Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Oman: An Exploration of English Language Teaching Pedagogy in Tertiary Education

Husna Suleiman Al-Jadidi
Dip.TEFL, B.Ed., M.A.
School of Education
Faculty of Arts
Victoria University
Melbourne, Australia

Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Revised July 2009

This work is dedicated to my parents, siblings, husband and my lovely children,

Al-Fajr and AbdulAziz

Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Oman:

An Exploration of English Language Teaching Pedagogy in Tertiary Education

Abstract

This thesis reports on research conducted between 2004 and 2007 into the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in tertiary education institutions in Oman. The research was an exploration of English language teaching pedagogy with a particular focus on bilingual (English and Arabic) versus monolingual (English only) teaching and the role of first language (Arabic) usage in the classroom.

The research was prompted on the one hand, by the need of the Omani government to train skilled teachers of English to support educational development and modernisation. On the other hand, I was aware of anecdotal evidence (including my own observations) that many students seemed to prefer learning with bilingual rather than monolingual teachers. I wanted to find out whether this was the case in Omani secondary institutions overall, and if so, why? What are the benefits and drawbacks of L1 usage in the classroom? What are the benefits and drawbacks of L2 only as a teaching medium? What are the language pedagogies that bilingual (Arabic and English speaking) teachers and monolingual (English only speaking) teachers typically practice?

The study was carried out in six different higher education colleges in or near Muscat, the capital of Oman. Ten classroom observations were carried out (including bilingual and monolingual teachers) and eleven teachers were interviewed. Fifteen students from the same colleges as those teachers were interviewed.

In addition, there is a self-reflective component built into the thesis. Throughout the course of the study I reflected on my own teaching in the light of the findings and my reading of the literature. As a bilingual teacher myself, how, to what extent, and for

what purposes do I draw on English and Arabic in my teaching? How could I improve my own pedagogical practice?

I observed that bilingual teachers as a group and monolingual teachers as a group each had characteristic pedagogical styles and approaches. The bilingual teachers were more teacher-centered, relied more heavily on the use of textbooks, focused more on the teaching of grammar and used less varied techniques of instruction and engagement than did the monolingual teachers. On the other hand, the monolingual teachers, while they were more learner-centered and incorporated more communicative, interactive lessons and activities, seemed to be less successful in classroom management and focus less on accuracy, grammar and lexis than their Arabic-speaking counterparts.

The outcomes of the student interviews broadly reflect the outcomes of the teacher interviews and classroom observations. Students seemed to be evenly divided in whether they preferred monolingual or bilingual teachers at the tertiary level. However, both students and teachers thought that bilingual teaching was essential at beginning levels of education and that the ability to speak both English and Arabic was beneficial for teachers. Many students, however, thought that as they advanced, interaction in the classroom should be conducted in English only. Together, the perspectives of EFL teachers and students and of the researcher herself as an EFL teacher point to a significant, but limited, role for Arabic usage in EFL tertiary college classrooms.

The teacher interviews in general reinforced the conclusions that I drew from the classroom observations and yielded insights into how teachers teach EFL in either English or Arabic and how expatriate teachers who speak English only, compensate for their lack of Arabic.

Through reflection on the interviews, the observational and self-reflective data, and my review of the contemporary literature about ESL/EFL methodology, an analysis emerges of the strengths and drawbacks of the typical bilingual and monolingual styles of teaching. The two pedagogical styles reflect differences between the cultural and educational traditions, teacher training programs and stages of social and economic development between Oman and Western English-speaking countries. Each

style has inherent pedagogical advantages and disadvantages that have the potential to be developed through especially planned and targeted professional development programs.

There is a need for a systematic program of professional development for both groups of teachers in theories of language acquisition, communicative competence and more recent theories of constructivist pedagogy in language education. In addition, an opportunity exists for professional development programs that aim to involve local and expatriate teachers in cross-cultural awareness and in teaching and learning from each other. Monolingual teachers should try to enrich their learning and develop their understanding of the language-learning issues of their students by learning Arabic and learning about Islamic-culture. Bilingual teachers should work to incorporate more communicative approaches and more varied activities into their teaching and develop stronger frameworks for a cross-cultural understanding.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

A/S	- Advisors & Supervisors
AAMEP	- Australian Adult Migrant Education
BT1	- Bilingual Teacher Interview 1
BTCO1	- Bilingual Teacher Classroom Observation 1
CLL	- Communicative Language Learning
EFL	- English as a foreign Language
EGP	- English for General Purposes
ELCD	- English Language Curriculum Department
ELT	- English Language Teaching
ESP	- English for Specific purposes
FL	- Foreign language
KG	- Kindergarten
L1	- First Language
LSCT	- Lower secondary Course for Teachers
MT1	- Monolingual Teacher Interview 1
MTCO1	- Monolingual Teacher Classroom Observation 1
NESTS & NS	- Native English Speaking Teachers
NL	- Native language
NNEST &NNS	- Non-native English speaking Teachers
NPL	- National Policy on Languages
PRIT	- Primary In-service Training
RTT	- Regional Teacher Trainer
S1	- Student 1
SET	- Senior English Teacher
SETC	- Senior English Teacher Course
SETIM	- Senior English Teacher Inspector Meetings
SL	- Second Language
SLA	- Second Language Acquisition
SQU	- Sultan Qaboos University
TEFL	- Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TESOL	- Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language
TL	- Target Language

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank His Excellency Dr. Yahya Bin Mahfoodh Al-Manthari, the former Minister of Higher Education in Oman, the Chief of the State Council at present, for his inspiration and encouragement. I also would like to thank the staff at the Department of Higher Studies at the Ministry of Higher Education for their assistance throughout my PhD journey.

I am also grateful to the people at the Australian Agency for Education and Training Center in Muscat, Oman for their effort to facilitate my enrolment and education at Victoria University.

My gratitude goes to the staff and students of the six colleges where I have been allowed to observe and interview a number of teachers and students. I appreciate the teachers' generosity for giving me the time to share their professional expertise. I am also thankful to students who shared their concerns and were quite open to talk to me about learning English. All teachers and students have been protected by pseudonyms throughout the thesis.

I am grateful to my colleagues at The College of Law, notably the instructors at the English Unit who assisted me with regards to the required materials and references. Sayed Mohammed Omar and Associate Professor Dr.Ali Al-Issa have always inspired and motivated me to perform better. Majida Al-Hinai has always been there to help me whenever I faced any technical problems with my computer.

My love and deep gratitude goes to my parents, my mother, Shamsa Al-Harrasi, my father, Suleiman Al-Jadidi, and my sisters, Zakiya, Najya, Fathiya, Wafa, Iman, and Hind, my brothers, Saeed, Khalid, Dawood, Musaab, Mohammed and Zakharia and my nephew Jihad. I thank each one of them for their support. They all helped me in one way or another to make my dream come true and I could not have accomplished my research study without their sincere blessings.

Special thanks goes to my husband, who devoted his time to take care of our children while giving me time to travel and focus on my work. He has been always there for me as the most supportive and encouraging figure.

In Australia, my first special thanks; gratitude and dedication are due to my supervisor Dr. Jill Sanguinetti who has been my main source of inspiration in writing my thesis and fulfilling the candidature requirements. I would not have made such achievement without her continued support and advice. Her broad knowledge of the field of adult education has given me some insights into how to synthesize, refine and complete the study. My thanks also go to her partner Dr. David Legge with whom I was fortunate to discuss my work and who gave me fruitful feedback on different occasions.

I also wish to thank the staff of the School of Education at Victoria University who have offered me every support and assistance. The cohort of local and international research students, especially Ludmilla, Denise, Flossie, Suharjo and Siva whose friendship, help and support throughout the journey have been deeply appreciated. I have enjoyed being part of such a lively and enthusiastic group. It has been a lifetime learning experience that I will always think about and remember.

My gratitude also goes to the staff members at the International Student Office who provided me with assistance from the very first day of my enrolment at Victoria University, especially Esther Newcastle and Kerry Wright. Their assistance was not only while I was in Australia but was also extended during the period when I was an offshore student since the last quarter of the year 2006.

I am thankful to the staff at the library of Victoria University who made their effort in directing me to the appropriate academic materials and the educational sources in order to accomplish my research study.

Last but not least, I am thankful to the many Australian people whom I got to know during my stay in Melbourne, and who always made me feel welcome. Dr. Mary Weaven and her family were especially generous in providing me with accommodation during short trips to Melbourne to finalise the thesis with my supervisor.

The choice I made to travel all the way from Oman to Australia to do my PhD was the right choice, and the long hours of travel back and forth have been well worth the effort. Staying in Australia has enabled me to explore the other side of the globe and to see a diversity of cultures interacting harmoniously with each other in this cosmopolitan nation.

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Origins of the Research 11
1.1 Sultan Qaboos and the New Oman 11
1.2 From Student to Teacher 12
1.3 Questioning Monolingual and Bilingual English Teaching 14
1.4. Muslim Beliefs and Constructivist Epistemology 15
1.5 Outline of Chapters 18

Chapter Two: Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Oman 20
2.1 English Language Teaching, Culture and Globalization 20
2.2 The Development of English Teaching in Oman 21
2.3 English Teaching as a Strategic Policy Imperative 22
2.4 Basic Education System Schools 24
2.5 English Language Teaching in the Public Higher Education Institutes 27
2.6 English Language Teaching in Private Schools and Colleges 29
2.7 English Language Teaching in Private Higher Institutions 29
2.8 English Teacher and Training 31
2.9 Conclusion 34

Chapter Three: Theoretical Context 36
3.1 Introduction 36
3.2 Theories about Second Language Teaching and Learning 37
3.3 Theories of Bilingual Teaching and L1 Inclusion 44
3.4 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) 54
3.5 Brown's Principles of EFL Pedagogy 57
3.5 Constructivist Pedagogies in Language Education 63
3.6 Western Culture and the Teaching of English in Oman 66
3.7 Native and Non-native English Speaking Teachers 68
3.8 Conclusion 73

Chapter Four: Methodology and Method 76
4.1 Introduction 76
4.2 Qualitative Research in Language Acquisition and Learning 78
4.3 The Research Questions 79
4.4 Terminology of 'Bilingual' and 'Monolingual' 80
4.5 A Case Study of EFL teaching 80
4.6 Methods of Data Collection 81
4.7 Interviews 86
4.8 Researching My Own Practice through Self-Reflection 88
4.9 Data Analysis 89
4.10 Ethical Considerations 91
4.11 How Generalisable is this Research? 92

Chapter Five: EFL Teachers in their Classrooms 94
5.1 Introduction 94
5.2. The Participants 94
5.3 Data gathering, analysis and presentation 95
5.4 The Bilingual Teachers 97
5.5 Summary of Observations of Bilingual Teachers 105

5.6 The Monolingual Teachers.....107
5.7 Summary of Monolingual Teacher Observations 116
5.8 A Brief Comparison 116

Chapter Six: Experiences and Perceptions of Students..... 119
6.1 Introduction 119
6.2 Who the Students were.....119
6.3 Who their Teachers were.....120
6.4 Students' Preferences for Bilingual or Monolingual EFL Teachers 121
6.5 How Teachers should Use Arabic when Teaching English 124
6.6 Preferred Styles of Language Teaching 126
6.7 Culture and the Clash of Cultures 128
6.8 Conclusion.....130

Chapter Seven: Teachers' Perceptions of Bilingual and Monolingual teaching133
7.1 Introduction 133
7.2 Recruitment of participants 134
7.3 L1 Usage in the Classroom 135
7.4 Teacher-Centred and Student-Centred Approaches.....138
7.5 Classroom Management.....142
7.6 Summary 144

Chapter Eight: Reflection on my own Teaching 146
8.1 Introduction 146
8.2 About the Textbook.....147
8.3 Overview of Teaching Strategies: What Works.....147
8.4 English classes lessons from 10-14 March / 07 150
8.5 How I use Arabic in the classroom 158
8.6 How I Deal with 'Culture Conflicts'.....160
8.7 How I Deal with Slow Students 161
8.8 What I Learned from the Bilingual Teachers.....162
8.9 What I Learned from Monolingual Teachers.....163
8.10 What I Learned from the Student Interviews 163
8.11 Teacher-Centred versus Student-Centred Approaches 164
8.12 Summary 165

Chapter Nine: Learning from the Case Study 167
9.1 Introduction 167
9.2 The benefits of L1 (Arabic) usage in EFL teaching.....167
9.3 The Benefits of Monolingual EFL Teaching 173
9.4 Revisiting Brown's 12 Principles.....175
9.5 Delineating Typical Language Pedagogies of Bilingual and Monolingual Teachers 180
9.6 Bilingual Teaching Styles 182
9.7 Monolingual Teaching Styles.....185
9.8 'Native' and 'Non-Native' English Speaking Teachers.....188
9.9 EFL and the Clash of Cultures 189
9.10 Revisiting the Research Aims 191
9.10 Conclusion.....192

Chapter Ten: Re-energising EFL Teaching in Oman..... 194
10.1 Professional development to make a difference.....194
10.2 Where to from here?.....197
10.3 Recommendations to the Ministry of Education.....198

References **201**
Appendix A: Classroom Observation Checklist for Bilingual and Monolingual Teachers' Pedagogical Methods and Approaches **210**
Appendix B: Interview questions **211**
Appendix C: Student interview questions (Arabic text) **207**

Chapter One: Origins of the Research

1.1 Sultan Qaboos and the New Oman

I was among the generation born just before the Omani renaissance in 1970, when his Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Saeed took power in Oman. Under his leadership Oman rapidly modernized from almost nothing: until the 70s there were almost no schools, hospitals or streets and so the challenge was huge for the newly constituted government. Sultan Qaboos framed a new structure for the government that was to plan for Oman's development. All this new development was funded by the proceeds of oil, which was discovered in large quantities in 1963, a few years before I was born.

I was one of those who began their general education in the early1970s, participating in the new Oman from its beginning.

In 1970, His Majesty the Sultan promised to change the old face of Oman and to develop all fields of society and the economy. The priorities would be education, health care and basic services such as electricity and water. Since we had no proper school buildings at that time, His Majesty decreed that we would teach the new generation under the shelter of trees, until schools could be built. He said:

> From the moment that we assumed our responsibilities in this land, education was one of our constant preoccupations; in fact, one could say it was our main concern. As we said at the time, we will educate our young people even if it has to be under the shade of the trees. Many of you will not remember that period when many of the schools were temporary structures or tents. We established the Ministry of Education and we directed them to speed up the building of schools by all necessary means. This was done, beginning with the primary level and then the preparatory and secondary levels. This urgent need to spread education was based on our knowledge that learning is enlightenment and light is the opposite of darkness. We should all remember the saying of the Almighty, "Are those who know equal to those who know not"? [1]His Majesty's Speech on the occasion of the Royal Visit to Sultan Qaboos University May 02/05/2000.

Up until the 70s, women did not have a place; there was no education at all for women. There was a single boys' school where boys could learn up to grade six, and then the option for them was to go abroad to study or work.

---

[1] His Majesty's speech was quoted from his visit to Sultan Qaboos University in May 2000. Educational Statistical Year Book, Issue 34th, 2003/2004

Women before 1970 lived simply indoors and for domestic and child- bearing purposes only. However, after his Majesty took power, women's lives changed. Soon there were schools for girls and I still remember the first day all girls of different ages started school for the first time in the history of Oman. The first school in Muscat, was called *A' Zahraa Girls' School*. The school is still there and it is an icon for female students in Oman. I was amazed and excited by the speed of development in all fields, and in education in particular. As the time passed there were more girls' schools, not only in Muscat (the capital city of Oman) but also in the rest of the country.

Day after day, Oman developed rapidly. I watched the Sultan on TV with the first group of male students who were about to study abroad. Even though I was still in elementary school, I was inspired by his words. From that moment I decided to study hard to go abroad to study too. I remember exactly what his Majesty said to them. He said, "You are the first group of students who is leaving the country to study outside. My advice to you is to work hard and take good deeds from the new culture while holding onto your own culture". These words stayed with me and this was the beginning of my journey to achieve my own dream about my own education.

The study described in this thesis can therefore in one way be seen as a product of thirty- six years of educational development in Oman. While school education is now well established, Oman now needs to quickly develop its capacity for tertiary education of an international standard. Effective teaching of English as a foreign language in colleges and universities is therefore a key strategy in Oman's continuing development. Omani universities also need to establish a research base into how this can best be done.

1.2 From Student to Teacher

After I finished preparatory and primary school levels, I joined what was called the 'Teacher Training Institute', which was the only teacher- training institute for girls. It was equal to a general secondary school except that it focused on teacher training besides teaching other subjects. Students graduating from this institute would be eligible to teach at primary level.

The Teacher Training Institute offered courses in different majors of specialty, such as Arabic, Islamic, Social Science Studies, and English Language.

The program lasted for three years and there was an opportunity to pursue further studies abroad for students who did well.

I was one of the few female students who specialized in English language studies. My interest in English came about because my Iraqi English teacher inspired me when I was in Grade Seven at the preparatory level. English as a foreign language was first introduced for Grade Four students by the Curriculum Department in the Ministry of Education in (1977), the year I was in Grade Four[2].

By specializing in the English language, I would fulfill my dream to become a teacher of English and to learn about English and Western culture.

After I finished at the Teacher Training Institute, I went to the United Kingdom to get my first degree in Education (EFL/ESL) with a four- year scholarship from the Ministry of Education. I spent the first six months in an English Language Improvement course then I did my Diploma in Teaching English as a Second / Foreign Language in Morey House College of Education in Edinburgh (Scotland). After I successfully completed this course of study I returned to Oman for a year of teaching experience. After that I enrolled in the University of Bristol (England) to pursue my Bachelor degree in Education in ESL/EFL.

I taught for three years at two different secondary schools in Muscat after I came back from England in 1990.

In 1993 I was nominated to go to the United States of America to undertake a Master of Arts in Education at Ohio State University in Columbus Ohio. After 16 months I graduated with an MA.

On my return I was appointed as an Inspector of English Language for all school levels, for around six months. I had a number of schools to visit in the region and was

[2] Grade One to Grade Four is now called 'Basic Education', modeled on primary education in England. Basic Education was first introduced in Oman about seven years ago. It introduces school beginners to English, computer skills, life and small group activities with girls and boys mixed together.

responsible for conducting professional development seminars and workshops for English language teachers.

I was then transferred to the Ministry of Higher Education to work as an assistant instructor at the College of Education for Girls in Rustaq; this town is about 100 KM from where I live. For two years I taught English as a subject at this college. Teaching alongside me there were native speakers of English and one male Arabic-speaking teacher of English who was the head of the English department.

1.3 Questioning Monolingual and Bilingual English Teaching

While I was teaching at the College of Education for Girls at Rustaq, a number of students requested to leave the classes of the native English speakers and join my class. My classes became over-crowded and my co-teachers were quite concerned that their students started to move from them to join me.

As a result, I decided to conduct an informal oral survey to find out why the students wanted to withdraw from the classes of native speakers of English to my classes.

The reasons they gave were:

- They felt insecure with (monolingual) native teachers of English
- They felt comfortable with Omani teachers
- Students complained about communication breakdown with monolingual teachers with no Arabic provision
- English language was clearer with Omani teachers and more understandable.
- Native speakers spoke too fast and the students had difficulty listening and understanding monolingual teachers in general.

I spent around two and a half years at this college before I was transferred to the College of Law where I am still employed. The College of Law is relatively new and has smaller classroom size in comparison with other Omani colleges.

There were three teachers of English at the time I joined the faculty in 1998: one American 'monolingual' teacher, and two 'bilingual' teachers: a Sudanese and myself. I was the only female teacher in the college.

Once again, some students withdrew from the American teacher's classroom, switching to Arabic-speaking teachers classrooms. On the other hand, a few students moved from the bilingual teachers' classes to the American teacher's class.

This teaching experience left me thinking of conducting a more detailed research project to explore the reasons for the preference of many students for bilingual, Arabic-speaking English teachers, and of some students' preference for monolingual English-speaking teachers. I wanted to understand in depth the students' various preferences and to compare the kind of teaching and learning that took place in bilingual and monolingual classes respectively.

I had so many questions in my mind that needed answers:

- Why did those students prefer me to the American teacher?
- Why did they seem to prefer Arabic- speaking teachers to monolingual teachers?
- Why do some students prefer monolingual English-speaking teachers?
- To what extent do bilingual teachers speak in Arabic in the EFL classroom?
- How can students' attitudes towards learning the English language be improved (with all teachers)?
- Are there particular drawbacks or benefits for students in learning English with native speakers?
- Are there particular benefits or drawbacks for students in learning English with bilingual teachers?
- How do native speakers survive in EFL classes with no Arabic supplement?
- How do the students survive when the teacher has no recourse to Arabic?

I kept all the questions and concerns to myself and when I got a scholarship from the Ministry of Higher Education to do my PhD, I decided to challenge myself and try to get answers to those questions.

1.4. Muslim Beliefs and Constructivist Epistemology

The research journey that I write about in this thesis was also an exploration of what constitutes knowledge and what it means to be an academic researcher and a practising Muslim.

The search for knowledge is a fundamental quest in the life of a practising Muslim. The prophet Mohammed (peace be upon Him) often emphasized the importance of

knowledge: “Those who go in search of kowledge, are on the path of God until they return”. “Seeking knowledge is better than worship” (Mohammed, peace be upon Him (cited in Frager, 2002, p.29).

As a teacher and as an academic researcher, I am fulfilling my religious duty to seek knowledge.

> God propounds parables to humanity, as God [alone] has full knowledge of all things (Qura’n 24 p.35, quoted by *Frager, 2002, p.50).*

However, during my PhD studies, I have been challenged by the notion of epistemology and the fact that people have different understandings of where knowledge comes from and how it is constructed. I now believe that religious truths do not constitute a singular, universal ‘truth’ in the worldly sense, and that there is no over-riding ‘true’ truth underpinning social, spiritual and human endeavor. My personal religious truths are a different form of truth than scientific truths that are universally accepted by people in different cultural and religious contexts.

Instead, I understand truth in the academic context within a constructivist paradigm. Crotty (1998) is one of many social researchers who use a constructivist paradigm in his discussion of issues of ontology, epistemology and methodology (see also, Patton 1990 and Neuman 2003). The constructivist paradigm is very useful as it enables me to work within and across Islamic and Western paradigms of knowledge. My basic understanding of constructivism is that knowledge is not fixed or given, but is historically and socially constructed, so that what is ‘true’ for one group (e.g., Muslim, Christians or atheists) cannot be said to be universally true.

I therefore, have other sources of ‘true’ knowledge: knowledge gained from my work and social practices and knowledge produced by research. Working as a teacher has allowed me to gain knowledge of language learning and acquisition from practice and from sharing knowledge and expertise with colleagues in the educational field and surrounding teaching and learning environment. Teaching provides many ways of getting knowledge from different sources. I have integrated my personal belief as a Muslim and as a teacher to serve the same objective and that is seeking knowledge from the available resources.

Reflective thinking is a source of knowledge because it allows one to search, improve, and reflect on prior knowledge in order to better assimilate knowledge. As a researcher, I am trying to produce new knowledge by collecting from the informants, data that I then reflect upon, analyze and formalize as knowledge. My research would not only deepen and build my objective knowledge but also would make me better understand processes of teaching and specifically, my own teaching. I can share this practical knowledge with students, teachers and colleagues. I am therefore, on a journey of exploring, interpreting and constructing practical and theoretical knowledge, drawing on my personal experience as a teacher, the literature and the data at hand.

Muslims believe that the nature of existence is in the sole control of Allah (God), while many Westerners or non-Muslims believe that the world works independently of God or Allah. One's perceptions and interpretations of the nature of reality are bound by one's belief system, prior knowledge, learning experiences and cultural legacy that we inherited from the past generations.

On one hand, as a Muslim, I believe that Allah is the only one who has the absolute 'truth' and no one else. On the other hand, from my point of view as a constructivist researcher, in response to the question, 'what is there that can be known?' I would assert that in our daily lives there are multiple social realities that we construct to make sense of the world we live in. Every one of us tries to contemplate and to question so as to find answers to real life questions. How does this world work? We need to deeply understand other people's views and interpretations of the world around them in order to make sense of the world we live in.

Differences among individuals, societies and cultures do not mean that either one is wrong or right but rather they perceive the world differently. They use their commonsense that is underpinned by their belief system, and act accordingly.

We as human beings necessarily have limited knowledge and personal knowledge is always limited. The knowledge I have gained through teaching, through study and as a researcher is incomplete and bounded by language, tradition and context. In accepting this limitation, I can claim the authority of my findings and my conclusions as (conceptualized) knowledge, which accords with the guidelines and protocols of

qualitative research. The knowledge that is produced in this thesis will be judged by the quality of the research that has produced it and eventually, its usefulness in EFL teaching practice in Oman and other Arabic bilingual language teaching contexts.

I am involved in exploring a social phenomenon: the teaching of English in Oman by bilingual teachers and monolingual teachers teach English. The knowledge that this piece of research is striving for can only be partially achieved (or constructed). This research study aim has not been to prove a theory but to get useful insights and ideas and find out what pedagogical values, understandings and strategies teachers enact in classrooms. Hopefully this thesis is to be offering useful ideas and insights, but not absolute knowledge about the teaching of English to young adults in tertiary institutions in non-English- speaking contexts and how they can best be supported to learn.

1.5 Outline of Chapters

A brief synopsis of the ten chapters of the thesis follows:

Chapter One is the Introduction and gives a general introduction to my educational background and the teaching and profession experiences that led me to undertake this study, as well as my reflections, as a practising Muslim, on the epistemological foundations of the research.

Chapter Two presents a historical review of the development of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Oman, and the current situation of EFL teaching in school and tertiary education. A numerical breakdown of EFL teachers who are of Arabic background and those who are native English speakers is presented.

Chapter Three reviews the literature pertinent to the issues of teaching and learning of English and first language usage in the EFL teaching context. This chapter gives the theoretical context for the study and surveys the current research into the role of first language usage in second language teaching in various contexts, as well as key themes in the literature about foreign language acquisition and learning.

Chapter Four presents the methodology and the data collection methods used in the study. The data were collected from classroom observations and from interviews with teachers and students from six different tertiary colleges in Oman.

Chapter Five presents a description and analysis of ten classroom observations. The observations were of five bilingual teachers and five monolingual teachers.

Chapter Six presents the findings of the students' interviews and explores their English learning experiences, highlighting their perceptions and experiences of bilingual and monolingual teaching styles.

Chapter Seven presents an analysis of the teachers' interviews. These focused on the classroom teaching-learning practices, textbook usage and teaching methods and approaches. Styles of bilingual and monolingual teaching are delineated.

Chapter Eight is a report and reflection on my own teaching. I give a detailed description of three days of my own teaching practice and reflect on my own classroom interaction with the students and how I teach, as a bilingual English teacher.

Chapter Nine is the discussion of the findings and their significance in relation to current debates about EFL pedagogy in relation to bilingual and monolingual teaching. In the main, the research supports the view that a 'judicious' use of Arabic in bilingual classrooms is beneficial to learning, reflecting views expressed in the current research literature for example, Wigglesworth (2003). However, the issue of L1 usage was found to be only one ingredient in a complex mix of pedagogical factors that contribute to effective EFL teaching and learning.

Chapter Ten makes a set of recommendations to the Ministry of Education and the universities in Oman to seed a professional organization for EFL teachers in Oman that would be responsible for organizing professional development programs based on updating theoretical knowledge, action research, peer support, and bringing together bilingual and monolingual teachers to learn from each other.

Chapter Two: Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Oman

2.1 English Language Teaching, Culture and Globalization

Oman is one of many rapidly developing countries whose economies require increasing numbers of English speakers in the light of the global spread of English in recent decades.

According to Hasman (2000, p.2), over 1.4 billion people live in countries where English has official status. Over 70% of the world's scientists read English, over 85% of the world's mail is written in English and 90% of information in the world's electronic retrieval system is stored in English. Hasman suggests that by 2010, speakers of English as a second or foreign language (SL/FL) will exceed the number of native speakers. English has become a key factor in the development of the nations globally. The information technology revolution has shortened the distance between nations, and its services ignore geographical borders. Information technology has penetrated not only the industrial borders but also the Third and Developed worlds, thanks to telecommunications and English language. Computers and the Internet have both served nations and have become mediators for human communication in which English language is the main medium.

Crystal (1997, p.53) maintains that in 'inner-circle' countries (Kachru, 1999, 2008) where English is spoken as a native language, there are approximately 320-380 million native speakers of English. He explains that in outer circle countries, where English has an official role, as in India and Singapore for example, there are roughly 150-300 million second language (L2) speakers of English. In 'expanding circle' countries (Kachru, ibid), where English is used as a foreign language, there are as many as 100-1000 million learners of English (Crystal, 1997, p.61). There are approximately 670 million people in the world today who have a native or native-like command of English. No other language has spread around the globe so extensively, making English a truly international language. Crystal estimates that "well over a third" of the world population (2,025 million in 1997) were "routinely exposed to English" (p.60). The number of English users is developing at a faster rate as a language of international communication than as a language of intra-national

communication. A more recent IATEFL publication suggests that communication in English between non-native speakers now represents 80% of global English use (Finster, in Pulverness, 2004, p.9).

2.2 The Development of English Teaching in Oman

Oman was never a British colony and "…had no foundations for English…there were no English- medium schools in Oman…there was no British inspired education" Al-Busaidi (1995, p.90). However, from 1970 onwards it has readily embraced English as an officially taught foreign language in its institutions.

Along with other Arabic speaking countries, Oman realized the need to communicate with non-Arabic speaking countries in order to expand their bilateral relations. There was an urgent need for expatriate foreign expertise to strengthen such relationships especially after the discovery of oil in the Gulf States. After 1970, Oman developed powerful trade links with various non-English speaking countries in the globe such as Turkey, Sweden, Germany, Cyprus, France, Italy, Greece, Belgium, Austria, Portugal, and Russia. English has been used as a lingua franca in communicating with these and other non-English speaking countries.

English language is not just for trading purposes, but is also the means of communication within the country, the only tool or medium of communication between Omanis and foreigners/expatriates from all over the world who are working there. Increasingly there seems to be a need for a single language to enable people with different linguistic backgrounds to interact in a variety of settings, especially with the revolution of information technologies. In Oman, as all over the world, English has evolved as that language and is being taught and learned with increasing intensity (See also Hu, 2002, p.93).

Non English-speaking countries are adopting policies that promote the teaching and learning of English and their countless educational institutions now require their students to pass in English [3] as a condition for graduation. In Oman, as in other Arabic-speaking countries, graduate students with an outstanding command of written and spoken English are highly valued and accepted in the private sector, in oil companies in particular, where English is the only means of communication in that

[3] TOFEL is also required to pursue higher studies both in Oman and overseas

workplace. However, the fact that Arabic learners have linguistic and cultural backgrounds that are completely distinct from English creates a barrier to the easy learning of that language.

Unless they are planning to migrate, Arabic speaking students learn English for practical, rather than cultural purposes, so that the teaching context is quite different from, for example, teaching English as a second language to migrants and refugees in Australia. Omani students learn English not necessarily for it to become part of an English-speaking community or for English to become a language of social identity. However, to some degree, it is impossible to separate completely the practical and cultural aspects of language learning and, in Oman as elsewhere in the Muslim world, there are tensions around the cultural messages inherent in English language text books, especially those produced for the international market in the UK or USA and imported to Oman by the Ministry of Education.

The English Language Teaching Department Unit at the Ministry of Education is authorized to supply school textbooks throughout the country. However, the Ministry of Education does not always take account of the cultural connotations (such as allusions to dating and alcohol) that might be incompatible with Muslim culture. However, there are Muslim authors such as Sharifian (1999, p.2) who writes about "a conflict between the students' value system and those of the mainstream ELT tradition".

In summary, the teaching of EFL in Oman has been adopted as a major policy imperative and developing rapidly in schools, colleges and universities despite cultural tensions surrounding the teaching of a Western language in a Muslim country.

2.3 English Teaching as a Strategic Policy Imperative

EFL teaching in Oman, as in many parts of the world, receives political, economic and legislative support from the government. English is considered as "a resource for national development and as the means for wider communication within the international community" [4](NELP p.2).

[4] (NELP) refers to the Ministry of Education's document known as National English Language Policy/Plan (1987).

The Omani government recognizes the importance of English language as the language of modernization in the world today. The *Reform and Development of General Education* (Ministry of Education, 1995 p. A5 -1) states that:

> The government recognizes that facility in English is important in the new global economy. English is the most common language for international sectors such as banking and aviation. The global language of science and technology is also English as are the rapidly expanding international computerized databases and telecommunications networks, which are becoming an increasingly important part of academic and business life.

Clearly, the government is aware of the interrelationship of its national economy with the global economy.

A Ministry of Education document entitled *Philosophy and Guidelines for the Omani English Language School Curriculum* (Nunan et al, 1987) was written by three authors led by David Nunan, a leading Australian scholar in second language teaching and learning. This document outlines policy for the future development of English Language Teaching (ELT) in Oman.

The authors visited and stayed in Oman in 1987. They reported that English was the means for wider communications with the international community. It would be a resource for the country's continual development and for various key areas such as science and technology. English would be the tool that facilitates the acquisition of science and technology which, in turn, would contribute to narrowing the technological gap between the developed and the developing worlds; the bridge towards national development. . It was already widely used in sectors such as tourism, banking, hospitals and other medical and clinical premises, automotive showrooms, restaurants, factories, insurance agencies and other domains of the private sector.

The Oman Ministry of Education recognized the importance of developing English language teaching for Omani students and based its program on the philosophy and guidelines for the Omani English language school curriculum that was produced in 1987. The government affirmed English as Oman's only foreign language to be used officially in the country

In the year 2003 in the country's second census, the approximate number of expatriates was 20% of the population of 2.3 million. Expatriate skilled labourers largely dominate the private sector who mainly come from countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Philippines and use English as the lingua franca.

English has now become the fundamental medium for 'Omanization' - the government scheme for gradually replacing the expatriate skilled labor force with Omani citizens. In the last few years, English language competence has therefore become a pre-requisite for undergraduate education and recruitment. Many graduates fail to get jobs particularly in the private sector if they do not have a good command of written and spoken English.

2.4 Basic Education System Schools

English is taught in public and private schools, colleges, universities and institutes. In the public sector, English is taught from Grade One in the Basic Education System (primary) schools as part of the school curriculum. English is taught as a subject that is textbook-based and teacher-centered. There are large classrooms with an average number of 30-35 students of mixed ability.

Table (1) Distribution of public school classes by type of education, gender & educational regions 2005-2006

Region	Basic Education				General Education				Overall Total
	Boys	Girls	Coed	Total	Boys	Girls	Coed	Total	
Muscat	264	267	774	1275	947	915	28	1890	**3165**
Batinah North	221	228	805	1254	1322	1236	70	2628	**3882**
Batinah South	208	188	554	950	771	727	47	1545	**2495**
Interior	226	215	666	1107	784	735	76	1595	**2702**
Sharqiyah.South	152	144	424	720	437	424	31	892	**1612**
Sharqiyah North	144	134	337	615	460	421	10	891	**1506**
Dhahira North	52	46	132	230	86	85	37	208	**438**
Dhahira South	95	98	307	500	429	381	36	846	**1346**
Dhofar	131	133	412	676	540	485	377	1402	**2078**
Wusta	2	6	72	80	50	36	118	204	**284**
Musandam	32	21	62	114	51	57	14	122	**236**
Total	1527	1480	4514	7521	5877	5502	844	12223	**19,744**

The table above shows the eleven educational regions with the distribution of the 19,744 classes in the public schools in Oman (including boys', girls' and co-ed schools) in the academic year 2005/2006. English is now being taught in all schools at all levels and there is a corresponding unmet demand for school teachers who can teach English, especially in the outlying regions.

Table 2. Distribution of public school students by type of education, gender & educational regions 2005/2006

	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Overall Total
Muscat	19146	18377	37523	31729	30676	62405	99928
Batinah. N	18066	17972	36038	44525	40822	85347	121385
Batinah.S	14215	13166	27381	25016	23694	48710	76091
Interior	16389	15431	31820	25130	23710	48840	80660
Sharqiya.S	10435	9861	20296	12826	12056	24882	45178
Sharqiya.N	8932	8153	17085	13320	12070	25390	42475
Dhahira.N	3403	3042	6445	2838	2588	5426	11871
Dhahira.s	6632	6726	13358	12025	10788	22813	36171
Dhofar	9252	9345	18597	14686	13169	27855	46452
Wusta	780	847	1627	2256	1588	3844	5471
Musandam	1546	1367	2913	1570	1395	2965	5878
Total	**108796**	**104287**	**213083**	**185921**	**172556**	**358477**	**571560**

Table 2 above shows the number and distribution of the 571,560 students in public schools in Basic Education System and General Education of the academic year 2005-2006. It includes boys and girls in both types of education across the educational regions in Oman.

Table 3 (below) indicates the proportion of expatriate teachers to Omani teachers in the public school system.

Table (3) Distribution of Public Schools' Teachers of all subjects including English by Type of Education by Nationality across Educational Regions (2005/2006)

Region	Basic education			General Education		
	Grades 1-4			Grades 1-12		
	Omani	Expat	Total	Omani	Expat.	Total
Muscat	2861	217	3078	5242	618	5860
Al-Batinah North	2871	458	3329	6108	1173	7281
Al-Batinah South	2201	461	2662	3693	876	4569
Interior	2707	398	3105	4430	724	5154
A'Sharqiya South	1783	283	2066	2669	480	3149
A'sharqiya North	1400	3669	1769	2266	650	2916
A'Dhahira North	585	63	648	801	97	898
Á'DhahiraSouth	1474	163	1637	2436	313	2749
Dhofar	1345	660	2005	2353	1471	3824
Al-wusta	206	186	392	315	284	599
Musandam	330	120	450	355	146	501
	17763	3378	21141	30668	6832	37500

Table 3 shows the proportion of Omani teachers to expatriate teachers currently teaching in the Omani public school system. Of the expatriate teachers, possibly half come from other Arabic speaking countries (and therefore teach bilingually) and half from the Indian sub-continent. Of a total of 37,500 teachers in Basic and General Education, over 10,000 (about one third) are expatriates from Arab countries or the Indian sub-continent. There is a severe shortage of Omani teachers who are qualified to teach English to meet the needs of those students in all parts of the country. There are only a few native English-speakers (from Western countries) teaching in schools.

While Table 3 shows the total number of teachers of all subjects in the educational regions, Table 4 below gives a breakdown of the total number of the local Omani teachers and the expatriate teachers of English. It includes teachers of English teaching at the Basic Education System schools and the General Education schools across the country, and shows that overall, Omani English teachers in the General Education years are fewer than expatriate teachers (836 to 1439).[5]

[5] The number of expatriate teachers in these statistics includes expatriates from other Arabic-speaking countries, and no statistics are available for non-Arabic speaking teachers. However, it is likely that more than half of the 'expatriate' teachers are bilingual teachers from other Arabic speaking countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Iraq and Sudan.

Table (4) Teachers of English in basic and general education
(Ministry of Education. Education: 2005-2006)

Teachers of English in Basic Education (Grade 1 to Grade 4)			**Teachers of English in General Education (Grade 5 to Grade 12)**		
Omani	Expatriate	Total	Omani	Expatriate	Total
1579	1187	2766	836	1439	2275

In summary, Table 4 shows that the number of expatriate teachers of English in Oman Basic (primary) education approximately equals the number of Omani teachers. In General Education, Grades 5 and 6, expatriates outnumber local teachers of English by about two- thirds. An unknown proportion of these expatriate teachers are Arabic speakers from other countries, and a further large proportion of these are from the Indian Subcontinent, where English is widely spoken but not always as a first language.

The diversity of national, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds of English teachers in Oman adds a level of complexity to the current study. Bilingual teachers are Omani or non-Omani Arabs with a diversity of training backgrounds and regional accents; 'monolingual' teachers maybe bilingual in English and one or two other languages (but not Arabic) or are native speakers of English (who constitute a minority of English teachers overall).

The issue of the diversity of linguistic and national backgrounds of the teachers in this study, and the implications of this diversity, is further explored in Chapter Five.

2.5 English Language Teaching in the Public Higher Education Institutes

English is taught for general and specific purposes (ESP) in institutes such as the Institute of Health Sciences, Higher Colleges of Technology, the College of Banking and Financial Studies, the College of Law, the Colleges of Education, Sultan Qaboos University and the Royal Air Force of Oman Academy. English is the medium of instruction in all the science majors in public institutions. English is also taught for academic purposes (EAP) at the Institutes of Health Sciences and at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) to equip the students with the necessary skills to produce assignments and research papers in English. As already noted, all the institutions use imported ELT materials from UK and the USA and a few locally written materials.

Some of these institutions recruit a significant number of native English-speaking Teachers (NESTs) along with significant numbers of non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs). The table below shows the breakdown of the bilingual teachers, NESTs and NNESTs in the public higher education system.

Table 5. Bilingual and monolingual (NEST and NNESTS) English teachers in the public higher education institutions. Source: Ministry of Higher Education (2005-2006)

Total Number of Teachers	**Total number of bilingual and non-native English speaking (monolingual) Teachers (NNESTS)**	**Total of NESTS**
656	434	222

Table 5, above, is somewhat confusing as the figures for bilingual (Arabic speaking) and monolingual (NNEST) have been combined. However, in my experience, the number of non-native English speaking teachers is at least equal to the number of bilinguals. The table therefore may indicate that bilingual (Arabic speaking teachers would not be more than a third of the whole population of university English teachers. The table therefore gives a further indication of the shortage of local teachers teaching English in tertiary education.

Oman is not self sufficient in the field of higher education. The number of graduating postgraduates is limited and does not supply the teaching needs of the higher colleges. There is big demand for local teachers to work in the public higher education sector and hence the Ministry hires both Arabic speaking bilingual, and non-Arabic-speaking monolingual teachers in order to meet the growing number of higher educational institutions across the country. Oman will take many years before it becomes self-sufficient in its production of English teachers. The table also indicates that the native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) represent one third of the total number of teachers, while the bilingual and non-native monolingual teachers represent two thirds. As already stated, the total number shown in the table includes bilingual teachers (Omani and other Arabic-speaking teachers from neighboring countries) whereas the non-native English-speaking teachers include teachers from Indian subcontinent such as Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis and European non-English speaking countries. Unfortunately there is no breakdown of statistics for the bilingual Arabic-speaking teachers showing their countries of origin.

2.6 English Language Teaching in Private Schools and Colleges

This research into the differing teaching styles or monolingual and bilingual teachers has been in part instigated by the current situation in which there is a shortage of Omani teachers of EFL, and the reliance by Omani institutions, as a result, on the importation of non-Arabic speaking teachers (both NEST and NNEST). The tables below indicate the extent of the shortage of Omani English teachers with respect to private schools and colleges. Unfortunately the same figures are not available for public schools and universities, but in my experience, the situation is very similar.

Besides public education, there are private schools, colleges and universities. While public education is free in the Sultanate, private education is relatively expensive, but available for those who can afford it. The 143 private schools teach English from Kindergarten One (KG1).

All the schools use imported materials mainly from UK and the USA. The teaching materials usually come in full packages that include textbook, workbook, teacher's guide, charts, audio and videotapes and compact disks. These teaching materials are rich with cultural representations such as family life, recreation and social issues.

At present there are five bilingual private schools which teach all science-based subjects in English. These schools tend to recruit NESTs rather than NNESTs. Anecdotally, native English speaker teachers are paid more than their counterparts from non- English speaking countries, although I do not have hard evidence for this. The Table below indicates the countries of origin of NEST teachers in private schools.

Table 6. Native English speaking teachers (NESTs) by nationality in the private Schools: Source: Ministry of Education: Education. (2005-2006)

Total Number of English Teachers	Total of NESTS	USA	Britain	Canada	Australia	Ireland	New Zealand
220	33	6	16	3	5	2	1

2.7 English Language Teaching in Private Higher Institutions

At present there are 13 private colleges and three private universities which teach English at tertiary level. Some of these colleges are university colleges. Most of these colleges and the three universities offer First Degrees, Associate Degree and

Diploma programs in various majors. Programs offered include accounting, business administration, education, management information sciences, computer science, banking, safety technology, fire fighting management, architectural technology, graphic design, construction management, engineering (fire fighting, electronic, civil, mechanical and computing), and catering and medicine. English is taught in general, specific and academic streams. The medium of instruction in these institutions is exclusively English for the science- based subjects. These colleges and universities recruit large numbers of NESTs. However, in order to obtain the Ministry of Higher Education's accreditation, these local institutions are required to either affiliate, or sign a memorandum of cooperation with a university in an English-speaking country. For example Nizwa University is affiliated with University of Melbourne, Australia.

Table 7. Total Number of English teachers and NESTS in the private higher education institutions, Source: Ministry of Higher Education (Education 2005 – 2006)

Total Number of English Teachers	Bilingual and Non-Native (Monolingual) Teachers	Total NESTS
199	108	91

Table 7 above combines the numbers of bilingual and non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) in private higher education institutions and shows that native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) constitute almost half of that combined total. The table indicates the significance of the distinction between native and non-native English speaking teachers to officers in the Ministry of Education. Whilst the numbers of Arabic-speaking and non-Arabic-speaking, non-native English-speaking teachers are combined, it is known that these institutions recruit mainly Asian teachers. The Asian and Arabic-speaking teachers are less expensive employees and are not highly paid, unlike their native teachers counterparts, who as already mentioned, are provided with extra privileges. However, there are no official documents outlining salary scales which are the responsibility of individual institutions.

Clearly, there is a shortage of Omani teachers in the higher education sector (both public and private) in relation to the number of institutions listed in above. This has implications for the Omanisation of the English-teaching workforce. There is a need

intensify efforts to educate and qualify Omani nationals to gradually replace expatriate teachers in higher educational institutions. There is also a need to upgrade the skills of Omani bilingual teachers in order to decrease reliance on the more expensive NEST teachers.

Table 8. NESTS by nationality in the higher institutions, Ministry of Higher Education: Education (2005-2006)

NESTS Countries of Origin						**Total NESTS**
Britain 48	USA 17	Australia 6	Canada 11	Ireland 3	New Zealand 6	91

Table 8, above, is a breakdown table that shows the countries of origin of native English-speaking teachers[6] at the higher education institutions by nationality. Most of these private universities and colleges were established in the last decade. Each institution runs its own foundation and specialization programs, which are supervised and monitored by the Directorate General of Private Universities and Colleges at the Ministry of Higher Education.

In summary, the main objective of the Omani government is to increase and promote the number of colleges and institutions to meet the continuous demand for qualified citizens to take part in the country's on-going development. While the government has been working towards providing education for all, it pays special attention to producing English-speaking graduates and meeting the shortage of local qualified Omani teachers of English. However, the shortage of properly qualified English language teachers remains a problem.

2.8 English Teacher and Training

2.8.1 Pre-service Teacher Education Programs

Pre-service training that integrates academic subject studies with pedagogical studies and teaching practice is considered one of the most successful aspects of foreign language education in several countries. Study and work abroad programs also contribute to the language proficiency of foreign language teachers (Pufahl, Rhodes & Christian, 2000). I was one of the students who had pre-service experience studying

[6] A native English speaking teacher is regarded as one who comes from a predominantly English-speaking country and speaks English as a first language.

abroad, where I was involved in micro teaching practices and school visits in addition to the academic studies. Both theoretical and practical studies have been of vital importance in my career today. These years of study in English-speaking countries (England and the USA) provided me with a sound basis in language teaching and professional knowledge.

Increasingly, pre-service teaching is provided in Oman, diminishing the number of aspiring teachers who study abroad. Sultan Qaboos University offers a 4-year degree in English language studies in the Faculty of Education. Recently a few private universities have started to offer a 2-year pre-service Diploma in teaching English as a foreign language and additional two years bachelor degrees with separate tuition fees.

2.8.2 In- service Teacher Developmen

In addition to recruiting high-quality teachers and principals, educational institutions are responsible for on-going training and the provision of funding for professional development to improve learning and teaching outcomes (Poftak 2003, p.24).

Nunan et al. (1987) believed that the Omani teachers entering the ELT force would have a considerable impact on the system and show more commitment to their teaching than their expatriate counterparts. However, they also stressed that in-service training, or professional development, would help Omani teachers to pursue their continuing expertise, and be able to reflect on all aspects of their work in the light of international best practice. In-service training is one kind of professional incentive that the Ministry of Education has emphasized in its educational reform. Another kind of professional incentive is rewarding the more capable teachers with opportunities for postgraduate studies in TESOL and Applied Linguistics.

In-service teacher development programs are in place to improve teachers' subject knowledge and provide them with skills to help students meet academic content standards Poftak (2003, p. 24). This training must also be sustained, which means that such training may not be used for short-term goals but must be an on-going process. The Ministry of Education in Oman has been providing in-service training for all teachers at all levels for the last 30 or more years. This training is in the form of short courses, seminars and workshops conducted in different parts of the country.

The Ministry of Education signed a multi-million US dollar agreement with the University of Leeds (UK) in 1996 to run an in-service teacher training program in the Sultanate to help upgrade the level of 1060 English language teachers, over a period of eight years (2000-2008), to a Bachelor of Arts level. These teachers hold a Diploma from the Intermediate Teacher Training College - two years of teacher training after completing secondary education. The BA (TESOL) program is designed and taught by academic staff from the University of Leeds. This project is the biggest one of its kind so far.

There are other in-service teacher training activities organized by the English Language Curriculum Department at the Ministry of Education[7] designed for primary teachers. Workshops and seminars are held in each educational region across the Sultanate, Primary Teachers' methodology Course Cycle One (1-4) of the Reform [PRIT]. It is a re-training course for teachers who teach English to children in their first four years of schooling as part of the Ministry's reform program. The course has a minimum of 100 contact hours.

- In-service Teachers' Methodology Course for Cycle two (5-7) of the Reform lower Secondary Course for teachers (LSCT). This course aims to equip teachers with the skills and strategies to understand and implement the new English Curriculum. The course has a minimum of 100 contact hours.
- In-service induction workshop for Grades 8-9 for Cycle Two of the Reform. This is a brief induction course for teachers who are already familiar with Cycle 2 Grades 5-7 who will be teaching Grades 8-9 for the first time. The workshop aims to familiarize teachers with key aspects of the Grade 8-9 English for Me course materials.
- Language improvement course. This course is designed to raise the level of language competence of teachers in the classroom. It is oriented towards a pre-intermediate level of English. It is 100 hours long.
- Senior English Teachers' Course [SET]. This course is intended as a brief introduction to the role of Senior English teacher (SET) in Basic Education schools. Supervisors, RTTAs and SETS, run it. It is for a minimum of 25 hours.
- Senior English Teacher and Inspector Meetings [SETIM].

Senior English teachers and supervisors in Basic Education meet periodically throughout the year with the trainer to discuss issues pertaining to their role in supporting teaching and learning in their schools' curriculum support seminars and

[7]The source: Ministry of Education. Education: 2005-2006

workshops, as well as orientation seminars that are delivered in the regions under the direction of the Senior English Supervisor.

Re-training is an integral part of the training program or teachers entering Basic Education schools. Once teachers have commenced teaching in the Basic Education schools they are given on-going practical support and training. It takes the form of discussions, joint observations, team teaching, workshops and meetings to solve problems. This is carried out by the regional teacher trainers/advisors in co-operation with the English Supervisors and Senior Teachers. Observations made by Senior Teacher, teachers supervisors and RTT/AS are fed back into the training programs and the curriculum department of ELCD.

The British Council is another educational organization that plays a significant role in English language and professional development in Oman. It organizes workshops on a regular basis, which focus on various educational issues and new ways of teaching and the adoption of innovative and effective methods and approaches. The British Council also organizes TESOL Arabia, which is an annual event that takes place in the United Arab Emirates (Dubai). It discusses various educational concerns with participants from around the world. This event brings many issues into the spotlight and a number of Omani faculty members from the ELT departments at the Ministry of Education, Sultan Qaboos University and other public and private higher educational institutions are invited to take part.

Sultan Qaboos University has always organised symposiums on education in general and on English Language Teaching in particular. The University hosts an annual English Language Teaching Conference for professionals working in ELT across the country. Many experts from all over the world are often invited to the conference to discuss issues of mutual concern in education.

2.9 Conclusion

Clearly, the intensity of the effort to teach English to all of Oman's population, and include English as a component in all tertiary education and training, has created its own problems. One major problem is the shortage of Omani teachers of EFL and another is the lack of expertise in English language and English language pedagogy of

many teachers, including expatriate teachers both native English speaking and non native English speaking.

While Oman has focused on producing strong policies to guide English language teaching and teacher development programs, I know from my own experience that many teachers (both 'bilinguals' and imported 'monolinguals') are still not well trained in current methods and pedagogies of ELT. Teaching directly from text-books and learning by rote is the norm, especially in schools. Students are often bored and as a result lack enthusiasm for and commitment to learning and acquiring English, despite the fact that English is the key to future career advancement and security. I am not sure why this is the case, other than that is a result of the comparatively recent appearance of school and university education in Oman, and the concomitant educational under-development, as discussed in Chapter One.

For me, learning English as a young school and tertiary student was a daily pleasure as well as a challenge and it saddens me that so many Omani young people miss this experience through indifferent teaching. I agree however with Pufahl, et al. (2000, p.4) who writes that language and education policies at the national, regional, and local levels can facilitate or inhibit strong language education.

My review of the development of English language teaching in Oman has highlighted that the current problems are probably inevitable, given the comparatively low level of development and the fact that just forty years ago was no English teacher training at all. The research reported in this thesis is an attempt to examine some of the gaps and problems in English language teaching practices more closely, and on this basis, to make suggestions about how the skills base of ELT teachers could be strengthened.

In the next Chapter, I will review the literature relating to language learning and acquisition, the issue of bilingual and monolingual English-teaching, L1 and L2 usage in the classroom and theories and principles of EFL/ESL pedagogy.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Context

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I review the theoretical and research literature relating to L1 and its usage in the foreign language classroom, and I give an overview of some key pedagogical theories in relation to bilingual or monolingual EFL teaching.

Through the course of my research I became increasingly aware that effective language teaching encompasses far more than the amount or purpose of L1 spoken in the EFL classroom. In the light of my underlying aim, which is to make recommendations to the Ministry of Education in Oman about how EFL teaching can be improved, the focus of my study shifted to a focus on EFL pedagogy, and in particular, aspects of EFL pedagogy of relevance to teaching in Oman. I have therefore undertaken a broader review than originally planned, encompassing theories of language teaching and learning, theories of language and culture in the EFL classroom, native and non native speaking teachers of English, English as an International Language as these issues emerged from the data.

As it is not possible to review the literature of all of these areas in any depth, I have limited my review to an overview of material that is relevant to the issues of pedagogy that have arisen in the context of my study and my particular aims. My review of the literature is therefore structured in the following way:

3.2. Theories about Second Language Teaching and Learning

3.3 Theories about L1 and L2 usage in EFL teaching

3.4 Communicative Language Teaching

3.5. Brown's Principles of EFL Pedagogy

3.6 Constructivist Pedagogies in Language Education

3.7 Western Culture and the Teaching of English in Oman

3.8 Native and Non-native speaking Teachers of English

3.2 Theories about Second Language Teaching and Learning

Theories about how second languages are learned and acquired have proliferated over the last four decades. For the purposes of this study I have focused on Krashen's (1982) Monitor Theory and Schumann's (1978) theories of language acquisition and acculturation, as well as theories of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Nunan (1991, 2004) and Brown's (2001) Principles of EFL Pedagogy. These four sets of theories are the most influential in terms of current pedagogical thinking and are foundational to the field of EFL teaching methodology.

I addition I have reviewed some of the more recent theories based in constructivist epistemology, as these theories are such as Reyes and Vallone (2008) as these theories have important implications for EFL classroom practice also.

3.2.1 Krashen's Theories of Language Acquisition and Learning

In the early eighties, Krashen (1982, p.9) published his five hypotheses about second language acquisition: 'The acquisition – learning distinction', 'the natural order hypothesis', 'the monitor hypothesis', 'the input hypothesis' and 'the affective filter hypothesis'.

The acquisition-learning distinction is the best known of his all hypotheses. It states that adults have two distinct and independent ways of developing competence in a second language. The first way is *language acquisition,* a process similar to the way children develop ability in their first language. Language acquisition is a subconscious process; language acquisition develops naturally in the context of social communication. The second way to develop competence in a second language is by *language learning.* Learning refers to conscious knowledge of a second language and being aware of language rules (Krashen, 1982, p. 10).

The acquisition-learning hypothesis claims that adults acquire language just as children do. This hypothesis claims that the ability to 'pick-up' languages does not disappear at puberty; however, this does not mean that adults will always be able to achieve native-like levels in a second language, as most children can do.

Krashen's theories of language acquisition suggest that child and adult learners learn primarily through subconscious processes of 'picking up' the new language, which

suggests that maximum immersion in L2 would be advantageous. His input hypothesis has also been foundational in theorizing about the teaching of foreign or second languages. 'Input' refers to language which is understandable by the acquirer. The input hypothesis claims that in order to move from stage (i.e., what is already and easily understood) to i + 1 (i.e., language which is a little beyond the current level of competence), the acquirer needs to hear and understand input that contains i + 1. For the acquirer to understand is to use his/ her linguistic competence, the context, knowledge of the world and extra linguistic information to understand language directed to him/her. The situations where acquisition occurs are when the input is comprehensible (Krashen, 1982, p.21).

In order to help second language acquirers, teachers use 'modified input', sometimes called 'foreigner-talk', 'teacher talk' or 'inter-language talk'. Modifications made in 'foreigner-talk' and 'teacher-talk' are usually used for the purpose of communication and to help L2 acquirers understand what is being said. 'Foreigner-and teacher-talk' are roughly tuned input to the level of the acquirer, see Krashen (1980, 1982, p. 25).

The input hypothesis predicts that these modified codes will be useful for L2 acquirers. The hypothesis also predicts that natural, communicative, roughly tuned and comprehensible input have some real advantages over finely tuned input that directly attempts to teach the structure of the day", not every utterance contains the target structure. For example, if the lesson's focus is the progressive tense marker, other tenses will be used as well in both classroom input and in the readings (Krashen, 1982, p.69).

Krashen said that language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules. Real language acquisition develops slowly and speaking skills emerge later than listening skills. In fact, there is a 'silent period' in which the child or adult L1 learner builds up competence in the L2 by listening. The learner may say little during several months of exposure to L2 in a natural, informal, linguistic environment. Silent periods allow learners to learn chunks of language/expressions and phrases before they start talking (Krashen, 1982, pp.6-7).

However, adults and children in formal language classes are not allowed a silent period. They are often asked for language output in the L2/FL, sometimes even

before they have acquired enough syntactic competence to express their ideas. According to a hypothesis first proposed by Newmark (1966, cited in Krashen, 1982, p.27), performers who are asked to produce before they are "ready" will fall back on L1 rules. They will use L1 syntactic rules while speaking the L2.

The best methods, according to Krashen, are those that supply 'comprehensible input' in low anxiety situations containing messages of real language. These methods do not force early production in L2; improvement comes from supplying communicative and comprehensible input, and not from forcing and correcting production (Krashen, 1982, p. 7). 'Comprehensible input' implies graded or simplified L2 input with some translation and instruction in L1.

Krashen's theories have been applied comprehensively in second language teaching methodology. For the purposes of this study, his theory of acquisition versus learning (and the relationship between them) is significant in that it implies pedagogies of L2 immersion to maximize acquisition. On the other hand, Krashen's concept of comprehensible input theory does not discount the need for explicit, comprehensible instruction (which could be in either language) as a necessary basis for learning of 'the rules' (especially for adult learners). Moreover, such input could be provided equally by either bilingual (in this case Arabic speaking) or monolingual (English speaking) teachers, depending on the skill of the teacher.

For those who cannot easily access an informal environment for L2 input, such as students in Oman, the classroom is the only place where rich sources of input can be provided. Krashen's theories imply that lessons should be conducted primarily in English, should be communication rich environments and provide comprehensible input in order to enhance acquisition. Input is given by means of meaningful and communicative activities supplied by the teacher; and plenty of opportunities for linguistic interaction in the target language. This is the most direct way that teachers can promote language acquisition in the classroom.

3.2.2. Schumann's Theories of Acquisition and Acculturation

Schumann (1978, p.29) has hypothesized that "acculturation is the major causal variable in L2 acquisition". Schumann maintains, "second language acquisition is just one aspect of acculturation, and the degree to which the learner acculturates to the

target language group will control the degree to which he acquires the target language" Schumann, (1978, p. 34). Acculturation enables comprehensible input by 'lowering the filter' (i.e., the affective filter of anxiety, Krashen's term). Acculturation happens when L2 acquirers acquire language as part of adapting to a new culture.

Schumann (1978, cited in Krashen, 1982, pp.45-46) has defined two types of acculturation: In Type One acculturation the learner is socially integrated with speakers of the target language and, as a result, he or she develops sufficient contacts with them to facilitate natural acquisition. In addition, he or she is psychologically open to the target language such that the input to which he or she is exposed becomes 'intake'.

Type Two acculturation has all the characteristics of the first type, but in this case the "learner regards the target language speakers as a reference group whose life styles and values he consciously or unconsciously desires to adopt" Schumann (1978, cited in Krashen, 1982, p. 46).

Schumann's theory is of particular relevance to this study, as it suggests that Type Two acculturation in the broader sense (i.e., in the Omani context, acculturation to Western cultural norms reflected in the English language) will enhance English language acquisition. However, this notion is complicated because of the Muslim cultural setting with its distinct religious and ethical norms, which are often at odds with 'Western' cultural norms. In this case, the reverse process might take place, by which resistance to the culture embedded in many English texts might inhibit rather than enhance acquisition for example, wedding parties and social gatherings with mixed males and females might cause conflict between the two cultures (Muslim and Western).

3.2 3 Grammar Translation Method and Direct Method

For centuries, there were hardly any theoretical foundations of language learning upon which to base teaching methodology. According to Brown (2001), foreign language learning in schools in the West resembled the learning of Latin. Latin was taught by means of what has been called the Classical Method: focus on grammatical rules, memorization of vocabulary, conjugations, translation of texts and doing written

exercises (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 4 cited in Brown, 2001, p.19). The teaching of Latin aimed to provide intellectual challenge and develop logical thinking, rather than to equip students to use the language. In the nineteenth century the Classical Method was used. Later, this came to be known as the Grammar Translation Method which focused on grammatical rules as the basis for translating from the second to the native language. Grammar Translation, however, was the most commonly used method until it became supplanted by the Direct Method (Stern, 1983) and then by the Communicative Approach (Littlewood, 1983) in Western countries. However, in many developing countries, and certainly in Oman, grammar translation still seems to be the most widely used approach.

In the twentieth century, when the teaching and learning of modern languages was popularized, the Direct Method became the new orthodoxy. It was characterized by "…the use of the target language as a means of instruction and communication in the language classroom, and by the avoidance of the first language and translation as a technique" (Stern 1983, p. 456). Stern writes that the Direct Method has become the orthodoxy in EFL/ESL teaching, due to the fact that in Western countries, most teachers do not have access to the learners' L1 because there are migrants who come from different language backgrounds

According to Halliwell and Jones (1991) The Direct Method is assumed in many EFL and ESL contexts in Western countries, where local teachers are usually monolingual English speakers. However, in non-Western contexts, in the Middle East, such as in Oman and many developing countries, the teachers are bilingual, and have access to L1 as an aid to instruction. This additional linguistic resource is absent in most Western native-English speaking teaching contexts and bilingual instruction is not usually an option for native English speaking teachers. An additional factor is that some Arabic- speaking bilinguals and Omani local teachers may not have enough fluency to be able to conduct their classes wholly or mainly in English. This, according to Harbord (1992) has caused a conflict between what teachers actually do in the classroom and what they believe they should be doing. This conflict commonly occurs amongst non-native speakers of English, and non-English teachers are made to feel guilty if they use L1, despite the fact that their proficiency may not be sufficient to teach in L2 only.

The 'Direct Method' evolved in the twentieth century, as described by Stern (1983) and Halliwel and Jones (1991) and has had a significant influence on other EFL/ESL teaching methods that developed later. A variety of similar approaches and methods evolved, but all of these have the same assumption; that the target language is the main medium of instruction. For example, the Audio-lingual Approach (Prator & Celce-Murcia 1979 cited in Brown, 2001, p. 23) and Situational Language Teaching Howatt (1984), the Natural Approach (Krashen and Terrell 1983, 1988), and the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Finocchiaro & Brumfit,1983, cited in Brown, 2001, p.45), Nunan (1991). This is the current orthodoxy.

The Audio-lingual Method bans the use of L1 as a general principle. While in the Communicative Approach, the use of students' L1 is avoided, but translation is allowed at the higher levels, while a limited use of L1 is accepted when necessary and so translation is acceptable when needed and/or beneficial (Cook, 2001, p.403).

3.2.4 Theories and Assumptions about L1 Avoidance

Weschler (1997) gives four reasons for avoiding L1 use: "using the first language inhibits thinking in the second language … it may be used as a crutch … it may result in fossilization of the inter-language, and, … its use wastes precious class time that would be better spent on the second language" (Weschler, 1997, cited in Wigglesworth, 2003, p. 18).

Avoidance by EFL teachers of the L1 lies behind many teaching techniques, even if it is seldom spelled out. Many teaching manuals consider that the need for avoidance is so obvious that no classroom use of the L1 is ever mentioned (Halliwell and Jones, 1991). L1 usage is discussed in Scrivenor (1994, p.192) only as part of a list of problems- that of students using their own language in the classroom. In their discussion of the high variability of L2 use in the classroom, Duff and Polio (1990) give suggestions for enhancing the proportion of the L2 component, but make no recommendations about how the L1 component could be utilized.

The avoidance of first language thus has been taken for granted and is implicit in most books about EFL methodology for teachers since the 1980s. 'Audiolingualism', for instance, recommended "rendering English (L1) inactive while the new language is being learnt" (Brooks, 1964 p.142 cited in Cook, 2001, p.403) the advice to avoid, if

possible, L1 usage in the classroom was the accepted wisdom until the last few decades (Mattar, 1999).

According to Cook (2001, pp.403-404) "this anti-L1 attitude was a mainstream element in twentieth century language teaching methodology, probably influenced by Dulay, Burt & Krashen's (1982) separation model which formed the basis for much language teaching methodology".

The 'separation model' promotes teaching without any reference to the students' first language and discourages its use in the classroom, in the hope that the students will build up a new language system with no links to the first (Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982, p.269). Later experts did not so much forbid usage of L1 as ignore its existence altogether (Cook, 2001, p.403). Some suggested that the target language (TL) ought to be the sole medium of communication, implying that prohibition of the native language would maximize the effectiveness of learning the target language.

The idea that L1 and L2 are compartmentalized in separate parts of the brain underpins some theories that recommend teaching meaning without recourse to the L1. Teachers explain the L2 word, define, or mime its meaning, show pictures, and so on, without *translating,* in the long-term hope that this builds up the L2 as a separate system (Lado, 1957). The notion of compartmentalization was refuted later by many language experts saying that the two languages (L1and L2) are interwoven in the L2 user's mind, in vocabulary (Beauvillain & Grainger, 1987), in pragmatics (Locastro, 1987) in phonology (Obler, 1982) and in syntax (Cook, 1994). Cook (2001, p.405) says that, "trying to put language in separate compartments in the same mind is doomed to failure since the compartments are connected in many ways".

Communicative language teaching and task-based learning methods have no direct connection with L1. However, as Cook (2001, p.403) has noted, even communicative language teaching experts have assumed that the usage of L1 should be minimized. The main theoretical treatments of task-based learning implicitly dismissed any intention of L1 use in the classroom (Crookes & Gass, 1993; Nunan, 1989; Skehan, 1998 cited in Cook, 2001, p.403). Even today, most textbooks for teachers, especially British produced EFL textbooks, hardly mention the use of the first language at all (Cook, 2001, p.143). Another reason is that EFL textbooks produced in England, the

US or Australia are produced with the monolingual English teacher in mind, not for local teachers of English who have access to both English and the mother tongue.

It is clear from the review of authors above that discourses of EFL pedagogy have mainly emerged from Western teaching contexts and Western ESL and EFL teaching and research that assumes teachers will be native speakers of English. A kind of orthodoxy has therefore developed that neglects the possibilities for enhancing learning that may come with bilingual instruction.

3.3 Theories of Bilingual Teaching and L1 Inclusion

3.3.1 Mother tongue usage in the classroom

As noted earlier, there has been a growing shift in attitude, over the last thirty years, away from banning the use of L1 in EFL classrooms towards recommending some usage of the mother tongue. (Authors recommending some usage of L1 in the classroom include Atkinson (1987, 1993), Duff (1989), Harbord (1992), Franklin (1990), Turnbull (2000, 2001), Cook (2001), and Wigglesworth (2003). These authors share the view that some bilingual instruction can prepare the way for purposeful and productive learning of the target language.

Duff (1989) writes that the mother tongue should be used if and when it can enhance the quality of the learning experience in the classroom. The mother tongue "should be used to provoke discussion and to develop clarity and flexibility of thinking and to help increase our own and our students' awareness of the inevitable interaction between the mother tongue and the target language that occurs during any type of language acquisition" (Duff, 1989, cited in Harbord, 1992, p. 355).

Atkinson (1993, p.4) warns "if banning the mother tongue from the classroom is neither justifiable on any theoretical grounds, nor feasible nor desirable, this has important implications not only for teachers but for teacher trainers, department heads, inspectors and policy makers".

He gives the following reasons for including L1 in language instruction:

- The rapport between the teacher and learner may be enhanced;
- If teachers and learners share the same mother tongue, it may seem artificial to use the TL only;

- Using L1 may be more efficient (if there is something complicated to communicate);
- Language awareness activities (comparing mother tongue and the TL) can usefully take place in L1;
- Using L1 may improve students' motivation, if their attention is sustained more keenly, and;
- Using L1 may be a good idea if the teacher is tired.

Collins (1993, cited in Morgan and Neil, 2001, p.146) also argues for the use of the L1 in the foreign language classroom. Both teachers and students must use the TL as the main means of communication but L1 can and should be used for specific purposes. He calls for a systematic use of the mother tongue for specific purposes such as explaining the aims of a lesson, gaining feedback from students after something has been taught to see if the hypotheses they form are correct, to draw comparisons between items (both linguistic and cultural) in the target language and to give instructions if using the target language would be too time consuming. Collins 1993 (cited in Morgan & Neil, 2001, p.146) calls for the systematic integration of L1 in second language classrooms, arguing that too much use of the target language may be counter-productive. Teaching in the target language only "is not theoretically justified" and does not lead to maximum language learning (Cook, 2001 cited in Turnbull 2001, p.531).

Cook is one of a number of recent authors who frame the issue of L1/ L2 usage in terms of broader notions of language learning pedagogy who shift the terms of the debate from a focus on the 'pros and cons' of the language of instruction (Cook, 2001, Wigglesworth, 2003). Cook uses the term 'language interaction' in relation to L1/ L2 usage. "L2 should be the language of real communications during the class rather than the L1… The natural use of the TL for virtually all communication is a sure sign of a good modern language course" (DES, 1990, p. 58 cited in Cook, 2001, p. 406). This takes us back to the principles of 'communicative method' and of providing a 'language-rich environment', which was discussed earlier.

Stern (1992, p. 295) writes about 'intralingual' language teaching. He states that, "if any degree of L2 proficiency is to be obtained, an intralingual strategy must be used

… It is efficient to make a quick switch to the L1 to ensure that students understand a difficult grammar concept or an unknown word".

Turnbull's study (2000, discussed in Turnbull, 2001, p.534) explored four French teachers' uses of English (L1) and French (TL) using tape recordings made over eight weeks. The teachers' discourse was coded by dividing the teachers' talk into units of analysis corresponding to their communicative or pedagogical function. The functional units were first coded as one of three macro-categories (social, academic, managerial), on a micro- level according to pedagogical function and then according to language (L1, TL, or mixed). The four teachers differed in the amount of L1 and TL used (e.g., from 24% to 72% of functional units were in French).

In another study designed to examine teachers' attitudes about TL use in their FL classes, Mitchell (1988, cited in Turnbull 2001, p.534) found that a majority of the 52 secondary school FL teachers he surveyed were stressed by having to teach in the target language. These teachers reported that it was inappropriate to use the TL for anything other than giving classroom organizational instructions; teaching grammar, teaching background to new activities, and disciplining was best done in L1. In reviewing Mitchell's study, Chambers (1991, cited in Turnbull, 2001, p.534) suggested, however, that these teachers might have been using more L1 in their classes than TL.

According to Turnbull (2000) it is not sufficient that a teacher uses the TL only 24% of time. He believes that the SL or FL teachers who spoke the TL during less than 25% of class time were relying far too much on the L1 and were depriving their students of valuable TL input (Turnbull, 2001, p.534). Turnbull asks whether a teacher who speaks the TL during 50% of class time also relies too heavily on the students' L1: How do we decide what is an acceptable amount of teacher TL and L1 use? What is the optimal amount teacher use of the L1?

Calman and Daniel (1998, cited in Turnbull, 2001, p.534) conducted a large-scale evaluation of core French programs in an urban setting in central Canada (the number of teachers surveyed is not given). The researchers and members of the school board in which the evaluation was conducted deemed that the acceptable proportion of target language (French) that should be spoken in class by teachers was 95%. The

researchers spent one full class period in 75 Grade 5 and 8 classes and found that the majority of teachers were using English more frequently than was deemed acceptable by the School Board. 42% of Grade 5 teachers and 17% of Grade 8 teachers were within the limit that had been deemed acceptable in that school district.

The studies reported above were conducted in contexts in which the TL was expected to become the teacher's classroom language. The study by Calman and Daniel (1998) is of interest to my study in that the desired usage of L2 in the foreign language classroom was quantified (95%) rather than related to different teaching functions, and that the actual TL usage recorded was far below that. However, we do not know how the figure of 95% was arrived at, and the context of Canada, which is officially a bilingual nation, is different from the context of Oman, in which the target language, English, is likely to present more difficulties to learners than French would to English-speaking learners.

According to Turnbull (2001) it is common practice for teachers to integrate L1 into their L2 teaching and to do so is not necessarily negative in terms of student learning. Turnbull believes however that the official guidelines that encourage teachers to use the TL create positive pressures for teachers, encouraging them to speak as much TL as possible. He writes that in addition to official guidelines, teacher educators must help teacher candidates and practicing teachers to make principled decisions about the judicious use of the L1, while maximizing their TL use. In the context of Oman, it could well be that more explicit official guidelines encouraging L1 usage in the classroom would assist teachers to make principled decisions about when to use L1 and when to use L2 in their teaching.

According to Turnbull (2001, p.534), multiple interacting factors influence which language(s) a teacher speaks in a SL or FL class. He writes that in order to provide effective teacher education on this important topic, more research is needed to understand: (a) what factors prompt SL and FL teachers to speak the students' L1 when guidelines clearly prescribe the opposite; and, (b) how and why official guidelines influence teachers' TL and L1 use. More process-product studies are also needed to determine more clearly than the existing literature presents, the relationship between teachers' TL and L1 use and students' TL proficiency. Turnbull concludes his argument by calling for maximized and optimal TL use by teachers to be defined

in terms of quality of its use and in terms of when it is acceptable and or effective for teachers to draw on the students' L1.

Wigglesworth (2003, p. 23) argues that if the first language is completely abandoned from the classroom, it means "limiting language learning activities in their complexity". For example, the first language would not be made use of to make the instructions comprehensible or to stimulate the communicative value of the activity.

She highlights four different aspects in relation to the L1 use in the classroom:

- The conditions under which the first language may be profitably employed
- Teacher code- switching in the classroom as a useful pragmatic strategy in the EFL classroom
- Use of the first language as a cognitive bridge to the second language
- Use of the first language in the classroom as most beneficial with low level and or beginning learners

(Wigglesworth, 2003, p.22) (See also Harbord (1992) and Duff (1989).

Currently, most contemporary authors such as Wigglesworth and Turnbull advocate moderate and 'judicious' use of the L1 particularly in the lower levels of learners' proficiency. On this basis, we need to know more about the purposes of L1 usage and the extent to which it can most usefully be integrated into classroom activities *in different contexts*. One of the purposes of this thesis is to explore the advantages and disadvantages of integrating Arabic language usage in EFL teaching in Oman.

Notions of 'moderate' and 'judicious' use of L1 in the classroom may be theoretically sound but not so easy to apply in daily classroom practice for many bilingual teachers. Benson (2004) has put forward an analysis of the demands and expectations that are placed on bilingual teachers in developing countries, with a case studies of teachers in Bolivia and Mozambique. She has asked whether we are asking too much of bilingual teachers, given the sophistication of the linguistic, pedagogical and inter-cultural skills that are suggested by the experts. Benson suggests that programs of professional development for bilingual teachers in developing countries should focus on

1. First and second language learning theory;

2. Modelling of first and second language teaching methods (oral and written);

3. Modelling of methods for intercultural instruction;

4. L2 verbal and literacy skills;

5. L1 verbal and literacy skills, including pedagogical vocabulary;

6. Language and programme assessment, including international

7. Bilingual schooling, models and evaluations;

8. Study visits and/or practical internships at functioning

9. Collaboration with parents and community members.

McKay (2001) agrees that bilingual teachers are often regarded as 'less competent' than monolingual, native speaking English teachers, and puts forward a different case on their behalf. Once it is accepted that English is an international language, there is no reason to privilege cultural content that reflects English-speaking countries. Instead, bilingual teachers are able to teach English drawing on local cultural content and also, use pedagogical approaches that are more appropriate than the communicative language teaching (CLT) methods that are currently taught and recommended by Western universities. In her research in secondary schools in Chile, McKay (2003) surveyed 50 bilingual teachers in public, semi-public and private schools. The majority (33) said that CLT methods, such as group work were not necessarily appropriate because of the large class sizes (over 45), difficulties in management of groups, lack of time and physical space. The survey was conducted shortly after the school authorities had withdrawn an earlier policy directing teachers to use CLT instead of more traditional methods. McKay concludes that,

> There is no need, in the teaching of EIL, to base the content of teaching materials, the choice of teaching methodology or the ideal teacher on native-speaker models. Instead, each country in which EIL is being taught must take ownership of the language, selecting teaching content and methods that are appropriate to the local context (p. 145).

3.3.2 Creating links between L1 and L2

The acknowledgement of the relative merits of both native-speaker and non-native speaker teachers appears to be part of a trend towards integrating the use of L1 and L2 in FL settings to maximise learning opportunities.

Code-switching and decoding

The debate about how best to make the teacher's L1 complement TL teaching in the classroom draws on theories of code-switching and decoding. Morgan & Neil (2001, p.147) define the concept of code-switching as "the practice of switching between the TL and the mother tongue for specific purposes." They define decoding "the practice of making an utterance in the TL followed by the translation in the mother tongue".

Grosjean (1989) describes code-switching as a highly skilled activity – the 'bilingual mode' of language in which L1 and L2 are used simultaneously, rather than the 'monolingual mode' in which they are used separately. According to Grosjean, code-switching forms part of normal L2 use in many L2 situations outside the classroom where participants share two languages.

Finally, a fundamental question of the effect of code-switching on the acquisition of FL is raised by some researchers. These researchers emphasize the need of exposure to FL and reject the use of NL (Duff & Polio, 1990; Polio & Duff, 1994). Others very cautiously suggest that the use of NL may have been undervalued in the history of language teaching methodology. The latter advocate a more conscious use of code-switching in teaching practices and for the introduction of the issue in teacher training (Castellotti & Moore, 1997, p.389, cited in Ianziti and Brownlie, 2002, p.404).

For some researchers, uses of code-switching can play a positive role in FL acquisition. Code-switching, for example, can contribute to creating a 'supportive' language environment in the classroom. It may also promote processing by improving the quality of the input. That could be improved by shifting the learner's attention to forms during content-based activities; thus introducing a 'focus on form' (Doughty & Williams, 1998) in an immersion approach to language teaching.

Auer (1984, 1995, 1998, cited in Liebscher & O'Cain, 2004, p. 501) analyzed learner code-switching practices in a tertiary foreign language (FL) classroom. Auer found out that students code-switch as a fall back method when they fail to convey meaning in L2. This usage resembles code-switching patterns in non-classroom bilingual settings and shows that language learners automatically use the classroom as a bilingual space. Wenger (1998 cited in Liebscher & O'Cain, 2004, p. 501) has pointed out "learners orient to the classroom as a community of practice through their

code-switching patterns as manifestation of a shared understanding about their actions and about themselves as members of that community"

L1 Usage as a 'Natural' resource in Teaching

Cook (2001) argues that the L1 could be used more positively by building it into existing classroom practice. Several studies were conducted on the use of students' L1 in the classroom at different educational institutions in Europe and United States by Macaro (1997), Franklin (1990), and Polio & Duff (1994, cited in Cook 2001 p. 409). The key question is whether something can be done more effectively through the L1. Another issue that these authors discuss is that of naturalness: whether or not the teachers feel more comfortable when teaching about some functions or topics in the first language rather than the second.

The potential loss of L2 experience must be balanced against benefits of efficiency, naturalness and whether or not L1 usage actually assists language learning.

L1 for Giving Feedback

Macaro (1997) interviewed 271 modern language teachers and 196 pupils in schools in England and found that 84% of English teachers try to provide feedback in the L2. However, according to Macaro, giving students feedback in their own language may make the praise more 'real'. The L1 is used predominantly in the French beginners' course for correction of written homework, as done by 56% of Scottish teachers (Franklin, 1990) who looked at 201 modern language teachers in Scotland. The teacher may also switch to L1 to make personal remarks and comments to a student, for instance when a student has a coughing fit (Polio & Duff, 1994, p. 318). The benefit of the L1 use for personal contact is naturalness. When using the L1, the teacher is treating the students as their real selves rather than as assumed L2 persons (Cook, 2001, p. 410)

Students' L1 Use within the Classroom

Advice to teachers on group work and pair work has mostly stressed minimizing the use of the L1; 'If they are talking in small groups it can be quite difficult to get some classes - particularly the less disciplined or motivated ones - to keep to the target language' (Ur, 1996, p.121). According to Cook (2001, p.411), code- switching is a

normal feature of L2 use when the participants share two languages, and therefore there is no reason why students should not code- switch in the classroom. Moreover, L1 provides scaffolding for the students to help each other. L1 use is an acceptable normal psycholinguistic process that facilitates L2 output and allows the learners both to initiate and sustain verbal interaction amongst themselves. Amongst students, L1 may be used to explain the task to each other, negotiate roles they are going to take, or check their comprehension or their production of language against that of their classmates (Brooks & Donato, 1994, p. 268).

Schweers (1999) offers a compelling argument for the validity of incorporating the L1 into an EFL classroom. He surveyed students and teachers at his Puerto Rican university and found that 88.7% of the students and 100% of the teachers felt that Spanish should be used in their English classes. Eighty-six percent of the students felt that their L1 should be used to explain difficult concepts and 67% said that their L1 helps them to feel "less lost". Krieger (2005, p.13) admits that his students in Japan respond well when he uses Japanese for clarification and to help "lost" students feel included.

In Schweers's survey, teachers responded to a question whether L1 might be more effective than using English exclusively. Some of their responses were that L1 serves as "additional input", is good for establishing rapport with students, and can be used to diminish the affront of a language being imposed upon them. He concluded that, "the pedagogical and affective benefits of L1 use justify its limited and judicious use" (Schweers, 1999, p.7).

Finally, Cook (2001, p.412) gives a list of suggestions for the systematic use of L1 in the classroom:

- To provide a short-cut for giving instructions and explanations where necessary
- To build up interlinked L1 and L2 knowledge in the students' minds
- To carry out learning tasks through collaborative dialogue with fellow students
- To develop L2 activities such as code-switching for later real-life use.

In Cook's terms, the classroom should be treated as a situation in which L2 use is the goal, but where two languages are always present. Teachers need to develop a range of techniques to enhance L2 use and to minimize the use of L1.

L1 Use and Student Motivation

According to Dornyei (1994), motivation is an important determinant of language learning achievement, as it includes the desire to learn the language as well as favorable attitudes towards learning the language. Harmer (1991) gives two main kinds of Motivation: *extrinsic motivation*, which stems from a desire for an external reward, and *intrinsic motivation*, which consists of learning for personal reasons as an end in itself.

According to Brown (2001) intrinsic motivation is often low in EFL settings, as English may seem not relevant to the students' daily lives. English in these cases the motivation is extrinsic as it is required to study to pass a test or it is a compulsory part of the school curriculum.

In addition, in EFL settings there are often large classes with limited contact hours, which affect student motivation and makes learning English a real challenge (Rose, 1999). To boost students' motivation to learn English, teachers need to use intrinsically motivating techniques. Techniques that make students perceive English as significant in their future life such as helping students see the uses for English in their lives, playing down the role of tests, presenting them with reasonable challenges and appealing to their genuine interests (Brown, 2001). These can be fulfilled by turning into what students are interested in and giving them the choice in how to approach activities, the teacher is more likely to stimulate them to respond favorably to activities and therefore by doing so, the teacher can help them direct their own learning, pursue their preferred learning style, or talk about any topic they want (Krieger, 2005, p.10). There is no doubt that these techniques can be applied in any teaching situation, but it is in an EFL context that the teacher may need to work harder to stimulate and arouse students' intrinsic motivation.

According to Krieger (2005, p. 10) EFL students who lack intrinsic motivation may have high extrinsic motivation if their education system emphasizes the extrinsic rewards flowing from high scores. Even though these forms of motivation are

important but maybe are not as good as intrinsic motivation, they can still inspire students to work hard. For example, Krieger with his Japanese students in his University classroom in Japan, frequently speak Japanese for conversation activities in spite of his efforts to convince them to use English. However, when they know they are being evaluated on their oral speech-the main criterion being that they speak English only, they all do so, demonstrating the power of extrinsic motivation. Yet, when they return to their normal class routine, they frequently resume speaking Japanese. So it is the teacher who inspires his/her students as they often tend to be low intrinsically motivated. As Brown (2001) observed, if learners have the opportunity or desire to learn for its own sake, such as to become competent users of that language, they will have a higher success rate in terms of long-term learning than if they are driven by only external rewards.

One of the key reasons put forward for the judicious use of L1 by some authors is that of student motivation. For example, Collins (1993, cited in Morgan & Neil, 2001, p. 146) says "motivation, especially of lower ability level [learners], may dictate that use of the TL has to be interspersed with English in order to keep their attention and to ensure they are following the lesson". Again, however, it is essential to ensure that such students are still given a sustained diet of the TL, simplified, explained and made comprehensible to them by whatever means.

On the other hand, MacDonald (1993, cited in Turnbull, 2001, p. 532) argues that teachers should use L2, *rather than* L1 as much as possible for motivational reasons. Learners see the TL as immediately useful, as opposed to being so at some distant point in the future. This motivation leads to enjoyment and success; both important factors in ESL and EFL settings acquisition.

3.4 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) builds on a pedagogical approach to language teaching and incorporates notions of acquisition and motivation.

CLT focuses on interaction as central to learning as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language. According to authors such as Canale (1983), Brown (2001), Nunan (1991, 2004) and Littlewood (2007), CLT focuses on language as it is used in real contexts i.e., language for "real life" communication and so the students

are given opportunities to express their ideas and opinions. The teacher acts as a facilitator during classroom activities so that students will ultimately be equipped with tools in order to generate a spontaneous language use outside the classrooms boundaries.

Chambers (1997, cited in Brown, 2001, p. 43) wrote that "a great deal of use of authentic language is implied in CLT, as it attempts to build fluency". Accuracy and acquisition of the formal features of the [second language] are less a measure of successful language learning than are fluency and an ability to get something across comprehensibly to a native speaker (Sanders, 1987, p. 222 cited in Beale, 2002, p. 15).

There has been a significant change in the received wisdom regarding the role of the language teacher over the years since CLT replaced the grammar translation method and audio-lingual method, for example. Teachers are meant to be less dominant in the classroom and develop more authentic relationships with students. The teaching sequence, 'presentation, practice and production' ('PPP') is aimed to gradually produce more independent learners who take positive roles in the classroom interaction. Teachers are seen more as guides and facilitators than as controllers of everything that happens in classrooms (Beale, 2002, p.13).

CLT is often contrasted with traditional teaching methods such as audio-lingual and grammar translation methods which are centered around the display of grammar rules and language structures, and teachers spend a substantial amount of time on pattern drills. Students have to repeat the pattern over and over until it is learnt by heart. However, in CLT techniques, teachers try to use more communicative exercises. Johnson (1980) for example, offers some useful suggestions in his article 'Making Drills Communicative' about how teachers can move from traditional exercises to information gap activities for instance. CLT encourages students to practise structures through activities.

According to Cheng (1980, p.62) CLT activities focus on students' interaction with their peers. Group activities maximize the amount of oral interaction on the part of the students. Students are also less likely to be inhibited when working with their

peers. The teacher moves from one group to another without being obtrusive. She/he gives guidance and help when needed only.

CLT not only encourages the above activities but also emphasizes the use of visual aids, cue cards and power-point displays. Language teachers in the old-fashioned teaching ways used to use chalk, talk, black board, and pictures. Influenced by the principles of CLT, teachers have adopted more sophisticated Hi- Tech techniques in their classrooms.

Role-play and communicative games are also part of CLT features that can be arranged for group work and pair work. Students usually enjoy these kinds of tasks because they create some sort of fun besides they help develop students' communication skills.

The five features of CLT outlined by Nunan (1991, p.279) underpin good practice in developing the learner's language competence. The five features are:

- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language but also on the learning management process.
- An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
- An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom.

These features are based on the idea that the learner is the central focus of language teaching and learning processes and so the emphasis must be put on the students' needs and interests. The basic pedagogical principle of CLT is that successful acquisition of the target language on the part of the learners depends on the amount of interaction and negotiation of meaning that they participate in. In this way, the integration of language input and output contributes to the language development system of the learners (Beale, 2002, p. 15).

Nunan (2004, p.10) describes communicative language teaching as an overarching concept ("a broad, philosophical approach to the language curriculum") of which "task-based language teaching represents a realization…at the levels of syllabus

design and methodology". Littlewood, (2004, p.324 cited in Littlewood, 2007, p.244) describes CLT as "a development within the communicative approach", in which the crucial feature of the communicative 'tasks' serve not only as major components of the methodology but also as units around which a course may be organized".

3.5 Brown's Principles of EFL Pedagogy

Brown's (2001) principles of EFL pedagogy incorporate the principles of CLT and motivation, as well as notions of acquisition, learning and acculturation developed by Krashen and Schumann. Viewing second language learning and teaching as 'pedagogy', Brown's principles give a framework for understanding and working with the complexity and multidimensionality of the teaching and learning of languages.

Pedagogy has been defined as 'the study of methods and styles of teaching and the principles, practice or profession of teaching' (Hedge & Whitney, 1996, p. 121). A more recent definition of pedagogy refers to the relationships, social contexts and 'hidden agendas' of teaching and learning:

> Pedagogy is about the processes and dynamics of teaching and learning, including the purposes, management, underlying philosophy, relationships, curriculum, instructional methods, environment and social context of learning. *(Sanguinetti, Waterhouse et al. 2004)*

Brown's book *Teaching by Principles*, (2001) brings current pedagogical thinking into the context of EFL and ESL thinking. Brown provides one of the best-known contemporary accounts of the pedagogical principles and methods of second language learning and acquisition in all their complexity.

In this section of the literature review I am going to briefly summarise Brown's Twelve Principles of second language learning that underpin effective ESL or EFL teaching practice. These principles form the core of an approach to language teaching and are considered to be foundational in many EFL teacher-training contexts. They are also included as a framework for describing the teaching that I observed as part of this study.

Brown (2001, p. 55) divides the twelve principles into three sets of principles: Cognitive Principles, Affective Principles and Linguistic Principles. However, as he

himself points out, all twelve principles have somewhat porous cognitive, affective and linguistic boundaries.

3.5.1 Principle 1: Automacity (Brown, 2001, p. 69).

'Automaticity' is the spontaneous and subconscious acquisition of any language to which a child or an adult is exposed. . Automaticity takes place in a communication rich environment.

Children learning a foreign language tend to acquire that language subconsciously and naturally when it is delivered to them. This could be true of all learners living in SL/FL cultural and linguistic environments. Children often acquire the new language inductively and effortlessly, unlike adult FL learners. Adults tend to focus on parts of the language trying to comprehend how the new language works and how it is different from their mother tongue. They often tend to analyze language forms. This, however, may impact negatively on their speed of language acquisition and, due to this, the adult learner might take more time to move away from focusing on forms of language to the purposes of the language. This principle suggests a learning-rich environment with low levels of anxiety for automatic acquisition to take place for adult learners.

3.5.2 Principle 2: Meaningful Learning (Brown, 2001 p. 57).

'Meaningful Learning' is about the language or language content in EFL teaching and of that learning having meaning and relevance to learners' interests and lives. This principle is closely related to the automaticity principle. According to Brown, "Meaningful learning will lead to better long-term retention than rote learning".

The classroom, however, has not always been the best place for meaningful learning. In the days when the audio-lingual method was popular, rote learning was the dominant mode of classroom teaching where students were drilled in order to 'over-learn' language forms. The principle of meaningful learning does not say that all aural-oral drilling is harmful - it may be useful for some language aspects such as rhythm, stress and intonation, but should not be the dominant technique.

3.5.3 Principle 3: Anticipation of Reward (Brown, 2001 p.58)

'Anticipation of Reward' is about one's expectation of an incentive or some sort of praise after achieving a certain goal. Human beings are universally driven to act, or behave by the "anticipation of some sort of reward. This reflects Skinner's argument (1957, cited in Brown, 2001, p. 58) that 'the anticipation of reward is the most powerful factor in directing one's behavior'. The implications of anticipation and reward for the classroom are clear through the immediate praise to students' appropriate behavior or correct response. Such praise is considered as the teachers' recognition of a good job from students. This could be in the form of verbal praise or grades or scores for good assignments. Rewarding students for successful and desirable work has remarkable effects on long-term goals in learning a language, L2 or FL. The Reward Principle may be useful for low-motivated classes in order to help them perceive their language development.

3.5.4 Principle 4: Intrinsic Motivation (Brown, 2001, p. 59)

'Intrinsic motivation' is about the drive to achieve certain objectives and goals. If the classroom techniques are designed in such a way that takes account of students' intrinsic motivation, then students will perform the task because it is intrinsically fun, interesting or useful and not because of the possibility of reward from the teachers. The development of intrinsic motivation involves affective processing, which stems from students' desires and needs.

3.5.5 Principle 5: Strategic Investment (Brown, 2001, p. 59)

'Strategic Investment' is about the notion of student-centered activity and the role the learners play in the teaching and learning process. A decade ago, the language learning profession was concerned with the 'delivery' of language. Textbooks and teaching methods were regarded as the primary factors in successful learning. However, in recent years, the focus has shifted from language teachers to the role of the learner and the methods that the learners employ to internalize and perform in the language.

For teachers, the pedagogical implications of this principle lie in the importance of recognizing and dealing with a range of styles and strategies that learners bring to the learning process and the need for attention to every individual in the classroom; their

preferences and styles of learning, for example individual versus group work. However, in large classrooms, teachers face a dilemma in attending to each student. In applying principle of strategic investment, the aim is to provide as much attention as you can to individual students and their specific needs and learning characteristics.

3.5.6 Principle 6: Language Ego (Brown, 2001, p. 60)

'Language Ego' is about having an awareness of how the learner's ego is nurtured and expressed in L2. Learners in the early stages of language learning are fragile and need support from their teachers to nurture their developing sense of who they are in their new language. The teacher should therefore exercise patience and empathy in order to maximize the development of their 'language ego'; their developing sense of identity as speakers of the target .

3.5.7 Principle 7:Self-Confidence (Brown, 2001, p. 62)

'Self –Confidence' is related to 'language ego' and can be defined as the student's self-belief in his or her ability to achieve what she or he wants to achieve and it is the power inside any one to reach success. This principle stems from the fact that self-esteem is the key to successful learning experience. If a person believes in his/ her ability to accomplish a task, then he or she will successfully achieve this goal.

The teacher's role is therefore to assure students of their ability to achieve the tasks assigned to them. In order to sustain self-confidence, the teacher should start from doing easy tasks to those which are more difficult. Classroom activities would logically start with simpler techniques and concepts, and teachers should try to exclude any activities which will give students a sense of failure.

3.5.8 Principle 8: Risk-Taking (Brown, 2001, p.63)

All learners of a foreign language are challenged to take risks in their learning. This principle is interlinked with the two principles mentioned above. It is important to encourage learners to take risks in their attempts to use the new language both productively and receptively. Self-confidence and strong language ego lay the ground for risk-taking. If learners recognize their own ego and develop a firm belief in their ability that they feel they can do it, so they are ready to take risks. They thus will feel

ready to try out their acquired language, risking making mistakes or by asking questions.

The SL-FL teacher can reflect on this principle in his or her classroom by, for example creating an atmosphere in the classroom that encourages students to try out the new language. Providing reasonable challenges in the classroom techniques and using different types of exercises such as reading aloud, giving presentations and role plays would enable them to challenge themselves and use their language skills. Therefore, responding positively to students' risky attempts by praising them for trying lay the path for more risk taking and success.

3.5.9 Principle 9: The Language-Culture Connection (Brown, 2001 p.64).

The 'Language–Culture Connection' is about the linkage between the language and its culture. It is about the connotations that the language carries about its cultural system. One aspect of this principle is that whenever a teacher teaches a language, he or she also teaches a system of cultural customs, values and ways of thinking. The other aspect of the language-culture connection is the process of acculturation that may affect the students' learning the new language (Schumann, 1978).

Learners of ESL differ from learners of EFL as a result of the different contexts and goals of learning for instance, migrants in Australia and Canada versus Omani students in Oman. ESL learners are likely to be more successful in adapting to the new culture than are EFL learners, unless the latter are very highly motivated. The teacher's role is to enhance interaction between learning about culture and language learning itself, and how learners deal with the complexities of the linguistic system

3.5.10 Principle 10: The Native Language Effect (Brown, 2001, p.65).

'The Native language Effect' is about the interference of the mother tongue in the second or foreign language, causing errors of the internalized language.

The most observable effect on learning a second or foreign language (L2/FL) is interference. This causes the majority of learners' errors in L2 or FL, particularly in the beginning levels. An approach to minimizing learners' L1 interference is to consider learners' errors as important signals of language development. The teacher should treat learners' errors as part of their learning process and give feedback when

necessary. The teachers should also encourage students to think in the L2 language as well as to pay attention to its functional and socio-linguistic aspects. Teachers should ensure that every student gets an opportunity to gain fluency in English without worrying unduly about their mistakes. They should try to cultivate fluency, not accuracy only

3.5.11 Principle 11: Inter-Language (Brown, 2001, p.67)

'Inter-language' is the gradual developmental system in L2 or FL learners' minds as they internalize its rules and lexis. Second language learners tend to go through a systematic or quasi-systematic developmental process as they progress to full competence in the target language. Inter-language is what a L2/ FL learners internalize of the language, such as chunks of language, vocabulary and grammar structures, either in the classroom or outside as they gradually build a system of the language in his/ her mind. Error feedback is a necessary part of inter-language development.

The process is similar to that of children developing their native inter-language. They develop the progression of acquisition of the parts of the language gradually and systematically. The students improve their inter-language by hearing and comprehending what they are exposed to in the class, as well as learning from the teacher's feedback.

3.5.12 Principle 12: Communicative Competence (Brown, 2001, p. 69).

'Communicative Competence' is about language use, fluency, authentic language in context and the students' needs to apply classroom learning to the real world. Communicative competence consists of organizational competence, pragmatic competence, strategic competence and psychomotor skills (Bachman 1990, Canale & Swain, 1980, cited in Brown, 2001, p.68). 'Communicative Competence' combines a number of linguistic principles of learning and teaching (Brown, 2001 p. 68). By using authentic materials as much possible, by exposing students to real-life and genuine language and by helping them to meet their L2 language needs outside the classroom teachers can foster various aspects of their students' communicative competence.

3.5 Constructivist Pedagogies in Language Education

A more recent trend in theories in second language learning can be broadly described as constructivist (Mayer, 1996; Reyes and Vallone, (2008); Mantero, (2007). According to Reyes and Vallone (2008, p.31) there are two main perspectives in constructivist learning theory: *cognitive constructivism* (which is about the cognitive processes involved in knowledge construction and meaning making, and *social constructivism* which is about the social and cultural processes involved in learning.

The central idea in cognitive constructivist theory is that all learning builds on what we already know, and the dynamic of learning is characterized in terms of whether or not new knowledge fits easily with what is already known. If knowledge is congruent with existing knowledge, we are in a state of *equilibrium* regarding that knowledge; if new knowledge is incongruent we are in a state of *perturbation,* or *disequilibrium.* This is when new learning takes place, as the learner struggles to make sense of new information (von Glaserfield, 1989, cited in Reyes and Vallone, 2008, p. 33).

In the social constructivist perspective, the social processes of learning are seen as intrinsic to the cognitive processes. That is, learning is socially and culturally mediated through the flow of language. According to Reyes and Vallone, the insight that meaning and therefore learning are socially mediated has implications for the teaching of EFL in that it suggests that "we are obliged to advocate for native language support while learning specific content" (p. 34).

Gass and Selinker (2000, p.399) put forward a 'social interactionist' view which is similar to the social constructivist view. They emphasise that language, cognitive development and social interaction cannot be separated because they are deeply embedded in social context, and that to try to separate them would result in a distorted picture of linguistic and interactive skills).

There is also an issue of equity in that language is part of the construction of student identity and therefore power relations come into play. While learners might feel disempowered in the L2 foreign classroom, "we see the equitable foundation evident in constructivist classrooms, particularly when students' cultural backgrounds are built upon and access to native language is allowed" (ibid).

The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978) is another important notion in social constructivist learning theory. The ZPD is the distance between what is already known and what can be learned with a knowledgeable teacher. As teachers facilitate learning, they use *scaffolding* to make meaningful steps and provide a degree of support as the learners construct new knowledge (Reyes and Vallone, p.34).

Reyes and Vallone (2008, pp. 36-39,) put forward a set of principles that characterise the constructivist language classroom:

1. New learning builds on prior knowledge
2. Learning is mediated through social interaction
3. Problem solving is part of learning
4. Learning is a process and teachers are facilitators of that process.

Forman (2008) has published research that applies constructivist ideas about *scaffolding* and *intertextuality* in the context of bilingual and monolingual EFL teaching in Thailand. In terms of scaffolding, the three mechanisms studied by Forman were *priming, prompting* and *dialoguing.*

Forman observed the technique of *priming* in monolingual contexts only. *Priming* took place when there were no bilingual translation to explain grammar or vocabulary, so the teacher uses drilling and repetition of language in order to reinforce grammatical meanings and thereby to prime students for more creative expression in the L2. The metaphor of 'priming' suggests the priming of a pump with water in mind – because this kind of interaction is regarded as requiring little cognitive engagement on the part of the learner.

Prompting took place in monolingual classrooms when the teacher posed questions which provided answer prompts within them, and which were then confirmed by the teacher's 'echoing' (rather than elaborating or evaluating) feedback. According to Forman, "Scaffolding of this type can offer a semantic framework and grammatical cueing which can support learners with limited language competence to participate gradually and securely". Interestingly, prompting in bilingual teaching was found to be a more effective form of scaffolding than it was in monolingual teaching:

> On the one hand, in monolingual teacher prompting, it may be said that if a teacher uses only L2 to explain new L2 vocabulary, benefits may accrue as students are led to operate in the target language. Moreover, as they experience L2 exclusively, students can develop strategies for surviving in L2 on occasions when meanings are not known or not fully clear. On the other hand, such exclusive use of

> L2 may not serve as the most effective and efficient means of rendering meaning. Moreover, a belief in the value of confining vocabulary explanation to L2 synonyms can also sometimes buttress an anti-bilingual dictionary stance. It appears that rather than offering potentially confusing synonyms in the target language, meaning can more accurately and swiftly be provided by translating into L1, as seen here, where the value of the bilingual support – only a few words – was striking (Forman 2008, p. 324).

Scaffolding by means of prompting in bilingual interactions was therefore found by Forman to be of 'greater depth' than prompting in monolingual interactions. His explanation for this was that the process of translation requires cognitive depth on the part of students, through the processes of first, identifying or approximating the meaning of L2 word(s), and then retrieving the closest L1 form.

The third type of scaffolding, *dialoguing* was also observed as being different in bilingual and monolingual classrooms. Forman describes dialoguing as taking place when,

> … teacher–student interaction is still guided and monitored by the teacher, but where students' speech is more open, varied and lies beyond what is "in the teacher's head". This technique may also extend to a kind of 'problematising', where content may be of some depth cognitively or affectively. 'Dialoguing' may be shaped by hypothetical or speculative statements/questions, as well as by 'real' questions, that is, where the other party's own ideas are genuinely sought. It may also include quite extended discourse on the part of either teacher or students (p. 325).

In monolingual dialoguing, the scaffolding pedagogy seen provided teacher talk which was within students' receptive capacities in English and probably beyond their productive capacities. The content of discussion had been contextualised both through the display of photos and by drawing upon students' world knowledge. Given this support, students were enabled to understand the teacher's talk, and to respond, albeit in relatively limited ways, within the target language. The teacher's questions were often open ones, which provided cognitive stimulus; and students' responses demonstrated a willingness to 'go for meaning' in the target language.

In monolingual classrooms, Forman found that the kind of advanced dialoguing reported above was fairly rare. However, he observed that the scaffolding through dialoguing being conducted by bilingual teachers was more pedagogically productive because of the possibilities afforded by negotiating meaning in two languages. In one

classroom that he observed, the bilingual teacher scaffolded interaction in a discussion about family life that drew upon and moved between L1 and L2. Forman noted that meaning was thus created interdiscursively across two language/cultures. He commented that "In this way, students are acknowledged as 'knowers of a shared culture', and are enabled to extend their prior L1 knowledge into another culture (ie, the culture of the L2 (Forman 2008, p.329).

I have drawn extensively on Forman's article, as it is the only recent study that I have found in which, similar to my own study, an explicit comparison has been made between bilingual and monolingual pedagogies through classroom observation. The significance of his study lies not only in the application of contemporary social theory to English language teaching, but in the suggestion of the possibilities for meaningful interdiscursivity between languages and cultures in bilingual dialoguing. In this case, EFL learning is enhanced by the creation of opportunities for participation in scaffolding which is both linguistic and cultural and in which learners' own prior experiences are centre stage.

Overall, the emphasis in constructivist pedagogy on language learning as meaning-making taking place through processes of social interaction and problem solving suggests a more sophisticated role for the EFL teacher than either the traditional or CLT approaches that went before. It also suggests that bilingual teachers may have access to more very powerful pedagogical strategies by being able to call on and creatively different discourses as well as different languages in the classroom.

3.6 Western Culture and the Teaching of English in Oman

Such is the spread of English as an international language that, according to some authors, it is no longer the carrier of a singular culture. Smith (1976 cited in McKay, 2000, p.7) for example, argues that English as an international language (EIL) does not belong to any one culture, so that non-native speakers do not need to internalize the cultural norms of native speakers. He argues that the learning of any language is primarily about learning how to use it correctly and appropriately according to native speaker norms.

Others, however, argue that a language cannot be taught without the knowledge of a target culture. Lademann (1992, p.13 cited in Zaid, 1999, p.112) argues that a language and its cultural knowledge are inseparable: He says "language learners must have knowledge of the cultural and social background and behavioral styles of the members of the target language culture".

This begs the question of the potential culture conflict EFL students would experience when being taught by teachers from different cultural backgrounds, as when Muslim students are taught by expatriate Western teachers using teaching materials that have been developed in Western countries without particular regard to Muslim norms or expectations.

In her discussion of western culture and the teaching of English as an international language (EIL), McKay (2004, p. 10) argues that one of the most complex problems is the cultural basis of the teaching/learning process. She points out that despite the growth in learning English as an international language, some countries reject the inclusion of western culture and values in teaching texts and curriculum, while others value and promote them.

Those who advocate the inclusion of western culture in materials in the EFL classrooms include language educators such as Adaskou, Britten, and Fahsi (1990, cited in McKay, 2004, p. 11) who present the argument for having a cultural component in language teaching that it can promote international understanding, deepen an understanding of one's own culture and motivate learners by facilitating their visits to foreign countries and motivate learners.

McKay, on the other hand, gives Japan as an example of a country that inserts its own cultural content into English teaching materials. Suzuki (1999) the writer of the bestseller: *Why the Japanese People are No Good at English*, wrote that Japan, as an international power, has no need for western culture or to emulate everything western in order to learn English. For Suzuki, the adoption of the values inherent in the teaching texts is a form of mental colonization. Suzuki's critique of potential cultural colonization through English language learning is reflected in the attitudes of many Muslim students that I have taught.

This study does not explore in detail the political and cultural implications of EFL teaching in Oman. However, the fact that monolingual native English speaking teachers offer their learners a completely different set of cultural understandings in the way that they teach, speak and interact with students and in their choice of materials (compared with Muslim teachers) is relevant in that culturally different approaches affect the way the Omani students learn.

3.7 Native and Non-native English Speaking Teachers

As mentioned in the Introduction, while I did not set out initially to focus on the issue of differences between native English speaking teachers and non-native English-speaking teachers, it emerged in the document, interview and observation data and therefore forms part of my findings. As shown in Chapter 2, I have adopted the terms 'Native English-Speaking Teacher' ('NNEST') and 'Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher' ('NNEST') from Richards (1998) and from the Educational Statistical Year Book produced by the Omani Ministry of Higher Education (2005-2006) (Education, 2005-2006). In using these terms I am aware of the sensitivities in the usage of these categories, in particular the possible imputation of cultural or racial bias in relation to the more lowly paid NNESTs and the fact that many of those, especially from the Indian sub-continent who are classified by the Omani Government as NNEST, may in fact be first language speakers of English who may not speak any local languages.

The linguistic and national backgrounds of EFL teachers in Oman, whether they are native English speakers or non-native English speakers, emerged as a significant factor in the comparison of the teaching styles and approaches of the teachers in this study. Native speakers have different linguistic capabilities from those of 'non-native' English speakers, even those with very highly developed English language skills. They are also 'culture carriers' of western values and norms. The issues here are complex, as many officially designative 'non-native' speakers in fact may be 'native' speakers who speak with non-Western accents and are not 'culture carriers' of Western values and norms, as described above.

As discussed, there is anecdotal evidence pointing to discrimination in favor of native speaking teachers of English (NESTs) and against non-native speakers in employment opportunities and pay scales. Non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) tend

to be considered as having second-class status in both English-speaking and non-English speaking countries.

Braine (1999) and Canagarajah (1999) write about the discrimination against non-native English speakers in ESL contexts as occurs in the United States, where students from overseas are willingly accepted onto MA TESOL courses, but then limits are placed on their employment opportunities as ESL teachers once they are qualified on the grounds that they are non-native speakers.

A number of authors argue against the linguistic discrimination towards non-native speakers of English. Cook (1999, p.187) for example, calls for language teaching to go beyond the privileging of native speakers and for a thorough examination of this issue to be made in relation to language teaching. He maintains that it is a matter of "adjusting the perspectives about models that underlie language teaching… to bring language teaching to the realization that it is helping people use L2s, not imitate native speakers" (p. 204).

Despite Cook's claims about the native and non-native issues, the native speaking teacher as the ideal teacher and as arbiter of 'correct' usage and pronunciation persists. Phillipson (1992) refers to this as 'the native speaker fallacy' and maintains that it results in the devaluing of non-native teachers. He gives two main explanations for the native speaker's dominance in ELT. The first one is the notion of the ideal speaker who can be taken as the reference point and the arbiter of what constitutes a grammatical version of the language. The native speaker therefore is the only one with full language competence, against which instances of language learning can be compared.

The second explanation is that the insistence on the superiority of the native speaker has facilitated the development of a massive worldwide industry in the training and deploying of teachers and curriculum developers all over the world. The insistence on the use of the target language as the medium of instruction means that a qualified native English speaking teacher can be deployed anywhere without necessarily knowing the language or culture of the students she or he teaches.

Writers such as Edge (1988, p. 156) and Medgyes (1992) call for a more internationalist view of EFL teaching: "it seems more and more important that

training and development should help us escape from the nationalistic view of native speaker and non-native speaker and get us involved in furthering an internationalist perspective in which users of English are simply more or less accomplished communicators."

Widdowson (1992) makes a distinction between skills of English speaking as against skills of instruction. He reminds us that a teacher is both informant and instructor and, while native speakers may be better informants, they are not necessarily better instructors. They have more experience as English language users, but non-native speakers have had experience as English language learners. Liu (1999) also argues that the experience of having learned English themselves is beneficial to teachers attempting to help and support learners.

According to Richards (1998) whether a NEST (Native English Speaking Teacher or NNEST (Non-Native English Speaking Teacher) becomes proficient is a product of their training and their ability to communicate and lead. He maintains that it is not only knowledge and competence in English language that counts, but that pedagogical skills also are crucial to good teaching. The untrained or unqualified native speaker may in fact be ignorant of the structure of the mother tongue. UNESCO has also warned against privileging vernacular languages in education: 'A teacher is not adequately qualified to teach a language merely because it is his mother tongue' (UNESCO, 1953 p.69).

According to Medgyes (1992) both NESTs and NNESTs serve equally important purposes. They should complement each other in their strengths and weaknesses. They also should work collaboratively in favor of promoting their language skills. They should work as language consultants for each other.

Both NS and NNS teachers have their advantages and disadvantages according to Medgyes (1992, pp.346 -7) who provides the following characteristics of ideal NNS teachers:

- They provide a good learner model to their students
- Are able to teach language strategies very effectively
- Are able to provide more information about the language to their students
- Understand their students' needs

- Are able to anticipate and predict language difficulties
- Can use students' L1 in (EFL settings).

However, Medgyes had also pointed out that most NNESTs, will never reach "native competence" because there is a stage when their language competence will stop improving (Medgyes, 1992, cited in Liu & Zhang, 2007, p. 158).

According to Li & Meng (2005), NESTs have several advantages. They have authentic English that attracts students' attention. They are more flexible and tend to focus more on classroom environment where students are encouraged to speak and express themselves (Li & Meng, 2005). Other authors claim that they are more flexible in evaluating students' performance (Li, 2005; Wu, Shao & Wang, 2005 cited in Liu & Zhang, 2007, p. 158).

On the other hand, Li, (2005) is critical of native speaker teachers on the grounds that they have a limited knowledge of their EFL learners and they prefer to use their own teaching materials rather than prescribed textbooks.

Some research has been carried out on differences in native speaker and non-native speaker instructors' classroom pedagogies. Arva & Medgyes' (2000) have evaluated non-native speakers' students' oral production; Ludwig (1982) carried out an evaluation of written production (Takashima, 1987; Kassen 1988; Porte 1999); Macaro researched the use of code-switching (Macaro, 2005); Cots & Diaz, 2005), researched discourse strategies, and Medgyes (1994) and Braine (1999) cited in Callahan, 2006, p.26) looked at the differences in terms of preparation and training

There is some literature on ESL and EFL students' perceptions of non-native speakers as language instructors (Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Pacek, 2005; Lasagabaster & Sierra 2002, 2005). Lasagabaster and Sierra surveyed EFL students in the Basque region of Spain. They found that those students preferred native speaker teachers in the areas of teaching vocabulary, pronunciations, and culture, but that they preferred non-native speaker teachers in the teaching of grammar and learning strategies (cited in Callahan, 2006, p. 26).

Lasagabaster and Sierra (2002, p.134) incorporated the issue of the instruction level into their questionnaire of EFL students in Spain. They found out that there was a

preference for native speaker teachers at higher levels of language learning. The respondents thought that, at the advanced level, native speakers were more helpful.

Another survey was administered in the spring of 2005 to 55 intermediate and advanced students of ESL (who were speakers of several different first languages, such as Russian, Spanish, Chinese and Gujurati) and Spanish cohort students (included L1 speakers of English, Haitian Creole, Chinese, Finnish and other languages) at a four- year college in the US. ESL students showed a stronger preference for native speaker teachers overall and their responses were not compatible with those of Spanish students' ratings of native speaker teachers' performance on a number of aspects (cited in Callahan, 2006, p. 28).

The two groups diverged on the issue of the use of L1 in the classroom. The (EFL) students of Spanish disagreed with the statement that Spanish teachers should not use English at all in the classroom, while ESL students agreed, to a significant degree, with the statement that ESL teachers should not use the students' native language at all in the classroom. ESL students disagreed also with the statement that ESL teachers should use the students' native language to explain grammar and to give instructions on exams, while Spanish students were much closer to agreement with the ESL students on this issue. Both groups indicated that an instructor's academic qualifications are more important than native speaker status (cited in Callahan, 2006, p. 29).

Another survey of students' perceptions of native and non-native speaking teachers was undertaken in China. Sixty-five 3rd year college students majoring in English and literature from an English department in South China were interviewed and answered a questionnaire on their local Chinese teachers ('bilingual' in the terms of this thesis) and native English speaking, or 'monolingual') teachers' attitudes, means of instruction and teaching results. Findings from the questionnaire, in terms of attitude towards students and the course, showed that more than 61% of the students believe that native English- speaking teachers try different means to deliver text materials more often than their Chinese counterparts. In terms of students' evaluation and achievement 60% reported that the foreign teachers are more flexible than the Chinese teachers. Foreign teachers interact more with the students than their Chinese colleagues in class, as they are more interested in fluency than accuracy unlike the

non-native monolingual teachers. However, the main difference was found in teaching results perceived by students. Around 73.4% of the students believed that they learn more from courses taught by the Chinese teachers (Liu & Zhang, 2007, pp.161-162).

Findings from the interviews showed that the students at the top level prefer foreign teachers while low-level students prefer Chinese teachers. This group reported that they feel more comfortable with local teachers because they can speak in Chinese (Liu & Zhang, 2007, p. 162). This is similar to what I found in the students' interview data of my research study, discussed in Chapter 6.

Finally, Roberts & Harden (1997, p. 22, cited in Callahan, 2006, p. 20) talk about the roles that both native and non-native teachers have in the teaching and learning processes as complementary:

> … we reject naïve presuppositions about the relative merits of native speaker and non-native speaker teachers, seeing indispensable roles for both, especially at a moment in history when the aims of language teaching should be above all else intercultural. Ideally, for the foreseeable future, reaching teams should be made up of an appropriate mixture of native and non-native teachers. This will provide for cross-fertilization between the teachers, and afford the learners linguistic and cultural insights from two different viewpoints.

3.8 Conclusion

This research project builds on existing research about the teaching and learning of English by adults, and applies this knowledge in the cultural, linguistic and economic conditions of Oman, with a special focus on the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom and a range of issues in relation to whether the teachers are bilingual, native speakers of Arabic, or monolingual non-Arabic-speaking native English-speakers. To my best knowledge, there are no published reports of research projects investigating the pedagogies of bilingual and monolingual teaching or the usage of L1 and L2 in classroom the context of Arabic-speaking Muslim countries.

Over the last three decades there have been contradictory views about whether and for what purposes the mother tongue of the students should be used in foreign language classrooms. However, there have been many efforts to resolve the debate in recent

years and a number of research studies have been conducted to explore in what ways L1 may facilitate the learning of second or foreign language.

There now seems to be a growing orthodoxy that L1 has a potentially significant role in the teaching and learning of foreign languages, and as shown above, there is a range of views about how, to what extent and for what purposes L1 should be used.

However, this question is a relatively neglected topic in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) methodology literature. This suggests that there may be a corresponding gap in EFL teachers' initial and post graduate training, and possibly in current professional development programs. Certainly, the lack of focus in Oman on issues of bilingual teaching and the role of L1 in EFL teaching may be partly responsible for the apparent over-use of L1 in teaching by bilingual teachers. In other contexts, it may feed into the uneasiness which many bilingual EFL teachers, both experienced, and inexperienced, feel about using or permitting the use of the students' native language in the classroom, as discussed by Atkinson (1987, p.241).

Another relative absence in the TEFL literature is a focus on general issues of classroom pedagogy and how these relate to EFL teaching. This gap is addressed in the work of Brown's Principles (2001), as discussed, and in recent publications that relate constructivist pedagogy EFL teaching, such as Forman (2008) and Reyes and Vallone (2008).

I wish to finish this review of the literature with a quote from Prah (1998, p. 2 cited in Sonaiya, 2003, pp.149-150) whose insights about language and culture have inspired much of my personal thinking about the cultural and psychological tensions at play when Arabic students are struggling to understand and express themselves in English.

> It is in language that people find their mental home, their definitional relationship to the external world. What this also means is that people can hardly be themselves in an idiom in which they have difficulty understanding or expressing themselves. They can barely be creative and innovative in a language they have to struggle with in order to command expression. There is no doubt that a language is the vehicle of expression of a people's culture and the window through which they understand the world and are themselves understood.

With the internationalization of English and globalization of the world's economy and culture, the issue of 'identity' becomes more complex, as citizens of the world inevitably take on 'international' or 'global' identities in addition to their local,

national identities. In this case, English may be learned in the context of it becoming the vehicle of emerging, fragile and fragmented international or multicultural identities.

This review of the literature around L1 and L2 usage, EFL pedagogy and bilingual versus monolingual teaching has ranged across the research and professional debates about issues that impact upon the teaching and learning of EFL and how English can be most effectively taught in the context of Oman.

My thesis is an attempt to document and analyse some of the complexities faced by students who in learning and acquiring English are doing so from an Arabic 'mental home' which is challenged by the cultural and linguistic 'mental home' of the English language but also enriched by it. The complexities faced their teachers who also come from a variety of cultural 'mental homes' are not less challenging.

Chapter Four: Methodology and Method

4.1 Introduction

The research reported in this thesis was designed around the following aims:

1. To investigate to what extent and for what purposes L1 (Arabic) is being used in the teaching of EFL in Omani tertiary institutions.
2. To make a comparison between the teaching methods and pedagogical styles used by bilingual teachers (English and Arabic) and monolingual teachers (who speak English only) in EFL classrooms in Oman.
3. To investigate the students' responses and preferences in relation to bilingual or monolingual teaching in Oman.
4. To produce knowledge about how English should best be taught in Oman in order to inform professional development programmes?

This set of aims calls for a qualitative methodology rather than a quantitative approach.

The phenomenon that I have investigated, the teaching of English as a Foreign Language in tertiary institutions in Oman, is one which is characterized by a number of cultural, institutional and pedagogical complexities. The tensions and complexities in the field are therefore best understood through the experiences of participants – in this case, students and teachers. Qualitative research enables this kind of in-depth investigation. According to Kervin et al. (2005, p. 37) such research can be seen as "an approach to making sense of social phenomena as they occur in their natural settings … the qualitative researcher is not interested in objective measures, preferring to explore the subjective experiences, ideas and feelings of participants".

While I did not bring a strongly held hypothesis to this study, I brought a hunch that I wished to explore. My hunch, based on my own earlier observations and on anecdotal evidence in the field of EFL in Oman, was that bilingual teachers might better serve students of English. I did not assume this hunch as an explicit hypothesis and have attempted to follow through my exploration of the natural scheme of things through documenting and analyzing the findings. The qualitative methods I have utilized have enabled me to illuminate the different styles of EFL teaching and to articulate some of

the dilemmas that are intrinsic to language teaching in general and the bilingual/monolingual question in particular, in the context of EFL in an Arabic-speaking country. There are a lot of challenges to be encountered with data collection and whether or not there will be any consensus or contradiction over the issues to be inquired. There are also the emerging issues that might come into surface during analysis. All these challenges are likely to make the findings more valuable, authentic and more insightful.

Kervin et al. (2005, p.35) write that there has been a shift away from quantitative methodologies towards qualitative methodologies in educational research:

> Educational research was initially dominated by quantitative research designs because this was believed to be the superior form for gaining knowledge … Dissatisfaction with the quantitative approach arose in the latter part of the twentieth century because the kinds of questions that were relevant in school settings weren't adequately answered by quantitative means. As a result, in recent years, there has been an increase in qualitative studies that allow insight into these complex educational settings.

In this case, the research is about making sense of different styles and approaches to EFL teaching in classrooms and institutions. Qualitative research relies on fieldwork by the researcher and produces "detailed, thick description; inquiry in depth; direct quotations capturing people's personal perspectives and experiences" (Johnson and Christensen, 2000, p. 313). In qualitative inquiry, "*the researcher is the instrument"* (Patton, 1990, p. 14). As the *research instrument,* I have drawn upon the traditions, skills and disciplines of qualitative research as well as my own experience, ideas and knowledge about teaching EFL in Oman.

While the sample of teachers and students involved is not large, the strength of this research lies in the inclusion of the perspectives of teachers and students from different institutions through interviews, direct observational and self-reflective data. Moreover, the four main methods of data collection (observations, teacher interviews, student interviews and personal action research) have served to provide a degree of triangulation of the findings and a multi-faceted picture of the current situation.

As stated earlier, I am the prime instrument for analyzing and interpreting the data. According to the constructivist epistemology that underpins the methodology, my own agentic role in constructing the knowledge produced must be acknowledged

Belenky et al. (1986); Stanley and Wise (1983); Crotty (1998); Denzin and Lincoln (2003). The constructivist paradigm, which was discussed briefly in Chapter 1, can be summed up as, "all knowledge is constructed, and the knower is an intimate part of the known" (Belenky et al., 1986, p.137). It is inevitable that my own ideas and biases would have coloured the findings, especially as I am an EFL teacher and teacher inspector myself. My own history and practice are therefore offered as an object of the research, to be considered as part of the methodology as well as the outcome.

4.2 Qualitative Research in Language Acquisition and Learning

Qualitative research is the most common approach in educational research about processes of teaching and learning, classroom relationships and how students learn.

This project has its major focus on how teachers teach English. The methodology is perhaps unusual in that it is partly based in the tradition of research into second language learning and acquisition, and partly in the traditions of research into classroom pedagogy. Most research in language acquisition in relation to monolingual or bilingual learning is based on applied linguistics and is quantitative in nature. For example: Duff and Polio (1990) did a quantitative study of the amount of target language used in the foreign language classroom. Mattar (1999) is another quantitative researcher in issues of L1 and L2. His research into the use of classroom translation as an elicitation technique in FL/SL acquisition shows how that technique may increase the L2 learners/ reliance on the mother tongue at the University of Bahrain.

There are also a number of studies that have employed qualitative methods to study issues similar to those that are the focus of this research. Gearon (1997, cited in Ianziti and Brownlie, 2002, p. 404) conducted a qualitative study into code-switching between native and foreign languages in schools in Victoria, Australia. Other projects employ both quantitative and qualitative methods to further knowledge about language teaching. For example, Tang (2002) used both quantitative and qualitative methods in conducting classroom observations, interviews and questionnaires in his exploration of the use of Chinese in English language teaching at the university in Beijing.

I have chosen qualitative research methods as explicitly recommended by Seliger and Shohamy (2001, p. 24) who wrote:

> Qualitative research is a useful approach wherever an investigator is concerned with discovering or describing second language acquisition on its natural state or context and where there are no assumptions about what the activity consists of or what its role is in acquisition'.

My methods of data collection were eclectic, following Burns (1994) who writes about methodological eclecticism in qualitative research. I have utilised the three main forms of data collection in qualitative research mentioned by Patton (1990) interviews, observation and documents. I have added a fourth method with a chapter that reflects on my own teaching in order to add a further dimension to the analysis.

The qualitative approach that I have used therefore combines several sources of qualitative data. My interpretations of these data are based on "the belief that our worlds are independent, messy, unique and therefore the qualitative researcher aims to uncover this complexity rather than to uncover a 'knowable truth'" (Kervin et al. 2005, p.3).

4.3 The Research Questions

The research aims listed above were translated into the following questions:

1. How do bilingual teachers use L1 in their teaching, if at all?
2. How do monolingual teachers compensate for their lack of L1?
3. What are the differences (if any) between bilingual and monolingual classrooms, in terms of methods and approaches used by teachers?
4. What are the benefits and drawbacks of 'bilingual' as against 'monolingual' English teaching in terms of the effectiveness of instruction and the ability to engage and motivate learners?
5. What are the perceptions and experiences of bilingual and monolingual teachers and of students in relation to both kinds of teaching?
6. Are there any cultural issues that arise in the context of EFL in Oman, in relation to either bilingual or monolingual classrooms that may affect learning?
7. How can bilingual and monolingual teachers best be supported to improve their practice in relation to the findings of this research?

4.4 Terminology of 'Bilingual' and 'Monolingual'

For the purposes of this thesis, I have described Arabic-speaking teachers of English as 'bilingual', with reference to the fact that they are able to draw on both English and Arabic in the classroom. I have adopted the term 'monolingual' for teachers who do not have access to Arabic in the sense that they teach English monolingually. This terminology is the same as that used by Medgyes (1994) and other authors. The 'monolingual' teachers come from Western countries such as the USA, Canada and Great Britain, or post colonial countries such as India or Sri Lanka. They may therefore be fluent in a language or languages other than English. The bilinguality or monolinguality of teachers therefore refers to their teaching rather than their linguistic status generally.

In addition, as discussed in Chapter 3, I have I have adopted the terms 'Native English-Speaking Teacher' ('NNEST') and 'Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher' ('NNEST') from Richards (1998) and from the Educational Statistical Year Book produced by the Omani Ministry of Higher Education (2005-2006) (Education, 2005-2006). While these terms are in some ways problematic, as previously discussed, they are in common usage in Oman and probably elsewhere.

4.5 A Case Study of EFL teaching

This research can be understood as a case study of EFL teaching in the unique context of Omani tertiary institutions. It focuses on the characteristics and the relative merits of bilingual or monolingual teaching as well as the role of L1 and L2 language usage in bilingual classrooms. Participants were drawn from six separate institutions in which English is taught.

No other studies that I know of have comprehensively studied the issue of bilingual versus monolingual teaching in EFL classrooms from multiple viewpoints. The case study approach incorporates data sets gathered at each of six sites. My objective in constructing how teachers teach and students learn English in Oman as a 'case' is to throw some light on the broader issue of how English can best be taught in tertiary institutions in other Arabic-speaking countries as well as in non-English speaking countries generally.

Case studies have the advantage of being able to incorporate a range of methods or approaches. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003, p. 134), "Case studies have become one of the most common ways to do qualitative inquiry… we could study it analytically or holistically, entirely by repeated measures or hermeneutically, organically or culturally, and by mixed methods".

The case-study approach is particularly appropriate for individual researchers because it gives an opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in some depth and within a limited time-scale.

Following Stake (2000, 2006), Yin (1994) and Merriam (1998) the research design is conceived as a qualitative multi-site case study. The 'case' here is the teaching of EFL in tertiary institutions in Oman. Elements of the case study are drawn from multiple sites and different groups of participants at each site that together provide data illuminating EFL teaching in Oman as a 'case' This study can also be seen as a 'multicase project', described by Stake (2006, p. vi) as

> … a special effort to examine something having lots of cases, parts, or members. We study those parts, perhaps its students, its committees, its projects, or manifestations in diverse settings … One small collection of people, activities, policies, strengths, problems, or relationships is studied in detail … The cases have their stories to tell, and some of them are included in the multicase report, but the official interest is in the collection of these cases or in the phenomenon exhibited in those cases. We seek how to understand better how this whole … operates in different situations".

The data were collected from six different colleges but were not compared (as in a comparative study) but rather, the data sets from each (observations, student and teacher interviews) were combined and analyzed as a whole (as recommended by Stake, 2006). Data were drawn from several different sites and groups of participants in order to present the key aspects of the casein Stake's terms.

4.6 Methods of Data Collection

Miles and Huberman (1994, p.10) state "qualitative data provide thick descriptions that are vivid, nested in a real context, and have a ring of truth that has strong impact on the reader".

I have developed 'thick descriptions' of the ways in which teachers' teach the manner in which they perceive their teaching and how the Omani tertiary students perceive their learning of English in their colleges.

The data for this study arise from five different sources

1. Policy documents and government reports containing statistical and other data about teachers in Oman and professional development for teachers,
2. Classroom observations,
3. Interviews with teachers,
4. Interviews with students, and,
5. A reflection on my own 'journey' and practice as a bilingual English teacher.

I gathered the empirical data as follows:

1. I conducted five classroom observations with Arabic-speaking bilingual teachers and five classroom observations with non-Arabic-speaking 'monolingual' teachers.
2. I interviewed six monolingual and five bilingual teachers (not the same people as those whom I observed).
3. I interviewed 15 students from five different colleges (nominated by their teachers, whom I also observed and/or interviewed).
4. I kept detailed notes of my teaching over a period of six weeks.

In all, I conducted twenty-six interviews: five with bilingual Arabic-speaking teachers, six with monolingual English-speaking teachers and fifteen with students from five different higher institutions, (students' interviews took place right after the classroom observations in the same day but teachers' interviews were conducted at different times in five colleges and an additional teacher interview took place in a sixth college).

All interviews and classroom observations took place at the informants' institutions. Each teacher was interviewed separately and the interview took about 45 minutes, while the classroom observation lasted for 60 minutes. Student interviewees were nominated by their teachers. It was the teacher's choice to nominate any three students from those classes I observed. They were over 18 years of age, each signed a consent form and each was informed that s/he could withdraw at any point during the data collection phase. I also explained to the students that participation was optional

and that they could withdraw before the interview took place. The teachers interviewed were different of those I observed. In addition, I needed to interview different teachers from different college in order to get a broader spread of viewpoints and a sense of the field as a whole. As a researcher, it was a good opportunity to meet and interview a number of teachers from different institutions in order to interrelate and compare the bits of data.

4.6.1 Classroom Observation

The first phase of data collection was classroom observations, although I commenced interviewing before completing the observations. In this I was guided largely by Sapsford and Jupp (1996, p.58), who point out that observation may be employed in the preliminary stages of a research project to explore an area which can then be studied more fully utilizing other methods. In my case, the observations were carried out at roughly the same time as the interviews. As I went along, the observations helped to raise my awareness of the issues I needed to explore further, and in particular, helped to shift the focus away from a narrow focus on L1/L2 usage (which I began with) to a broader focus on other issues in relation to monolingual versus bilingual teaching and EFL pedagogy.

There are a number of approaches to observational research. Gall and Borg (1993) explain the difference between more structured or (systematic) observation and less-structured or (ethnographic or unstructured) observation. These two approaches originate in different academic traditions, and have different aims, purposes and procedures. For classroom observations, I chose to use relatively less-structured observation. Gall and Borg (1993) said that the origins of less-structured observation lie in the anthropology tradition, which aims to explore the social meanings that underpin behavior in natural social settings.

The data are usually combined with information from conversations, interviews and, where appropriate, documentary sources, to produce an in-depth and rounded picture of the culture of the group being studied. Another aim of less-structured observation is to develop theory, which according to Glaser (1998) will be generated from or 'grounded in' the emerging data.

In my case, however, I imposed a degree of structure through my use of an observation checklist alongside my own hand-written field notes. Nevertheless, my analysis of the observation data, combined with the other data, was mainly in the tradition of 'grounded theory'.

I designed my own checklist, based partly on the research questions and partly on my understanding of the key elements of EFL pedagogy, by drawing on my experience as an inspector of EFL teachers for the Ministry of Education. I also adapted material from a checklist developed by a Thai doctoral student at Victoria University (Soontornwipast 2004). Whilst I filled out the check list for each teacher, the classroom vignettes recorded below are based mainly on my personal responses to the teaching style of each teacher overall and my own informal notes. I used the observation checklist as a way of noting in summary form the gaps and strengths of each style of teaching and referred back to it as I was writing up.

I adapted this list with the permission of Mr. Soontornwipast for the particular purposes of documenting and analyzing similarities and differences that may exist between 'monolingual' language pedagogies and 'bilingual' language pedagogies. Besides taking notes to enable me register the teachers and students' behaviors and interaction in the classroom, I noted how the students and the teachers responded to each other in both monolingual and bilingual environments (see Appendix A).

4.6.2 Recruitment of Teachers for Observations

I observed the teachers at five different higher institutions, which took part in the research study. Four were located in or near Muscat, the capital city of Oman. The fifth college is about 100km away.

The participating colleges were officially invited by the Ministry of Higher Education to take part in my work. I was also given a letter for the principals or deans explaining the purpose of the study and the confidentiality protocols. I asked the head of the English department at each college to select teachers to include a mix of bilinguals, monolinguals and nationalities. The department heads also took into account whether or not the teachers would be in the classrooms when I was there. The observations therefore included a range of teachers with a variety of teaching approaches,

backgrounds and cultures of origin teaching groups of students at a variety levels; weak, average and advanced.

Each departmental head nominated the bilingual teachers and the monolingual teachers. All of the classes were at Foundation or 2nd year level. The nomination of teachers for both classroom observations and interviews was based on the fact that I asked to observe a variety of teachers from different countries and different linguistic backgrounds. This would add a variety of expertise and different educational, variety of English and cultural backgrounds. Every teacher was informed about me visiting his or her classroom a few days before I attended. After I was introduced to them, the bilingual teachers showed a willingness to have me observing their classes without any hesitation, although some were surprised when I asked them to sign the consent form.

The non- native monolingual teachers (or NNESTs) also showed no objection and were quite happy for me to watch their English lessons. On the other hand, the native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) seemed to be quite concerned about me attending their classrooms and wanted more information about my thesis topic before they allowed me to observe their teaching. They also read the consent sheet much more thoroughly before they signed it.

This I think reflected a cultural difference between the monolingual and the bilingual teachers: The Western teachers perhaps had a greater awareness of their rights, a preparedness to question authority and a sense of their teaching as an individual endeavor. The non-Western teachers did not seem to have the same awareness of rights and seemed to have a more collectivist approach than the Western teachers. I was received quite well by all of the teachers and the students in the actual lessons. All teachers introduced me to the students and explained that I was a research student, who had come to observe the classroom interaction and that I was by no means interested in evaluating them.

4.6.3 Carrying Out the Observations

I used an observation sheet besides taking notes of any interesting events to complement the observation sheet.

My prime interest was to see:

- How do bilingual teachers actually teach?
- Do they use Arabic language in the English lesson and, if so, how often they use it and for what purposes?
- How do non-Arabic speaking monolingual teachers teach?
- How do the students survive English language lessons without any Arabic language input?
- What teaching methodologies do each group of teachers use? (See chapter five for more details)

I observed a one-hour lesson with each of the ten classes. It was a good experience to watch a variety of different teachers and students at different learning levels. Each one of the teachers presented a different activity or lesson from the school syllabus. Each class I attended was different to all the others. The degree and quality of engagement with students varied from one situation to another. Following the observations I had some informal discussion with most of the teachers and I have included some of their comments in the vignettes alongside my own observations.

4.7 Interviews

I needed to get detailed information from both teachers and students about their perceptions of bi- and monolingual teaching and L1/L2 usage. I therefore needed to interview a sample from each group.

The type of interviewing used was that of the 'semi- structured' interview (eg, Seliger and Shohamy, 2001). This process is used to explore specific topics and to ask open-ended questions of the interviewee. I had prepared an interview protocol beforehand, but allowed the interviewees to stray from the topic at times and at times I asked follow-up questions. I did not always follow the given order of questions in order to allow a natural flow of the conversations between the interviewee and myself. I often used probes to get more details and explanations from them.

4.7.1 Interviews with Teachers

As with the observations, the head of English department at each college selected and recruited all the teachers to be interviewed and informed them about the purpose of the interview for my study.

Questions for teachers were designed to elicit information and insights about their beliefs concerning language teaching and learning and their pedagogical styles and methodologies (see Appendix B for interview schedule). These interviews were all conducted separately, in English and were recorded. The interviews lasted for about 45 minutes each and took place at the teachers' place of work. Before conducting the interviews, I gave each person a detailed description of my study and all those approached signed the ethics consent form. All groups of teachers fully cooperated and showed interest in contributing to my study.

4.7.2 Interviews with Students

The same procedure was followed for recruiting the student interviewees. The heads of English departments at the five colleges met with the English teachers and explained on my behalf that I would be interested to interview male and female students from different stages and levels of competency. The teachers then nominated the students accordingly.

Student interview questions focused on their preference for particular teaching methods and attitudes toward English as a foreign language. (See Appendix B for interview schedule.)

The student interviews were conducted in Arabic. The Omani students were at different levels of English language fluency so that, in order to obtain as much information as possible, and to make the students comfortable, it was better to communicate in Arabic. I informed each one of them that the data they were about to reveal would be used for the research purposes only, that every word they supplied would be kept confidential and that they would remain anonymous. The students all signed ethics consent forms.

All the fifteen students were interviewed at their educational institutions. The students responded freely and openly. They were happy to share their learning experiences and talk about their journey of learning English starting from grade four; the time they started to study English; through to their current tertiary level.

I transcribed the interviews in Arabic and then translated them into English (see Appendix C for the Arabic text of the questions).

4.8 Researching My Own Practice through Self-Reflection

After gathering and collating all the other data, I wrote a reflection on my own teaching in relation to the research questions. This would be another way into exploring the complex issues that were the subject of the research. This was also a way of positioning myself as an 'interested' researcher because I needed to articulate my own teaching styles and beliefs, in the way that I had asked other teachers to do.

While engaged in recording and reflecting upon my own teaching, I realised that throughout this research my teaching was developing and improving in concert with the intensive reading, reflection and analysis that I have been engaged in over the last year. In this fashion, an action research element emerged from the methodology as an additional dimension of the data gathering and analysis, out of the on-going nexus between my research and my teaching (as described by Stringer, 2004, p. 1-10).

The part of the case study that is recorded in Chapter 8 therefore fits with the tradition of research into teaching through *reflexive enquiry.* Cole and Knowles (2000, p. 2) discuss 'reflexive enquiry' in terms of the fundamentally personal nature of teaching practice and teacher development:

> … teaching is an expression of who teachers are as people, that it is imbued with the beliefs, values, perspectives, and experiences developed over the course of a teacher's life-time. We believe that in order for teachers to understand their professional lives and therefore continue to develop professionally, they need to understand the formative as well as the continuing experiences and influences that have shaped and continue to shape their perspectives and practices.

The notion of self-study in teaching and teacher development is defined by Pithouse et al. (2009, pp. 43-62) as:

> a wide-ranging community of inquiry dedicated to better understanding and more insightfully describing and improving the practice of teachers and teacher educators' . The use of the term 'self-study' in teacher education became widespread in 1993, not as a detailed articulation of one particular method of practitioner inquiry but rather … a tacit acknowledgement that because teaching is messy, complicated, contextualized - hard to pin down, we need to be innovative and creative in the search for more suitable ways to understand and improve our practice as teachers and teacher educators.

In journaling my own teaching over a period of weeks as input to this thesis, I recorded not just what I did and what happened in the classes, but also my feelings of

frustration and at times of despair when students seem to not be able to, or not want to learn English.

This significance of teachers recording their emotional responses in teaching is discussed by Pithouse et al. (2009, p. 43-62) as follows:

> Our discussions with the teachers have revealed that even though they have found it emotionally painful to relive and hear about certain experiences, they believe that it has been beneficial to work together to engage with the emotional weight of teaching in challenging educational contexts. The teachers have also highlighted the value of acknowledging the often ignored emotional dimensions of teaching and researching and of having an opportunity to express and explore their own emotions.

In order for me to reflect on the perspectives and practices of both monolingual and bilingual EFL teachers, I needed to be able to document, reflect on and as far as possible, to analyse my own perspectives and practices, and to view these alongside those of my fellow teachers who are the participants in the study.

I found through keeping a journal that I it became a way of reflecting on how this research was challenging and developing my own teaching of English as a Foreign Language in Oman.

In order for me to reflect on the perspectives and practices of both monolingual and bilingual EFL teachers, I needed to be able to document, reflect on and as far as possible, to analyse my own perspectives and practices, and to view these alongside those of my fellow teachers who are the participants in the study.

4.9 Data Analysis

4.9.1 Translating and Transcribing the Data

The data set that I assembled consisted of:

- Ten observation sheets together with my own handwritten notes for the classroom observations (See Chapter 5).
- Fifteen student interviews (See Chapter 6)
- Eleven transcribed teacher interviews (five with bilingual and six with monolingual teachers) (See Chapter 7)
- My own self-reflection (a full description of a total of nine teaching hours a week) of teaching practice (See Chapter 8).
- Documentary records and policies relating to EFL (discussed in Chapter 2).

4.9.2 Data Analysis Framework

The analysis of the data was planned to reveal the practices and understandings of both bilingual and monolingual teachers and the perceptions of students in relation to either monolingual or bilingual teaching styles. To achieve this I used a framework for analysis based on the research aims and questions.

Theories of L1/L2 usage, language acquisition and EFL pedagogy, described in Chapter 3, provided a broad theoretical framework for the analysis. However, as these theories are complex, varied and contested, they were used as a broad framework to guide my reflection and interpretation, rather than as a framework of analysis in the formal sense.

The research questions were by nature exploratory, rather than theory-driven, so that the analysis was "a search for patterns in the data – recurrent behaviors, objects or a body of knowledge" (Neuman, 2003, p. 447). The analysis was inductive, Patton (1990, p.390) says "Inductive analysis means that the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis".

4.9.3 Data Analysis Process

For the classroom observation data, I began by writing a short vignette for each of the teachers I observed. I then coded and analyzed the observation data by developing themes in the same way as for the interviews. In this way I was able to combine these three sets of data for my overall analysis and interpretation. The bilingual teachers were coded (BTCO1 to BTCO5) while those of monolingual teachers were coded (MTCO1 to MTCO6). The interviews with the bilingual teachers were coded (BT1 to BT5) and (MT1 to MT6) for monolingual teachers. Students' interviews were coded (S1 to S15).

For the teacher interviews, I categorized the data in terms of their ideas on issues of L1/L2 usage, teaching methods and issues of culture and looked for themes within each of those categories.

I used the reflection data mainly as a tool to aid my interpretation of the other data and the literature and to think deeply about the findings in terms of my own values and

practices in relation to the issues under study – and what I had learned about my own teaching from the study.

I worked through the three sets of data to familiarize myself with their contents and to identify the key themes. I coded each set of data according to the themes and identified and categorized all of the responses based on the themes. This involved a period of going back and forth between the data, the coded themes and the research questions (Neuman, 2003, p. 441).

4.10 Ethical Considerations

I gained informed consent and ensured the confidentiality of the data as required by Victoria University, and participants were allowed to withdraw at any time from the study. However, there were two issues in the guidelines that challenged me to think through the overall ethical conduct of the research and to safeguard the interests of the participants.

The first of these was that the participants possibly felt that they had little choice in their taking part, given that they were 'chosen' by their heads of department to participate and might have felt coerced, or at least that there may have been negative consequences for them if they declined. However, I had no other way of recruiting participants, but through the heads of departments. In the Omani cultural context, in which institutions tend to be more autocratic than the Australian context, this would be perceived by them as normal, or at least, not unethical. Given that this research has been in many senses 'cross-cultural', my supervisor and I decided that we had to go along with this mode of recruitment, but that I would be doubly careful in safeguarding the interests of participants.

The second issue was potentially more sensitive. While I set out, initially, to examine the typical teaching styles or pedagogies of the two sets of teachers, I did not want to be in a position of publishing adverse findings about one or both groups of teachers in a way that might be seen as 'stereo-typing'. However, it gradually became clear that my research questions and method were in fact predicated on some sort of comparison. In making the classroom observations, I also formed some strong impressions about what were typical approaches to teaching or typical pedagogies of each group. It became clear that each group of teachers, broadly, had a particular

pedagogical style, clearly related to the cultural and institutional contexts and the training opportunities of each, as well as the level of development of EFL as a field of educational endeavor in Oman. On the other hand, there were teachers (in both groups) who did not seem to me to be teaching effectively, and teachers (in both groups) whom I thought were excellent.

These issues presented something of a dilemma in writing up the vignettes, which I felt were necessary to enliven the data and to help me to make an overall interpretation. I have, therefore, changed the personal identifying details in writing up and reporting on the observation data. I have changed details of age and nationality of both the monolinguals and bilinguals whom I observed in order to protect their identities. The important classifying detail, for the purposes of this research, is whether they were bilingual (speaking Arabic and English), monolingual (speaking English only). Later, I further classified the 'monolingual' English speakers into Native English Speaking Teachers (NESTs) or Non-Native English Speaking Teachers (NNESTS). All of the bilingual teachers were given Arabic-sounding pseudonyms, and all of the monolingual teachers (both NEST and NNEST) were given European-sounding names.

4.11 How Generalisable is this Research?

This project is a qualitative case study of teaching English as a Foreign Language in tertiary colleges in Oman.

The extent to which the findings of the thesis can be generalized to other EFL contexts is therefore limited. However, I believe that the findings would be certainly relevant to other Arabic-speaking teaching contexts. In addition, they would serve to illuminate the key issues of monolingual versus bilingual EFL teaching in other linguistic contexts. The majority of the studies in the research literature are similarly context bound, and I do not know of any studies that have been carried out in three or more countries or cultural contexts.

Stake (2006, p.88) states the purposes of multicase research in terms of usefulness and applicability, rather than generalisability:

> … the multicase report will say different things to different audiences, accommodating and eluding various expectations. Among the expectations are (1)

> that the multicase report will be a guide for setting policy for a population of cases such as those studied; and (2) that the report will provide people with the vicarious experience useful for transferring assertions from those cases to others.

In my case, the findings could help to guide policy in relation to professional development for EFL teachers in Oman, and perhaps elsewhere. Teachers might be able to transfer the experiences and findings recorded here to their own practice and researchers might find insights and examples that contribute to their own research and theorizing.

I have made several tentative generalizations that appear to me to be evident in the data. Again, Stake puts it nicely: "Because the reader knows the situations to which the assertions might apply, the responsibility of making generalizations should be more the reader's than the writer's" (Stake, 2006 p. 90).

Chapter Five: EFL Teachers in their Classrooms

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present the data resulting from the ten classroom observations of English lessons delivered by five bilingual and five monolingual teachers who were located at the five higher education institutions where I did my research.

I begin by giving some background information about the teachers and my method of analyzing the data. I then present ten vignettes or snapshots of EFL classes, one for each teacher, based on my observations. Finally, I discuss some tentative findings, which emerge from reflection upon and analysis of the ten vignettes.

With the five bilingual teachers, I focused particularly on whether, how and to what extent they used Arabic in their teaching, their pedagogic styles and the extent to which the students seemed to be engaged in productive language learning. With the monolingual teachers I focused on how they communicated as non-Arabic speakers as well as their pedagogic styles and the overall effectiveness of the lessons.

5.2. The Participants

There were five bilingual and five monolingual teachers. I gave each one a numerical code and a pseudonym as follows:

5.2.1 Bilingual teachers

- BTCO1, Jasmine
- BTCO2, Jihad
- BTCO 3, Omar
- BTCO 4, Saeed
- BT CO5, Ahmed

5.2.2 Monolingual teachers

- MTCO 1, John
- MTCO 2, Sarah
- MTCO 3, Eva
- MTCO 4, Desrene
- MT CO5, Patricia

The bilingual teachers came from a variety of Arabic-backgrounds and were all qualified, having postgraduate degrees from Europe, Australia and America. They had been teaching English for different periods of time and were experienced in a variety of EFL settings.

The monolingual teachers included three native speakers of English (John, Desrene and Patricia) and two non-native speakers (Sarah and Eva). I counted the non-native English-speaking teachers as monolingual teachers, as they did not speak Arabic, even though they obviously spoke one or more other languages. They were all qualified teachers and had been teaching English in different contexts for some years.

Most of the classes were at foundation level (first year) and one was in second year. However, all of the students would have learned English from Grade 4 onwards, approximately nine years. However, there was great variability in their levels of achievement.

5.3 Data gathering, analysis and presentation

For all the teachers, I took full notes of the lesson – what was taught and how it was taught. With the bilingual teachers, I made notes of how often, in what contexts and for what purposes they used Arabic during the lessons. In regard to the monolingual teachers, I took notes of how they conveyed grammatical rules and lexical meanings. In addition I made notes about classroom interactions and students' participation and involvement.

In addition, I used an observation checklist which I adapted from a checklist developed by a Thai doctoral student at Victoria University (Soontornwipast, 2004). I also added my own list based partly on the research questions and partly on my understanding of the key elements of EFL pedagogy by drawing on my experience as an inspector of EFL teachers for the Ministry of Education. The checklist was used to note the pedagogic and teaching styles of each teacher and how they differed from one another. It enabled me to note how each teacher used the available teaching resources, such as the textbook and whether these were supplemented with other teaching materials, or were the sole source of teaching English.

I was aware that the teachers all knew when I was coming, so that it is likely that some would have made an extra effort in their teaching when I saw them. On the other hand, it would probably not have been possible for any of them to radically change their teaching styles simply because I was in the room.

Figure 1 (below) gives the pedagogy checklist. A sample of my completed checklists is attached as Appendix A**.**

Fig. (1) Checklist for pedagogical methods and approaches

- Gives clear and comprehensible input and instruction
- Motivates and stimulates students to want to learn English
- Has an awareness of specific problems of Arabic speakers in learning English
- Builds rapport with students
- Provides effective explanations of language features
- Uses culturally inclusive and appropriate communication and texts
- Provides effective and logical progression of sequences of instruction and practice
- Provides an effective mix of activities to maintain interest and foster learning
- Uses communicative approach
- Uses grammar translation method
- Integrates classroom discussion of general issues and news in English
- Encourages questioning and discussion of English items
- Uses prescribed texts as main basis for instruction
- Teaches pronunciation
- Uses authentic texts chosen by the teacher
- Uses group work
- Uses individual work only
- Uses drama, singing, poetry, or other methods
- Provides individual assistance as appropriate

Finally, I put together both sets of data (my informal notes and checklist jottings) for each teacher and wrote a short vignette capturing the key features of the lesson contents, teaching styles and classroom dynamics for each lesson.

5.4 The Bilingual Teachers

5.4.1 Jasmine (BTCO1)

Jasmine was a young teacher from North Africa with a postgraduate degree in linguistics from a Western University. She had been teaching English at this college for the last few years. Her class was a foundation class in their second semester where students were taking first year intensive English pre-intermediate level that focused on developing the four language skills. This class would specialize in English language studies the following year in order to become teachers of English at the end of a four-year course.

It was an all-female class. I observed her teaching a one-hour lesson in writing skills.

Jasmine first wrote some sentences on the board and set the students the task of discussing, summarizing and paraphrasing them. The students worked in pairs and individually and most interactions were in English. The students then read aloud their own sentences while the teacher wrote them on the board. The activity was from a prescribed book: *Academic Writing Course: Study Skills in English (1992)* a British textbook. As part of this activity, the term 'culture shock' was introduced, and Jasmine brought in some supplementary materials and texts about culture shock from magazines. Jasmine read the text while the students followed in their books. She paused for questions and explanation whenever they reached an unfamiliar word.

There seemed to be a lively interpersonal relationship between Jasmine and her students. It was like a motherly relationship, and there was clearly a sense of trust between them. The students expressed themselves freely while the teacher was friendly and so this seemed to have a positive impact on the students' communication. The rapport between the Jasmine and her students was demonstrated by the fruitful classroom discussion.

The idea of 'culture shock' was further explored in a discussion in English and Jasmine gave some examples of cultural differences that may cause culture shock for people going between cultures. Then students were invited to give anecdotal examples of such experiences happening to themselves or to their friends. They compared cultural differences between their own Islamic culture and that of the Western culture as had been reflected in the lesson. This lesson, I think, provided them with useful

vocabulary related to the topic of 'culture shock': vocabulary such as 'homesick', 'insomnia' and 'stress'. The lesson also gave the students an opportunity to appreciate other cultures and to think about what it might mean to move between cultures.

Finally, Jasmine gave them an assignment to do in the form of writing a paragraph about culture shock. I thought this topic was a useful basis for learning grammatical features, developing general knowledge vocabulary and for reflecting on the nature of culture and cultural differences.

Jasmine showed an awareness of problems of Arabic speakers in learning English in the way she monitored their pronunciation and provided assistance where appropriate, asking other students to pronounce the difficult words and then writing them on the board. Some students had difficulty pronouncing certain words 'persevere,' 'encounter' and 'dedication'. To help them, she pronounced the words and asked them to repeat after her. The teacher encouraged the students to ask questions in English by providing effective explanations of language features. She explained the difference between a noun and a verb and the students were asked to change the verbs tenses in the culture shock text. By doing this, Jasmine was trying to teach them to differentiate between the parts speech.

It was an interesting lesson, well timed and demonstrated. Jasmine seemed to be devoted to her teaching and worked hard toward making students positively involved in the activities.

The students also showed respect to the teacher and they appreciated her efforts in trying their best to engage in the tasks. The class in general was well managed and every student knew what to do. Jasmine was one of the only two bilingual teachers who did not use Arabic at all. The students participated and interacted positively throughout the one- hour lesson.

When we talked after the class in an informal conversation, Jasmine said that she did not believe in speaking Arabic while teaching English as a foreign language. She said the female students she was teaching would be specializing in English the following year and therefore, the classroom was the only place where they could be exposed to English language immersion. They were planning to become English teachers, so

sooner or later they too would be teaching English to students whose L1 is Arabic. She emphasized that she needed to prepare them to hear and to use English only.

Interestingly, Jasmine's strongly-held views about the importance of using English only in the classroom were not shared by most of the bilingual teachers whom I observed.

5.4.2 Jihad (BTCO2)

Jihad was a young man from an Arabic country with a Masters degree in TEFL/ TESOL from a Western university. He was obviously enthusiastic in his adoption of new teaching methods and like Jasmine, had a teaching style, which was communicative rather than prescriptive. He was popular in the college and seemed to be admired by students and staff as a teacher.

Like Jasmine, Jihad was teaching English for an introductory foundation course, where the students spent the first year studying the four English language skills before they took up their main courses. After they successfully finished this course at the end of the academic year they were to go into a specialty area of study.

I observed Jihad for a one-hour class with 21 male students. The main activity was based on a prescribed (English only) textbook designed and produced locally for the college's specific language teaching needs. The activity was about mobile phones. He started his lesson by holding up two mobile phones and then gave instructions on how to write the similarities and differences between the two phones. First, he encouraged them to talk about the topic before they moved to the writing stage. They were allowed to refer to the book for more help on how to express comparisons. He motivated students to speak in English only and provided sufficient explanations (in English) of language features such as word order in a sentence. His instructions were clear and comprehensible.

The students were given a task of writing a comparison of two different mobile phones. First they talked about each mobile phone in small groups, then wrote down the similarities and differences between them. The students had to use the key words which the teacher had put on the board to ease discussion.

During the one-hour period he tried to integrate classroom discussions of related general issues, such as mobile phone brands and their various features and the nature of mobile phone companies. They spent around fifteen minutes talking about different brands of mobile phones and the brands the students would buy. He used the communicative approach in dealing with authentic texts and trying to involve as many students as possible in the classroom discussion. He allotted plenty of time to ask questions about mobile phones in general. The students could ask the teacher directly, or their classmates, as another way of preparing themselves for writing exercise.

In order to help the students write their paragraphs, Jihad had put some phrases such as 'in my opinion', or 'I think' on the board in order to encourage them to use English only. Every student had to write his or her own sentences before they could check their work with partners/groups.

This lesson was one of the best and most dynamic lessons of all the lessons of bilingual teachers that I observed. The students worked with partners and in groups that had given each one of them a chance to take part in the task. Most students were actively involved in every step of the lesson and they seemed to really enjoy doing the collaborative work. The all took out their mobile phones and appeared to study them while taking in the English language terms and discussion about the phones. All of the students were watching and listening and trying the new language whenever they could. On the discipline level, the class appeared to be a good learning place with no report of absentees. Jihad said later in an after class conversation that he takes a roll call daily and that he is quite happy about their attendance in his classes.

Like Jasmine, Jihad spoke in English only for the whole lesson. He never responded in Arabic, despite the fact that students sometimes asked him questions in Arabic, he asked them to give all questions in English and offered his assistance on how certain questions are formed in English such as 'Wh' questions. He said later that he adopted this kind of strategy as students learn better if they are exposed to 'English only' in the classroom.

5.4.3 Omar (BTCO3)

Omar was a middle aged, highly experienced EFL teacher from another Arabic-speaking country. He also had a Masters degree from a Western university. Like Jihad and Jasmine, Omar seemed to be a dedicated teacher, but unlike them, his methods were very traditional and he spoke mainly in Arabic.

Omar was teaching elementary general English as a subject at the first year of tertiary level. The students were using *Headway Elementary (1993),* a prescribed British school resource. At the end of the first academic year, the students would select to study either 'Islamic Studies' or 'Law'.

It was a mixed male and female group doing mainly speaking and reading practice.

Omar started the lesson by introducing some new words using English language first then translating them into Arabic. The students repeated the new words for correct pronunciations. Then they gave the conjugations of some verbs and he asked the students to put them into sentences. Omar explained all language features and their usage in Arabic and he gave instructions on how to do the tasks in Arabic too.

During the fifty minutes of the lesson, the students worked individually only. Although the teacher provided individual assistance, his use of the grammar translation method resulted in him dominating throughout the whole lesson as he explained the structures of English grammar. The students were only answering the questions raised by the teacher and so there was hardly any communicative interaction.

While he spoke mainly in Arabic Omar gave a number of examples of the new vocabulary in English, but he always gave those examples immediately after into Arabic. When he thought they did not understand in English only, he gave the equivalents in Arabic. He gave the students time to practice the 'going to' future tense and asked questions such as 'what are you going to do after the lesson' in English? He focused on pronunciation and asked students to repeat words after him to ensure the correct pronunciation of words with silent letter sounds, such as the 'r' in 'farm' and 'car'.

There was an occasion where a student sneezed in the class. He used this as an opportunity to talk (in Arabic) about cultural differences and the different ways people react when someone sneezes. He taught them the phrase 'bless you!' and then explained its equivalent in Arabic. He added that when someone sneezes, the people around him/ her would say 'bless you' then that person would reply 'you too' or 'thank you'. The students then practiced saying 'bless you' and 'thank you'.

The lesson was taught traditionally; in other words, the teacher was the information provider, while the students were passive receivers. Omar worked in a fatherly way and was very kind with them. However, my impression was that this was a chaotic classroom with students casually walking into the class at different times, up to 20 minutes after the class began, without apologizing or greeting the teacher. Other individuals came in about ten minutes before the English lesson finished.

To me the main weakness with the lesson was in classroom management overall. For example, Omar was not strict in taking the classroom register and as a result, the students did not feel to attend on time.

The other point was that the students were clearly bored especially those who were not called to answer any question or to take part in the classroom interaction. Many did not attempt try to engage in the lesson at all, and just talked amongst themselves. The teacher did not have a strategy where students might be called on to participate; instead, he called the same students who were willing to participate and who raised their hands whenever a question was asked. Omar seemed not to have learned students' names, so that it is likely that they thought that he would not remember who participated and who did not, who attended the class and who did not. In fact, only a few students took part in the discussion and exercises and so the rest of students were not kept alert and failed to take turns in the activities.

According to my own professional judgment, Omar spoke too much in Arabic and made no real attempt to engage the students in an English-language environment. However, the main problem was not his over-use of Arabic – it was his lack of classroom management skills and lack of pedagogical strategies that would engage the students' interest while enabling them to learn.

5.4.4 Saeed (BTCO4)

Saeed was a young teacher who had spent a number of years abroad studying English as a Second or Foreign Language in Europe. He had his undergraduate and Master degrees from England and had gained his PhD in Education from a leading Western university, and so Saeed is comparatively very well qualified teacher in the EFL educational field and has been working in this college for the last eight years.

The students in this class were first year tertiary students, twenty males and one female. English courses last two semesters at this college as part of the school curriculum.

The medium of instruction at this college is Arabic and so English is taught as a subject. The main textbook used is Headway Elementary, a British book. However, Saeed was not really using this book but rather using different materials from different sources.

The main activity was matching verbs with pictures. Every student was given a set of pictures and a sheet with sentences to match and write down the verbs under the correct picture. They were given a task to do individually or discuss it with their partner for five minutes. The teacher then went through the task to ensure that the students had done it correctly.

Although the pictures were simple for the students and clear enough to be matched with the suitable verbs, the teacher explained everything in Arabic. The teacher dominated the activity while the students' role was to read aloud the verbs they had matched with the pictures and there was quite a lot of grammar drilling.

During the fifty minutes of the English lesson, the students worked in pairs and individually only. For example:

> Student A: Do you like playing sport?
>
> Student B: Yes, I do or No I don't.

In the second half of the lesson Saeed gave the students a reinforcement task. They were given twelve pictures and twelve phrases for students to practice. While they were doing this task, he went around the class to help and provided individual

assistance where necessary. He paid attention to students' pronunciation. The students repeated the words after the teacher for correct pronunciation. From time to time he asked them to give the meanings of some verbs. When they failed to do so, he first explained the meanings in English and then translated them into Arabic.

The activities seemed to be carried out in a mechanical manner. He used one main technique: one student asked a question based on the pictures, the other student gave either a positive (yes) or a negative (no) response accordingly.

I could see that some students were quite bored by Saeed's repetitious use of this method for fifty minutes. After a while they started not bothering to respond. Some were looking around the room and others were drawing on their papers. He spoke Arabic most of the time, especially to give instructions and to make sure that they understood what their task was in the activity. In fact he did not use any English at all apart from presenting structures.

He used Arabic to maintain classroom discipline. It was a quiet and well-ordered classroom despite the fact that the students seemed to me to become increasingly bored.

Saeed said after the class in that he did not believe in his students' ability to learn English by being taught in English. He felt that English was better taught through Arabic.

5.4.5 Ahmed (BTCO5)

Ahmed is a middle-aged teacher with a Masters degree in English as Foreign Language from a Western university.

When I observed him he was teaching first year students in an undergraduate course taking English as a subject and he was using An Intermediate level General English.

The lesson was taught almost entirely in Arabic. At this college, the medium of instruction is Arabic so that there would be an expectation that the students would also be taught English in Arabic.

Once again, the lesson was delivered in a routine manner that did not incorporate much variety or offer much stimulation.

The task was to complete missing information in a Cloze test by listening to a conversation played on a tape recorder. Ahmed played the tape three times at least to assist the students to fill in the gaps in the four dialogues. Then the students read out their dialogues for the teacher so that he could write the completed sentences on the board.

The listening activity was given to students to practice present simple, present continues for 'future use' and 'past simple'.

During the sixty minutes of the English lesson, the students worked individually only. They mainly answered the questions raised by the teacher. Mechanical drills were repeated and, again, the students soon showed the same signs of boredom as I had seen in the previous two classrooms – looking around, talking and doodling.

There was very little interaction in this teacher-centred classroom and the students had little chance to figure out the meanings of some of the new vocabulary before he gave the meanings to them. Ahmed translated every single word even when there was no apparent need to do so. Very few students took part in the activity; and in fact the teacher focused on the same few students throughout the class. The rest of the class was listening only. The lesson was quite rich in content, but as I observed in relation to Omar and Saeed, was facilitated in a mechanical manner which lacked any dynamic techniques for engaging the students in the learning materials.

5.5 Summary of Observations of Bilingual Teachers

All of the five classes observed were with first year tertiary college students. Four were in the 'foundation year' in which the students study English as a pre-requisite before going into the main course. Given that they were studying English only for that year, I would have expected that more of the instruction would have been given in English (as was done in Jasmine and Jihad's class). Ahmed's class on the other hand was in the first year of a course in a college in which the medium of instruction was Arabic.

All of the teachers gave clear and comprehensible input and instructions, provided appropriate explanations of language features and gave appropriate practice in language forms. However, there were marked differences between them in their

usage (or non-usage) of English in processes of teaching and classroom management and in the degree to which they managed to engage their students in meaningful learning.

Three of them (Omar, Saeed and Ahmed) used Arabic extensively. They explained the new words, gave instructions and translated almost everything into Arabic. These three teachers did not provide opportunities for the students to use English, nor did they give them much exposure to spoken English. The lessons were teacher-centred and students had no opportunities to work in groups or to express their opinions and ideas.

This is understandable given the pressure to produce results and the difficulties that many students seem to experience. However, I believe that they over-used Arabic and that this probably had some negative effects on the students' learning and certainly on their interest in English.

On the other hand, the two bilingual teachers who did not use Arabic (Jasmine and Jihad) displayed a much more sophisticated and engaging pedagogical approach in general, which clearly involved the students, judging by their body language and general level of attention. They demonstrated the principle that learning a foreign language comes by trying to use it and think in it and, that for most of the students the classroom is the sole place where they could do so.

In addition to engaging the students through a variety of methods, I felt that by teaching only in English, Jasmine and Jihad were able to provide the students with opportunities to speak English, to minimise code-switching and to encourage the development of inter-language in an atmosphere where feelings of anxiety and frustration were reduced.

While the other three teachers used the textbook as the sole basis for instruction, Jasmine and Jihad mainly used supplementary materials and authentic texts. They had an eclectic approach, while Omar, Saeed and Ahmed mostly stayed with grammar translation.

These two seemed to be exceptional teachers in comparison with the other three that I observed as part of this research, and in comparison with most of the bilingual teachers with whom I have taught in the past or have observed during my period as a

school inspector. Despite the fact that their class-sizes were relatively big, Jasmine and Jihad managed to get students involved in the activities. They had a mixture of teacher-centered and student-centered activity depending on the nature of the activities and tasks. They used no Arabic at all and conducted the class discussions in English. Both of them said after the class that they wanted to train the students to listen and use English only. Jasmine said to me after the class that she did not want to use Arabic, because the students in her class were going to specialize in English language after they had successfully finished the foundation course.

It was very interesting for me to see different classroom practices and to compare the different language pedagogies. Even though all the five had teaching certificates and degrees from western universities, I was struck by the fact that three of them still maintained traditional ways of delivering the language input in the classrooms. On the other hand, it was refreshing to see Jasmine and Jihad linking the activities prescribed in the textbook with real life situations and social life experiences and in giving students a degree of autonomy and voice in their lessons. They also seemed to have a commitment to teaching and a passion for teaching that was lacking in the other three teachers.

5.6 The Monolingual Teachers

In the second part of this chapter I present the data from the classroom observations of the five monolingual speakers of English – three native English speakers and two non-native speaker teachers. As explained earlier, I am using the term 'monolingual' here as a short-hand for 'non-Arabic speaking'. Of the 'monolinguals', some speak languages other than English. Some who come from non-Western countries such as India may in fact be native English speakers in that English is their first or only language and others speak English only (and therefore are truly 'monolingual'.

The monolingual teachers that I observed came from different parts of the world. As before, each teacher was given a code and a pseudonym:

John (MTCO1), Desrene (MTCO4), and Patricia (MTCO5 were from native English-speaking countries.

(MTCO2) Sarah and Eva (MTCO3) were from non-native English–speaking countries). All of the monolingual teachers were qualified and had been teaching English in a range of different contexts.

5.6.1 John (MTCO1)

John is a middle-aged, native-speaking English teacher with a good sense of humor. He seemed to be very committed to his work as a teacher and was popular in the college. John was teaching general English to second year students who were studying this language as part of Arts major. It was an all female class.

He started the lesson by taking the attendance then asked the students to say what they thought the words 'persuade' and 'persuasion' meant. He provided many examples so that students would understand the meanings based on an oral discussion. The activity was based on *New Interchange (1998)*, a prescribed American textbook.

John used acting, miming and gestures to convey the meanings of new words. The students spent a while guessing the meanings and giving examples. They worked out the meanings by watching the miming. Some students tried to guess the meanings by giving Arabic words and because the teacher was a non-Arabic speaker and had no way to know this, he asked those he thought were a little ahead of the others to help translate what they had said into English. I thought asking other students to do necessary translation was an interesting technique that other monolinguals could adopt.

During the fifty-minute lesson, John presented the lesson clearly and provided effective explanations of language features in a level of English that the students could follow. He provided a mix of activities to maintain interest and foster learning and on several occasions had the class in fits of laughter as he caricatured himself and used his walking stick to point to students in a dramatic way. He motivated the students by putting on a hilarious act with his acting and mimicry. After that the students worked quietly individually and in pairs while the teacher assisted them, still using his walking stick in an amusing way. I felt that the laughter was the most important ingredient in this lesson.

Even though John was teacher-centred in some ways, the students were relaxed. They were not scared to speak and seemed to be fully engaged in all the activities, guessing the meanings of words and trying their best to understand and do the activities. They attempted to ask questions in English even though they struggled to do so and kept complaining about how hard it was for them to ask the questions in English.

At one stage, the words 'bark' and 'barking' came up. He imitated the sound of a dog barking. The students found it funny and were interested to learn this word. John even mimicked the difference between dogs' barking and puppies' barking. He told them that wild male and female dogs stay together for life. If one of them died then their partner would die too. The students did not know about this because keeping dogs is culturally not acceptable in Oman. It is forbidden to keep dogs at home in Muslim culture, however Muslim take care of dogs for guarding their property.

This lesson was full of life and everyone was alert because of the way he would spring questions on each one of them. What I liked about John's style was that he moved from one corner of the class to the other easily and frequently, thus creating a dynamic learning space and encouraging all students to participate. He gave plenty of opportunities for the female students to talk. I liked the idea of imitating sounds rather than explaining the new words straightforwardly. I believe that the students would have remembered the demonstrations rather than the verbal explanations.

Obviously, the lesson was conducted in English only and it seemed to work well, because his approach was so communicative. They enjoyed the mimicry and acting out, although some students complained about how difficult it all was. John's friendliness seemed to reduce the students' anxiety about their lack of English skills. Everybody showed some sort of interest by taking part in the tasks even though the class size was large.

5.6.2 Desrene (MTCO4)

Desrene was another native English speaker. She was teaching reading and writing skills in the foundation course using a locally made prescribed textbook, *English Language Studies and Academic Skills*. The textbook was exclusively made for the students at the particular college. The students at the end of the second semester

would start their main course of studies. There were twelve male and eight female students doing reading and writing activities.

Desrene engaged the students with a variety of teaching techniques. She started the lesson by marking the attendance, and then gave a warm-up activity; passing small slips of paper for them to write down three things that they did at the weekend. One student was asked to write five things because he was absent the whole week. After five minutes she collected the slips with no names on them and distributed them to the students, but in a different order. She then asked one student at a time to read what s/he had on the slip.

She then passed a roll of tissue paper to all of the students. Each one took a bit of it and so did the teacher. To explain the task, the teacher first talked about her teaching experience in four sentences, one for each bit of tissue paper that she had torn off (one fact for each sentence). Then in the same way the students tore up their pieces of paper and gave the same number of reasons why they chose to study at this college. They started with the most important points followed by the least important.

Throughout the lesson, Desrene gave clear instructions which all the students seemed to comprehend. She wrote the main points on the board to ensure that students would get the idea of each task. She asked them to add some more points to the list to expand it.

Desrene asked them to give the meaning of the word 'location', but most of them responded in Arabic. First, she gave examples using the word 'location', then some students looked it up in the dictionary and gave the Arabic translation so students soon knew the meaning. In order to make sure that the meaning was clear, she put the word in several sentences on the board for the rest of the class, so that they could see the meaning and this procedure worked well. She provided a mix of activities to maintain interest and foster learning. The students worked in pairs to write a paragraph and, while they were doing this task, she went around the class to give assistance as required. She also asked the students to swap in order to work in different pairings.

Desrene developed a classroom discussion of general issues and news and asked about each student's experience in the college. She used a variety of different texts,

from the local textbook which had been designed by the staff at this college, based on students' needs (and which was being used as a main syllabus). She drew a chart on the board as a guide for students to write an essay. She divided the chart into cells to explain how to formulate the essay, (including title, topic sentence and supporting sentences the body of the essay and conclusion). She made a good use of the board in order to help clarify the concepts to the students. I believe all of the students understood the key words and ideas that she had presented.

I liked this lesson very much. Effective and logical progression of sequences of instruction and practice were maintained. I also liked it because she communicated well with the students and engaged them in authentic interactions. The students were motivated and I could see their engagement and how they responded to the different steps of the lesson. Every student demonstrated interest and a positive attitude. Desrene displayed a range of strategies to compensate for her lack of Arabic, which did not seem to be a disadvantage in her teaching.

5.6.3 Patricia (MTCO5)

Patricia was another highly experienced teacher who was a native English speaker. She was teaching English at the foundation level first year students, using a local syllabus called *English Language Studies and Academic Skills*, which had been designed by the staff. The students would go on to specialize (e.g., Business Management) after they had completed their introductory course. There were [8]twenty-five female students doing reading and writing activities.

Patricia's teaching style was firm and consistent yet lively. She started the lesson by introducing the key word 'auction'. She held a handbag and acted like an auctioneer and put a price on it. The students raised the price from 15 to 20 Omani Riyals. She also introduced other related new words such as 'bidding', 'buyers' and 'auctioneer'. This presentation and discussion took around ten minutes. She gave a brief explanation of bidding and auctions and said that these are common practices in Canada and America. People gather to sell and/or buy a property a house or a car, for example, and they bid different amounts of money. The buyer is the person who made the highest bid.

[8] Even though this college is a co-education based, some classes are single sex at foundation level

She asked the students to make groups of 4-5 and gave each group a name, then assigned each group a set of questions to answer based on the theme and key words. Patricia allowed 5 minutes to complete this exercise, then a representative of every group wrote that group's answers on the board, which had been divided into 5 cells. After that, she held an auction for the handbag and every group had to make a bid. However, due to time constraints, the teacher ended up playing the auctioneer role while the groups gave different prices for the items she was holding.

Patricia then gave them a grammar exercise in which the students had to identify the mistakes in 10 sentences (each sentence offered an alternative of two incorrect and one correct response). The students had to read out the correct sentences from the multiple-choice list. She tried her best to make the students understand why the sentences were wrong and why they had to change them in the reading activity. As the students read out their responses she wrote down the correct ones on the board and asked them to say why the incorrect ones were wrong. I thought this was a very good way to teach grammar using English only, and I believe the students learned the grammatical forms from the examples and simple explanations that she gave.

The students were responsive to the whole lesson activity and they were willing to learn the new words and use them in the bidding activity. I also liked the way she formed group-work activities. There was some sort of competitiveness among the students in the group discussion. Each group tried to do the best they could in order to gain the teacher's satisfaction.

Patricia provided a mixture of activities. She tried to engage most of the students in each activity. There was a good interaction in the class that helped create a good rapport among them. I liked the way she integrated a structured grammar activity with the 'fun', communicative, activities. As with Desrene and John, the clarity of her communication with the students and her ability to motivate and engage them seemed to compensate for her lack of Arabic.

5.6.4 Sarah (MTCO2)

Sarah was from a non-English speaking background. She had been teaching at this college for the last four years. She was a sociable person and seemed to be respected by the English language department staff and students. She was teaching English at

the foundation level before the students went on to specialize in different fields the following year. It was a large, all-female class and the lesson focused on superstitions in various cultures-an activity from *Intermediate Matters (1991),* a British textbook.

Sarah strove to make the lesson interesting, gave clear input, and included a variety of presentation techniques. Despite this, she struggled to engage the interest or attention of the majority of learners.

She started the lesson by writing some phrases on the board and the students read the same phrases from their own textbooks; the 'signs' or omens of good luck and bad luck. The students were asked to guess the meanings of each omen written on the board. The omens were from different cultures.

She encouraged them to talk about superstitions in different cultures and how they affect peoples' lives. When she introduced omens of good luck and omens of bad luck, she gave many examples of how they are used. The students first exchanged ideas about different beliefs across cultures. Then, towards the end of this part of the activity, the teacher asked the students to talk about signs of good luck and bad luck in Oman and in other cultures.

However, most of students were not paying attention. They were laughing and talking amongst themselves. They did not try to respond or express their ideas in English. Sarah was trying to encourage them to speak in English, but all their responses were in Arabic and there was obviously a breakdown in communication.

She then asked the students to open their textbooks to talk about or describe the pictures and give the meanings of the unknown vocabulary. Some students tried to give the meanings or some examples in English or by miming, but she was unable to really understand their attempts. She then asked the students to listen to different superstitions on the tape recorder and try to repeat what was said about each one. To consolidate this activity, the teacher gave students a listening exercise; they had to look at four pictures on their books and write down a title underneath one of them. The only ones doing so were those at the front. Some of them were able to respond by looking at the pictures and writing the titles while most students took no notice.

The classroom was crowded and did not allow her to move freely around the class, thus preventing the students from taking part in the activity. Those who were sitting at the back of the class did not pay attention and continued to talk noisily amongst themselves. Sarah focused on the students in front and so that two students dominated the activity. They answered the teacher's questions and gave examples, so they were seen as good at English, while others students were not encouraged to participate.

The most problematic thing I observed in this class was that the majority of students seemed disengaged and disrupted the few who wanted to learn. When nine girls walked into the class about twenty minutes after the lesson started Sarah did not show any concern. The class was noisy and seemed to be out of control.

Nevertheless, she carried on with the lesson ignoring the source of noise I felt disturbed by the fact that although this seemed on the surface like an interesting and well-presented lesson, it was spoiled by lack of communication and lack of student management.

5.6.5 Eva (MTCO3)

Eva was another young teacher from a non-English speaking background who had been teaching English in Oman for the last year. She taught technical English at foundation level to a mixed class who would be in the Engineering Faculty after they had passed this course.

The students were doing a reading exercise from a British textbook called *English for Science and Technology (1982)*. Eva started the activity by passing out small slips with time markers written on them, then she asked the students to read them out aloud. She then read a story that included those time markers and asked them to put each time marker in the right order. After she made sure that they had grasped the idea, she passed out some sections of sentences and asked the students to build up another story using the same time markers which she had given earlier.

During the one and half hours, the students worked individually, in pairs and in groups, while the teacher went around the class to check and assist on each students' progress. She also explained some difficult words and wrote the verbs on the board for students to read aloud. She gave clear instructions before any task was carried out.

She asked some students to read the instruction then she read it again to double check and just in case they needed further assistance.

Eva was very dynamic in the classroom. She tried her best to motivate and stimulate the students to learn English by praising them whenever they produced correct responses. She provided effective explanations of language features such as pacing, intonation and stress. She read some portions of a story to show her students the correct intonation, stress and pacing. Eva read each word and asked them to repeat it after her. She focused on stress and intonation as well as pronunciation. She also asked individual students to say the word in order to make sure that all students got a chance to pronounce the words correctly.

Eva used the textbook as a main basis for instruction, but also used supplementary materials and overhead projector slides. She brought a box containing a collection of objects and asked students to pick up an object and describe it to the rest of the class using verbs that they had learnt recently. Other students had to guess what the object was, then the teacher passed the box to another student to pick up another object to describe. The rest of the students had to guess the name of the object and so on.

Towards the end of the lesson, the students were assigned to write a short paragraph using the key words and verbs and time markers introduced at the beginning of the lesson. Every student was asked to write his/her own paragraph in fifteen minutes.

The students showed a high level of engagement and obviously enjoyed participating in the small dialogues at the front of the class. This lesson was one of the most enjoyable lessons among the classes I had observed. I really admired the way the teacher constructed the lesson in logical steps and the way the students were engaged in every follow up exercise.

Most of the students were given a chance to take part in the activity. The teacher showed a passion for and understanding of students' individual differences and so she tried to help every one of them to achieve the lesson's objectives. Her lack of Arabic language did not seem to be a significant issue in the context of the overall success of the lesson.

5.7 Summary of Monolingual Teacher Observations

As with the bilingual classes, the monolingual classes I observed were at all at first year level except for one second year level class.

All of the teachers spoke clearly managed to communicate with the students in English and used a variety of techniques to engage the students in learning. Explanations were in English, reinforced by lots of examples and acting out to illustrate difficult vocabulary and concepts. All but one succeeded in holding the interest and attention of the class and gave what I thought to be lively, productive, lessons.

Some of the teachers made use of the better students they had in the class to explain new words to others in Arabic. Some got them to use the dictionary to look up the difficult words. When on a few occasions students used Arabic, the teachers (apart from Sarah) insisted that they translate or give short sentences in English, so that they would understand what they were saying.

Most of them tried to introduce news and current affairs in an informal classroom discussion whenever this was appropriate. John and Patricia talked about the cultural differences between Oman and the West and gave examples of such issues and compared the culture in Oman and their own cultures.

The monolingual teachers generally used handouts, real objects and supplementary materials. They used extra materials for illustration and explanatory purposes, as well as to maintain students' interests and motivation. Clearly, the teachers used communicative approach, rather than grammar translation (which seemed to be the predominant method amongst bilingual teachers).

5.8 A Brief Comparison

Of the ten teachers that I observed I would say that six gave successful lessons. Jasmine, Jihad, John, Desrene, Patricia and Eva were successful in terms of engaging the students in active and effective language learning. Two of the five bilingual lessons and four of the five monolingual lessons worked well, in my opinion.

While Jasmine and Jihad engaged the students in a variety of strategies, spoke almost exclusively in English and had a strongly communicative styles of teaching, Omar, Saeed and Ahmed conducted their lessons largely in Arabic, were more teacher-centered, relied on grammar-translation and according to my observations, were less successful in engaging the students' attention and interest.

Amongst the monolingual teachers, there were four teachers who engaged the students with communicative styles and varied activities, while Sarah, despite her attempts to engage the students with interesting material and activities, had difficulty in holding their attention or managing the disruptive and inattentive students.

Interestingly, all of the six successful lessons (out of the total of ten), whether conducted by bilingual teachers or monolingual teachers, were conducted mainly or exclusively in English, and all of them engaged the students in a meaningful and lively way. This suggests that what is important is not whether teachers are bilingual or monolingual, but how effectively the teachers teach, and how well they can manage, engage and stimulate the students in lively learning situations.

The ten observations taken together suggest the importance of other elements of pedagogy, apart from the language of instruction: having a friendly, communicative style, providing a variety of activities, giving plenty of opportunities for students to practice and express themselves in English and putting them in situations where they were constantly challenged to speak in English in order to communicate with the teacher. The six successful teachers also had engaged their classes, to a certain degree with their own personal traits, through which their commitment to teach and engage the students in learning, was implicitly reflected.

On the other hand, the four less successful lessons seemed to indicate by negative example the importance of such of basic classroom management skills and the ability to engage students' interest and will to learn. Two of the three 'teacher-centered' bilingual teachers (Saeed and Ahmed) kept good class order through their authority as teachers, but they failed to engage the students' interest in learning.

After the initial stage of my research, the classroom observations, I was already confronted by a much more complex set of questions than those with which I began. The usage of L1 or L2 in the EFL classroom was indeed an issue. However, my initial

hunch, that bilingual teachers might be more effective teachers of EFL, was being challenged. It was the monolingual teachers instead who, to me, seemed to be teaching more effectively; at least, in this tiny sample in which the findings cannot be generalized. However, to understand the role of L1 and L2 in the EFL classroom, it became clear that this issue had to be understood in the context of language teaching and classroom pedagogy issues more generally. I will take this issue up in Chapters 9 and 10.

In my interviews with teachers and with students I was able to delve into these issues more explicitly. In the next chapter, I present the findings of my fifteen student interviews. These findings led me to further build up a more complex picture of effective pedagogical practice.

Chapter Six: Experiences and Perceptions of Students

6.1 Introduction

My exploration of bilingual and monolingual EFL teaching in Oman needed to include data about the students' experience and views of bilingual and monolingual teaching. In this Chapter I present the findings in relation to the fifteen students whom I interviewed at five different higher education colleges.

The students spoke about their attitudes to learning English, their perceptions about the relative merits of monolingual versus monolingual bilingual teaching, and about the teaching methods they found most effective.

The students' views mirrored to a large extent my impressions and observations described in the previous chapter.

There was unanimous message about minimizing the amount of Arabic usage and so overall, the students made it clear that they thought the use of Arabic should be reduced. They also made it clear than they preferred interactive, communicative styles of teaching with a variety of activities to maintain their interest.

Collectively, the students' opinions seemed to support the view that there are benefits and drawbacks on either side. Some gave reasons why they prefer to have bilingual teachers, while others said they preferred monolingual teachers, and they gave a different set of reasons.

6.2 Who the Students were

I set out to interview students who would reflect a spread of language competency. I therefore requested that the teachers of English at each of the five colleges nominate three students for me to interview: a weak, an average and a good student. Most of those students had experienced studying English with both monolingual and bilingual teachers at different times in the last nine years. The students interviewed were in different courses of English: some were taking English as a major, some were studying English as a single subject, some were studying English for Special Purposes (ESP) and some of them were in foundation courses. Six of them had been in the classes than I had observed. However, I did not ask them directly about their current

teachers, so there would be no necessary overlap between the student data and teacher data. The interviews were conducted in Arabic according to the schedule of questions in (Appendix C). However as I was conducting semi-structured interviews, I did not adhere rigidly to the set questions and at times followed up their initial responses with further questions.

6.3 Who their Teachers were

Overwhelmingly, the students reported that they had had more experience being taught by bilingual teachers, rather than monolingual teachers. However, thirteen of the fifteen had experienced some teaching with monolingual English teachers. As would be expected, the most common experience, especially in school, was with bilingual Arabic speaking teachers, including Omanis, Tunisians, Egyptians, Sudanese, Jordanians and other Arabic-speaking teachers.

Of the students' 'monolingual' English teachers, most were non-native speakers from the Indian subcontinent (including their teachers in the school system). Typical responses to the question about the background of their English teachers were:

> … My teachers were all bilingual teachers from Oman and Egypt at different levels except class 12 where my teacher of English was from India (S.1).
>
> … There were bilingual and monolingual teachers from Oman and India at all my schooling levels (S.10).

The students' experience with teachers from India and Sri-Lanka were mainly when they were at school. However, some had been taught by native speakers of English from the USA, Europe, Australia and Canada since they began at tertiary college, in addition to teachers from the Indian subcontinent:

Table 9, below, shows the linguistic and national backgrounds of the teachers as reported by the students.

Table 9. Teacher backgrounds

	Bilinguals	**NEST Monolinguals**	**NNEST Monolinguals**
Nationality	Oman, Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, Sudan	Britain, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand	Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Iran, Poland, Bulgaria
Linguistic Backgrounds	Arabic L1 English L2	English L1 Little or no Arabic	L1: English, Urdu, Hindi, Tamil, Farsi, Polish, Bulgarian L2: English Little or no Arabic

6.4 Students' Preferences for Bilingual or Monolingual EFL Teachers

The main finding is that there seemed to be a fairly even division between those students who preferred bilingual and those who preferred monolingual teaching.

Six of the fifteen students said that they would prefer learning English with bilingual teachers. Six said they would prefer monolingual teachers, and the remaining three had mixed feelings and thoughts about their preference.

6.4.1 Reasons for Preferring Bilinguals

The reasons for preferring bilinguals were given as follows:

- Bilingual Arabic- speaking teachers share the same language and cultural backgrounds and this helps their learning and communication.
- Students could get more help from bilingual teachers in terms of clarification of meanings, translation and explanation of difficult vocabulary

Bilingual teachers had better classroom control. Typical comments were:

> I prefer bilingual teachers at primary and foundation levels especially. We prefer bilingual teachers because most students would need some translation of new vocabulary into Arabic since we don't have sufficient English knowledge (S13).

Student (S15) said not only did bilingual teachers use the same language but they also had more powerful classroom control and discipline:

> I prefer bilingual teachers…. We share the same language and I think they are more capable of managing and disciplining the classroom … when the class is controlled, we learn more because our focus would be on the lesson only. Bilingual teachers show more concern and take full responsibility towards us as EFL learners. They understand what our needs are and act accordingly. We feel at ease to tell them about our learning problems … [we] feel they understand us better…(S15).

Another referred to the benefits of sharing a common language and cultural background with the teacher:

> I prefer bilingual teachers because we share the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds. They know my needs and language problems. I thus feel more comfortable with bilingual teachers… If I don't understand a point in the lesson, I would go back to the teacher and ask for clarification. I would also discuss any problem not necessarily related to classroom but even a personal one because I feel closer to bilingual teachers…(S7).

6.4.2 Reasons for Preferring Monolinguals

Six of the fifteen students stated that they would prefer monolingual teachers as teachers of English, giving the following reasons:

- Monolingual teachers encourage students to work hard and encourage more classroom discussion
- Students become independent learners
- Students acquire more knowledge with monolinguals
- Students are motivated to become fluent if they have to use English language only as it is a 'real life' context for communication
- Students have opportunities to learn native-like pronunciation
- Being *forced* to listen and learn in English increases interest in the language
- Monolingual teachers rely less on text books and use more supplementary materials
- Monolingual teachers try to integrate the four language skills
- Monolingual teachers facilitate better use of the dictionary

Monolingual teachers tend to correct language mistakes more. Typical comments were:

> Currently at my college level monolingual teachers are British, Australians and Canadians and they use a lot of teaching approaches. They use new techniques and there is always innovation in the class. This motivates us a lot. We improve our pronunciation but in general our teachers focus on the four language skills (S5).

> With monolingual teachers, we don't understand 100% of the lesson but we get more practice in English because we have no choice but to try to speak in English only. We gain more vocabulary, which helps expand our English knowledge. Monolingual teaching also makes us develop positive habits in using the dictionary that we won't get with bilingual teachers (S7).

> Monolingual teachers are more effective, although I personally have had only a little experience with them. When I studied English with monolingual teachers, we were encouraged to use English only. We learned to use the dictionary to look up some difficult words and vocabulary and so we became good dictionary users. We didn't learn this technique from bilingual teachers because they didn't need the dictionary at all. Bilingual teachers used Arabic language almost all the time. I think using Arabic too much distracted our focus and slowed our learning process.

> As a consequence, this left us reluctant to use dictionaries and more dependent on the teacher as the only source of information (S9).
>
> Monolingual teachers are more effective simply because they have no access to Arabic which means that students have no choice but to learn in English only. I believe that when English is 100% used in the classroom, this challenges students to work hard in order to use it more and minimize our Arabic use. Being obliged to use English only has increased our interest in learning it. Also, bilingual teachers stick to the textbooks while monolingual teachers use other materials besides the textbook. This helps us to discuss different topics freely. The monolingual teachers also try to integrate the four language skills. They select topics they think worth discussing in the class (S10).

Three of the students did not have a clear preference either way, acknowledging the relative merits of each. They thought that monolingual teaching was more beneficial in the later stages and more suitable for tertiary level education. Students S11 and S14 said that both monolingual teaching and bilingual teaching had a role. The monolingual approach had helped improve students' listening skills, while the bilingual approach was more helpful at foundation classes and for beginners in terms of facilitating language problems.

These three said that bilingual teachers were better for beginners at primary and foundation levels but as they gradually move to higher levels, monolingual teachers were more suitable because the students at this point had more knowledge and needed to develop more language skills.

Typical comments were:

> My personal preference would go for monolingual teachers but honestly speaking, it was a good idea that we started learning English with bilingual teachers because we had so many difficulties understanding teachers when they spoke in English only. Arabic usage should be eliminated gradually because we need Arabic in the early stages but as we go further to higher levels, we should use English only (S11).
>
> I prefer studying English with monolingual teachers because we should learn the language from native speakers. We acquire whatever s/he says in the class because this will help us get used to listening to English. However, I would recommend bilingual teachers for beginners since they require a lot of assistance. Lack of English knowledge makes students feel secure to start with teachers of the same language. As university students, monolingual teachers are more suitable because we are mature enough and could have a sound experience in learning English (S14).

One student (S5) made a distinction (unprompted by me) between teachers who were native English speakers ("European monolingual teachers") and those who were non-native ("Indian") teachers. He said that monolingual teachers from Europe and North America were the best to serve at the tertiary English levels, clearly implying a preference for native-English speaking teachers who represented and reflected western culture, rather than teachers from the Indian sub-continent:

> Either qualified bilingual teachers or European monolingual teachers [are more effective] because the bilingual teachers would understand our needs and learning problems, while the monolingual teachers would give us an opportunity to listen to native speaking teachers to get correct pronunciations and improve our listening skills. Monolingual teachers use a variety of approaches that make us like learning. With Indians however, we face a lot of difficulty in listening to unclear pronunciations due to their different accents. They don't pay attention to our problems; most of them have come to improve their living conditions. In addition, European or American teachers focus on the four learning skills and so listening is one skill that native English-speaking monolingual teachers most emphasize (S5).

This student raised an interesting point about the qualification of teachers. He said that the teachers should be properly qualified. (Currently not all monolingual teachers have to have a teaching qualification). He emphasized that either bilingual or native English-speaking (NEST) monolinguals should teach English, but that in his opinion, there were problems with some non-native English speakers (NNESTs).

6.5 How Teachers should Use Arabic when Teaching English

Interestingly, while six of the fifteen students said they would prefer monolingual teachers, all fifteen said that some aspects of English lessons were better carried out in Arabic.

The students had clear views about how much and for what purposes Arabic should be used in English lessons. The majority view was that Arabic should be kept to the minimum, but that grammar points, new and difficult words should be explained in Arabic:

> I think teachers should confine themselves to using Arabic only when they have to. All parts should be done in English but if students don't get it, then verbs, new words meanings and paragraphs should be clarified in Arabic. …Grammar points and tasks' instructions should also be explained in Arabic (S1).

> Arabic should be limited to vocabulary and some grammar points. Our teacher at the college strives hard to use English only yet sometimes we do use Arabic when he feels that we need to know the word in Arabic (S9).
>
> Most students would not understand the meanings till they were translated into Arabic. ..Grammar translated in terms of different tenses and their usages (S7).

Apart from language structures and other grammar points, these students said that there were other occasions when Arabic usage was crucial, i.e., giving instructions, classroom management and discipline were more effective if communicated in Arabic:

> Arabic should be used for classroom management, giving instructions for the tasks, and giving meanings of difficult words when necessary. However, Arabic usage should be kept to its minimum because we must be trained to use English only from the beginning (S2).
>
> Classroom management, difficult parts of the language lessons such as structural points and giving instructions for the tasks. I think most bilingual teachers were reluctant to use Arabic language but had no other way to get their message across but speak in Arabic (S15).

One student only (S6) thought that Omani students would always need Arabic at all schooling levels at some point. The reason he gave was as students did not get sufficient exposure to English outside the classroom, their English knowledge was too low to cope with 'English only':

> It depends on the students' leve.. At primary level, bilingual teachers used Arabic to give the meanings of difficult words. Grammar should also be illustrated in Arabic. As Omani students, I think we need Arabic at all levels because we don't have enough exposure to English language outside the class and therefore, our English knowledge is still low (S6).

Two students (S9 and S14) were the only ones who complained directly that bilingual teachers used too much Arabic.

It is interesting that while the majority view from students was that teachers should minimise their use of Arabic, (and my clear impression from the classroom observations was that bilingual teachers used Arabic far too much), only two of the fifteen students made this comment directly.

Overall, the students' message was that Arabic was essential on certain occasions in the English language classrooms for the explanation of grammatical points,

vocabulary, and new words and for classroom management. However, teachers should try to minimize their usage of Arabic.

6.6 Preferred Styles of Language Teaching

Most of the students said they preferred a variety of teaching approaches. They said that varied techniques such as pair work, individual work, presentations and group work, gave them more ways of interacting with the teachers and with their peers. They clearly appreciated interactive styles of teaching that involved them personally in the English lessons.

Some of their comments were:

> I like a variety of approaches; we used to do a lot of group discussions based on selected topics in pairs and individually. This was done in form of writing essays. The teachers assigned us to write a topic about Oman or write an essay in English relevant to our law studies. As undergraduate students we miss this now… The focus now is on pair work and individual work only. No more handouts or use of dictionary and often the lesson is lecture based. I think the problem here is that the teacher uses the textbook only. We rarely use other materials and hardly use the dictionary because we depend on the teacher to spoon feed us (S2).
>
> It depends on the activity…I think I would like to work in groups and in pairs because mixed approaches would bring life to the class and make us more devoted to the lesson. Working collaboratively in groups and in pairs I think would inspire us positively towards learning English. We then would feel a real language setting. Unfortunately, sometimes teachers would dominate the activity by lecturing without giving us an opportunity to students to take part in the activity, which turns the classroom into a tedious place (S3).

Student S8 said:

> I like presentations, group, individual, and pair work. Presentations give us a chance to talk freely and gain self- confidence. I can deliver my topic freely and openly. It is a new approach for us as college-level students …
>
> My second preference is group work because students would share ideas and thoughts and so everyone can help each other in a different way.
>
> What happens in the class currently is that the teacher gives us some tasks to talk about. These tasks sometimes are done individually, in pairs or in groups. He sometimes asks one student to present a certain topic in front of the class.

Student S9 said:

> I like presentations because we can choose our own topics to talk about. We feel confident and responsible by talking in front of the class. Pair work is suitable for reading conversations or asking and answering questions. Group work is beneficial

too, because it assists students to work together to solve problems related to activities but my preference goes to individual work (S9).

Student S10 said:

I believe in-group work. This allows everyone to take part in the class discussions and they could exchange ideas and views. I noticed here at the college that monolingual teachers make a good use of the available visual aids and over-head projector. I think this is an important transition to us as undergraduate students shifting from the very simple/ traditional way of teaching to using such new ways and techniques. Using such visual aids and new devices promotes learning quality and in turn suits learners' styles and so these approaches should be used accordingly. We feel inspired by the teachers and their methods in English lessons. Learner- centered and pair activities should replace traditional ways of teaching, such as teacher- centered activity. I think it is the teacher's role to increase students' motivation by creating lively techniques (S10).

S12 said:

My first preference is group work. In the beginning of the semester, our teacher put us in groups…we learned a lot from group work because every student participates and contributes to the discussion and brings something to talk about. Every one benefits from the group and develops language skills. ... I was shy and lacked the basic generic skills, but after I worked in groups I became more open-minded. I can now ask questions freely. I gained self-confidence by working in groups. Then gradually we became independent learners (S12).

S13 said:

I believe that new techniques such as group work are a really good way of maintaining students' positive attitudes towards English because they enable each one of them to give his/ her opinion over a certain topic or task. Group work is not good for students only but for the teacher too because he could go around the class to check the students' work. The teacher could monitor the weak students as well as the good ones (S13).

Student (S1) articulated clearly the need for active, motivating teaching, and that the teacher's way of teaching shapes students' attitude towards participation in the class:

Some students feel dull and passive with their bilingual teachers… it depends on the activity; for me group work is the best way to discuss topics or a reading paragraph. We feel responsible towards each other in working in groups. I don't really like teacher- centered activities because this makes us passive recipients only. Individual and pair work are also suitable for us; however, my preference would be for group work. When a teacher becomes a lecturing device, the class then becomes tedious and students become absent minded and loose their focus. I believe that teaching methods determine the whole class situation either positively or negatively (S1).

The students all said that they like a variety of classroom activities and would prefer any approach that allows them to take a positive part in activities and maintain their interest in learning English.

6.7 Culture and the Clash of Cultures

The students were invited to give their views on whether the cultural content of their English lessons was appropriate to the Muslim context. Some students seemed to take a more conservative viewpoint in their criticism of imported Western textbooks and the cultural insensitivity of monolingual teachers, but all those who were studying from imported materials expressed criticisms from a Muslim viewpoint.

Ten students thought that the prescribed textbooks are not suitable for the Omani community as a Muslim country as they contained some offensive contents and pictures.

Some typical comments were:

> The textbook we are using at the moment is British (Headway). It contains some unacceptable activities or contents that I think are culturally in appropriate in our society. Some units have paragraphs about girl friend and boy friend, dating, besides some pictures at the beach bathing and so on. The Ministry is responsible to purify the content and the teacher is responsible to evaluate the teaching materials before hand (S.1).
>
> 'Headway' a British textbook is currently used for students at the college. It is too Western and some units are just inappropriate. Dating, love stories, boy friend girl friend relationship are off society topics. Do we really need to learn this? We must learn some materials relevant to our law major. The unacceptable materials should be replaced by local topics such as Forts in Oman, water streams and so on. We should know more about Oman and Arab world first then about the other world(S.2).
>
> We are sometimes exposed to pictures of people kissing and dancing. As female students, we feel embarrassed. Our teacher does not skip the content we think is not suitable, maybe he thinks we benefit from the grammar within those units (S.3).
>
> What I noticed from the non-Arabic- speaking (monolingual) teachers the they are not aware of the sensitivity of the prescribed materials. This is because it is part of their culture and norms. Most of monolingual teachers do not pay much attention to the parts considered as sensitive and that they should be avoided or replaced by some other activities. Instead they follow every step of the textbook (S.5).
>
> Since the textbook is American, we expected to see some weird contents that clash with our own culture. Some units of the textbooks used currently for instance

> have pictures, topics and activities that I think are ethically unacceptable. Some students dislike listening to music, therefore Arabic- speaking bilingual teachers tend to skip some contents especially the music part in response to students' rejection in this regard. Both native and non-native monolingual teachers are not really aware of such cultural difference. Arabic teachers on the other hand skip and / or avoid such contents due to the mutual culture that they share with the students (S.15).

Five of the fifteen students were not so critical, and accepted the school textbooks as appropriate for foundation level (first year). However, they said that the English Department staff makes their school textbooks locally. These locally produced textbooks are appropriate and they are designed to suit their language needs within the Muslim cultural context.

These students did not complain about the imported texts. Typical comments were:

> The textbooks used at the college so far are suitable and appropriate…The syllabus at foundation level that I am enrolled in at the moment is designed locally. It is made to meet students' leaning needs as engineering students (S.6).
>
> The staff design the books used at the college. They are based on students' needs, but whenever we come across with contents that deal with Western culture, we talk about it but not in –depth (S.10).
>
> The books are made locally and so most topics are derived from the Omani environment. The content is appropriate but when we come across contents that are against our culture our teachers delete those bits (S.11).

There seemed to be a consensus, however, amongst all of the students interviewed that the bilingual teachers were more aware of the students' feelings towards what they think are unacceptable contents than were the monolingual teachers. On the other hand, they thought that monolingual teachers lacked a cultural awareness and so they taught whatever they come across regardless of the sensitivity of the content and its possible effect on students.

The issue of culture and the potential 'East-West culture clash' within EFL classes using teaching materials produced in the West, provided yet another dimension to the complex picture that has emerged from the findings so far. What seems to come out of the data from the student interviews is that a significant proportion are critical of the lack of cultural sensitivity of monolingual teachers and therefore feel more 'secure' with bilingual teachers who might skip sections and therefore not cause potential embarrassment. Despite this, an equally significant proportion of the students

(approximately half) stated that they preferred monolingual teachers *as teachers.* This suggests that the issue of cultural and religious difference is an issue for many students, but probably not the key one in the way they make judgments about what is best for their language learning. As students they felt that they were recipient of the textbook's content and have no control over what was delivered to them. However, a few students said that learning about the western culture was a good learning experience because it was an opportunity to get to know the other part of the world's culture.

6.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented the findings of my interviews with fifteen students' from five different colleges.
The data from the student interviews has thrown light on research questions 3, 4, 5 and 6: the differences between monolingual and bilingual classrooms in terms of methods and approaches, the benefits and drawbacks of each, the students' perceptions and experiences in relation to bilingual and monolingual teaching and the cultural issues in relation to each.

All of the students interviewed (but excluding those that had been designated by their school as 'weak' English learners) seemed to have a positive attitude towards English language learning. The 'weak' ones probably needed more attention and care from the teachers side to boost their intrinsic motivation towards learning and appreciating English lessons.

About half of the students preferred bilingual teachers in that they shared the same language and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, they would understand their needs better than monolingual teachers. They also thought that bilingual teaching gives them some sense of security. The other half thought that monolingual teachers were more effective in that they provided them with more opportunities to practise English with no Arabic language interference. Some commented that monolinguals gave them more exposure to English language and western culture. This group also said that they benefited from the variety of techniques these teachers used in order to keep students engaged in the English lesson activities.

All students preferred to have a variety of teaching methods, including working in pairs, individually, in groups and classroom dialogue. They all stressed that they would like to have a range of different classroom techniques that would engage all students in learning.

The students' accounts reinforce the findings from the observations and interviews that the bilingual teachers tended to have a limited range of teaching techniques, while the monolingual (NEST) teachers seemed to focus more on collaborative work such as group and pair work. The students were impressed by the variety of teaching approaches and techniques used by monolingual teachers. They were also impressed by their use of communicative approaches that enhanced their language acquisition.

The students were not asked to comment on their perceptions of native English speaking teachers versus non-native English speakers. One student, however, commented spontaneously that the non-native speakers ("Indians") often had accents that were hard to understand and did not seem committed to the students' learning.

Finally, the significance of the findings in this chapter so far, lies in the fact that from the point of view of the students, there is no clear -cut preference for either group of teachers, but rather each 'group' (and corresponding sort of teaching) has its own merits and drawbacks.

There is a clear message that bilingual teachers need to limit the amount of Arabic they use in their teaching, and limit the purposes for which they use it. The students' appreciation of more varied, learner-centered styles of teachers of the monolingual (NEST) teachers suggest that the bilingual teachers would benefit from professional development in language teaching pedagogy. While students in many cases stated a preference for monolingual teachers, overall, the students felt that some language teaching functions (such as explanation of difficult grammar points) were best done in Arabic.

The issue of respect for Muslim culture was clearly an important one, and although views about textbooks varied from 'more conservative' to 'less conservative', there seemed to be a consensus that bilingual teachers (i.e., Arabic teachers of Muslim background) were more aware of Muslim cultural norms and better able to handle situations when inappropriate content came up in the English- or American-produced

learning materials. However, this did not seem to be a view that over-rode the other considerations about the most effective language pedagogies and the preferred backgrounds of teachers.

The students' emphasis on the need for more variety and more communicative styles in teaching suggests that it is the quality and skills of individual teachers, especially their ability to draw on a variety of approaches, that count more than whether they are of monolingual or bilingual backgrounds. This point will be taken up in Chapter 9.

Chapter Seven: Teachers' Perceptions of Bilingual and Monolingual teaching

7.1 Introduction

In Chapter 1, I wrote that I had formed a hunch during my years as an EFL teacher in Oman, that bilingual teachers were more popular with students and more effective than monolingual teachers because of their ability to use Arabic in their teaching.

I set out therefore to explore the extent of Arabic usage of bilingual teachers in the classroom and the purposes or functions for which it is used, and by way of comparison, to find out how monolingual teachers carried out the same purposes and functions in English only. I found that having access to the students' L1 was not the most important factor in the effectiveness of the teaching of both sets of teachers.

I gathered data about bilingual and monolingual teaching mainly through observations and interviews. The observation data appears to indicate that bilingual teachers as a group and monolingual teachers as a group have quite different teaching styles. The students' comments also indicated that there were characteristic teaching styles. While they seemed to be divided about whether they preferred to have bilingual or monolingual teachers, they showed a preference for minimum Arabic usage, more communicative approaches and for a variety of activities including group and pair work.

In this chapter I am drawing on the data from 11 interviews: five with bilingual and six with monolingual teachers. As well, I refer back to the data from the ten classroom observations and the student interviews.

As occurred with the data from the student interviews, a more complex picture emerged from the teacher interviews than I had expected. While there seemed to be 'typical' bilingual and 'typical' monolingual teaching styles, the differences were blurred by the fact that many of those I interviewed did not fit in with this somewhat simplistic distinction and, as already mentioned, some monolingual teachers who were not native speakers of English or were native speakers from non-Western countries seemed to fit the 'typical' bilingual style rather than the 'typical' monolingual style of teaching.

Again, it became clear from the teacher interviews that the issue of L1 usage in the classroom is only one aspect of a wider issue: the comparative benefits of monolingual versus bilingual teaching, in terms of the typical language pedagogies that each group practises.

7.2 Recruitment of participants

The procedure for teachers' interviews was the same procedure as for classroom observations. I wrote a letter to the Ministry of Higher Education requesting that they nominate a number of state (public) and private colleges to participate in my research study.

The Ministry of Higher Education sent out official letters to the six proposed colleges to facilitate my visits. The deans or principals met with Heads of English Departments giving them a brief idea about my research study and the aims of interviews about to be carried out at their institutions.

The Heads of the English Departments at each college nominated both bilingual and monolingual teachers for the interviews. The Heads arranged for me to meet with them before I was allowed to interview the teachers. Prior to the interviews, I met with each group of teachers and explained to them their potential participation in my study and that the information they were about to reveal would be kept confidential and would be used only for the project purposes. I also explained to them that they could withdraw at any time during data collection. Every participant signed a consent of agreement form to take part in the study.

The participating teachers (i.e., those were observed and those who were interviewed) can be categorized into these three groups as follows:

Bilingual	NS Monolingual	NNS Monolingual
Observation Teachers		
Jasmine	John	Sarah
Jihad	Eva	
Omar	Anna	
Saeed	Desrene	
Ahmed	Patricia	
Interview Teachers		
Salem	Anna	Nora
Ghassan	Jenny	Allan
Zahra	Joanna	
Wafa	Amy	
Aziz		

7.3 L1 Usage in the Classroom

As we saw in Chapter 5, three of the five bilingual teachers whom I observed teaching spoke mainly in Arabic especially in giving translations of words and illustrative examples. Likewise, the bilingual teachers whom I interviewed all spoke about how they use Arabic to give equivalent words and provide translation when necessary.

Typical comments from the interviews are:

Ghassan said:

> We [I] use Arabic especially when we have grammar lessons. Some students don't understand the rules of grammar in English. We tend to use L1 with first year students who come from high schools with zero English and who therefore, don't understand the explanations of lessons in English.

Wafa said:

> I [I use Arabic] every time when it is needed and when there is no other way. You give the rules' meanings in Arabic, you explain in Arabic; if we explain everything in English they never get it.

The bilingual teachers justified using Arabic for time-saving purposes, showing differences between L1 and L2, and so many of them said that translation and giving equivalents of every new word in Arabic would save them time and help them to accomplish more steps of the activity or lesson.

Salem commented:

> Students have very limited exposure to English language (four hours weekly), so we tend to use L1 for vocabulary in order to save time of explaining the meaning of a word that is essential to understand in English.

Wafa also explained that, since Arabic and English are of different linguistic origins, she has to point out the differences between the L1 and English meanings and syntax immediately and not wait until later on:

> If [I] wait or postpone it, it will become an error. On the spot, you have to explain the differences between the two languages so that they are aware of them.

Zahra said that she used Arabic to explain cultural ideas or those relating to literature:

> If there is an image or metaphor and there is a kind of analogy that we have a similar line of poetry in Arabic that says almost the same thing; for instance, I give examples to show the analogy from the Holy Quraan or a certain idea from a novel to make them understand and get the message across.

Keeping classroom order seemed, from bilinguals' responses, very much associated with using Arabic to maintain discipline, that speaking in Arabic was a necessary means of maintaining classroom control.

Wafa said:

> I speak Arabic to maintain classroom discipline. I always try to build up their motivation by talking in Arabic for a minute then I go back to English.

Salim commented:

> Bilingual teachers … are able to explain some matters in Arabic such as classroom order.

In summary, the purposes and functions for which the bilingual teachers used Arabic were stated as:

- Explaining the rules of grammar and word meanings
- Discussing cultural ideas
- Giving immediate, comprehensible feedback
- Pointing out differences between the structures of each language
- Saving classroom time
- Building motivation
- Maintaining discipline

While the bilingual teachers reported using English and Arabic for different purposes, all of the monolingual teachers (both NS and NNS) taught in English only. None of them had enough Arabic to use it in their teaching. They talked about how they explain the meanings of vocabulary and difficult phrases by action, miming and voice

imitation. However, while they did not have any knowledge of Arabic, some said that Arabic *would* be useful for explaining the key words of an activity.

Joanna commented:

> It [Arabic] is useful to explain particular concepts. Sometimes it is difficult for students to understand technical words. Usually, I have one student maybe little ahead of the others. I am reluctant to use that [ie, use students to translate into Arabic for the rest of the class] because I don't know Arabic and not sure that he is giving the accurate word meaning. For general English, we don't use very much Arabic. I let them sometimes speak Arabic because I don't feel it is fair not to allow students to do so. I ask him/her to give an explanation in English first, so I can check, still I am not 100% [sure]. I still ask for some more examples.

However, other monolingual teachers did not think that speaking Arabic would be necessarily beneficial to their teaching. Anna said that not speaking students' L1 makes the teacher find other ways of explaining and this helps her to develop her other means of communication:

> When you are in such circumstances that you can't use your own language then you have to find a way out. You have to find a way to explain things and to make the students understand you.

Jenny made a similar point, that being an experienced teacher working with ESL students from different cultural contexts had helped her find alternative ways of communicating, if one way had failed already. Jenny said:

> I am used to teaching students whose English is their second or third language. I always try to think of another way and if everything fails, I say well let's look it up in the dictionary.

Anna commented on the use of dictionary too:

> In the beginning of first year, I asked students to use their (English/Arabic) dictionary. Most of them said that they could not use it. I said how are you learning a language without using a dictionary? So they learnt, I give them homework to prepare and to find examples in the dictionary about the uses of some words.

All of the monolinguals (both NS and NNS) seemed to focus extensively on white board and dictionary usage as strategies to compensate for their lack of Arabic language. The approach of the monolingual teachers interviewed in relation to the advantages of monolingual teaching, and how the lack of Arabic can be compensated, mirrored the approaches I observed in their classroom teaching. The interviewee teachers were not the teachers I observed.

In summary, the monolinguals said that they used the following strategies to compensate for their lack of Arabic:

- Simplifying oral presentations by using modified 'teacher talk'
- Using gestures, acting out word meaning
- Extensive use of the white board
- Extensive use of dictionaries
- Allowing some discussion amongst students in Arabic to share understandings
- Looking for and devising alternative means of communication
- Motivating and engaging students through authentic relationships and communicative focusing on student needs

In this way, the comments at interview of the monolingual teachers mirrored the teaching of monolinguals that I observed. The implications of this last point are further discussed in the next section.

7.4 Teacher-Centred and Student-Centred Approaches

The difference in the teaching styles of bilingual and monolingual teachers indicated in the observation data can be described roughly as 'teacher-centred' (bilingual and NNS monolingual teachers) and 'student-centred' (NS monolingual teachers). This rough categorization of two basic styles of teaching was reflected when the teachers were describing their own teaching in the interviews, but less strongly so.

Only one the five bilingual teachers interviewed, Ghassan, and one of the two NNS monolinguals interviewed, Allan, clearly indicated a preference for focusing on grammar and being teacher-centred.

Ghassan said:

> I use the Grammar Translation Method, and prefer a teacher-centered activity especially when I teach grammar. I use a teacher-centered approach because my students have difficulty understanding grammar … I use a teacher- centered approach when I teach grammar, because students don't understand much. I do most of the talking because my students are weak in English

Allan, a monolingual teacher, said:

> We [I] should try our best in order to get the essence of the grammar, students should understand directly from English to English, which will improve their English language competence and it will then have lasting effect and they won't

> forget ... My main teaching approach is teacher-centered because I think my students are weak and so I have to be directive to get them on the right track.

Both Allan and Ghassan clearly indicated a preference for teacher-centered approaches on the assumption that the students are weak in English and that this way would provide them with more language input.

Another bilingual teacher, Aziz, indicated that he relied heavily on textbooks and printed materials:

> We [I] are confined to the prescribed books basically. We [I] tend to use the materials we have and, because of teaching loads, we find that we can't use other materials.

The other bilingual teachers (Salem, Wafa and Zahra) indicated that they were striving to integrate more communicative approaches and a variety of activities.

Salem, for example, said that he would use Arabic minimally to explain structural aspects, because his aim was to teach *the language* rather than *about* the language. He said that he would focus on exercises that are communicative, rather than on those that concentrate on learning *about* the language.

Aziz said he tries to focus on students' needs and interests, and that he believed in being both 'traditional' and 'communicative':

> We [I] need to be traditional, use audio-lingual method, grammar translation method or [as well as] the communicative approach. It depends on the activity or teaching-learning situation.

Wafa said that she used mixed methods of activity engagement, including the communicative approach; communicating with students and trying to draw out the information from them.

She said:

> I like to sit down on the chair and observe them, give them work, solve the problem and get the result. I like groups and encourage them to sit in groups. I don't like individual learning because I don't know what's inside the person. So they do group work or pair work or research when they go outside and do the research. I like it and they compete [with each other]. [They] work in pairs for short tasks, but for discussion I prefer group work. At the end of the discussion each student writes what he or she thinks about the task…. [I] make them capable of doing tasks and develop their skills. Group work is usually done for production,

> presentation, discussion, reading in preparation for writing and reading for the purpose of speaking or writing.

Nora (NNS monolingual) said:

> We [I] don't use the same technique all the time. I teach technical English here, ESP [English for Specific Purposes]. Sometimes I do General English . Group and pair work are the main techniques. Students don't like monotonous classes, they like different activities. Sometimes we have games and quizzes in the class. So there are different activities at different times; we use realia, learn about shapes, tools and we usually use transparencies to make them understand easily. For group work, I usually put the weak students with bright ones. It is easier for them to learn from their peers than from the teacher.

Salim, Wafa and Aziz and Nora all showed some sort of commitment to student-centered teaching that encourages the students to take responsibility for their own learning.

The monolingual native speakers of English also emphasized their commitments to teaching communicatively and finding ways to motivate students. However, they spoke with more enthusiasm about their communicative teaching, and gave more detailed descriptions of how they tried to involve students in a variety of activities to encourage fluency and ease of communication. Overall, it was clear that NS monolingual teachers interviewed were more attuned to the group atmosphere and that they left students to progress more at their own pace, than the bilingual teachers interviewees.

Jenny said:

> When students understand, the excitement comes and the enthusiasm to learn more and that is part of my job. I also have fun in the class and so to make learning fun is to see students work on their own. I also try to encourage them to put the steps into practice.
>
> … Students work on their own but, if they work with their partners, I am happy for them to help each other. I try to encourage them to put the steps into practice.

Amy said that her main concern was to build her students' communication capability. She said,

> [When] I speak English to students and I force them to speak to me, it brings out of their shyness. Now they know, even if it is broken English, I want my students to live with confidence, with fluency; accuracy comes in later. Accuracy will fit in but fluency is affected by shyness, because in schools they don't practice any English. If you take those barriers away, I think they will pick it [fluency] up.

Amy also talked about building teamwork and self-confidence:

> Students develop teamwork, they practise time management; they read, summarize and then explain the task in simple English language. They use power-point presentations and, in doing so, they use a lot of skills that are useful for building confidence.

Joanna commented:

> As a monolingual teacher, I use more general English when I am talking to them [students]; they learn about the culture from me as well. Sometimes they bring issues related to programs they watch on television to share with me and compare across cultures.

All six monolingual teachers (NESTs and NNESTs) talked about different ways in which they present material and elicit English language use in their classroom instead of relying on the textbook too much. Joanna said that, because the subject she teaches (technical English), is a bit different, her students do a lot of talking and practice presentations and use a lot of realia. Jenny said that, as she presents material she may paraphrase if she feels students have difficulty understanding and come down a level with her vocabulary, while using the board to write down the steps of the task she has set for them. She added that besides using the school textbook, she brings her own teaching materials that suit her students' needs.

Most monolingual teachers spoke about how they developed their own materials to use in the class, reflecting what I noticed in the classroom observation (in which John, Desrene and Patricia used a variety of aids in delivering the learning activities).

However, a number of bilingual teachers also spoke about their use of other supplementary materials in addition to the texts, to stimulate interest. Ghassan talked about using a wide range of teaching materials:

> We [I] use a wide range of books, imported and locally made ones. I also photocopy some supplementary materials that I think are suitable for my students.

Salem said that he had been developing his own teaching materials to help students to develop their writing, but that the text -books were, nonetheless, very useful.

He said:

> As a group of teachers we try to implement this curriculum for example a theme targeting weak students or slow learners. The printed materials I found very useful for writing and reading skills.

Overall, the interviews indicate that the bilingual and monolingual teachers seemed to be along a continuum between teacher-centred, grammar-translation methods and student-centred, communicative methods. The approaches of the NS monolingual teachers seem to be more student-centred and more communicative than either those who were bilingual or NNS monolingual, but ere exceptions and the differences were by no means clear- cut.

7.5 Classroom Management

It seemed to me that in the main, the bilingual teachers had more orderly classes than the monolingual teachers I observed, whose classrooms tended to be noisier and less disciplined. Interestingly, the learning processes with native monolingual teachers seemed to me to continue productively in most cases, despite the fact there was more noise.

Classroom management in them came spontaneously along with the activity and the relatively free atmosphere in the classrooms was probably related to the fact that they were more interactive. The teachers were more interested in engaging students in meaningful discussion, which would bring some sort of enjoyment to EFL learners, than in maintaining absolute classroom discipline. They tried to involve students in various activities in developing different skills, so that the students would have some freedom and scope for imaginative thinking, rather than expressing themselves in ways that were always controlled by the teacher.

Maintaining students' interest seemed to be the main strategy of the NS monolingual teachers in order to motivate students and involve them in language learning.

Jenny saw classroom management in terms of requiring 'respect' – respect between teachers and students:

> I am quite a tough teacher and don't accept any respect other than their best and they soon learned that I mean what I say. I also take greater care to be fair but also consistent if I say something then I will follow through every time and I expect them to show the same respect for me.

Amy spoke about teaching students to take responsibility for their learning:

> I receive equal respect as a teacher. I love Omani students as compared to British students and they are very respectful and interested in learning. There is one thing you still have to treat them like students, you can't treat them like adults because

> they haven't learned that and that is what I learned culturally. You have to introduce them to the idea of taking responsibility for their actions and for their learning.

Both of these teachers were thinking about the quality of the relationship they were developing with their students. They gain respect by being fair, by the quality of their teaching and, in Amy's case, thinking about how students can be supported into having a more mature and responsible attitude towards their English learning.

Only one of the NS monolingual teachers, Anna, indicated in interview that she might have some problems maintaining order as the result of large class sizes. The noise resulting from the large classes interferes with real communication taking place:

She said:

> They like writing on the board that is also a useful way for them to do exercises because if somebody doesn't know, she can copy from the board. I give them [students] some work so that they can work individually and then [I] just check what they have done otherwise [I] can't talk and they can't hear [me]. First of all there are so many students in the class, (40) in each class. Actually they really miss out on communication.

It is interesting to note that the effectiveness of more open 'communicative approaches' (encouraging discussion and spontaneous communication) favored by the monolingual teachers could well be limited in the context of large class sizes as in Oman.

Again, however, it is difficult to generalize, as the observations showed that some of the monolinguals were more skilled than others in bringing a noisy classroom to order. Patricia's class, for example, became noisy at one point, she but maintained calmness and had effective strategies to bring the class under control. She made eye contact with those who were misbehaving and in a split second the class was brought back in order. I felt that this teacher had dealt with the students' disruptive behavior without taking too much valuable teaching time.

Overall, both the interviews with NS monolinguals and the observations seemed to indicate that they had a wider range of strategies to manage their classrooms and engage the students' interests. These seemed to be more developed and more effective than the traditional, more authoritarian approaches that displayed by some bilingual

and NNS teachers, who may have had more orderly classrooms, but did not seem to be engaging the students in language learning so effectively.

By implementing the principles of the communicative approach, the NS monolinguals focused more on developing language skills than going through the formalities of presentation, drilling and practice exercises. They seemed to be more seriously committed to the students' language learning than many of the bilingual and NNS teachers.

7.6 Summary

In this chapter I have presented the data from interviews with five bilingual and six monolingual teachers of EFL in Omani tertiary teaching institutions.

The bilingual teachers on the whole thought that Arabic usage in the classroom serves to convey meaning and that this reduces the time that would otherwise need to be spent explaining difficult concepts or grammatical structures. They also felt that speaking Arabic helped them to develop their relationship with students and maintain discipline

On the other hand, the monolinguals had developed alternative techniques to convey meaning, build classroom relationships and manage their classrooms effectively.

The interviews reflected to a large degree what I observed in the classrooms, regarding classroom management. Rather than rely on their authority, as was the case with some of the bilingual teachers, the NS monolingual teachers had other strategies for maintaining order and keeping the learning going

The data confirms the findings of the previous chapters that, while there seem to be 'typical' teaching styles used by the bilingual, NNS monolingual and NS monolingual English teachers, the differences are by no means clear cut, and there was evidence of 'good practice' pedagogies being practiced by all groups.

Together, the classroom observations and interviews showed that most bilingual teachers and NNS monolingual teachers seemed to place more emphasis on language accuracy and pronunciation, whereas the native-speaking monolingual teachers focused more on interest, fluency and expanding language discourse. It seems that

while there were many differences between individual teachers and between the groups of teachers, the single most defining difference was about teacher-centered as against student-centered teaching.

This was revealed in the degree to which the teachers used interactive, communicative approaches and incorporated a variety of aids and methods. The bilingual and non-native-speaking monolingual teachers tended to conduct traditional, authoritarian classes that did not encourage spontaneous communication or interaction in English. They mainly used audio-lingual, presentation and drill methods, though there were some notable exceptions.

Whilst the monolingual teachers would have been at some disadvantage in not having access to Arabic, they compensated by utilizing a variety of methods of presenting language structures, engaging the students in authentic communication and maintaining their interest. Thus their classroom management relied more on engagement of students in dialogue and activities through being student- centered than on traditional methods and teacher-centered styles.

While there appear to be characteristic styles of teaching, these differences were blurred by individual cases, and it became clear that the skill and commitment of individual teachers is an over-riding factor in the effectiveness of EFL teaching.

Chapter Eight: Reflection on my own Teaching

8.1 Introduction

This chapter is a report and a reflection on my own teaching in relation to all of the issues that I have explored through the research. As discussed in the Methodology chapter, I felt it was necessary to position myself in relation to my research into bilingual and monolingual teaching of English as a Foreign Language, given that I myself belong to the same category as those I was studying. My own teaching and reflections on my own teaching are therefore an additional source of data as well as a source of my own personal learning about my own teaching.

In this chapter I describe a number of lessons that I took in late 2007 and ask myself how different or similar my teaching is to that of the bilingual teachers I have observed and interviewed, what pedagogies I mainly utilize and whether my own teaching shares more similarities with that of the bilingual or monolingual teachers.

As indicated in the first chapter, I started teaching at secondary level after I graduated from University of Bristol in England in 1990. I have been trying to reflect on and improve my own teaching practices since then.

Having gradually moved from teaching secondary school learners to undergraduates, I have had a comprehensive teaching experience and been exposed to different groups of learners as well as methods and approaches. As well, working as an inspector at some point in my career had also enabled me to watch and explore a variety of teaching techniques and I have been able to draw from them to add to my own expertise.

Collecting data for my research in 2004 by observing the ten participant teachers (both bilinguals and monolinguals) was a rich learning experience. The ten classroom observations with ten different teachers were a small sample in relation to the total number of bilingual and monolingual teachers working with undergraduate students in Oman. However, it gave me a good insight into what was going on in EFL classes and how students learned with monolingual teachers who could not speak Arabic. I learned more about what not to do, and gained new ideas about what to do, especially in developing skills in communicative approaches.

In this chapter I describe and discuss some of my classroom English lessons at the College of Law with first, second, third and fourth year students.

8.2 About the Textbook

The syllabus I use at present is based on a British textbook called *Targets 2(2001).* There was no prescribed textbook last semester when I started teaching and I developed my own materials at that time. However, after students completed the evaluation form at the end of last semester, some of them requested an English textbook as the main basis for the English language course. Some of them had asked me informally to use a textbook because they thought they would benefit more from what it offers than simply using photocopied sheets from different sources.

When we started this semester in February 2007, I used the *Targets 2* textbook besides some other supplementary materials when I feel there is a need to teach something that is not offered in the prescribed textbook. *Targets 2* is a British textbook, which has 15 units and covers reading, and writing skills besides grammar.

However, I do not follow the book step by step, but rather choose what is new and what I think would be a good discussion-based activity. I selected this particular book, because I thought it is suitable for the students' English level. It also offers a diversity of activities and tasks that I thought students would find useful, such as topics about special occasions in different cultures worldwide.

8.3 Overview of Teaching Strategies: What Works

I try to embrace communicative language teaching (CLT) in every aspect of my teaching of EFL, and try to use all the new resources to stimulate students' interest that become available. It is another way to learn about different nations and their cultural aspects. It also keeps students engaged in the activities and keeps them away from boredom.

Looking at and discussing different cultures is a key strategy in my teaching. Learning EFL is a good opportunity to learn about different cultures since students cannot afford to travel around the world. The textbook has shortened the distance and made learning about the other world more attainable. I have found most of my students enjoy learning about different cultures; in fact they bring issues about other nations'

cultures and special occasions. A student presented a topic about special occasions in India. She used power point for illustrations and some other pictures to show the class what people do in those festivals. The students love learning about cultural differences. Recently we studied a text about New Year's Eve and what people do that night in cities such as London, Paris, New York and Sydney. They also learned about the traditional songs that people sing for this occasion. They found it useful to think about cross cultural issues and so it was a good time to compare our traditional and special events that we have here in Oman. Introducing other cultures is important as it helps the learners to understand other societies and to see their own culture as something that is relative, not absolute. This gives them more critical insight into their own culture as well. It might be more acceptable for me to introduce information and discussion about other cultures and beliefs that it might be for monolingual (especially Western) teachers, because as a Muslim woman I have an instinctive understanding of the sensitivities.

I consider my students this year are more open to the other world than the ones I had four years ago. This is perhaps due to the multi-media and technology's revolution that is making the world into a village and bringing different civilizations closer to each other. This I think has contributed to human's tolerance in general which in turn has allowed people to learn about other nations' life styles and so forth. We need to encourage this tolerance at a time when there is a 'clash of fundamentalisms' and wars based on prejudice and ideological differences.

I do not delete any of the topics or activities in the book, but I sometimes substitute some sentences that I find quite sensitive such as 'I asked Bob to buy a bottle of wine at the shops'. Instead of this sentence, I would say, *I asked Bob to buy a bottle of milk at the shops.* Instead of 'I saw Jim kissing his girl friend' I would put *I saw Jim talking to his friend*. I tend to do this when I think the students might not feel comfortable with the original sentences. My classes are males and females and so to avoid cultural insensitivity I change the sentences when I feel I need to.

I always start my English lesson/ activity by taking the students' attendance. It is my daily habit to take attendance as I think it encourages them to come on time. Most students at this college come on time because I explained my rules to them from day one of the semester. I rarely have students walk into the class a few minutes after the

lesson has started. What I like about this strategy is that students feel obliged to attend English lessons.

In this way I establish my authority and a base line of respect for my classes.

I sometimes start the lesson by organizing the classroom physical setting as a signal to students that we are ready for the day. Then I ask them about their weekends, what they did (I usually ask them on Saturday the first day of the week). I do this as a warm-up and to get them to start thinking and talking in English.

After that I ask them to sit in groups, pass around worksheets, and begin the main part of the lesson.

Group work has advantages in that students learn to depend on themselves and each other by taking responsibility and participating in the group. They also share ideas and find out about their strengths and weaknesses. What I learned from observing and both groups of teachers, and the kind of learning that took place in their classrooms, confirmed my view that students learn better while working in groups as it increases their self-confidence and minimises anxiety.

I encourage the use of bilingual dictionaries that are now available in many different forms. In English lessons, instead of using direct translation method for the new vocabulary or meanings, I ask them either to find out the meaning through the contexts by reading the sentence, or look the word up in the dictionary. Sometimes; I give homework based on looking up the new words in the dictionary and putting them in sentences. This strategy works well for me, as my students have learned not to ask for translation of new and difficult words but follow the strategy I set for them. Most students are quite happy because they have started to depend on themselves, as I gradually became a secondary source of information in the class.

I sometimes talk to the students after English classes about my teaching and what they prefer. In this way, I am including them as partners and respecting their ability, as young adults, to have input into how they are learning English.

8.4 English classes lessons from 10-14 March / 07

8.4.1 Day One: Saturday 10/03/07– Group 5

- Group 5: Room 1
- Time: 12:00 – 12:50pm
- Number of English Classes 3 times per week, Saturdays, Mondays & Wednesdays
- Total Number of Students: 35 - 26 boys & 9 girls

Lesson One: Having a Wonderful Time, Unit 4 page 16

Sequence of activities

I began the lesson with the usual greeting in Arabic. As a Muslim teacher, at the beginning of every lesson I greet my students in Arabic 'Salamualeikum', this is the formal Islamic way of greeting. I greet them as soon as I walk into the class. They reply 'waaleikum A'salam'. This ritual creates some sort of safety or shared space for us and helps to create a rapport in the classroom.

Before I started, I read the title first and asked the students to explain it to me while their books were closed. They gave examples of the good time they had experienced. When I asked them if they have ever been abroad or traveled, some of them named places they have been to and how they spent their holidays. This discussion was carried out in English as I encouraged them to speak in English only, no matter how good or bad their speaking was. This is my usual strategy in teaching so that students can practise whatever vocabulary they have learned. However, I have some female students with outstanding language competence, so they are more confident to speak out in the class, while male students are generally less competent and therefore they are reluctant to participate or take part in discussion.

After the discussion was over, we opened the appropriate page and matched the pictures with the descriptions. I gave them five minutes to do the task but asked them either to do it individually or in pairs. They preferred to work individually because they thought it was relatively easy and the pictures were clear. I checked the task when the time was over, then we moved to the next step, (reading the letter and answering the questions). I asked them to form a group of 3 to do this task and gave them 20 minutes to complete it. While they were working in groups, I went around to

see how they were interacting. I noticed that some students were discussing the task in Arabic, however, when they saw me coming close to them, they switched into English. One student said, *we switch to Arabic when we don't know the right vocabulary.* They said this in Arabic. I replied in Arabic and gave the meaning of that vocabulary in Arabic. They felt comfortable (as this helps them to get a clue of the activity) and continued working but I asked them to use a bilingual dictionary to help them understand the meanings of the new words.

Some of them asked me some questions about the newly introduced vocabulary such as 'ancient', 'ruins', 'snorkeling', 'souvenirs' and 'spectacular'. I explained these words by asking students to point to the appropriate picture on their books. They matched each word with its corresponding picture. I also gave some other examples using these words. Some female students put the words in sentences and used their dictionaries to get the meanings of the words. In order to make sure everybody got the meanings, I asked individuals randomly to say aloud the new words in sentences.

We also paused at every question to talk about students' personal experiences in relation to the topic, for example; *Where is Suzanne's favorite restaurant*? (from the textbook). After answering this question from the book, I asked some students about their favorite restaurants too. They found it interesting to find out about each other's favorite places to eat and favorite foods. I could say that this lesson was discussion based which allowed students to talk about the points we raised in the class and gave plenty of opportunities to practice the language.

I was satisfied with the interaction between the students except that some of them found some words such as 'snorkeling', 'ruins' 'souvenirs' and 'spectacular' difficult to pronounce. I paused and asked them to repeat the words in a chorus and then asked random individuals to say the words. I could see that the repetitions helped them to improve the pronunciation of these words. It was a mixed ability class, so some of them understood the instructions of the tasks from the first time, others didn't. To help the weaker students, I repeated the same instruction many times and asked a student to read it again. I did not use Arabic to give meanings of the new words as I felt that the examples I gave were enough however, I switched to Arabic after I explained the task instruction and found that some students didn't get what I said, then switched back to English.

Interestingly, despite the fact that the number of female students was far less than male students, the girls seemed more involved and seemed to enjoy the lesson more. In fact they were far better from most boys. They showed this in different ways, in their classroom attendance, active participation, and willingness to do their homework.

Reflection

My overall reflection on this lesson is that it worked well. Students had a chance to talk about places they would like to travel to, and they also came across new words that may be useful as vernacular English. I think the students were happy working individually, in pairs and in groups.

We usually do a variety of techniques in one lesson when I feel it serves students better. Sometimes I use group work only, especially when we are doing a reading text that is a bit above the students' level. Sometimes I ask students to choose the technique they like to do for some tasks, they even choose classmates to work with from the same gender in co-sex classes. Choosing appropriate techniques depends very much on the type of activity and students' level as well as students' choices.

Having female and male students together in one- class gives a good balance as well as encouraging some sort of competitiveness among them. Girls always try to exert their best effort to display their performance in the class, while boys tend to keep silent and feel afraid of making mistakes in front of their female counterparts. They admit that they prefer either to speak in Arabic or they keep quiet. Most boys believe that their female counterparts are better performers. This reminds me of other female students of the previous years where they were at the same performance level and ahead of the male students.

I have been always trying to involve as many male students as possible in presenting topics in front of the class. I found out that male students chose to do a written exam as a mid term evaluation and in fact very few boys chose to do a presentation. I offered two choices as mid term exams where students can choose either a written test or select any topic and present it in class. I give these choices because the majority of boys refuse to do presentations. They justify this by saying that they do not have a good command of English and therefore choosing a written test does not require

speaking ability and standing in front of their classmates which in their opinion cause them embarrassment. Their performance in a written test would be confidential since I am the only one who read it. Giving them types of assessment makes me more comfortable than forcing them to do something they do not like. I started to use this strategy to show the students that they have the right to choose the way they feel more suitable for them to learn English. Both choices are out of twenty marks.

I usually call weaker students by name to involve them in the discussion. If I feel they are unable to give me a correct sentence, I ask them to give it a try. I also assure them that it is OK to make a mistake and I do not expect them to produce perfect English because we learn any language by practising it.

In this class I tried as usual to involve everyone in the activity or the discussion, and so from time to time I would ask who hadn't said anything that day. The ones who identified themselves would have their turn and so on. I follow this technique with all groups that I teach and it works quite well.

8.4.2 Day Two: Sunday 11/03/07 – Group 6

- Group 6, Room One
- Time from 12:00 – 1:15pm
- Number of English Classes 2 times per week, Sundays & Tuesdays
- Total Number of Students: 35, boys 14 & 21 girls.

Lesson Two Unit 4, Having a Wonderful Time (continued) pages 17-18 and supplementary materials talking about the time (what time is it).

This class has more girls than the other two groups, which meant there was more interaction.

Sequence of activities

I started the lesson by registering the attendance then we soon moved to do task No.5, a grammar task that involved underlining the correct verb. While the students were engaged in doing this task, I wrote the 8 sentences on the white board to check after they had finished.

We moved then to another task that talked about the weather (snow) in winter season. I asked them if they had experienced this kind of weather, most of the students have

not experienced the four different seasons. Local weather is warm all year round except for 2 to 3 months when it cools down a bit. Very few students had been overseas who were willing to share their experiences and how difficult it was to cope in cold weather.

The next step of the activity was talking about the four seasons. The students loved to talk about this because most of them have not yet experienced such different seasons. This discussion led to comparing our weather to weather in other parts of the world such as North America, Australia and Europe where there are four seasons a year. I also told them about my experience in Europe, America and Australia living in various weather conditions and how different each season is. Then students opened their textbooks and matched the appropriate season with the right pictures.

Towards the, end of the class, I passed around some photocopied sheets about telling/ writing the time. I gave them this task after I found out that they could not say the time in English. Each student was given a work sheet with clocks on. Their task was to give the times accordingly. There was an example for them to start with. However, after I passed the sheets around, I asked every one to look at the time and say it. Most of them failed to do so. First, they gave the times in Arabic saying that it is extremely difficult to say it in English. To help them, I explained to them by drawing around clock with both hands and showed them how to say the minutes and hours. Then we moved to do the task. I gave them 5 minutes to discuss it with their partners. Then I nominated single students to read out what they wrote. I have been asking about the time every time I go to the class to make sure they get enough practice saying the time in English.

Reflection

There was a lot of speaking in this lesson, as the students were given a large amount of time to speak and express their ideas and share their experiences. Despite the fact that students had difficulty in choosing the correct words, they tried to use English only. Some students used Arabic to express their ideas as it was difficult to use English. However, they know that I am consistent and quite strict about discouraging Arabic in my lessons; therefore, they do their best to manage their activity engagement in English only, unless there is a good reason to use Arabic.

I used a variety of tasks in this lesson. Most students participated well and they were willing to move from one task to another. This class has more girls so the speaking part of the lesson was quite rich and interesting. The degree of their engagement added more excitement to the overall lesson. I think I facilitated the discussion and the progression of tasks in a lively way.

The pictures in the textbook about the weather (snow) gave me an opportunity to talk about my experience abroad. Most students were interested to know more about Europe and the places where it snows. It was also fun for them to learn to say the time in English. Most of them acknowledged the importance of learning the time in English and thought it had added something new to their existing knowledge. This would help them to tell the time in English with me in English classes or even with foreigners/ tourists in the street for example.

In grammar lessons, students expect me to explain in Arabic as other bilingual teachers do. I always explain to them that each language has its own grammar structures and we cannot compare every single difference. When we learn a foreign language, we should think in it but not in our mother tongue. Even though, some of the students are convinced that each language works differently, others insist on getting full explanations on how each language functions (Arabic and English).

Sometimes I explain to students how Arabic and English work, and teach them parts of speech. I draw a table and classify each part of speech part and give examples then I ask them to add more examples. Then they put each part in the correct column. They like this kind of teaching technique.

Some students especially the weaker ones feel reluctant to speak out in the class using English only, so while speaking English they switch to Arabic and pause to ask for the correct word in English. I do not mind speaking to them in Arabic and giving them the appropriate English words at times when I feel they are unable to continue in English. I actually tell them frankly that it is tough for them to speak in English only but due to the good relationship between my students and me, most students feel at ease to talk about this problem with me. Most of them treat me as a 'friend' or 'mother' and open their hearts to tell me about the problems they struggle with in learning English. I often talk and give them advice on how to overcome such

problems. This warm relationship that I foster with the students is the key to my being able to 'push them' in their language learning and take risks trying to speak in English.

8.4.3 Day Two Sunday 11/03/07 – Group 4

- Group 4, Time from 1:45 – 2:50pm
- Number of Students 15, 14 boys & 1 girl

Lesson Three: presentations (Mid term assessment)

Sequence of activities

In this lesson three different students presented topics as part of the semester evaluation. Besides the 15 students, there were additional female students to support the only girl. The class was full with attendees from other groups that I teach.

I started the lesson by introducing the three presenters who were going to deliver the three topics. Then I asked who wanted to present first, I allowed them to take turns and choose their turns when they were ready to talk. A male student chose to present first. His topic was about his hometown, which is about 275 KM from Muscat. He had brought in some photographs. He started his presentation by passing on flyers with the titles of his topic. Introduction, location, population, village, the streams (or 'falages' as they are called locally) and the historical places, for example the old mosque built by the founder around 400 hundred years ago.

He went through each point but pausing in between to allow the audience to ask questions. I also asked some questions whether this town was open for tourists as a tourism attraction. He said it is open for tourists and attracts many locals, Arabs and foreign visitors from the West.

The only female student delivered the second presentation. Her topic was about 'Being a Special Person'. She started by introducing the four main points of the topic. First, she gave a brief overview of what it meant to be a special person. She also named her mother as the most special person in her life. After she talked about all the main points, which lasted for approximately 10 minutes, she invited the class to comment or ask questions.

I sat at the corner of the class to watch how those presentations were going. Whenever she paused, I added information to her explanations and I also invited the students to ask the presenter to comment or ask for further clarification. She was quite good in English and this was clear through out her presentation. She was well prepared and gave away some hand-outs for students to follow. I felt this presentation was an invitation to every student to reveal their special person in their lives. They were inspired by her presentation and felt emotional talking about their mother as a role model. Many students staying in Muscat feel homesick being away from their families. They leave for their hometowns at weekends only. Thus the majority felt this presentation was a good occasion to talk about and share their loneliness and difficult moments in their lives as students.

The third and last presentation was entitled 'Unemployment in The Arab World' delivered by a male student. His presentation was organised under three headings:

1. Definitions of unemployment
2. Reasons of unemployment
3. Unemployment in the Arab World and its consequences

He gave a detailed description of the unemployment in the Arab world and its percentages. He gave explanations to their questions, and then I asked students to ask more questions about the topic.

Reflection

The students enjoyed listening to the three topics delivered in this lesson. It was good that they had an opportunity to participate in this kind of experience of learning from each other. It is the first time that they depended on themselves in researching the topics of their interests.

There were no complaints about not being allowed to use Arabic throughout this lesson and during presentations. This was due to the fact that right from the beginning I was clear with my students that I would be interested in fluency and there was so no need to worry about language mistakes. I think this had lowered their anxiety and empowered them to focus on the topic and not on the language structures or grammar rules. I ignored the language problems and emphasized how they presented in front of the class for the first time and how impressed I was for them to

deliver in English only. (In fact a few used Arabic occasionally when they were faced with difficult expressions that they couldn't say in English). I think this also had a positive impact on their performance as well as the support they got from their peers who attended the class for the one-hour period. All students were engaged in a meaningful discussion and so everybody interacted in one way or another in the tasks.

This kind of activity requires students to access the Internet in order to search for topics worth discussing in the classroom. By doing so, they become more independent learners at the end of the semester. I really liked all topics selected for the presentations.

While most of the 'teaching' was done by the students themselves I felt I had set up and supported the presentations in order to maximize meaningful communication in a relaxed atmosphere. In Brown's (2001) terms, I encouraged 'risk taking, 'communicative competence', 'self-confidence' and the development of 'language ego'.

8.5 How I use Arabic in the classroom

I used to use Arabic extensively in my first year as a secondary schoolteacher of English. I used it for specific purposes such as giving the meanings of the new words, explaining grammatical points, giving tasks instruction, maintaining the class order and relating to students personally.

As a teacher of undergraduate students in a tertiary college, I now minimise my Arabic usage. I consciously limit the amount of Arabic I use and do not allow students to use it in the classroom as a general rule. The students from time to time complain about the fact that I hardly speak in Arabic and from time to time they come to my office during office hours (the weak ones especially) to explain to me how difficult it is for them to learn English without any Arabic translation. I am still working on getting the balance right and finding ways of using Arabic 'judiciously', when my habit has been to exclude Arabic as much as possible.

Last semester a few students said to me that I am being unfair not to use Arabic, considering that I am an Arabic-speaking local teacher. I said that during office hours,

I would usually speak Arabic if they come to my office and speak Arabic, but I insisted that I mainly speak English in class.

However, I now try to pay more attention to the weaker students and the unwilling learners by listening to their language problems and understanding their point that English is difficult to learn and that for these students, I should use some Arabic in the classroom, despite my personal feeling is that I use Arabic if I feel the students will be incapable of learning in English only. I now I explain my points in English and then check the number of students who got my points and follow what I was saying. However, when I find some students were not following me and therefore could not understand what I was trying to say, I switch to explain the same points in Arabic.

I usually follow this technique now with my students. If the class is doing well in English only and there is no complaints from them with regards to Arabic use, it is fine with me. In fact, some students like to study in English only. They often ask me to do everything in English and at the same time I am aware that there are slower learners alongside the brighter ones. So at times I speak bilingually to satisfy all students and so there is always a place for Arabic usage and there is no harm in including a bit of Arabic in the English lesson now and then.

The brighter students however, say that they want to practice English and since the classroom is the only place and the time available is very limited, they would find it is precious to try to speak English. Somehow, I have to find a balance.

As was said by my bilingual interviewees, the main problem teaching English as a foreign language, and using English in the classroom is the time factor. We are confined to fifty minutes per lesson, and to achieve the goals we set each semester, we are under pressure to try to finish the syllabus on time.

Keeping the classroom order is another challenge for any teacher when it comes to EFL. I find I am able to keep discipline and manage the class in English only, except in extreme cases. If some bilingual teachers believe that Arabic should be at least used for class discipline, I could argue that this is not necessarily the case if the teacher could find alternative ways for conducting a good learning environment. However, my English fluency might say something about the fact that it is easier for me than other teachers.

Sometimes though, I speak Arabic when I feel students are not responding to the issue that I am talking about, and I need to get their attention. For example, when I talk about the mid term exams or final exams and want them to prepare themselves for those exams, sometimes most of the students in the class do not show any response. I come to feel that they did not understand what I said and I ask some students to repeat what I said to make sure that every body gets the message.

Some bilingual teachers believe that keeping discipline is best done in the students' L1, and this view has some support from the literature (Mitchell, 1988, Polio and Duff, 1994). Some teachers maintain discipline in class bilingually, others monolinguals. For myself, if I feel the students are not getting the points I am trying to deliver, I switch to Arabic, but only in some classes and only when I feel I absolutely have to. This is my way of using L1 'judiciously' in the EFL classroom.

8.6 How I Deal with 'Culture Conflicts'

For me as a bilingual teacher, throughout my career, I have from time to time come across content in textbooks that I know will be embarrassing or even offensive to some students. I normally teach whatever I come across, but I notice that some female students (especially very conservative ones) do not like pictures of girls on the beach in bikinis, for example, so they come to me and we talk privately about the issue. They tell me that they feel embarrassed to look at pictures that they call 'inappropriate' or 'obscene', and that they cannot talk about it in the class in front of the male students. We talk about what topics they like and what topics they dislike. They tell me that they do not like topics that are outside of our culture, especially activities that contain 'obscenities'.

These incidents have made me careful in the way I deal with the activities. If I feel the topic displayed is too offensive to students I simply avoid it. I also substitute sentences I feel students won't feel comfortable with by more acceptable ones. But this does not mean that I skip everything I find different from our Muslim culture. In less sensitive situations such as people sitting in a 'pub', I explain to them that in the West, it is common to go to the pub to chat with friends and have food. I often explain to students that it is the way of life in the West to drink alcohol, sunbathe, and go to mixed parties. I say, "It is just a different culture". In this way I try to challenge

them and get them to see cultural differences as natural, to shift their thinking away a bit from moralizing.

I particularly enjoy lessons that give opportunities for making cross-cultural comparisons. I always like to talk about my experiences in other countries and things I have seen outside Oman. I compare the Western culture and our own and try to tell them that each nation has its own tradition and different styles of life. I like to talk about occasions such as wedding, birthday parties, Christmas, and Easter, and what people do at every occasion. Sometimes I explain to them that it is culturally acceptable for non-Muslims to drink alcohol at any social occasions.

Most students like to learn and hear about other cultures and so they ask me lots of questions. They sometimes tell me that I am a knowledgeable person because I describe in details all the occasions that I have been exposed to. I also talk about my experience when I was abroad and how I lived there and coped with their culture, food and weather.

8.7 How I Deal with Slow Students

Despite the fact that I enjoy teaching, there are times where I feel that my students are hopeless. In other words, some of them are so incompetent in English that are unable to form a simple sentence. They need special attention and lots of practice in the four skills. This demands intensive work from me as well as from the students in order to build their language skills. Some students respond positively to the effort I exert. They gradually improve their language ability and appreciate English as a subject. Some improve their attitude towards English by working hard, doing homework on time and focusing on what I offer in class and the activities I choose. I try to motivate them by praising and supporting them, and always encourage them towards better performance by talking to them about the importance of English language is for their future career. I let them know that I appreciate their effort and hard work.

However, some students do not improve the way they should. They are uninterested in learning foreign languages and they think that it is difficult for them to learn and master other languages. These students (the minority) would drop out of the English classes or they postpone the English course until they reach their final year (4th year), hoping that they might be exempted from studying English at all. It is unfortunate

that some students still have negative attitudes toward English and won't change this narrow vision. I am still trying to engage these students and to develop the skills to motivate them and give them the confidence to learn

8.8 What I Learned from the Bilingual Teachers

I learned a lot from doing this study about my own teaching, especially by being exposed to many different experiences through classroom observations and interviewing teachers and students.

I realized how counter-productive it could be to rely on Arabic as a 'crutch' when there is no reason why much of what is conveyed in Arabic could be just as well conveyed in English. I am more convinced than ever that reliance on L1 in the classroom robs the students of opportunities to hear and acquire English, and of being in a language- rich environment. As well, it can be boring to be taught everything through translation.

I have also become more sensitive about when to use Arabic myself, and when not to. I am aware now of when to use Arabic for underpinning points of the lesson, even though I have a fairly homogenous classes, there are still varying degrees of learners' competency, (good and willing learners versus reluctant and slow learners). I need always to find the balance between not leaving the slow and reluctant ones behind, and challenging and stimulating the quick and willing learners, especially in relation to when I do or do not speak Arabic.

I have come to understand that using Arabic 'judiciously' is not harmful, but rather is useful at different stages of the class time. This was confirmed by the students in the interviews and by my teaching last semester, when I spoke more Arabic than I used to before.

I keep Jasmine and Jihad in my mind as models of teachers who use their bilingualism as a resource in their teaching, rather than as a crutch, as others did. They also showed how local teachers with an-Arabic and Muslim cultural background can teach in more open and communicative ways, and be student-centered in the way they conduct their classes.

8.9 What I Learned from Monolingual Teachers

I enjoyed watching the way that monolingual teachers who were not able to speak Arabic found other techniques to compensate. The pedagogical techniques they utilized were useful and effective and gave me some good ideas. I also learned from monolingual teachers that if one-way of teaching doesn't work they could try and use other ways that may work better for students.

The other thing I learned was about relaxing and being oneself in the classroom. The bottom line is that it is *the teacher herself* who makes a rich and dynamic learning context, regardless of whether she is bilingual or monolingual. It is her personality and her commitment that is the most important factors in the effectiveness her pedagogical effectiveness. John and Eva were particularly good examples of teaching and learning in which the teacher was strongly personally engaged, so it was lively and interesting because of the way they projected their personalities, as well as the techniques that they used.

8.10 What I Learned from the Student Interviews

The student interviews have given me insights and have helped me to become more aware of my responsibilities and have helped to shape my attitude in the class to be a better EFL instructor.

The research with students has also taught me how to listen more to students' opinions and use constructive dialogue with them. This allows me to include them as active participants in diagnosing their language problems and acting accordingly.

Now I realize the importance of conducting open dialogue between teachers and students. Such on-going dialogue can serve long-term goals, and by knowing the source of the problem I can try to give solutions and remedial work.

For instance, as I started the second semester last academic year (September 2007) with newcomer students, I asked them several questions (similar to the interview questions) to see how many similar or different the answers or reactions were, in comparison with the lot I interviewed. It was fascinating to me to get similar thoughts from this lot of students. They said that because of insufficient knowledge of English language, they took recourse to their L1 (Arabic) in order to compensate for such

deficiency so they could express themselves. They too, said that they feel comfortable using Arabic when they need to in the English language classroom, but not too much. They also said that the most difficult parts are new words and grammar. These informal, on-the-spot interviews have made me more aware of the students' problems and so I have become a little more flexible than I have been in the past, in allowing and speaking Arabic when it is necessary for basic comprehension.

8.11 Teacher-Centred versus Student-Centred Approaches

As I discussed, some teacher's favored student-centered and communicative approaches while on the other hand, some teachers mainly followed the old teacher-centered approach.

I am more convinced than ever about the effectiveness of student-centred approaches that incorporate a variety of techniques, depending on the kind of the activity, size of classroom and students' level.

This semester I teach four different classes with over 95 students altogether. To meet every one's needs and learning styles, they work individually, in pairs and in groups, as my ultimate goal is to satisfy every student learning style as far as possible. There are times when students choose to work individually, when they feel the task is short and relatively easy. I like to have a variety of techniques in the same lesson and so do students.

I always praise the good achievers for their effort. The anticipation of reward is very much related to the tasks we do in the class which come naturally and spontaneously as an appreciation for good work. For example we as teachers praise students for good response or achievement. With my students I use this on a daily basis to show them that I am happy about their language progress. Reward comes in different forms depending on the schooling levels. Beginners/ elementary level students get rewarded in form of small gifts; stars and stickers while undergraduate students are often praised verbally. Any form of reward could have positive impact on students especially at the FL contexts. These help lowering their anxiety and increase their self-confidence and intrinsic motivation. This is true for good, average and slow learners and the more I praise them the better they perform. However, for low motivated students, my strategy is to praise whenever they a produce correct response

as I advise them that learning English is linked to a better future. In this way, I make them aware of the academic benefits of knowing English and the prestige in being able to use English.

However, I am still aware that as a local bilingual teacher, my style is perhaps more teacher-centred than in could be, and I need to work on developing skills in listening more carefully to what the students are up to and teaching to all the students needs, including the slower ones.

8.12 Summary

I must acknowledge that I benefited in many ways from the study, especially from the teacher's viewpoints and from the perceptions of students.

It was an excellent opportunity to deepen my understanding of the thoughts and experiences of other people involved in the teaching and learning process. This ultimately would increase my awareness of language teaching and improve my performance, which would have some impact on my students' performance and attitude.

Through out my teaching career I have been encouraging my students both in secondary schools and at the tertiary education levels to try to speak in English when possible. Everybody in the class tries their best to participate using English in all activities and communication with each other and with me. I usually do not pay attention to language mistakes as long as their English is understandable. However, there are times where I teach English language grammar rules as part of the syllabus, and then only I correct mistakes.

I have found that most of the time I am able to fulfill all the purposes of relationship, management, instruction, explanation and creating a 'language rich environment' in English, especially in classes where there are proficient learners. However, I do use a little Arabic from time to time and sometimes allow students to give meanings in Arabic when I think they will not learn otherwise. I believe that in the long run, I can achieve my teaching aims more effectively this way. This is in keeping with the conclusions of Atkinson (1993) and Wigglesworth (2003) who recommend judicious use of L1 in the EFL classroom. The word 'judicious' is significant as it signals that it

is the teacher who is the final judge of when, or when not to use English in any context. As mentioned above, I am learning to become a little more flexible in my English usage than I have been in the past in order to better serve the needs of the whole class, including the slower ones.

Teaching English as a foreign language in Arabic contexts is not easy, given the demands of large classes and the cultural differences that inevitably come up in the classroom. With huge difference between the two languages, teachers expect students to take time to comprehend the message he or she is trying to deliver. We as teachers should make our students appreciate the English lessons by implementing various techniques and focus on developing new and innovative ones. We should move forward from the traditional teaching methods and constantly improve and refine our teaching techniques and strategies to make them more motivating, more communicative and more interactive.

For myself, I am still working on the whole question of when I should or should not use Arabic and reflecting on how I can become more student- centered but still maintain my authority and the flow of activities.

Chapter Nine: Learning from the Case Study

9.1 Introduction

In this chapter I draw together the findings of the four phases of the research described in Chapters 5 – 8: classroom observations, interviews with students; interviews with teachers; and a self-reflection on my own practice. Taken together, the findings provide a three-dimensional snapshot of teaching EFL in Oman at this time. The findings also suggest some ways forward to improve the quality of EFL teaching in tertiary institutions.

I initially set out in my research to make a comparative analysis of the impact on learning of monolingual or bilingual EFL teaching, focusing on the role and usage of L1 (Arabic) in the classroom. In the main, this case study confirms the views of contemporary authors that while L1 has a potentially beneficial role in EFL teaching, its usage should be minimized and limited to particular purposes.

In exploring these issues, other aspects of language pedagogy in relation to monolingual versus bilingual teaching have been opened up. These include a more general focus on language pedagogy (especially communicative and socially interactive language teaching approaches), the characteristic styles of teaching of bilingual and monolingual teachers of English and the effects of culture and tradition in language teaching. The main finding, or insight suggested by the research overall is that effective EFL teaching is not only about the language or cultural context of instruction, but relies on teachers (whether bilingual or monolingual) integrating a broad range of pedagogical strategies into their teaching.

In the rest of this chapter I discuss the findings presented in Chapters 5 – 8 in relation to the specific situation and needs of Oman, presented in Chapter 2 and in the light of key insights contained in the literature reviewed in Chapter 3.

9.2 The benefits of L1 (Arabic) usage in EFL teaching

As shown in Chapters 6 and 7, the bilingual teachers and the students in this study said there were particular benefits in incorporating Arabic language in EFL teaching. Some use of Arabic, especially in the beginning years of learning, has a number of

benefits from the point of view of both learners and teachers. There was almost a complete consensus amongst the Arabic-speaking teachers and student participants that this is the case. One monolingual teacher also conceded that it would be an advantage for all English-speaking teachers, if they could speak Arabic in the classroom.

Bilingual teachers gave many reasons for using Arabic in English lessons. These can be summarized as:

- Discussing cultural ideas
- Giving immediate, comprehensible feedback
- Pointing out differences between the grammatical structures of each language
- Saving classroom time
- Building motivation
- Maintaining discipline

The students gave similar reasons for wanting Arabic to be spoken by their EFL classroom teachers. In particular, they emphasized:

- Common language and common culture helps communication and learning
- More effective clarification of word meanings
- Better classroom control

Several students commented that bilingual teachers helped them to feel secure and safe, thereby suggesting that L1 usage contributes to a more relaxed classroom atmosphere. This implies that a bilingual classroom would be more conducive to learning than an L2-only classroom, in which learners are constantly straining to understand.

The rapport between students and teachers enabled by a shared language and culture might in turn enhance the smooth running of classes. This was clearly identified by student S1, for example, who said that being in a bilingual classroom allows the students to express their language needs and problems, and that it "eases our understanding and learning".

A further advantage of having a bilingual teacher, reported by some students is, that low level learners are more likely to keep up and be able to participate in the classroom activities, as they are able to understand in full the instruction for the tasks

(cf. Wigglesworth, 2003 p. 22). In the words of one student in this study, "since we all have low-level English, translation and explanations of new words and concepts helps us understand and contribute to our overall learning process and it saves the class time".

The students' and teachers' perceptions regarding the importance of L1 usage support the considerable evidence that the first language has an important role to play in the classroom for the explanation of difficult concepts, translation of particular words/ vocabulary, classroom management and building rapport, reflecting what is now a mainstream viewpoint regarding L1 usage in EFL pedagogy, for example as put forward by authors such as Cook (1991), Collins (1993), Cole (1998), Schweers (1999) and Wigglesworth (2003).

While the purposes of speaking Arabic by the participants, listed above, might seem to be common sense, it is interesting to me that three of the five bilingual teachers whom I observed seemed to make little attempt to limit their Arabic usage to these sorts of functions, and in fact spoke Arabic throughout almost all of their teaching.

On the other hand, two of the teachers (Jasmine and Jihad) spoke only in English and did not use any Arabic at all in the lessons that I observed. In other words, I saw the two extremes: either too much Arabic or none at all.

There was certainly an all-round agreement amongst the teachers and students interviewed that students need bilingual teachers for basic communication, especially when they are at their minimal proficiency level or have very little confidence in their ability to learn English.

Even though there was a near full consensus among both bilingual teachers and students about the benefits of Arabic usage, most teachers and students determined that there should be some sort of limitations or conditions in regard to such usage. The comment by bilingual teacher Salem, that he would use Arabic minimally to explain structural aspects, because his aim was to *teach the language rather than about the language*, summed up nicely the communicative, rather than the grammar-translation, or instructional approach. Students agreed that although Arabic language was necessary, it should not be over-used. Overall, they thought that certain grammatical

points, new words and meanings of English vocabulary should be explained in Arabic.

These views about minimizing L1 usage in foreign language teaching reflects the findings of a number of authors already cited, including Atkinson (1993 cited in Morgan, 2001, p.149) who points out that using L1 may be more efficient if there is something complicated to communicate.

A number of the bilingual teachers said that speaking Arabic when managing discipline is more effective than speaking English. This echoes a survey conducted at some FL classes in secondary schools reported by Mitchell (1988, p.28) which found that giving classroom organizational instructions, teaching grammar and disciplining were best done in students' L1. However, given the evidence in this study of effective classroom management by both bilingual and monolingual teachers using English only, it could be that the advice from Mitchell's study does not apply in the context tertiary institutions.

Overall, this case study supports the most common view in recent literature that L1 does have an important role in foreign language teaching, but that that role needs to be defined and confined to certain functions. Duff (1989, cited in Harbord, 1992, p. 355) said that, "unless, the mother tongue can enhance the quality of the learning experience in the classroom, it should be avoided". In other words, L1 needs to be used consciously and strategically. Duff's guideline is that the mother tongue should be used "to provoke discussion and to develop clarity and flexibility of thinking and to increase our own and our students' awareness of inevitable interaction between the mother tongue and the target language that occurs during any type of language acquisition".

I saw little evidence in my observations of teachers using their first language "to develop clarity and flexibility of thinking" or to increase awareness of "inevitable interaction between the two languages". As we have seen, the majority of bilingual teachers that I observed in this study spoke Arabic for most classroom functions. I believe their over-use of L1 would have reduced the students' experiences of being in a communicative, English language learning environment and severely limited opportunities to develop aural comprehension skills.

What I actually observed was therefore at odds with the ideas and perceptions provided at interview from the bilingual teachers, about the *benefits* of speaking some Arabic in EFL classes, and it did not reflect the advice of authors such as Duff. My conclusion here is that there is a need for professional development for bilingual teachers around the whole issue of speaking Arabic in the EFL classroom, perhaps through reflection upon and discussion of the literature and through peer support strategies.

Collins (1993) call for the 'systematic' integration of L1 in second language classrooms could be a useful starting point. Perhaps what is needed in Oman (and elsewhere) is a clear framework or protocol giving guidance as to the specific purposes, functions and circumstances in which L1 usage is acceptable and beneficial.

Such a framework could build on the ideas of Atkinson (1993, cited in Morgan, 2001, p. 149) who calls for L1 to be spoken in the foreign language classroom for the following purposes.

- The rapport between the teacher and learner may be inhibited [if L2 only is used];
- If teachers and learners share the same mother tongue, it may seem artificial to use the TL only;
- Using L1 may be more efficient (if there is something complicated to communicate);
- Language awareness activities (comparing mother tongue and the TL) can usefully take place in L1;
- Using L1 may improve students' motivation, if their attention is sustained more keenly, and;
- Using L1 may be a good idea if the teacher is tired.

Atkinson's views suggest that the more skilled and experienced the EFL teacher is, the less need there may be for explicit guidelines describing when L1 and when L2 should be spoken, as language switching for different purposes would gradually developed as an automatic skill. Cook's (2001) notion of 'language interaction' in the EFL classroom is relevant here, as is Stern's (2001) notion of 'intralingual' language teaching, a strategy of quickly changing between languages according to the teaching need of the moment.

In my own teaching, having trained myself to speak English as much as possible, and Arabic as little as possible, I do use Arabic in my classes when I deem it necessary to convey complex meanings of grammar and lexis. I have sometimes found it commonsense to translate meanings and instructions, from the point of view of efficiency and clarity of explanation. I consider that I teach 'intralingually', and that my switching between English and Arabic is mainly automatic.

However, I myself have not found it necessary to use Arabic to create rapport or for class management. This is possibly because I am more confident and fluent in my English-speaking as the result of more years of study spent overseas than many of my colleagues, who have not had the same opportunities to develop their English fluency. Perhaps the conclusion here is that because there are so many factors interacting at any one time in the classroom (including the linguistic skills of individual teachers) there can be no hard and fast rules, but only broad general guidelines for L1 inclusion in EFL teaching. At any one moment, it is up to the judgment of the teacher as to how to teach and how to respond to constantly changing pedagogical situations. That is, teachers need to develop the skill of making *judicious* (Turnbull, 2000, 2001) *decisions* in the course of their teaching and from moment to moment.

The data from teacher and student interviews together with the evidence from the literature suggests that a framework for a more *systematic* approach to L1 usage, with clearly defined specific purposes, reflecting Wigglesworth's (2003) view that L1 is inevitable in SL/ FL teaching and learning situations, but that it should be used sparingly; confined to *necessary* translation for *particular* purposes.

In this way, the data also supports Turnbull's (2000, 2001) view that teacher educators must help teacher candidates and practicing teachers to make principled decisions about the *judicious* usage of the L1. This research also supports his call for more empirical research to be conducted in this area, in order to understand more clearly what is meant by *judicious* and the factors that prompt SL/FL teachers to speak the students' L1 and the relationship between teachers' TL and L1 use and students' TL proficiency.

9.3 The Benefits of Monolingual EFL Teaching

It seems clear to me that despite the *benefits* of L1 usage in teaching EFL discussed above, the bilingual teachers in this study who used little or no Arabic were teaching English much more effectively than those who taught English through the medium of Arabic.

The monolingual teachers had found ways of English teaching, which also work. Both NEST and NNEST monolingual teachers managed to convey the meanings of vocabulary or difficult phrases by actions, mimes and voice imitation. When asked, most monolingual teachers said they did not think that speaking Arabic was necessary in their teaching practice with undergraduate students.

The monolingual teachers I observed were more likely to create student-centred, communication rich learning environments than their bilingual counterparts. These teachers also had excellent rapport with their students and seemed more relaxed in the classroom than many of the bilinguals, who were more authoritarian in their style. I think that the kind of rapport that is generated by personal engagement and a lively, supportive style is a different kind of rapport to that which is generated by shared language and culture, although both are valid. In a bilingual classroom students might feel relaxed insofar as the teaching style is familiar, and everything is understood. At the same time, students might feel relaxed in an engaged, student-centred classroom, because it is communication-rich, even though they feel some tension in their attempts to listen and participate in a new language and be implicitly exposed to a different culture in doing so.

In this way, the monolingual teachers (at least, the native English-speaking ones) were putting into practice the broad approach of communicative language teaching (CLT) as described by Nunan (1991) and Brown (2001):

- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language but also on the learning management process.
- An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.

- An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom.

It seems that 'necessity is the mother of invention'. The disadvantage of not speaking Arabic became an advantage, in that it stimulated and even required creative solutions, in the tradition and approach of CLT, especially by monolingual teachers Anna, Jenny, Eva and John.

Monolingual teachers used the white board far more extensively and more creatively than did bilinguals, so that students were engaged in visual presentations to back up the oral work. They also integrated dictionary work, hence encouraging the students to take responsibility for their own learning.

While the bilingual teachers and the students commented on the importance of being able to give instructions in Arabic, monolingual teachers worked hard to compensate and found other ways and strategies to deal with their students and thus to cross the language barrier. I see this as a kind of paradox that, despite the advantages and efficiencies of bilingual instruction, with monolingual instruction, the power of human inventiveness in communication brings out a more communicative and personal approach, which stimulates learning in different sorts of ways.

The more communicative approach displayed by the monolingual teachers can also be viewed in the light of Krashen's (1982) distinction between language acquisition and language learning. Do bilinguals promote more *learning* while monolinguals tend to promote more *acquisition*?

According to Krashen, *language acquisition* is primarily a subconscious process, and takes place in the same sort of way that children develop the ability to speak in their first language. *Language learning* is a more conscious process of learning word meanings and grammatical rules. While adults are more able to learn the rules of a new language than children, they are still able to 'pick up' new languages through subconscious processes. However, acquisition develops slowly, and speaking skills emerge more slowly than listening skills. Krashen's theories imply that maximum immersion in communication rich environments is the key to effective language learning (as in the case of classrooms of the monolingual teachers).

On the other hand, his theory about *comprehensible input* implies graded or simplified L2 instruction with some translation. Based on the small amount of observational evidence of bilingual teachers conducting their lessons in English, I would say that their English input was more simplified and more comprehensible than that of the monolingual teachers, but that monolingual teachers had had more practice in grading their language in discussing difficult ideas.

9.4 Re-visiting Brown's 12 Principles

Brown's (2001) twelve principles of second language teaching build on the principles of communicative language teaching and contain echoes of Krashen's theories as well as social constructivist theories of second language acquisition, as discussed earlier. In order to make a more detailed comparison of the bilingual and monolingual teaching styles, in the light of both SLA and constructivist theories of language learning, I have used Browns' (2001) principles as a framework for analysis of the observation and interview data.

Brown's 12 Principles	Bilingual teachers	Monolingual teachers
Principle 1: Automaticity About the need to promote acquisition rather than learning: suggests the need for teachers to create a learning rich, English speaking environment and minimise low levels of anxiety for automatic acquisition to take place.	May not provide a learning environment that would promote automatic acquisition, because classes conducted in Arabic and emphasise grammar and pronunciation. However, L1 teaching and common culture may minimise anxiety, in comparison with monolinguals.	Monolingual classrooms more likely to promote automaticity and learning-rich environments. However, lack of recourse to L1 and lack of common culture may cause anxiety for some students.
Principle 2: Meaningful learning About the need to promote learning through meaningful understanding rather than rote learning	Tendency to encourage rote learning of the language basics rather than meaningful learning. However, access to L1 enables more meaningful explanations of complex language points and to make comparisons and use analogies.	Meaning conveyed through communicative approaches. However, monolingual teachers may avoid *appropriate* rote learning of structures, and may be unable to convey complex linguistic meanings through a lack of Arabic.
Principle 3: Anticipation of reward About the need to praise achievements and give positive feedback to motivate students	Tendency to praise to high achievers and ignore low achievers. However, L1 can be used to give encouraging feedback.	More positive and lively classrooms and more engaged relationships tend to incorporate positive feedback. However, lack of L1 could inhibit the giving of detailed linguistic feedback.
Principle 4: Intrinsic motivation About providing tasks and materials that are intrinsically fun or motivating	Over-formal teaching with little student input is unlikely to provide intrinsic motivation. However, some textbooks tend to utilise interesting or funny scenarios that are likely to be intrinsically motivating.	Teachers in the main attempted to provide intrinsic motivation in their attempts to engage students' attention and make language learning fun.

Principle 5: Strategic Investment About the need to focus on the role of students in the methods they employ in learning languages	Tendency to dominate the class with little opportunity for learners to take a role in their own learning. Teacher-centered is common in bilingual and NNES classes. Large classes inhibit possibilities for strategic investment.	More attempts to give the learners autonomy in the tasks they are engaged in. Group work where students share thoughts and learn from each other provide space for different ways of learning. However, large classes inhibit possibilities for strategic investment.
Principle 6: Language Ego About providing safety and the need to treat learners with care	May be neglected in formal, traditional classrooms, and the tendency to focus on accuracy rather than meaning, thereby giving more negative than positive feedback.	May be promoted through more personal engagement with students as individuals and focus on meaning.
Principle7: Self-Confidence About promoting students' self-esteem in learning L2 or FL	Tendency to follow traditional teaching methods that makes learners passive, which in turn have negative impacts on learners' self-esteem. Teachers may not affirm that they are capable learners and they do not give them time to prove themselves. The better students have more opportunities to build their confidence.	More skills in enhancing learners' confidence by working from simple tasks to more complex ones. More focus on inclusion rather than teaching to the better students.
Principle 8: Risk-Taking About the teachers' readiness to encourage students to take risks in attempting use newly acquired language meaningfully	There are not many chances for risk taking in highly structured lessons and a focus on rote learning.	The focus on meaningful language and authentic materials and opportunities for problem-solving activities encourage risk-taking.

Principle 9: The Language –Culture Connection About the importance of making explicit connections between language and culture.	Emphasis on the grammatical forms and structures of the language, rather than discussion and dialogue and the habit of references considered culturally offensive may learners from an important facet of learning a language.	Monolingual teachers may not be sensitive to Muslim norms and may leave students feeling their English learning entails an unwanted imposition of Western culture. On the other hand, monolingual teachers are implicit 'models' of Western culture and may therefore offer a level of linguistic acculturation not available to bilinguals.
Principle 10: The Native Language Effect About the effects of learners' native/ first language on acquiring and or learning the new language.	Bilingual teachers would have more insight into the native language effect and can therefore explicitly teach about common errors. They are well placed to correct errors, which stem from their L1 interference and translation.	Lack of their learners' L1 makes monolinguals less able to diagnose accurately the source of common errors and to depend more on students' writing for diagnosing their language errors.
Principle 11: Interlanguage Inter-language is process of internalising chunks of language, vocabulary and grammar structures. Error feedback is a necessary part of inter-language development.	Tendency to control learners' language to minimise producing language errors and mistakes inhibits them from developing their innate language, which affects acquisition of that language. However, students may benefit from the feedback they get from bilinguals in terms of grammar and language forms and structures.	Focusing on fluency may contribute to the developmental processes of learners' interlanguage. Enhance acquisition. However, balance must be struck between focusing on fluency and providing the feedback necessary for interlanguage development.
Principle 12: Communicative Competence About giving equal attention to language use and fluency in the context of authentic communications.	Tendency to pay more attention to language usage through drills based-activity and focus on accuracy rather than using English as a vehicle for authentic communication.	More skills in teaching in communicative contexts. To facilitate learners' understanding and prepare them to encounter the real world beyond the classroom doors.

Brown's principles are themselves a Western cultural product, reflecting approaches to language pedagogy common in Western countries, and so it is no surprise that the principles are reflected strongly in the practice of the monolingual rather than the bilingual (and NNEST bilingual) teachers. However, this analysis does reinforce one of the main findings of this research that many bilingual teachers are still teaching in traditional ways, and would benefit from professional development based around current notions of EFL and ESL pedagogy, especially communicative language teaching approaches.

9.5 Delineating Typical Language Pedagogies of Bilingual and Monolingual Teachers

Making a comparative analysis across different cultural contexts (albeit in the same country and, in many cases, in the same institutions) is fraught with difficulties, including ethical challenges. My attempt to compare bilingual and monolingual teaching styles may be seen as a projection of my own cultural biases. As already mentioned, there are a whole range of contextual factors influencing how any one teacher teaches, or what happens in any particular lesson: factors of tradition; the national, religious and local school culture; the set curriculum; the quality of training teachers have received; personal history, the available resources; and the motivation of particular groups of students. All these have an impact on the quality and effectiveness of teaching at any one time. Pedagogy, by its very nature, is multi-layered, value-laden, and reflective of dynamic fields of social, historical and educational discourses (Schulman, 1990; Van Manen, 1995; Sanguinetti et al. 2004). Educational institutions reflect the cultures and societies that they serve and each classroom is a microcosm, in a sense, of dominant mores and values in the mainstream societies beyond that room, as described by (Xiao, 2006).

It is inevitable that there would be differences between the language pedagogies of bilingual teachers who have been educated and socialised in Arabic-speaking, Muslim societies, those of monolingual teachers educated and socialised in the West, and those of monolingual teachers educated and socialised in Asian countries.

Whereas most of the bilingual teachers in this study had received at least a part of their EFL teacher training in Western universities, it seems that the effects of culture

and tradition and the effects of local institutional cultures still strongly influence the way they practice their teaching.

I did not quantify the extent of Arabic usage of bilingual teachers in this research. It seems, however, based on the small sample of teachers in this case study, that the amount of Arabic usage in EFL classes in Oman varies widely, from those teachers who rely on Arabic almost 100% and those who use it very little, if at all. Taken together, the observation, student interview and teacher interview data suggest that that it is commonplace for bilingual teachers to conduct classes largely in Arabic and to use Arabic for functions that could well be conducted in English. (Three of the teachers whom I observed used Arabic extensively and two of those interviewed indicated that they use Arabic liberally in the classroom.)

L1 usage may benefit language learning in some contexts, especially at lower levels of language competence. In other contexts, it may inhibit language learning by depriving learners of rich, communicative input. Over-riding both of these tendencies, however, is that of the pedagogical skills, repertoire and commitment of the teacher. I believe that the teachers' pedagogical repertoires, their communication skills and levels of personal engagement with the subject matter and the students, are equally significant factors, or more so, in the overall effectiveness of their English teaching, in both bilingual and monolingual contexts.

The data presented in Chapters Five, Six and Seven suggest that there are typical or characteristic 'bilingual' and 'monolingual native-speaker' pedagogies, or styles of teaching. There is also some data suggesting that monolingual non-native-speakers have styles of teaching that resemble the bilingual teaching styles.

The small sample of teachers whom I observed and interviewed, as well as the small sample of students who contributed their views about monolingual and bilingual teachers, means that my description of characteristic teaching styles is only tentative. The characteristic styles are not fixed, and are mediated by differences in individual skills and pedagogical approaches and differences in the teachers' attitudes towards their teaching. Moreover, there is a risk in categorizing teachers according to national, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds of stereotyping and negative labeling.

In the last two sections, I offer the observation about characteristic styles, as it is way into thinking about the professional needs of all teachers in the context of EFL in Oman.

9.6 Bilingual Teaching Styles

Three of the five bilingual teachers whom I observed seemed to be more teacher-centred than the monolinguals and two of those interviewed identified their teaching as teacher-centred. The other three bilingual interviewees indicated that they attempt in some ways to be student-centred as well as teacher-centred. I observed that the bilingual teachers tended to maintain tighter control throughout and seemed to follow set piece lessons, rather than 'going with the flow' or encouraging students to express their own ideas. I felt that the set lessons might have inhibited the students, at times, from fully participating in the learning process. The bilingual teachers also seemed to pay attention to brighter students who were a little ahead of others and were generally those sitting in the front rows.

Most importantly, the bilingual teachers, in the main, used too much Arabic in their teaching. I felt that their use of Arabic when teaching English was the 'easy way out' for them. As Weschler (1997, cited in Wigglesworth, 2003, p. 18) pointed out, "using the first language inhibits thinking in the second language … it may be used as a crutch … it may result in fossilization of the inter-language, and, … its use wastes precious class time that would be better spent on the second language".

More could be done to offer professional development in the *limited and judicious* use of Arabic in the classroom, as suggested by Wigglesworth (2003 p.22), who wrote that teachers need to be aware of four different aspects in relation to the L1 use in the classroom:

- The conditions under which the first language may be profitably employed
- Teacher code- switching in the classroom as a useful pragmatic strategy in the EFL classroom
- Use of the first language as a cognitive bridge to the second language
- Use of the first language in the classroom as most beneficial with low level and or beginning learners (Wigglesworth, 2003 p. 22). See also Harbord (1992) and Duff, (1989).

As well as teaching mainly or only in Arabic, I noticed that the majority of bilingual teachers did not learn students' names; they either pointed to them or called them 'you'. This I think goes against the principle of the students' right to be treated as individuals and would in my view have a de-motivating effect on their learning. Identifying students by pointing or saying 'you' may alienate students, making them think that the teacher is not interested in them or in teaching. Alternatively, they may conclude that the teacher has a bad memory and as a result may absent themselves from the lesson, thinking that the teacher may not be able to know whether a particular student was there or not. To me, learning students' names is fundamental to good teaching practice, regardless of the linguistic or cultural context.

I believe that my teaching style, as an Omani bilingual teacher, also tends to be somewhat teacher-centred, although I try to include group activities as much as possible and involve the students in the discussion of issues. I now wonder whether my style, and especially my commitment to speaking almost entirely in English, implicitly encourages the brighter students and creates barriers for the slower ones. Perhaps this is an inevitable outcome of teaching in English with only a 'minimal' and 'judicious' use of Arabic and it is a matter of continually trying to find the best balance or compromise.

In the main, however, bilingual teachers seemed to provide less freedom and had more limited repertoires than the monolingual teachers. Most did not take into account students' individual differences. My own EFL teaching experience, working at different levels with many bilingual teachers (including when I was an English language inspector) supports this view of a typical bilingual teaching style. In my experience, bilingual teachers typically use fewer group activities, relying more on students working individually and in pairs. Students talked less in the bilingual classes and teachers were more dominant. Some simply read out the task instructions without any attempt to inject life into the lessons.

The bilingual classrooms I observed seemed to be better disciplined than the monolingual ones. They were more orderly, due, I believe to the fact that teachers spoke Arabic and everyone understood. However, they were also more routine and less lively. The students seemed to depend on translation of almost everything, even when there was no necessity for it. The teachers, such as Ahmed, translated every

time students faced a difficulty. He probably thought that his students would not take in any English at all unless it was translated into Arabic. I think that translating everything wastes valuable class time that could have been spent on something more educationally beneficial.

The teacher-centered pedagogies of the bilingual teachers tended to create passive, rather than active learning situations. Students sat still in rows while the teacher stood in front of the class lecturing and dictating to students their tasks and activities. Again, the exceptions were Jasmine and Jihad, who both used more creative ways to warm up the students before starting the new lesson, such as starting an oral discussion to introduce the students to the main topic or activity. While I do not have a clear hypothesis as to why the teaching of Jasmine and Jihad was so different from that of the others bilinguals, I can only conclude that the observed differences were a matter of the individuals' personality, their commitment to English teaching and probably their training.

Lessons seemed to be mainly conducted by using audio-lingual and grammar translation methods. The teachers asked questions and students answered or repeated certain aspects of the language. They did a lot of mechanical drills and correction of mistakes. There was a lot of emphasis on getting students to produce correct grammar and language input. I did not see any dictionary work being carried out (although some students had personal electronic dictionaries). The absence of dictionaries in bilingual classes made the teacher the only source of knowledge and, at the same time, made the students more dependent on that person as information provider. As shown in Chapter 6, the views of student interviewees tended to back up my observations of the teacher-centered teaching-taking place in bilingual classrooms. Some complained about the authoritarian style of teachers, saying they were only kept working either individually or in pairs and often felt bored.

While my observation of the bilingual classroom teaching revealed, in the main, traditional, teacher-centered pedagogies, there were many signs that these pedagogies are changing. Three of the bilingual teachers, Salim, Wafa and Aziz, whom I interviewed, indicated that they were committed to more learner-centered, communicative approaches and spoke about the variety of techniques they use, including games, quizzes and putting weaker and stronger students together in groups,

so peer teaching and learning could take place. Wafa and Aziz also said they would focus on communicative tasks, based on authentic language, rather than presentation and drilling of grammar and pronunciation.

According to Krashen, both *acquisition* and *learning* are required, at least in an adult learning context. In the light of his theory, the views of Salim, Wafa and Aziz indicate that some, perhaps many, Arabic-speaking EFL teachers are embracing communicative approaches and methodologies that will enhance acquisition. On the other hand, the observations (and some of the interviews) indicate that some bilingual teachers need to move their teaching forward from a focus on formal instruction that is about *learning* to more informal and communicative activities that will enhance *acquisition.* Following Reyes and Vallone (2008, pp.36-37), in terms of constructivist language pedagogy, they need to see learning as a *process* rather than as the enactment of a set of predetermined steps, to allow more space for learning to be mediated through social interactions and to learn the skills of facilitating the students' own processes of problem solving.

The work of Forman (2008) suggests that bilingual teachers have opportunities to further strengthen their teaching by having a conscious awareness of the operation of interdiscursivity and intertextuality in bilingual classrooms. By negotiating meaning in two languages, bilingual teachers can create meaning interdiscursively across two language/cultures. Learners can thus be scaffolded into the understanding of new meanings as well as knowledge about how languages work. By being acknowledged as 'knowers of a shared culture', students can thus be enabled to extend their prior L1 knowledge into another culture (ie, the culture of the L2).

The insights from constructivist pedagogy again underlines the need for on-going and effective professional development for EFL teachers so that they have access to the latest research and theorizing about their teaching.

9.7 Monolingual Teaching Styles

The monolingual teachers seemed to have a more communicative and learner-centred teaching style than the bilinguals. They spoke to students by name and seemed to be more aware of where the students were in terms of their learning. For example, Jenny reported that she would modify her language by "coming down to the students' level"

in order to ease communication. She appeared to be implementing Krashen's (1982) 'input hypothesis', that in order to help L2 acquirers, modified inputs such as 'foreigner talk' and 'teacher talk' are useful. 'Teacher talk' increases students' motivation and enhances their attitude towards learning English, which in turn encourages students to practise the target language. Perhaps this style of teacher talk was necessary in order to compensate for lack of recourse to Arabic.

It is likely that the students who said that they preferred monolingual classes are those who were the better students and the keenest language learners, although I do not have the evidence to support this suggestion. Some students preferred the monolingual teaching style because, they said, they had more opportunities to what they had learned so far, since the classroom was virtually the only place to get such practice. One said that monolingual classes were more effective than bilingual classes because they get more English speaking practice. As student (S7) said, "with monolinguals we do not understand 100% of the lesson, but get more practice in English because we have no choice but to try to speak in English only. We gain more vocabulary, which help expands our English knowledge capacity".

From my ten classroom observations, I saw that monolingual teachers tended to give more choices to students in one activity as well as more variety. They provided individual assistance, pair work and group work. This means that students were exposed to more than one approach. Students who were not good at individual work were offered alternative choices in an attempt to take account of individual skill levels and learning styles. However, as we have seen, bilingual teachers Jasmine and Jihad also incorporated a quite a lot of variety in their lessons.

In the main, as noted above, it became clear that the monolingual teachers, especially those who were native English speakers, such as Patricia, Desrene and Rosalyn, used more sophisticated and learner-centered pedagogies, designed to promote acquisition along the lines of communicative language teaching. They could create interest and establish rapport by implementing a variety of methods. Such variety was mainly absent from the bilingual teachers' classrooms that I observed.

Native English speaking teachers tended to address students in a more friendly way than did either bilingual teachers or monolingual teachers whose first language was

not English; they were more flexible and gave students more opportunities to engage in activities. They stimulated the students to be lively and dynamic, so that classes were typically noisier, but not chaotic. They tried to create a collaborative atmosphere by allowing students to converse with their peers. This was an effective strategy to keep students engaged in meaningful discussion. They also gave equal turns to students to read/speak and participate in different aspects of the lesson.

NEST monolingual teachers were more flexible with their students. They were more concerned about students' fluency and more positive towards engaging them in English. They encouraged students to work in pairs, in groups and individually. Desrene and Patricia gave wonderful examples of allowing students to work collaboratively. In fact, they had a range of different classroom techniques in order to equally engage the entire class in the tasks.

Learner-centered pedagogies seemed to be the norm in the NEST monolingual classes. As these teachers were more concerned about training students to work freely with their peers, they did not take students' mistakes as a serious problem. Some teachers said in their interview that making mistakes was part of the learning process and, that overcorrecting is not a good idea when teaching/learning a foreign language, because students may feel frustrated if they were over corrected. Finally, the NEST monolingual teachers encouraged the use of dictionaries and relied on these for students to check the meanings of the difficult words – thus building students' self-learning habits, which over time would boost their long-term success in learning English.

The typical teaching style of the monolingual teachers reflected more of the principles of constructivist pedagogy, particularly the principle of learning through social interaction. Interestingly, there is one important principle put forward by the constructivists (certainly in the context of teaching ESL for migrant communities in English-speaking countries) that the monolinguals teachers are unable to enact. That is the principle of speaking in the learners' L1 in the classroom as a means of student empowerment and 'deep' language learning. As we saw with two of the monolinguals, L1 usage can still take place by encouraging students to discuss their L2 learning in the L1 and allowing students to translate for each other when this is appropriate.

However, they too would benefit by professional development that would enable to re-think their instructional techniques explicitly in terms of constructivist pedagogy. Constructivist learning theory (Reyes and Vallone, 2008) provides new perspectives and guidelines that are relevant in all spheres of learning, including second language learning. Monolingual as well as bilingual teachers would benefit, for example, by incorporating the principles suggested by Reyes and Vallone, 2008, (pp.39 – 63):

1. New learning builds on prior knowledge
2. Learning is mediated through social interaction
3. Problem solving is part of learning
4. Learning is a process and teachers are facilitators of that process.

While monolingual teachers may not have the same opportunities to scaffold students through interdiscursivity and intertextuality between two languages, there may be possibilities to promote similar effects by encouraging students to make comparisons and 'think across' both languages and both cultures.

In making a critical comparison of bilingual and monolingual teaching in the context of Oman, it is also important to bear in mind Benson's (2004) questioning of whether we ask too much of bilingual teachers in developing countries. Benson's linguistic and educational snapshots of bilingual teachers in Bolivia and Mozambique reverberate with the snapshots of bilingual teachers that I have presented. Benson's suggested solution is specialized professional development programs that focus explicitly on first and second language learning theory; modelling of first and second language teaching methods (oral and written); and modelling of methods for intercultural instruction (Benson p. 216).

The suggested ways forward for professional development for both bilingual and monolingual teachers is taken up in the final chapter.

9.8 'Native' and 'Non-Native' English Speaking Teachers

There is a small amount of data in this case study indicating that non-native English speaking monolingual teachers (NNESTs) from Asian countries may have more in common with those of the Arabic-speaking bilinguals, in terms of their approaches to classroom pedagogy and their ability to engage students in communicative language learning.

This is a sensitive issue that I have become aware of through my own experience and as an EFL teaching inspector. One of the students interviewed was critical of the non-native English-speaking teachers on these grounds.

One of the NNEST monolinguals interviewed indicated that he preferred teacher-centred, grammar-based methods. One of the NNEST monolinguals that I observed was attempting to engage the students in interesting content, and vary her methods, but in fact failed to keep their attention or manage the students' misbehavior.

The sensitivity of these findings is underlined by the fact that as previously mentioned, there is inbuilt discrimination in Oman against NNEST teachers in pay scales that significantly favor NEST teachers. There could also be a degree of racial discrimination against NNEST teachers from non-Western countries. As already discussed, many of these could in fact be L1 speakers of English but classified by their nationalities of origin, rather than their linguistic status.

Phillipson (1992) and Cook (1999) argue strongly against privileging native speaker teachers over non-native speakers. (Phillipson speaks of 'the native speaker fallacy"). I agree with Richards (1998) who wrote that, whether a NEST or NNEST becomes proficient as a teacher is a product of their training and their ability to communicate and lead. Richards maintains that it is not only knowledge and competence in English language that counts, but that pedagogical skills are crucial.

9.9 EFL and the Clash of Cultures

I did not set out to explore in detail the issue of the potential cultural tensions inherent in teaching the language of the West in a fully Muslim context. Nevertheless, I was curious to find out whether in this case study, there was any evidence regarding the impact of cultural tensions on language learning. Shumann's (1978) hypothesis that acculturation is the major causal variable in L2 acquisition, especially in relation to his 'Type 2 Acculturation' theory, is that language acquisition is enhanced when the speakers of the target language belong to a group whose life styles and values he or she unconsciously wishes to adopt. To what extent is his theory borne out in this case study?

This issue did emerge in the data, although it did not seem to be a major factor affecting teaching and learning either in bilingual or monolingual contexts.

In my classroom observations I did not observe any incidents or exchanges that suggested the clash of cultures being enacted in EFL classrooms.

Some student participants however, did speak about this issue from the point of view of whether the cultural content of some English lessons was appropriate in a Muslim context. The criticisms were of imported textbooks that contained embarrassing or offensive material, such as love stories or texts about dating and dancing. The other viewpoint put forward was that monolingual teachers are less aware and less sensitive to these cultural issues than are bilingual teachers.

There is no clear evidence as to the potential effect on the students' acquisition and learning of English as a result of such 'inappropriate' content. Some students reported feeling more relaxed and less anxious with bilingual (Muslim) teachers. In this way, it seems that bilingual classrooms may be able to lower the 'affective filter of anxiety' (in Krashen's terms), a pre-condition for language acquisition, according to his theory. However, there is no strong evidence in this case study that the lowering of the affective filter is related to having access to a shared language and necessary translation, or participating in a shared culture and religion. On the other hand, if bilingual classrooms with shared Muslim culture and ready access to L1 translation result in lower levels of anxiety, it may not follow that learning is enhanced, especially if students are feeling bored and disengaged from teachers.
It is interesting to note that while a number of students criticized the lack of cultural sensitivity of monolingual teachers, approximately half of them said they preferred monolingual teachers to bilingual teachers. Again, we cannot be sure whether this is because of the particular pedagogical skills of monolingual teachers, as previously discussed, or whether, at some level, the students are enjoying the challenge and interest of being indirectly exposed to Western culture in the course of learning English and engaging face to face with Western (non-Muslim) teachers.

As I stated in Chapter 1, I have personally enjoyed the opportunity for engaging with the English-speaking world, making friends, seeing how other people live, and broadening my horizons as the result of learning English. I imagine (and hope) that

Omani EFL students are similarly motivated and that English will be their pathway to enculturation not so much in Western ways but in global citizenship.

9.10 Revisiting the Research Aims

I conclude this chapter by revisiting the research aims and noting in summary form how each of them has been addressed in the course of the thesis. Again, it is necessary to re-iterate that this is exploratory, applied research in the context of tertiary institutions in Oman, with limited generalisability to wider contexts.

1. To investigate to what extent and for what purposes L1 (Arabic) is being used in the teaching of EFL in Omani tertiary institutions.

Although this research was based on a relatively small sample (10 teachers observed and 11 teachers interviewed) I have found that most of the bilinguals use Arabic for most instructional, communication and classroom management purposes. A small group of bilingual teachers appeared to use no Arabic at all, and another small group attempted to minimise their usage of Arabic in order to maximise their use of English in the classroom.

Those bilingual teachers who do use both Arabic and English in their classroom teaching use Arabic for:

- Explaining the rules of grammar and word meanings
- Discussing cultural ideas
- Giving immediate, comprehensible feedback
- Pointing out differences between the structures of each language
- Saving classroom time
- Building motivation
- Maintaining discipline

2. To make a comparison between the teaching methods and pedagogical styles used by bilingual teachers (English and Arabic) and monolingual teachers (who speak English only) in EFL classrooms in Oman.

There appeared to be a distinct difference between the pedagogic styles of the monolingual teachers and the bilingual teachers, although some non native English-speaking teachers had similar pedagogic styles to bilingual teachers. In brief, the bilingual teachers had more teacher-centred and traditional styles of teaching and relied more heavily on set texts. The monolingual teachers tended to

integrate more communicative styles into their teaching, were more flexible and had a wider repertoire of strategies.

3. To investigate the students' responses and preferences in relation to bilingual or monolingual teaching in Oman.

Students seemed to be evenly divided as to whether they prefer to be taught by monolingual or bilingual teachers, although all thought that English in the primary years should be taught bilingually However, all of the students interviewed said that they wanted to have more variety in their instruction and more collaborative work such as pair and group work.

4. To produce knowledge about how English should best be taught in Oman in order to inform professional development programmes

In Chapter Ten I offer a set of recommendations to the Ministry of Education in Oman based on the findings of the research.

9.10 Conclusion

The findings of this case study are based on a small sample and it is possible that similar research conducted elsewhere in the world, in non-Arabic or other cultural contexts may produce different findings.

The different pedagogical styles of bilingual and monolingual teachers are a reflection of differences in cultural background as much as training. As Hofstede (1986) has pointed out, classroom teaching reflects culture in a profound way, and perceptions of teaching and learning are strongly influenced by culture. The typical pedagogies of the Arabic-speaking teachers no doubt stem from the traditional, grammar-oriented, teacher-centred pedagogies that they themselves would have been likely to experience as learners and may reflect to a degree the cultural norms of Islamic society (just as 'Confucian' learning styles are the norm in China).

In the same way, the non-native English speaking monolinguals mainly come from traditional (Asian) societies, and their teaching would reflect the norms and cultures of those societies.

The typical pedagogies of the native English-speakers are equally culturally based and reflect the more advanced stages of educational development in the developed world. The training of English teachers in Western universities is better resourced and more research-based than that provided in Arabic countries, at least in past decades. The

native-speaking monolingual teachers would have had the advantages of having more hi-tech resources, teaching materials, training and exposure to a variety of theories of learning and educational psychology. As expatriate 'outsiders' who are probably in Oman for short periods, they would have the additional stimulation and motivation of living between two cultures (or at least being in a different culture). They need to make a deliberate effort to reach out to Omani students and to communicate with them and would have no choice but to find extra techniques and resources to compensate for their lack of Arabic language.

In one sense, the comparison of typical pedagogies is an unfair one, especially given the extraordinary speed at which Oman has developed since the mid-70s. Research in language teaching, however, is an international endeavor and so we need to move towards narrowing the cultural gap in teaching as in other areas and to learn from each other.

Chapter Ten: Re-energising EFL Teaching in Oman

10.1 Professional development to make a difference

This case study has confirmed the research of other scholars in relation to the pros and cons of using L1 in the classroom and the need for bilingual EFL teachers to use their first language in the classroom more consciously and more 'judiciously'. In addition, the research has shown that effective EFL teaching is a much more complex issue than whether or how teachers use L1 in their teaching – in that issues of methodological repertoire, authentic communication, personal engagement, motivation, confidence building, meaningfulness and culture also affect how language acquisition and learning take place.

Bilingual and monolingual teachers appear to have typical teaching styles, although of course there are individual exceptions. While monolingual teachers are more at home using communicative approaches and have a wider repertoire of techniques at their disposal, it may well be that in the context of Oman; they have much to learn from their bilingual colleagues, especially in giving error feedback and grammatical explanations. Each typical style carries with it potential advantages and disadvantages. There may therefore scope for monolingual and bilingual teachers to find ways of learning from and mentoring each other. This I believe is what Medgyes (1992), meant when he wrote that both NESTs and NNESTs (and in this case I would like to add bilinguals) serve equally important purposes. They should complement each other in their strengths and weaknesses. They should also work collaboratively in favor of promoting their language skills. They should work as language consultants for each other.

It is clear that the use of Arabic in the classroom (as the learners' L1) has a number of benefits in terms of efficiency, conveying complex meanings that cannot otherwise be conveyed, creating a sense of community, and supporting classroom discipline and management. Monolingual teachers should therefore be encouraged to learn the language of their host or adopted country in order to have an additional resource to draw upon, or at least to deepen their cultural awareness in the host society. Learning and attempting to use the language is a sign of respect and a way of developing relationships and common understandings. This should not be comprehended that

monolingual teachers are mandated to learn the learners' first language but it is only a suggestion that may help them to adapt into the new culture. Moreover, teachers who are engaged in teaching a language have much to learn by themselves becoming language learners and struggling with the same sorts of problems that their students have to struggle with.

Secondly, research has not established that grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods in and of themselves are to be avoided, in all contexts. It may be that in the Omani context, monolingual teachers put too much emphasis on communication, self-expression and variety, and that they are neglecting some basic techniques in teaching the grammatical and syntactic structure of English. Further classroom based research would be needed to confirm whether or not this is the fact.

Monolingual teachers who may have an instinctive feel for grammar and syntax may themselves often lack an explicit knowledge of grammatical and syntactic rules, and therefore find that communicative teaching is an easier option. In the process of creating interest, implementing a variety of techniques and encouraging a flow of communication in classrooms, monolingual teachers may be letting learners down by neglecting to teach the structure of English adequately. I do not have enough evidence that this is the case from my data, but believe that this might be a useful area of future research in EFL teaching in comparative contexts.

Thirdly, there is the element of the expression of culture in classroom teaching and learning styles. Hofstede, (1986, p. 303), wrote that classroom interaction is an archetypal human phenomenon that is deeply rooted in the culture of a society, so that interactions between teachers and learners from different cultures are fundamentally problematic and cross-cultural misunderstandings often occur.

Clearly, some of the Omani students felt discomfort in relation to the cultural differences implicit in the teaching styles of monolinguals, while other students seemed to enjoy the cultural exposure to Western ways of thinking and communicating provided by their monolingual teachers. In either case, expatriate monolingual teachers should try to minimise the potential discomfort of a culture clash in EFL classrooms and be more aware of differing cultural styles and traditions as they plan their teaching and make a conscious effort to include a variety of styles

and cultural traditions. This is in line with Lixin Xiao (2006) who in writing about Confucian teaching styles, called for teachers of EFL to develop cross-cultural awareness and to incorporate cross-cultural skills in their teaching. As Kumaravadivelu (1991, p. 98) states, "minimizing the perceived mismatch between teacher intention and learner interpretation will facilitate the chances of achieving the desired learning outcomes".

The bilingual teachers also need to develop cross-cultural awareness and be given opportunities to broaden their pedagogical repertoires and make English learning more engaging and more meaningful. They need to learn to let go of the need to strictly manage everything that takes place in the classroom and instead think about the roles of a language-rich environment in enhancing learning and of affect and motivation. They need to learn about communicative, learner-centered teaching and ways of encouraging learners to become more responsible for their own learning. In order to limit their L1 usage in classrooms, many may need to improve their English, especially English conversation. To this end, in addition to professional development providing access to language learning theories and new techniques, they may need to be encouraged to spend more time in English-speaking countries and to participate culturally and linguistically in those countries.

Teachers need to encourage students to become responsible for their own learning. In particular teachers need to take responsibility for raising students' awareness of cultures on the other side of the world, and encourage them to think globally as part of learning English not just as a foreign language, but as an international language. They need to consider the available teaching materials in the context of all the different cultures of the world culture and involve students in talking, discussing, comparing and negotiating such content. The students should be encouraged to bring cross-cultural topics to the class as some interviewed teachers have said earlier (Chapter six). There should be no taboos in learning and teaching practices or how students learn about western culture. There is so much to do trying to narrow the gap between the two cultures. So it is the responsibility of all parties, bilingual, monolingual teachers and the learners if we want to improve our appreciation of one another's language and culture.

10.2 Where to from here?

In Chapter 9 I discussed the research findings in relation to L1 usage in EFL classrooms in Oman and in relation to language pedagogy more broadly. I have sketched 'typical language pedagogies' of bilingual Arabic speaking teachers, and of native and non-English-speaking monolingual teachers and discussed the difference in terms of history, culture, tradition and comparative levels of development between Oman and Western countries. I have concluded that there are gaps and potential weaknesses in the typical pedagogies of both bilinguals and monolinguals and further, that whether or not a teacher teaches monolingually or bilingually, may not be the most important factor that affects the quality and effectiveness of his or her teaching.

Clearly, each group of teachers would benefit from professional development that is specifically targeted to the needs that have been identified. Arabic-speaking teachers need to be constantly developing their awareness of pedagogical theory and teaching strategies in order to be able to reduce their L1 usage; English-speaking teachers need to learn Arabic as a sign of cultural respect and a potential tool in their own teaching; and Arabic-speaking teachers and non-native English-speaking teachers need to broaden their repertoires and to develop more communicative and personally engaging styles of teaching.

With these two different, but corresponding, sets of professional development needs there is an opportunity in Oman for the Ministry of Education to build on the current professional development program in a way that would bring together the different groups of teachers and enable them to teach in partnerships and learn directly from each other. Ideally, that program would be led by a professional organization representing the teachers themselves.

A future project might therefore be to explore the possibility of establishing a program to enable EFL teachers in tertiary institutions in Oman to learn from and mentor each other in small teams. The Ministry of Education could organise ways for groups of teachers to be brought together in professional development programs that would facilitate a flow of ideas and mutual learning between all of the teachers. It might be possible to establish professional development partnerships for peer mentoring, review of language acquisition and teaching theories and collective self-reflection on teaching practices. Conversations between the teachers (especially

between bilingual, NEST and NNEST teachers) about culture and how cultural differences affect students' learning could be an opportunity for all teachers to become more culturally aware, more respectful, and at the same time more tolerant and more adventurous in preparing students to live and work in what is now a multicultural, globalised world.

The findings of this case study suggest an approach to professional development (for both bilingual and monolingual teachers) that is specifically targeted at the gaps in pedagogical skill and knowledge that have been demonstrated and would enable bilingual and monolingual teachers to learn from each other.

In this concluding chapter I will therefore make some brief recommendations to the Ministry of Education regarding an innovative approach to professional development for EFL teachers in Oman, based on what I have learned from the case study, from reflection on my own practice, and from my reading of the literature.

The strategy I am suggesting is based on the seeding and funding of an independent professional body of bi- and monolingual EFL teachers at all schools and tertiary institutions. This organization would be managed by an elected committee of teachers and be funded to run an annual conference, produce newsletters or a journal and would be responsible for organizing and running a professional development program based on principles of peer mentoring and action research.

10.3 Recommendations to the Ministry of Education

The specific recommendations that I am making are:

1. That a professional body of EFL teachers, including bi- and monolinguals, be seeded and funded to run a range of professional development activities, including a website, publication, an annual conference, and professional development activities.
5. That, this body will be responsible for a program of facilitated action research to involve bilingual teachers at all tertiary institutions, focused on L1 and L2 usage and issues of bilingual methods and communicative language teaching.
6. That an annual conference or seminar focusing on the role of culture in EFL teaching, to which all bi- and monolingual teachers would be invited, would be organised.

7. A pilot program be set up that will involve small groups of bi- and monolingual teachers working together in peer review with the aim of learning from each other.
8. That a professional development program including all EFL teachers in tertiary institutions in Oman be established with the aim of updating teachers' knowledge of recent language pedagogy theories and providing opportunities for the practical application of these theories in the Omani context. For example, all teachers would benefit from professional development based on Brown's (2001) principles and the more recent principles of constructivist pedagogy in relation to second language teaching and learning.

The professional organization could be similar to other such professional organizations elsewhere in the world such as ACTA (the Australian Council or TESOL Organisations), (http://www.tesol.org.au/) which has an important role in Australia in leading debate amongst teachers about a range of English language teaching issues, producing a journal and convening a conference.

There are many skilled EFL teachers in Oman, but my professional and my research experience suggests that they tend to be isolated in terms of their professional lives and professional thinking. The existence of hundreds of expatriate native-English speaking teachers whose skills in communicative language teaching methods appear to be more developed than those of their Arabic-speaking counterparts, is an important resource that could be tapped for the benefit of all teachers.

Medgyes' (1992) call for teachers to complement each other in their strengths and weaknesses and to work collaboratively, as language consultants for each other, could well be applied to improve the level of EFL teachers' skills in Oman. Such collaboration could include a program of cross-cultural awareness bringing together monolingual and bilingual teachers to reflect on and discuss sensitive but critical issues such as how teachers reflect and express their cultural background in their teaching, and how more harmony and understanding could be brought about in working with young people in the midst of two such different cultures.

In summary, I offer two potential solutions to the short-comings in English language teaching in tertiary institutions in Oman, based on this research. The first is for the Ministry of Education and/or the universities to conduct professional development programs for bilingual and monolingual teachers in order to update their knowledge

and skills in second language pedagogy and issues of multiculture and globalisation. Secondly, ways need to be found for teachers to talk to each other, teach with each other and learn from each other. A funded professional organization might be the most dynamic and effective way of achieving this.

The End

References

Communicative Language Teaching- Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. (n.d). Retrieved on September 09th, 2008 on the World Wide Web: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communicative_language_teaching URL

Abbot, E. (1979). Communicative Exercises: A problem and Suggested Solution. English Language Teaching Journal, **33**,4, 203- 205.

Al-Busaidi, K. A. (1995). English in the Labour Market in Multiligual Oman with Special Reference to Omani Employees. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Exeter: UK.

Arva, V., & Medgyes P. (2000). Native and non-Native Teachers in the Classroom. System, **28**, 3, 355-372

Atkinson, D. (1987). The Mother Tongue in the Classroom: a Neglected Resource? English Language Teaching Journal, **41** 4, 241-247

Atkinson, D. (1993). Teaching in the Target Language: a Problem in the Current Orthodoxy. Language Learning Journal, **8** 93, 2-5

Bates, M., Dudley-Evans, T. (1982). English for Science and Technology: General English. Harlow: Longman

Beale, J. (2002). Is communicative Language Teaching a thing of the Past? TESOL, **37**, (1), 12-16. Retrieved on September, 06th, 2008 on the World Wide Web: http://www.jasonbeal.essaypages/clt _essay.html

Belenky, M. F., Goldberger, L. & Tarule, J. M. (1986). Women's Ways of Knowing: The Developing of Self, Voice, and Mind. New York: Basic Books Inc.

Bell, J. & Gower. R. (1991). Intermediate Matters: Students' Book. London: Longman.

Benke, E., & Medgyes P. (2005). Differences in Teaching Behaviour between Native and non-Native Speaker Teachers: As seen by Learners. Llurda, E. (Ed). Non-native Language Teachers' Perceptions, Challenges and Contributions to the Profession, 195-215, Springer, New York.

Benson, C. Do We Expect Too Much of Bilingual Teachers in Developing Countries. International Journal of Bilingual Education & Bilingualism; 2004, Vol. 7 Issue 2/3, p204-221, 18p. Accessed June 20, 2009 at http://pdfserve.informaworld.com/135227_758845107_908067308.pdf

Best, J. W., & Kahn, J .V. (2006). Research in Education (10th ed), New York: Pearson education. Inc.

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen. S. K. (1992). Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods, London: Allyn & Bacon.

Braine, G. (1999). Non-Native Educators in English Language Teaching. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Brooks, F. B., & Donato, R. (1994). Vygotskyan Approaches to Understanding Foreign Language Discourse during Communicative Tasks. Hispania, **77**, 262 - 274.

Brown, J. D. (1995). The Element of Language Curriculum: A Systematic Approach to Program Development, Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Brown, D., H (2001). Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy. San Francisco: Longman Inc.

Brown, D. M. (2003). Learner-Centered Conditions that Ensure Students' Success in Learning, Education. **124,** 99-105. Retrieved on January, 06th, 2005, from Academic Search Elite Database.

Burns, B. (1994). Introduction to Research Methods. Cheshire: Longman.

Callahan, L. (2006). Students' Perceptions of Native and Non-Native speaker Language Instructors: A comparison of ESL and Spanish. Sintagma, **18,** 19-49. Retrieved on December, 27th, 2007 on the World Wide Web: http://www.doaj.org/doaj?func=abstract&id=196617

Canagarajah, A. S. (1999). Interrogating the "Native- Speaker Fallacy": Non Linguistic Roots, non Pedagogical Results. In G. Braine (Ed.), Nonnative Educators in English Language Teaching (pp.77-92), Magwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Canale, M. (1983). From Communicative Competence to Communicative Language Pedagogy. In J. C. Richards, & R. W. Schmidt (Eds.), Language and Communication. London: Longman.

Cheng, W. (1980). Communicative Language Teaching: Theory and Practice. CUHK Education Journal, **8**, 2, 59 - 67.

Chomsky, N. (1959). A Review of B. P. Skinner's Verbal Behaviour. In J. A. Fondor & J. J. Katz (Eds.), (1968), The Structure of Language. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Cole, A.L., & Knowles, J.G. (2000). Researching Teaching: Exploring Teacher Development Through Reflexive Inquiry. New York, NY: Allyn & Bacon.

Cole, S. (1998). The Use of L1 in Communicative English Classroom. The Language Teacher, **22** 12**,** 11- 13.

Cook, V. (1999). Going Beyond the Native Speaker in Language Teaching. TESOL Quarterly, **33** 2, 185-209.

Cook, V. (2001). Second Language Learning and Language Teaching. London: Oxford University Press.

Cook, V. (2001 March). Using the First Language in the Classroom. The Canadian Modern Language Review, **57**, 3, 402 - 423. Retrieved on April 17th, 2005 on the World Wide Web: http://www.utpjournals.com/jour.ihtml?lp=product/cmlr/573/573-Cook.html

Cook, V. (2003). Effects of the Second Language on the First. Sydney: Multilingual Matters LTD.

Crotty, M. (1998). The Foundations of Social Research, Meanings and Perspective in the Research Process, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Crystal, D. (1997). English as a Global Language. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Denzin, N., & Lincoln. S. (2003). Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dornyei, Z. (1994). Motivation and Motivation in the Foreign Language Classroom. The Modern Language Journal, **78**, 273 - 284.

Doughty, C. & Williams, J. (1998). Focus on Form in Classroom Second Language Acquisition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Duff, P., & Polio C. (1990). How Much Foreign Language Is There in the Foreign Language Classroom? The Modern Language Journal, **74** 2, 154- 166.

Dulay, H., Burt. M., & Krashen, S. (1982). Language Two. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Edge, J. (1988). Applying Linguistics in English Language Teacher Training for Speakers of Other Languages. ELT Journal, **42** (1), 9-13.

Education, (1995). Reform and Development of General Education, Ministry of Education, Sultanate of Oman, Muscat.

Education, (2003-2004). Educational Statistical Year Book, Issue 34th, Ministry of Higher Education. Sultanate of Oman, Muscat.

Education, (2005-2006). Ministry of Higher Education General Statistical Book for Higher Education Institutions in the Sultanate of Oman. Oman, Muscat.

Evans, V. D., J (2001). TARGETS 2: Reading & Writing Student's Book. Newbury: Express Publishing, UK.

Forman, R. (2008). Using Notions of Scaffolding and Intertextuality in Bilingual Teaching of English in Thailand. Linguistics and Education, 19 (2008) pp. 319 – 322. Retrieved on June 20, 2009 on the World Wide Web, at www.sciencedirectcom.

Frager, R. (2002). The Wisdom of Islam: An Introduction to the Living Experience of Islam Belief and Practice. Barron's Educational Series, Inc: Godsfield press.

Franklin, C. E. (1990) Teaching in the Target Language: Problems and Prospects. Language Learning Journal, 2 (1), 20 - 24.

Gall, W. R., Gall, M. D., & Borg, J. P. (1993). Applying Educational Research: A Practical Guide. Longman Publication Group.

Gass, S.M., and Selinker, L., (2001). Second Language Acquisition: An Introductory Course.2nd edition, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Routledge,

Glaser, B. G. (1998). Doing Grounded Theory: Issues and Discussions. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Gonza'lez, J. & Hammond, L. (2000). Programs that Prepare Teachers to Work Effectively with Students Learning English. ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics, Center for Applied Linguistics. 1-5. Retrieved on April, 07th, 2005 on the World Wide Web: http://www.cal.org/ericcll/DIGEST

Grosjean, F. (1989). Neurolinguisits, Beware! The Bilingual is not Two Monolinguals in One Person. Brain and Language, 36, 3-15.

Halliwell, S., & Jones B. (1991). On Target: Teaching in the Target Language. London: CILTR.

Harbord, J. (1992). The Use of the Mother Tongue in the Classroom. English Language Teaching Journal, **46** 4, 350- 355.Oxford University Press.

Harmer, J. (1991). The Practice of English Language Teaching. New York: Longman.

Hasman, M., (2000). The Role of English in the 21st Century. English Teaching Forum Online - Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, **38** (1), January-March 2- 6. Retrieved on April 07th, 2005 on the World Wide Web: http://exchanges.state.gov/forum/vols/vol38/no1/p2.htm

Hedge, T., & Whitney, N. (Eds.). (1996). Power, Pedagogy & Practice. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hofstede, G. (1986). Cultural Differences in Teaching and Learning. International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 10, 301 - 320.

Howatt, A. (1984). A History of English Language Teaching. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hu, G. W. (2002). Potential Cultural Resistance to Pedagogical Imports: The Case of Communicative Teaching in China. Language, Culture and Curriculum, **15** 2, 93 - 105.

Ianziti, J., & Brownlie, S. (2002). Teacher Use of Learners' Native Language in the Foreign Language Classroom. The Canadian Modern Language Review, **58** 3, 402- 426. Retrieved on April 21st, 2005 on the World Wide Web: http://www.utpjournals.com/jour.ihtml?lp=product/cmlr/583/583-Rolin.html

Johnson, B. C., L (2000). Educational Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches. Singapore: Allyn & Bacon.

Johnson, K. (1980). On Making Drills Communicative. Modern English Teacher, **7** 4, 23 - 25.

Jordan, R. (1992). Academic Writing Course: Study Skills in English (3rd ed.). Nelson, Surrey: UK.

Kachru, B. (1999). Culture, Context, and Writing, In E. Hinkel, (Ed.), Culture in Second Language Teaching and Learning. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kachru, B., & Smith, E. (2008). Cultures, Contexts, and World Englishes. Hoboken: Routledge.

Kervin, L. V., W., Herrington, J. & Okely, T. (2005). Research for Educators. Thompson: Australia.

Krashen, S., D. (1982). Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Krashen, S. D., & Terrell T. (1983). The Natural Approach: Language Acquisition in the Classroom. San Francisco: Alemany Press.

Krashen, S., D. (1988). Second Language Acquisition And Second Language Learning. London: Prentice Hall International.

Krashen, S. D., & Terrell T. (1988). The Natural Approach: Language Acquisition in the Classroom. Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall.

Krieger, D. (2005). Teaching ESL Versus EFL: Principles and Practices. English Teaching Forum, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, **43** 2, 8 -16. Retrieved on February 20th, 2008 on the World Wide Web:http://forum.state.gov/vols/vol43/no2/p8.htm

Kumaravadivelu, B. (1991). Language-Learning Tasks: Teacher Intention and Learner Interpretation. English Language Teaching Journal, **45** 2, 98- 107.

Lado, R. (1957). Linguistics Across Cultures. University of Michigan Press.

Larsen-Freeman, D. (1986). Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Liebscher, G. and O'Cain, J. D. (2004). Learner Code-Switching in the Content-Based Foreign Language Classroom. Canadian Modern Language Review, **60**, 4, 501-525. Retrieved on April 17th, 2005 on the World Wide Web: http://www.utpjournals.com/jour.ihtml?lp=cmlr604.html

Littlewood, W. T. (1983). Communicative Approach to Language Teaching Methodology. Dublin University: Trinity College, Centre for Language and Communication Studies.

Littlewood, W, (2007). Communicative and Task-Based Language Teaching in East Asian Classrooms. Language Teaching, **40,** 243 -249. Published online by Cambridge University Press. Retrieved on September, 10th, 2008 on the World Wide Web: http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?aid=1051335

Liu, M., & Zhang, L. (2007, December). Student Perceptions of Native & Non-Native English Teachers' Attitudes: Teaching Skills Assessment and Performance. Asian EFL Journal, **9**, 4,157-165. Retrieved on January 12th, 2008 on the World Wide Web: http://www.asian-efljournal.com/Dec2007ml&Lz.php

Liu (1999). From Their Own Perspectives: The Impact of Non-Native ESL Professionals on Their Students. In G. Braine (Ed.), Non-native Educators in English Language Teaching. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associated Inc. Publishers.

Macaro, E. (1997). Target Language, Collaborative Learning and Autonomy. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Mantero, M. (Eds.). (2007). Identity & second language Learning: Culture, Inquiry, and Dialogic Activity in Educational Contexts. Charlotte, North Carolina: Information Age Publishing, Inc.

Mattar, H. (1999). Translation Elicitation Techniques and Mother-Tongue Interference: Any Significant Connection? IRAL, International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching, Heidelberg, **37**, 4, 307- 314. Retrieved on May 27th, 2003 on the World Wide Web: http://0-proquest.umi.com/library...6Y0GPDk6tWY05YQt9S6Dqdozc56gbYFUY

Mayer, M. (1996,August). South West Educational Development Laboratory (SED) Letter, 9, 3. Retrieved on June 17, 2009 on the World Wide Web: http://www.sedl.org/pubs/sedletter/v09n03/construct.html

McKay, S. L. (2000) Teaching English as an International Language: Implications for Cultural Materials in the Classroom. TESOL Journal, **9** 4, 7-11.

McKay, S.L. (2003) Teaching English as an International Language: The Chilean Context, ELT Journal, Vol. 57/2 April 2003, Oxford University Press

McKay, S. L. (2004). Western Culture and the Teaching of English as an International Language. English Teaching Forum Online- Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, **42** 2, 10-16. Retrieved on April 07th, 2005 on the World Wide Web: http://exchanges.state.gov/forum/vols42/no2/p10.htm

Medgyes, P. (1994). The Non-Native Teacher. London: Macmillan Publishers.

Medgyes, P. (1992). Native or Non-Native: Who's Worth More? In T. Hedge & N. Whitney (Eds.), "Power, Pedagogy & Practice" (pp 31- 42). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Merriam, B. (1998). Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Miles, M., & Huberman A. (1984). Qualitative Data Analysis: A Sourcebook of New Methods. London: Sage Publication.

Miles, M., & Huberman A. (1994). Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook (2nd ed.). London: Sage publication International Educational & Professional Publisher.

Mitchell, R. (1988). Communicative Language Teaching in Practice. London: CILTR.

Morgan, C., & Neil P. (2001). Teaching Modern Foreign Languages: A Handbook for Teachers. London: Kogan Page.

Neuman, L. (2003). Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches (5th ed.). New Jersey: Allyn & Bacon.

Nunan, D., Tyacke, M. & Walton, D. (1987). Philosophy and Guidelines for the Omani English Language School Curriculum. Muscat, Sultanate of Oman: Ministry of Education & Youth.

Nunan, D. (1991). Communicative Tasks and the Language Curriculum. TESOL Quarterly, **25** 2, 279-95.

Nunan, D., & Lamb, C. (1996). The Self-Directed Teacher. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. (2004). Task-Based Language Teaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods. California: Sage Publications.

Phillipson, R. (1992). Linguistic Imperialism. London: Oxford University Press.

Pithouse, K., Mitchell, C., & Weber, S. (March 2009). Self-Study in Teaching and Teacher Development: A Call to Action. Educational Action Research, 17 1, 43-62. http://0-www.informaworld.com.library.vu.edu.au/smpp/content~db=all~content=a908929395

Poftak, A., (2003). Are Your Teachers "Highly Qualified"? Technology & Learning, **23**, 11, 24 - 27. Retrieved on March 18th, 2005 on the World Wide Web: http://0-web6.epnet.com.library.vu.edu.au/DeliveryPrintSave.asp?tb=1&_ug=dbs+0+1

Polio, C. P., & Duff, P.A., (1994). Teachers' Language Use in University Foreign Language Classrooms: A Qualitative Analysis of English and Target Language Alternation. The Modern Language Journal, **78**, 3, 311- 326.

Pufahl, I., Rhodes, N., & Christian, D. (2001). What We Can Learn From Foreign Language Teaching in Other Countries? ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics, Center for Applied Linguistics. Retrieved on July 29th, 2004 on the World Wide Web: http://www.cal.org/resources/digest/digest/pdfs/06-pufahl/pdf

Pulverness, A. (Ed.). (2004). IATEFL 2003 Brighton Conference Selections. Canterbury: IATEFL.

Reyes, A., & Vallone, L. (2008). Constructivist Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners. Corwin Press, Inc: Sage Thousand Oaks, CA.

Richards, J., & Rodgers T. (1986). Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.

Richards, J. C., Hull, J. & Proctor, S. (1998). New Interchange: English for International Communication. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J.C. (1998). Beyond Training: Perceptions on Language Teacher Education. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, C., & Rodgers S. (2001). Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rose, K.R. (1999). Teachers and Students Learning about Requests in HongKong. In E. Hinkel, (Ed.), Culture in Second Language Teaching and Learning, (pp. 167-80), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sanders, C.S. (1987). Applied Linguistics. In J. Lyons, Coates, R. Deuchar, M and Gazdar, G. (Eds.), New Horizons in Linguistics 2: An Introduction to Contemporary Linguistics Research. London: Penguin.

Sanguinetti, J., Waterhouse, P., & Maunders, D. (2004). The ACE Experience: Pedagogies for Life and Employability, Adult Community and Further Education. Victoria University: Melbourne.

Sapsford, R., & Jupp, V. (Eds.). (1996). Data Collection and Analysis. London: Sage Publication.

Schulman, L. S. (1990). 'Pedagogical Ways of Knowing', Conference paper, Improving the Quality of the Teaching Profession, International Council on Education for Teaching, Singapore: International Council on Education for Teaching.

Schumann, J. (1978). The Acculturation Model to Second Language Acquisition. In R.C. Gingras (Eds.). Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Teacging. (pp.27-50). Arlington,VA: Centre for Applied Linguistics.

Schweers, W. Jr. (1999). Using L1 in the L2 Classroom. English Teaching Forum, **37** 2, 6 - 9.

Scrivenor, J. (1994). Learning Teaching. Oxford: Heinemann.

Seliger, H., & Shohamy E. (2001). Second Language Research Methods. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sharifian, F. (1999). The Impact of Macro- Cultures and Micro-Cultures on the ELT Theory and Practice. CALLR /Online-Journal, **1**, 4, 7p. Retrieved on June 1st, 2004 on the World Wide Web: http://www.ecu.edu.au/ses/research/CALLR/onlinejournal/1999/sharifian99

Smith, L. (1976). English as an International Auxiliary Language. RELC Journal, **7** 2, 38 – 42.

Soars, L., & Soars J. (1993). Headway Elementary: Student's Book. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sonaiya, R. (2003). The Globalization of Communication and the African Foreign Language User. Language Culture and Curriculum, **16**, 2,146-154. Retrieved on April 17th, 2005 on the World Wide Web: http://www.multilingual-matters.net/lcc/016/0146/lcc0160146pdf

Spada, N., & Frohlich M. (1995). Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT): Observation Scheme Coding Conventions & Applications. National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research (NCELTR), Macquarie University, Sydney: Australia.

Stake, R. (2000). Case Studies, In: Handbook of Qualitative Research, (Eds.), N. Denzin, and Lincoln, Y. London: Sage Publications.

Stake, R. E. (2006). Multiple Case Study Analysis. New York: Guilford Press.

Stanley, L., & Wise S. (1983). Breaking Out Again: Feminist Ontology and Epistemology. London: Routledge.

Stern, H. H. (1983). Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stern, H. H. (1992). Issues and Options in Language Teaching. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stringer, E. (2004). Action Research in Education. New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.

Tang, J. (2002, January). Using L1 in the English Classroom. English Teaching Forum Online - Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, **40** (1), 36- 43. Retrieved on April 07th, 2005 on the World Wide Web: http://exchanges.state.gov/forum/vols/vo140/no1/p36.htm

Turnbull, M. (2000). Analyses of Core French Teachers' Language Use: A Summary. Proceedings of Bilingual Child, Global Citizen Colloquium, University of New Brunswick: Fredericton. Available: www.caslt.org.

Turnbull, M. (2001,). There is a Role for the L1 in Second and Foreign Language Teaching But…1. Canadian Modern Language Review, **57** 4, 531- 540. Retrieved on April 17th, 2005 on the World Wide Web: http://www.utpjournals.com/jour.ihtml?lp=product/cmlr/574/574-Turnbull.html

UNESCO (1953). The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education, Paris, UNESCO.

Ur, P. (1996). A Course in Language Teaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Van Manen, M. (1995,). "On the Epistemology of Reflective Practice". Teachers & Teaching: Theory & Practice. Oxford Ltd, **1** (1), 33- 50. Retrieved on January 05th, 2008 on the Word Wide Web: http://www.phenomologyonline.com/aarhus/MvM%20Epistemology.pdf

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in Society. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Widdoson, H. (1992). "ELT and EL Teachers' Matters Arising". English Language Teaching Journal, **46** 4, 333 -339.

Wigglesworth, G. (2003). The Role of the First Language in the Second Language Classroom: Friend or Foe. English Teaching, **57 (**1), 17- 32.

Xiao, L. (2006). Bridging the Gap Between Teaching Styles and Learning Styles: A Cross-Cultural Perspective. TESOL EJ, **10** 3, 1-14. Retrieved on November 30th, 2007 on the World Wide Web: http://tesl-ej.org/ej39/a.2.html

Yin, R. (1994). Case Study Research: Design and Methods. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Zaid, M. A. (1999). Cultural Confrontation and Cultural Acquisition in the EFL Classroom. IRAL, International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching, **37** 2, 111-126.

Appendix A: Classroom Observation Checklist for Bilingual and Monolingual Teachers' Pedagogical Methods and Approaches

Bilingual Teachers	BTCO1	BTCO2	BTCO3	BTCO4	BTCO5	MTCO1	MTCO2	MTCO3	MTCO4	MTCO5
Clear and comprehensible input	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Motivates and stimulates	Yes	Yes	Little	Little	No	A great deal	Little	A great deal	A great deal	A great deal
Built rapport	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Little	Yes	Yes	Yes
Effective explanations	Yes	Yes	Yes/in Arabic	Yes/ Arabic	Extensive Arabic/	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Culturally inclusive	Yes	No	No	No	Little	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Logical progression of sequences	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not sure	Not sure	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Effective mix of activities	Yes	Yes	Teacher centered	Teacher centered	Teacher-centered	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Used communicative approach	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Used grammar translation method	No	No	Yes	Audio-lingual Method Drills Only	Yes. Audio-lingual	No	Not sure	No	No	No
Integrated classroom discussion of general issues and news in English	Yes	Yes	Little	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Encouraged questioning and discussion of English items	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Little	Yes	Yes	Yes
Used prescribed texts as main basis for instruction	Yes + supplementary	Yes + supplementary	Yes	Excerpts	Yes	Yes+ supplementary	Yes	Yes +supplementary	Yes/Realia	Yes+ supplementary
Taught pronunciations	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Used authentic texts chosen by the teacher	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes/Real objects
Used group work	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Used individual work only	No	No	Yes/ in-pairs	Yes/ in- pairs	Yes	Yes/in-pairs	Yes	Yes/ in-pairs	Yes/in-pairs	Yes/in-pairs
Used drama, singing, poetry, or other methods	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes/mimics	No	OHP	No	Drama
Provided individual assistance as appropriate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not really	Yes	Yes	Yes
Aware of specific problems of Arabic speakers in learning glish	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not Much	Yes	Yes	Yes

Appendix B: Interview questions

Teachers' interview questions (bilingual teachers):

1. Do you use Arabic when you are teaching English in the EFL classroom?
9. What percentage of your time on (average) would you speak Arabic in an EFL classroom?
10. For what purposes? For example?
11. Do you think your use of Arabic when teaching English is inevitable or necessary? Why?
12. Do you think your being of Arabic background helps you to have a positive influence on your students' attitudes towards learning English? Why?
13. Does the use of Arabic accelerate your students' motivation positively toward learning the language?
14. What are the main methodological approaches you use in classroom?
15. Do you see any disadvantages or negative effects in using Arabic in the EFL classroom?
16. Being bilingual, do you think you understand your students better in terms of their language weaknesses, and typical errors?
17. In what way?
18. As a foreign language teacher, do you have any reservations over the textbooks' content in terms of cultural appropriateness?
19. How do you deal with this?
20. Are there any cultural effects (including on issues of gender) in relation to being a bilingual Arabic teacher?

Teachers' interview questions. (Monolingual teachers):

1. Would you sometimes feel it is useful to be able to teach Arabic when you are teaching English?
21. In what ways would it be useful or beneficial?
22. For what purposes would you use it?
23. Do you think that the use of Arabic would be essential for use more effective teaching, or do you think you can be as effective or more effective than a bilingual teacher?
24. Do you think your being of an English-speaking background helps you to have a positive influence on your students' attitudes towards learning English? Why?
25. Do you think these could be negative effects of teaching in English only?

26. What are the main methodological approaches you use in classrooms?
27. If you were a bilingual teacher, do you think you would understand your students better?
28. What strategies do you use to understand typical errors related to L1?
29. Talking of cultural appropriateness, what do you think of the textbooks content?
30. How do you deal with this?
31. Are there any cultural effects (including on issues of gender) in relation to being a bilingual Arabic teacher?

All teachers' interviews will be conducted in English, taped and transcribed. All students' interviews will be conducted in English, taped transcribed and translated by me.

Students' interview questions (conducted in Arabic)*:*

1. For the past nine years or so, have you experienced learning English with both bilingual teachers and monolingual (English- speaking) teachers?
32. Regarding your own preference, do you prefer to be taught by a teacher who speaks both Arabic and English or a teacher who speaks English only? Why?
33. What parts of the lessons, if any, do you think need to be communicated in Arabic?
34. In general, in your opinion, which approach is more effective (monolingual or bilingual), and why?
35. In general, to what extent are satisfied with your learning processes and the approaches of your English teachers, over the last few years?
36. How would you describe your attitude towards learning English? Do you enjoy it? Are you a willing learner?
37. Do you think you would do better with either a bilingual or a monolingual teacher?
38. What do you think about the culture content of some of the English books or teaching materials? Are they always appropriate?
39. What do you think should happen, if they are not appropriate?
40. What sort of approaches do you think do you prefer, for example, group work, in pairs, individual work or teacher-centred activity?

ملحق (د)

أسئلة مترجمة من اللغة الإنجليزية إلى اللغة العربية

مع ملحق باللغة الإنجليزيةAppendix C

أسئلة الطلبة في المقابلة الشخصية

1- هل درست لغة إنجليزية مع أساتذة عرب (ناطقين) باللغة العربية أم كانوا أساتذة من غير العرب (غير ناطقين باللغة العربية) خلال السنوات التسع الأخيرة؟ أم كانوا مزيج من الأساتذة؟

2-هل تفضل أن تدرس اللغة الإنجليزية مع عرب أم أجانب؟ أيهما تفضل؟

3- ما هي أهم مميزات معلم اللغة الأجنبية (الإنجليزية)؟

4- ما هي أجزاء الدرس في نظرك والتي يجب أن تدرّس باللغة العربية؟

5- ما هي طريقة التدريس الأكثر فاعلية برأيك ' هل التدريس باللغة العربية فقط أم باللغة الإنجليزية فقط ولماذا؟

6- إلي أي مدى أنت\ أنتِ راض عن طريقة التدريس المتبعة مع معلميك؟

7- كيف تصف اتجاهاتك نحو تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟ هل تستمتع بالدراسة؟

8- ما رأيك بمحتويات الكتاب المدرسي هل يتناسب و التقاليد العربية ؟

9- كيف تتصرف في حال أن محتوى الكتاب المدرسي غير مناسب؟

10- ما هي طرق التدريس المناسبة لك والتي تفضلها؟