is the one who gives interesting classes. What does that mean?

S1: The classes are light and the teacher is kind with students. It is good to have discipline in class, but the students need to have an opportunity for relaxation and refreshment. Some teachers are too strict and they do not allow students to move or have fun.

S: What makes the classes interesting?

S1: The topic could be interesting and as a result you feel that the time flies quickly; the lesson in this case is light and interesting.

S: Did you have an interesting class that you still remember it?

S1: Yes, the classes we tended to take in the library were interesting. We watched foreign films there. Also giving presentations in speaking classes was interesting for us. This reduces the pressure on the students. Also the teacher himself can create an interesting atmosphere through his sense of humour.

S: An effective teacher is the one who is friendly with his students. How can the teacher be friendly?

S1: He can treat students in a friendly manner. He tries to be close to them so that they can love him and understand every word the teacher says.

S: The effective teacher is the one who helps students inside and outside the class. Can you give examples on how and where the teacher can help students?

S1: The teacher should be willing to receive students in his office, the library or the computer lab and explain things for them and answer their questions and if necessary allow students to telephone him.

S: The participants agreed that the teacher should be flexible? What does that mean? Can you give examples on teacher’s flexibility?

S1: For example, the mobile is not allowed in the classroom. In case the mobile goes off, the teacher takes the mobile from the student and keeps it for one month, but other teachers tolerate it for one or two times. The student switches off the mobile and things go ok. Also teacher can tolerate having a student talking or laughing with her friend in class. In contrary, some other teachers do not allow students to move; they ask students to look toward the teacher and say to the students that they don’t want to hear any sound.

S: Don’t you thing that teachers’ flexibility may affect the learning of students negatively?
S1: No, the teacher in this case helps the student. The teacher should warn the student for the first time and explain to her that what she did or happened is not allowed. **If the student was sick, it won’t hurt the teacher if he gives the student a make up exam.** Allowing one absence or one lateness or giving a make up exam is considered a kind of assistance for the student and encouragement for her. We hate many teachers because they are very strict in taking attendance and do not give make up exams.

S: *Does this mean that the teacher should not implement the rules?*

S1: No, but he should not be too strict or though; he should be flexible. If he gives the student the chance to have a make up exam for the first time, he can disallow the student at the second time from taking a make up test.

S: *How about taking attendance? Shouldn’t the teacher take attendance?*

S1: He can take attendance but he should warn the student several times; after that he can mark him absent. The student might have car accident that makes her come to the class late.

S: *The effective teacher is the teacher who simplifies his or her teaching. What does that mean? Can you give examples?*

S1: For example most teachers here are native speakers of English and they do not know Arabic. Therefore, when they explain the meaning of a new word, they give a more difficult meaning for the word, so when they use a picture they simplify the meaning of the new word.

S: *What about using a diversity of teaching methods?*

S1: The teachers should not always use the computer or papers. They can also use different ways in explaining the meaning of difficult words. They sometimes use the overhead projector and other times give oral explanations. They also can teach using the whiteboard and sometimes they let us watch films or listen to cassettes. They sometimes change from listening to speaking. In reading for example they can give us reading passages from outside the reading textbook. These passages could be easier or more difficult than the ones in the textbook.

S: *How about the teaching itself?*

S1: For example, when teaching reading, teachers should sometimes teach the new words before reading the passage and in other times they can teach them after reading it. Also in listening, the teacher can sometimes let us read the questions before listening and in other times while listening. In this case I know what my level is when I read the questions before listening and have an idea about the listening and what my level is when reading the questions while listening without having an idea about the listening. The same thing applies in writing. **The teacher gives me a topic** (writing prompt) that I should write about one day before the test. On the following day she gives me a test in which she asks me to write about that topic that I already have an idea about. In other times the teacher gives me a topic and asks me to write a composition about it in the same class. In this case the teachers can change their teaching ways. A teacher sometimes notices in reading, for example, that the textbook is below our level, in this case she gives us more difficult reading passages and asks us to read them and sees how did in them. Or in contrary, if the textbook is above our level she gives us easier reading passages from outside the textbook.

S: *The participants said that effective EFL teachers give students a good chance to practise English. Why is this important?*

S1: This is important. The textbook is sometimes boring, so the teacher gives us activities and stories from outside the textbook and as a result change occurs. For example, in listening classes instead of listening to the cassette several times, I work with my partner; I listen to what she says and draw something accordingly. **This is practice.** I ask her to what extent I managed to draw what she described for me. This is a change. It is listening and speaking.

S: *Are there any other activities that enabled you to practise English?*

S1: We tended to access the internet websites of reading or writing; this was class work. For example, the teacher asks us to find answers for certain questions. I should give the answers to her at the end of the class as a class work.

S: *Why is it important to practise English?*
S1: What I need to learn after all is speaking English more anything else. I learn reading and writing but speaking and a wealth of vocabulary and to what extent I can speak English are the most important things for me after all. Speaking is the most important thing. The skills of reading, writing, listening and conversation help in learning a lot of words. As long as I have this huge reservoir of words I can retrieve the words I want and use them in stead of using the same words every time in conversation. I can also express my opinion in English. Of course I can express my opinion in Arabic, but I like to be able of expressing my opinion in English because it is an international language.

S: Do you think that the teacher should correct the mistakes students make?
S1: Yes, because if the teacher doesn’t correct students’ mistakes how can they learn English?
S: Don’t you think that correcting students’ mistakes may hinder their learning?
S1: It is necessary that the teachers correct students’ mistakes even if their mistakes were many. The student after all came to the university to learn English. If the teachers overlook students’ mistakes, what is the benefit they gain out of this?
S: Don’t you think that correcting students’ mistakes may embarrass them in class?
S1: No, because I came here to learn English.
S: Do you prefer that the teacher corrects your mistakes on the spot or later on?
S1: I prefer my teacher corrects my mistakes when I make them.
S: Is there anything you would like to add?
S1: No.
S: Thank you very much.
Appendix N
Sample Follow-up Interview Two from Phase Three

S: Students mentioned that they preferred EFL teachers who could create a good classroom atmosphere. What should the teachers do so that he/she can create a suitable learning environment?

S2: When the teacher and students arrive the classroom, the class becomes active. You will not find sleeping students in the classroom, but rather there is interaction in the class.

S: Should the good atmosphere be created inside the classroom only or should it be there beyond the boarders of the classroom?

S2: It should also be outside the classroom, of course.

S: How? What are other places in which teachers should create a good learning atmosphere?

S2: You are talking in the context of English language, aren’t you?

S: Yes.

S2: For example, a teacher can take his students to watch a film outside the classroom or even outside the university. There should be trips for students. There is not conversation. They do not care much for conversation. Therefore, there is nothing wrong if we go with our teacher to markets and talk with sales assistants. There should also be activities inside the university, inside and outside the classroom.

S: Like what?

S2: For example, we can go to the computer lab and use the internet. This is an activity. We access English language sites and learn words and other things.

S: Can you elaborate more on what you meant by the activities outside the classroom?

S2: Going to the cinema with our teacher and watching a film, or going to one of the shopping centres so that we can improve our conversational skills.

S: To what extent do you think that teachers’ sense of humour is necessary?

S2: I prefer the teacher who is not too strict and tough and at the same time is not very easygoing one. Personally speaking teachers’ sense of humour is not very important for me.

S: The respondents said that the good teacher is the one who gives interesting classes. What does that mean for you?

S2: I consider reading classes interesting. The same classes can be interesting with one teacher, while they can’t be interesting with another. This depends on teachers’ way of teaching.

S: What else?

S2: Nothing.

S: Respondents also emphasized that effective teachers are friendly. How can the teacher be friendly?

S2: Teachers should listen to us. How can you ask a teacher questions if he is not friendly and good hearted person. In this case we will even be afraid to ask him questions. The friendly teacher would allow us to ask questions and when we ask him he would not get angry at with. Or say to us that you are stupid; I explained the lesson. So the teacher should be normal and interacts with us and when we ask him, he should answer us. He should also take into consideration students’ circumstances.

S: One of the practices of effective teachers that was given was that they helped students inside and outside the classroom. Can you elaborate on that?

S2: This is good. This is the friendly teachers. A teacher is considered friendly when he helps students by giving them advice for example.

S: Where can the teachers benefit their students outside the classroom?

S2: During the office hours.

S: Teachers’ flexibility was considered important. Can you give me examples of teachers’ flexibility?

S2: Agreeing to change the date of the test is an example of teachers’ flexibility.
S: Teachers’ ability to simplify teaching things was found to be helpful for students to understand things. What do you think simplifying things mean?

S2: It means that teachers use more than one way in explaining things. Students are of different levels and abilities.

S: What is meant by diversifying teaching ways?

S2: For example in reading, when the teacher explains the meaning of a word, he gives its definition in English. Another way could be by using pictures that simplify things and sometimes the teacher acts so that we can understand.

S: Do you remember any of the teaching ways that you liked?

S2: I like reading classes the most because teacher’s way of teaching is simple. When he gives us a lesson he gives time limit, 7 or 10 minutes for a passage depending on the level of difficulty of each. He gives us a simplified explanation at the beginning. For example, if the topic is about traveling, he would ask students who traveled and where and what the strange situations they had. After that he gives us ten minutes for reading and other ten minutes for questions. I should say that he teaches the difficult words before answering the questions. If we come across difficult words, we ask the teacher about them later on. We answer the questions and after that he gives a test. Therefore, if you noticed, the marks of students in the reading skill were the highest. This is because he doesn’t leave the lesson and that’s it but rather he gives us test on it. He gives us a test on each unit. The test is not only on vocabulary that he taught but also on all words that existed in that unit. In this case we learn the words in each unit and also understand the lesson before moving to the following unit. In this case the teacher simplifies things.

S: What else?

S2: The teacher should follow up the student.

S: Students like to be involved in many learning activities and practise English. Can you elaborate on that?

S2: This is important. If I do not speak, I won’t be able to learn the language, but if I practise speaking it and make mistakes, I will learn from my mistakes and the teacher will correct my mistakes and then I speak again and in this case I learn.

S: Do you prefer that your teacher corrects your mistakes or just leave you speak freely without any corrections?

S2: I prefer that the teacher corrects my mistakes. I came here to learn. If I make a mistake, I will learn from my mistakes and I don’t care if others laughed at me.

S: Is there anything you would like to add?

S2: No.

S: Thank you very much.
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