ENHANCING L2 LEARNERS' ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN AN INDUSTRIAL SETTING IN SAUDI ARABIA

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THESIS

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To: My wife Najwa and my children Fadi, Basil, Heba, Moh'd, Momen and Muhannad

ABSTRACT

Enhancing L2 Learners' Oral Communication Skills in an Industrial Setting in Saudi Arabia

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This observational study examines classroom instruction in the Basic English Program (BEP) in three Industrial Training Centers in Saudi Aramco, the largest oil producing and marketing company in Saudi Arabia. The researcher has been professionally involved in English language instruction in Saudi Aramco for more than 25 years, and the study emerges from the assumption that the BEP does not provide enough opportunities for learners to build up a communicative competence that helps them to use language for real communication. The subjects in the study are Saudi high school graduates with little background in English. Successful completion of the BEP program is a pre-requisite for their technical training in Saudi Aramco.

The study sets out to explore the types of L2 learning activities, the teaching methods and strategies the teachers employ, as well as the learners' roles in class and the organizational policies which control the Basic English Program. The data were collected through direct observation of thirty lessons using one part of the Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT) Observation Scheme. In addition, audio-recordings of several observed lessons were also made.

The analysis of the data from the COLT Scheme, and the transcribed lesson extracts reveal that the Saudi Aramco Basic English Program does not provide the learners with sufficient and appropriate practice opportunities and this is one reason why there is a lack of competence in the use of English in real communication.

The study concludes that classroom instruction in the Basic English Program limits the students' chances for spontaneous use of language and hence their ability to communicate in real situations. Among the recommendations made are that changes need to be introduced to the syllabus and teaching methods in order that learners are provided with the necessary language skills to enable them to use English to communicate inside and outside the classroom.

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I. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 <u>Context of the Research Study</u>

Saudi Aramco, which operates in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, is one of the major oil

producing and manufacturing companies in the world. It sponsors a comprehensive and

ambitious training program for its employees that covers English language, math/science,

and a variety of job skills and specialty programs. A recent training report states that:

> "Saudi Aramco devotes 50,000 man-hours daily, or about 10 million man-
>
> hours per year to training. Our training programs are not only large and
>
> diverse, they are also very successful. One reason for that success is our
>
> unique, comprehensive training system. An individual training plan is
>
> created for each newcomer at the time of his arrival at Saudi Aramco. This
>
> plan is designed to prepare the newcomer for a particular job, and that
>
> preparation may extend until he receives a Ph. D."
>
> Saudi Aramco, (2000: 2)

This research study is about the Saudi Aramco English language instruction program as

applied in three Industrial Training Centers (ITC) in *Abqaiq, Al-Hasa* and *Udhailiyah* of

the Eastern Province. These three locations are part of the Southern Area Academic

Training Division (SAATD). Two other divisions, Central Area Academic Training

Division and Northern Area Academic Training Division, make up the Academic

Training Department in the Eastern Region of Saudi Arabia. Another twin department

called Central/Western Training Department operates in the Central/Western Region of Saudi Arabia. (Appendix A illustrates this structure).

English is taught as part of the academic training operations. It is the focus of the training activities in eight major ITCs, and several other satellite ones, spread all around the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The program consists of seven levels:

Levels 1-4:   Basic English Program (BEP)

Levels 5-6:   High Intermediate Levels

Level 7:   Advanced English Reading and Writing

The focus of this study is the BEP program since it is the core program required by almost all Saudi Aramco employees, excluding the security guards who are required to complete a course specially tailored for them. At the end of each course/level, learners sit for a final test of different components. Those who achieve a grade of 70% are promoted to the next level, and those who do not, have either to repeat the course or drop out. In most cases, this passing grade of 70% is considered as a sufficient requirement for certain jobs, or a requirement for promotion to a higher grade. To many learners, passing a level has become more important than the language skills they need to acquire in that level.

1.2 Origins And Development of the Study

I have been involved in the Saudi Aramco English language instruction program for over a quarter of a century. Since 1974, I have witnessed most of the program stages of development from the structural approach to the communicative approach, and back to a

combination of both. In the 1970s, the program followed the structural approach by implementing the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) for language teaching at the lower levels. Most learners passed the final tests because of the intensive mechanical production of graded language patterns, which were evaluated through multiple-choice tests. Examinees could easily spot the correct answers among the other distractors and pass; no evaluation tools were used to measure the learners' ability to use the language for communication.

In the late 70s and early 80s, the Vocational English Language Training (VELT) program was introduced as a shift from the structure-based approach to a communicative-based one. This decision was in harmony with the rise of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in many parts of the world. Its content was Saudi Aramco job-oriented material. The VELT program had two-fold objectives: practice job-related material, and the use of language for communication with less emphasis on accuracy. It was designed as a terminal training requirement for employees targeted for maintenance jobs; at that time, those employees represented a large percentage of the Saudi labor force. The VELT program was successful in achieving its objectives. However, the VELT graduates, for career development reasons, were later re-enrolled in advanced levels of the general English language program and were tested through form-focused multiple-choice tests. Unfortunately, the majority of them failed those tests; therefore, the VELT program was eventually cancelled.

By 1983, a new Basic English Program (BEP) was introduced, and it has been applied, with several changes, since then. This program was designed to replace the VELT one. It

combines activities that follow both the structural and communicative approaches. Nevertheless, success in this program is evaluated through traditional form-focused testing tools with a passing grade of 70%. Oral communication skills are not tested at all. (Further discussion of the VELT program and the BEP is provided in Chapter 2.)

One common understanding and major observation among ITC teachers, including myself, administrators, job-skill instructors, and supervisors of customer organizations has always been the poor oral production of the ITC graduates. This phenomenon has always been a concern to all parties involved in the training programs and has been referred to in several communication meetings and reports. (The most recent is Washington D. C. Accreditation Council for Continuing Education & Training Field Memos #s 8, 9, 10 & 22, 2001.) In the capacity of my job, I have always tried to help teachers increase their communicative practice activities in class by introducing teaching techniques that allow for more oral practice. It is for this reason that I decided to make the language oral communication skills among Saudi Aramco learners the focus of my study.

1.3 The Questions to Be Addressed

This research study is based upon the assumption that the current English language core program does not provide enough opportunities for the learners to build up a communicative competence that helps them use language for communication. The objective of the study is to highlight a description of the instructional material, the teachers' and learners' roles, and the policies that control the program in order to

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recommend solutions that would enhance the learners' oral communication skills. In this study my aim is to address the following research questions:

1. What type of L2 learning activities are incorporated in the current Saudi Aramco Basic English Program syllabus? What impact do these activities have on the learners' performance?

2. What teaching strategies and techniques do Saudi Aramco teachers employ to meet their learners' needs and the program's objectives?

3. To what degree do Saudi Aramco learners in levels 1-4 get actively involved in practice opportunities that allow them to use language for communication and enhance their oral communication skills?

4. How do institutional and organizational training policies affect Saudi Aramco learners' performance?

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

The current chapter provides a description of the research study structure. A historical background of Saudi Aramco oil and training operations, including the English language instruction program as the context of the research study, is provided in Chapter Two. Much of the information in this chapter addresses research question number "4" which

investigates about the impact of institutional and organizational training policies on Saudi Aramco learners' performance.

Chapter Three represents the literature review of the research study. In section 3.2, the effect of classroom instruction on L2 learning is outlined because most Saudi Aramco L2 learning takes place in the classroom; moreover, research questions "1", "2", and "3" address the type of learning environment that takes place in Saudi Aramco language classrooms. Sections 3.3 and 3.4 investigate the nature of two common classroom instruction types, form-focused and meaning-focused. An outline of these two types of instruction is important to this research study because it is directly linked to the study's assumption, objective and research questions numbers "1", "2" and "3". This link is again highlighted in section 3.5 of Chapter Three, which investigates a mixture of the two types of instruction.

Chapters Four and Five deal with the research methodology, data analysis and findings. In Chapter Four, the research methodology, related ethical issues, and a full description of the Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching Observation (COLT) Scheme-Part "A" (Spada and Frohlich, 1995) as the data collection tool are discussed. Chapter Five includes a description, analysis, and discussion of the collected data during the observation stage, and sample excerpts, with analysis, from the audio-recorded lessons.

Chapters Six and Seven include the findings and recommendations. Chapter Six provides the findings which have emerged from the data analysis in Chapter Five. The findings show how the initial research questions have been addressed. Chapter Seven provides the

recommendations which the writer proposes as solutions to the concerns raised in the study's assumption and research questions.

Note:

Since all teachers and learners involved in this study are males, the third person masculine pronoun is used to refer to them.

II. CHAPTER TWO: THE SAUDI ARAMCO TRAINING PROGRAMME

2.1 <u>Introduction</u>

This chapter discusses the Saudi Aramco training program in order to provide the context for the study. Each section provides contextual information on the historical, social and organizational factors which affect the structure of the company's training culture.

The chapter opens with a "General Background", (2.2), which provides a brief description of Saudi Aramco oil operations and how oil prices have affected the number of jobs offered and, eventually, the training programs. The following section on "Training Programs", (2.3), discusses the different types of Saudi Aramco training programs. Section 2.4, *History of English Language Instruction in Saudi Aramco*, provides the historical background of the English language instruction program. It describes the different English syllabuses and the rationale for their selection. This selection was frequently affected by the continuous changes in the English Language Teaching theories and approaches, as well as Saudi Aramco needs. In line with this, Section 2.5, *The English Syllabus,* provides a brief description of the current syllabus used in all Saudi Aramco ITCs, with special emphasis on the Basic English Program (BEP), since this is the focus of this research study.

Sections 2.6, *Enrolment Policies*, and 2.7, *Testing and Evaluation*, provide a description of two major factors that affect the enrolment of the students in the English instruction program. The final section of this chapter highlights some organizational procedures and

policies which, based on feedback received from parties involved, relate to the learners' performance. This outline is needed because it links to research question number "4" which addresses these policies and procedures.

The discussion in this chapter provides a useful contextualization for this study as it presents information about the different factors that have affected the objectives, design, and procedures of the Saudi Aramco English Language Instruction Program. These factors have had a great impact on the learners' achievement, particularly their oral communication skills, which are the focus of this research study.

2.2 General Background

On May 29, 1933, representatives of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Standard Oil of California (SOCAL) signed the concession agreement that allowed SOCAL to explore for oil in Saudi Arabia. Article 23 of the concession agreement established the policies for training the company's Saudi personnel, Pledge (1998).

One important objective of these policies has been to provide training for the company's Saudi workforce in order to reduce the need to bring foreign workers to Saudi Arabia. At first, this training was informal: drillers, craftsmen, and office workers taught their particular specialties on the job. By 1940, this on the job training necessitated special full-time training. The training activities greatly expanded after World War II due to the world's increased demands on oil. By the middle of 1949, the increase in oil production called for both more facilities and accelerated training of the work force. The company

embarked on a program of on-the-job training under which one-eighth of the working day was set aside for training. In a relatively short time this program developed a Saudi Arab work force of more than thirteen thousand employees who were capable of doing a very high proportion of the company's work.

In the mid 1950s, the majority of training activities were centralized in three ITCs and three industrial training shops (ITSs). The ITCs and ITSs were in Dhahran, Ras Tanura, and Abqaiq, three cities in the Eastern region of Saudi Arabia. The ITCs concentrated on academic subjects such as English, mathematics, geography, accounting and general science. The ITSs provided the opportunity to acquire skills, such as the ability to read blueprints, wire a house, install and repair plumbing, and handle tools.

Between 1974 and 1977, two more ITCs and ITSs, were opened in Dammam and Al-Hasa. In addition, Dhahran's ITC and ITS were enlarged. With this enlargement and increase in the training facilities, the number of trainees grew greatly and the curriculum was broadened to include a wide range of subjects, such as advanced English, electronic instruments and industrial control devices.

By 1980, there were nearly 9,600 Saudi employees enrolled in the company's industrial training centers and shops, and a further 1,050 were enrolled in one or more of its forty-five-on the-job training and testing programs. Another group of 390 was studying abroad in craft courses, and about 300 more were enrolled in full-time academic courses in educational institutions within the Kingdom and abroad, Lunde and Sabini (1980).

Recommended by the Saudi Arab Manpower Committee (SAMCOM), Training and Career Development Department (T&CD) was established in 1980. With T&CD, training in Saudi Aramco took a great move towards strategic programs. The objectives of T&CD are to:

- Provide Saudi manpower with the appropriate training to do a better job

- replace expatriate employees with trained Saudi personnel

- keep Saudi Aramco employees up-to-date with the latest job-related technologies

- provide employees with better career development opportunities

Training & Career Development in Saudi Aramco (1994)

T&CD supervises the planning, implementation, and follow-up/evaluation of all administrative, technical, industrial, and academic training programs chosen to meet the above set objectives. By the end of 1984, there were more than thirteen thousand Saudi employees enrolled in one of these training programs. Due to the great decrease in oil prices starting in 1984, Saudi Aramco reduced the capacity of its oil production operations. That resulted in slowing the pace for employment and training, which reduced the number of trainees to about four thousand. However, after the Gulf War, T&CD started a new training pattern called the Apprenticeship Program for Saudi high school graduates. (This is discussed in more detail in section 2.5 of this chapter.) The number of trainees began to go up again, until it reached about eight thousand trainees by 1998.

This brief background of the Saudi Aramco training operations highlights a correlation between the company's oil operations and the need for training programs. Moreover, the background details link the training programs to a major objective set by T&CD; that is, Saudization, as stated in section 2.2 above.

2.3 Training Programs

Training programs in Saudi Aramco are designed to match the target job requirements. These jobs are distributed over three major business lines:

A. **Administrative and Technical:** These represent about 20% of the total company jobs. Employees targeted for these jobs must be college graduates. Therefore, all training programs are related to college training and career development. They include programs for college preparation, college training, college graduates follow-up programs, post-graduate specialization, and executive training programs.

B. **Industrial:** These represent about 70% of the company's jobs. Naturally, training programs for these jobs represent most of T&CD operations. Training programs include technical and academic training at the ITCs (academic) and ITSs (technical). The academic programs cover subjects like English, mathematics, science, geography, accounting, and typing. As stated in the introductory chapter, the focus of this research study is the teaching of English in levels 1 – 4.

C. **Clerical:** These represent about 10% of the company's jobs. Training programs at the ITCs cover subjects like typing English Key Boarding, and all other clerical training such as short-hand skills, accounting and filing. Training & Career Development in Saudi Aramco (1994).

Having provided the contextual background, and information about the structure of Saudi Aramco and its training programs, I now turn to a discussion of English language instruction at Saudi Aramco.

2.4   History of English Language Instruction

The training and development of Saudi Aramco manpower, which was started in the 1940s (Lunde & Sabini, 1980), was based on the foundation of good English language skills. These skills were essential for daily oral and written communication within the company. In addition, English was the means of classroom instruction in both academic and technical subjects. Moreover, English proficiency was a basic requirement for in-Kingdom and out-of-Kingdom training. Accordingly, completion of both the academic and job skill training programs were crucial for job promotion and better career opportunities.

Hence, the English language instruction program has been the focus of much of the Training and Career Development Department budget and operation. For example in 1980, an estimated 82% of the ITCs' resources, $12 million, was budgeted for the

English program. Out of 480 instructors in the ITCs that year, 420 were teachers of English, Pledge (1998).

As stated above, regular English language instruction was started in the late 40s. Since then, different teaching methodologies have been tried and practiced. The earliest was the Direct Method, which depended mainly on teaching vocabulary with little emphasis, on grammar. In the 1950s, and 1960, the structural approach was adopted. This approach emphasized the study of grammatical rules and sentence patterns. The 12 volume *Aramco English Series* (Saudi Aramco, N.D.) was the first in-house language syllabus. This series stressed much vocabulary learning through realia, and a lot of grammatical rules and patterns through repetition and mechanical reproduction. In 1960, this syllabus was replaced by audio-lingual method textbooks such as *English Pattern Structure* and its companion *English Pattern Practice*, Lado & Fries (1971).

Due to a rapid increase in Saudi Aramco's oil production, and the need for more Saudi manpower, Training and Career Development realized the need for a better English language instruction syllabus that provided more job-oriented vocabulary skills through enhanced reading and speaking; this was in harmony with the new trends in English Language Teaching (ELT) theory. In the late 70s, the Communicative Approach to language teaching, and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) were introduced to Aramco training for the first time by some of the Saudi Aramco Training personnel who had either been for refresher courses abroad, or had carried out some individual investigation during their repatriation leave. Consequently, Aramco invited some applied linguists to visit Saudi Aramco training locations in order to evaluate the programs used at that time.

These included D. Wilkins and C. Candlin, Pledge (1998). Candlin visited Saudi Aramco in 1977 and recommended changing the English language program to a more job-oriented syllabus that allowed for more oral production by learners. He also recommended in-service training programs for teachers and an evaluation system that would test the language skills needed.

Almost at the time as Professor Candlin presented his recommendations, and throughout the following two years, Saudi Aramco used several books in levels 1A-6B. In level 1, a book called *Beginners' English* Saudi Aramco (1977) was used. This book followed the structural approach and taught the trainees to distinguish the sounds of English and recognize the Roman alphabet.

As for level 2, a book called *Communicate* Saudi Aramco (1978) was introduced. This was a thick book full of job-focused dialogues and exercises. In levels 3-5, the American Book Company's *English for International Communication* (1978) was chosen to be used on experimental basis. This book did not last for long because most teachers felt that it was too difficult and inappropriate for Saudi Aramco learners. In level 6, another Saudi Aramco publication book, *Technical English* (ND), was introduced. This book included lengthy reading passages with exercises on technical topics.

The above mentioned books used between 1977 and 1980 did not link to each other as one syllabus used to provide cohesive L2 learning.

However, by 1980, Saudi Aramco oil operations were expanding rapidly due to the increase in oil production and the establishment of more plants to process oil. Those plants were in need of Saudi manpower to work as plant operators and maintenance handymen. Therefore, there was a need for a comprehensive craft training program to produce qualified technicians. Hence, the Vocational English Language Training Program (VELT) was introduced. Over the next several years, and at a cost of $2 million, VELT was put into practice. It was an all-out attempt to respond to the line organizations' requests for a comprehensive, job-related English language training program. As a method of teaching English, it combined the two newest and most popular English as a Second Language (ESL) approaches of the time, the Communicative Approach and English for Specific Purposes.

The VELT Program aimed to impart, as quickly as possible, the Basic English skills the trainee needed to do useful work in the field. Unfortunately, VELT was designed to be a complete English language training program for candidates who did not need advanced English language skills. This meant that by completion of VELT, those maintenance technicians would not be enrolled for any other language training in the future and chances for university or higher institution training assignments for career development purposes became limited for those employees. This caused a negative effect on the trainees' morale. Moreover, the top-level Saudi Arab Manpower Committee (SAMCOM) was pushing for more college training opportunities for Saudis in order to help them take up more leadership roles and other influential positions in the company.

A task force was established to revise the VELT program. One of the most important findings of this force was to cancel the VELT program because it was not meeting the expectations of SAMCOM and other business lines objectives, such as Industrial Security and Community Services, Pledge (1998).

The task force members believed that a new core program for levels "one" to "four" was needed to meet the needs of all training patterns. Guided by the recommendations of the Council for Cultural Cooperation of the Council of Europe on how people learn languages and the stages of learning they go through, the task force set about to write Aramco's new English language program, the Basic English Program (BEP).

BEP was put into practice in 1984 and is still the main program in all Saudi Aramco ITCs for levels 1-4. BEP is a "weak version" of the communicative approach to language teaching. A "strong version" of the communicative approach means that "form can best be learned when learners attention is focused on meaning" Beretta (1989:223). However, a "weak version" means that "new linguistic information is passed on and practiced explicitly" Celce-Murcia et al. (1998:141). These two views shed light on the origins and objectives of this study, which tries to connect the Saudi Aramco BEP program to modern language classroom research findings and link it to the selected literature review on language classroom instruction stated in chapter three. This link is important to this study because Saudi Aramco trainees' L2 learning takes place mainly through classroom instruction. (Further discussion on the BEP is provided in the following section.)

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In this section, I have provided a detailed historical account of Saudi Aramco English Language instruction programs over the past 40-50 years. The final part of the section has included the background and the special features of the BEP program, which is the focus of this research study. In the following section, more detailed information is provided about the BEP syllabus.

2.5   Basic English Program (BEP)

In the second section of this chapter, a brief account of the history of training in Saudi Aramco was discussed. In the third section, we looked at the different Saudi Aramco training patterns. In the fourth section, we saw a more detailed account of the Saudi Aramco English Language instruction development since the late 40s. In this section, the current BEP syllabus used in Saudi Aramco ITCs is described in some detail.

As I stated earlier in this chapter, the BEP program replaced the VELT program in 1984. This program was written by Saudi Aramco personnel and uses a mixture of English as a foreign language material along with material specific to Saudi Aramco operations. For example, the reading material covers various topics about internationally famous characters, sports, agriculture, transportation, health and safety, modern inventions and technologies, different aspects of life in Saudi Arabia, and the petroleum industry. In the units where the material is about Saudi Arabia or oil, much of the vocabulary used is Saudi Aramco oriented. For example, Appendix "B" is a sample lesson about "Communications: Then and Now" taken from BEP level three *Using English*, Book 3, Unit 28, Lesson 1. Appendix "C" includes two samples: The first is a sample lesson

about "Air Safety" taken from the same book-stated above-Unit 36, lesson two. The second sample is a lesson about "Good Study Habits" taken from BEP level two *Building English*, Book 3, Unit 9.

2.5.1 <u>BEP Design</u>

When the program was first put in use in 1984, levels 1, 2, and 3 each consisted of 300 lessons with 3 exercises in a lesson (a total of 900 exercises per level). However, level 4 had a different structure of 48 units with 5 lessons per unit and 3 exercises per lesson (a total of 720 exercises). In a recent revision of the program, levels 1 and 4 maintained the previous structure, but levels 2 and 3 were restructured. Level two now consists of 48 units with about 20 exercises in each, while level 3 is restructured in the same manner as level 4. Below is a summary of the current BEP format:

Level	# of Units	# of Lessons	# of Exercises in Each Unit/Lesson
1	-	300	3
2	48	-	20
3	48	5	3
4	48	5	3

The BEP instructional material consists of 16 textbooks in the four English levels. Each level is divided into "A" and "B" sub-levels; that is, 1A/1B, 2A/2B, 3A/3B, and 4A/4B. The total program is meant to be completed in about 1500 class periods including revision and testing. In addition, the program is enhanced with two commercial grammar books which provide learners with basic to low intermediate grammar skills.

The program's design combines both the structural and communicative approaches. There is heavy emphasis on basic structure skills in level one with minimal communicative practice. This format changes gradually to provide more reading, listening and speaking, and writing skills in levels two, three and four. Vocabulary is introduced extensively in all levels, and throughout the program the learners are expected to learn around 3000 common English words.

As stated earlier in this chapter, the BEP program was designed in order to replace VELT as a core program. The main objective was to meet the needs of the newly-hired Saudi technicians in the craft fields.

In general, BEP graduates are expected to be proficient enough in spoken and written English to make themselves understood by supervisors, fellow workers, visitors, and friends. They should be able to follow conversations between native English-language speakers, read company publications, training manuals, memos, directions, and inventories. They should be able to write short, informal memos, complete forms, make simple log entries, and make lists in alphabetical or numerical order, Pledge (1998). However, there are specific objectives set for each level. These are stated below Saudi Aramco Course Catalogue (2000):

- **<u>BEP 1A/B</u>**

BEP 1A/B is designed to bring a trainee to the initial stage of English language competence, which is defined as the ability to cope in English within a limited range of common Saudi Aramco situations.

Upon completion of this course, the trainee will be able to:

-   understand familiar instructions and explanations dealing with routine, non-technical activities;

-   understand and pronounce well-rehearsed vocabulary relating to familiar topics such as personal life and the work environment;

-   understand common signs and traffic symbols;

-   read short, simple passages on familiar topics;

-   copy letters, numerals, words, and short phrases in cursive form and fill out simple forms; and,

-   write short answers to simple questions.

- **BEP 2A/B**

BEP 2AB is intended for apprentices in the Craft/Technical/Operator and Clerical Training Patterns. It is also offered to those trainees whose current jobs or future jobs (up to one salary code above current job code) require this course. It is designed to bring an apprentice/trainee to the stage of English language competence at which he/she has the ability to function at a basic level in an English-speaking environment in Saudi Aramco.

Upon completion of this course, the apprentice/trainee will be able to:

-   understand the topic of conversations spoken slowly and clearly;

- understand public announcements, work directions, and warnings involving common situations and everyday activities;

- identify the names of certain hand tools, jobsites, and company facilities;

- ask and answer simple, routine questions on familiar topics;

- give short instructions and make requests;

- read short, simple passages on familiar topics;

- understand simple company forms, applications, schedules, charts, graphs, and maps;

- fill in routine information on simple and commonly used forms and applications; and,

- write complete answers to simple questions on familiar topics.

- **BEP 3A/B**

BEP 3AB is intended for apprentices in the Craft/Technical/Operator and Clerical Training Patterns. It is also offered to those trainees whose current jobs or future jobs (up to one salary code above current job code) require this course. It is designed to bring an apprentice/trainee to a level where he/she uses the English language adequately in a Saudi Aramco setting, such as a workshop, a plant, or an office.

Upon completion of this course, the apprentice/trainee will be able to:

- follow the topic of a conversation;

- understand familiar requests and instructions;

- use the phone for routine conversations on familiar topics and participate in face-to-face conversations on familiar topics;

- understand simple, routine memos and notices;

- read simple, technical and non-technical materials on familiar topics; and,

- write short guided paragraphs given a model to follow.

- **BEP 4A/B**

BEP 4AB is intended for apprentices in the Craft/Technical/Operator and Clerical Training Patterns. It is also offered to those trainees whose current jobs or future jobs (up to one salary code above current job code) require this course. It is designed to bring an apprentice/trainee to a level of operational proficiency in the English language in an industrial setting or to an adequate level for further English language training in Saudi Aramco ITC courses.

Upon completion of this course, the apprentice/trainee will be able to:

- understand instructions in clear spoken English on familiar topics;

- follow regular training sessions conducted by a native English-speaking instructor;

- participate in conversations on familiar job-related topics;

- handle, in person or by phone, routine inquiries from a supervisor or a visitor;

- read simple job-related materials and graphics on familiar topics;

- understand approximately 3,300 taught technical and non-technical vocabulary items; write phone messages, short informal notes, and log entries related to his/her job; and,

- Write simple paragraphs describing objects or step-by-step processes or giving directions or definitions.

The above stated BEP level objectives show the gradual shift in the emphasis from structure practice to more practice of the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In level 1A/B, the learner is expected to be able to "cope" in English within limited situations; however, in level 2A/B, he is expected to "function" at a basic level in an English speaking environment. In level 3A/B, he is to be able to "use" English adequately in specific settings, and in level 4A/B, he is expected to be "proficient" in English in industrial settings. It is also noticed that the objectives have been set to reflect the settings where graduates are expected to use the English language; these are the Saudi Aramco work and community settings.

With the above description of the BEP program design and objectives, I now turn to describe its material activities and how they are paced.

2.5.2   BEP Activities and Pacing

Since level 1A/B has been phased out from the program due to the fact that the majority of the learners are now placed in E2A/B and above, the following discussion will focus on the activities and pacing schedules of levels 2A/B – 4A/B.

As stated above, level 2A/B textbooks include 48 units with 20 exercises in each unit. The exercises are shorter than the ones in 3A – 4B and they cover varied activities of

vocabulary, reading comprehension, pronunciation, listening and speaking, word forms, and writing. (This is discussed further in Chapter 5).

The new vocabulary items are introduced in a short reading passage for learners to read silently, complete a multiple-choice exercise, and discuss the meanings of these items with the teacher. Speaking activities usually include picture clues or certain situations and learners are asked to comment on them. The listening exercises include listening material on a cassette or CD, and students need to complete a related exercise and later read out their responses to class. The word formation exercises usually include an introduction with word form rules followed by an application exercise in the form of "fill in the blanks". Writing exercises usually require learners to expand a sentence from a provided clue or respond to questions with complete answers and later put the responses in a short paragraph.

The unit exercises are designed to provide practice in the four language basic skills. However, the majority of the exercises cover silent reading and writing activities with students reading out their responses to class. The exercises where learners can state their ideas or give short talks are minimal. (This is further discussed in Chapter 5).

In levels 3A-4B, the activities are almost the same as level 2A/B except that the format is different. As stated above, the textbooks in 3A-4B consist of 48 units in each level with 5 lessons in each unit and 3 exercises in each lesson. This makes the total number of exercises in a unit 15 rather than 20 as in level 2A/B. Another difference is noticed in the

new vocabulary exercises; these are introduced in isolation with dictionary meanings in lesson one of each unit.

Due to the fact that a given BEP level is offered to learners mainly on a period of 8 hours a day, or sometimes on a period of 4 hours (for those who need to spend the other 4 hours on the job), and due to the fact that more than one teacher may teach the level, the material is paced in detailed schedules. For example, a daily pacing schedule for level 3A on a 4-period basis may include the date, the training day number in the level, the period number, the title of the textbook, the unit, the page, and the exercise numbers. It would look like this:

Date	Training Day	Pd. 1	Pd. 2	Pd. 3	Pd. 4
1/10/2003	18	UE. Unit 8 pp: 80-82 L. 1, Exs 1-3	UE. Unit 8 pp: 83-85 L. 2, Exs 1-3	UE. Unit 8 pp: 86-88 L. 3, Exs 1-3	UE. Unit 8 pp: 89-91 L. 4, Exs 1-3

2.5.3 Testing and Evaluation

Performance Evaluation in the BEP program is an on-going process. Part of it is recorded in a trainee progress record on a daily, or weekly, basis by the teacher. This is called "Teacher Evaluation Grade" and it represents 20% of the final grade (100%). The teacher grade is usually the average of dictation grades, writing grades, weekly quiz grades, and is also based on the individual teacher's discretion. The other evaluation element comes from the final tests. These tests are made up of two parts, test booklet one and test booklet two.

Test Booklet one for levels 1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A consists only of a "writing" component (16% of the final grade – 100%). It usually requires testees to write simple statements in the form of responses to questions, and gradually gets more difficult until, in levels 3&4, testees may be asked to write short controlled paragraphs. In levels 1B, 2B, 3B and 4B, the same "writing" component applies; however, a listening component, which usually requires testees to listen to a short talk, or dialog, and write answers to questions they hear, is added (24% of the final grade – 100%). This Test Booklet is usually scored by the individual ITCs as per very specific scoring notes provided by the Central Academic Curriculum & Testing Unit of the Program Development & Evaluation Division. The remaining weighting of the 100% is assigned for test booklet two (which is mainly multiple-choice items); 64% for 1A, 2A, 3A & 4A, and 56% for 1B, 2B, 3B & 4B levels. Therefore, by adding the percentages of the components of the two parts of the tests to the teacher's evaluation, which is 20%, the total equals to 100%.

It is essential to note that the test components represent fragments of three basic language skills; that is, "reading", "listening" and "writing". "Speaking", which is a basic skill in building and evaluating the oral communicative competence, is not officially tested at all. It should be noted that the "listening" and "writing" components of the tests do not test acquired language skills. For instance the majority of the listening skill items are either "fill-in-the blank" or "circle the best choice" in a multiple-choice exercise. Similarly, the same thing happens in the "writing" skill component, where learners fill in the blanks with missing words/phrases, or complete sentences.

The absence of evaluation tools that examine and judge the learner's oral production and their ability to use language for communicative and self-expression purposes could be the reason for de-emphasizing the oral communication practice opportunities throughout the curriculum, which in turn, affects the learners' motivation to enhance these skills. This, perhaps, might be the reason why the students' language performance has always been a problem for the training management.

In sub-sections 2.5.1, 2.5.2, and 2.5.3, I discussed the BEP program's design and objectives, activities and pacing, and the testing and evaluation procedures. In the following section, I discuss other related features of this program, such as enrollment policies, support equipment and supplementary material.

2.5.4   Other Related Features

In addition to the description of the BEP program provided in the above sections, the following account on other related features such as the support equipment, supplementary material and the enrollment policies is provided to shed more light on this program which is the focus of this study.

BEP is supported by a great deal of listening material recorded on cassette tapes by native speakers of English, and recently recorded on CDs. This material includes narratives, dialogues, process descriptions, and interviews. Furthermore, each textbook is supported by activity sheet packages that include related exercises to reinforce the language features taught for the day. These are used in the revision class periods at the end of the day. In

addition to the supplementary material, each textbook is supported by a teacher guide. This guide includes the listening material scripts, exercise responses, sample pacing schedules, test objectives, new word lists, word form lists, hints on how to make lesson plans and hints on how to teach some activities.

The two types of enrollees who have a direct link to this research study are the regular trainees and apprentices. The regular trainees are Saudi Aramco regular employees who hold jobs with the company. They are usually enrolled for an ITC course because it is necessary for job improvement, career development, and/or promotion. The apprentices are enrolled for training in order to qualify for Craft, Operator, Technical, Clerical, and Support Services jobs. The apprentices remain on a non-employee status during the two-year program. Upon completion of the program, employment may be offered to those who fulfill all requirements of the program. Candidates are selected for employment based on the company's needs and the established guidelines.

A placement test is required by apprentices and regular employees who have no training history and no placement record in the subject area for which enrollment is requested, or has been requested by line organizations. Exceptions are entry level courses (English 1A, Math 2A, Science 5A) where enrollment is possible without placement tests provided that the trainee meets applicable prerequisites. Placement test results determine into which course/level an apprentice or a trainee may be enrolled, provided that he does not have a successful completion of a higher level in his training history. If a trainee's placement test results are different from his history record, the latest successful completion or the placement, whichever is higher, will prevail for enrollment purposes.

This sub-section concludes the description of the BEP program. In the following section, I highlight some observations about this program that impact on the teaching /learning environment.

2.5.5 <u>Observations on BEP</u>

In the following few pages, I provide some observations on the Saudi Aramco BEP program that might, one way or another, affect the teaching/learning process in levels 1-4. The first of these observations is the length of time this program has been used as the main instructional material in levels 1-4. As mentioned earlier, the BEP was first implemented in 1984. It has been active since then, with one revision between 1998 and 2001. The revision was mainly on the distribution of the material and the layout of the units, with some modifications to the exercises in levels 2 and 3. However, the set of policies that control the program's training and testing procedures continues to be the same. The second observation relates to the policies and procedures which control the teaching/learning process. These policies were determined by groups centralized in Dhahran, the Company's headquarters in Saudi Arabia, and were applied in the same manner at all settings in all training locations. Teachers and learners are not involved in the decisions made regarding those policies. They include all matters related to the syllabus design, setting, objectives, enrollment policies, instructional material pacing, and the testing and evaluation system. An example of these policies is the passing grade. A trainee whose final grade is 70 or above, out of one hundred, in a certain level, is recorded in the system as having completed that level successfully though his language

proficiency may be much lower than that level. Passing a certain level with a grade of "70" does not necessarily mean that this trainee has met the language proficiency objectives of this level. Another example is the way the instructional material is tightly paced. In some cases, a teacher makes it his concern to complete the paced material in his period by all means otherwise he might be counseled because the next teacher of the same class is supposed to start from where the previous teacher ended. This practice may compromise the quality of the teaching/learning process and, consequently, affect the choice of the best teaching methodology for a certain activity. In addition, the need for completing the material according to the schedule may limit the teachers' choices to provide further opportunities to the learners to discuss and expand on the taught language features through oral discussion.

The above stated concerns about the BEP program highlight the importance of the nature of classroom instruction in the Saudi Aramco English training programs. For many of the Saudi Aramco trainees, L2 learning takes place only in a classroom setting. Hence, the importance of this study, which investigates the learning activities, the type of instructional material, and the modes of delivery in the Saudi Aramco classrooms.

Summary:

This chapter has included a comprehensive description of Saudi Aramco's training program in general, and the English language instruction program in particular. The description included a historical background of Saudi Aramco training and the gradual development of the English syllabus and how it was influenced by the prevailing teaching approaches and methods, such as the direct method, the structural method, the audio-lingual method, and finally the communicative approach. The last section included an account of the company's objectives and policies for controlling the training processes and environment. In chapters 5 and 6 of this study, the data analysis and findings show how these policies have impacted on the teaching/learning process in Saudi Aramco L2 classrooms. The following chapter includes a selected literature review relating to the research questions stated at the end of Chapter One.

III. CHAPTER THREE: REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE ON SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter Two, the Saudi Aramco language training program was outlined as the context for this research study. In the last section of Chapter Two, the problems in the Saudi Aramco instruction program were illustrated. It was noticed that the major problems were related to the syllabus, methodology, and the testing system. In the present chapter, I critically explore selected literature on second language classroom instruction. This provides the framework for the study and the theoretical discussion for the research questions.

Clearly the field of second language classroom instruction is a vast area, and there is a need to be selective in the choice of literature to be critically reviewed. This is not only due to restrictions on word space, but also to the encompassing nature of the literature in this area. For example, there is a great amount of literature on second language classroom discourse, but I have made the decision not to focus on this. Instead, the major focus of this review is on two major classroom instruction methodologies that are of relevance to the particular context in this study, that is, the Saudi Aramco training program, within the broader framework of the general nature of language learning in the classroom.

As most of the Saudi Aramco learners' second language learning takes place in the classroom setting, it is deemed appropriate to review literature which focuses on second language learning within a classroom context. Therefore, following the introductory section, Section 3.2 includes a critical review of the literature on L2 learning in classrooms.

Section 3.3 and 3.4 explore and critically discuss two types of classroom instruction which are fundamental to the particular learning and teaching context in which the study takes place, and to the research questions provided in the first chapter. Moreover, these two types have been the focus of intensive research and discussions about L2 learning in the classroom in the last fifty years. These are *form-focused* and *meaning-focused* instruction. Each type is defined with a description of its features, advantages, disadvantages, and with reference to a range of literature. These two sections are of great importance to this study because my professional experience of twenty years in the Saudi Aramco contexts suggests that the existing form-focused instructional methods do not provide enough opportunities for learners to build communicative competence that helps them use language for communication.

The final section of the chapter includes a discussion of a possible eclectic approach to L2 learning where the best features of form-focused and meaning–focused types are combined in one setting as decided by the learners' needs. This type of instruction is explored, with reference to the literature, in order to show how it might provide a suitable model.

3.2   Classroom Instruction

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, this section is important to this study because the majority of Saudi Aramco learners' contact with the English language occurs in classrooms. As I have shown in Chapter Two, learners in Saudi Arabia, and in Saudi Aramco specifically, have little access to English outside the classroom. In addition, through classroom instruction, the roles of all the elements of the teaching/learning process interact and become alive.

I start this section with a brief definition of the concept of "classroom". Allwright & Bailey (1999) cite Gaies' (1980:18) notion of a "classroom" as a "crucible", that is, a pot in which teachers and learners come together and where language learning occurs. In a crucible, the outcome depends on the interaction between the different elements that go into the crucible.   In a classroom, these elements are the teacher, the learners, the instructional material, in addition to the environment within which all interact.

The crucible metaphor can only be taken so far, however. In a language classroom, successful learning is affected by many variables such as motivation, learners and teachers' beliefs towards the target language, personality, learning strategies, age, gender, etc. However, I find the following three factors the most important because they are in line with the "crucible" metaphor stated above. First, the input available, whether from the instructional material, teacher to learners, or learners to learners. Second, the practice opportunities available for the learners to use the language for communication. Third, the social context in which the first two variables are executed. Though more empirical

research is still needed on instruction and the several factors that affect such instruction, many studies have proved that classroom instruction helps second language acquisition and language learning.

In the following section of this chapter, I discuss several studies that have shown significant advantages of classroom instruction on L2 learning as compared to L2 learning which takes place through natural exposure. In addition, I discuss other studies which have shown no significant advantage in classroom instruction over natural exposure, though these studies imply that L2 learning was achieved in classroom settings. The critical review of these studies will only focus on the subjects, context, language levels, test types and results. It is not the intention of this discussion to critically evaluate those studies, but to highlight the positive or negative impact of classroom instruction on L2 learning as suggested by those studies. The rationale behind this focus is the fact that each study has its own variables that might have affected the results and it is almost impossible to claim that there was a total control over all the variables which usually affect studies in the classroom or in public settings.

After a review of twelve research studies about the effect of instruction on second Language Acquisition (SLA), Long (1983:359-382) noted that instruction is beneficial:

1. For children as well as adults,

2. For beginning, intermediate, and advanced students,

3. Whether the data is collected through integrative or discrete – point tests, and

4. In acquisition-rich as well as acquisition – poor environments.

In six of the studies referred to by Long, (Carroll, 1967; Chihara and Oller, 1978; Krashen, Seliger and Hartnett, 1974; Briere, 1978; Krashen and Seliger, 1976 and Krashen et al. 1978), there was considerable evidence that classroom instruction does make a difference to language proficiency and that instruction has helped L2 learning even more than natural exposure to the target language, except in the study by Carroll (1967), which shows that exposure helps more than instruction. The reason for this exception could be the fact that the learners' first language was English and the target language was another foreign languages learned in the United States. However, even in Carroll's study, instruction has helped L2 learning. Though Briere's study (1978), was conducted on subjects learning Spanish, but with Indian as a first language, the results indicate that instruction has helped L2 learning more than exposure. This could be due to the fact that the subjects of this study were beginner children. In some situations, children learn foreign languages faster than adults in classrooms, (Lightbown & Spada, 1993:41-43).

Three of the six studies mentioned above were conducted on adult subjects learning English as a second language in the United States; these are Krashen, et al. (1974), Krashen and Seliger (1976), and Krashen et al. (1978). Two of these three studies (1974 and 1976) came up with results stating clearly that instruction helps L2 learning but exposure does not. In the third study (1978), however, the results indicate that both instruction and exposure help, but instruction helps the most. Though the results of these three studies add more evidence that classroom instruction helps L2 learning more than natural exposure, it is essential to note that the type of tests used to evaluate the learners'

performance were different. While the (1974) study used a discrete point test, the 1976 used an integrative test. However, the (1978) study used both types of tests. The question that emerges here is that had the (1974) and (1976) studies used the two types of tests together to evaluate the learners' performance, would the results have shown more positive evidence for natural exposure? Another fact is the amount of instruction given to the learners compared to the amount of exposure to the language they had outside the classroom. Whatever questions and challenges emerge from these facts, these three studies have presented enough evidence that classroom instruction is beneficial to L2 learning.

The Chihara and Oller study (1978) was conducted on adult learners, in all proficiency levels, learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in Japan. To evaluate the learners' performance, discrete point and integrative types of tests were used and the results indicate clearly that instruction helps but exposure does not. Though none of these studies was conducted in the Arab world, the results of this study, in particular, are important because it is similar to the Saudi Aramco context. The Saudi Aramco learners are adults learning EFL at all proficiency levels in an industrial setting. Though the Chihara and Oller (1978) study states clearly that the subjects in the study had less exposure to the language (short visits to the United States), there was no significant relationship between the amount of exposure and the test scores. In contrast, there was a positive correlation between the amount of instruction and test scores.

Though the results of Chihara and Oller's study indicate that classroom instruction has helped the subjects' L2 learning, there is great possibility that motivation, as a crucial

factor in language learning, was the major reason for those positive results. According to Littlewood (1984:56-57) people usually have one of two kinds of motivation to learn a foreign language; *integrative* or *instrumental*. Those learners who have integrative motivation learn a foreign language because they are interested in the other language community. They want to have the ability to communicate in the target language in order to join this community and its culture. On the contrary, those who learn the second or foreign language due to instrumental motivation, do this for more practical reasons, such as employment or career enhancement. Such motivation will encourage learners to take a more active part in class events and interact more with their teachers and classmates. This fact may explain why in the Chihara and Oller study the Japanese learners' proficiency increased through classroom instruction more than through natural exposure during their visits to the United States. This literature relates directly to the setting in which Saudi Aramco learners learn English. As stated in Chapter Two of this study, Saudi Aramco learners are required to successfully complete specific language levels in order to meet job requirements and grow in their career with the company. This instrumental motivation by Saudi Aramco learners makes the classroom the most important setting for their language learning.

Regardless of the different factors that might have affected the results of the above-mentioned six studies, the results provide sufficient evidence that classroom instruction helps L2 learning. This conclusion is in harmony with the "crucible" metaphor, stated earlier in this section, where the elements of classroom come together and language learning occurs.

Other studies on the effect of instruction on general language performance followed Long's (1983) reviews and indicated positive advantage to instruction. These studies are cited in Ellis (1994:619). They are by Weslander and Stephany (1983), Ellis and Rathbone (1987), Montgomery and Einstein (1985), and Spada (1986).

Though three of these studies (Weslander and Stephany, Montgomery and Einstein, and Spada) were conducted on learners learning English as a second language in native speaking settings (United States and Canada), the results show that the learners' proficiency in English has increased through classroom instruction. Keeping in mind the different factors which may affect the test results in such studies, it is pertinent to note that the learners' proficiency might have been affected by living in a native speaking community and that the subjects might have learned some English outside the classroom. However, Ellis and Rathbone's (1987) study also showed that the learners who attended classroom instruction gained more than the others though the subjects were adult UK students studying German as a foreign language in a non-native speaking environment. The importance of this study emerges from the fact that the instruction which the learners received in the classroom could have been the only source of language learning they had. It is interesting to note that the results of Montgomery and Einstein's study (1985) show the learners who received communicative and formal instruction improved more than those who received only form-focused instruction. This is in line with the assumption of this research study stated in section 1.3 of the introductory chapter. (Further literature on this issue is in sections 3.2 & 3.3).

The above mentioned studies were conducted in order to find out how much classroom instruction affected the learners' L2 proficiency in general. All of those studies have shown that classroom instruction can help L2 learning somehow. However, other studies were conducted on EFL learners' acquisition of specific language features. The majority of these studies have also shown a positive effect for classroom instruction on the acquisition of those specific features. These studies, cited in Ellis (1994:628-630), are by Perkins and Larsen-Freeman (1975), Turner (1979), Pavesi (1984, 1986), Pienemann (1984, 1987, 1989), Gass (1982), Zobl (1985), Eckman et al. (1988), Jones (1991a, 1991b), and Buczowska and Weist (1991). Five of the above studies were conducted on subjects learning foreign languages, similar to the Saudi Aramco context; these were German in Australia, Pienemann (1987, 1989), English in Japan, Jones (1991, 1991), and English in Poland, Buczowska and Weist (1991).

In Pienemann's studies (1987, 1989), the subjects were three Australian university beginner students learning German as a foreign language. In oral interviews, the students used simple and easy word order rules more successfully when taught. However, their use of more difficult rules corresponded to the natural order of acquisition where certain language features cannot be taught before the learners are ready for them. It is true that this study has shown that learners, through classroom instruction, learned to use certain language rules in their oral productions, it is only fair to admit with only three subjects involved, it is not possible to make solid judgment on the studies' results. However, the two studies by Jones (1991a, 1991b), were conducted on 370 adult female Japanese university student studying EFL in intermediate levels. The first study included a total of 210 students and the second one included 160. Through sentence-joining tasks and oral

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production task-based pictures, the subject learners showed proper use of marked structures more than the unmarked ones.

In Buczowska and Weist's study (1991), the 60 Polish adult university students studying English as a foreign language in mixed ability levels showed evidence that, in sentence-comprehension tests based on pictures, instruction facilitated rather than impeded the acquisition process.

Further to the above reviewed studies on the positive effect of classroom instruction on L2 learning, I would like to provide below a critical review of two more studies that are related to each other, with regard to L2 classroom instruction, and because they are directly related to sections 3.3 (Form-Focused Instruction), 3.4 (Meaning-Focused Instruction), and 3.5 (Mixing Both Types of Instruction) of this selected literature review. These are "Instruction and the Development of Questions in L2 Classrooms" by Spada and Lightbown, 1993, and "Second Language Instruction Does Make A Difference, Evidence from an empirical study of Second Language relativization" by C. Doughty, 1991.

Spada and Lightbown's experimental study (1993) was designed to investigate the effect of form-focused instruction and corrective feedback on the development of interrogative constructions in the oral performance of ESL learners. It was based on the hypothesis that form-focused instruction and corrective feedback provided within the context of communicative interaction can contribute positively to second language development in both short and long terms. The subjects of the study were francophone ESL learners (age

10-12, Grades 5 or 6) in intensive communicative programs in elementary schools near Montreal-Quebec, Canada. Learners in two experimental classes (one Grade 5 and one Grade 6) received approximately 9 hours of form-focused instruction and corrective feedback on English question formation over a 2-week period. Data obtained from an oral production task as well as from the learners' oral production in classroom interaction were collected. The oral performance of the learners from the experimental classes was compared to that of students in a comparison group (Grade 5) in which the regular intensive teaching program was continued. A global listening comprehension test was given in order to obtain an independent measure of the learners' general abilities in English. The instructional material for the experiment was prepared by the research team and taught by the class teacher. The exercises and activities emphasized questions with the auxiliaries "can", "be", and "do" in the present and the question words "what", "where", and "why". Tasks included unscrambling interrogative questions, several guessing games, to identify the identity of an object/person, and preference tasks. Students were pre-tested immediately before the focused instruction began and post-tested immediately following the instructional period. There was a follow up post-test 5 weeks later and a long term follow up test after a further 5 months. The experimental class received 5 hours of explicit instruction the first week, two hours of follow up the second week and 2 hours of repetition of the taught activities. In addition, teachers were encouraged to continue providing corrective feedback inside and outside the instructional activities. The control class continued studying the course without special activities. The teacher of the control group was not informed of the purpose of the study. Audio-recording of some classes during the experiment was done for both groups. The two groups were pre-tested and post-tested as planned except for the control group which was

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not given the long term follow up test 5 months later. In order to elicit natural talk from students and to assure participation by all, a communicative task was developed. Students used sets of pictures in asking questions for the purpose of matching with one similar picture with the teacher. When they failed to use a "wh" question after three trials, the interviewer prompted them to do so.

Spada and Lightbown used different techniques for assessing the subjects' ability to form and produce "wh" question forms – these are the language patterns used for the study. First the subjects were formally tested for their knowledge of the question forms; then for their development stages – as recommended by Pienemann (1998). The test results showed that the subjects gained better knowledge of those forms in the post and follow up tests. In addition, the authors could identify the stage of development for each student by their ability to form certain model questions. The third technique followed in assessing the subjects' question forms was the analysis of the subjects' classroom interaction. This analysis showed that the subjects in the experimental groups formed more questions than the control group but the control group questions had a higher accuracy rate. Moreover, results showed different attitudes and preferences among subjects when forming their questions. The authors related those differences as being most probably due to the instructional material, and to the differing teachers' techniques.

The authors concluded that though there were individual and group variation in the development of question forms produced by the comparison group than those produced by the learners of the experimental groups, both groups' performance was better after they were provided with instruction and corrective feedback. In experimental research, if

the independent variable is effective in creating an effect, the subjects of the experimental group usually outperform those of the control group. In this study, the planned treatment for the experimental groups, and the unplanned treatment for the comparison groups produced positive effects in developing and improving the performance of all.

However, the learners in the comparison group outperformed those of the experimental groups because they had received sustained form-focused instruction and correction in the course of their learning. Moreover, their teacher consistently provided focus on form and corrective feedback during the study. She (their teacher) always drew the learners' attention to errors in their inter-language development within the context of meaningful and sustained communicative interaction.

Regardless of the different factors that usually affect the results of experimental studies, such as degree of control over variable, randomization, comparison, and social background of subjects, Spada and Lightbown's study has provided some evidence that classroom instruction can have a positive influence on L2 learning. However, it is important to note that in order for the results of this study to be generalized, the subjects' age and the roles of the teachers are to be considered. Research findings (Lightbown and Spada, 1993; Averch, 1974) have shown that young children learn language faster than adults, particularly in communicative settings. The implication is that the study needs to be repeated on adult learners in similar circumstances and variable controls in order to generalize results. Moreover, continuous systematic observation is recommended in order to monitor the learners' performance and keep records for comparison and reference. With regard to the teachers' roles, one might question whether the same results would be

achieved if the controlled group teacher and the experimental group teachers exchanged their teaching assignments.

The second study by Doughty (1991) was also an experimental study built on previous studies (Gass, 1981; Eckman, et. al. 1988; Pavesi, 1986; Zobl, 1985) which specifically examined L2 relativization in the context of the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy (NPAH) and showed initial support to the Accessibility Hierarchy Hypothesis (AHH). At the initial stages of Doughty's study, the following research questions were formulated for investigation:

1. Does SL instruction make a difference?

2. If so, do different types of (carefully operationalized) instructional procedures differently affect SLA, and

3. How can SLA theory and previous findings be incorporated into SL instruction?

Doughty (1991:435)

However, during the development of instructional material, the author added the following research questions:

1. Does SL instruction affect the rate of acquisition or relativization by ESL subjects? If so,

2. Do meaning-oriented instructional techniques and rule-instructional techniques differently affect the acquisition of relativization? and

3. Does SL instruction which utilizes marked relative clauses (OBJECT OF A PREPOSITION TYPE) facilitate the acquisition of other types of relative clauses?

Doughty's study was different from previous studies because of the material, the method of instruction, and the method of assessment. The material was designed to be delivered through Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). The method of instruction was designed to provide core instruction to the two experimental groups (one group received special meaning-focused treatment and the other received special rule-focused treatment) and to the control group which did not receive any special treatment. The method of assessment followed the experimental design of pre-tests, post-tests. However, the post-tests included written items focused on utilization of SL relativization, and an oral part which used pictures that included scenes where learners had to describe through the use of relative clauses. The subjects were twenty adults (10 males and 10 females) with different international mother tongue languages studying advanced English at the English Institute, Philadelphia, USA. The subjects all had a high level of education, at the level of college and university, before they came to the USA; their average stay in the US was 3.7 months.

The core instruction and special treatment, for the experimental groups, were delivered via the computer for 10 days by completing one lesson a day. Each lesson included a "skimming" activity for the 3 groups, and a special "treatment" activity for the two experimental groups (with different material for each: meaning-focused and rule-focused). The treatment was followed by a "scanning" activity for all groups, and, finally, subjects were asked to answer two comprehension questions about the text, and write a recall summary of the text in their native language to avoid L2 production constraints since the objective of the written summary was comprehension only. Analysis of the

post-tests and the daily assessment activities showed that both experimental groups improved greatly in English relativization. The controlled group subjects' ability in relativization also improved, but less than the two instructed groups. The gains mean averages were as follows:

- Meaning-focused instruction group =   26.44%

- Rule-focused instruction group   =   25.31%

- Controlled group   =   12.02%

The results also showed that both meaning-focused instructed and rule-focused instructed subjects improved almost equally on the use of relativization. Furthermore, though the subjects received instruction on only one type of relative clauses, their ability in other contexts of relativization improved as well.

The results of Doughty's study (1991) have also provided evidence that SL instruction can have a positive impact on L2 learning, similar to the evidence provided by Spada and Lightbown's study (1993). Though the two studies' overall objective was to investigate whether instruction positively affects SLA, they differ in many ways. The subjects in Spada and Lightbown study were young children with ages between 10-12, while the subjects in Doughty's study were adults at a high education level with long periods of exposure to English as students in their countries. This rich experience in learning English might have positively affected the gains of the subjects in the experimental and controlled groups. In order for the results to be validated, the study needs to be repeated with subjects whose English background is at the level where learners are ready to receive instruction on relative clauses.

In Spada and Lightbown's study, the instructional delivery was carried out in regular L2 classrooms through interactive activities guided by teachers with immediate feedback and correction. However, in Doughty's study, instruction was delivered by the computer in explanatory techniques where knowledge about the language is provided and the feedback on the subjects learning was delayed after the tests results. It is true that feedback on the subjects was immediately received during the oral part of the post-tests, but this feedback was restricted to the proper use of relative clauses; no sustained communication was practiced. To reach sound judgment on the learners' ability to use the learnt language features, teachers need to challenge them to use these features in communicative situations. Moreover, no follow-up tests were conducted later to see whether the learnt features were retained, or to see whether those features had become part of the learners' communicative competencies. Regardless of the above observations on the above-mentioned studies, their results have added more evidence that instruction can have positive effects on L2 learning.

In addition to the studies reviewed above which have shown that classroom instruction can aid L2 learning, other studies such as the ones by Hale and Budar (1970), Upshur (1968), Mason (1971), and Fathman (1975), have indicated that classroom instruction had no significant influence on the subjects' L2 learning. With respect to the results of these studies, it is important to keep in mind what type of teaching methodologies were used by teachers in those studies which were conducted at times when there was a gradual shift from structural and oral/aural approaches towards a more communicative one in L2 classrooms (1968-1975).

As stated earlier in this chapter, the main purpose of this part of the chapter is to provide evidence from research findings that classroom instruction can aid L2 learning. This aid can be enhanced if there is a sufficient degree of control over the variables which affect such learning. Some of these variables are the *teachers' roles, the learners, the material,* and *the learning environment. Teachers* play major *roles* in classroom language learning. Some of these roles are: warming up learners; presenting the lesson, controlling class interaction; motivating participation; providing enough practice opportunities; evaluating what is learned, and reinforcing the lesson objectives. Therefore, the teacher's roles can be considered as one of the major factors that may affect the results of research studies. For example, in the study by Spada & Lightbown (1993), critically reviewed above, improvement in accuracy among the control group was higher than the experimental group because the teacher manipulated the formation of the questions and provided effective feedback on the students' grammar errors.

Learners usually come to the classroom with different beliefs towards language learning; varied learning strategies and styles; different degrees of motivation; differing feelings and attitudes towards the target language, and different ages, personalities and emotional states. All of these factors may affect the results of research studies from one setting to another.

Material here refers to the source of input available for both the teacher and learners. Since this material includes the text for language practice and reinforcement, it can, in many ways, affect the process of L2 learning and the outcomes as well.

The *environment* in which L2 learning is taking place can affect the results of research studies in different settings. The word "environment" in this situation may consist of several factors forming either a positive or a negative atmosphere to learning. Allwright & Bailey (1999) state eight factors that affect the learners' receptivity to L2 learning; these are: the target language and culture, the teacher as a person, other learners, the teacher's way of teaching, course content, the materials, the idea of being a successful language learner, and the idea of communicating with other people. Many of these factors are in line with what I have stated and discussed under the teacher and learners' roles above. However, three of Allwright and Bailey's factors (the teacher as a person, other learners, and the teacher's way of teaching) are related to the social aspect of the teaching learning process. This aspect is illustrated by Vygotsky's thoughts on how learning develops. Vygotsky (1978:85-86), believes that people develop their learning in the "Zone of Proximal Development". This is "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers". For Vygotsky, social interaction is a mechanism for individual development, Donato (1990). This view is in harmony with what I state above that learning is affected by different cultural and interactive conditions. If these conditions/factors are well-controlled, L2 learners can benefit a lot from classroom instruction. To support this stand, I would like to state that most language teachers in countries where English is a foreign language; including myself and all my fellow teachers, learned their English in classroom settings.

This section of the chapter has provided feedback on the effectiveness of classroom instruction in L2 learning. This feedback is needed since the setting for this study is Saudi Aramco's English classrooms. Research questions numbers 1, 2 & 3, stated at the end of chapter one, address issues that occur in classroom settings. However, what has been discussed about classroom instruction so far leads to the emergence of crucial queries in this area.

It is a truism that different means and methods are utilized in classroom instruction. What is most important at this stage is not which means or method is best, but how input is made available to the learners, and what kind of output learners produce in specific classroom contexts. Are learners enriched with explicit knowledge through language awareness techniques, or are they enriched with implicit knowledge through interactional techniques that help shape their learning? Is the classroom a place for teachers to intervene in the process of L2 learning in order to build up the learners' linguistic competence, or is it a place where teachers need to provide the utmost learning opportunities for the learners to be able to learn language for communication? These queries bring up other queries with direct relation to this study. What kind of classroom instruction currently prevails in Saudi Aramco's classrooms? Is it effective? What alternatives can be introduced to improve the situation and help build up the learners' communicative competence? In order to find answers to all these questions, I examine two types of classroom instruction that relate to this study's objectives; *form-focused instruction and meaning-focused instruction*. These two types are of special importance due to the fact that they are directly related to this study's research questions and that they have been the focus of many research studies in the last thirty years. In addition, in

Chapter Two of this study, it was noted how Saudi Aramco has followed the traditional change in language teaching methodology for the last fifty years. Following the audiolingual approach to teaching, the form-focused and meaning-focused instruction types have played a major role in Saudi Aramco language teaching practices. Therefore, the next two sections of this chapter (3.3 & 3.4) will critically review these two types of instruction and see how the choice between the two can affect the learners' performance.

3.3 **Form-Focused Instruction:**

Form-focused instruction as opposed to meaning-focused instruction generated different teaching methods in the past such as the grammar-translation method, the direct method, and the audiolingual method. These methods dominated language teaching in different parts of the world in the twentieth century, Richards & Rodgers (1986).

Form-focused instruction emphasizes grammar teaching for the purpose of accuracy rather than fluency. It is based on the theory that language is a set of structures or a system of rule-governed structures that can be learned through habit formation and memorization. This concept was established as a result of some learning theories such as "Behaviorism" which states that foreign language is a mechanical process of habit formation, and Chomsky's linguistic theory which claims that much of human language use is created anew from underlying knowledge of abstract rules and that sentences are generated from the learners' underlying competence.

Form-focused activities include repetition, substitution drills, dialogues and pattern practice. The teacher is the model and controller of what is practiced in class. He is the one who dominates what is given, evaluates the outcomes and decides the course of action. The learner is to listen, repeat, respond to questions and has no control over content. Lightbown and Spada (1993:70), who refer to form-focused instruction as "traditional", describe its focus as being "on the language itself rather than on information which is carried by the language. The teachers' goal is to see to it that students learn the vocabulary and grammatical rules of the target language. The goal of learners in such courses is often to pass an examination rather than to use language for daily communicative interaction."

In comparing form-focused classes with meaning-focused or "experiential" classes, Harley et al. (1996:58) describe form-focused classes as those "that spend relatively more time on whole-class activities, form-focused practice, use of minimal text, reaction to code rather than to message, and can be described as having an overall analytic profile". The above stated definitions of form-focused instruction have two common facts that directly relate to the Saudi Aramco setting. The first one is the fact that, in a form-focused class, the learners are mostly involved in learning language features that increase their knowledge of the language rather than using such knowledge in life-like communicative activities. The second one is the fact that the learners' objective in form-focused classes is to pass the final examination and move to the next level or receive a certificate of completion.

What has been said so far about form-focused instruction does not imply that this type of instruction is ineffective. Throughout the years in which the communicative approach to language teaching prevailed in the field, many linguists were still in favor of form-focused instruction for better and accurate L2 learning. Ellis (1994), for example, believes that form-focused instruction helps in the acquisition of linguistic competence; that form-focused instruction has both immediate and delayed effects on the learners' ability to perform the target structures in natural communication. The conscious knowledge of marked forms may help to accelerate learning and may also be necessary to prevent fossilization.

Another advocate of the importance of form-focused, or "analytic" strategy, in language teaching is H. Stern. Stern (1991) believes that the analytic strategy in language teaching is not "confined" to grammar but also refers to any other aspect of the language that can be identified and isolated, phonological, lexical, semantic, discoursal, and sociolinguistic. Stern highlights five features of the form-focused, or analytic, strategy:

1. It focuses on specific language features and by isolating them makes them salient for the learner.

2. An analytic strategy of necessity decontextualizes linguistic features.

3. As object of study, language items are examined, observed, explained, compared, and put into some order within a system.

4. It provides an opportunity for the learner to come to grips with a specific language feature through practice.

5. It pays attention to accuracy and error correction to a degree regarded as appropriate for a given group of learners.

Though the above features reflect a positive stand by Stern in favor of form-focused strategy, I believe that in any L2 learning program, a control mechanism of the target language rules needs to be established during the learning process. This is necessary in order to shape up the learners' output. In support of this conclusion, in an interview by Arnold (1991:2-5), Rivers, emphasizes the role of teaching grammar to L2 learners by saying: "It is the framework (grammar) within which the language is operating." Later in the interview, Rivers re-affirms that "the important thing about classroom experience is that we are enabling the learner to build a performance memory; and... we need better language knowledge and language control, that when learners are speaking a language, they are using a mental representation that they have built up and so it would better for this to be as accurate as possible". Rivers' views add support to the importance of explicit learning of language rules in the classroom for accuracy purposes.

The above-mentioned views claim that form-focused instruction is essential to L2 classroom learning. However, and as I mentioned earlier in this chapter, a great deal of research is still needed to prove, or provide evidence about which features or parts of instruction actually help L2 learning. Other research studies provide evidence that form-focused instruction has inherent problems. Some of these problems are:

1. Dealing with language items one by one in isolation and out of context brings with it the danger of fragmentation, Stern (1991). What Stern probably means here is the fact that a language is used as a cohesive entity where communication flows as a whole unit with harmony between the message and the form.

2. Languages are too complex for the rule system even to be learned by conscious techniques of study and practice, McNamara (1973). McNamara also found out that it is not easy to arrange the rule system in a logical order for the learner to learn easily. These findings by McNamara call for the need to practice language rules in meaningful contexts where the rule is part of the message itself.

3. Practice (*within the form-focused strategy context*) does not necessarily make perfect, Lightbown (1985). Lightbown has found out that conventional practice tasks have great limitations that have led to a critical reassessment of drills, the notion of mechanical training, methods of repetition and other types of exercises.

4. Practice in the language classroom through conventional techniques does not automatically transfer to actual language use in real life settings, Stern (1991). In order for this transition to materialize, Paultson (1970) proposes meaningful and communicative drills, Rivers (1972) proposes increased skill-using emphasis, and Gunterman and Phillips (1981) propose a communicative orientation for exercises.

The above-stated problems, as highlighted by the previously mentioned views on the form-focused instruction strategy, could be minimized if this strategy is blended with more communication activities. Modern research in this field and the tremendous information technology resources have provided teachers and learners with several means and strategies to manage the L2 learning process. In addition, the objectives of a certain program should enforce the most appropriate method and techniques needed to achieve the set objectives. Even in this case, a fixed, pre-decided method may be faulty. In due course, classroom events and other factors related to the learners themselves may force

teachers to shift their strategies and look for alternative methods that would better suit their objectives. Hence, there is a need for a discussion of the other type of classroom instruction, that is, meaning-focused instruction.

3.4 Meaning-Focused Instruction:

Meaning-focused instruction developed from the communicative approach to language teaching and learning. In meaning-focused instruction, learners focus on the message, comprehension or meaning implied in the context rather than on the structures or rule analysis. Lightbown and Spada (1993:70) refer to meaning-focused instruction as "communicative instruction". Doughty (1991:431-470) calls it "meaning-oriented instruction". The teaching/learning process is carried out through communicative activities.

The foundations for the communicative approach in language teaching were laid by Hymes in the late sixties and early seventies. According to Hymes, the aim of language teaching is to develop a "communicative competence" (1972). Hymes coined this term in order to highlight a communicative view of language in contrast to Chomsky's theory of competence. Chomsky's linguistic competence had affected syllabus design and teaching methodologies aimed at mastering of language structures. The system went like this: a structure is presented, drilled and practiced in a context, then another structure is presented, and so on, until gradually the learner is equipped with the necessary structure for his linguistic competence. Hymes (1971) believed that language operates in a "user" system, not a "knowledge" system. The user system is the communicative competence

which enables users to use language as cultural behavior, not as knowledge of rules and structures because this knowledge in itself is insufficient for language to occur. He believed that a linguistic theory needs to be integrated with theory of communication and culture within a framework based on four factors:

1. Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible.

2. Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible.

3. Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate.

4. Whether (and to what degree) something is done (actually performed) and what its doing entails Hymes (1971).

In sum, "the goal of a broad theory of (communicative) competence can be said to be to show the ways in which the systemically possible, the feasible, and the appropriate are linked to produce and interpret actually occurring cultural behavior" (Hymes 1971: 5). Following Hymes, other linguists such as Halliday (1970), Allwright (1977), and Newmark (1979) produced more literature about the nature of the communicative competence and how it should be built in the classroom. Since then, teaching for "meaning", or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has been the focus of intensive research and literature in the fields of sociolinguistics and language teaching pedagogy. From a cognitive point of view, CLT has shifted the focus from the teacher to the learner; from language knowledge to language use. Teachers do not just "transmit" knowledge, and learners do not just "receive" it. Instead, knowledge is constructed through interaction between both.

In a meaning-focused instruction class, communication is perceived through the input provided, the teachers' and learners' roles, and the practice opportunities available for learners. This strategy allows learners to use language for communication. Since these classroom aspects are in line with the research questions in this study, and in line with the "crucible" metaphor mentioned earlier in this chapter, I am going to critically review these aspects in the following pages.

3.4.1. *Input*

In a meaning-focused instruction class, several characteristics of input have been identified by researchers. These characteristics are critically reviewed below.

- Input as being motivating. Motivating input is the one that appeals to the learners' interests. Shrum and Glisan (1994:28), describe a motivating input as having "an apparent purpose, holds attention and interest of the listener or reader, introduces a conflict of some sort, and is not dull and boring", whereas Nunan (1989: 98-99), believes that a motivating input should be "simple, short and colorful, i.e. supported by pictures, graphs, tables, drawings, etc". In addition to what is mentioned above, input is motivating to learners when it challenges them and catches their attention to explore and probe into it further.

- Input as being organized. Organized input is part of a whole framework starting with program objectives, syllabus design, methodology and learning outcomes. Organized input activities are related to each of the above components. Long

(1989) describes organized input as one which allows for enhanced practice of specific linguistic and communicative features of the language in classroom settings related to the syllabus and the assigned instructional material. Therefore, in order for learners to be able to practice using the language intensively, it is better to allow learners to manipulate language through varied communicative activities whether as whole-class or in groups of two or more.

- Input that is sequenced or graded is arranged and presented from simple to more difficult, short to longer in content, and meets the learners readiness to acquire or learn. This concept of sequencing is in harmony with Pienemann & Johnston's (1986) learner developmental hypothesis which states that learners progress step-by-step along an order, or a sequence, mastering one particular structure, target language or transitional, before another. However, in a critique of Pienemann's ideas on the importance of "sequence" in learning languages, Lightbown (1985:102) cautions against this "rigidity" in language teaching, particularly when it contrasts with the learners needs. In my opinion, as long as the teaching activities facilitate the learners' communication process and enhance their communication skills, they are not to be restricted.

- Input that is comprehensible is any form of the language provided to the learners which includes linguistic features that are understood and can add to the learners' inter-language. I have already made reference to the work of Krashen in the chapter. However, in the discussion below, I discuss his concept of comprehensible input. Krashen (1985: 2-3) states that "humans acquire language

in only one way, by understanding messages, or by receiving comprehensible input. We progress along the natural order by understanding input that contains structures at our next stage – structures that are a bit beyond our current level of competence". Though Krashen's "Input Hypothesis" was criticized by many linguists, for example, McLaughlin (1987) and Swain (1995), his hypothesis has had some impact on the field of second language acquisition and classroom treatment. McLaughlin (1987:56), for example, criticizes Krashen's argument that "effective input contains structures just beyond the syntactic complexity of those found in the current grammar of the acquirer" as leading to nowhere "because it assumes a non-existent theory of acquisition sequence". Swain (1985:252) argues that the learners' comprehensible output is also as important as comprehensible input. She says that "comprehensible input is a necessary mechanism of acquisition independent of the role of comprehensible input. Its role is, minimally, to provide opportunities for contextualized, meaningful use, to test out hypotheses about the target language". Learners must try to make themselves understood if they are to gain grammatical mastery of the target language. Whether comprehensible "input" or "output" is more effective in second language acquisition, both are complementary in a language classroom. When learners understand what is presented to them as language input, they will be able to manipulate it, interact with it, negotiate it, and produce it through communicative activities. This production is the teacher's major source of feedback on the learning taking place in class.

- Input that relates to the learners' past experience, current and future needs includes authentic activities appealing to the learners' social and organizational world. Activities that touch the learners' daily concerns at home and on the job. Nunan (1989:38) describes activities or tasks in language classrooms as, to some extent, mirrors of the real world. "Tasks are justified on the grounds that they will help the learners develop the skills they will need for carrying out real-world communicative tasks, beyond the classroom". Clark and Silberstein (1977:59) state that "classroom activities should parallel the 'real world' as closely as possible. Since language is a tool of communication, methods and material should concentrate on the message, not the medium". The views of Nunan, Clark and Siberstein are in harmony with the Saudi Aramco setting where input relates to the job and to the target language culture. This is because, after completion of their English language training program, the majority of Saudis will have work and social contacts with English native speaker employees; in addition, some Saudi employees, in their career with the company, are sent for study assignments to Britain and America. This can be done by providing contexts where a comparison between the two cultures can be negotiated.

- Input that is practical includes practical instructional activities. There is a setting of communication, some form of language content to be communicated, people to communicate, certain patterns and rules that control the process, and an objective for the whole event. Nunan (1989:10) describes a good communicative task or activity as "a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language".

When the L2 learners interact in this manner in the target language, they have greater opportunities as individuals and as groups to use the language for self expression and for communication with others. This stand is supported by Shrum and Glisan (1994), who call for the need to provide opportunities for students to hear a great deal of authentic language, to use the language in meaningful interaction with others, to negotiate meaning in cooperation with others, and to participate in an environment that encourages and motivates self-expression in a non-threatening way. Another aspect of the practicality of the language input in the classroom meaning-focused activities is using it to help learners work on special projects and problem-solving tasks. In such tasks, there is a great deal of negotiation and interaction among learners in their effort to complete such projects or find solutions to the problem in focus, Stern (1991). Such activities would create conditions for real language use, such as use of target language, information gap activities, sustained speech, reaction to message, incorporation of preceding utterances and discourse initiation.

The above-mentioned description of input in meaning-focused classrooms highlights not only the nature of the input needed, but also the skills needed by the learners. The strategies and tactics employed by the individual learner in order to initiate, understand, respond, interact, and produce language are very important for the success of communicative activities.

As I highlighted in the introduction to this section, input (3.4.1) is the first of three important features of meaning-focused instruction. Instructional activities, or input,

which promote the learners' communicative competence are related to this study's research questions and objectives. The other two features of meaning-focused instruction, which I stated earlier, are *the teachers' and learners' roles (3.4.2)*, and *the practice opportunities (3.4.3)*. Now I turn to the *teacher's and learners' roles* for discussion.

3.4.2. *Teacher's and Learners' Roles*

In my analysis of the instructional activities as one factor affecting the building of the learners' communicative competence, it is clear that those activities can provide enough learning opportunities for the learners to use the language in meaningful interaction, to negotiate meaning in cooperation with others, and to participate in an environment that encourages and motivates self expression in a non-threatening way. Learners can employ different learning skills that help them take active and productive roles in the learning process. Hence, the inter-related roles of teachers and learners begin to emerge, both connected to the nature of interaction that takes place. Interaction in the classroom is the frame within which these roles become alive and dynamic. Even when the interaction is among learners themselves as groups, the teacher is there as a planner, stage director, monitor, facilitator, and even a participant.

Allwright and Bailey (1999:122) refer to authors like Long (1985), Swain (1985), Pica (1994), and Lynch (1996) as having shown how the roles of the learners and teachers can modify interaction in class for the purpose of better learning. Teachers can involve learners to be interactive by following certain strategies such as turn distribution, speaking less, waiting longer after posing a question and calling on learners who have

been previously ignored. Long strongly believes that this sort of "negotiated interaction" helps second language acquisition. Swain believes that teachers need to push learners to produce comprehensive output in order to master the language and this would come about as a result of negotiation in the process of interaction.

Pica (1994) states that there is a lot of empirical evidence for the contribution of negotiation among teachers and learners, and learners themselves on the learners' comprehension of L2 input, their production of modified output, and their attention to L2 form. I believe that the above stated views of Long, Swain and Pica have one common factor among them, that is, the role of the teacher in promoting the interactive roles of the learners for better management of the learning environment. I myself strongly believe that the teacher's interactive strategies facilitate language learning because they help learners to get actively involved in the classroom activities and thus get constantly exposed to the target language. In line with this stand, Lynch (1996:47) mentions seven strategies teachers can utilize to modify and promote interaction and sustained communication in the classroom:

1. confirmation check: making sure that what the teacher has understood is what the learner means.

2. comprehension check: making sure that the learner has understood what the teacher means.

3. clarification request: asking the learner to explain or rephrase.

4. repetition: repeating the teacher's words or those of the learners.

5. reformulation: rephrasing the content of what the teacher has said.

6. completion: completing the learner's utterance.

7. backtracking: returning to a point in the conversation, up to which the teacher believes the learner has understood him/her.

Lynch's seven strategies provide an excellent outline of what teachers can do to enhance the learners' role in L2 instruction. However, I would like to state that since each learning situation might be unique in itself, teachers need to be creative enough to know which move they need to take in accordance with the situation itself. Some learners require the practice of a certain strategy more than others. What is important is how teachers bring about the best of what their learners can do in the process of L2 learning. In addition to what has been stated so far, teachers can bring interaction with their learners to a point where learners find themselves actively involved in the learning process not only in message comprehension, but also in structuring the message itself. This social framework which regulates the relationship between the teacher and his learners is enhanced by Vygotsky's views, (cited in Adair-Hauck and Donato, 1994:534). Vygotsky highlights the importance of the social context in the individual's development from the beginning of life. He states that "the roots of thought are communication with other human beings". The learner develops cognitively by observing, taking part and interacting with experts in his community.

It is clearly noticed, from Vygotsky's view, how interaction between teacher (as the expert) and learner (as the novice) is important in the development of knowledge. Brooks (1989:222) believes that a foreign language classroom is a complex and dynamic social environment. "A socially organized place where people come together through face-to-face interaction to perform many different activities". The construction of meaning

through interactional, communicative activities is a baseline for learning in communicative L2 classrooms where teachers and learners help each other construct shared meanings. Teachers guide learners through their learning development, and learners signal and send messages back to their teachers about their development. This relationship extends to learners when they interact among themselves.

I believe that this social relationship referred to by Vygotsky between teachers and learners in structuring knowledge is crucial in learning. However, I would like to state that when this process of "knowledge structuring" is carefully executed in an L2 learning environment, teachers can activate and enhance the learners' innate learning capabilities and skills, and eventually, learners can build up their own language expressions rather than just repeat the teacher's ideas and expressions. This process of building up the learner's own language expressions would help them utilize what they learn in class in future situations.

From a different perspective, related to classroom practice, Nunan (1989:81) believes that teachers need to help learners build up certain strategies towards their classroom learning, that is, learners need to be adaptable, creative, inventive, and independent. They need to make their own learning opportunities: "learning language actively by performing tasks in class, for example, by interacting with fellow learners and the teacher, asking questions, listening regularly to the language, reading different kinds of texts, and practicing writing". Nunan confirms the learners' "active" role in L2 learning as stated by Lynch above. However, Nunan adds to this a more "responsible" role by learners where

they need to create their own learning opportunities, which I believe is essential because it provides learners with a sense of ownership of what they do in class.

In addition to what is stated above regarding the teachers' roles in L2 classrooms, I would like to critically review three more views on the role of teachers in facilitating the communication process in the classroom. These are the views of Breen & Candlin (1980), Bygate (1987) and Littlewood (1992). Breen and Candlin (1980) specify three main roles for the teacher in the communicative classroom. The first is to act as a facilitator of the communication process, the second is to act as a participant, and the third is to act as an observer and learner. Breen and Candlin's ideas highlight the independent roles of the learners in the learning process and how learners can be the center of the communication process with the teacher's help. In a similar stand, Bygate (1987) indicates that the teachers' roles in L2 communicative classrooms are to create oral production activities where learners can take active roles in interacting with their teacher and fellow learners and negotiate the meaning in language tasks. What Bygate is probably stating here is the importance of getting the learners actively involved in communicative classroom events in order for them to be highly exposed to the target language and have more opportunities to communicate in the target language. Bygate's ideas about the teachers' roles in facilitating the communication process for learners are in harmony with Breen and Candlin's ideas stated above. In addition, they are in harmony with Littlewood (1992) who believes that, in a large classroom, interaction with the language is facilitated by teachers who provide a communicative framework through which learners take more control of the language they use.

I think Breen & Candlin, Bygate and Littlewood have summarized the teacher's and learners' roles in a meaning-focused classroom very clearly. Teachers facilitate the learning process by creating as many practice opportunities for their learners as possible in order for those learners to build their communicative competence. This view is in harmony with the objective of this study: to enhance the communicative skills of Saudi Aramco learners.

In the above section, I critically reviewed several research findings about the type of input needed in communicative classroom instruction and highlighted the roles of teachers and learners in such classrooms. These findings have suggested that a comprehensible and practical input that meets the learners' needs is basic element in communicative classroom instruction. Moreover, the findings have also shown a more active role for learners in manipulating this input with the help of their teachers who act as facilitators and participants in the learning process. In addition to this, and out of many years of experience, I have come to believe that the teacher makes a big difference. It is the teacher who makes the input accessible, communicative and simple, and motivates learners to participate in the communicative activities whether as individuals or in groups, taking into consideration, of course, the personal differences among learners. With this conclusion, I now move to critically review the research findings on the third factor which influences meaning-focused instruction in L2 learning, that is, the *practice opportunities* (3.4.3) available for learners to use language for communication.

3.4.3 *Practice Opportunities*

In addition to the input available for learning and the teachers' and learners' roles discussed above, *practice opportunities* are the third factor that influences meaning-focused L2 classes. Though much of this area has already been discussed in conjunction with the *input* and the *roles of teachers and learners*, I will discuss it in more detail in the following pages. By *practice opportunities* I mean the practice activities carried out by the learners in which they use the language to practice what they have learned, to communicate, and to provide feedback about their learning. Omaggio (1984) defines practice opportunities in a communicative classroom as those activities provided for students to carryout a range of functions likely to be necessary for interacting in the target language and culture, and those which allow students to use the language in a variety of contexts likely to be encountered in natural settings. Richards & Rodgers (1986) describe communicative practice opportunities as ones that allow learners to get engaged in communication and require them to use some communicative processes as information sharing, negotiation of meaning, and interaction. Omaggio and Richard & Rodgers' ideas both emphasize the functional side of communicative practice opportunities for the purpose of interaction with others, whether as native or non-native speakers. With special reference to the oral practice opportunities which aim at enhancing the communicative competence of the learners, Bygate (1987:59-64) cites the opinions of Rivers & Temperley (1978) and of Littlewood (1981). These two opinions are mentioned here together because there is great similarity between them. Rivers and Temperley believe that it is necessary for learners to be engaged in using language for various purposes. They state many categories of language use, such as establishing and maintaining social

relations, expressing one's ideas, asking for and giving information, teaching others and at the same time learning to do or make something, conversing over the telephone, solving problems, and discussing ideas. Littlewood and Rivers & Temperely's ideas emphasize the social side of communication when learners jointly manage the process of communication with their fellow learners, teachers, or other partners. These views are also in harmony with the views of Omagio and Richards and Rodgers, stated above, on the functional purpose of the communication process in the classroom. In addition to the ideas of Littlewood and Rivers & Temperely which emphasize the social and functional side of communicative activities in the classroom, Nunan (1988) believes that in a communicative classroom, practice opportunities should stimulate target performance which require learners to do in class what they will have to do outside. Nunan (1988) also cites other similar views, to those of Long and Crookes (1986), who have found that two-way tasks, in which two participants must share information in order to complete a task or solve a problem, and teacher's referential questions, are effective in stimulating the development of communication skills and help learners to mobilize all their linguistic resources. Long and Crookes have also emphasized the joint roles of learners in exchanging information and filling gaps in order to complete a given task. In such activities learners have the opportunity to manipulate and use language for communication, thus enriching their communication skills.

The opinions of Rivers & Temperley, Littlewood, Long & Crookes, and Nunan have one common factor among them, i.e., all communication practice activities in class must have a target. Learners get engaged in these activities in order either to complete a task, or to solve a problem in a setting that would facilitate their future social experiences. The

processes employed in achieving this target would help enhance the learners' communicative skills because they are similar to life-like situations. It is worth mentioning that Rivers and Temperely believe that communicative practice should be preceded by controlled practice for the purpose of building up language skills.

Ellis (1994:127) draws several insights for an optimal L2 communicative learning environment. He believes that learners need to be involved and interested in what is being talked about. In order to achieve this, learners are given opportunities to control the topic of conversation. They are allowed more initiative than is common in most language classrooms and are encouraged to produce utterances which oblige them to utilize their linguistic resources at least some of the time. To achieve this, teachers usually vary the type of questions asked to suit the learners' level of proficiency and encourage learners to initiate discourse so that they have the opportunity to perform a range of speech acts, requiring varied linguistic resources. Ellis's ideas here vary a little from the other ideas discussed above. Ellis wishes to give learners more say in many of the classroom decisions, whether in what is being practiced or how it is being practiced. I believe that this situation is more suitable in settings where L2 learning takes place in an uncontrolled environment. In a setting like Saudi Aramco, for example, where the material, timing, and objectives are controlled by company's policies and objectives, Ellis's ideas may not be practical because neither teachers nor learners have a say in the assigned material. Furthermore, the tests which decide completion of a certain level are based on the assigned material. However, in support of Ellis's ideas, Lynch (1996:121) believes that "by including interaction tasks in which learners can take the communicative initiative, we can provide them with a wider and richer experience of speaking". What Lynch is

stating above could be more practical in an L2 classroom more than Ellis's ideas because Lynch emphasizes the learners' roles once the communicative tasks are set for practice.

I would like to end the discussion on practice opportunities with a quotation from Allwright & Bailey (1991:28), which rightly describes the importance of practice opportunities in the classroom as "crucial to language learning because what happens determines what learning opportunities learners get... teachers and learners together manage the classroom interaction and at the same time manage these learning opportunities".

The above-mentioned views highlight the importance of practice opportunities through which L2 learners use the language for communication and for providing feedback on what they are learning. I believe that L2 learners should be given the chance to use the language for communication from the beginning. However, the input provided for them should be simple and accessible. The language forms and contexts they are asked to negotiate, manipulate and practice should be in harmony with what they can do, not with what they have to do. Gradually, with enriched linguistic and social interaction experiences, we can provide broader and more challenging opportunities for communication.

This last point brings us to the most common criticism of instruction which is focused on message and meaning rather than on code and structure. It is believed that this type of instruction requires sufficient language proficiency on the part of learners. It also cannot

be motivating enough to bridge the gap between natural and classroom communication, and does not satisfactorily contribute to the learners' proficiency since it emphasizes fluency over accuracy.

So far in this chapter, I have critically reviewed selected literature on second language classroom instruction. Much of such literature has shown that classroom instruction helps L2 learning somehow. I have also critically reflected on two types of classroom instruction related to this study because the English language syllabus in Saudi Aramco classrooms over a long period of time was based on these two types. These were form-focused strategy as in grammar exercises, drills, pattern practice, vocabulary exercises, and meaning-focused strategy as in classroom interaction, modified interaction, negotiation of meaning, information gap and role-play tasks, and problem solving activities.

At this point, it is worth noting that making a choice on one type of instruction is not always easy because each teaching/learning situation is unique in itself. Moreover, one has to keep in mind that there are many factors involved in a learning setting such as objectives, instructional material, learning environment, and other factors related to the learners themselves, such as personality, aptitude, age, gender and motivation. Therefore, the type of classroom instruction is decided by the nature of the learning setting itself. A good teacher is one who really knows what is best for his learners. Sometimes teachers need to follow an 'eclectic' approach, through which they observe and reflect upon their own teaching as well as the learning needs of their learners and choose the most suitable type for them.

This notion of the 'eclectic' approach lays a basis for the literature review in the next section about mixing the best of the above-mentioned types of instruction in one lesson or different lessons.

3.5 Mixing Both Types of Instruction:

The above-mentioned views on the eclectic approach are in line with a recent trend in the world of TESOL and linguistics which encourages mixing the positive features of both form-focused and meaning focused instruction in the same lesson in order to guarantee maximum language accuracy and, at the same time, use language for communication [Littlewood, 1992; Rivers (in Arnold, 1991); Lightbown, 1990; Johnson, 1995; Spada, 1997; Celce-Murcia, Dornyei & Thurrel, 1997]. Below, I provide a critical reflection of their views.

Littlewood (1992: 88-89) suggests that L2 learners can be helped to progress on a continuum where they start with carefully structured activities towards more communicative practice. "The focus has thus to be finally balanced between communicative process and linguistic product, in ways that aim not only to support the learners' capacity to become involved in the immediate communication, but also to equip them with a more polished instrument for future use". I believe that Littlewood's call for this harmonious relationship between building up the learners' linguistic accuracy and developing their ability to communicate fluently in the classroom is essential to L2 learning because when learners build up a linguistic competence and begin to produce accurate utterances, they become more confident and, eventually, communicate more

easily. In a similar view to Litttlewood's, Rivers (in Arnold, 1991:3) emphasizes the teaching of grammar in communicative classrooms. She says that learners need to learn grammar through class activities that enable them to perform rules and, eventually, build up a 'performance memory' and integrate the material in their semantic network. Though both Littlewood's and Rivers' opinions urge teachers to provide L2 learners with learning activities that aim at building the learners' linguistic and communicative competences, Littlewood prefers the gradual shift from "skill-getting" to "skills-using", while Rivers supports spontaneous practice of both competences throughout integrated activities.

In line with Littlewood's and Rivers' ideas on the necessity of incorporating form-focused tasks in communicative activities, Lightbown (1990:91), in an overview of the Development of Bilingual Proficiency (DBP) Project in the immersion schools of Canada, which is based mainly on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), believes that some attention should be given to teaching the language itself, to providing some formal, analytic teaching that can help students see where their use of the target language differs from that of native speakers. She believes that "communicative language teaching is turning its attention to the necessity for form-focused activity within a communicatively oriented program". I strongly agree with Lightbown's view about the need for form-focused practice in communicative activities, not only to help learners see the difference between their inter-language and that of native speakers, but also to foster their awareness of the target language as different from their native one.

Another well-known theory related to this issue is Ellis's Integrated Theory of Instructed Second Language Learning (1990:196). This theory is built upon the hypothesis that

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"explicit knowledge functions as a facilitator of implicit knowledge by making the learner conscious of linguistic features in the input". It is the teacher's responsibility to provide sufficient opportunities for meaning-focused communication to enhance the acquisition of implicit knowledge and also to help the learner to develop explicit knowledge. Though Ellis's theory focuses on the product of L2 classroom learning, i.e. the type of knowledge gained by learners, it also links this product to classroom processes where activities include opportunities for building the learners' explicit and implicit knowledge.

In addition to the above views on applying a blend of form-focused and meaning-focused methodology in L2 classrooms, more recent views have expressed almost the same ideas in support of such a choice. Johnson (1995:167), for example, elaborates on the different variables which help build up L2 learners' communicative competence. In order to "expand" the learners' classroom competence, he recommends ways through which teachers combine form-focused and meaning-focused instruction. "This means allowing for more spontaneous, adaptive patterns of communication in which the structure and content of the interaction can be constructed and controlled as much by the students as the teacher." This combination of meaning- and form-focused instruction creates opportunities for students to use language for learning to perform a range of language functions, and to reflect on the language structure and organization. I believe that Johnson's view is the most comprehensive one. It is in line with my study's objectives with regard to providing L2 learners with enough practice opportunities through which they use language for communication.

Further similar views are expressed by Ulichny (1996) and Williams (1995). Ulichny, for example, believes that L2 teachers should meet their learners' expectations for information about language use by "(a) authentic language activities requiring the selection of language options and negotiation of meaning among participants as well as (b) explicit information about formal features of the language". Williams (1995), expresses a similar view which also encourages the teaching of language forms in communicative classrooms. She concludes that "there seems to be a positive effect (i.e. higher accuracy) for an increased focus on form it the communicative classroom in general". Ulichny and Williams ask for increased and explicit focus on language forms in the communicative classrooms. However, I would say that such an increase needs to be monitored very carefully in order to avoid a return to whole-class form-focused activities.

A more recent opinion on this issue is Spada's. Spada (1997:73) believes that within a meaning focused instruction approach, pedagogical events, which she calls form-focused instruction (FFI), are provided in either spontaneous or predetermined ways to draw learners' attention to language form either implicitly or explicitly. Spada's ideas are in harmony with all the ideas stated so far which call for incorporating form-focused activities in the L2 classroom communicative or meaning-focused activities in order to meet both the learners' communicative and linguistic needs.

Along the same path, a more recent view is expressed by Celce-Murcia, et al. (1998:117), who have come up with a new approach in communicative language teaching called the "principled communicative approach" in which they call for a gradual shift within communicative teaching methodology towards a more direct approach. In this approach

there is more emphasis on "developing awareness of conversational grammar, that is, of the higher level rules and regularities within language that go beyond the sentence level". Celce-Murcia et al.'s approach calls for a control over CLT by advocating a systematic controlled communicative approach where learners explore the linguistic features of their classroom language. L2 learners need to be aware of the language rules and discuss their ideas in class with their classmates and teachers within the ongoing communicative activities. I believe that frequent episodes of communicative discussions about the language and the unique features practiced in the day's lessons could help in shaping the learners' linguistic competence. Adding more new ideas to the so far stated ideas, Ellis et al. (2001) highlight another feature to form-focused instruction within meaning-focused contexts; this feature is called "preemptive focus on form". This is when the teacher or the learners choose to highlight a specific form (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc.) and make it a topic for discussion and illustration during communicative activities (Ellis's earlier ideas on integrating form-focused and meaning-focused instruction in L2 classroom have been reviewed earlier in this section.) From previous experience, I believe preemptive focus on form is a normal process in ESL classrooms. However, it is important to note that this type of focus on form needs to be very carefully handled in order to avoid turning the lesson into fragments of grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation teaching. Ellis' ideas are in line with many recent trends in L2 research, discussed earlier in this section, steering towards the need for a balance between the two types of instruction, that is, form-focused and meaning-focused, the focus of this chapter. This balance can be integrated in the course of the lesson where language awareness is highlighted through interactive communicative activities, or grammar is introduced by involving learners in language awareness tasks before they get involved in other

communicative tasks where the sole objective is to have learners use the language for communication. A third type would be to hold any language awareness activities until learners complete a variety of communicative tasks, then they can be assigned tasks to discuss and analyze the language forms which they have just experienced in the communicative tasks, Fotos (1998). The choice is, of course, controlled by the teaching/learning situation and the different variables which either facilitate or hinder the process. Moreover, it is important for L2 teachers to vary their L2 classroom activities between language awareness tasks, and language communication tasks. Activities that introduce L2 as an entity by itself and as a means of communication and self-expression.

Summary:

In this chapter, I have critically reviewed selected modern research on the effect of classroom instruction on L2 learning. The discussion has indicated that classroom instruction helps L2 learning. Later in the chapter, due to their impact on Saudi Aramco L2 instruction program and due to being the focus of several classroom research studies, form-focused and meaning-focused strategies have been discussed and reviewed as two types of L2 classroom instruction. In the final part of the chapter, I have critically reflected on recent views that propose L2 instructional activities where a balance between the two types is advised. In the following chapter, I turn to the research design and methodology for this study.

IV. CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

4.1 <u>Introduction</u>

The research questions stated at the end of Chapter One address crucial matters related to the teaching/learning environment in Saudi Aramco classrooms. These questions have laid the foundations for reviewing selected literature on classroom instruction and its effect on L2 learning in Chapter Three. This review is of importance to this study because it represents a framework for the effectiveness of L2 classroom activities, which are researched in Chapter Five. This chapter, however, describes the research methodology used to reach that end. It also provides a critical review of the COLT Scheme and justification of the use of this scheme as the observation instrument.

In 4.2 and 4.3, facts about the study and what motivated it are briefly discussed. Section 4.4 provides a justification for choice of method and a full description of *observation* as the research method used to investigate the research questions. The COLT Scheme is critically reviewed in this section as well. Section 4.5 provides details of the subjects/participants and Saudi Aramco language classrooms as the setting where this investigation was carried out. Related ethical issues and some limitations in the methodology in this study are discussed in sections 4.6 and 4.7. Three appendices related to this chapter are provided, C, D, and E.

4.2 The Research Study

As stated in Chapters One and Two, this research study is about the Saudi Aramco English instruction program with particular emphasis on the Basic English Program (BEP) used as a core program in levels 1-4. The study covers the instructional material, the roles of teachers and learners, and classroom events. The main objective is to find out why Saudi Aramco learners and graduates have poor oral communication skills and experience great difficulties in using language for communication whether in the course of their study or after graduation even though they pass the final tests. It is hoped that by researching what goes on in these classrooms, it will be possible to find answers to the research questions, stated at the end of Chapter One, which are the major guide for the research methodology.

4.3 What Motivated The Research

As mentioned in Chapter One, there are many factors that motivated this study, the most important of which is my twenty-five-year teaching experience of English as a foreign language with Saudi Aramco. Other factors are the feedback received from the graduates' job supervisors and job skills instructors.

As far as the first factor is concerned, I have always attempted to maximize my learners' oral production skills within the constraints imposed by the teaching schedules and testing practices. I believe that enhancing the learners' oral communication skills facilitates other language learning skills such as reading and writing. Unfortunately,

Saudi Aramco learners have invariably shown poor language communication skills, and this has always been a concern to teachers and customers as well. (Further discussion of these problems appeared in Chapter Two.)

4.4 The Research Method

The challenges imposed by the research questions require using a research method that would facilitate the collection of direct information about the teachers' and students' behaviors in real classroom settings. I believe that the best desired method for this purpose is through direct observation with the help of a systematic observation instrument for written accounts and video/audio recordings of desired classroom events.

The observation method is an excellent measuring technique that enables the researcher to collect data about the subjects in public, that is, the observer can watch the subjects' behaviors in a public setting such as the classroom (Borg, 1987:10; Robson, 1993:190).

The observation method in educational research was known as far back as the 19th century. At the time, the French Philosopher Comte believed that a human being thought went through three stages, the theological, the metaphysical, and finally the scientific. From a scientific point of view, social behavior could be predicted through systematic observation and analysis. With regard to my research study, direct and systematic observation enabled me to capture the participants' direct behaviors, record and describe class events, and later analyze and interpret in order to provide valid conclusions.

Though classroom observation is used for several purposes such as evaluating teaching techniques, peer coaching, helping novice teachers, monitoring the effectiveness of the instructional material, it can also be used to capture specific classroom events. For example, an observer can record events that relate to the research questions, certain lessons of special features, the performance of individuals or groups of students, and modes of participation, Swann (1994:30). This type of observation method has several advantages and disadvantages. These are briefly summarized below after Borg (1987) and Robson (1993).

Observation is an effective method in gathering direct and descriptive information on the observed behaviors. The observer can collect data about behaviors that actually take place around him/her. This data is usually valid if the data collection instruments are systematically structured or recorded permanently on audio-visual devices. Moreover, the observation method is specially effective in situations where the observer either collects data about specific class events, such as the oral skills in my research study, or in real situations, such as a lesson in a language classroom.

However, one of the most threatening disadvantages of observation as a research method is the effect of the observer's presence on the situation. This presence can result in a change in the behavior of the observed. This threat can be minimized once the presence of the observer becomes habitual to the observed, and by reducing to the minimum the interaction and contact between the observer and the observed.

As far as this research study is concerned, I believe that the impact of the above stated disadvantage on the research process was not significant due to the fact that twenty-six out of the thirty observed lessons were done in two locations where the presence of the observer was common as part of his duties as an administrator. In the third location, where only four lessons were observed, though the observer was not well-known, the presence of visiting training personnel in the classrooms is also very common to both teachers and learners. Moreover, the use of systematic data collection tool like the COLT Scheme "A" to describe the class behaviors and teachers' and students' roles helped the observer to be isolated without interfering in the class events. However, the possibility that the presence of the observer had some effect on the observed behaviors cannot be eliminated.

With this brief explanation of the observer's paradox in the observed classes, I now turn to the two known types of observation methods. According to Cohen and Manion (1994), and Robson (1993), there are two types of observation methods. The *participant* and the *non-participant* (Robson calls the latter *structured*). The participant method is more common in research studies that extend over a period of time and require the observer to take part in the events. Nevertheless, in the non-participant method, the observer is purely observing the behaviors and events from a remote stance with the least distraction of the observed. In the case of this research study, I followed the latter type, the non-participant method, due to the fact that I needed to concentrate on class events and be able to systematically capture a full picture of the students' and teachers' behaviors. This choice was also mandated by the research questions which sought to identify the nature of classroom activities, and the roles of both teachers and students, and the exact time

allotted for such activities. Therefore, written and video-audio accounts of specific classroom events were recorded and analysed to provide valid conclusions, and eventually, present practical recommendations. To conclude this section, I now turn to critically review the COLT scheme which, with the help of the advisor at Leicester University, was then chosen as the observation instrument. The review includes first a justification for this choice, then a full description of its different components. (COLT Scheme Part 'A' is found in Appendix 'C'.)

COLT Scheme Part "A" was chosen because it investigates the nature of classroom activities and how much classtime is spent on each. The scheme categories reflect classroom events usually observed in most L2 classrooms. Moreover, they are classified and arranged systematically, a fact which facilitates identifying, tracking, and marking each category and, eventually, quantifying it in percentile values.

Other major reasons for using Part "A" are due to the fact that the tool had been used in different parts of the world in settings similar to the Saudi Aramco one. In those settings, Part "A" was used to investigate instructional practices and their impact on the learning outcomes. Since the purpose of this research study is to investigate the nature of classroom activities in Saudi Aramco language classrooms and their impact on the learners' performance, I find great similarities between these studies and the Saudi Aramco setting. Consequently, I hereby briefly review some of the studies which used COLT Scheme "A" as an instrument for data collection. For example, Spada used it in a classroom observation study to investigate the instructional practices and procedures in intensive ESL programs in Quebec primary schools. The results of the study indicated

that some intensive program teachers spent more time on form-focused instruction and error correction than others, Spada (1987, 1990).

However, Vandergift (1992) used it to investigate the use of listening strategies by high school students in a core French program in Canada. The comprehensive documentation provided by this scheme helped the researcher to conclude that there was little emphasis on global listening and listening for meaning.

In an East-Asian setting, Yohay and Suwa (1994) used COLT Part "A" in a case study of English in Japanese elementary schools to determine how consistent the actual classroom activities were with the stated goals of promoting communicative skills. The data collected and analysed showed very little verbal interaction between teachers and students and/or students and students due to a heavily teacher-centered approach and an emphasis on question/response-feedback patterns with a focus on form.

However, in a Mediterranean setting, Zotou and Mitchel (1993) used COLT Part "A" to investigate the communicative features in a project to develop a foreign language curriculum in Greece. The objective was to investigate the instructional practices and their relationship with the learning outcomes. The results of the study enabled the researchers to produce an overview of Greek EFL teachers' classroom practices.

And finally, Dicks (1992) used COLT Part "A" in the context of his doctoral research at the University of Ottawa to determine if there were pedagogical differences, in the classes in French immersion language arts classes, that reflected a more

communicative/experiential or a more analytical approach. The data analysis suggested that students in the more analytical classes were able to make fairly rapid gains on written, analytical verb tense tasks than on the oral, time restrained task.

In view of the above-stated past experiences and how COLT Part "A" was successful in showing the impact of instructional practices on the learning outcomes, it was decided to use it as the most suitable observation tool for this research study. Each of the conclusions made by the above studies has, in one way or another, some methodological implications for the research questions of my research. For example, Spada's studies, (1987, 1990), identify teachers who spend more time on form-focused activities, a fact addressed in research question number two of my research study. Vandergift's study (1992) concludes that there was little emphasis on listening for meaning, which is also related to the kind of activities practiced in Saudi Aramco classrooms. The studies of Yohay and Suwa (1994) and Zotou and Mitchel (1993) deal with the roles of teachers in L2 classrooms. Finally, Dick's study (1992) shows that analytical, or form-focused, classes have positive results on the learners' accuracy.

In addition to what is stated above, the scheme's "activity" record and categories enabled me to capture most of the Saudi Aramco L2 class events. On the "activity" part, I managed to record a detailed description of the type of class activities and how much class time was allotted for each. The "Participant Organization" category enabled me to identify the "grouping" arrangement during the learning tasks. The "Content" and "Content Control" categories enabled me to identify what language features were practiced in the input and the source of such input. The "Student Modality" category

helped me identify which of the basic language skills the learners were using in each activity. The last category, "Materials", helped me identify what the material used in each activity was designed for, whether audio or visual, minimal or extended, native speaker or non-native speaker. Though the scheme categories were sufficient in reflecting a comprehensive picture of the classroom events, I had to add another category that would reflect the learners' ability to use the taught features in independent communicative tasks. No class events particular to this added category were observed during the data collection process. All these factors made me decide upon choosing COLT Scheme Part "A" as a tool for data collection.

The other tools which were considered were rejected due to their impracticality with regard to this research study. For instance, Flander's Foreign Language Interaction (FIAC) and Moskowitz' Foreign Language Interaction Analysis (FLINT), Flanders (1970), are both directed to capture only those features that constitute the interaction which takes place between the teacher on one side and the rest of the class on the other side. They do not follow a systematic method to track other classroom events, such as students' modalities.

Fanselow's (1977) Foci for Observing Communications Used in Settings (FOCUS), is too detailed in focusing on the lesson's communicative features only. It is designed to capture the structure of the communicative and interactive exchanges/utterances that take place between the teacher and the students. Since the purpose of this research study is to capture the nature of classroom events, how much time is allotted for each, and how they are implemented, the FOCUS system was ruled out because it does not serve the purpose.

The Embryonic Category System of Long et al. (1976), an excellent tool for capturing verbal interactions in language classrooms, is too descriptive and does not facilitate recording specific timed class events and therefore does not allow quantification in percentile values which were necessary for my study to find out the exact time allotted for each class activity. Consequently, Part "A" of the COLT Scheme was considered as a possible good choice for this study due to its practical features which allow researchers to record timed and specific classroom activities. A detailed discussion of COLT is provided below.

COLT was developed in Canada in the early 1980s as part of a research project investigating the nature of L2 language proficiency and its development in classrooms. The project was called the Development of Bilingual Proficiency (DBP). One of the major objectives of DBP was to investigate the effects of instructional variables on learning outcomes. Hence, COLT came to life as an instrument used in the observation of teaching and learning in second language (L2) classrooms, Spada and Frohlich (1995).

COLT is divided into two parts: Part "A" describes classroom events at the level of episode and activity, and part "B" investigates the communicative features of verbal exchanges between teachers and students and/or students and students as they occur within each activity. According to the assumption of this research study, (stated in Chapter One), such verbal exchanges are not practiced in Saudi Aramco BEP classes. Therefore, I decided to use Part "A" only. This part is illustrated, with special explanations by the writer, on the following pages exactly as it appeared in COLT Observation Scheme – Coding Conventions and Applications, Spada and Frohlich (1995:

14-20). The explanations are provided in order to show how each component of the scheme contributed to collecting part of the data and added rich feedback to the analysis of such data and, consequently, to the conclusions and findings of the study. The scheme is arranged in two sections. The first one includes the following two components:

Time

The starting time of each episode/activity is entered.

Activities and Episodes

Activities and episodes are separate units which constitute the instructional segments of a class. They are marked by changes in the categories of the main features of COLT. Separate activities would include such things as a drill, a translation task, a discussion or a game. Three episodes of one activity would be: teacher introduces dialogue, teacher reads dialogue aloud, individual students read parts of dialogue aloud.

This section is the first part of the COLT Scheme. It allows the researcher to describe the nature of class activities whether they are, for example, reading comprehension, vocabulary explanation, exercise completion, grammar, speaking, writing. By marking the starting time of each, the researcher can find how much class time is allotted for each activity/episode. With regard to this research study, this section of the scheme enabled me to collect valuable data to describe the activities that take place in Saudi Aramco classrooms and quantify how much time is spent on each. (These findings provided many responses to the study's research questions.)

The second section is the Scheme's Categories. Each category captures specific features of the class events such as grouping, language skills, content, and material. "Participant Organization" is the first one:

Participant Organization

Refers to the way in which students are organized. Three basic patterns of organization are differentiated in this category: Class, Group and Individual.

Class

Teacher to student or class

One central activity led by the teacher occurs; the teacher interacts with the whole class and/or with individual students within the central activity.

Student to student, or student to class

One central activity led by a student or students occurs (e.g, a group of students acts out a skit and the rest of class is the audience)

Choral work by students

The whole class, or individual groups, participate in choral work (e.g, repeating a model provided by the textbook or teacher)

Group

Same task

Groups/pairs of students all work on the same task.

Different tasks

Groups/pairs of students work on different tasks.

Individual

Same task

Students work on their own, but on the same task.

Different tasks

Students work on their own, but on different tasks.

This category enables the researcher to describe the grouping arrangements through which the class activities are carried out. This is very important to the research process because the data collected in this category would identify whether the class activities were controlled by the teacher or were carried out by the learners themselves. In this research study, the "Participant Organization" category did help me collect substantial data about the type of participative organizations in Saudi Aramco language classrooms and how much of class time was spent on each. The next category is the "Content" category.

Content

Refers to the subject matter/theme of activities; that is, what the teacher and students are talking, reading or writing about or what they are listening to. Three major content areas have been differentiated: Management, Language and Other topics.

Management

Procedure

Procedural directives (e.g, 'Open your books to Chapter 3 and do the first exercise')

Discipline

Disciplinary statements, directives (e.g, 'I am getting more and more frustrated with the noise level in this class')

Language

Form

Reference to grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation etc.

Function

Reference to functions/communicative acts (e.g, requesting, apologizing and explaining)

Discourse

Reference to the way in which sentences (spoken or written) combine into cohesive and coherent sequences such as describing a process (e.g, how to plant a herb garden).

Sociolinguistics

Reference to forms or styles (spoken or written) appropriate to particular contexts (e.g, the difference in the use of 'vous/tu' in formal/informal contexts)

Other topics

A binary system is used to represent the potentially vast number of topics which can arise in classroom discourse. These topics are

categorized as either narrow or broad depending on their range of reference.

Narrow

Range of reference: topics which refer to the classroom and the students' immediate environment and experiences (e.g, personal information, routine school, family and community topics)

Broad

Range of reference: topics going well beyond the classroom and immediate environment (e.g, international events, subject-matter instruction and imaginary/hypothetical events)

The "Content" category allows the researcher to collect data about the focus of each class event. The collected data describes the topics being talked about, read, listened to, or written. The data also provides specific information whether the language practiced in each event refers to form, meaning, discourse and/or the social context. In addition, the data provides whether the topics discussed are narrow and limited to the learners' environment only or broad enough to include events that lead to critical thinking discussions. In the case of this study, the collected data identified the type of topics and language focus in Saudi Aramco classrooms whether as provided by the textbooks or as used by teachers. Analysis of the data collected in this category have helped in making decisions on the type of content used in Saudi Aramco language classrooms. The third category in the scheme is the "Content Control" category.

Content Control

Refers to who selects the topic (or task) that is the focus of instruction.

Teacher/Text

The topic (or task) is determined by the teacher and/or the text.

Teacher/Text/Student

The topic (or task) is jointly decided by teacher, students and/or the text.

Student

The topic (or task) is determined by the student/s

This category allows the researcher to decide the source of input for the class activities. Is this input provided and controlled by the teacher, the text, the student, or by all? In this study, the data collected in this category helped identify who controlled the classroom input in Saudi Aramco classrooms and whether the learners themselves had a say on the input used in the class activities. The fourth category of the COLT Scheme is the "Student Modality" one:

Student Modality

This section identifies the various skills involved in a classroom activity. The focus is on the students, and the purpose is to indicate whether they are listening, speaking, reading or writing, or whether these skills occur in combination.

Listening

Speaking

Reading

Writing

Other

This category is included to cover such activities as drawing, acting or arranging classroom displays.

This category enables the researcher to identify what language skill the students are using in each class activity. These skills could be listening, speaking, reading, writing, or others such as drawing, or acting. In the Saudi Aramco setting, the data collected in this category provided a rich resource on which student modality/modalities is/are used by students more than the others. In the analysis stage attention was paid to the speaking modality in particular as being the focus of investigation of this study. The last category in the COLT Scheme is the "Materials" category:

Materials

This feature describes classroom materials in terms of text type and source of materials.

Types of Material

Minimal

Written text: captions, isolated sentences, word lists etc.

Extended

Written text: stories, dialogues, connected sentences, paragraphs etc.

Audio

Recorded material for listening

Visual

Pictures, cartoons etc.

Note: Films, videos etc would be double-coded as audio and visual.

Sources of Material

L2-NNS (L2-Non-native speaker)

Material which is specifically designed for second language teaching, such as course books, teacher-prepared exercises, material etc.

L2-NS (L2-Native speaker)

Materials originally intended for native speakers of the target language (e.g. newspapers, brochures, advertisements, etc)

L2-NSA (L2-Native speaker-Adapted)

Native speaker materials which have been adapted for L2 purposes (e.g. linguistically simplified or annotated stories and other texts)

Student-Made

Materials (stories, reports, paper-shows, etc.) created by the students.

This category allows the researcher to decide whether the material used in each activity is a minimal or extended text, audio, visual, and where it is coming from: native speaker

sources, non-native speaker sources, adapted for non-native classrooms, or created by the students themselves. In the Saudi Aramco setting, the data collected in this category was meant to find out whether the material used by students is limited to their own classroom and work environment, or whether it is extended to help them expand on it and negotiate its content for critical thinking practice purposes.

I have added an eighth category called "Oral Communicative Practice" with four sub-categories: teacher/class; student/student; pairs, and groups. The rationale behind this addition is to record any expanded or broad classroom activities meant for learners to use language for communication away from the text. To capture any oral activities that signal or provide feedback on what has just been taught and whether the learners can use it to express themselves. Unfortunately, the COLT scheme Part "A" does not have a similar category to identify reinforcement and feedback activities on the learners' side indicating independent use of language for communication. This category is explained below:

Oral Communication Practice

T<-->S/C (Teacher to individual students or whole class interaction)

Any two-way interactive activities which aim at constructing knowledge mutually between teacher and class.

S/S (student/student)

Any interactive activities which include information exchange between two students with the teacher and the rest of class acting as audience.

Pairs

The class is divided in groups of pairs to interact and negotiate the

meaning of a topic or exchange information to solve a problem

using their own English.

Groups

The class is divided in groups of 3-5 in order to work on problem-

solving or information gap tasks.

It is worth noting that the added eighth category is intended just to show whether such

activities took place in class or not. Full analysis of the communicative features of such

activities is not an objective of this study.

The above description of COLT Scheme "A" represents the 1995 format of the scheme as

I stated earlier in this section, and it is the version I have used in this research study.

However, since its development in the early 80s, the COLT scheme has gone through

several revisions and changes for both theoretical and technical reasons. As far as theory

is concerned, between the 80's and early 90's, the Communicative Approach in language

teaching (meaning-focused instruction) was very popular in language classrooms around

the world, Spada and Frohlich (1995). However, throughout the 90's, much of the

research in this field led to overall results which indicated that "while exclusive focus on

meaning does lead to high levels of fluency and communicative abilities in the L2 it does

not lead to high levels of linguistic accuracy or more refined knowledge" Spada and

Frohlich (1995:07). This theoretical conclusion was the major drive behind some of the

changes made on COLT, which included the addition of other components to capture form-focused instructional features.

Technical changes were also made to the scheme after it had been used by the developers themselves and by others in different parts of the world. From actual experience by the developers in data collection, analysis and findings, and from the feedback received from many users in other countries, changes were reflected on the original scheme. Some parts were deleted and others were modified to make it simpler. (COLT Scheme Part "A" is found in Appendix "C".)

Immediately after the decision about the choice of method and instrument, the Saudi Aramco teachers in SAATD three training locations, Abqaiq, Al-Hasa, and Udhailiyah, were approached for permission to observe their classes. Out of about fifty teachers approached, only four teachers were not willing to be observed. Later, official permission from training management was also granted (Appendices D and E). An observation schedule was made for Abqaiq training location because it was far from the observer's work location and it was not under the observer's administrative jurisdiction. However, all arrangements were made with Abqaiq ITC administration and teleconferences were made with the teachers to be observed. As far as the Al-Hasa and Udhailiyah ITCs concerned, no special observations were made due to the fact that those observations were conducted as part of the routine duties of the observer. However, pre-conferences were held with the teachers concerned in order to arrange all matters related to the observation process. One of the points focused on in those conferences is the importance of carrying out classes in a natural and routine manner.

The observation and recording processes were executed during different timings over a period of two academic years due to the non-availability of desired levels to be observed. All in all, thirty lessons were observed and data recorded on the COLT observation records. Fourteen of those were audio-recorded and two others were video-recorded.

In the data analysis stage, excerpts from lessons 7, 17, 21, 23 and 24 were transcribed and added to the analysis in Chapter Five. These excerpts were added for two purposes. First, in order to enhance the other qualitative data collected on the COLT observation tool itself. Second, in order to support the data analysis with real samples from the observed classes which include features with special implications to the study's research questions. The data was analysed in five stages. First, and per the COLT Scheme coding system, the data was studied and classified to provide qualitative and quantitative information about the lesson activities and about the COLT Scheme categories as shown in Chapter Five. Second, the coded data was quantified and represented on graphs and tables with percentages and mean averages. Third, qualitative information was provided to illustrate those graphs and tables in addition to excerpts from the audio-recorded lessons to enhance the analysis with actual samples of class events. Fourth, findings were highlighted based on the analysed data and research questions. Finally, recommendations to help solve the problem for Saudi Aramco learners were formed.

With the above discussion about *observation* and the COLT Scheme 'A', I now turn to the setting and subjects.

4.5 Setting and Subjects

The data were collected in level 2, 3 and 4 classrooms of three Saudi Aramco training locations, *Udhailiyah*, *Hasa* and *Abqaiq*, which are under SAATD. Twenty six of the observed lessons were carried out in apprentice classes and the remaining four in regular employees' classrooms. This is because, at the time of the research study, most of the learners were apprentices. Furthermore, there were no learners in level one because most apprentices usually start in level 2 or above. Therefore, levels 2, 3 & 4 classes were chosen as the setting for observation since they are core levels required to be successfully completed by all learners.

The subjects are Saudi Arab highschool graduates studying different English levels and technical courses. Successful completion of the English levels and the technical courses is a basic requirement for them to become regular Saudi Aramco employees. The observed teachers are mostly foreign employees from different countries, such as Britain, The United States of America, Jordan, Palestine, The Sudan, and one teacher from Saudi Arabia. (Further details about the Saudi Aramco learners and teachers are found in Chapter 2.)

4.6 Ethical Issues

The research ethics issue has recently become an important concern in the field of both pure scientific experiments and other social science investigations. The paradox of research ethics stem from the fact that scientists, in their pursuit of truth and for the welfare and development of humanity, have to utilize and use means of investigation that

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might affect the participants' own lives negatively (Cohen & Manion, 1994; Robson, 1993).

It is the responsibility of any researcher to balance between his right to find the truth and the participants' right to privacy, dignity and self-determination. However, Robson believes that the best justification for ethical issues is the benefit and knowledge gained from the study (1993:29).

As far as this research study is concerned, the following ethical concerns were taken into consideration.

a) prior informed consent:

All observed teachers had been fully informed about the research study and they all willingly agreed to take part in it. As for the observed students, they were also oriented on the research study and its objectives and they, too, agreed to take part in it. We do not know whether they had any reservations on being the study subjects because such reservations were never expressed.

b) protection and confidentiality:

The participants were informed that the data collected would remain confidential and anonymous. Furthermore, they were informed that the findings would be related to the research study locally and it would not affect their professional status.

c) volunteer participation:

All participants agreed to take part in this research study voluntarily without force or threat.

d)   disclosure of research study objectives:

The objectives of the research study were honestly and clearly stated and explained to all participants.

e)   permission to conduct the research study:

Permission to conduct the research study had been granted by the training management in the Southern Area.

4.7 Limitations

In addition to the above-stated ethical issues, it is important to note some limitations related to the Saudi Aramco setting that might have affected the process and the product of this research study. These limitations include:

1. The difficulty to access training documents such as needs assessment studies, feedback analyses, internal reports, and final test samples. Those could have provided invaluable information to the study.

2. This study was conducted on only three out of eight ITCs due to time and distance restrictions on the researcher. However, it is worth mentioning that all Saudi Aramco ITCs follow the same English Instructional Program with regard to curriculum, quality of teachers, and evaluation system.

3. It was not possible for the researcher to conduct further follow-up research on the graduates' language performance on the job site. After graduation, those learners usually go back to their work locations scattered all over Saudi Arabia at distances that range between 50-1000 kilometers away. I believe that such research, if conducted, could provide responses to the following crucial questions: Would they retain the language skills they acquired at the ITC? How much would their work experience improve their language skills?

With the "limitations" section, I conclude Chapter Four.

Summary

Chapter Four has included a description of the research study and its methodology. Major issues such as *observation*, as the chosen research method, its advantages and disadvantages, and the COLT Scheme as the instrument used for data collection, have been critically reviewed. Furthermore, ethical issues and limitations related to the study have been highlighted. In the following chapter, the collected data is analysed for findings.

V.   CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

Chapter Four included an account of the methodology of the study and a critical review of the COLT Scheme Part 'A' as the major tool used in this study for data collection. The present chapter includes analysis and discussion of the collected data, excerpts from the audio-recorded data, samples taken from the data recorded on the COLT Scheme Observation tool, and sample exercises from the BEP textbooks to reinforce the analysis. Following this introduction, Section 5.2 includes an analysis of the data collected on the first part of the COLT Scheme; that is, the "Activities/Episodes" part. In Section 5.3, the data collected on the second part of the COLT Scheme (the Categories) is analysed and discussed. In addition, three kinds of supporting documents related to the present chapter are provided in the appendices, F, G and H.

5.2 Activities/Episodes Data Analysis

As mentioned in Chapter Four, the COLT Scheme Part "A" includes two sections: The "Activities" section, and the "Categories" section. This part of Chapter Five (5.2) includes analysis and discussion of data collected in the "Activities" section. The COLT Scheme describes "Activities" as being the instructional segments of a lesson. They represent the structure or the components of the lesson. "Episodes" are the components of an activity and they may extend from one to several episodes. For example, a reading comprehension "activity" may include several "episodes", or components, such as

introducing the passage with books closed, reading the passage by students silently, oral discussion of the passage in whole class work, silent completion of the comprehension exercise. Therefore, an "Activity" may consist of one or more episodes. The purpose of analyzing and discussing the observed lessons' activities is to identify their nature and find out how much class time is spent on each.

Before starting the analysis and discussion of the activities in the observed lessons, it is pertinent to point out that the format of the BEP lessons mainly consists of one or more activities of the same nature/type. For example, a complete lesson of fifty minutes duration may be based on a single activity, with the exception of "Listening and Speaking" lessons which include the two activities together. The collected data in the thirty observed lessons have shown three major types of activities; these are: "Reading Comprehension", "Vocabulary", and "Listening and Speaking". An analysis and discussion of each of these activities are provided on the following pages.

5.2.1 **Reading Comprehension Activities**

As stated in Chapter Two of this study, the instructional material in BEP 2 is distributed by "units". Each unit includes twenty short "exercises" about activities similar to the activities in BEP 3 and 4 in addition to other short ones such as writing, pronunciation, word formation, etc. In BEP 3 and 4, the instructional material is distributed by "units" too. However, each unit includes five "lessons" and each lesson includes three exercises.

The "reading comprehension" activities are given greater weight in each unit than other activities. For example, in BEP 2, out of twenty exercises in each lesson, seven or eight of these cover reading comprehension material. In BEP levels 3 and 4, out of the five lessons in each unit, at least two lessons cover reading comprehension material. (Further details are found in Chapter Two of this study.)

By examining the data collected on COLT observation sheets of the thirty observed lessons, the reading comprehension activities have been identified as major activities in 15 lessons. The following figure is a summary of these activities and the common episodes in each with percentile values showing how much classtime was spent on each:

Figure 1: Reading Comprehension
Observed lessons (2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 20, 22, 26 & 27)
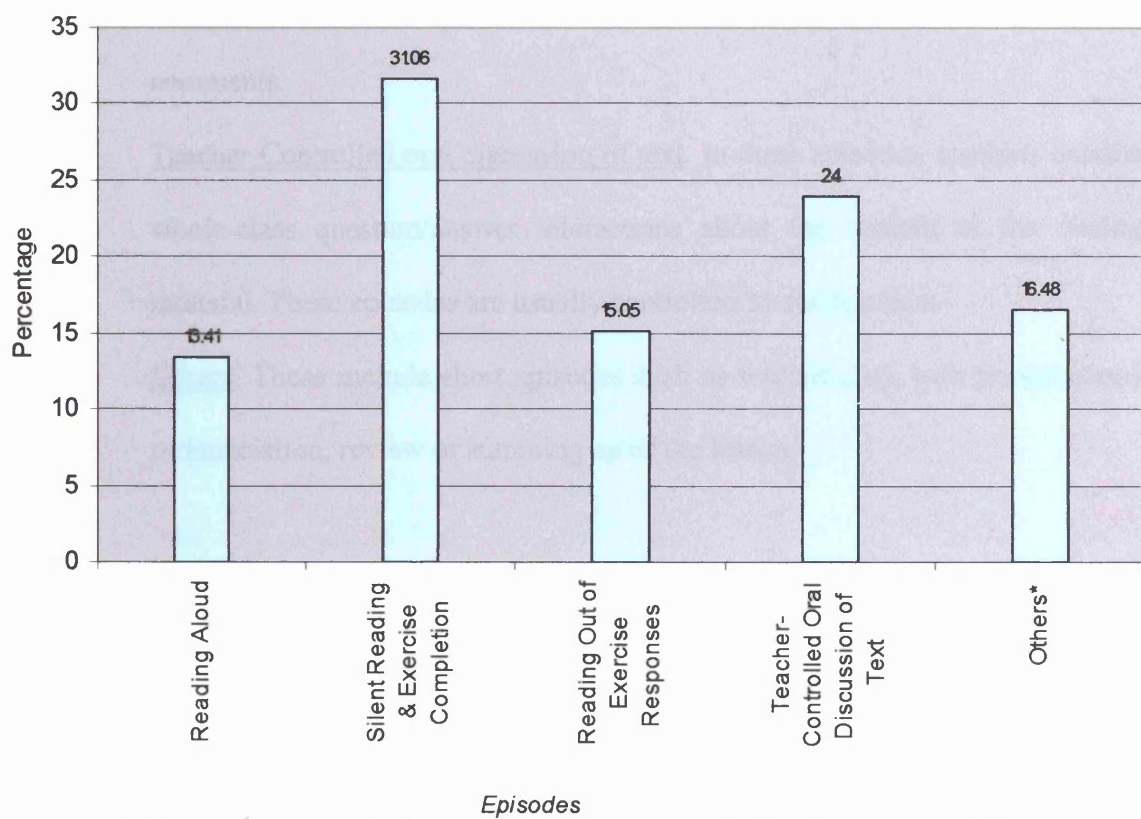
Episodes

* Others: Very short episodes such as warming up, pronunciation, task presentation, review or summing up.

Before analyzing and discussing the data shown in Figure 1, I provide a brief explanation of the nature of the episodes common in the observed reading comprehension activities:

- Reading Aloud. These episodes include model reading aloud of the passages by teachers, then later, by students.

- Silent reading and exercise completion. In these episodes, learners read the text material silently and complete the exercises on them as provided by the text.

- Reading out the exercise responses. In these episodes, individual students are asked by the teacher to read out their responses and the teacher confirms or comments.

- Teacher-Controlled oral discussion of text. In these episodes, teachers conduct whole-class question/answer interactions about the content of the reading material. These episodes are usually controlled by the teachers.

- Others. These include short episodes such as warming up, task presentations, pronunciation, review or summing up of the lesson.

The percentile values in Figure 1 represent the average percentage for each episode. For example, an average of 13.41% of the observed 14 reading comprehension lessons was spent on Reading Aloud, 31.06% on Silent Reading and Exercise Completion, 24% on Teacher-Controlled Oral Discussions, 15.05% on Reading Out of Exercise Responses, and 16.48% on Other activities. With this illustration, I now turn to discuss each episode separately in the order they appear on the graph:

Reading Aloud (13.41%). In these episodes, the text is read aloud by the teacher, the students, or by both after the teacher provides a model reading. The text in question could be a preview to the lesson, a reading passage, or a dialogue. The main objective of these episodes is either to provide model readings or to have students practice reading aloud. During the reading aloud process, the teacher usually stops the process to provide accurate pronunciation. Such moves by the teacher usually disrupt the flow of the reading and turns the text into fragments and broken sentences. An average 13.41% of the reading comprehension activities is spent on reading the text aloud. Excerpt 1 below provides an example of a "Reading Aloud" episode:

Excerpt 1

1.	Teacher:	OK. Now we have time to read the passage aloud...OK. "Mishary" read the passage, please.
2.	Mishary:	(unclear sound)
3.	Teacher:	No, no. I didn't say exercise twelve. We're going to read the passage aloud.
4.	Mishary:	The passage.
5.	Teacher:	Read the first paragraph please. "Responding Quickly". Read the first paragraph.
6.	Mishary:	"Responding quickly is an important company /kompəni/..."
7.	Teacher:	Company /kʌmpani/
8.	Mishary:	"Company... value. Good companies should respond quickly to changes. In 1991, the Saudi Government asked Saudi Aramco to produce more crude... oil..."
9.	Teacher:	Crude oil.
10.	Mishary:	"Crude oil. With its usual speed, the company quickly increased the amount produced."
11.	Teacher:	Yes, what do we say / Kʌmpani/ or / Komponi/?
12.	Mishary:	/kʌmpəni/
13.	Teacher:	What do we say?

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14.	Mishary:	Say /kʌmpəni/
15.	Teacher:	/kʌmpəni/, /kʌmpəni/. OK. OK.
16.	Mishary:	Teacher…
17.	Teacher:	Yes, go ahead.
18.	Mishary:	"A company should also respond to needs and wants of people buying its products /prodiust/…"
19.	Teacher:	/prodʌkts/
20.	Mishary:	"Products. First it should get information about what these buyers" /boyərs/
21.	Teacher:	/baiəs/
22.	Mishary:	"buyers want. Then it should use this information to improve its products and services."

<div align="right">

Building English (BEP 2B)
Unit 29, Ex. 11, Page 103
Observed Lesson No. 7

</div>

A good example of the disruption of the reading process is clear in lines 6-18. In line 6 the student mispronounces the word "company" and the teacher stops him in the middle of the sentence to correct the pronunciation. However, the same student again mispronounces the same word in turn 10 and the teacher again corrects the pronunciations but this time after the student finishes the sentence. Two other examples are illustrated in turns 18-19, and turns 20-22.

Silent Reading and Exercise Completion (31.6%). In these episodes, students are asked to individually and silently read the material and complete the related exercises. The exercises are either comprehension questions that require written responses (one sentence), completing a statement with information from the text, multiple-choice, or "True"/"False" entries. The students are assigned a certain time to work silently and

individually on the text material. They scan the text for the proper responses and complete the exercises. An average of 31.6% of the 14 observed reading comprehension activity lessons was spent on silent reading and exercise completion episodes by individual learners. During these episodes, the learners' roles are limited to silent work. Excerpt 2 below from the same lesson (BEP 2B Observed Lesson No. 7) is a good example of how the teacher introduces a silent reading and exercise completion episode:

Excerpt 2

1. Teacher: OK? So, we have a passage "Responding Quickly" and I'll give you... eight minutes to read the passage and then to answer the comprehension questions. OK... Eight minutes. Go ahead.

(Silent reading for about six minutes)

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Observed Lesson No. 7

The above extract shows the teacher introducing a silent reading and exercise completion episode with specific timing (8 minutes). However, the students managed to finish the task in only 6 minutes. The type of exercise completed in this task (illustrated in Excerpt 3) was "sentence completion" where students read the passage silently and extracted specific information from the text to complete the missing information in 4 exercise items. Later, the students' responses were discussed in whole-class work as shown in the next episode.

Reading Out of Exercise Responses (15.05%). After the students complete the reading comprehension exercises or after the allotted time for the episode is over, the teacher asks individual students to read out their responses to the rest of the class. The roles of the students in these episodes are limited to reading out, or repeating, information already provided by the text either in the form of a multiple-choice distractor, a "True"/"False" entry, or phrases to complete missing information in a sentence. In the case of the latter, where extracted information from text is used to complete sentences, the teacher takes a controlling role in the process instead of involving other students in negotiating the information provided. Excerpt 3 below is a good example of a reading out of exercise responses:

Excerpt 3

1.	Teacher:	OK. Stop writing now. Stop writing. Stop writing. OK. So, we have passage about responding quickly, and we just have slight mistake. Line four, line four, you have it?
2.	Students:	Yes
3.	Teacher:	Yes. The Saudi government asked Saudi Arabia...?
4.	Students:	Aramco
5.	Teacher:	Saudi Aramco. Yes. Not Saudi Arabia. OK. So, we have time to answer the first one. The first question, please.
6.	Student 1:	(Reads item #1): "Saudi Aramco agreed to do what the government asked and produced more crude oil.
7.	Teacher:	And... again
8.	Student 1:	Produced more...
9.	Teacher:	And produced (stressing first syllable)
10.	Student 1:	Produced.
11.	Teacher:	And produced... more oil, or more crude oil. Yes (unclear sound). OK. Number two. Yes.
12.	Student 2:	(Reads item #2): "A company should gain information about

		what the buyers want."
13.	Teacher:	What the buyers want. What others... companies need or want. Yes. For the buyers. The "buyer" is the person who...?
14.	Student 2:	Who... buy...
15.	Teacher:	Who buys something? Yes. A Company or a person...whatever. Number three...
16.	Students:	Teacher... yes...
17.	Teacher:	"Nimer"
18.	Nimer:	(Reads item #3): "A company should use information about other companies to improve its products and services."
19.	Teacher:	Yes. To improve... which line?
20.	Student 3:	Line "11".
21.	Teacher:	Line "11".... to improve... yes... its products and... services... again "Nimer".
22.	Nimer:	(Reads item #3 again)
23.	Teacher:	And services. Number four.
24.	Student 4:	Teacher... Teacher...
25.	Teacher:	Yes.
26.	Student 4:	(Reads item #4): "Supervisors need to notice their employees respond quickly to the needs of their employees."
27.	Teacher:	Yes, to respond quickly. Yes, another answer we can have. Yes...

The above excerpt shows clearly how the roles of the students are limited to just reading out the exercise items with the information extracted from the text. It also shows how the teacher takes part in the limited responses without expanding on the students' responses or allowing others to negotiate the ideas in the responses, (as in turns 11, 13, 15 and 21). In conclusion, 15.04% of the reading comprehension activity lessons is spent on reading out exercise responses by individual students as provided by the text.

Teacher-Controlled Discussion of Text (24%). In these episodes, teachers conduct teacher-class oral discussions of a reading comprehension text, which may include a

warm-up, a short preview of the passage, discussing difficult words that appear in the

reading process, etc. The main feature of such episodes is the leading role taken by the

teacher. The teacher usually starts and ends these episodes with questions addressed to

the class, with books either closed or open, and one student responds to the question (in

most cases one who raises his hand). This type of question/answer interaction about the

text material is carried out under the control of the teacher. The students' speaking skill is

limited to the fragments of information borrowed either from the teacher's questions or

from the text itself. The following samples, taken from the data recorded on the COLT

Scheme observation tool of one of the lessons, show a description of three episodes of

teacher-controlled oral discussion of the text:

COLT PART A

Observed Lesson #13 Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching Observation Scheme © Spada & Frolich 1995

Training Location	Udhailiyah ITC	Course/Level E3A
		Observer A. I. Hasan
Teacher	Mr. "X"	Period 2
		Date June 12, 2001
Material	UE2, Unit 19, L.2	Page 127-

TIME	ACTIVITIES & EPISODES	PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION							CONTENT								CONTENT CONTROL			STUDENT MODALITY					MATERIALS								ORAL COMM PRACTICE			
		Class			Group		Indiv.		Manag.		Language				Other topics										TYPE				Source							
																									Text											
		T-S/C	S-S/C	Choral	Same task	Different tasks	Same task	Different tasks	Procedure	Discipline	Form	Function	Discourse	Socioling	Narrow	Broad	Teacher/Text	Teacher/Text/Stud.	Student	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Other	Minimal	Extended	Audio	Visual	L2-NNS	L2-NS	L2-NSA	Student-made	T < > S/C	S/S	Pairs	Groups
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
Act. I* 8:00 E.1**	Warm up & review. Teacher conducts Q/A activity orally to review and brainstorm students' ideas about lesson. (Books Closed)	✓													✓		✓			✓	✓(circled)				✓				✓							
8:03 E.2	Vocabulary review. Teacher conducts another Q/A to review lesson one new vocabulary items. (Books Closed)	✓									✓ V.***				✓		✓			✓	✓(circled)				✓				✓							
Act. III 8:27 E.3	Teacher discusses some of the new/difficult words in the passage in a whole class activity.	✓									✓ V.				✓		✓			✓(circled)	✓				✓				✓							
	* A = Activity ** E = Episode *** V = Vocabulary																																			

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By examining the sample collected data on the previous page, we can see how the oral

discussions are controlled by the teacher and how all questions are generated by the

teacher with limited productions on the students' part. Episode 1 of Activity 1, (definition

of "Activities" and "Episodes" are provided on page 106), lasts for 3 minutes (6% of

class time). The questions are generated by the teacher about a topic limited to the text

content which is non-native material. The students' modality is limited to listening and

speaking with primary focus ($\checkmark$) on speaking. However, the speaking skill here is

limited to the responses steered by the teacher's questions. Episode two of the same

activity, which lasts for 4 minutes (8% of class time), is similar to episode one except that

here the content has a form-focused language feature; i.e., vocabulary (V). Episode 3 of

Activity 3, which lasts for 5 minutes (10% of class time) is also a teacher-student/class

question/answer interaction with limited content to the text (difficult words in the

passage), but it is different from Episode 2 of Activity 1 with regard to the students'

modality. In this episode, the primary focus is on Listening ($\checkmark$), not speaking; this

means that the students' roles were mostly listening rather than speaking.

Others (15.46%). These are varied minor episodes in the lessons' activities that cannot be

reviewed separately. Examples of these episodes are:

- Warming Up. This is usually done by the teacher at the beginning of the lesson.
  The teacher usually socializes with the students, reviews previously taught
  material, or checks on homework assignments.

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- Pronunciation. Pronunciation episodes are rare and limited to a number of special exercises in BEP level 2. In BEP levels 3 and 4, they usually appear as part of other reading comprehension exercises.

- Task Presentation. In these episodes, the teacher spends few minutes introducing the task, then he gives instructions on how to complete it.

- Review or Summing Up. These episodes are conducted either at the end of an activity or at the end of the lesson. Usually, the teacher spends a few minutes providing an oral summary of the taught material.

The following excerpt is a good example of a "task presentation" episode. Before the teacher asks the students to read the passage, he conducts a short oral episode to explain/illustrate the meaning of the title of the passage "Responding Quickly".

Excerpt 4

Teacher refers the students to the exercise and introduces the title:

1.	Teacher:	We have a reading passage, "Responding Quickly". What is the meaning of "responding quickly"?
2.	Student 1:	Answer
3.	Teacher:	(inaudible)... be answer (unclear utterance)... Ha!
4.	Student 1:	To do
5.	Teacher:	To act quickly. When I ask you, for example, go to the parking lot and bring me something, so, what should you do? You should ...
6.	Student 2:	Go...
7.	Teacher:	Go. So, what you do? You respond, you act. OK. You do as I ask you to do something. OK? So, we have a passage "Responding Quickly" and I'll give you... eight minutes to read the passage and then to answer the comprehension questions. OK... Eight minutes. Go ahead.

Even in these short episodes the teacher's role is dominant. Students have provided only three very short productions in turns 2, 4 and 6.

Having discussed the nature of the reading comprehension activities in the lesson and how much class time is spent on each, I turn now to an analysis of the vocabulary activities in the lesson.

5.2.2 Vocabulary Activities

Out of the 30 observed lessons, 9 lessons were about vocabulary learning. In these lessons, the fifty-minute-class was spent on vocabulary learning activities. These are usually taught in early lessons/exercises to introduce new words that will appear in the following reading comprehension, listening and speaking, and writing lessons. Other vocabulary learning episodes appear also in other activities in other lessons, but these are usually short episodes to introduce one or two new words that appear in a reading text.

The most common episodes of the vocabulary lesson activities are:

- vocabulary explanation and discussion

- silent exercise completion

- reading out responses, and

- others (warming up, pronunciation, spelling rules, copying new words, etc.).

Figure 2 below illustrates the nature of these episodes and the percentage of class time

spent on each:

Figure 2: Vocabulary
Observed Lessons (1, 9, 14, 18, 23, 24, 28, 29 & 30)

Episodes
* Others: Warming up, pronunciation, spelling rules, copying new words, etc.
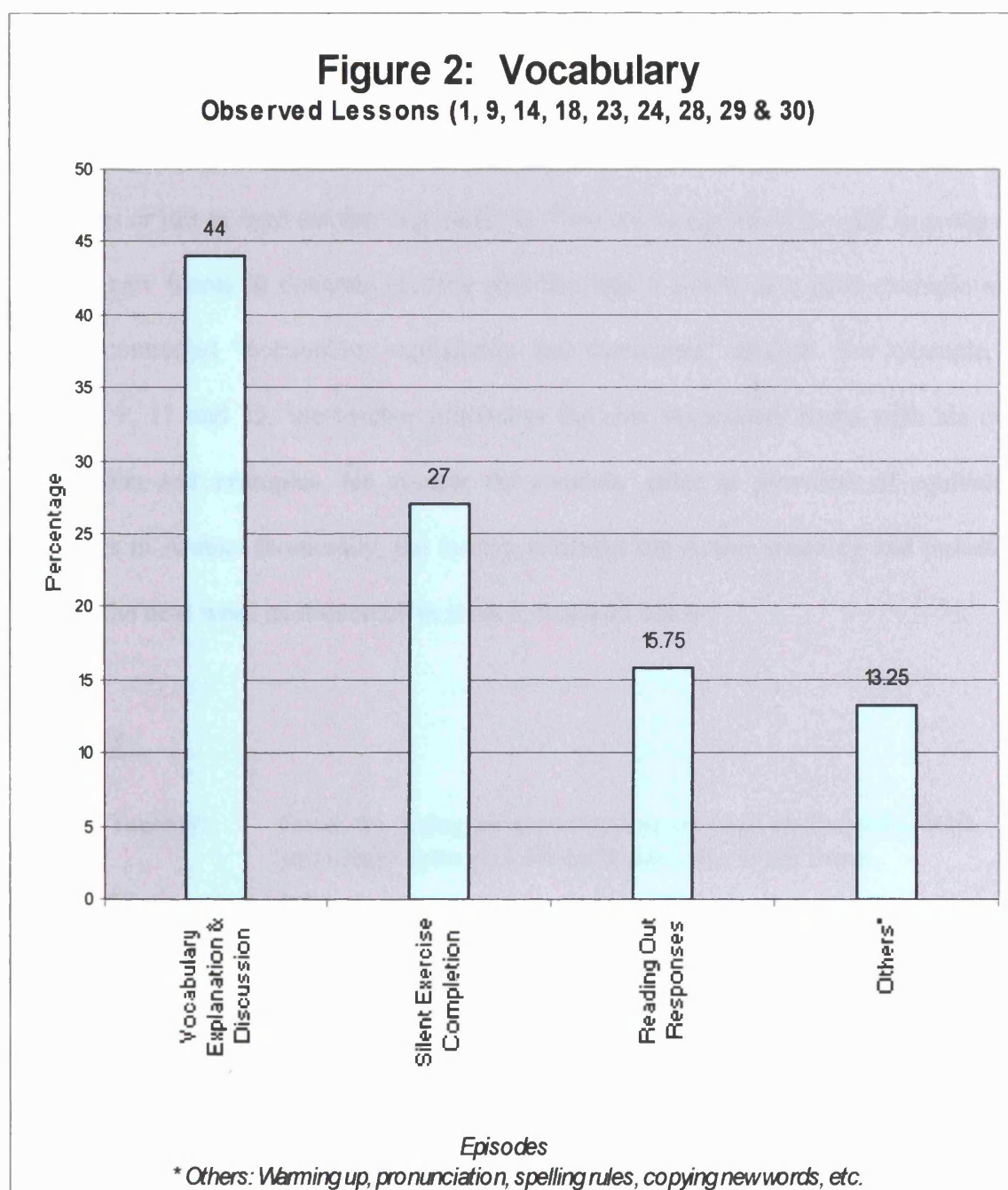
I will discuss each episode in the order they appear on the graph.

<u>Vocabulary Explanation and Discussion (44%)</u>. In these episodes, the teacher plays the major role. He usually reads the words out and students repeat after him. Then he provides meanings for the words of his own or refers to the dictionary meanings which are sometimes provided by the text. Occasionally, students are asked to provide more meanings or just to read the text explanations. They are rarely asked to work in groups to use the new words in contexts of their own. Excerpt 5 below is a good example of a teacher-controlled "vocabulary explanation and discussion" episode. For example, in turns 3, 7, 11 and 15, the teacher introduces the new vocabulary items with his own explanation and examples. He accepts the students' roles as providers of equivalent meanings in Arabic. Eventually, the teacher confirms the Arabic meaning and moves to explain the next word as illustrated in turns 5, 9 and 13 below:

Excerpt 5

1.	Teacher:	Good. So, today we are to read about good study habits. Will you please open your books to page one seven seven.
2.	Class:	OK.
3.	Teacher:	OK? One seven seven? We have these words "contribute". (Teacher repeats "contribute" six times while writing it on board.) Say... "contribute". (Students repeat it four times after teacher.) "Contribute" means to give help or idea, or anything that makes something happens. For example, of... if one of your friends has financial problems *maali* (Arabic: financial), we are going to collect money from each other. We are contributing to solve his problem by this. "Contribute"
		Yusahem.....yusharek
4.	Class:	*Yusharek*
5.	Teacher:	Good. Very good. OK. We have the other word "recognize"

		(Teacher repeats this word five times while writing it on board.) Say, "recognize".
6.	Class:	"Recognize" (Class repeats this word four times after teacher.)
7.	Teacher:	"Recognize" means "to know". For example, if you have a friend. Let's say your friend was in the elementary school... a small boy. You meet him after many years. You cannot recognize him easily because his shape is changed, but when he introduced himself to you, you recognized him...
8.	Student 1:	*Yatathakkar*
9.	Teacher:	To "recognize" means, "to know"... OK "to know". Yes, good... "Practical" (Teacher repeats this word six times while writing it on board.) Say "practical".
10.	Class:	"Practical". (Class repeats this word four times after teacher.)
11.	Teacher:	Something "practical" that means you can work on it... workable... that is... you can work on that...
12.	Student 2:	*Amali*
13.	Teacher:	Yes *Amali* Good... "Instead of" (Teacher repeats "instead of" six times while writing it on board.)
14.	Class:	"Instead of". (They repeat this word four times after teacher...
15.	Teacher:	Well... We don't have a big table to put this recorder on... so we use a desk instead of the table. We use a desk instead of the table. Sometimes you don't have a... a... your car ready to drive to the ITC... You use a taxi instead of...
16.	Class:	(Unclear explanations of "instead of" in Arabic).

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Ex. 1, p. 177
Observed lesson # 23

It is clear from "Excerpt 5" that the teacher dominates the explanation and discussion process and students get limited opportunities to initiate contexts for the new words though they manage to provide L1 translation of most of the new words. So, around 44% of the time in the vocabulary lessons is spent on explanation and discussion of new vocabulary items mostly under the teacher's control. In "Excerpt 5", the way the teacher

steers the discussion on the new words suggests the main target of the discussion is to identify L1 equivalents. Though providing an Arabic equivalent to the new words is an achievement in itself, in all cases the discussion terminates when the equivalent is provided. The learners are not challenged to use the newly learned words in target language contexts.

Silent Exercise Completion (27%). Like the silent exercise completion in the Reading Comprehension episodes, students are asked to silently complete vocabulary exercises on the newly taught words in the form of fill in blanks, multiple-choice, and matching. Students work individually on the exercise items depending mainly on the information provided by the text. They are given few opportunities to expand on the explanation provided by the text/teacher, or negotiate new contexts for the taught words.

Reading Out Responses (15.75%). After students complete the text exercises, individuals are asked to read out their responses to their classmates and their teacher. The teacher repeats the student's responses either to confirm or to correct inaccurate pronunciations. Occasionally, he asks the other students limited questions either to have them repeat the response or in order to expand on it. So, almost 43%, (27% + 15.75%), of the vocabulary lessons is spent on silent completion of text/teacher controlled exercises and reading out of the exercises responses with very limited opportunities by students to expand on the provided information and experiment with the new words in meaningful discourse.

<u>Others (13.25%).</u> These short episodes include warming up, pronunciation, spelling rules, and copying of new words. Now, I turn to analyze and discuss the third type of activities in the 30 observed lessons, that is "Listening and Speaking".

5.2.3   <u>Listening and Speaking Activities</u>

The "Listening and Speaking" activities are the third most common type of activity in the thirty observed lessons. Before analyzing and discussing the data on these activities, I would like to clarify the following points. First, the listening and speaking activities are dealt with under one sub-section because they appear together in one lesson. These lessons focus on the listening and speaking skills, just like other lessons which focus on a specific skill. For example, some lessons focus on the reading skill, others focus on vocabulary learning, others focus on writing and others on grammar. Second, the listening and speaking skills are practiced in other lessons too, but as minor episodes of the other activities in focus. Third, the listening and speaking activity lessons are shown together in one figure (Figure 3), but they are analysed with their episodes separately in 5.2.3.1 and 5.2.3.2. Fourth, the listening and speaking activities are the major focus of six observed lessons. Figure 3 below shows the nature of the episodes in the listening and speaking activities, how much class time spent on each episode, the observed lesson's numbers where the listening and speaking activities were the main focus, and the other minor episodes in these lessons.

Figure 3: Listening and Speaking
Observed Lessons (4, 8, 12, 16, 21 & 25)

Episodes

- Listening & Exercise Completion (22%)
- Reading Out The Listening Exercise Responses (20%)
- Preparation for Talk (6%)
- Speaking/Talk (27.33%)
- Reading Text Dialogues (12%)
- Others (12.67%)

*Others: Warming-up, task presentation, scoring by teacher, spelling, text loud reading, oral teacher/class interaction, etc.
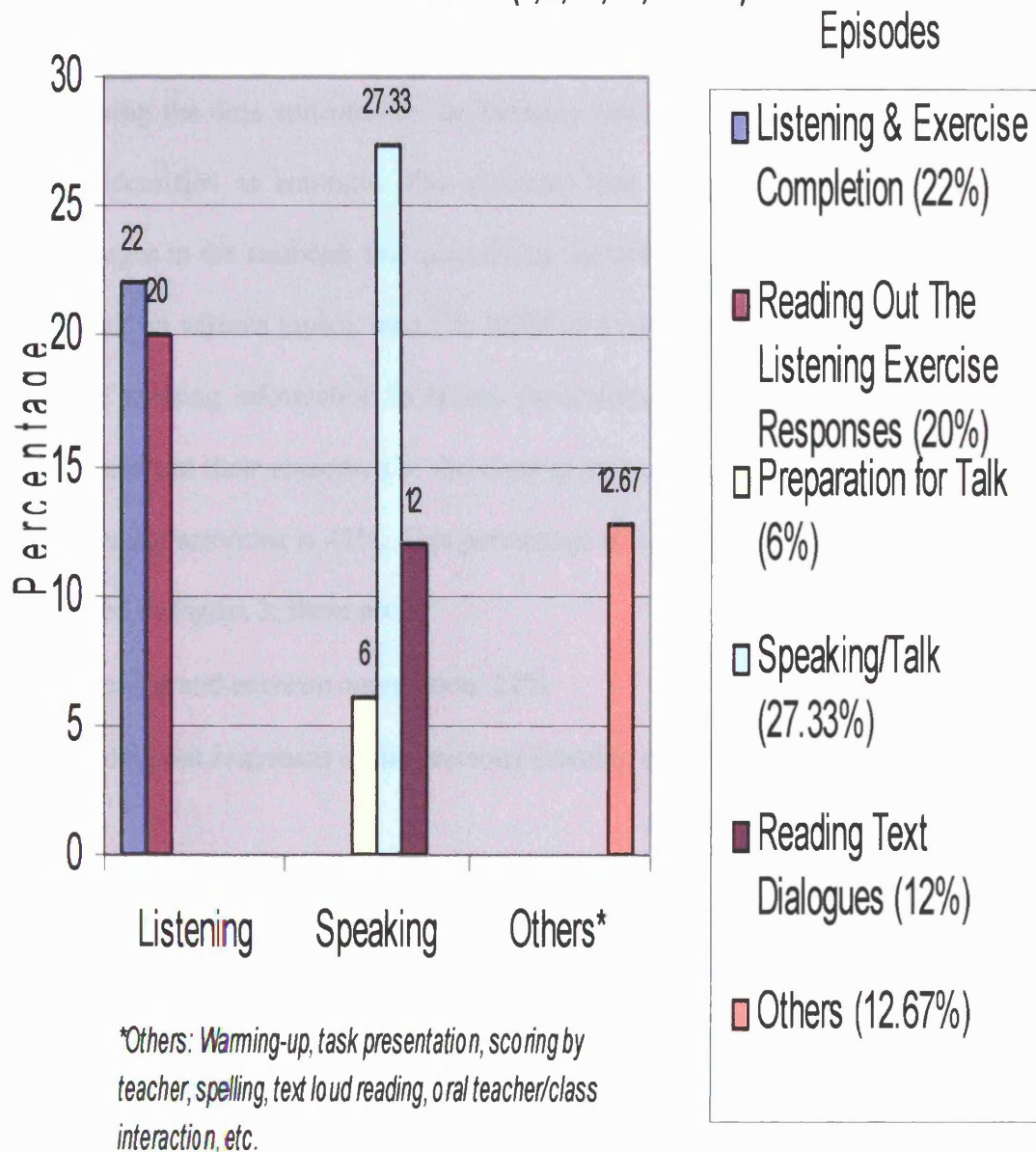
I now turn to analyze the data on the listening activities.

5.2.3.1 <u>Listening Activities (42%)</u>

By examining the data collected in the listening activity lessons, the following process has been identified as common. The activities start with the teacher referring to the assigned pages in the textbook and introducing the task as episode one. Students listen to the material, on various topics, on a CD ROM or a cassette as episode two, complete an exercise of missing information in tables, paragraphs, dialogues as episode three, etc., and later read out their responses to the class as episode four. The total class time spent on the listening activities is 42%. This percentage is distributed over two major episodes as illustrated in Figure 3; these are:

- listening and exercise completion: 22%

- reading out responses of the previous listening episode: 20%

On the following page, a sample exercise taken from BEP 3B textbook is shown as an example of a listening activity and its two episodes:

Figure 4: **A sample exercise of a listening activity taken from <u>Using English, Book</u> <u>3</u>, Unit 28, Lesson 4**

Exercise 2

Look at the chart. You will hear a telephone conversation between Ali Al-Athamin, the senior teacher at Jeddah ITC, and Jamal, in the Services Unit. Ali is calling to request additional books for the ITCs. The line is bad, so Jamal has to ask Ali to repeat several things. Listen to the tape and complete the chart. You will hear the conversation twice.

No. of books	Subject/level	ITC	Why needed

It is worth noting that the listening activities are designed in such a way to test memory rather than practice the listening comprehension skill. When students listen to the input, they focus on recognizing the missing information in the related exercises rather than on comprehending and preparing to negotiate, question, defend, and provide feedback on the content.

5.2.3.2 Speaking Activities (45.33%)

The second part of the listening and speaking lessons is spent mostly on speaking activities. These activities are made up of three episodes; reading aloud text dialogues/situations and discussing the language functions in focus, preparation for talk, and the talk itself. Each episode is discussed below.

Reading Aloud of Text Dialogues/Situations (12%). In these episodes, the teacher usually provides a model reading of the text dialogue/situation. Individual students are asked to read out the same material. The teacher then explains the language functions used and writes them on the board.

Preparation for Talk (6%). The teacher introduces the task and students are divided into pairs or groups to prepare the required talks/dialogues. Whether it is a short talk or a dialogue, the text provides situations and specific language functions to be incorporated in the students' products.

Below is an example of a "preparation for talk" episode taken from observed lesson 21. The material is from BEP 3B, Unit 28, Lesson 4, P82. The teacher introduces the task and asks two students to read out the following six topics:

1. Talk about how communications have changed over the last 50 years.

2. Describe a cellular phone.

3. Talk about changes that modern communications make in people's lives.

4. Describe how people used to communicate 200 years ago.

5. Describe how a fax machine works.

6. If you are familiar with the Internet, describe what the Internet is and what you can do with it.

Then he asks the class to prepare short talks on topics of their choice. In the following episode, I provide an excerpt from a student talk about one of these topics.

Speaking/Talk (27.33%). Once the students are ready, the teacher asks them as individuals, pairs, or groups to come out and either deliver their talks, or role-play the constructed dialogues. Below is an excerpt, taken from the same lesson, about one of the six topics mentioned in the above "preparation for talk" episode:

Excerpt 6

1. Misha'al: The Internet is a group of websites, (he reads "websites" as "websits"), and... have... have... many useful websites... about eee... and you can find useful information.

2. Teacher: Yes

3.	Misha'al:	From their chat...
4.	Teacher:	Chatsites you mean...?
5.	Misha'al:	Yes
6.	Teacher:	Yes
7.	Misha'al:	Websites... you can talk to people outside... from other countries...
8.	Teacher:	Yes. You are right.
9.	Misha'al:	You can... you can... now... by satellites... you can know what life in other countries like... from your time(?)
10.	Teacher:	You can make phone call.
11.	Misha'al:	Yes... Internet make good for you.
12.	Teacher:	Can I write to a friend in America from the Internet websites?
13.	Misha'al:	Yes, you can write...
14.	Teacher:	Using the e-mail?
15.	Misha'al:	By write and by sound...
16.	Teacher:	Very good "Misha'al". Thank you. Thank you very much. Now who wants to speak about another topic?

The student has done his best to give a short talk about "the internet" in turns 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 15 (eight lines out of sixteen). If we put his portion of the excerpt together, it will look like this:

"The internet is a group of websites, have... have... many useful websites... about eee... and you can find useful information from their chat. Yes. Websites... you can talk to people outside... from other countries...you can... you can... now... by satellites... you can know what life in other countries like... from your time (?) Yes... internet make good for you. Yes, you can write... by write and by sound..."

There is a clear message about the uses of "the internet" in the student's talk. However, the teacher's interruptions (eight turns out of sixteen, 50%) causes lack of spontaneity in the student's talk and turns it into a kind of dialogue between the teacher and the student instead of the student addressing the class.

Excerpt 7 below is another example of a talk about another topic. The teacher, as in the previous ones, does not provide the speakers enough 'wait time' to express their thoughts:

1.	Teacher:	Good... good... another one? Yes, "Mr. Uwaisi" (student name)
2.	Uwaisi:	Talk #1
3.	Teacher:	First topic. Yes. So you are going to talk about what?
4.	Uwaisi:	Talk about how communications have changed over the last 50 years.
5.	Teacher:	Yes. Very interesting. Yes.
6.	Uwaisi:	In the past people... made... eee...say... used... eee... ropes... or smoke.
7.	Teacher:	Yes
8.	Uwaisi:	To each other... and used... eee... horses... ee. Egyptian physicians invented paper and writing on it.
9.	Teacher:	Yes
10.	Uwaisi:	But now we use books
11.	Teacher:	Yes
12.	Uwaisi:	And we buy it.
13.	Teacher:	Good. That's good.

Though there is constant interference by the teacher in the students' flow of speech, such speaking activities are the only activities where students get the opportunity to work out something of their own and speak out in front of their classmates. These activities are

reflected in the observed lessons 4, 8, 12, 16, 21 and 25. A breakdown of these activities, their objectives, and the students' roles in them are stated in the following table:

Table 1: Sample BEP exercise activities which provide opportunities for meaning-focused practice

Lesson - Exercise	Nature of Activity	Objective	Students' Practice
4-2	Introducing expressions of asking for help in the form of dialogues.	Practice asking for help and responding.	Students read text dialogues, reproduce them orally then work in pairs using the expressions in situations provided by text.
4-2	Giving short talks about situations provided by text.	Practice expressing ideas orally in a short talk.	Students give short talks about topics related to text material.
8-13	Introducing expressions of requesting action in the form of dialogues.	Practice asking for action and responding to such requests.	Students work in pairs to form dialogues using the new expressions in situations provided by text
12-1	Introducing expressions of asking for and offering a favor.	Practice using expressions of asking for and offering a favor.	Students listen to sample dialogues and practice reading text examples. Then they produce their own dialogues.
12-3	Making dialogues about asking for and offering a favor.	Practice using expressions of asking for and offering a favor.	Students work in pairs to form and role-play text situations using the newly learned expressions.
16-1	Introducing different ways of requesting for action and responding to such requests.	Practice using different expressions of asking for actions and how to respond.	Students read the sample text dialogues and then make similar ones about situations provided by text. Later, they construct more new ones orally.
16-3	Giving short talks about topics provided by text.	Practice expressing ideas orally in a short talk.	In a whole-class discussion, individual students express their ideas about topics provided by teacher and text.
21-1	Introducing expressions of asking for and giving	Practice using expressions of asking for and giving	Students read the sample text dialogues and produce their own by building

	clarification.	clarification.	upon key expressions provided by text.
12-3	Giving short talks about topics provided by text.	Practice expressing ideas orally in a short talk.	Individual students prepare short talks about a given topic and speak out for class. They also complete, in writing and orally, an activity sheet using the expressions learned in ex. 21-1
25-14	Introducing expressions of needs and how to respond to them.	Practice using expressions of needs and how to answer.	Students read sample text dialogues and form dialogues of their own on situations provided by text. Then, they, in pairs, role-play other situations provided by teacher.

By examining the above illustrated activities and their objectives, we can see that they offer real practice opportunities for students to use language for communication. The learners have either listened to, discussed orally, or read expressions in situations featuring language functions, and worked together in pairs to structure and speak about similar products of their own. However, it is important to note that though students were able to use language functions in communicative situations, these situations were still controlled by either text or teacher. There was no expansion in the activities to include free and sustained talk by learners. Moreover, the exercises where students have a chance to use language for communication are minimal and represent only a mean average of 11.5% (10% in BEP 2 and 13% in BEP 3 and 4) of the total exercises in each unit as shown in tables 2 and 3 below. The majority of the rest of the activities are mostly vocabulary and reading comprehension with silent exercise completion and reading responses aloud.

Table 2: Distribution of class activities in level 2 (as they appear in the BEP syllabus):

Subject/Level	Activity	% Per Unit
BEP Two	Vocabulary	15%
	Reading comprehension and checklists	40%
	Spelling & Pronunciation	10%
	Listening	15%
	Speaking	10%
	Writing	10%
	Total	100%

Table 3: Distribution of class activities in BEP levels 3 and 4 (as they appear in the BEP syllabus):

Subject/Level	Activity	% Per Unit
BEP Three & Four	Vocabulary	20%
	Reading and comprehension exercises	40%
	Listening	7%
	Speaking	13%
	Writing	20%
	Total	100%

With the distribution of class activities in BEP levels 2, 3, and 4, I conclude the analysis of the data collected on the "Activity" section of COLT Scheme Part A. On the following pages, I analyse the data collected on the "Categories" section.

5.3 Analysis and Discussion of The Data Collected on The COLT Scheme "A" Categories

In Section 5.2 above, the data collected on the first section of the COLT Scheme "A", the class activities, was discussed and analysed. The discussion and analysis showed the nature of those activities and how much class time spent on each. In this part of the chapter, the data collected on the second section of the scheme, the five categories, will

be analysed and discussed. The data collected on the scheme's categories illustrate how the activities were carried out. In Chapter Four of this study, the COLT Scheme's categories were critically examined. They are: *Participant Organization, Content, Content Control, Student Modality, and Materials*. The data collected on each category in the 30 observed lessons is summarized with percentile values in a table which is used as a source for the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the specific category. Moreover, and for a quick reference by the reader, the five tables have been all incorporated in one table which appears as Appendix F. Now I turn to the analysis and discussion of the data collected on the first category: Participant Organization.

5.3.1 <u>Participant Organization</u>

According to the COLT Scheme "A", Participant Organization" is described as the way in which students are organized to complete a certain activity. This organization can be either a Teacher-Student/Class (T-S/C), a Student-Student/Class (S-S/C), Choral, a group working on the same task or different tasks, or individuals working on the same task or on different tasks. The following table shows a summary of the "Participant Organization" category components and the data collected in it reflected in percentile values. In cases where there was no class events related to any of the components, that part was left blank. In addition, the percentile values are added up, from left to right, into 100% in the last column on the right. In lessons where the total is less than 100%, the missing portion was spent on other minor activities such as disciplinary, taking attendance, preparing listening equipment, etc.

Table 4: A summary of "Participant Organization" category showing what kind of class organization was used for each activity

Observed Lesson Nos.	PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION							Total (%)
	CLASS			GROUP		INDIVIDUAL		
	T-S/C (%)	S-S/C (%)	Choral (%)	Same Task (%)	Different Tasks (%)	Same Task (%)	Different Tasks (%)	
1.	68	18	4			4		92
2.	76	6				16		98
3.	44	14				42		100
4.	26	32		6		26	8	98
5.	50			14		26		90
6.	72	2				24		98
7.	54	16				26		96
8.	38	10			4	32	14	98
9.	68	8				20		96
10.	44	14				36		94
11.	52	4				42		98
12.	58	6				30		94
13.	64	10				26		100
14.	74	2				18		94
15.	72					20		92
16.	68	16				10		94
17.	62	6				30		98
18.	58	18				22		98
19.	56	2		8		30		96
20.	56	8				34		98
21.	8	56				34		98
22.	40.5					58.5		99
23.	23.5				25.5	50		99
24.	77					23		100
25.	57.5	14				28		100
26.	46	10				28		84*
27.	58	24			4	12		98
28.	52	6				40		98
29.	18	38				42		98
30.	24	10		16		50		100

* *No class work was done in the last 8 minutes (16% of class time).*

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A quick look at the above table shows that most of class work was carried out through either teacher-student/class, individuals working on the same task, or student-student/class organizations. A distribution of the mean average (MA) for the class work done through each class organization is shown in the following table:

Table 5: Distribution of mean average percentage for class work done through each organization

Class Organization	Mean Average (%) of Class Time Utilization
Teacher-Student/Class	52.2
Individuals Working on Same Task	29.3
Student-Student/Class	11.6
Group Work	2.6

Below I discuss each type of "organization" separately:

Teacher-Student/Class (M.A. 52.2%). The mean average of class work done in this mode shows that slightly more than half of the class events were controlled by the teacher either with individual students or with the whole-class. From personal experience, and as the data collected on the COLT Scheme indicates, in activities controlled by the teacher, the students' roles are limited to mere reactions to the teacher's prompts. Their production is limited to a word, a phrase, or a sentence that is already identified either in the text exercise, the teacher's questions, or in the text itself. With these roles, the students are not given chances to be creative and use language for communication. Moreover, this superficial exposure to the language limits the learners' chances for retention of the learned features, as discussed towards the end of this chapter.

Individuals Working on Same Task (M.A. 29.3%). The mean average of class work done in this mode indicates that almost one-third of the students' class time is spent on individuals working silently on text exercises. In order to complete the exercises, students either fill in blank spaces or complete sentences from the text, check multiple-choice distractors, label statements as "True/False", match phrases, or tick checklists. So, by putting together the mean averages of Teacher-Student/Class (52.2%) and Individuals Working Silently or Same Tasks (29.3%), a total of 81.5% class time is spent on activities in which the students' roles are reactive rather than productive.

Student-Student/Class (M.A. 11.6%). The mean average for this mode is very low. Moreover, one might question whether the students were actually involved in interactive activities among themselves. According to the collected data for this mode, it is noticed that students were either reading texts aloud to their classmates or reading out/responding to exercise questions. There was no data collected involving students questioning their classmates' ideas or defending their own. Neither was there any data collected involving sustained negotiations among students of the text content.

Group Work (M.A. 2.6%). In most lessons, teachers rarely organize their students in pairs or groups to complete the required tasks or to produce work of their own. According to Spada and Frohlich (1995:15), group work is crucial in the development of the learners' communicative competence. Facilitated and guided by the teacher, when learners work in groups, they use a variety of linguistic forms and functions to develop their fluency skills. Only in very few lessons, which represent around 11.5% of the whole BEP curriculum, students work together in pairs to construct dialogues and role play them for their

classmates. In the Saudi Aramco context, since all learners are adults of the same culture, group work encourages them to interact among themselves and learn from each other. This type of learning is enhanced by the fact that pairs or members of one group could be living in the same apartment or work for the same unit. Such classroom experiences help them practice roles they may assume in the future. Following this analysis and discussion of the "Participant Organization" category, I now move to the second one, the "Content" category.

5.3.2 <u>Content</u>

This COLT Scheme category represents the theme, or focus, of the lessons. It reveals what "content" the teachers and learners are reading, talking about, or listening to. It is made up of three sub-categories: "management", "language", and "other topics". The "management" themes are shown on the table but they are not analyzed because the time spent on management content is minimal. The "language" themes are either about language "forms", language "functions", "discourse", or "socio-linguistics". "Other topics" themes are either "narrow" or "broad" topics. [Full definition of the "Content" category and its themes is provided in chapter four (pp. 91-92) of this study.]

Table 6 below is a summary of the data collected on the "content" category components reflected in percentile values. The blank areas on the table indicate that there were no class events to be recorded or coded. The total percentage of the category components for each recorded lesson is shown in the last column on the right.

Table 6: Summary of the "Content" category showing what percentage of class time spent on each component

Observed Lesson Nos.	CONTENT								Total (%)
	MANAGEMENT		LANGUAGE				OTHER TOPICS		
	Procedure (%)	Discipline (%)	Form (%)	Function (%)	Discourse (%)	Socioling (%)	Narrow (%)	Broad (%)	
1.	6		86				8		100
2.	2		60				38		100
3.			18				82		100
4.	2			86			12		100
5.	10		46				30	14	100
6.	2		48				50		100
7.	10		42				48		100
8.	2		64	20			14		100
9.	4		92					4	100
10.	6					4	84	6	100
11.	2						98		100
12.	6			84			10		100
13.			18				82		100
14.	6		90				4		100
15.	8		42				50		100
16.	6			66			28		100
17.	2						98		100
18.	2		98						100
19.	4		32				64		100
20.	2		16				74	8	100
21.	2		30	18			28	22	100
22.	1		8.5			6	84.5		100
23.	1		53.5				45.5		100
24.			17.5				59.5	23	100
25.				36.5			57.5	6	100
26.							100		100
27.	10		10				80		100
28.	2		40				58		100
29.	2		80				18		100
30.			100						100

A cursory look at Table 6 shows that most class events are recorded under the "form", and "narrow topics" themes. (Discussion of these themes is provided in Chapter 4). Very little work is done on "function" or "broad topics" themes. Before discussing each theme separately, Table 7 below shows the Mean Averages (MA) of class time spent on each theme:

Table 7: Mean Averages of class time spent on "Content" themes

THEME					
Form (%)	Function (%)	Narrow Topics (%)	Broad Topics (%)	Others (%)	Total (%)
36.4	10.4	46.8	2.8	2.9	99.3

The "form" themes, 36.4%, are mostly vocabulary learning. In some lessons (1, 9, 14, 18, 29 and 30) almost the whole lesson is spent on vocabulary learning. Appendix G, for example, includes a sample record of a vocabulary lesson taken from BEP level 2 (Building English, Unit 9). The vocabulary learning activities usually follow a fixed pattern: the teacher introduces the new words and discusses their meanings orally; students complete vocabulary exercises individually and silently; then they read out their responses to the teacher and the rest of the class. Students are not given the opportunity to expand on the newly introduced words in contexts of their own, or utilize them in communicative situations in order to help them retain and internalize such words.

The "function-focused" themes, 10.4%, are noticeable only in lessons 4, 8, 12, 16, 21 and 25. These are the same lessons analyzed in section 5.2.3.2, where the activities allow the students to use some language functions in meaningful situations. In these lessons,

students structure dialogues and role-play situations in pairs and groups. However, this 10.4% of the "content" of the lessons in the study about language functions is not a sufficient resource of themes for the learners to initiate speech and expand on it.

Like the "form-focused" themes, the "narrow" topics themes, 46.8%, are also dominant. In the Saudi Aramco context, narrow topics mean reading comprehension activities about topics related to the classroom environment, the students' personal lives, and topics related to their jobs. In these activities, students read the material silently, complete limited exercises mostly about information in the text, then read out their responses to the teacher and the rest of the class. They thus have limited opportunities to expand on these topics with their own input.

Content about "broad topics" themes represents only 2.8% of the class time in the thirty observed lessons. Students are rarely given the opportunity to expand on the text topics into broader and social life concepts. They do not use language to express their own views on topics about social and international events. The learners have very limited chances to initiate topics of their own or initiate discourse that would allow them to think critically and use language for communication. So, the data analysis of the "Content" category has shown that the focus of class events is mainly on form-focused and narrow topic themes.

5.3.3 Content Control

According to the COLT Scheme, "content control" refers to who selects, or decides, the topics or tasks for class discussion; this could be the teacher himself, the text, the

students, or the three together. The following table shows a summary of the data collected

about this category:

Table 8: Summary of the "Content Control" Category showing the percentage of class time spent on events controlled by the teacher, text, students, or all

Observed Lesson Nos.	CONTENT CONTROL			Total (%)
	Teacher/Text (%)	Teacher/Text/Student (%)	Student (%)	
1.	70	20	4	94
2.	100			100
3.	100			100
4.	58	12	28	98
5.	60	30		90
6.	100			100
7.	100			100
8.	30	70		100
9.	74	22		96
10.	48	46		94
11.	100			100
12.	20	68	6	94
13.	76	24		100
14.	74	20		94
15.	100			100
16.	40	54		94
17.	90	8		98
18.	98			98
19.	100			100
20.	100			100
21.	32	66		98
22.	66	34		100
23.	79	20		99
24.	77	23		100
25.	46	53.5		100
26.	98			98
27.	68	30		98
28.	92	6		98
29.	62	36		98
30.	56	18	26	100

It is clearly noticed that most of the topics discussed in the lessons are controlled by the

teacher, through the text material.

The mean average of control over the topics discussed in the thirty lessons is shown in the following table:

Table 9: The mean averages of content controlled by the teacher, the text, the student, or by all

CONTENT CONTROL				
Teacher/Text (%)	Teacher/Text/Student (%)	Student (%)	Others (%)	Total (%)
73.8	22	2.1	2.1	100

Only in five lessons (8, 12, 16, 21 & 25) is there some degree of control by students over the discussed topics. These are the same lessons analyzed earlier in Section 5.2.3.2 where students work, in groups, on language function features.

Only in two lessons, (4 & 30), do students have exclusive control on the task at hand. In lesson 4 (28% of the lesson duration) they structure dialogues on specific language functions, and in lesson 30 (26% of the lesson duration) they are asked to work individually on structuring quiz items on the newly learned words. However, the class period ended before any further work is done to check on the students' structured items.

As the table indicates, students have a very limited degree of control over the class tasks.

5.3.4 Student Modality

The "student modality" category shows the various skills the learners are involved in throughout a certain lesson. It shows whether the students are "listening", "speaking",

"reading", or "writing". Table 10 illustrates the time percentages spent on each skill in the thirty lessons:

Table 10: A Summary of the "Student Modality" Category showing the time percentages spent on each language skills as recorded in the 30 observed lessons

Observed Lesson Nos.	STUDENT MODALITY					Total (%)
	Listening (%)	Speaking (%)	Reading (%)	Writing (%)	Other (%)	
1.	28	28	6	32		94
2.	24	16	36	22		98
3.	6	14	70	10		100
4.	10	56	24	8		98
5.	16	22	38	14		90
6.	40		58			98
7.	32	8	30	16	4	90
8.	14	12	30	42		98
9.		30	44	20	2	96
10.	4	26	58		6	94
11.		36	62			98
12.	14	64	16			94
13.	24	16	50		10	100
14.	38	8	30	18		94
15.	2		90			92
16.	38	34	22			94
17.	18	10	70			98
18.	44	12	18	22	2	98
19.		8	88			96
20.	26	16	56			98
21.	14	22	38	18	6	98
22.	32		51	17		100
23.	12	8.5	48.5	30		99
24.	17.5	43	33.5		6	100
25.	34	53	12			99
26.	38		38	8		84
27.	26	18	42	12		98
28.	26	16	32	24		98
29.	14		48	32	4	98
30.	4	8	30	58		100
Total	23.5%	19.5%	42.3%	13.4%	1.3%	100%

Each of the skills stated in the above table is analyzed separately in the following sub-sections.

5.3.4.1 _Listening_

The percentile values under the "listening" skill in the above table indicate that 23.5% of class time is spent on listening activities. The collected data on the COLT Scheme observation sheets about listening tasks reflect two types of listening activities: listening to taped material in order to fill in information and these represent around 20% of the listening tasks, or listening to whatever is being said in the class events and these represent the other 80% of the listening activities.

5.3.4.2 _Speaking_

Speaking is the second skill in the "Student Modality" table shown above. The percentile values in the "speaking" column refer to how much time the students, as a class, have a chance to say something even if it is a production of one word (19.5%). The speaking features as observed in the thirty lessons are mostly reacting to prompts by the teacher or another student in class. They are enforced by the requirements of the text exercises, and by the particular nature of classroom discourse.

Students are rarely given real chances to participate in speaking tasks for the purpose of class discussion, presenting opinions and defending them. Only in a few lessons (4, 12, 16, and 25) is much of class time used for speaking tasks. These lessons focus on language function themes (51.75%).

In other lessons (6, 15, 22, 26 and 29) there are no speaking tasks recorded. This does not mean that the students have not spoken a single word throughout the lesson. It means that the whole lesson activities are done either by the teacher, or by students just completing silent tasks and later reading out their responses (14.50%). Compared to the other

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language skills practiced in the thirty observed lessons, only 18.50% of the time is utilized for speaking activities. Though in the "four lessons" shown above the "speaking" time percentage is 51.75%, the flow of the students speaking skills is often interrupted by the teacher, thus turning these activities into teacher-controlled ones. The following excerpts, taken from three of the audio-recorded lessons, show some of the problems which hinder the students' speaking skills.

Excerpt 7 is taken from Ex. 14, Unit 9 BEP 2A of the observed lesson number 24. In this exercise, the students are expected to practice some language functions expressing needs and how to respond to such requests. The text exercise includes a sample dialogue about a situation using these expressions. The teacher introduces the lesson, interacts with the whole class, and then asks individual pairs to read the text dialogue. The excerpt shows how the two students are called to role-play, in front of the class, a dialogue about a situation provided by the teacher:

Excerpt 7

1.	Teacher:	OK. Now I want two guys come here before the classroom… and I'll give you a situation and then you can say… express your help. So, "I need to", "I have to", or "I must". OK. "Sa'adi" come here please. "Abdallah"… come here… (teacher writes something on board). OK. Now, I'll give you …eem a situation that you need to get a ride to the clinic.
2.	Abdallah:	A ride to… aah.
3.	Teacher:	A ride, and you don't have a car. So, "Sa'adi" is a friend of you and he has a car. What would you say to him?
4.	Abdallah:	Aaah… sss… I need to a ride to the clinic.
5.	Teacher:	I need to get…

6.	Abdallah:	To get to the clinic.
7.	Teacher:	I need to get... (disciplinary procedures) I need to get a ride...yah?
8.	Abdallah:	I need to get a ride to the clinic.
9.	Teacher:	eem...eem.
10.	Sa'adi:	Yes, I can... I can help you.
11.	Teacher:	OK. So you say "do you want me to help you?" eem...eem...What would you say?
12.	Sa'adi:	Do you...
13.	Teacher:	Do you want me to help you?
14.	Sa'adi:	Do you...
15.	Teacher:	What would you say? ... yah?
16.	Sa'adi:	Do you want...
17.	Teacher:	No.. no.. He (pointing to Abdallah) will say...
18.	Abdallah:	Do you want help to me?
19.	Teacher:	"That", you will say "that would be" from the example... "that would be great. That would be great."
20.	Sa'adi:	Sorr...
21.	Teacher:	OK. I can come, for example, or do you want me to give you a ride now? Or when do you want me to get you a ride to the clinic?
22.	Sa'adi:	When ...ee... When did...
23.	Teacher:	When do you want me to get you...
24.	Sa'adi:	When do you want me to get you?
25.	Abdallah:	Aah... oh... I want you to get to me at 7 o'clock.
26.	Teacher:	OK. You will say... I'm really...
27.	Sa'adi:	I am...
28.	Teacher:	What will you say?
29.	Abdallah:	Thanks.
30.	Teacher:	Thanks a lot. Thanks. Yah?
31.	Abdallah:	Thank you.
32.	Sa'adi:	Thanks.

In line 1, the teacher introduces the task. "Abdallah" expresses his need with a slight grammatical mistake (I need to a ride to the clinic) which the teacher manages to correct through successful guidance. "Sa'adi" receives "Abdallah's" need and responds to it correctly. Unfortunately, this is the last time "Sa'adi" manages to utter anything meaningful on his own until the end of the interaction. This is because the teacher interferes in line eleven and confuses "Sa'adi" by saying "So you say 'do you want me to help you?'" Sa'adi is lost by this unexpected prompt by the teacher and fails to produce anything meaningful all through.

After the teacher's interruption, the teacher becomes a dominant partner in the role-play until the end. Most of the students' utterances are repetitions of the teacher's prompts. The teacher has become not only a third partner in the dialogue construction, but also a "feeder". Out of the 32 turns of the excerpt, 14 (46.9%), are spoken by the teacher himself. In most of these lines, the teacher is telling the two students what to say! Consequently, the students end with minimal speaking opportunities of their own.

Another example of the teacher's dominance on the students' oral production is illustrated in Excerpt 8 below. In this exercise, the teacher is previewing a reading passage about air safety. He introduces the preview through "questions and answers", and then continues, in the same manner, completing the preview questions, thus limiting the students' chances of expressing their ideas and speaking about the events.

Excerpt 8

1.	Teacher:	Who can read it (the preview)? "Ahmad"... listen to Ahmad.
2.	Ahmad:	"1996 was the worst year for aircraft accidents for a long time. Over 2000 people died in plane accidents. Is flying becoming more unsafe, or is the increase in accidents just a result of the increase in flights?"
3.	Teacher:	We have number one (teacher reads question # one. Who can tell me... Who can talk about a famous air accident that he can remember?... Yes "Tareq"... listen to Tareq please.
4.	Tareq:	Egyptian.
5.	Teacher:	Egyptian? Please... Which crashed... Where? Where did the Egyptian plane crash?
6.	Class:	Down in the sea.
7.	Teacher:	Down in the sea where?
8.	Student 1:	In Bahrain
9.	Teacher:	In Afri...
10.	Class:	In America... America
11.	Teacher:	Aah... in America... USA... Yah... (unclear voices). Who can ask question # two? (voices reading)... Listen please... don't talk... listen to... yes... read the questions please...
12.	Student 2:	"How safe do you feel when you fly?"
13.	Teacher:	Yes, how safe do you feel when you fly? Who can answer?
14.	Student 3:	Is flying...
15.	Teacher:	While you are in a plane... how safe do you feel? Do you feel safe? Do you feel... afraid? "Hussain"
16.	Hussain:	Feel afraid
17.	Teacher:	You feel afraid. Hussain feels afraid... Are you feeling afraid now?
18.	Hussain:	No, no.
19.	Teacher:	Not now...
20.	Student 4:	He is safe now.
21.	Teacher:	OK. Why? Because he is sitting at the back now. He is safe.

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22.	Student 4:	Yah.
23.	Teacher:	OK. # three… Who can ask the question? "Ibrahim"
24.	Ibrahim:	"How can experts make flying safer?"
25.	Teacher:	Aah… How can experts… engineers… specialized… eem. How can they suppose that you are an expert, how can you make flying safer? How should we improve?
26.	Class:	Check the fly.
27.	Teacher:	Improve…
28.	Class:	Check tyres… check engine…
29.	Teacher:	Improve the plane…

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L.2, pp.: 257-258
Observed lesson # 17

As in *Excerpt 7*, the teacher takes up the role of a "controller" and limits the students speaking chances into fragmented responses to his questions or prompts (turns 15 and 16). In some turns (25-29) the teacher steers the students toward what he wants them to say and ignores their ideas.

The last example about how the students' chances for practicing their speaking skill is restricted by the teacher's control is the following one about vocabulary practice. In this exercise students are expected to learn four new words, read a passage and discuss some comprehension questions about the passage. The teacher starts by introducing the topic of the passage, good study habits, and then starts working on the four new words. (This same excerpt has already been used as a sample of a vocabulary activity in Sub-Section 5.2.2.)

Excerpt 9

1.	Teacher:	Good. So, today we are to read about good study habits. Will you please open your books to page one seven seven.
2.	Class:	OK.
3.	Teacher:	OK? One seven seven? We have these words "contribute". (Teacher repeats "contribute" six times while writing it on board.) Say… "contribute". (Students repeat it four times after teacher.) "Contribute" means to give help or idea, or anything that makes something happens. For example, of… if one of your friends has financial problems *maali* (Arabic: financial), we are going to collect money from each other. We are contributing to solve his problem by this. "Contribute"
		Yusahem…..yusharek
4.	Class:	*Yusharek*
5.	Teacher:	Good. Very good. OK. We have the other word "recognize" (Teacher repeats this word five times while writing it on board.) Say, "recognize".
6.	Class:	"Recognize" (Class repeats this word four times after teacher.)
7.	Teacher:	"Recognize" means "to know". For example, if you have a friend. Let's say your friend was in the elementary school… a small boy. You meet him after many years. You cannot recognize him easily because his shape is changed, but when he introduced himself to you, you recognized him…
8.	Student 1:	*Yatathakkar*
9.	Teacher:	To "recognize" means, "to know"… OK "to know". Yes, good… "Practical" (Teacher repeats this word six times while writing it on board.) Say "practical".
10.	Class:	"Practical". (Class repeats this word four times after teacher.)
11.	Teacher:	Something "practical" that means you can work on it… workable… that is… you can work on that…
12.	Student 2:	*Amali*
13.	Teacher:	Yes *Amali* Good… "Instead of" (Teacher repeats "instead of" six times while writing it on board.)
14.	Class:	"Instead of". (They repeat this word four times after

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	teacher...
15. Teacher:	Well... We don't have a big table to put this recorder on... so we use a desk instead of the table. We use a desk instead of the table. Sometimes you don't have a... a... your car ready to drive to the ITC... You use a taxi instead of...
16. Class:	(Unclear explanations of "instead of" in Arabic).

Building English, Unit 9
Ex. 1, p. 177
Observed lesson # 23

All throughout the discussion of the new words, it is the teacher who is speaking almost all of the time (turns 3, 7, 9, 11 and 15). He is the one who provides the meaning of the new words, and he is the one who he is using them in contexts. The students' role, in most cases, is to provide the L1 equivalent for the new words; and the teacher is very satisfied with that. For example, at the end of line 3, the teacher introduces the word "contribute". Immediately, two students provide an L1 explanation of the word "contribute" and the teacher is happy with this explanation, repeats the two students' input, and moves to the next word "recognize". The same techniques is repeated in turns 12 and 13. One student provides an L1 meaning for the word "practical", the teacher repeats the student's input and moves to the next word "instead of". The data does not show any tasks where the students use the new words in contexts of their own.

The above examples are just a few representations of what kind of speaking opportunities Saudi Aramco students practice in the BEP program classes. Their speaking opportunities are restricted by the teacher/text instructions. They rarely have the chance to initiate

sustained speech for the sake of expressing their opinions or questioning the opinions of others.

5.3.4.3 *Reading*

The third skill in the "Student Modality" category is the "reading" skill. By looking at the percentile values in the reading column in table 7, we notice that 42.3% of class time in the thirty lessons is spent on reading tasks. In ten of the thirty lessons, more than 50% of the class time is spent on reading tasks. This may be due to the fact that two of the five sections in each unit in BEP levels 3 & 4 are reading materials (a sample script of a reading lesson is in Excerpt 2).

In this study, though some of the reading tasks are meant to help students develop certain reading skills, such as reading for the main idea or for comprehension, most of the reading activities are assigned in order to complete limited exercises. The most common of these exercises are multiple-choice checking or "True/False" tasks.

Reading comprehension exercises that require students to report on their comprehension in the form of a presentations, or defend their opinions in group discussions, or provide solutions to problems stated in the reading material are unfortunately very limited, or frequently non-existent. Students spend most of the time reading material silently and checking multiple-choice items or circling a "True" or a "False" answer. They are not provided with opportunities to manipulate the reading material and initiate discourse,

interact with the others, or use the reading content to negotiate the meaning with their teachers and classmates.

5.3.4.4 *Writing*

The fourth skill in the "Student Modality" is "writing". As I stated earlier in chapters two and four, development of the "writing" skill is practiced in a separate period in each unit of study. In BEP, almost all writing practice is controlled. Since the focus of this study is the students' oral communication skills, no "writing" lessons have been recorded for analysis or study.

Nevertheless, by looking at the percentile values in the "writing" column of the "Students Modality" category, we notice that 13.4% of class time is spent on writing. In twenty-eight of the thirty observed lessons, the writing activities are either to fill in the blanks with words or phrases, to check distractors in multiple-choice items, or to choose "True" or "False" responses. Only in two lessons, eight and thirty, are the writing activities different. In lesson eight, students spend 42% of the lesson time either writing words in contexts of their own, or completing sentences. In lesson thirty, students spend 58% of the lesson time trying to individually write quiz items, as instructed by the teacher, about given words. (Most probably the teacher wanted to fill in the remaining time of the lesson. The class ended while students were still working.)

In sub-section 5.4.4, I have analyzed and discussed the data about the students' modality, or the language skills they practice in class. Special emphasis has been given to the

"speaking" skill since the students' oral communication skills are the focus of this study. In the following sub-section, the data about the "material" category is analysed and discussed.

5.3.5 Material

The last category in the COLT Scheme is "material". It is meant to describe the type and source of the texts used by the learners and the teacher for class activities. "Type" of material could be "minimal" as captions, isolated sentences or word lists in written texts. It could also be "extended", such as stories, dialogues, paragraphs, etc. Other types are "visual" and "audio".

"Source of Material" could be either material for non-native speakers (L2-NNS) such as the Saudi Aramco locally produced material and the international L2 books which are designed for learners of English as a foreign language (EFL), native speakers (L2-NS) such as input by native speaker teachers, English magazines, newspapers, advertisements but used in L2 classes, or native speaker material but adapted for non-native speakers (L2-NSA). Examples of this type of material include the simplified or abridged native speaker material.

The following table summarizes the data collected about the type and source of material used in the study's lessons.

Table 11: Summary of the "Material" Category showing the "type" and "source" of material used in the 30 observed lessons

Observed Lesson Nos.	TYPE				SOURCE				Total (%)
	Text		Audio (%)	Visual (%)	L2-NNS (%)	L2-NS (%)	L2-NSA (%)	Student-made (%)	
	Minimal	Extended							
1	✓	-			94				94
2	✓	✓			98				98
3	-	✓			100				100
4	✓	✓	10		88				98
5	✓	✓			90				90
6	✓	✓			100				100
7	✓	✓	12		78				90
8	✓	✓	6		92				98
9	✓	-			96				96
10	✓	✓		6	88				94
11	✓	✓			98				98
12	✓	✓	14	14	60				88
13	✓	✓			94	6			100
14	✓	-			94				94
15	✓	✓			92				92
16	✓	✓	10		84				94
17	✓	✓			100				100
18	✓	-			100				100
19	✓	✓			100				100
20	✓	✓			100				100
21	✓	✓	14	22	62				98
22	✓	✓			100				100
23	✓	✓			100				100
24	✓	✓			100				100
25	✓	✓	28		72				100
26	✓	✓			84				84
27	✓	✓			98				98
28	✓	-			98				98
29	✓	✓			98				98
30	✓	-			100				100

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Table 11 clearly shows that the type of material used in the 30 observed lessons is mostly written texts with a mixture of both "minimal" and "extended" features. "Minimal" texts are captions, isolated sentences, and word lists. "Extended" material are stories, dialogues, connected sentences, and paragraphs. The table also shows that the source of such material is mainly designed for non-native speakers (95.3%). There is not much authentic material that would help students use the language outside the classroom in real-life situations though the percentage of observed native speaker teachers is 33%. Moreover, the class events do not include any material made by students themselves such as stories, reports, presentations and articles.

With this discussion, I conclude the data analysis collected on the COLT Scheme categories. With regard to the sixth category, "Oral Communication Practice" which has been added to the Scheme by the writer of this study as stated in Chapter 4, no analysis has been done simply because no classroom events have been observed which provide data for analysis about this category. More comments on this category are provided in the next chapter.

5.4 Summary

The above stated analysis and discussion of the data collected on the COLT Scheme's "activities" and "categories" have revealed the following facts which may have some impact on the Saudi Aramco learners' L2 outcomes. These facts are outlined and highlighted under three areas: The *teacher's role*, the *students' roles*, and the *classroom environment*. The teacher's role in L2 classrooms was discussed in Chapter 3 of this

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study. The fact that EFL teachers tend to practice different degrees of control over their class events is recognized in many educational contexts. In addition to the literature reviewed in Chapter Three about the teacher's role in L2 classrooms, several research studies have been carried out to compare L2 outcomes in teacher-fronted and controlled classes, and pair or group work classes. For example, Shapiro (1979), Bialystock et al. (1978), Hernandez (1983), Tsui (1995), Ramirez (1986), Mitchell et al. (1981), and Long et al. (1976), all have concluded that teachers tend to dominate class events and, eventually, the learners' chances for L2 learning are reduced. However, a degree of teacher control over class events is necessary in order to provide input, direct and facilitate tasks, evaluate feedback, and keep learners on task. (Further literature on the teacher's role in language classrooms is critically reviewed in Chapter 3). In the Saudi Aramco setting, the teacher control over class events is mostly to keep the learning process under the dominance of the teacher and the text. Language features are taught and explained for the sake of providing knowledge to help pass tests, not to be used in communicative tasks. For example, the vocabulary items are explained by the teacher for meaning purposes not for the sake of using them in contexts by students.

Another feature of the teacher's control is interference for correction purposes, especially when teacher has an agenda which follows the textbooks. Another example of interference is to correct the students' pronunciation. Both types of interference break the students' thoughts and, eventually, limit spontaneity.

The data analysis has also revealed that Saudi Aramco learners are mostly involved in silent individual reading assignments in order to complete the text exercises which are

mainly based on providing information from the text content. Once the exercises are completed silently, individuals are asked to read out their responses to the teacher and the rest of the class. Discussions of their responses are carried out by the teacher just to verify whether they match the text content or the teacher's input. The other students' roles are mostly to listen to the correct responses and compare them with their own. Rarely are they asked to express their opinions, question the text content, or expand on the information provided by other classmates.

The third factor revealed by the data analysis and discussion as affecting Saudi Aramco L2 outcomes is the *classroom environment*. This is manifested in the following features:

- Class activities are mostly carried out through either teacher-student/class organization (52.2%) or individuals doing silent work (29.3%), a total of 81.5%.

- 73% of the language used in class is controlled by the teacher and the text.

- The material used as a learning source is designed for classroom learning, not for real-life situations.

- The content themes are mainly form-focused (46.8%).

- The speaking skill is only practiced in 11.5% of class time.

The above discussion might explain some of the concerns about the Saudi Aramco BEP syllabus rigid policies stated in Chapters 2 and 4 of this study. One of the reasons behind the teachers' tackling the material in a traditional manner and with very few practice opportunities for students is probably to avoid being criticized by the ITC administration. Their control over class events may be to guarantee that students gain the knowledge they need about the language features that will be tested in the final tests. The students'

acquired "knowledge" in this context is very crucial because it helps them pass their final tests with a grade of 70 or more since these tests are made up of discrete-point test items and they represent more than 60% of the whole final grade.

The fact that the "speaking" skill is not tested in the final tests and it is not specifically assigned for classroom practice means that teachers do not emphasize it and, eventually, the students have minimal chances to practice it. Both parties prefer to utilize class time in learning things that help them pass their final tests.

Chapter five has included an analysis of the collected data. The analysis has been carried out in two parts. Analysis of the classroom activities/episodes, and analysis of the data recorded on the COLT Scheme, Part "A" categories. In the first part, the analysis has focused on the type of activities conducted and how much of classtime has been allotted for each. In the second part, the analysis has focused on the scheme's five categories and how each one of them has impacted on the students' learning outcomes. Based on this data analysis, I present in the following chapter the findings which have emerged from the analysis.

VI. CHAPTER SIX: FINDINGS

6.1 <u>Introduction</u>

Chapter Five has included analysis of the data collected in the thirty observed lessons. The major part of the analysis was based on the data collected on the COLT Scheme - Part "A" "Activities" and "Categories" sections. However, and in order to enhance the validity of the analysis, several excerpts from the audio-recorded classroom events have been provided. Moreover, actual samples from the syllabus exercises and copies of COLT Scheme "A" classroom observation records have also been included in the analysis. In the current chapter, I discuss the findings that have emerged from the data analysis. Before I discuss the findings, I would like to restate the research questions, as they appear in Chapter One of this study:

1. What type of L2 learning activities are incorporated in the current Saudi Aramco Basic English Program (BEP)? What impact do these activities have on the learners' performance?

2. What teaching strategies and techniques do Saudi Aramco teachers employ to meet their learners' needs and the program objectives?

3. To what degree do Saudi Aramco learners in levels 1-4 get actively involved in practice opportunities that allow them to use language for communication and enhance their communication skills?

4. How do institutional and organizational training policies affect Saudi Aramco learners' performance?

In addition to the objective of this study, "to recommend solutions that would enhance the learners' oral communication skills" (pp 4-5), the major assumption in this study was also stated in Chapter One as follows:

"This study is based upon the assumption that the current English language core program does not provide enough opportunities for the learners to build up a communicative competence that helps them to use language for communication." (p 4).

6.2 Major Findings

Guided by the research questions and the study's major assumption and objective, and based on the data analysis of the classroom activities, the COLT Scheme "Part A" categories, samples of recorded material, and the structure of some lessons, the following sets of findings emerge:

1. Most classroom activities are designed for non-native speakers with content mainly about the learners' classroom life, community and work environment, with more focus on form rather than on meaning. As the percentages illustrated in Figures 1, 2 and 3 of Chapter Five (pp. 105, 117 and 122) indicate, the learners spend most of the time listening to the teacher's explanation of vocabulary items, silently reading text material, completing exercises individually, or reading out their responses to the rest of the class. On very few occasions, are the learners involved in oral activities where they take part in dialogs, or deliver short talks on topics provided by either

the teacher or the text. Most classroom activities are generated from the text exercises and led by the teacher.

These types of activities limit the learners' ability to acquire a wider range of vocabulary items to be employed in sustained communication. Moreover, the learners' experience with the language is restricted to fragmented "knowledge" of the language rather than real-life usage. In addition, the learners' chances for building communicative skills are reduced and most of what they learn in class may not be retained for long. Finally, as long as learners have no control over the source of these activities, their roles in class may continue to be limited to providing responses to the teacher's prompts or to extracting information from the text material. With such roles, they have limited chances to gradually build up critical thinking modes through which they take more participative roles in using language to solve problems in class, and later at work.

We have seen in the selected literature review in Chapter Three several views (Nunan, 1989; Clark and Silberstein, 1977; Shrum and Glisan, 1994; Stern, 1996; Pienemann and Johnston, 1986; Lightbown, 1985; Krashen, 1985) on the need for classroom activities where students actively manipulate the text material and use it as a source to discuss the content, express and defend their opinions or question the opinions of others, in order to use language for communication.

2. As the tables on pages 139, 143, 146, 148 and 160 in Chapter Five indicate, teachers employ teaching strategies that depend mainly on giving instructions, providing

information, explaining vocabulary items and confirming or rejecting students' responses with relation to the text content. Even in lessons where the material allows learners to interact among themselves and use language for meaning, teachers interfere in the communication process and become dominant partners, thus lessening the learners' chances for self-expression. Teachers lead their learners throughout the paced material with lengthy explanations, specific instructions on how to complete exercises, questions and answers about the information in the text and finally listening to the students' responses to see if they match with the content. They rarely provide learners with opportunities to work cooperatively on the answers to the exercise questions. The feedback they receive from their learners is either responses to the teachers' prompts, or information extracted from the text in response to a text question. This degree of control over classroom events by the teachers could be the result of the stated training policies regarding the objectives of the assigned instructional material and final tests. The effect of these policies is the major issue raised in research question number 4 of this study.

Regardless of the reasons for this control over the classroom events by the teachers, this kind of classroom environment does not promote active participation on the side of the learners. This lack of active participation reduces their chances to build up the desired communication skills that help them use language to express their ideas and establish two-way communication processes.

We have seen in the selected literature review in Chapter Three how many researchers (Long, 1985; Swain, 1985; Pica, 1994; Lynch, 1996; Brooks, 1989;

Breen and Candlin, 1980; Littlewood, 1992; Bygate, 1987) call on teachers to maximize the learners' interactive roles in L2 classrooms. Learners need to be given more chances to actively get involved in classroom interactive events where they express their ideas and challenge the input they receive. By doing this, they will have more chances to build up communication competencies necessary for L2 proficiency.

3. As stated in the above-mentioned tables and the transcribed material in Excerpts 1-9, the learners in BEP classrooms are recipients of information. They listen to the teachers' explanations with minimal participation; they follow instructions; complete text exercises individually and later read out their responses which are, in most cases, extracted from the text. In oral activities, they respond to the teachers' questions, or take part in constructing dialogues or short talks about text or teacher's assigned topics with frequent interference by the teacher. Learners have a peripheral role as they react to class events rather than initiate them. Students practice the four language skills through text exercise completion with minimal opportunities for building their oral communication skills. In listening activities, their role is to listen to the material and complete filling-in-exercises depending mainly on their memory. In speaking activities, they mostly respond to teacher's prompts with minimal opportunities for self-production. In reading activities, they mainly read the material silently, complete exercises about the reading content and later read out their responses to the class. They are rarely given tasks that require critical thinking and the use of English to express ideas, interact with other classmates, communicate messages, construct dialogues, or express their own ideas orally or in writing.

Learners are rarely challenged with oral or written tasks - away from the text - to provide feedback on their learning development.

This lack of practice opportunities for learners to use basic language skills in expressing themselves and freely practice whatever language features they have learned limits their chances for spontaneous use of the language, and, eventually, their ability to communicate. Learners need to listen, not only for comprehension purposes, but also for feedback on the content itself. They need to be allowed to speak in class not to respond to the teachers' prompts in fragmented utterances, but to express their own ideas and interact with their teachers and classmates in sustained discourse. In addition to reading for comprehension purposes, they also need to question the content and expand on it.

We have seen in the selected literature in Chapter Three views by many authors (Omaggio, 1984; Richards and Rodgers, 1986; Rivers and Temperley, 1978; Littlewood, 1981; Nunan, 1988;Long and Crookes, 1986; Ellis, 1994; Lynch, 1996; Allwright and Bailey, 1991) on the need for increased learners' opportunities in L2 classrooms because, with active participation in class events and continuous exposure to the language, learners will have more chances to be communicatively competent and thus meet their learning needs.

As stated earlier, the above findings have emerged from the data analysis in Chapter Five. They also provide answers to the research questions. The first set of findings, for example, explains the type of language activities incorporated in the BEP

syllabus available for Saudi Aramco learners to practice. Most of these activities are narrow, with more focus on form rather than meaning. In these activities, the learners are merely engaged in either responding to teachers' questions, which require very short utterances about the text materials, or completing text exercises by providing fragmented information from the input they receive whether it is from the teacher, the text or the audio material. Such controlled activities increase the learners' knowledge of the language and help them pass final tests. With this limited exposure to the language, the learners are rarely provided with activities to use language for communication and, eventually, build strong and sustained communication skills.

The second set of findings provides answers to research questions two and four. The teaching strategies used in BEP classrooms are, to a great extent, dominated and controlled by the teacher and text exercises with minimal opportunities for learners to initiate class events. As indicated earlier in this section, this great control could be the result of the set of objectives of the training program and learners' needs. (These are stated in sections 2.4 and 2.5 of Chapter Two, pages 13, 20 – 23). The program's objectives are based on building good English language skills for purposes of oral and written communication within the company, and as basic requirements for in and out-of-Saudi Arabia training assignments. In line with this, the learners need to be equipped with language skills that help them communicate with their supervisors, fellow workers, visitors and friends.

The third set of findings provides answers to the third research question which inquires about the learners' chances for real language practice opportunities that would allow them to use language for communication. The findings indicate that such practice opportunities are minimal.

To sum up, the above sets of findings have emerged in line with the research questions and lay the foundations for the recommendations and conclusions in the following chapter.

VII. CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

7.1 Introduction

Based on the study's data analysis stated in Chapter Five and the set of findings stated in Chapter Six, the following recommendations are provided for the purpose of enhancing the learners' oral communication skills in the Saudi Aramco BEP program.

7.2 Recommendations

Provide learners with input and instructional material which allows them to actively interact with their teachers and classmates to manipulate and expand on the content, express and defend their opinions, and question the opinions of others. This active participation in class activities will help learners meet their needs in building up better communication skills. Such skills are needed for job accomplishment, social life, and training.

This can be implemented through exposing learners to a variety of language resources such as pictures, video-clips, picture stories, classroom objects, short written texts with visual cues, Harmer (1998). Jointly with the teacher, the input could be extensively manipulated through structure exercises in order to build up the learners' knowledge of the specific language features. This knowledge is expanded through guided classroom interaction where the teacher takes a participative role rather than a directive one in explaining the new language features Pica (1994). Cooperatively, learners can practice some activities such as:

a)   interviews

b)   dialogue completions and dialogue structuring

c)   short talks

d)   using picture clues to structure oral and written discourse

e)   giving and responding to directions

f)   simple task completion

g)   unscrambling reading texts

h)   finishing stories.

At a later stage, learners can get involved in more challenging activities such as:

a)   listening to reports and expressing their own opinions on the reports'

contents

b)   completing information gap tasks

c)   taking part in role-plays

d)   problem solving in teams

e)   exploring IT resources for oral and written reports

f)   panel discussions.

At the end of each activity, learners should expect to take an active role in discussing specific language features that are recurrent in the material they work on (Shrum and Glisan, 1994; Nunan, 1989; Johnson, 1995; Celce-Murcia et. al. 1998). Some advantages of this technique are, first, the material is fresh in their minds; second, it is available for reference in case the learners need to reflect upon the contexts these features are used in.

2. Train teachers on classroom instruction methods where they guide and facilitate the learning process rather than dominate it. They need to start with whole-class interactions and move to a more cooperative work where learners work in pairs or groups to construct their own language skills and communicate their ideas to their teachers and classmates. Whether being fellow-workers on the job or living together in one apartment, working in groups allows learners to negotiate meaning and use varied communication strategies.

Teachers need to help learners utilize the available input whether it be the text material, a videotape, a cassette/CD, a picture, a map, or a story, as a source for practicing language skills; not just for exercise completion, which is a low cognitive skill (Allwright and Bailey, 1991; Ellis, 1994). Teachers need to provide opportunities for their learners to read or listen to a variety of inputs and generate several group activities where they investigate and explore the content for information, question the collected information, and report on findings orally and in writing (Chaudron, 1998; Lynch, 1996; Bygate, 1987). These high-level cognitive skills help learners to build up strong communication competencies and eventually, facilitate the learners' use of English for communication.

3. Involve learners in negotiation of meaning tasks in order to reinforce and provide feedback on their learning. In such tasks, learners may practice, in pairs or groups, what they learn in class in life-like situations. These tasks may include role-plays, problem solving, panel discussions and oral presentations followed by questions and answers. After completing the paced material, learners need to get involved in class

and out of class tasks through which they utilize the learned material to provide feedback on their learning, and, in the process, use language for communication (Kumararadivelu, 1994; Lynch, 1996).

This could be done through recalling key information in the text, questions about the text made by individual learners and addressed to classmates, panel discussions about the new language features of the lesson, short talks followed by questions and answers, oral interviews and reporting on findings, class-wall magazines, teaching parts of the health and safety lessons to the class, contributing to routine events and special days by short presentations and reporting on safety hazards.

4. Establish new training policies where teachers and learners are given more freedom to jointly construct language skills and build the learners' communicative competencies. This will, eventually, lead to modifying the current evaluation system in order to assess the learners' communication skills on a regular basis.

This can be done through increasing communicative activities in the syllabus in order to provide more practice opportunities of the learned objectives in several situations. The syllabus should also include general English material that gradually changes into a more English for Specific Purpose (ESP) content related to the learners' target jobs. (Further discussion of these jobs is provided in section 2.3 of Chapter Two.) Other policies should include reducing class sizes to allow for maximum learner participation, continuity in the training program until all levels are completed, placement tests every three years for learners who discontinue the

program and an intensive refresher English course every five years for graduates who have fewer contacts with the language on the job site.

As for the new assessment system, it should be established on an understanding that completion of any given level depends, to some extent, on successful completion of assigned language tasks rather than passing a discrete-point-item final test. The system should also include alternative testing practices such as:

- Starting progress records (profiles) for the learners in order to track the growth of their language skills

- Checklists to highlight each learner's weaknesses and strengths in certain language features

- Samples of learners' work. This may include written materials, and audio/video-tapes of discussions and presentations

- Teacher's feedback and samples of task completion activities such as information-gaps, role-plays, picture clues, etc.

The above-stated recommendations represent a proposal to Saudi Aramco training policy makers to consider a comprehensive revision of the curriculum, teaching methodology, assessment system, and the policies which control the training operations.

I personally believe that with less restrictive policies and more in-service training on the above recommendations, teachers can make lots of changes in class and create more opportunities for the learners to use language for communication, and,

eventually, enhance their oral communication skills. It is true that currently there are some changes taking place in training where individuals can learn independently; however, the required changes should be comprehensive in all training aspects. Saudi Aramco learners can benefit greatly from the proposed changes; some of the benefits are:

a) The recommended activities and methods of practice might motivate Saudi Aramco learners to increase their involvement in the learning events, and, eventually, increase their exposure to the language. This enhanced involvement and exposure will increase their language performance, which will eventually facilitate their job assignments and enhance the language proficiency of those assigned for out-of-Saudi Arabia training. For example, many Saudi Aramco employees go through a pre-structured Individual Development Plan (IDP) where they have to complete several courses related to their future jobs. The medium of instruction for these courses is English and, in most cases, the instructors are native speakers of English. Another example is the use of information technology resources. Recently, Saudi Aramco has invested large amounts of money in establishing various information technology facilities, such as subscription to international libraries, desktop and video-conferencing distance-learning, and live-link seminars. In order for the employees to utilize these facilities successfully, they have to have a reasonable command of English. A third benefit would be dealing with western supervisors and foremen who still hold important positions in critical worksites such as oil and gas plants. Finally, a high level of English is needed in order to help candidates for college

training meet the requirements such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) acceptable grade of 550 required by many American universities.

b) By changing the roles of Saudi Aramco learners from being recipients into more active roles, they will have more opportunities to dry-run job positions that they will eventually take up in the future. For example, the professional development plans for employees allow them to grow and be promoted to supervisory jobs such as group leader, training coordinator, foreman, shift supervisor, or facility/unit supervisor. Some of the duties of these jobs require attending different kinds of meetings, writing reports, giving oral presentations, counseling, and preparing operating plans. A good command of English is necessary for employees holding these jobs.

c) Working in groups helps them to establish patterns of communication with other classmates, and, eventually, co-workers. The practice they get in completing language tasks helps them build social skills such as negotiation skills, flexibility, accepting others' opinions, teamwork, and self-confidence. For example, the majority of the supervisory, crafts, maintenance, and operator jobs are now open for the Saudi workforce. In addition to being technically educated on a certain job like a controlroom or plant operator, a welding crew leader, a loss prevention inspector, a security shift supervisor, or maintenance team leader, one needs to maintain other skills such interpersonal communication skills, negotiation skills, flexibility, and teamwork skills. Without the proper

language skills, it may be difficult to many employees to grow in their careers with Saudi Aramco.

d) The intensive language learning opportunities as stated in the recommendations will help learners understand and deal with the technical course materials which are complementary to their language courses and are considered pre-requisites for their future jobs. This benefit is directly related to the learners' job skills training programs. After completing the 4A/B English levels, the learners enroll in job-specific training programs where they receive training on their future jobs. This training continues along with English levels 5 and 6 and beyond. In order for the trainees to be able to deal with the job skills course material, they need to have reasonable reading and speaking competencies. Their technical study requires them to read technical manuals, watch special video clips, and describe processes and equipment operations, in addition to equipment operating manuals. Without a reasonable command of English language skills, they are likely to face difficulties in completing those job skill programs.

Most of the recommendations and benefits for the Saudi Aramco employees stated above may be achieved if changes are made to curriculum, teaching methodology, and the policies which control the training process. However, and due to some policies and standards of the Saudi Aramco unique training system, one should expect several problems in accepting the proposed recommendations and their benefits for Saudi Aramco employees. The Saudi Aramco unique training system was first mentioned in Chapter Two of this study. It is clearly reflected in the policies and regulations

established for enrollment in a certain course, curriculum design, teaching methodology and assessment procedures. Without tangible changes in the basics of this system, it will be difficult to accept this study's recommendations and apply them.

For example, an employee is not allowed to enroll in a course/level unless it is a requirement for his job. Many of the employees are not allowed to enroll in certain levels because those levels are not required for their jobs at a certain time. Later in their career, many of these employees change their jobs due to company needs or due to plans for cross-training. These employees have to rejoin the training centers for further language training in order to meet their new job requirements. Furthermore, several employees have to enroll for further English courses in order to meet the demands of utilizing information technology facilities. Consequently, new enrollment policies need to be established where all employees have more chances to attempt any available English level whether on part-time, half-time, full-time or self-development basis.

Another feature of the Saudi Aramco training system is the curriculum designs and teaching methodology. As described in Chapter Two of this study, the training curriculum design is always controlled by the company's job needs and objectives. For example, the instructional material is either tailored for Saudi Aramco or is chosen to meet the demands of a certain group of employees such as the technical books, VELT, and the current BEP program.

In order for the recommendations of this study to be applied, the choice of instructional material and teaching methodology should be based on the learners' language needs as

well as the company's job objectives. Teachers need to be trained in teaching techniques that maximize the learners' exposure to the language and allow them to use language for real life communication. Unless these changes are introduced, the recommendations will not be accepted. The final feature of the Saudi Aramco unique training system which may create a concern for accepting the proposed recommendations is the assessment system. This is reflected clearly in two practices, the standards for a course completion and the final test as the major judgment for a course/level. These two aspects are complementary. The components of the final tests depend mainly on multiple-choice test items that test the learners' knowledge rather that their ability to use language for self-expression. A learner who scores 70% on those tests is promoted to the next level and is considered as meeting the requirements for certain jobs, though his ability to use language could be much lower than the completed level.

Therefore, changes in the Saudi Aramco training assessment system need to allow for ongoing assessment of the learners' level of language performance, and completion of a certain level needs to take into consideration the ability of the learner to use the language for self-expression and completion of certain tasks that reflect his actual level of performance. Without the above-proposed changes and recommendations, Saudi Aramco learners will always suffer from poor language performance, and, eventually, will not build up the desired communicative language skills necessary for their careers with the company.

With the above discussion of the proposed changes in the Saudi Aramco training system, this chapter concludes. However, I would like to end it with the following tale:

"Once a man lived in a town near the sea. He couldn't swim because he never tried to learn how to swim. However, most of the town's people were very good swimmers and spent happy times in the water.

One day, the man made up his mind and decided to learn how to swim because he didn't want to miss the fun anymore. So, he bought several books about swimming from the town's bookshop and spent many hours reading about the different tricks and moves required to learn swimming. In the evenings, he would also spend some hours practicing his growing knowledge about swimming on top of his own bed! He would imagine the bed as a sea location and jump on it or dive into his bedsheets. He would also stretch on his back and strike the air with his hands; on several occasions, he fell on the hard room floor!

After several days, he decided to enhance his swimming knowledge by watching the other swimmers in action. So, he would sit for hours on the beach memorizing their moves, and later in the night, he would return to his room and practice the newly learnt moves on his bed.

The man went on with this routine of reading, watching and practicing on his bed until he was convinced that he had acquired the needed swimming skills to enjoy sea. The following morning, he put on his new swimming suit and marched towards the sea. He threw himself in the water and headed below the surface. Unfortunately, that was the last time he was ever seen by the town swimmers!" *

* *Retold by the writer from folklore tales.*

The implications behind this story is that in order for the man to learn swimming properly, he should have gone directly to the water and started his first lesson there. In addition to learning several moves or watching others doing it, he should have lived the learning experiences by allowing his body to float and sink, stretch and dive, move forward and backward, on his back and on his chest in the water rather than on his bed. He should have experienced staying under water for longer times and jumping to the surface gasping for air and occasionally swallowing salty water. With the help of a swimming instructor, those repeated, actual and live experiences in the water would have allowed him to master the skill and enjoy the gradual progress he made every time he found himself floating and moving in several directions easily. Reading about swimming, watching others doing it and practicing it in the wrong setting did not save the man's life.

Language learning is no different. It is an axiom that language is learned through acquiring several skills, just like learning driving and swimming. Under the guidance of a skillful teacher, learners need to immerse themselves in several experiences in the proper setting and get actively involved in intensive practice as much as possible until they gradually master those skills.

SPECIAL NOTE

THIS ITEM IS BOUND IN SUCH A

MANNER AND WHILE EVERY

EFFORT HAS BEEN MADE TO

REPRODUCE THE CENTRES, FORCE

WOULD RESULT IN DAMAGE

T&CD STRUCTURE

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                    ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
                    │      GENERAL MANAGER              │
                    │  Training & Career Development    │
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T&CD POLICY & PLANNING STAFF	ACADEMIC TRAINING DEPARTMENT	CAREER DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT & EVALUATION DIVISION	JOB SKILLS TRAINING DEPARTMENT	
TRAINING SUPPORT & QUALITY ASSURANCE DIVISION	CENTRAL REGION/ WESTERN REGION TRAINING DEPARTMENT	

ATD

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                          ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                          │          DIRECTOR           │
                          │ Academic Training Department │
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SUPERINTENDENT CA Academic Training Div	SUPERINTENDENT SA Academic Training Div	SUPERINTENDENT NA Academic Training Div
Asst. Superintendent DH. N ITC Section	Asst. Superintendent Hasa/Udh. Acad Trng. Section	Principal Rah. Math/Sci.
Principal DH North M/S Unit	Principal Al Hasa Adv. Eng/Math/Sci. Unit	Principal Rahima Basic/Int. Eng.
Principal DH B/I English Unit	Principal Al Hasa Basic/Int. English	Principal Rahima Adv. Eng. Unit
Principal DH Advanced English	Principal Udhailiyah ITC	Principal NA Satellite ITC
Principal Special Training Center	Principal Abqaiq Basic/Int. Eng. Unit	
Principal CPP-Eng. & Gen. Studies Unit	Principal Abqaiq Adv. Eng/Math/Sci Unit	
Principal CPP-Math/Sci/Tech. Unit		
Principal Prof. English Lang. Unit		

CR/WRTD

DIRECTOR
Academic Training Department

SUPERINTENDENT
Jeddah Training Div

- Group Leader
  Job Training Standard Group
- Principal
  English PELP Unit
- Principal
  Math/Science Clerical Unit
- Supervisor
  Operator skills Unit
- Supervisor
  Maintenance Skills Unit
- Supervisor
  Driver Training Unit
- Coordinator
  Facilities Group

SUPERINTENDENT
Riyadh Training Div

- Group Leader
  Job Training Standard Group
- Principal
  Riyadh Math/Science Clerical Unit
- Principal
  Riyadh English Unit
- Supervisor
  Operator Skills Unit
- Supervisor
  Maintenance Skills Unit
- Supervisor
  Driver Trng & Heavy Equip Unit
- Coordinator
  Facilities Group

SUPERINTENDENT
Yanbu Training Div

- Asst. Superintendent
  Rabigh Training Section
- Principal
  Rabigh Academic Training Unit
- Supervisor
  Rabigh Job Skills Training Unit
- Supervisor
  Rabigh Training Support Unit
- Supervisor
  Yanbu Metals Machinist Unit
- Principal
  Yanbu Academic Training Unit
- Supervisor
  Yanbu Operator Skills/Driver/
  Heavy Equipment Unit
- Supervisor
  Yanbu Instrument/Electrical Unit
- Supervisor
  Yanbu Metals Machinist Unit
- Group Leader
  Yanbu Facilities Group

Administrator
CR/WR Career Dev.

- Group Leader
  Supervisory/Prof. Develop Group
- Group Leader
  Saudi Development Group
- Group Leader
  Redeployment & Community
  Service Group
- Group Leader
  Rabigh & Yanbu Career
  Development Group
- Team Leader
  Rabigh Career Development
  Team
- Team Leader
  Yanbu Career Development
  Team Leader

**Communications
Then and Now**

Lesson One

Exercise 1

Study the new words in the box. Then, read the statements. Are they true or false? Write T for true and F for false.

▼

Statement	T/F
1 Everyone uses the telegraph every day.	
2 If the police stop you while you're driving, they will usually ask you for documents such as your driver's license.	
3 The moon shines at night because it reflects the sun's light.	
4 When you reverse out of a parking lot, you should be looking out your back window.	
5 A fax machine is a very important document.	
6 The road from Jeddah to Riyadh joins the two largest cities in the Kingdom.	
7 I spoke to my brother on the fax machine this morning.	

telegraph (noun) a way of sending messages along a wire using electric signals.
The invention of the **telegraph** was the first time people could send messages over long distances quickly.

document (noun) a paper containing information of some kind.
When you enter a foreign country, you must have the correct **documents**.

fax/facsimile machine (noun) a machine that sends copies of documents through the phone lines.
I'll send you this letter by **fax** so that you can have it today.

join (verb) bring together; connect.
I can **join** my computer at home to the computer at work using my telephone.

shine (verb) **shone, shone** give off light.
In Saudi Arabia we can see the sun **shining** almost every day.

reverse (verb) go backwards; go the opposite way.
We need to **reverse** our direction because we're going the wrong way.

Exercise 2

Study the new words in the box. Then, put them into the sentences below using the correct form of the word. You may use a word more than once.

▼

1 I think cooking with gas is the preferred _____ of cooking.

2 My supervisor wants me to _____ the new project so that everything will work correctly.

3 We have the _____ to watch something happening thousands of miles away by simply turning on our TV.

4 In the ITC, the bell _____ the beginning and the end of classes.

5 The Internet is the most modern method of _____.

6 People who can't hear use hand _____ to talk to each other.

7 It's difficult to _____ with someone who doesn't speak your language.

8 If you didn't bring lunch, don't worry. You can _____ with me. I brought extra food.

---

method (noun) a way of doing something.
Different people have different **methods** for earning money; some work for a company and some have their own businesses.

communications (noun) the methods by which information travels: telephone, mail, fax, television, radio...
I think the phone and the mail are the two most used methods of **communications**.

communicate (verb) give and receive information.
I **communicate** with my family every week by letter, or by phone.

share (verb) use or have something between two or more people.
There aren't enough books so some students will have to **share**.

technology (noun) things that have to do with scientific or industrial methods and their uses.
The **technology** that scientists develop for the space program is used for many other things too, like our home computers or new materials for airplanes.

signal (noun) a sound or action that is understood to give a message.
We use turn **signals** to give the message to other drivers that we are turning right or left.
(verb) The teacher **signaled** to the trainees to go back to the class.

organize (verb) put into a good working system.
My brother is going to help me **organize** my garage because I can never find anything in it quickly.
(noun=organization) My room needs some **organization** because it is not neat.

Exercise 3

Which word completes each sentence? Circle A, B or C.

▼

1 I want to take a class with that teacher because I like his _____ of teaching.

   A signal
   B document
   C method

2 He needs to _____ his desk because he can never find what he's looking for quickly.

   A organize
   B share
   C join

3 There are some important _____ that my father wants me to sign.

   A signals
   B technologies
   C documents

4 If you have a _____, I can send this information to you immediately.

   A signal
   B fax machine
   C document

5 The new gold ring _____ in the sun.

   A organized
   B shared
   C shone

6 You don't have a phone in your own office yet, so you can _____ my office.

   A organize
   B share
   C reverse

7 Over the last 100 years, _____ has changed the way we travel and our system of communications.

   A technology
   B organization
   C signaling

8 If you study English well, you will be able to _____ when you travel to England or the USA.

   A organize
   B share
   C communicate

9 The _____ used electric signals to send messages before the invention of the telephone.

   A fax machine
   B document
   C telegraph

10 Ali had decided not to get married until next year. However, he _____ his decision and got married last week.

   A reversed
   B shared
   C joined

11 The red and green lights of a traffic _____ tell us when to stop or go.

   A method
   B telegraph
   C signal

12 Sending a letter or using a phone are two methods of _____ that we use every day.

   A communications
   B signals
   C documents

13 If all six of us buy one book each, and then _____ them, we can all read six different books for the price of one.

   A organize
   B communicate
   C share

Communications Then and Now

Lesson Two

Exercise 1

Look at the pictures. Read the preview. Then, discuss the questions with your teacher.
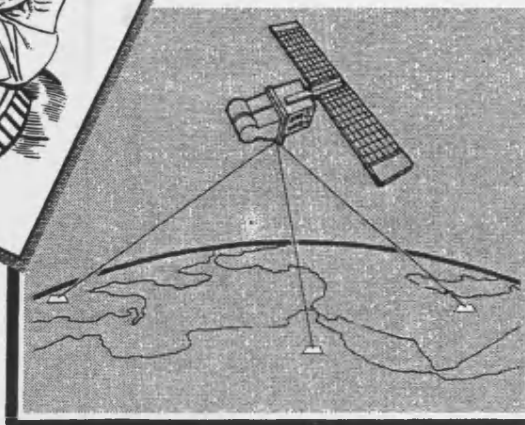
Preview

Sending messages and information from one group or person to another has always been important to people. Through **communications**, people can **share** ideas and make plans. The need to send information has not changed for thousands of years. However, the **methods** for sending it have changed a lot. Today, because of new **technology**, people all over the world can **communicate** quickly and easily with each other.

Questions

1 How have communications changed since your grandfather was young?

2 How many times a day do you use a phone or fax?

3 Before telephones, what did people do if they wanted to speak to each other?

Exercise 3

Read the preview in Exercise 1 and the passage in Exercise 2 again. Then, answer the questions below. Circle A, B, C or D.

▼

1 Long ago, people sent messages by
_____.

  A fax
  B telephone
  C smoke signals
  D television

2 The _____ were the first people
to use paper for writing messages.

  A Egyptians
  B Persians
  C French
  D British

3 The _____ were the first people
to organize a postal system.

  A Romans
  B Persians
  C Egyptians
  D French

4 The Internet is a group of _____
that share information.

  A telegraphs
  B televisions
  C computers
  D letters

5 Only _____ years ago, the US
postal system still used horses to
carry letters.

  A 50
  B 150
  C 175
  D 200

Read the following statements. Are they true or false? Write T for true and F for false.

▼

Statement	T/F
6 Methods of communications haven't changed for a long time.	
7 Because of new technology, it is difficult for people to communicate today.	
8 The telegraph was invented a little less than 200 years ago.	
9 The telephone was invented before the telegraph was.	
10 If you're on the Internet, you can communicate with people all over the world.	

Exercise 3

Read the passages in Exercises 1 and 2 again. Then, answer the questions. Circle A, B, C or D.

▼

1 A cellular phone uses _____ .

A electrical signals
B radio signals
C a thin line of light
D a moving cylinder

2 A fax machine uses _____ .

A radio signals
B radio transmitters
C electrical signals
D radio receivers

3 In a fax machine, _____ passes over the cylinder.

A radio signals
B electrical signals
C a transmitter
D a thin line of light

Read the following statements. Are they true or false? Write T for true and F for false.

▼

Statement	T/F
4 There are many control centers connected to each cell.	
5 Electrical signals are part of the system used by a fax machine.	
6 A fax machine can tell the difference between white, gray, and black on a piece of paper.	
7 "Cells" are very large areas of land.	
8 A call on a cellular phone never uses regular phone lines.	
9 Fax machines can tell the difference between black, blue or green.	
10 A cellular phone is more useful in an emergency outdoors than a fax machine.	
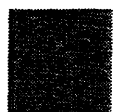
Communications
Then and Now
Lesson Four
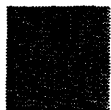
Exercise 1

Study the expressions in the boxes. Read the example dialogs and use the guide words to make new dialogs. Make the necessary changes. Work in pairs.

▼

Asking for clarification

1 Pardon me?

2 I'm sorry, what was that?

3 Excuse me?

4 What did you say?

5 I'm afraid I don't follow you.

6 Could you say that again, please?

Giving clarification

1 I was just saying...

2 I said...

3 Let me repeat that for you...

4 I'll repeat that.

Example 1

A: It's very warm in here.

B: *Pardon me?*

A: *I was just saying* it's very warm in here.

B: Oh, I see. Maybe we should turn the AC on.

A: Sure. That's a good idea.

Example 2

A: We need thirteen more boxes of that product.

B: *I'm sorry, what was that?* Did you say thirty or thirteen?

A: *I said* thirteen.

B: OK. I understand. I'll get them straight away.

A: Thank you.

1 There is a lot of traffic this morning.

2 The plane will be forty minutes late.

3 I put the files on your desk.

4 There will be a short break from 11:00 to 11:15.

5 Is that Badr standing over there?

6 What's the problem? Have you hurt your leg?

7 I'm going to Damascus for my vacation this year.

8 The coffee's ready. Help yourself.

Exercise 2

Look at the chart. You will hear a telephone conversation between Ali Al-Athamin, the senior teacher at Jeddah ITC, and Jamal, in the Services Unit. Ali is calling to request additional books for the ITCs. The line is bad, so Jamal has to ask Ali to repeat several things. Listen to the tape and complete the chart. You will hear the conversation twice.

▼

No. of books	Subject/level	ITC	Why needed

Exercise 3

Give a short talk about one of the following. Use three or four sentences for your talk.

▼

1 Talk about how communications have changed over the last 50 years.

2 Describe a cellular phone.

3 Talk about the changes that modern communications make in people's lives.

4 Describe how people used to communicate 200 years ago.

5 Describe how a fax machine works.

6 If you are familiar with the Internet, describe what the Internet is and what you can do with it.

Communications Then and Now
Lesson Five

Exercise 1

Complete the following statements using your own words. Make sure what you write fits the rest of the statement. Follow the example.

▼

Example: The telephone is a very important invention because **we use it every day.**

1 At work, I'm very busy all the time, but _____

_____

2 When it's the month of Ramadan, _____

_____

3 My wife asked me _____

_____

4 When we go to the beach, _____

_____

5 I can help move you because _____

_____

6 If I'm going to finish on time, _____

_____

Exercise 2

Read the following about communicating by letter. Use the guide words to write in the missing sentences. Then, use these sentences to complete the paragraph below. Use correct capitalization, punctuation and sequence words.

▼

1 Write a letter to someone.

2 (envelope)

_____

3 (mailing address)

_____

4 (return address)

_____

5 (stamp)

_____

6 (mail box)

_____

Sending a letter

_____Sending a letter is still a very popular way to communicate._____

First, _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Exercise 3

Read the paragraph about Ali's old Mazda. Write a similar paragraph about your new Caprice. Make sure you use similar, but not the same, ideas. Use correct capitalization and punctuation. Make changes as necessary.

▼

Ali's old Mazda

My friend Ali just bought an old Mazda 929. It is a 1978 model. Nothing in this car is automatic. It has a manual transmission. It also has regular seats and regular windows. Its top speed is 90 km/hour. This car does not have any modern safety devices like air bags. It's not big enough for all of Ali's family to ride in comfortably. Ali is not happy with his car, but he has no money for a new car.

▼

My new car

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

COLT Part A

************** Communicative Orientation Of Language Teaching Observation Scheme **************

School: _____   Grade (s) _____   Observer _____

Teacher: _____   Lesson (min.) _____   Visit No. _____

Subject: _____   Date _____   Page _____

TIME	ACTIVITIES & EPISODES	PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION							CONTENT								CONTENT CONTROL			STUDENT MODALITY					MATERIALS							
		Class			Group		Indiv.		Manag.		Language				Other Topics										Type				Source			
																									Text							
		T<>S/C	S<>S/C	Choral	Same Task	Different Tasks	Same Task	Different Tasks	Procedure	Discipline	Form	Function	Discourse	Socioling.	Narrow	Broad	Teacher/Text	Teacher/Text/Stud.	Student	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Other	Minimal	Extended	Audio	Visual	L2-NNS	L2-NS	L2-NSA	Student-made
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33

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Public Relations Department
MEDIA PRODUCTION DIVISION
Building 3030, LIP, Dhahran
Tel. 876-1607; Fax 876-1404
June 10, 2001

PRD/MPD: 218/01

Videotaping of ITC Activities

Faisal A. Al-Sharif, Superintendent
Southern Area Academic Training Division
Abqaiq
Fax: 572-3940

Reference letter SAATD-01/138.

Please be advised that Media Production Division has no objection for Mr. A.I. Hasan to videotape ITC classes as part of his degree program requirements. It is MPD's understanding that Mr. Hasan will supply his own camera and materials.

It will be necessary, per company directives, for the ITC tapes to be reviewed by MPD prior to their release as a formality.

If you require any additional information, please call Mohammad Al-Umairi at 872-2933.

Your cooperation is appreciated.

Zaki M. Al-Shobber, Producer
Media Programs

ZMS/cde

cc: MRU

AL-HASA INDUSTRIAL TRAINING CENTER
Basic/Intermediate English Unit
Box 6140, Mubarraz
577-1864; 577-1845
April 1, 2001

REQUEST TO CONDUCT
CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

FAISAL A. AL-SHARIF, Superintendent
Southern Area Academic Training Division
Box 5280, Abqaiq

Dear Sir:
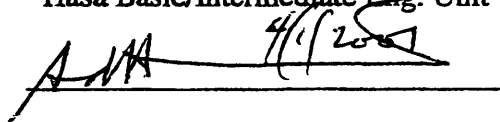
As you know, I am currently undertaking a Doctorate Degree program in Education – TESOL with Leicester University – England.
The Degree thesis requires conducting systematic observations for about thirty Basic English Program (BEP) classes. I would very much appreciate your concurrence to conduct these observations.
I hereby assure you that the collected data will be utilized only for the study analysis and findings which may, hopefully, help us improve the quality of our instruction in the future.
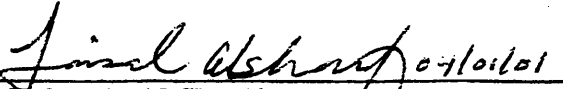
Thank you for your usual cooperation and support.

ADNAN L. HASAN, Principal(A)
Hasa Basic/Intermediate Eng. Unit

CONCURRENCE:

Faisal A. Al-Sharif, Superintendent
Southern Area Academic Trng. Division

ABQAIQ BASIC INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH UNIT
Box:5667;Tel:572-4631;Fax:572-4651
June 30 ,2001

<u>**OBSERVATION SCHEDULE**</u>

'TEACHERS CONCERNED

Adnan Hasan,Principal(A) of Udh ITC, will observe the following classes on July 1,2001 according to the following schedule:

SECTION	ROOM	PERIOD	TEACHER	SKILL
E4MF	203	1	AL KHATIB	Vocabulary(L.1)
E4MA	215	2	BUTLIN	READING(L.2)
E3MA	201	4	HESTER	READING(L.3)
E3MB	205	5	TYEB	LISTENING(L.4)

Notes:

1-These observations are not for evaluation purposes.They are required for Adnan's doctoral thesis,so
  be natural and normal during the observations.
2-Adnan needs to have a copy of your lesson plans for the periods he will observe.

Your cooperation with Mr. Hasan is appreciated .

KAM

cc :NJY

AIH,Udh. ITC

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Appendix "F"

COLT Part A

A comprehensive summary of all COLT Scheme, Part A, categories with percentile values indicating how much of classtime is spent on each category and its sub-categories.

LESSON	PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION Class T<>S/C	S<>S/C	Choral	Group Same Task	Different Tasks	Indiv. Same Task	Different Tasks	CONTENT Manag. Procedure	Discipline	Language Form	Function	Discourse	Socioling.	Other Topics Narrow	Broad	CONTENT CONTROL Teacher/Text	Teacher/Text/Stud.	Student	STUDENT MODALITY Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Other	MATERIALS Type Text Minimal	Extended	Audio	Visual	Source L2-NNS	L2-NS	L2-NSA	Student-made
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
1	68	18	4			4		6		86				8		70	20	4	28	28	6	32		✓	-			94			
2	76	6				16		2		60				38		100			24	16	36	22		✓	✓			98			
3	44	14				42				18				82		100			6	14	70	10		✓	✓			100			
4	26	32		6		26	8	2			86			12		58	12	28	10	56	24	8		-	✓	10		88			
5	50			14		26		10		46				30	14	60	30		16	22	38	14		✓	✓			90			
6	72	2				24		2		48				50		100			40		58			✓	✓			100			
7	54	16				26		10		42				48		100			32	8	30	16	4	✓	✓	12		78			
8	38	10			4	32	14	2		64	20			14		30	70		14	12	30	42		✓	✓	6		92			
9	68	8				20		4		92					4	74	22			30	44	20	2	✓	-			96			
10	44	14				36		6					4	84	6	48	46		4	26	58		6	✓	✓		6	88			
11	52	4				42		2						98		100				36	62			✓	✓			98			
12	58	6				30		6			90					20	68	6	14	64	16			✓	✓	14	14	60			
13	64	10				26				18				82		76	24		24	16	50		10	✓	✓			94	6		
14	74	2				18		6		90				4		74	20		38	8	30	18		✓	-			94			
15	72					20		8		42				50		100			2		90			✓	✓			92			
16	68	16				10		6			66			28		40	54		38	34	22			✓	✓	10		84			
17	62	6				30		2						98		90	8		18	10	70			✓	✓			100			
18	58	18				22		2		98						98			44	12	18	22	2	✓	-			100			
19	56	2		8		30		4		32				64		100				8	88			✓	✓			100			
20	56	8				34		2		16				74	8	100			26	16	56			✓	✓			100			
21	8	56				34		2		30	18			28	22	32	66		14	22	38	18	6	✓	✓	14	22	62			
22	40.5					58.5		1		8.5			6	84.5		66	34		32		51	17		✓	✓			100			
23	23.5				25.5	50		1		53.5				45.5		79	20		12	8.5	48.5	30		✓	✓			100			
24	77					23				17.5				59	23	77	23		17.5	43	33.5		6	✓	✓			100			
25	57.5	14				28					36.5			57	6	46	53.5		34	53	12			✓	✓	28		72			
26	46	10				28								98		98			38		38	8		✓	✓			84			
27	58	24			4	12		10		10				78		68	30		26	18	42	12		✓	✓			98			
28	52	6				40		2		40				58		92	6		26	16	32	24		✓	-			98			
29	18	38				42		2		80				18		62	36		14		48	32	4	✓	✓			98			
30	24	10		16		50				100						56	18	26	4	8	30	58		✓	-			100			

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Air Safety
Lesson Two

Exercise 1

Look at the picture. Read the preview. Then, discuss the questions with your teacher.

▼
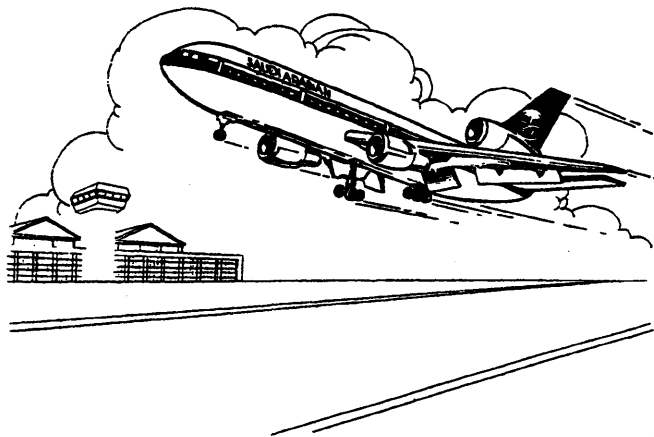
Preview

1996 was the worst year for aircraft accidents for a long time. Over 2,000 people died in plane accidents. Is flying becoming more unsafe, or is the increase in accidents just a result of the increase in flights?

▼

Questions

1 Talk about a famous air accident that you can remember.

2 How safe do you feel when you fly?

3 How can experts make flying safer?

4 Which do you think is safer: traveling by air or by car?

Exercise 11

Read the passage in Exercise 5 again. Then, complete the sentences using the information from the passage.

▶

Responding Quickly

Responding quickly is an important company value. Good companies should respond quickly to changes. In 1991, the Saudi government asked Saudi Arabia to produce more crude oil.
5 With its usual speed, the company quickly increased the amount produced.

A company should also respond to the needs and wants of people buying its products. First, it should get information about what these buyers
10 want. Then, it should use this information to improve its products and services.

The people in a company should also respond quickly to each other. Employees should respond quickly when supervisors ask them to
15 do something. Also, supervisors should respond quickly to the needs of their employees.

When people respond quickly, everyone gains. Everyone notices faster service. People who buy goods are happier because they are getting
20 faster service. Workers are happier because they are helping each other more.

Word count: 145 words   *Time:* _____

---

1 Saudi Aramco agreed to do what the government asked and _____

_____

2 A company should gain information about _____

_____

3 A company should use information about other companies to _____

_____

4 Supervisors need to notice their employees_____

_____

Unit Twenty-Seven

Defensive Driving
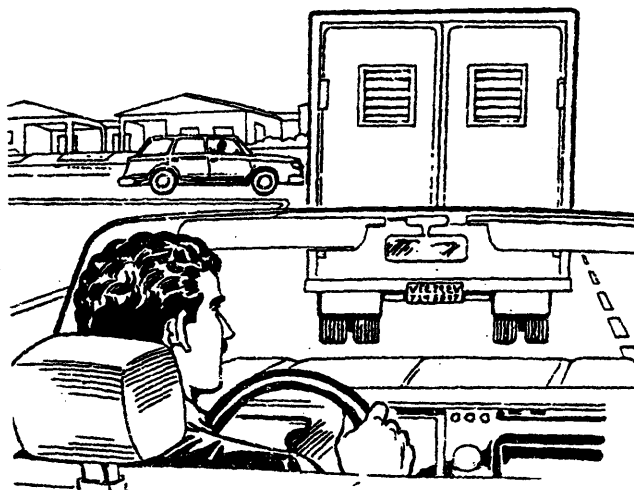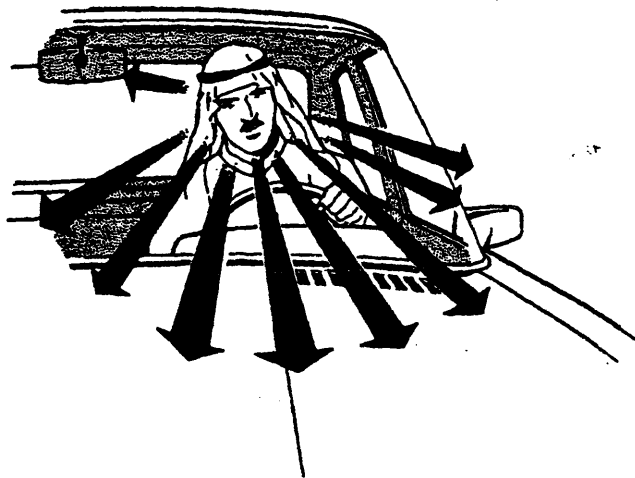
Exercise 1

Read the passage silently and answer the questions. Circle A, B, C or D. Then, discuss the passage and the new words with the teacher.

▶

Driving Safely

All accidents have a cause. Most traffic accidents are the result of bad driving. Therefore, it is important for **each** driver to improve his driving skills. A good driver must
5 drive carefully and pay attention to all traffic rules. He must also **share** the road with others and drive at the right speed.

Sometimes, the condition of the roads or bad weather makes driving more difficult. But a
10 good driver drives safely in difficult conditions. Trouble, however, often comes from other drivers. Careless drivers make mistakes. **In fact**, they are a danger to themselves and to others on the road. That is why the best driver
15 is a **defensive** driver. A defensive driver tries to prevent accidents by predicting what other drivers are going to do. This is driving to stay **alive**.

Word count: 131 words   *Time: _____*

▼

New Words

each (adjective)   **defensive** (adjective)

share (verb)   **alive** (adjective)

in fact (adverb phrase)

1 Every accident _____.

   A is the result of bad driving

   B happens in difficult conditions

   C has a cause

   D can be avoided by defensive driving

2 Defensive drivers _____.

   A always drive slowly

   B are careless

   C never have accidents

   D are the best drivers

3 The condition of the road _____.

   A can make driving more difficult

   B never changes

   C is not important

   D makes careless drivers

4 Careless drivers _____.

   A drive safely in good conditions

   B are a danger to other people

   C try to predict what other drivers are going to do

   D do not make mistakes

Exercise 3

*Study the pictures.
Discuss each picture
with a partner. Then, be
ready to tell the class
what happened. The
teacher will also ask you
questions about the
pictures.*

Ali Buys a Car for His Son
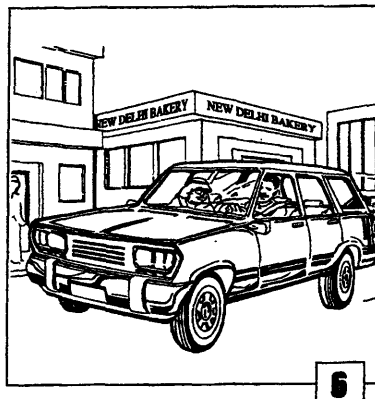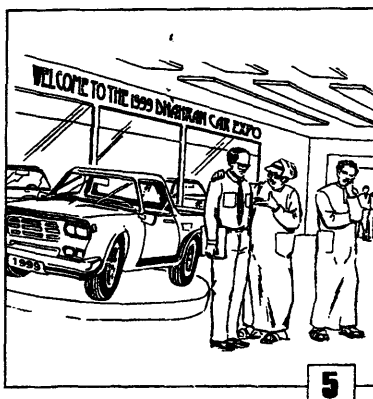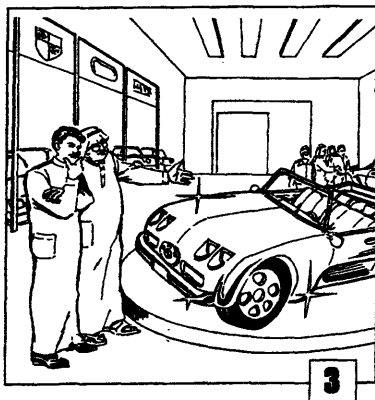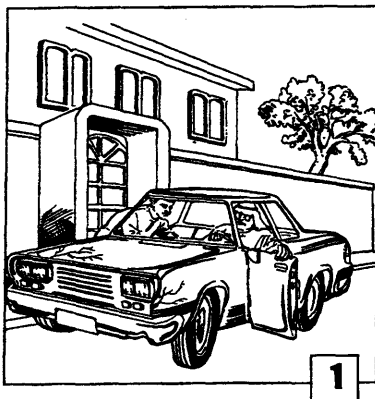
Exercise 4

Study the rule in the box. Then, use one of the words in parentheses to complete each sentence. The first one is done for you.

> **Did You Know?**
>
> You can add the suffix *-ation* to certain verbs to make nouns. For example, *relax* ⇨ *relaxation*. If the verb ends in an *e*, drop the *e* when you add *-ation*. For example, *examine* ⇨ *examination*. Do you know any other verbs that can be changed in this way?

▶

1 *(recommend / recommendation)*

A worker needs a good ___recommendation___ from his employer if he wants to get a new job.

2 *(continued / continuation)*

The rain _____ to fall the next day.

3 *(Memorize / Memorization)*

_____ becomes more difficult as you get older.

4 *(examine / examination)*

Everyone did well on the _____.

5 *(explain / explanation)*

The supervisor asked for an _____ of Ali's poor work.

6 *(install / installation)*

The _____ of the air conditioning should be finished on Monday.

7 *(relax / relaxation)*

Do you like to _____ after eating a meal?

8 *(invite / invitation)*

Mansour received an _____ to a talk during the GCC Traffic Week.

9 *(applied / applications)*

After seeing the advertisement, many people _____ for the job of electrician.

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Exercise 6

Read the passage in Exercise 5 again. Use the information to answer the questions with complete sentences. The first one is done for you.

▼

1 What is "the big picture"?

<u>It is everything that the driver can see.</u>

_____

2 What kinds of things does the defensive driver check for?

_____

_____

3 How does a driver see what is happening behind him?

_____

_____

4 Why does the defensive driver want space around him?

_____

_____

5 How does a driver tell other road users what he plans to do?

_____

_____

6 How does a driver warn pedestrians or other drivers?

_____

_____

Exercise 7

Listen to the short talks. After each talk, answer the question(s). Circle A, B or C. You will hear each talk twice.

▶

Talk One

1 If you have to take someone to the hospital, _____.

A always use other transportation
B return quickly to the place of the accident
C go with a policeman

Talk Two

2 Animals are dangerous because _____.

A it is difficult to predict what they will do
B they are difficult to see
C there are a lot of them

Talk Three

3 Most of the 100 drivers _____.

A drive at 80 kph
B take more than 53 meters to stop when driving at 80 kph
C take longer to stop than they think

Talk Four

4 The best place to park is _____.

A in a parking lot
B near a traffic sign
C by another parked car

5 Never park where there _____.

A are people
B is a lot of space
C are yellow lines

Unit Nine

Good Study Habits
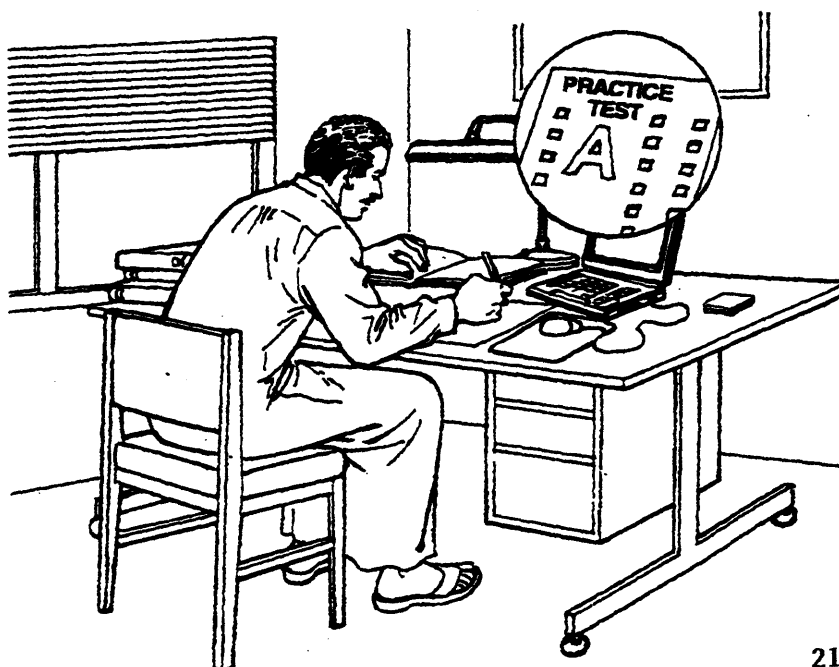
Exercise 1

Read the passage silently. Then, discuss the passage, the new words and the questions with the teacher.

▶

Good Study Habits
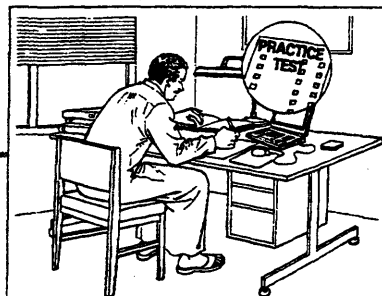
Different things **contribute** to making someone a successful learner. This unit talks about good
5 study habits. It will help you **recognize** which of your study habits are good and which are bad. Also, you will learn some **practical** things you can do to become a better learner.

Word count: 47 words   *Time:* _____

▼

New Words

contribute (verb)

recognize (verb)

practical (adjective)

instead of (adverbial phrase)

▼

Questions

1 What does the area where you study look like?
2 Do you study a little each day **instead of** waiting until the day of the test? Which do you think is better?
3 Are you good at taking tests?

Exercise 2

Answer the questions in the box about your study area. Write Y for Yes or N for No. Then, answer the questions below. Discuss the answers with the teacher.

▶

Statements	Y/N
1 Do you have a desk or table to study at?	
2 Do you have a quiet area to study in?	
3 Does the desk or table you study at have enough room to write easily?	
4 Do you have a place for everything you need, like books, pens, pencils and other things?	
5 Do you sit in a chair that is comfortable and good for your back?	
6 Is your study area free of things that distract you, like magazines, newspapers, and even people?	
7 Is there enough light for you to study by?	
8 Is the temperature in the room comfortable?	
9 Is your study area free of noisy things like phones, TVs or radios?	
10 Do you have a watch or clock in the room, so that you can check the time?	

▼

1 How many times did you answer "Yes"?

2 Look at the questions you answered "No" to. Do you see anything you can change to have a better study area?

Exercise 3

Find six things that are wrong with the picture of Khalid's study area and write them below. Then, write the number of the question from Exercise 2 that talks about each item below. The first one is done for you.

▶

▼

1 **There is no room to write on the desk.**   3

2 _____ ☐

3 _____ ☐

4 _____ ☐

5 _____ ☐

6 _____ ☐

Exercise 4

Read the statements below. Are they true or false? Write T for true and F for false.

▼

Statements	T/F
1 It is good to study where a radio is playing.	
2 Newspapers, magazines and phones can distract you from studying.	
3 You shouldn't check the time when you study.	
4 There shouldn't be any books on the desk when you study.	
5 There should be enough light in your study area.	
6 You should always study in a comfortable place—for example, your bed.	
7 You should study in an area where the temperature is just right.	
8 When you study, keep the TV on. Then, you can take time out to watch it and relax.	

Exercise 5

Read the passage silently. Then, discuss the passage and the new words with the teacher. Finally, read the information below and discuss it with your teacher.

▶

Short-Term and Long-Term Memory

Your memory is everything you remember and keep in your mind. There are two types of memory. The first type is called short-term memory. What you did ten minutes ago or
5 yesterday is stored there. The second type is called long-term memory. Long-term memory stores and helps you remember things you did or learned years ago.

When you learn a new language, there is
10 always a lot to **memorize**. One of the best ways to remember what you learn in class is to **review** it aloud. Reviewing aloud helps to get things from your short-term memory into your long-term memory.

Word count: 100 words   *Time:* _____

New Words

memorize (verb)

review (verb)

▼

What to Do

1 Find something you need to review and divide it into small parts.

2 Put the information you need to review on study cards.

3 Read what you want to remember, cover it up, and then say it aloud.

4 If you said it right, go on to the next item. If you didn't, read it, cover it up, and say it again. Do this until you get it right.

5 Keep going until you finish everything you want to study.

6 Remember: **If you can't say it, you don't know it.**

Exercise 6

Work in pairs. Divide the words in the shaded box in two. Put three words in each box. Then, do the activity below.

contribute   practical

impractical   recognize

review   instead of

1 One of you will close his book and say the three words in one of the boxes without looking at it. The other will check him.

2 Switch and repeat until you both know all the words.

3 Make sure you check each other's pronunciation.

Exercise 7

Match the words to the clues. Write the letter of the word in the box. There is one extra word.

▼

☐	go over something you just learned	**A** contribute
☐	isn't useful or doesn't work	**B** practical
☐	add to, put your part in	**C** impractical
☐	is useful or has an everyday use	**D** memorize
☐	know something when you see it	**E** review
☐	in place of	**F** instead of
		G recognize

*Now choose four of the above words. Write one word in each box below. Then, write a definition that describes that word. Finally, review the words **and definitions** with a partner the same way you did in Exercise 6. The first one is done for you.*

Study Card

memorize
Study something until you
know it and remember it.

Study Card	**Study Card**

Study Card	**Study Card**

Exercise 8

Write a complete sentence for each of the four words you put on the study cards in Exercise 7.

▼

1 _____

_____

2 _____

_____

3 _____

_____

4 _____

_____

Exercise 9

Complete the statements about the last time you took a test. Circle A, B, C or D.

▼

A Test-Taking Survey

1 The last time I took a test, I studied for it _____.
  A the day of the test
  B a little the night before
  C a lot the night before
  D a little every day and the night before

2 The last time I took a test, I _____.
  A didn't study at all
  B studied a little from the book
  C studied from the book and some notes
  D studied from the book, my notes, and some study cards that I made

3 During the test, I answered _____.
  A some of the questions
  B more than half of the questions
  C all the questions that I knew
  D all the questions, even if I was not sure about some of them

4 During the test, I _____.
  A never read the directions
  B read some of the directions
  C read the directions once
  D read all the directions twice

5 During the test, I _____.
  A never checked the time
  B checked the time once
  C checked the time twice
  D checked the time regularly

6 After I finished the test, _____.
  A I turned it in without checking it first
  B I checked part of it before turning it in
  C I checked it all quickly before turning it in
  D I checked carefully to make sure I answered all the questions

Exercise 10

Look at the table. Use it to find out your total from Exercise 9.

▶

for every	answer	your score is
A		1
B		2
C		3
D		4
	Your Total	

▼

Now read the table below. Find the box that has your total. Then, read the explanation next to it. Discuss what you read with your teacher and the class.

Total	Explanation
6–10	You need some new "test-taking" habits.
11–18	You are doing some things right, but you can improve.
19–24	You do a very good job of getting ready for and taking tests. There may be some things that you can improve on.

▼

Discuss the following questions with the teacher.

1 When you take a test, do you usually think that you are ready for it?

2 Think about the last test you took. Do you think you did well on it?

3 What are some things you do to get ready for a test?

4 What are some things you don't do but think you should?

Exercise 11

Read the ideas in the box. Then discuss the ideas and the new words with the teacher.

▶

Things to Do Before a Test

1 **Keep up** in class. If you miss a class, make sure you **catch up**.

2 Review what you have learned daily.

3 Do not wait until the last minute to study.

4 Take notes in class. (Remember, you have pages for notes in your book.)

5 Make study cards to help you memorize.

6 Ask your teacher what the test will be like.

7 Study in small **groups** of two or three.

Remember

If you wait until the last minute to study for a test, you might do well on the test. However, what you learn for the test will go into your short-term memory and not into your long-term memory. You may not be able to remember something later when you need to use it.

If you study in a group of more than three, you may not have the chance to talk and practice as much as you should.

When you are trying to learn something: read it, write it, say it, hear it! Doing this will help you learn better. Also, it will help to keep things in your long-term memory.

New Words

keep up (verb phrase)

catch up (verb phrase)

group (noun)

Exercise 12

Read the ideas in the boxes. Then, discuss the new words and the questions with the teacher.

▶

What to Do During a Test

1 Read all directions carefully.

2 Check the test time and the number of questions you have. Then, **figure out** how much time you have per question.

3 Answer the questions that you know first. Then, you will be able to tell how much time you have left for the other questions.

4 Make sure you answer every question.

5 Always check the number of the question on the test to the number on the answer **sheet**. You don't want to put the right answers in the wrong places.

6 Always review your test and answer sheet before you give them in. Make sure you answered all the questions as well as you could. Also, be sure you filled in the answer sheet correctly.

What to Do After a Test

1 **List** the things that you did well.

2 List the things that you didn't do well. Could you improve on these things next time?

▼

New Words

figure out (verb phrase)

sheet (noun)

list (verb/noun)

Questions

1 What do you think of these ideas?

2 How many of these ideas did you know already?

Exercise 13 📼

Listen to the tape. Decide if what each person is doing is a good or a bad study habit. Check (✔) the correct box. The first one is done for you. You will hear the tape twice.

▶

		Good Study Habit	Bad Study Habit
1	Talal		✔
2	Jamil		
3	Ahmed		
4	Saeed		
5	Salim		
6	Abdullah		
7	Waleed		

Exercise 14

Study the expressions in the box and practice them with a partner. Read the example. Then, use the situations to make new dialogs with your partner.

▼

Expressing Needs	Answering
• I need to...	• Do you want me to...
• I have to...	• I can help you...
• I must...	• Sorry, I can't help you...

Example

(help studying for the test)

A: I need help studying for the test. There are some things I still don't understand.

B: Do you want me to study with you?

A: That would be great. Can you come to my house tonight?

B: Sure. I can come about 7:00.

A: Thanks.

▼

What You Need

1 find out why your car won't start

2 get a ride to the clinic

3 get a better job

4 find someone to help you move to your new house

5 find someone who can help you with your computer

6 get a better score on your next test

Exercise 15 🗀

Study the table.

Test "Dos and Don'ts"

Now listen to the tape. You will hear about things you should or should not do when you have a test. As you listen, put a check (✓) in the correct column. The first one is done for you. You will hear the tape twice.

▶

		Do	Don't Do
1	Get a good night's sleep the night before a test.	✓	
2	Stay up studying the night before a test.		
3	Eat a good meal.		
4	Eat foods like fish, meat or eggs.		
5	Eat some candy.		
6	Have some coffee.		
7	Have some tea.		
8	When you feel worried, breathe quickly.		
9	When you feel worried, think about a nice place for a few minutes.		

Exercise 16

First, discuss these questions with a partner. Then, discuss them with the teacher.

▶

1 Do you ever get worried during a test?

2 If you get worried during a test, what things do you do to relax?

3 What do you usually eat or drink before you take a test?

4 Do you think that what you eat or drink before a test makes any difference?

Exercise 17

Match the clues to the words. Write the letter of the word in the box. There is one extra word.

▼

☐ sometimes it means one piece of paper	**A** group
☐ understand how something works	**B** catch up
☐ not be behind any more	**C** review
☐ don't fall behind	**D** figure out
☐ write down several things	**E** sheet
☐ several people or things put together	**F** list
	G keep up

Now choose five of the words from above. Write one word in each box below. Then, write a sentence using that word. Finally, review the words out loud with a partner. The first one is done for you.

▼

> **Study Card**
> *catch up*
> I missed too many classes, so I
> need to catch up with the class.

Study Card	**Study Card**

Study Card	**Study Card**

Exercise 18

Study the table about four students who took a test. Then, answer the questions with complete sentences. The first one is done for you.

▼

	Breakfast	Answer Sheet	Directions	Time
Sami	bread, egg sandwich, orange juice	answered every question, checked all answers	read all directions carefully	used watch to figure out how much time he had for each question
Malik	coffee, cake	didn't answer three questions	read all directions once quickly but not carefully	forgot to watch the clock to see how much time he had left
Mousa	tea	answered everything but didn't check answers	read some directions quickly and some carefully	checked the time at the beginning of the test
Ibrahim	coffee, zatar, bread	didn't finish on time, so didn't answer last 5 questions	didn't read all the directions	didn't pay attention, so didn't know the total test time

▼

1 Who read all the directions carefully?

Sami read all the directions carefully.

_____

2 What did Malik forget to do?

_____

_____

3 Who read only **some** of the directions carefully?

_____

_____

4 How many questions did Ibrahim not answer?

_____

_____

5 Who had the best breakfast before the test?

_____

_____

Exercise 19

Study the table.

Now listen to the tape while you read along in the table. Listen carefully to the pronunciation of the words in each group. Then, do the activity below.

▼

For most verbs in the present tense, 3rd person singular, you add -s. In these words the -s is pronounced as /s/.	**A** count drink help laugh sleep write	counts drinks helps laughs sleeps writes
In these words the -s is pronounced as /z/.	**B** answer arrive drive ride run see snow wear	answers arrives drives rides runs sees snows wears
In these words you add -es. The -s is pronounced /iz/.	**C** finish fix push teach	finishes fixes pushes teaches
In these words the -y changes to -i and you add -es. The -s is pronounced /z/.	**D** cry hurry study	cries hurries studies
In these words the -y doesn't change. Each has a vowel before the -y. In these words the -s is pronounced as /z/.	**E** buy pay say stay	buys pays says stays

Make dialogs with a partner using the verbs in the box. Follow the example.

▶

Example

TEACHER:	drink
TRAINEE A:	I drink coffee every day.
TEACHER:	What does (_____) do every day?
TRAINEE B:	He drinks coffee every day.

An Adaptation of

COLT PART A

Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching Observation Scheme

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L5		
Training Location	Udhailiyah ITC	Course/Level E2B — Observer A. I. Hasan
Teacher	Y. Rachi	Period 3 — Date April 16, 2001
Material	Building English Book 3	Page U. 29, Exs. 1-4

Column legend (numbered 1–37):

1 TIME · 2 ACTIVITIES & EPISODES · PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION — Class: 3 T-S/C, 4 S-S/C, 5 Choral; Group: 6 Same task, 7 Different tasks; Indiv.: 8 Same task, 9 Different tasks · CONTENT — Manag.: 10 Procedure, 11 Discipline; Language: 12 Form, 13 Function, 14 Discourse, 15 Socioling; Other topics: 16 Narrow, 17 Broad · CONTENT CONTROL: 18 Teacher/Text, 19 Teacher/Text/Stud., 20 Student · STUDENT MODALITY: 21 Listening, 22 Speaking, 23 Reading, 24 Writing, 25 Other · MATERIALS — TYPE/Text: 26 Minimal, 27 Extended, 28 Audio, 29 Visual; Source: 30 L2-NNS, 31 L2-NS, 32 L2-NSA, 33 Student-made · ORAL COMM PRACTICE: 34 T<>S/C, 35 S/S, 36 Pairs, 37 Groups

(Circled checkmarks shown as (✓))

TIME (1)	ACTIVITIES & EPISODES (2)	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
9:10	Fixing A/C (hot room) called handyman - instructions								✓	(✓)																										
Act. I 9:15 E.1	Oral introduction of lesson. Teacher elicits oral feedback from students by asking questions & interacting about values. Emphasized new word (fair)	✓									✓		(✓)					✓		(✓)	✓				✓				✓							
Act. II 9:23 E.1	Books open - Ex. 1 reading and interaction. Teacher asks students to read silently for comprehension.	✓					✓							✓			✓					✓	(✓)			✓			✓							
9:27 E.2	Vocabulary discussion - oral	✓									✓						✓				✓				✓				✓							
Act. III 9:31 E.1	Reading comprehension (Ex. 2). Teacher introduces topic and asks students to read passage silently. Teacher writes new words on board while students are reading.	✓					✓							✓			✓					✓				✓			✓							
9:36 E.2	Oral discussion of vocabulary. Use of L.1 (three times)	✓									✓						✓				✓	(✓)			✓				✓							

An Adaptation of

COLT PART A

Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching Observation Scheme

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L5

Training Location	Udhailiyah ITC	Course/Level E2B	Observer A. I. Hasan
Teacher	Y. Rachi	Period 3	Date April 16, 2001
Material	Building English Book 3		Page U. 29, Exs. 1-4

Column legend (numbered 1–37):

#	Heading
1	TIME
2	ACTIVITIES & EPISODES
3	PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION – Class – T-S/C
4	Class – S-S/C
5	Class – Choral
6	Group – Same task
7	Group – Different tasks
8	Indiv. – Same task
9	Indiv. – Different tasks
10	CONTENT – Manag. – Procedure
11	Manag. – Discipline
12	Language – Form
13	Language – Function
14	Language – Discourse
15	Language – Sociling
16	Other topics – Narrow
17	Other topics – Broad
18	CONTENT CONTROL – Teacher/Text
19	Teacher/Text/Stud.
20	Student
21	STUDENT MODALITY – Listening
22	Speaking
23	Reading
24	Writing
25	Other
26	MATERIALS – TYPE – Text – Minimal
27	Text – Extended
28	Audio
29	Visual
30	Source – L2-NNS
31	Source – L2-NS
32	Source – L2-NSA
33	Source – Student-made
34	ORAL COMM PRACTICE – T<>S/C
35	S/S
36	Pairs
37	Groups

Observation entries (✓ = check, (✓) = circled check):

Time / Episode	Activities & Episodes	Marked columns
Act. IV / 9:44 / E.1	Ex. 3 Reading comprehension. True/false statements. Teacher asks students to read silently and check their responses.	3 ✓; 8 (✓); 12 ✓; 16 ✓; 18 ✓; 22 ✓; 23 (✓); 27 ✓; 30 ✓
9:47 / E.2	Discussion of Ex. 3 students' responses	3 ✓; 16 ✓; 18 ✓; 22 ✓; 23 (✓); 26 ✓; 30 ✓
Act. V / 9:53	Class is divided into pairs to list their ideas after discussion of example. Individual pairs work silently - mostly each one alone.	3 ✓; 6 (✓); 16 ✓; 20 ✓; 24 ✓; 26 ✓; 30 ✓; 33 ✓
10:00	Class ends - No discussion of students' lists.	(none)

APPENDIX "H"

COLT PART A

Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching Observation Scheme

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L7		
Training Location	Udhailiyah ITC	Course/Level E2B
Teacher	T. M. Salameh	Period 5
Material	Building English Book 3	

Observer	A. I. Hasan
Date	April 16, 2001
Page	U. 29, Exs. 9-12

TIME	ACTIVITIES & EPISODES	PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION — Class			Group		Indiv.		Manag.		Language				Other topics		CONTENT CONTROL			STUDENT MODALITY					MATERIALS TYPE — Text		Source						ORAL COMM PRACTICE			
		T-S/C	S-S/C	Choral	Same task	Different tasks	Same task	Different tasks	Procedure	Discipline	Form	Function	Discourse	Socioling	Narrow	Broad	Teacher/Text	Teacher/Text/Stud.	Student	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Other	Minimal	Extended	Audio	Visual	L2-NNS	L2-NS	L2-NSA	Student-made	T< > S/C	S/S	Pairs	Groups
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
11:00									✓																											
Act. I 11:02 E.1	Ex. 9 - Spelling ex. - Books open. Teacher introduces ex. and gives oral explanation with help by students and chalkboard.	✓									✓				✓		✓			(✓)	✓				✓			✓								
11:07 E.2	Students complete exercise in writing.						✓		✓ Gr								✓					✓	(✓)		✓			✓								
11:12 E.3	Students read out their responses and teacher comments and re-affirms rule.	✓							✓								✓				✓	(✓)			✓			✓								
Act. II 11:14 E.1	Ex. 10 Listening. Teacher goes out to get key for CD player… After two minutes, he comes back and operates machine.	✓							✓								✓																			
11:17 E.2	Students listen to CD and complete ex. (Listening is done twice)						✓								✓		✓			(✓)			✓				✓		✓							
11:21 E.3	Teacher goes around and checks/scores student responses.	✓													✓		✓						(✓)		✓			✓								

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Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching Observation Scheme

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Training Location	L7	Udhailiyah ITC	Course/Level	E2B	Observer	A. I. Hasan
Teacher		T. M. Salameh	Period	5	Date	April 16, 2001
Material		Building English Book 3			Page	U. 29, Exs. 9-12

TIME	ACTIVITIES & EPISODES	PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION							CONTENT								CONTENT CONTROL			STUDENT MODALITY					MATERIALS							ORAL COMM PRACTICE			
		Class			Group		Indiv.		Manag.		Language				Other topics										TYPE		Source								
																									Text										
		T-S/C	S-S/C	Choral	Same task	Different tasks	Same task	Different tasks	Procedure	Discipline	Form	Function	Discourse	Socioling	Narrow	Broad	Teacher/Text	Teacher/Text/Stud.	Student	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Other	Minimal	Extended	Audio	Visual	L2-NNS	L2-NS	L2-NSA	Student-made	T< > S/C	S/S	Pairs	Groups
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
11:24 E.4	Oral discussion of students responses. Teacher asks students oral questions about correct responses.	✓													✓		✓				✓				✓				✓							
Act. III 11:27 E.1	Reading and Writing. Teacher asks students to read passage and answer questions in writing.	✓													✓		✓									✓			✓							
11:28 E.2	Students read silently and complete exercise in writing. Teacher goes around and checks.				✓										✓		✓					⊘	✓			✓			✓							
11:32 E.3	Individual students read our their responses. Rest of class write/correct. Teacher confirms.	✓	⊘												✓		✓					⊘	✓		✓				✓							
11:36 E.4	Individual students read the passage aloud. Teacher correctssome wrongly pronounced words.	✓	⊘												✓		✓			✓		⊘				✓			✓							
11:39 E.5	Teacher asks oral questions about passage main idea. One student answers.	✓													✓		✓			✓		⊘			✓				✓							

APPENDIX "H"

An Adaptation of

COLT PART A

Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching Observation Scheme

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	L7						
Training Location	Udhailiyah ITC	Course/Level	E2B	Observer	A. I. Hasan		
Teacher	T. M. Salameh	Period	5	Date	April 16, 2001		
Material	Building English Book 3			Page	U. 29, Exs. 9-12		

TIME	ACTIVITIES & EPISODES	\[Class\] T-S/C	S-S/C	Choral	\[Group\] Same task	Different tasks	\[Indiv.\] Same task	Different tasks	\[Manag.\] Procedure	Discipline	\[Language\] Form	Function	Discourse	Socioling	\[Other topics\] Narrow	Broad	Teacher/Text	Teacher/Text/Stud.	Student	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Other	\[Text\] Minimal	Extended	Audio	Visual	\[Source\] L2-NNS	L2-NS	L2-NSA	Student-made	T<>S/C	S/S	Pairs	Groups
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
Act. IV 11:41 E.1	Intonation practice - stress. Teacher writes colored coded words on board with special intonations, explains orally & elicits input from class.	✓									✓ Pr						✓							✓	✓			✓								
Act. V 11:46 E.1	Listening. Teacher introduces exercise and explains procedure.	✓									✓						✓							✓	✓			✓								
11:47 E.2	Teacher reads out and students mark responses in their books.	✓									✓						✓			(✓)			✓		✓		✓	✓								
11:48 E.3	Individual students pronounce their marked choices.		✓								✓						✓				✓				✓			✓								
11:50	Class ends																																			

An Adaptation of

COLT PART A

Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching Observation Scheme

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Training Location	Al-Hasa ITC	Course/Level	E3B	Observer	A. I. Hasan
Teacher	A. Ghariri	Period	2	Date	June 26, 2001
Material	U.E. Unit 36 L.2			Page	257-260

L17

TIME	ACTIVITIES & EPISODES	PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION							CONTENT								CONTENT CONTROL			STUDENT MODALITY					MATERIALS								ORAL COMM PRACTICE			
		Class			Group		Indiv.		Manag.		Language				Other topics										TYPE		Source						PRACTICE			
																									Text											
		T-S/C	S-S/C	Choral	Same task	Different tasks	Same task	Different tasks	Procedure	Discipline	Form	Function	Discourse	Sociling	Narrow	Broad	Teacher/Text	Teacher/Text/Stud.	Student	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Other	Minimal	Extended	Audio	Visual	L2-NNS	L2-NS	L2-NSA	Student-made	T < > S/C	S/S	Pairs	Groups
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
Act. I 8:01	Brainstorming/warm-up/preview / Q/A about air travel safety	✓													✓		✓			Ⓥ	✓								✓							
Act. II 8:06 E.1	Lesson oral preview/picture explanations & instructions reading - The passage title "Crowded Sky" could be utilized as focus for comprehension check-up activity.	Ⓥ	✓												✓		✓				✓				✓				✓							
8:07 E.2	Reading - model by teacher	✓													✓		✓			✓						✓			✓							
8:08 E.3	Individual students read aloud same passage.	✓	Ⓥ								✓ Gr				✓		✓			✓	Ⓥ					✓			✓							
8:09 E.4	Comprehension questions about the passage - Q/A - Questions are written in book.	✓													✓			✓		Ⓥ	✓				✓				✓							
Act. III 8:13* E.1	Model loud reading of passage. Teacher gives model reading sentence by sentence. Individual students read out the same sentences.	Ⓥ	✓												✓		✓			✓						✓			✓							
8:25 E.2	Students are instructed to read same passage (5 minutes) silently and answer the "main idea question".						✓								✓		✓					✓				✓			✓							

* Slow model reading by teacher; not necessary. Should give students to read silently first. Can be completed by paragraph (4 paragraphs - 223 words).

An Adaptation of

COLT PART A

L17	Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching Observation Scheme		© Spada & Frolich 1995

Training Location	Al-Hasa ITC	Course/Level E3B	Observer A. I. Hasan
Teacher	A. Ghariri	Period 2	Date June 26, 2001
Material	U.E. Unit 36 L.2		Page 257-260

TIME	ACTIVITIES & EPISODES	PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION							CONTENT								CONTENT CONTROL			STUDENT MODALITY					MATERIALS								ORAL COMM PRACTICE			
		Class			Group		Indiv.		Manag.		Language				Other topics										TYPE				Source				PRACTICE			
																									Text											
		T-S/C	S-S/C	Choral	Same task	Different tasks	Same task	Different tasks	Procedure	Discipline	Form	Function	Discourse	Socioling	Narrow	Broad	Teacher/Text	Teacher/Text/Stud.	Student	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Other	Minimal	Extended	Audio	Visual	L2-NNS	L2-NS	L2-NSA	Student-made	T< > S/C	S/S	Pairs	Groups
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
8:30 E.3	Question/Answer about the passage	✓													✓		✓			(✓)	✓				✓				✓							
Act. IV 8:33 E.1	Comprehension exercise about passages one & two. (multiple-choice) Students complete ex. silently in pairs.				✓										✓		✓					✓			✓				✓							
8:39 E.2	Individual students read out their responses. Correct choices are entered on board.		✓												✓		✓					✓			✓				✓							
8:42 E.3	True/False exercise silent completion				✓										✓		✓					(✓)	✓		✓				✓							
8:46 E.4	Individual students read out their choices. Teacher confirms and enters choices on board.	✓	(✓)												✓		✓					✓			✓				✓							
8:50	Class ends																																			

An Adaptation of

COLT PART A

Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching Observation Scheme

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L21

Training Location	Abqaiq ITC	Course/Level	E3B	Observer	A. I. Hasan
Teacher	A. E. El-Tyeb	Period	5	Date	July 1, 2001
Material	UE, U 28, L. 4			Page	

TIME	ACTIVITIES & EPISODES	PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION							CONTENT									CONTENT CONTROL			STUDENT MODALITY					MATERIALS								ORAL COMM PRACTICE			
		Class			Group		Indiv.		Manag.		Language				Other topics											TYPE				Source				PRACTICE			
																										Text											
		T-S/C	S- S/C	Choral	Same task	Different tasks	Same task	Different tasks	Procedure	Discipline	Form	Function	Discourse	Socioling	Narrow	Broad	Teacher/Text	Teacher/Text/Stud.	Student	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Other	Minimal	Extended	Audio	Visual	L2-NNS	L2-NS	L2-NSA	Student-made	T< > S/C	S/S	Pairs	Groups
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
Act. I 11:01 E.1	OHP Activity. Expressions asking for clarification. Teacher explains when these expressions are used.	✓										✓					✓			✓		(✓)			✓			✓								
11:03 E.2	Expressions used in "giving clarifications" are read out by students.	✓										✓					✓			✓		(✓)			✓			✓								
11:04 E.3	Pairs read out example dialogues about asking for clarification and giving clarification.		✓									✓					✓					✓				✓		✓								
Act. II 11:06	OHP: Situations are shown on screen and individual pairs construct dialogues similar to the model ones using "asking for clarifications" and "giving clarification" expressions. "8" situations (very controlled).		✓									✓						✓				✓				✓		✓				✓				
Act. III 11:10 E.1	Listening - Students listen twice to CD telephone conversation and fill in required info in a table.						✓								✓		✓			✓			✓				✓									
11:17 E.2	Teacher goes around to check individual responses and scores their correct answers (only two).	✓													✓		✓							✓	✓											

An Adaptation of

COLT PART A

Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching Observation Scheme

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	L21	
Training Location	Abqaiq ITC	Course/Level E3B
Teacher	A. E. El-Tyeb	Period 5
Material	UE, U 28, L. 4	

Observer A. I. Hasan
Date July 1, 2001
Page

TIME	ACTIVITIES & EPISODES	PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION Class T-S/C	S-S/C	Choral	Group Same task	Different tasks	Indiv. Same task	Different tasks	CONTENT Manag. Procedure	Discipline	Language Form	Function	Discourse	Sociling	Other topics Narrow	Broad	CONTENT CONTROL Teacher/Text	Teacher/Text/Stud.	Student	STUDENT MODALITY Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Other	MATERIALS TYPE Text Minimal	Extended	Audio	Visual	Source L2-NNS	L2-NS	L2-NSA	Student-made	ORAL COMM PRACTICE T<>S/C	S/S	Pairs	Groups
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
11:18 E.3	Individual students are asked to read out their responses.		✓												✓		✓					✓			✓				✓							
Act. IV 11:20 E.1	Individual students are called upon to the chalkboard to write some difficult words. (classes & order)		✓												✓				✓				✓		✓				✓							
11:21 E.2	Teacher shows OHT with the written input for students to check spelling.						✓								✓		✓							✓	✓			✓								
Act. V 11:23 E.1	Individual students read out the ex. instructions and the "5" topics to be worked on.		✓												✓		✓					✓			✓				✓							
11:24 E.2	Individual students are asked to deliver a short talk about each of the exercise topics. (6 ones) Teacher interacts shortly with speakers.		✓													✓	✓				✓					✓						✓				
Act. VI 11:35 E.1	Teacher distributes handout with a situation and incomplete dialogue. The missing information is mainly the "clarification expressions" of ex. 1. Students are asked to complete dialogues silently.						✓		✓								✓ T						✓		✓				✓							

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Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching Observation Scheme

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L21		
Training Location	Abqaiq ITC	Course/Level E3B	Observer A. I. Hasan
Teacher	A. E. El-Tyeb	Period 5	Date July 1, 2001
Material	UE, U 28, L. 4		Page

TIME	ACTIVITIES & EPISODES	PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION							CONTENT								CONTENT CONTROL			STUDENT MODALITY					MATERIALS								ORAL COMM PRACTICE			
		Class			Group		Indiv.		Manag.		Language				Other topics										TYPE Text		Source									
		T-S/C	S-S/C	Choral	Same task	Different tasks	Same task	Different tasks	Procedure	Discipline	Form	Function	Discourse	Socioling	Narrow	Broad	Teacher/Text	Teacher/Text/Stud.	Student	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Other	Minimal	Extended	Audio	Visual	L2-NNS	L2-NS	L2-NSA	Student-made	T<>S/C	S/S	Pairs	Groups
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
11:43 E.2	Pairs are asked to read out their completed dialogues.		✓								✓							✓				✓				✓			✓			✓				
11:50	Class ends																																			

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COLT PART A

L22	Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching Observation Scheme	© Spada & Frolich 1995

Training Location	Udhailiyah ITC	Course/Level	E2A	Observer	A. I. Hasan
Teacher	A. Al-Zaki	Period	3	Date	11/27/01
Material	BE. U.9			Page	Exs. 1 - 4

TIME	ACTIVITIES & EPISODES	PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION — Class — T-S/C	S- S/C	Choral	Group — Same task	Different tasks	Indiv. — Same task	Different tasks	CONTENT — Manag. — Procedure	Discipline	Language — Form	Function	Discourse	Socioling	Other topics — Narrow	Broad	CONTENT CONTROL — Teacher/Text	Teacher/Text/Stud.	Student	STUDENT MODALITY — Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Other	MATERIALS — TYPE — Text — Minimal	Extended	Audio	Visual	Source — L2-NNS	L2-NS	L2-NSA	Student-made	ORAL COMM PRACTICE — T< > S/C	S/S	Pairs	Groups
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
Act. I 8:25 E.1	Attendance - Warm up. Teacher starts by asking questions and eliciting responses from class (B.O.). Then he refers them to the reading passage.	✓												✓			✓			⊘	✓				✓			✓								
8:27 E.2	Introducing vocabulary items: Teacher writes new words one by one, pronounces them for repetition and discusses meaning (L1 used by students).	✓									✓						✓			⊘	✓				✓			✓								
8:30 E.3	Teacher asks students to read the passage for comprehension. Individuals ask for certain meanings and teacher explains.						✓								✓		✓					✓			✓			✓								
8:32 E.4	Discussion of the "3" comprehension questions about the passage. (Teacher just reads questions and gets answers.)	✓												✓			✓			⊘	✓				✓			✓								
Act. II 8:34 E.1	A "Yes" "No" checklist about general reading habits. Teacher introduces the exercise and asks students to complete silently. Teacher goes around to help.						✓							✓			✓						✓		✓			✓								
8:39 E.2	Oral discussion of "how many", "Y", "N" each one has (the two questions below the passage).	✓												✓				✓		⊘	✓				✓			✓								
Act. III 8:42 E.1	Picture description (finding wrong situations). Teacher inroduces task. Students complete it silently. Teacher goes around to help.						✓							✓			✓						✓		✓			✓								

B.O. = Books Open

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COLT PART A

Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching Observation Scheme

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L22		
Training Location	Udhailiyah ITC	Course/Level E2A
Teacher	A. Al-Zaki	Period 3
Material	BE. U.9	

Observer	A. I. Hasan
Date	11/27/01
Page	Exs. 1 - 4

Column legend (numbered 3–37):

- PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION — Class: 3 T-S/C, 4 S-S/C, 5 Choral | Group: 6 Same task, 7 Different tasks | Indiv.: 8 Same task, 9 Different tasks
- CONTENT — Manag.: 10 Procedure, 11 Discipline | Language: 12 Form, 13 Function, 14 Discourse, 15 Socioling | Other topics: 16 Narrow, 17 Broad
- CONTENT CONTROL — 18 Teacher/Text, 19 Teacher/Text/Stud., 20 Student
- STUDENT MODALITY — 21 Listening, 22 Speaking, 23 Reading, 24 Writing, 25 Other
- MATERIALS — Type Text: 26 Minimal, 27 Extended, 28 Audio, 29 Visual | Source: 30 L2-NNS, 31 L2-NS, 32 L2-NSA, 33 Student-made
- ORAL COMM PRACTICE — 34 T<>S/C, 35 S/S, 36 Pairs, 37 Groups

TIME (1)	ACTIVITIES & EPISODES (2)	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
8:48 E.2	Whole-class discussion of the students findings (the wrong situations in the picture).	✓													✓			✓		(✓)	✓				✓				✓							
8:49 E.3	Matching the wrong situations in picture with the statements in previous exercise. Teacher introduces task and students complete silently.						✓								✓			✓				✓			✓				✓							
Act. IV 8:54 E.1	"T"/"F" exercise about the same topic. Teacher introduces task and students complete exercise silently. Teacher goes around to help.						✓								✓		✓					✓			✓				✓							
8:57 E.2	Individuals read their responses and teacher confirms with minimal elaboration.	✓													✓			✓			✓	(✓)			✓				✓							
9:00	Class ends																																			

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