



**An Investigation into Professional Practical Knowledge of
EFL Experienced Teachers in Egypt: Implications for
Pre-service and In-service Teacher Learning**

Submitted by

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate what constituted the professional practical knowledge of EFL experienced teachers in the Egyptian context and what the sources of their knowledge were. It also aimed to examine the relationship between the teachers' knowledge and the contextual factors intervening in action. By delineating its focus as such, the study responds to call for reconceptualising the core of the knowledge base of teaching to focus on teaching as a knowledge-based activity and an act of common sense and reasoning, the pedagogy by which teaching is done, and the context in which it is done.

The study was carried out using multiple methods for collecting qualitative and quantitative data. This design was chosen to investigate the participants' views of professional practical knowledge and to construct their different understandings and interpretations which they brought with them. Questionnaires completed by 236 EFL experienced teachers, semi-structured interviews conducted with 14 of them and stimulated recall classroom observation data with three of them were the data collected for the current study. Although it provided a parsimonious view, quantitative questionnaire data made an important contribution to the bricolage of information built up during the study. A more in-depth understanding was gained from qualitative data using responses to the open-ended section of the questionnaire, interviews and classroom observation.

Based on quantitative and qualitative data analyses, six core areas of teacher knowledge were constructed from the participants' responses and accounts. These were: subject matter, pedagogy, students, classroom learning environment, curriculum and self. The findings also revealed a variety of sources which shaped the teachers' professional practical knowledge including: experience, teacher education, university study in the subject department, student and peer feedback, in-service training, expert advice, student output and postgraduate study. The findings also revealed that the relationship between teacher knowledge and practice was reflected in two ways. The first was that teacher knowledge represented an operative model which underpinned practice. The second was that

it informed the classroom decisions. However, not all teacher knowledge found application in practice. A variety of intervening contextual challenges were revealed to deter the actualisation of teacher knowledge in action such as the EFL exam policy, lack of time, support and resources, mismatch between teacher purposes and students' expectations and needs, and large class size. These findings were discussed in relation to existing research evidence and context. Implications for pre-service and in-service teacher learning were also drawn based on the findings of the study.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The introduction chapter aims at highlighting the rationale for conducting the current study, the constructs being investigated, the aims and research questions of the study as well as its significance. It starts with highlighting the need for studies in teacher cognition in general and English as Foreign Language (EFL) teacher knowledge in particular where there is a gap in literature. The need to study teacher knowledge in relation to classroom practice is also highlighted. Then, teacher knowledge is conceptualised. In addition to being understood as practical, experiential, personal, situational and contextual, teacher knowledge in the current study is conceived of in relation to teacher reasoning. Then, the aims and research questions are stated. The chapter ends with showing the significance of the current study for both in-service and pre-service teachers.

1.2 Exploring the gap

The field of research in language teacher cognition has gained popularity since the mid-1990s (Freeman, 2002). It is also highlighted that the study of language teacher cognition is both a well-established domain of research activity and increasingly an international phenomenon (Borg, 2006). There is a need to continue research in this field to help in understanding language teaching. Borg (2003) states:

While the study of teacher cognition has established itself on the research agenda in the field of language teaching and provided valuable insight into the mental lives of language teachers...there are several major issues in language teaching which have yet to be explored from the perspective of teacher cognition (p.81).

For research on teacher cognition to provide profound insights into the complex nature of the teacher's work, it needs to be done in relation to classroom practice. Borg (2006) highlights that studies like these “entail the study of actual classroom practices and of the relationships between cognitions and these practices” (p.50). Such studies are rare in the EFL context. Borg (2003) states:

There is also a need for more research in contexts which, globally speaking, are more representative of language classrooms. I am thinking here of classrooms in state schools, taught by non-native teachers, and where syllabuses are to various degrees prescribed. Hardly any of the settings studied in research I have reviewed here reflect these characteristics. (p.98)

He further adds that “minimal insight into state school settings (primary and secondary) where languages are taught by non-native teachers to large classes of learners who, particularly in the case of English, may not be studying the language voluntarily” (p.106). This indicates the lack of studies on teacher cognition in contexts similar to that of the current study. This highlights the need of the current study on teacher knowledge which is one aspect of research on teacher cognition.

The need for continuing research on the language teacher knowledge is also underscored. Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1999) indicate that “there has been a shift in thinking about teacher learning over the last several decades from an emphasis on what teachers do to what they know, what their sources of knowledge are, and how those sources influence their work in classrooms” (p. 267).

Teacher knowledge needs to be investigated in relation to classroom practice. Xu & Liu (2009) highlight that teachers’ practical knowledge, which informs their practice, is often unexamined. Elbaz (1983) makes an assumption about the nature of teacher knowledge and how it could be investigated in relation to real classroom settings. She highlights that “the most basic assumption, of course, is simply that practical knowledge exists and that a direct examination of the thinking of teachers at work will make apparent to us the nature, defining characteristics and criteria of this knowledge” (p. 13). Clandinin (1989) highlights the role of experience and suggests that experienced teachers hold a special kind of knowledge which is practical, experiential, and shaped by a teacher’s purposes and values. This is clear when the teacher does the job. When teachers perform, they make principled choices informed by the knowledge they have about the various areas of teaching. This idea is supported by Kumaravadivelu (2006) that teachers follow a principled pragmatic approach in their teaching. This point is also supported by the position taken by Freeman and

Johnson (1998) that teacher knowledge can and should be rooted in teachers' actual practices.

Teachers' practical knowledge "is anchored in classroom situations" (Munby, Russell & Martin, 2001, p.880). Therefore, there is a need to examine the relationship between knowledge and practice when investigating the teacher's knowledge. Richards (1994) maintains that "if we are to understand how teachers know we need to be with them in their places of work" (p.403). Johnston & Goettsch (2000) make two assumptions about research on teacher knowledge that stress the relationship between knowledge and practice. The first one is that there is a knowledge base of language teaching of various elements. The second one is that the various elements of this knowledge are intertwined in complex ways as the knowledge base is utilized in the classroom. Likewise, Gatbonton (1999) and Mullock (2006) assume that there is a relationship between the teachers' thinking in action and the knowledge they hold about teaching and learning in a way that shapes their classroom practices. They, therefore, hold that investigating the thought processes will uncover the knowledge underlying them.

The current study could also be set in the context of Freeman and Johnson's (1998) call for reconceptualising the knowledge base of language teacher education. They argue for a reconsideration of the content and structure of the language teacher education in which the practice of teaching is central. They state: "We argue that the core of the new knowledge-base must focus on the activity of teaching itself; it should center on the teacher who does it, the contexts in which it is done, and the pedagogy by which it is done" (p.397). It is also a response to the statement by Troudi (2005) who highlights: "If any element is to be the core of a teacher education programme, it should be the teacher's view(s) of what language education is about and what he/she considers teaching to be" (p.118).

Although it was highlighted that research on teacher knowledge and practice is needed in contexts similar to that of the current study (e.g. Borg, 2003), no attention has been paid to such kind of research in Egypt. Most available research

related to EFL teachers focuses on teaching methods and the teachers' use of them, mostly through interventions and quantitative research traditions. This might be related to the minimal role of the teacher in the curriculum design and knowledge creation in Egypt. This resonates with what is stated by Gahin (2001) that the "paucity of research on teacher cognition in Egypt might have been epistemologically-based in terms of what constitutes valid knowledge and how teachers are viewed" (p.17). He further adds, "Teachers' experiential knowledge is not acknowledged. They are seen as agents fulfilling others' intentions and conduits of externally recommended knowledge" (ibid). The current study attempts to address this gap of research on teaching in Egypt.

In addition, research on teaching in general and teacher knowledge in particular is of personal interest to me. It is part of who I am. I worked as a teacher in schools and a teaching assistant in the university for several years. I have always believed that knowledge is power. The more I know about my work, the more successful I am. When I was teaching, I used to reflect on my classes, especially when they did not go very well. I always viewed my unsuccessful lessons as an opportunity for development and a catalyst for change. I started to feel the gap in my knowledge. What was the problem? Was it lack of knowledge in my subject matter? Was it a problem in my teaching and personal style? Was it a problem in the material I use and how I present it? Am I aware of and listening to my students? I did not stop at thinking. I started to take action, based on the information I collected and the reflection I did. I started to try new ideas. It worked. The lessons are not unsuccessful anymore. I soon realised, based on practical experience, that knowledge is the key to success and appropriate action. This deepened my interest in conducting research in this area.

1.3 Conceptualising teacher knowledge in the current study

Teacher knowledge in the current study is conceived of as experiential, practical, personal, situational and contextual. It is experiential in a sense that it is acquired through the accumulation of the experience of the individual teacher as a person, a student, and a teacher learner. It is also practical because it influences and is

influenced by the practice of teaching. It could shape what the teacher does in the classroom and it could be modified as a result of the interaction with the different domains of the teaching process. It has meaning for the teacher as a person who cannot be separated from being a professional. It is situational because it is employed to respond to the various situations of teaching or is constructed through them. It is contextual because it is shaped by and applied in a particular context. This conceptualisation echoes the definition provided by Munby et al. (2001) that teachers' practical knowledge "is based on the personal understandings that teachers have of the practical circumstances in which they work and classroom knowledge that is situated in classroom events" (p.880).

Teacher knowledge is generated based on reflection on experiences and is therefore experiential. Meijer, Verloop, & Beijaard (1999) see that teacher knowledge is generated by the teachers themselves as a result of their experiences as teachers and their reflections on these experiences. Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1999) define it in terms of what teachers know as it is expressed or embedded in the artistry of practice, in teachers' reflections on practice, in teachers' practical inquiries, and/or in teachers' narrative accounts of practice. They point out that practical knowledge is manifested in teachers' actions and in the decisions and judgments they make in an ongoing way. Xu & Liu (2009) support the conception of teacher knowledge as the sum total of the teacher's experiences. They state that "teachers' past experiences, present actions and future plans all constitute the bulk of teacher knowledge" (p.505).

In addition to being described as practical and experiential, teacher knowledge is also characterized as being situational and contextual. Hiebert, Gallimore & Stigler (2002) state that teacher knowledge "is grounded in the context in which teachers work" (p.6). Teacher knowledge is situated as long as new understandings are developed as teachers react in terms of the particular context in which they work (Elbaz, 1981; Clandinin and Connelly, 1987). Brown and McIntyre (1993) hold that this form of knowledge guides the teacher's actions in concrete and specific situations. Schön (1983) maintains that putting teachers' knowledge in classroom practice is context-bound and contingent on the

circumstances of the teaching-learning situation.

Teacher knowledge is also described as personal. Elbaz (1981) maintains that teacher knowledge has a personal dimension because teachers use their knowledge to enable them to work in personally meaningful ways. Turner-Bisset (1999) highlights the importance of the personal element of teacher knowledge because of the importance of teacher self-reflection in teacher growth and the importance of self-image for job survival.

Teacher knowledge in the current study is also conceived of in relation to teacher reasoning. The current study works along the assumption that teacher knowledge is a truly justified belief or view (Fenstermacher, 1994). These views concern any aspect of the teaching process articulated by the EFL practicing teacher and are evident in the practice of teaching. It is worth noting that the nature of justification of knowledge claims is related to teacher reasoning or the provision of good reasons to add to the epistemic warrant of the view held by the teacher.

Although it is difficult to separate between knowledge and beliefs (Kagan, 1990; Calderhead, 1996), a teacher's knowledge is conceived of as having to do with more factual propositions, whereas beliefs refer to personal values, attitudes, and ideologies (Pajares, 1992; Johnston & Goettsch, 2000; Meijer et al., 1999). Woods (1996) sees beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge as representing a continuum on which assumptions are based on beliefs and knowledge is based on assumptions and beliefs. Alexander, Schallert, & Hare (1991) define knowledge as "all that a person knows or believes to be true, whether or not it is verified as true in some sort of objective or external way" (p. 317).

The word 'knowledge' in the construct 'practical knowledge' is sometimes used as an umbrella term to cover a broad spectrum of teacher cognitions, a view endorsed by a group of researchers interested in teacher knowledge. This is how it is used in the current study because my study on knowledge incorporates some aspects of beliefs and values. Thus, I align with other researchers who use the term 'knowledge' in this way. For example, Fenstermacher (1994) uses the term 'knowledge' as a grouping term to include insights, imaginings, musings,

awareness, understanding, recollections, predictions, anticipations, and a host of other activities. Likewise, Verloop, Van-Driel & Meijer (2001) state:

It is important to realize that in the label ‘teacher knowledge’, the concept ‘knowledge’ is used as an overarching, inclusive concept, summarizing a large variety of cognitions, from conscious and well-balanced opinions to unconscious and unreflected intuitions (p.446).

They justify that using it in this way is easier to the researcher who is dealing with the teacher because the differences among the terms: knowledge, beliefs, conceptions, and intuitions may not be clear in the mind of the teachers who could use them interchangeably and they are ‘inextricably intertwined’ in his or her mind. They argue that this conceptualization is relevant to research on teacher knowledge. They state:

This is particularly relevant with respect to research on teacher knowledge. In investigating teacher knowledge, the main focus of attention is on the complex totality of cognitions, the ways this develops, and the way this interacts with teacher behavior in the classroom (ibid).

However, apart from research considerations, it is worth noting that a claim to know is different from a claim to believe. For a knowledge claim to be a verifiable one, it needs to be justified. Therefore, it could be argued – in accordance with Fenstermacher’s (1994) proposition – that the teacher could produce knowledge in the course of acting on experience through generating ideas, conceptions, images or perspectives when performing as teachers or that they are justified in performing as they do for reasons or evidence they are able to provide. Thus, if teachers are able to establish the reasonableness of what they are doing in classroom practice in relation to other, competing claims, they are capable of providing knowledge about teaching.

1.4 Aims of the study

It is worth pointing out, in the current study, that neither generalizable truths about the knowledge of the EFL teachers in the Egyptian context nor judgements or evaluation of their knowledge is being sought. These two goals are unattainable due to the focus of the current study and the complexity of teaching

with the myriad variables intervening in the process, and also due to the lack of agreed-upon standards of what is good teaching and what knowledge is required to carry out this highly contextualized course of action. Instead, what is being attempted is to establish the content of the EFL teachers' knowledge and how it informs practice from their own perspectives.

In doing so, it is hoped that the current study contributes to the on-going debate about what should constitute the core of knowledge of teaching in general and of EFL teaching in particular. It is also aimed that this study fills the gap in literature about the EFL teacher knowledge and its relationship to classroom practice in Egypt. Ultimately, it is hoped that the current study represents a step forward in understanding teaching in general and EFL teaching in particular.

1.5 Research questions

The current study aims to answer three research questions:

- 1- What constitutes the practical knowledge of Egyptian EFL preparatory and secondary school experienced teachers in Egypt and what are the sources of their knowledge?
- 2- How does EFL experienced teachers' knowledge inform their practice?
- 3- How does context influence the actualisation of teacher knowledge in practice?

The 'what' and 'how' questions are congruent with the nature of and research in teacher knowledge and practice. These two questions were discussed by Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1999). They state:

The 'what' is practical knowledge, craft knowledge, or knowing-in-action- that is, the knowledge that is generated by competent teachers as they deal with classroom situations that are inherently indeterminate...The 'how' is deliberation and consideration/ reconsideration - that is, consciously reflecting on the flow of classroom action and invention of knowledge in action in order to take note of new situations, intentionally and introspectively examining those situations, and consciously enhancing and articulating what is tacit or implicit. (p.268)

Furthermore, teacher knowledge and practice need to be understood in light of the context, which could explain the challenges facing the teachers when they attempt to turn what they know into classroom action.

This research was carried out to develop understanding of four broad areas rather than focusing on particular aspects of teachers' knowledge and practice. These areas are:

- the domains constituting the professional practical knowledge of experienced EFL teachers in Egypt
- the sources that contribute to shaping the teachers' knowledge
- the relationship between the teachers' knowledge and practice
- the contextual factors affecting the realisation of teachers' knowledge in action.

An important reason for covering these broad areas is their interrelatedness. For example, in order to gain an understanding of the relevance of teachers' knowledge, it is important to consider how this knowledge is actually used in practice. In addition, studying the sources of teacher knowledge helps in understanding how this knowledge is constructed. This in turn will be shaped by the context in which the practice occurs. Since teaching is an interdisciplinary applied field, a wide research scope helps to identify the multiplicity of the factors which will have an impact on teaching. This approach aligns with existing analytical frameworks (e.g. Shulman, 1987; Turner-Bisset, 1999; Hegarty, 2000) which combine the various domains and inputs informing the teacher's work. An alternative approach would be to focus in more depth on particular aspects of knowledge and practice but only by adopting a broader framework can a holistic picture of how the various knowledge areas that are constructed by teachers relate to one another and to the context in which teaching takes place.

1.6 Significance of the study

The aim of research on teacher knowledge in the current study is twofold. One aim is to reveal the professional practical knowledge from the perspective of the

practising teacher and how it is put into practice. Another aim is to provide implications for the continuing professional development of the teacher and teacher education programmes. Understanding the professional practical knowledge of the teacher and how it is used could result in a generation of capable teachers. This is supported by Shulman (1987) that “a proper understanding of the knowledge base of teaching, the sources for that knowledge, and the complexities of the pedagogical process will make the emergence of such teachers more likely” (p.20). Research on teacher knowledge also plays a significant role in providing insights into the role of the teacher. Elbaz (1983) emphasizes that “the single factor which seems to have the greatest power to carry forward our understanding of the teacher's role is the idea of teachers' knowledge” (p. 10).

It is through articulating knowledge that the teacher is made conscious of the knowledge held and how it is related to practice. This awareness is at the essence of developing the teacher. This idea is referred to in research literature as meta-mind or meta-cognition, i.e. knowledge about knowledge. It is made clear by Berthoff (1987), cited in Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999), that what teachers need is to re-examine the rich experiences they have through articulating them. In doing so, they are making mutual benefits to themselves through visualising the hidden side of their work and exchanging their experiences and displaying them for public scrutiny. This goes with what is highlighted by Golombek (1998) about the value of constructing teachers' knowledge providing a context for how and why that knowledge is acquired and used.

Research on teacher knowledge has implications not only for in-service teacher learning, but also for pre-service teacher learning. Therefore, another beneficiary of research on teacher knowledge is teacher education programmes. This is supported by Johnston & Goettsch (2000) who argue that teacher educators and curriculum designers could benefit from an enhanced awareness of the complexity and the process-oriented nature of the knowledge base of teachers.

Thus, the research findings about what constitutes the knowledge of the EFL teacher and how it is drawn upon in practice have relevant implications for planning and designing the curriculum of the teacher education programmes in the context of the current study in particular and the EFL context in general. This approach to curriculum design of the teacher education programmes is consistent with the theoretical social constructivist approach suggested by Roberts (1998). It is also congruent with the framework for re-conceptualizing the knowledge base of language teacher education called for by Freeman and Johnson (1998) which puts into consideration the important three dimensions of the language teacher education, namely, the teacher, the context, and the pedagogy. Therefore, it is expected that teacher educators may find the actual data resulting from this study useful in providing teacher trainees and teachers with a source of reflection that can be used as the basis of teacher education activities and continued professional development.

It also stands to reason that documenting teacher knowledge is useful for future practitioners. It provides history of practice to peers to consult whatever is suitable in their situations. Shulman (1987) laments the lack of such documentation. He states that “one of the frustrations of teaching as an occupation and profession is its extensive individual and collective amnesia, the consistency with which the best creations of its practitioners are lost to both contemporary and future peers” (p. 7).

1.7 Overview of the thesis

This section provides a bird’s eye view of the whole thesis. The thesis consists of seven chapters: introduction, context, review of related literature, research design, findings, discussion, and implications and conclusion. These chapters are briefly overviewed below.

In **chapter one**, the gap and intellectual puzzle of the study were explored. It highlighted the gap to be explored, the constructs being investigated, the conceptualisation of teacher knowledge in the current study, the aims and research questions and its significance.

Chapter two sets the context of the study presenting background information about the following issues: nature of the educational system, structure of pre-university education, pre-service and in-service EFL teacher training, status of EFL in Egypt, and EFL teaching material.

In **chapter three**, related literature is reviewed. First, a theoretical argument is made about two models of research on teacher knowledge: the technical rationalistic model and the professional practical knowledge model. The review then focuses on areas of teacher knowledge, its sources, and its relationship to classroom practice and to contextual factors.

The research design is presented in **chapter four**. First, the ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions of the study are made. This is followed by a discussion of the aims and justification of the methods used. A detailed account is then provided about the data collection and analysis processes. Finally, the ethical considerations and the encountered challenges are discussed.

Chapter five presents the findings of the study. It consists of three parts: (1) findings related to the domains of teacher knowledge and the sources that shaped them, (2) findings related to the relationship between teacher knowledge and classroom action, and (3) findings related to the role of the contextual factors in influencing the actualisation of teacher knowledge in practice.

In **chapter six**, the findings of the study are discussed in relation to context and existing literature. Four themes are discussed: (1) the core of teacher knowledge and a teacher knowledge perspective on good teaching, (2) the development of teacher knowledge, (3) ways of understanding the relationship between teacher knowledge and practice, and (4) the role of context.

In **chapter seven**, the implications for pre-service and in-service teacher learning are presented. A model is proposed for teacher learning. Other implications are drawn related to curriculum development, teacher professional development and educational research. Then, recommendations of the study and suggestions for

further research are made. The thesis concludes with reflections of the whole journey of the work.

1.8 Summary of the chapter

This chapter highlighted the need for the current study on professional practical knowledge of the EFL teacher and its relationship to classroom practice. It showed how teacher knowledge was conceptualised in the current study as being practical, experiential, personal, situational and contextual incorporating some aspects of beliefs and values. It was also conceived of in relation to teacher reasoning. The aims, research questions and significance of the current study were then highlighted.

CHAPTER 2

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

CHAPTER 2: CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

2.1 Introduction

In order to fully understand practical knowledge in its broad sense conceptualised in the previous chapter and its relationship to classroom practice, it might be a pre-requisite to understand the educational context in which these teachers work and the fieldwork of the current study was carried out. Therefore, this chapter sets the context of the current study. The chapter gives factual and background information about: country profile, the nature of the Egyptian educational system, structure and organization of the pre-university education in Egypt, the pre-service and in-service EFL teacher training, the status of English language in Egypt, EFL teaching material, and aims and methodology of the EFL curriculum. Most of the factual and background information in this chapter are drawn from: Ibrahim (2003), Gahin (2001), Razik & Zaher (1992), Schaub (2000) and Hargreaves (1997).

2.2 Country profile

The Arab Republic of Egypt, which is the field for conducting the current study, lies in the north-eastern part of Africa and Sinai Peninsula in the Western part of Asia. It is strategically located at the intersection of Europe, the north-east corner of Africa and Western Asia. It occupies a land of approximately one million square kilometres. The country borders Libya in the west, Sudan in the south, and Gaza Strip and Israel in the northeast. Egypt is administratively divided into 27 governorates of varying sizes. A governor appointed by the President heads each governorate. The governorates have important administrative functions in various fields including education. While the Ministry of Education (MOE thereafter) is responsible for legislating and following up national policies and overall plans, the governorates are responsible for implementation and administration.

2.3 Nature of the educational system

Improving education is the key to reforming the society at large. Egypt has

started development late after it has become an independent republic in 1952. The 1952 revolution brought about a new philosophy and approach to education. The revolutionary regime preached uniformity, equity, equal opportunities, and access for all at all levels of education. In 1956, the first Constitution issued after the revolution promulgated the following (Gahin, 2001):

- Education is free within the limits of the law and public decency (Article 48).
- Education is a right to all Egyptians, guaranteed by the state which will gradually establish all types of schools and educational institutions (Article 50).
- Education is free and compulsory at the elementary cycle in all public schools (Article 51).

Through the 1980 amendment to the Constitution, the government guaranteed equality of educational opportunities to all Egyptians and stipulated education to be free at all cycles.

2.4 Structure and organization of school system

There are three stages of pre-university public education provided by the state for all citizens. These are the primary, preparatory and secondary stage. The primary stage accepts children at the age of six and comprises six grades. The aim of this stage is to provide the pupils with basic literary and numeracy skills. English language has been recently introduced as a school subject at the primary stage from grade one to grade six. At the end of primary education, pupils are awarded a completion certificate. They now can join the second stage of pre-university education, which is the preparatory stage. This stage lasts for three grades (grade seven to grade nine). The main goals of this stage are to prepare children emotionally, socially, physically and intellectually to take part in modern citizenship and for more advanced levels of education.

Teaching English language is continued throughout the three grades of this stage. Upon completion of the preparatory school, pupils move to the secondary education level, which aims to prepare students for practical life and for higher and university education. Based on their exam results, students who get higher marks are allowed to join the general secondary school. Those who get lower marks could join the technical, commercial or agricultural secondary school. Most students in the second group terminate their education at this stage because of the fewer chances available for them to join university education which accepts students mostly from the general secondary school.

The preferred option general secondary school consists of three grades (grade ten to grade twelve). School subjects at grade ten are common for all students. At grades eleven and twelve, students choose subjects to prepare them to join either the science or the arts departments at the university. English language is taught throughout the three levels of this stage.

2.5 Pre-service EFL teacher training

Initial Teacher Education (ITE henceforth) takes place at the twenty-seven faculties of Education in universities. Enrolment in a particular programme at the Faculty of Education (FOE) depends on the total mark of the student in General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). Since the programme integrates educational preparation and subject matter preparation in four-year-training, enrolment is also dependent on the student's total mark of GCSE subject related to the area of specialisation of the programme. As well as possessing the appropriate school leaving qualifications, prospective trainees are required to pass a personal interview conducted by the Faculty of Education offering the training to measure the would-be trainee aptitude for the teaching profession. The tables below describe the plan of the EFL pre-service training programme of preparatory and secondary school teachers relevant to the focus of the current study.

Table 2.1: Plan of first year EFL ITE programme

Term 1		Term 2	
Name of the course	No. Of hours weekly	Name of the course	No. Of hours weekly
Grammar and Phonetics	8	Essay Writing and Linguistic Exercises	4
Novel and Prose	4	Translation from English into Arabic and vice versa	4
Civilization and History of Language	4	Drama and Literary Criticism	6
Second Foreign Language	4	Poetry	4
Principles of Education	2	Arabic Language	4
		Principles of Psychology	2
		Principles of Computer	2
Total hours weekly	22	Total hours weekly	26

Table 2.2: Plan of second year EFL ITE programme

Term 1		Term 2	
Name of the course	No. Of hours weekly	Name of the course	No. Of hours weekly
Grammar and Phonetics	8	Novel and prose	4
Essay Writing and Linguistic Exercises	4	Translation from English into Arabic and vice versa	4
Civilization and History of Language	4	Drama and literary Criticism	6
Second Foreign Language	4	Poetry	4
Principles of Teaching	2	Arabic Language	4
Psychology of Childhood	2	Psychology of Adolescence	2
Total hours weekly	24	Total hours weekly	24

Table 2.3: Plan of third year EFL ITE programme

Term 1		Term 2	
Name of the course	No. Of hours weekly	Name of the course	No. Of hours weekly
Grammar and Phonetics	8	Poetry	4
Novel and prose	4	Translation from English into Arabic and vice versa	4
Essay Writing and Linguistic Exercises	4	Drama and literary Criticism	6
History of Education	2	Social Foundations of Education	3
Educational Psychology	3	Education and Problems	3
Principles of Curricula	2	Educational Technology	4
Teaching Methods	4	Measurement and Evaluation	3
Teaching Practice	4	Teaching Practice	4
Total hours weekly	31	Total hours weekly	31

Table 2.4: Plan of fourth year EFL ITE programme

Term 1		Term 2	
Name of the course	No. Of hours weekly	Name of the course	No. Of hours weekly
Grammar and Phonetics	8	Poetry	4
Essay Writing and Linguistic Exercises	4	Translation from English into Arabic and vice versa	4
Novel and prose	4	Drama and literary Criticism	6
Comparative Education	2	Educational Administration	2
Philosophical foundations of Education	3	Psychology of Individual Differences	3
Mental Hygiene	4	Social Psychology	4
Curriculum Planning	2	Teaching Methods	4
Teaching Practice	4	Teaching Practice	4
Total hours weekly	31	Total hours weekly	31

According to this plan, the time of the programme is distributed for student teachers to learn about subject matter (58%), pedagogy (14%), psychology (10%), technology (3%), and other languages (7.5%). Only a small amount of the time of the programme (7.5%) is devoted for prospective teachers to practice teaching. This time is not enough for the trainee teachers to construct professional knowledge that is relevant to their teaching career. Moreover, there are no courses that help them reflect upon their teaching practice.

Upon completion of the programme, a student is granted a B.A. in English and Education which qualifies him/her as an EFL teacher.

2.6 In-service EFL teacher training

EFL preparatory and secondary school teacher training aims at teacher professional development and continuing preparation. Teacher training activities include workshops and conferences held by the education authorities or in coordination with FOE in the university.

Continuing teacher preparation courses provide another opportunity for in-service teacher training. For EFL teachers who only have a B.A. in English language without educational preparation and are appointed as teachers, they might choose to have part-time educational preparation at the FOE which grants a general diploma at the end of the course. EFL practising teachers could join this diploma for two-year part time. Graduates of the general diploma in education could apply to take post-graduate studies in education if they have achieved good grades in their course.

EFL in-service international training is also provided by the MOE in cooperation with faculties of Education. Since 1993, teachers have been sent to more developed countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States for training in fields such as modern methods of teaching and the use of advanced technology in education. The programmes organised by the overseas universities are designed to update the teachers' skills, see other systems of education and the schools within them, and encourage them to talk to teachers about their practices,

introduce them to new classroom technology and generally allow them to imbibe the cultural milieu of their host country (Swain, Monk & Christ; 2003). The teachers are selected for this course based on their professional records and English language proficiency. They spend nine months abroad and are required when they return to their schools to transfer their learned experiences to their colleagues who have not got the chance.

2.7 The status of English language in Egypt

English occupies a high status in Egypt especially among the well-educated groups and in the field of tourism, which is one of the major sources of income. Kachru (1992) – cited in Schaub (2000) – highlights that the status of English in Egypt indicates that though Egypt is not in the ‘Expanding Circle’ of countries in which English is becoming a universal second language, there are a number of Egyptian contexts, such as medicine, higher education or tourism where English serves as a first language of communication between natives of the country. The status of English language has passed through five historical stages since its introduction and up till now.

Since the 1870s, under the rule of Khedive Ismail, foreign language instruction has been included in the Egyptian educational system, and English was one choice alongside French, Turkish and German (Schaub, 2000). El-Ezabi, (1990) – cited in Ibrahim (2003) – maintains that during the British occupation (1882-1956), English language occupied a higher status after the decline of Turkish. However, it became less popular after the end of occupation in 1956. It regained popularity due to the ‘open door’ policy of former President Sadat, which required English to be taught in public schools. In Egypt today, English is an obligatory school subject in all the 12 grades of the public school system.

Different groups in Egypt are highly motivated to learn English today. These groups study English as a school subject or take courses in English language institutes which are widely spread all over the country in the hope of finding well-paid jobs in one of the innumerable foreign firms or banks operating in Egypt. These institutions carry a similar condition for applicants, i.e., is good in

English language. Good English learners also find it easy to get a job in the tourism industry. Publicly, English is widely used in the tourism industry in hotels, restaurants, museums, tourist sites and guided tours.

This enthusiasm to learn English reflects a wide concern about the importance and popularity of English in Egypt. It also reflects the positive attitudes towards English language in Egypt. This is bolstered by Schaub (2000) who mentions: “To the average speaker of English on a visit to Egypt, there in fact seems to be a great love of the language, with people all over its cities and countryside eager to practice their English, to communicate in *il-Ingliizi* [English transliterated]” (p.235).

In pre-university education, English is taught in all 12 grades. At all grades, students receive six lessons per week, forty-five minutes a lesson. Regarding tertiary education, almost all academic university departments all over the country provide English as a required course to get a university degree. English is also a requirement to join or pass (based on each university policy) any post-graduate university course. In addition, all PhD theses, if not written in English, must devote a chapter of the thesis in English. In the private sector, English is enjoying more popularity. In most private schools and universities, English is the medium of instruction. Besides, English courses are offered to the public through university community service centres, the British council, the British University, the American University and its off-campus centres across the country, authorized English language centres, private tuition and the like.

English language serves many purposes in Egypt. Schaub (2000) suggests several functions for the English language in Egypt including instrumental and regulative functions. As far as the instrumental function is concerned, most faculties in the national universities require some English and it is the medium of instruction in some professional schools of science, medicine, engineering and others. It also serves some regulative functions in international conferences such as the annual CDELT (Centre for Developing English Language Teaching) and conference on

teaching of English in Africa and the Middle East which has its proceedings in English.

2.8 EFL Teaching Material

The Book Sector of the MOE is responsible for the development and distribution of school textbooks for students at the various stages of pre-university education. The school curricula are the same in all public schools. The Book Sector also distributes teachers' manuals.

Since 1999, the MOE has replaced the old textbook 'Excel in English' with a new one called 'Hello'. This series, which is still in use, is introduced to students from the primary school and continues throughout the preparatory and secondary schools. This series was developed to promote the communicative approach and to address the failure of previous approaches to help learners communicate through English.

For each grade, there is a student's book, a teacher's book and two cassette tapes. The student's book contains the core teaching material. The workbooks consolidate work taught and practised in the student's books. They also contain test practice exercises. The teacher's book gives useful information to help teachers with their preparation. The cassette tapes contain models for oral work, listening and dictation texts and the reading passages in the student's book.

2.9 Aims and methodology of the EFL curriculum

The aims and methodology of the EFL curriculum – as stated by the MOE – are listed below (Ibrahim, 2003):

- Pupils need to be enabled to communicate in English.
- Pupils need to know about the basic structure of the language and to be given practice in using it in meaningful and realistic situations.
- All language skills; i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing are introduced.

- Pupils must be encouraged to work alone, in pairs, in small groups, and in large groups as well as a whole class.
- The communicative language approach should form the framework of class activities and foreign language interaction.
- Pupils should be encouraged to participate in the lesson.
- Teachers should be aware of the integration of language skills while teaching them. This means giving the four skills the same importance as no skill can be taught in isolation or separated from the others.
- Error correction shouldn't be at the expense of fluency and self expression in English.
- Pupils should be always aware of what they are doing and how and why they are doing it.

2.10 Summary of the chapter

This chapter set the context of the study. It started by giving background information about Egypt, where the fieldwork of the current study was implemented. Then, the philosophy of the Egyptian educational system was pointed out. This was followed by a description of the structure and organization of the school system in Egypt. Then, the training of EFL teachers during the ITE programme and while being in-service was outlined. The status of English language in Egypt was also presented. The chapter ended with providing background information about curriculum material.

CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF LITERAURE

Chapter 3: Review of literature

3.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews relevant research literature. It starts with a theoretical background about two models of teacher knowledge: the technical rationality and the professional practical model. A review of literature on teachers' knowledge suggests that relevant studies focus on four issues: the content of teacher knowledge, the sources which contributed in shaping it, its relationship to classroom practice and how it is influenced by context. After establishing the conceptual framework of the current study and defining related constructs, analytical frameworks to categorize the domains of teacher knowledge are presented and commented on followed by research studies which investigated the constituting areas of teacher knowledge. Insights from such work are drawn and related to the current study. The sources of teacher knowledge are then reviewed. This is followed by a section about the relationship between teacher knowledge and classroom practice.

A model viewing teaching as a knowledge-based activity and an act of common sense focusing on the moment of teaching and considering teaching as an intelligent behaviour informed by a variety of inputs is presented. This is followed by research studies investigating the relationship between knowledge and practice in relation to the notions of classroom decision making and practice as a physical form of knowledge. Evidence related to the role of context in the actualisation of teacher knowledge in practice is then reviewed. The chapter concludes with highlighting various theoretical influences that shape the area of research on teacher cognition and how it is related to teacher knowledge.

3.2 Research on teaching

Research on teaching has undergone a paradigmatic shift coupled with the cognitive movement. Verloop et al. (2001), who conducted intensive research on teacher knowledge in the Canadian context, maintain that the cognitive shift in research on student learning is followed by a shift on research on teaching. They

state: “Research on teaching changed from studying teacher behavior into studying teacher cognitions and beliefs underlying that behavior, based on ideas about the interaction between them” (p.442). They point out how this shift has had an impact on re-conceptualizing the research agenda on teaching. They further add:

The most challenging question with respect to teacher professionalism is no longer how we can best provide teachers with insights developed elsewhere, but how the process of ‘dialogue with the situation’ takes place in a teaching context, which insights are developed in this context, and how these insights relate to insights from other sources (pp. 442-443).

The shift of focus in learning, teaching, and teacher knowledge took place after recognizing the limitations of the behaviourist movement which had a widespread impact during the first part of the twentieth century and the resulting technical rationality model of teaching and teacher education and development. Johnson (1999) emphasizes that although much of what teachers know about teaching comes from their real life experiences inside and outside the classroom, the traditional view of teacher knowledge that has dominated educational research for a long time considered teachers’ knowledge to be something that was almost external to the teacher.

3.3 The technical rationalistic model

The technical rationalistic model is seen as the product of behaviourism. Hiebert et al. (2002) maintain that viewing teacher knowledge in terms of technical rationality dates back to the behaviourist movement at the beginning of the twentieth century. They further indicate that proponents of the behaviourist movement viewed that scientific research evidence should guide practice. The movement borrowed methods from physical sciences, with an emphasis on objective methods to measure and isolate variables, and to compare quantitative outcomes. However, the introduction of the technical model from other fields, such as medicine in which research evidence-based practice was first developed, to be applied to education overlooks the different meanings of evidence in these fields and their different nature from that of education (Biesta, 2007).

Depending on research evidence alone to guide educational practice denies educational professionals the right to make judgment. Evidence could be useful to guide a teacher to alternative courses of action. However, the choice of the most appropriate alternative remains the realm of the professional who needs to make an informed decision based on an awareness of the context and various inputs underpinning the teaching moment. This argument resonates with what is suggested by Hiebert et al. (2002) who argue for a knowledge base for teaching, which is underpinned in practice. They highlighted two negative consequences of the technical rationalistic model on education. First, many teachers found the knowledge produced through this model difficult to apply in their particular contexts. Second, professional knowledge building became the province of researchers whereas applying the knowledge was left to practitioners.

Thus, the technical rationality model has diminished the role of teachers as practical theorizers. This stance is supported by Kumaravadivelu (2003) who wrote about macro-strategies for language teachers especially in the EFL and L2 contexts. He holds that the technicist view of teaching and teacher education marginalises the role of teachers who have to carry out the teacher-proof packages they are provided with regardless of issues of context, experience or reflection.

Another criticism of the technical rationalistic model is that it is too simplistic. This approach considers teaching as a craft that can be broken down into a set of skills in terms of which teachers could be educated. However, not all teaching can be looked upon as skills or competencies. Hegarty (2000) criticizes this approach as it “leads to an impoverished notion of teaching which reduces it to the unreflective application of rules devoid of insight and creativity” (p. 456). In adopting such a view, the particularity of the teaching situation is overlooked. Schön (1983) argues that teachers work in “swampy lowland where situations are confusing messes incapable of technical solution” (p.42).

The technical rationality model does not only undervalue the context-specific nature of teaching, but also the practicality of it. Hegarty (2000) warns that great

care must be taken in using formal knowledge resulting from research studies and the claims made for it because of the limited utility on their own to the work of practitioners. Equally, Hiebert et al. (2002) point out how research on teaching which is focused on isolating certain features of teaching is of limited, if any, use to the work of teachers. They state: “The knowledge produced by these studies often is not immediately useful for teachers because it is the interaction among the features of teaching, not their effects in isolation that give teaching its meaning and character” (p.8). They also criticize the lack of relevance of research knowledge to actual classroom teaching. They state: “In spite of the continuing efforts of researchers, archived research knowledge has had little effect on the improvement of practice in the average classroom” (p. 3). Verloop et al. (2001) support this view arguing that “the research led to very few generalizable results” (p.442). They add that the search for effective variables comprising teaching behaviour resulted in losing the sight of the complexity and interdependency of teacher behaviour as a whole. Educational theory has a role to play in the work of teachers. However, the relationship between theory and practice is not always straightforward. In addition, theory is generated in a particular context and cannot be simply generalised to all teaching settings.

The technical approach to teacher knowledge does not acknowledge the multi-dimensionality of teaching and consequently over-simplifies the process by specifying to teachers the course of action they are supposed to take. This agrees with Hegarty (2000) who states:

Teaching draws on a multiplicity of cognitive, affective and interpersonal elements. To appreciate fully the challenge of teaching excellence, we have to bear in mind not only the extraordinary diversity of these elements but also the many different ways that teachers can draw on them to construct teaching behaviour (p.451).

However, in adopting the technicist approach, teaching becomes no more than mechanistic routines followed by teachers with no big value for teachers’ wisdom of practice (Doyle, 1990). It is through reflection, talk and discussion that teachers develop professionally and gain wisdom. Instead of being told how to act, they can devise for themselves, based on the contextual and situational

conditions of their work, the best alternative ways to act. These options will then be turned into action plans. Once put to use, these plans can prove their success or failure. The cycle repeats and new insights are generated. It is through this that a teacher can become a creative professional. Asking teachers to apply theories and insights provided by experts challenges the idea of teachers as creative professionals (Hargreaves, 1998).

A further criticism of technical knowledge as informing the work of the teacher is that it is not readily transferable. Troudi (2005) emphasizes that it is not always clear how technical knowledge can be transferred into practical knowledge that teachers can employ in their classes. This is in addition to the limitation that technical knowledge produced by research studies is not easily accessible to practising teachers. Hiebert et al. (2002) emphasize that: “Teachers rarely draw from a shared knowledge base to improve their practice. They do not routinely locate and translate research-based knowledge to inform their efforts” (p.3). Similarly, Tsui (2003) maintains that teachers can not simply apply research-based theory to solve problematic situations because problems of practice do not present themselves as given. Teachers have to identify the problem by making sense of situations that are ill-defined, messy, and full of uncertainties. Even if teachers are able to identify the problem, they may find it unique, so that they can not solve it by applying established theory or technique.

Overall, the technical rationality model of teacher knowledge is heavily criticised for overlooking the experiential, practical, contextual, situational and idiosyncratic dimensions of teaching. It failed to recognize teachers as proactive members of the profession. In addition, it overlooked the practicality and particularity of teaching as well as the teachers’ wisdom of practice. This is apart from the nature of technical knowledge as being not readily transferrable.

A point to be made about the technical model of teacher knowledge is that it fails to account for teacher knowledge as constructed by the teacher through interaction with experience. Teacher knowledge could not be readily transferrable in the sense described by the technical model. Before formal or

propositional knowledge becomes part of the schemata of the teacher, it needs to be cognitively filtered by the individual teacher. Therefore, it may be constructed differently because different individuals have different interpretive frameworks through which they see the world. In addition, propositional knowledge about teaching represents part and not all what a teacher knows because many aspects of the teacher's work in any particular context have yet to be known. This means that indicating to teachers the knowledge appropriate for teaching may deprive them of constructing their own world of practice and forming new insights from the interaction with the teaching situation. An alternative model which gives rise to the practicality of the teaching situation is discussed below.

3.4 Professional practical knowledge

This section supports the argument made earlier about the complexity of teaching and what it informs. The model supported here provides the counterargument for the criticisms addressed to the technical rationalistic model. The main argument here is that the knowledge underpinning the teachers' work is not what 'works' or 'will work', but what 'worked' in a particular context from the perspective of practising teachers. The professional practical model of teacher knowledge focuses on knowledge which is constructed by the practising teacher from the interaction with the teaching situation. It is worth noting that this knowledge incorporates some aspects of beliefs and values. This knowledge is mainly built through experience and is conditioned by the context of teaching. This model is required to avoid the separation between the generation and application of knowledge created by the technical rationalistic model. This argument is theoretically-grounded. Gibbens, Limoges, Nowotny, Schwartzman, Scott, & Trow (1994) describe the practical knowledge of teaching as being trans-disciplinary and driven by the problem to be solved with the social context as an integral part of the problem definition.

Accordingly, the model of professional practical knowledge gives rise to teaching as being context-specific. Hegarty (2000) argues that educational "research which is concerned with knowledge produced and valued in a practical

classroom context as opposed to theoretical knowledge associated with child development and psychology is more likely to commend itself to educators” (pp. 455-456). He further adds that:

Defining and pursuing inquiries in a transdisciplinary way, where the key driver is the underlying problem and disciplinary inputs have a place only to the extent that they illuminate the problem, stand a better chance of producing knowledge that can be used by the classroom teacher than university-based, discipline bound research (p.456).

This indicates that experiencing with the teaching situation could result in insights which are intrinsic to the conduct of teaching. Hegarty (2000) calls for a model of practical knowledge from which teachers generate the insights which shape their teaching behaviour, and consequently empower teachers as professionals. He states:

If the model is accepted, researchers' contribution to teachers' professional development is conceptualised in terms of enhancing the knowledge base from which teachers generate the insights which shape their teaching behaviour (p.464).

This outlook to teacher knowledge supports teachers as knowledge producers, which is a core and distinctive purpose of education (Hegarty, 2000). It overcomes the limitation of the technical rationality model of viewing teachers as consumers of knowledge. Schön (1983) holds that teachers, through their informed involvement in the principles, practices, and processes of classroom instruction, can bring about fresh and fruitful perspectives to the complexities of teaching that can not be matched by experts who are far removed from classroom realities. He argues that the most suitable methods teachers could resort to manage the problems of everyday teaching are “experience, trial and error, intuition, and muddling through” (p.43). Teachers deal with human beings not machines. They also know, based on their experience, their students and the context in which they work. This knowledge, which is practical, could inform their practice and facilitate their judgment. Schön adds that it is the teachers’ own reflection in and on action, and not undue reliance on professional experts that will help them to identify and meet the challenges they face in their everyday practice of teaching.

By accounting for the practical, contextual and experiential dimensions of teaching, professional practical knowledge is different from technical knowledge. Hiebert et al. (2002) assert that teachers have a distinct form of knowledge different from that produced by educational researchers with the former being detailed, concrete, and specific as a result of being generated from and oriented towards practice, whereas the latter is more abstract because it is intended to be applied to a wider variety of potential problems.

This model of professional practical knowledge, instead of focusing on technical notions of teacher knowledge, gives rise to the trans-disciplinary nature of teacher knowledge. It acknowledges teaching as a context-specific activity. It also recognizes the experiential nature of the teacher's work. It is through experiencing with the teaching situation that teachers could generate insights which shape their teaching behaviour. Thus, the model empowers teachers as producers rather than consumers of knowledge. The role of research with regard to teacher knowledge becomes the enhancement of the knowledge produced through dialogic engagement with practising teachers to reveal the hidden side of the work and how it shapes practice.

This model is going to serve as the conceptual framework of the current study. This is because of its emphasis on understanding and enhancing the role of the teacher. It also acknowledges the role of context and experience in shaping the teacher's knowledge and practice. The model is also suitable because teachers in Egypt, especially the experienced ones, construct most of their professional knowledge from experience and interaction with the context in which they work. This is supported by Gahin (2001). Based on his study of EFL teachers in the Egyptian context, he states that "teachers do not count on the theoretical knowledge they were exposed to in their education programmes. Rather, they believe in what is workable in their classroom" (p.282). This indicates that the professional knowledge of EFL experienced teachers in Egypt is practically-shaped.

3.5 Definition of terms as used in the study

3.5.1 Knowledge

Knowledge in the current study is viewed broadly in order to incorporate aspects of beliefs and values. This definition is similar to BAK (Beliefs, Assumptions & Knowledge). These three concepts represent a continuum on which assumptions are based on beliefs and knowledge is based on both assumptions and beliefs. The term 'knowledge' is used in this particular way to allow teachers to talk about a broad range of ideas, views, intuitions, memories, awareness, insights, understanding, beliefs and values. It is appropriate to use the term 'knowledge' in this broad way because the differences among the terms 'knowledge', 'beliefs', 'conceptions' and 'intuitions' may not be clear in the minds of teachers who may be using them interchangeably.

Much of the general literature concerned with teacher knowledge uses this broad conceptualisation of the term 'knowledge'. For example, Verloop et al. (2001) use the label 'teacher knowledge' as an overarching inclusive concept of a host of teacher cognitions. Johnson (1999) uses the term 'teacher knowledge' to include experiential and professional knowledge that shapes teacher reasoning and is embedded in classroom practice. Other research studies use the term 'knowledge' when considering the cognitive bases underpinning teachers' work (e.g. Elbaz, 1981; Turner-Bisset, 1997; Mayer & Marland, 1997; Golombek, 1998; Meijer et al. 1999, 2001; Gatbonton, 1999; Johnston & Goettsch, 2000; Tsang, 2004; Mullock, 2006; Xu & Liu, 2009).

3.5.2 Beliefs

In the current study, beliefs are considered part of teachers' knowledge because of the interrelatedness of the two concepts and the difficulty of delineating where knowledge ends and beliefs begin. Pajares (1992) refers to existential presumptions and affective and evaluative loading as two features characteristic of beliefs. Existential presumptions are perceived as immutable entities that exist beyond individual control or knowledge. People believe them because they are

there. In addition, beliefs have stronger affective and evaluative components than knowledge and that affect typically operates independently of cognition associated with knowledge. Pajares (1992) argues that what is missing from these conceptualisations is the element that cognitive knowledge must also have its own affective and evaluative component because knowledge cannot exist in the absence of judgment or evaluation. Due to these complications, beliefs, which could be tantamount to values, judgements, axioms, opinions, perceptions, conceptions, personal theories, internal mental processes, practical principles, perspectives and repertoires of understanding are included under the term 'knowledge' in the current study.

3.5.3 Expertise

Given that teacher knowledge in the current study is viewed in its widest possible sense as encompassing knowledge, skills, processes and dispositions essential to good teaching, a knowledge-based paradigm of expertise is adopted. Accordingly, expert teachers are those who work towards a state of expertise, of mastery over all kinds of knowledge, skills and processes needed for expert teaching (Turner-Bisset, 2001). Some of the most common criteria used in identifying expert teachers include their reputation (amongst peers and school administrators) and their performance as observed in the classroom (Mullock, 2003). Experience is another factor used in the identification of expert teachers. Westerman (1991) considers five years experience as being the benchmark time by which expertise may develop. Although experience and expertise may not always go hand in hand, experience is seen as the most important prerequisite for the development of expertise (Gage & Berliner, 1998). All these parameters were observed in the current study, which acknowledges the role of teacher knowledge in the development of expertise.

3.6 Analytical frameworks for categorising teacher knowledge

Although the various areas of teacher professional knowledge are intertwined in practice, some categorizing systems are used to map out the various domains of

teacher knowledge informing the teacher's work. This section reviews three analytical frameworks, which are commented on and related to the current study.

One way to categorize the domains of teacher knowledge is to do this in relation to the disciplines of knowledge thought to be relevant to their work. For example, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) give an example of the content of this knowledge for teaching provided to prospective teachers of English as a second language. It consists primarily of the general theories and research-based findings on a wide range of foundational and applied topics that together constitute the basic domains of knowledge about teaching. By this, they refer to formal knowledge. They propose eight domains as constituents of a knowledge base for the teaching profession. These include:

1. Content or subject matter knowledge;
2. knowledge about the disciplinary foundations of education;
3. human development and learners;
4. classroom organization;
5. pedagogy;
6. assessment;
7. the social and cultural contexts of teaching and schooling; and
8. knowledge of teaching as a profession.

This classification is based on the structural divisions of teacher education institutions providing teacher education training. However, this categorization of teacher knowledge raises serious concerns. The elements of this disciplinary structure are not intrinsic to the conduct of teaching as they exist and develop in their own right and their relationship to education is necessarily indirect (Hegarty, 2000). Hegarty further adds that these domains are separate from each other with each of them providing valuable insights that inform the practice of teaching, but they tend to do so in an atomistic way with no systematic means of combining different understandings within a common framework. Likewise, Tsui (2003) maintains that the disciplines approach to categorizing teacher knowledge results

in a hierarchical separation between the underlying principles of teaching and teaching practice although this separation is not so discernable in the work of teachers.

Instead of viewing teacher knowledge in relation to the disciplinary structures, other models suggest classifications related to the practice of teaching. Two models which have informed the current study will be reviewed here. The first is the pioneer work of Lee Shulman (1987) which has been followed by several studies in the area of teacher knowledge for more than three decades. The second is an adaptation of the original list provided by Shulman. It was introduced by Turner-Bisset (1997) and elaborated in her subsequent model (1999) and (2001).

Categorising teacher knowledge was based on the belief that there exists a knowledge base for teaching - a codified or codifiable aggregation of knowledge (Shulman, 1987). He suggests a minimum of seven categories of teacher knowledge. They are:

1. Content knowledge;
2. general pedagogical knowledge, with special reference to those broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organization that appear to transcend subject matter;
3. curriculum knowledge, with particular grasp of the materials and programmes that serve as 'tools of the trade' for teachers;
4. pedagogical content knowledge, that special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of professional understanding;
5. knowledge of learners and their characteristics;
6. knowledge of educational contexts, ranging from the workings of the group or classroom, the governance and financing of school districts, to the character of communities and cultures; and
7. knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values, and their philosophical and historical grounds.

The work of Shulman motivated several researchers to conduct research studies attempting to set the content of knowledge of teachers either in general education or in the EFL context.

The original model suggested by Shulman (1987) was then adapted and elaborated. Turner-Bisset (1999), in the British context, has developed a model of teacher knowledge bases (1999) from analysing interview and observation data of post graduate primary teachers in training. The model she provides is more comprehensive than Shulman's original list of knowledge bases for teaching. She added knowledge of self as a significant domain, which is not included in the model provided by Shulman. She also added knowledge of models of teaching as a component domain. She also specified which areas of knowledge are included under each domain. Thus, her model is expanded to nine instead of seven domains. These are: subject matter knowledge, curriculum knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, knowledge of models of teaching, knowledge of learners, knowledge of self, knowledge of educational contexts, knowledge of educational ends, and pedagogical content knowledge.

According to that model, knowledge of subject matter was divided into three sub-domains: substantive subject matter, syntactic subject matter, and beliefs about subject matter. They are all aspects of content knowledge. The substantive structure of a discipline consists of the facts and concepts of a discipline, and its organising frameworks whereas syntactical knowledge is the ways and means by which the propositional knowledge has been generated and established. Beliefs about the subject were considered as much an aspect of subject matter knowledge itself. As for knowledge of curriculum, a broad conception of it which goes beyond the materials and programmes of study available for a subject matter by government prescription was adopted. Turner-Bisset proposed that teachers should be able to evaluate curricular materials critically. She argued that it was inadequate for teachers to just rely on prescribed materials without judging whether they were really suitable for their purposes or the needs of their students.

Knowledge of models of teaching was described as beliefs or perceptions about teaching. The views held by the teachers about the processes of education have an influence on what they do and how they do it. By including such a component as one constituent domain in her model, Turner-Bisset (1999) views knowledge as a general term including not only the teachers' knowledge, but also their beliefs and perceptions as well. The current study line up with this broad conceptualisation of teacher knowledge to incorporate some aspects of beliefs, perceptions and values.

In terms of teachers' knowledge of students, two elements were emphasized: social knowledge and cognitive knowledge of learners. Social knowledge of learners included their age characteristics, how they behaved in classrooms and school, their interests and preoccupations, their social nature, how contextual factors could have an effect on their work and behaviour, and the nature of student-teacher relationship. The cognitive knowledge of learners consisted of two elements. First, there was teachers' knowledge of child development which informed their practice. The second element was teachers' knowledge of a particular group of learners in a particular context and of what they could and could not know, do, or understand. This knowledge grew from regular contact with students and affected teachers' practice in two ways. Linking with Shulman (1987), Turner-Bisset found that teachers adapted their teaching and the curricular material to suit the needs of particular learners. She also found that teachers, informed by their knowledge about particular groups of learners, differentiated their instruction to cater for the differing abilities of their students.

Knowledge of self was found to be an important knowledge base because of the importance of self image in coping with the demands of the teaching profession and because of the importance of self-reflection and evaluation in teacher development. She also found that knowledge of self was an important requisite for reflection and being able to deliberate on one's own practice, which, in turn, could have some impact on teachers' development. Although knowledge of self was not included in Shulman's original list, Turner-Bisset found it – like other researchers (e.g. Elbaz, 1981; Clandinin, 1989; Richards, 1996) – an important

knowledge base of teaching. For example, Richards (1996) highlights that knowledge of self relates to the teacher's personal and subjective philosophy of teaching and the teacher's view of what constitutes good teaching.

Knowledge of educational ends, purposes and values was considered as one of many essential features of teaching. Teaching is also a purposeful activity both at the short term for teaching a lesson or a series of lessons, and at the long term for the eventual value to society.

The ninth and last domain in the model developed by Turner-Bisset was pedagogical content knowledge. For her, this knowledge domain was not just an amalgam of content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge in the way conceptualised by Shulman (1987), but an overarching knowledge base comprising all of the knowledge bases already described. Conceptualizing pedagogical content knowledge in such broad way sets pedagogy in general terms to include, as indicated by Richards, Schmidt, Kendricks & Kim (2002), theories of teaching, curriculum and instruction as well as the ways in which formal teaching and learning in schools is planned and delivered.

Some concluding points are to be made regarding the model of the knowledge bases of the expert teacher provided by Turner-Bisset. It is worth noting that the model is a useful analytical tool to facilitate the understanding of a complex and multi-dimensional activity such as teaching. However, the relationship between knowledge and practice is not linear because of the practicality and the particularity of the teaching situation. Another point is that although Turner-Bisset (1999) provides a comprehensive set of knowledge domains for teaching, these emerged from her study (1997) of a particular group of student teachers in a particular context teaching a particular subject. Any attempt to adopt the suggested model must consider these issues first. A third point is that Turner-Bisset (1999) claims that this model represents the knowledge bases of the expert teachers although it is based on and makes many references to her study (1997) on student teachers in training who are still learning about teaching and who are not experienced enough either to articulate their theories of practice or to have a

very clear and crystallized idea about what effective teaching requires.

One advantage of the model presented by Turner-Bisset (1999) is that it is empirically-based revealing the areas of teacher knowledge which are related to the teacher's work. It shows the knowledge teachers have already come up with out of their interaction with the teaching situation. This has implications for the current study because some insights could be gained about the construction of professional practical knowledge of the teacher. Knowledge areas such as subject matter, pedagogy, learners, learning context, curriculum and self were constructed as important areas of teacher knowledge. Therefore, these aspects could represent important foci in the current study which is concerned with constructing the areas of teacher knowledge intrinsic to the conduct of teaching. Although the context is different given that the model provided relates to the UK context, the areas revealed could represent a general framework for examining the areas of teacher knowledge taking into consideration the particularity of the context of the current study.

Another insight which could be drawn from the model provided by Turner-Bisset (1999) is the provision of justifications for considering the revealed areas as essential for the teacher's work. This is at the essence of the notion of reasoning which is necessary for research on teacher knowledge and practice (Fenstermacher, 1994). The model does not only present the areas of teacher knowledge, but also explains why they are essential. It highlights the importance of investigating teacher knowledge in relation to teacher reasoning which is a significant aspect of the teacher's professional life. Johnson (1999) argues that teachers' knowledge consists of a combination of experiential and professional knowledge that shapes teachers' reasoning and is tacitly embodied in their classroom practices. This indicates that it is important when investigating teacher knowledge to do this from the perspective of practitioners who are in a position to uncover the knowledge underlying and informing their actions. Finally, the model highlights the role of experience in constructing teacher knowledge. This means that the teachers' knowledge is experientially and practically-oriented. Therefore, it could be anticipated that when they talk about their knowledge, they

will do this in relation to their practice which helps in shaping and reshaping their knowledge.

3.7 Research studies on areas of teacher knowledge

Although the models reviewed above may be useful as general frameworks for the domains of teacher knowledge, the findings of research studies conducted in similar contexts to that of the current study could provide useful insights into the content of teacher knowledge. This is the aim of the review of the studies in this section which discusses studies in the ESL/EFL contexts that focus on the domains of teacher knowledge showing how they could inform the current study.

There have been attempts to investigate the content of teacher knowledge from the perspective of experienced practitioners. One of these attempts in L2 education is the study by Golombek (1998). Using data from class observations, interviews, and stimulated recall reports of two ESL secondary school teachers in the USA, she investigated language teachers' personal practical knowledge. The two participants had extensive formal language learning experiences in their secondary and postsecondary schooling and in natural settings outside the United States. They were teaching the second course in a series of three speaking and listening courses for international ESL students. She established four categories representing the content of the teachers' personal practical knowledge: knowledge of self, knowledge of subject matter, knowledge of instruction, and knowledge of context. Golombek described knowledge of self in terms of the identities to which the teachers referred when they reconstructed their experience, for example, language learner, teacher and spouse. Knowledge of subject matter includes the disciplinary knowledge that a teacher uses in the classroom. It is input from readings, classes, professors and other experiences that the teachers in her study had filtered through their interpretive frameworks to shape their understandings of ESL learning and teaching.

The third domain of personal practical knowledge established was knowledge of instruction, which represented the pedagogical knowledge her participants drew upon to teach and to make sense of their teaching such as the role of lesson plans

and interaction with students. The fourth knowledge domain was knowledge of contexts including institutional and socio-political setting along with the time, place, and actors within the setting. It is worth noting that Golombek (1998) admits that although the four categories described above help illustrate the personal practical knowledge of her teachers, they are neither a comprehensive nor a prescriptive view of what teachers know.

The study of Golombek is insightful in many ways. It is insightful in terms of the construct dealt with. Describing knowledge as both personal and practical indicates that teacher knowledge is unique. It is idiosyncratic because it is influenced by the individual teacher who constructs it. It is also constructed from practice. That is why it is described as practical. The study is also insightful in terms of the methods used. Constructing teacher knowledge using classroom observation, interviews and stimulated recall reports is in accord with the personal and practical elements of teacher knowledge. This means that these methods are suitable for studying the knowledge areas underpinning the teacher's work. This also indicates the need to investigate teacher knowledge in relation to practice.

Another is the sources which shaped these areas. These insights could be made use of in the current study. However, some differences could be noted between my work and this study. My study attempts to survey and investigate the views of as many EFL teachers as possible. The study groups are different because the target sample in the current study is EFL preparatory and secondary school teachers teaching EFL students in public schools with a given curriculum. Therefore, it is anticipated that knowledge of curriculum, which was not revealed in the study by Golombek, could be part of the EFL teacher knowledge in the current study. There are other important areas of teacher knowledge missing in the study by Golombek such as knowledge of content pedagogy and knowledge of learners.

Elbaz (1981) provided a more comprehensive model of the knowledge areas of a teacher in the Canadian context. She reported on a case study of the practical

knowledge of an experienced English language teacher. The teacher in her study had about ten years of teaching experience, and taught abroad for several years. She had been at her present school, a large, suburban high school, for five years, teaching English literature and writing. She had been involved for a year in the development of a course in reading and information-getting skills for grade 10 students. Based on classroom observation and interview data, she set the content of the practical knowledge of the participating teacher in her study in terms of five categories: knowledge of subject matter, curriculum, instruction, self, and milieu of schooling.

The teacher's knowledge of herself and her role as a teacher had many facets including three aspects that stood out. First, because the teacher took herself and her potential contribution to teaching seriously, she looked upon herself as a source to be used in the best way possible: she had knowledge of her skills and abilities. Second, the teacher saw herself in relation to others and had knowledge concerning her relationships to others. Third, she viewed herself as a unique human being with needs, personality traits, talents, and limitations, all of which necessarily influenced her work as a teacher.

Concerning the teacher's practical knowledge of the milieu, the focus was on the ways that the teacher's beliefs about the milieu interacted with her actions in organizing her own social setting. Sub-categories included the basic setting of the classroom, the teacher's relations with other teachers and with the administration of the school, her view of the political context of teaching, and the kinds of setting she seemed to create for herself within the school.

The teacher's subject matter knowledge, similar to other areas of her knowledge, was practical, shaped by and for the practical situation. This view was elucidated by revealing the conceptions which lay beneath the different facets of content, the ways in which content from different subject areas was selected and combined by the teacher, and how this content changed as the teacher used it in teaching.

With regard to knowledge of curriculum, the teacher experienced curriculum development processes in several forms. She had participated intensively in the development of a learning course over a period of about a year and half. She was also involved in programme planning in the English department and she had worked on the curriculum of the reading centre attached to her school. Each of these tasks was found to contribute in a different way to the development of the teacher's practical knowledge of the curriculum process.

The teacher's practical knowledge of instruction was considerable. It included the teacher's view of learning and knowledge of teaching generally and of her teaching style in particular. Other aspects included views on how instruction should be organized, the kind of interaction with students, and the evaluation of student learning.

Although the context of the study by Elbaz is different from that of the current study, it could be insightful and therefore, inform my work in many ways. One insight is that it focuses on the teacher's practical knowledge, shaped by and for the actual teaching situation. This could justify the use of classroom observation and interviews as methods for investigating the practical knowledge of an experienced teacher.

The role of context in influencing teacher knowledge was highlighted when presenting knowledge of milieu of instruction. This could be an important focus when researching the practical knowledge of the teacher. Knowledge of teacher strengths and limitations was highlighted when presenting teacher knowledge of self. This could be another important focus informing my study. Although knowledge of instruction was highlighted, knowledge of how to teach the subject matter was a missing area of the teacher's practical knowledge. Thus, no distinction was made between the teacher's knowledge of general pedagogy or instruction and knowledge of content pedagogy.

An additional point to be made about the study by Elbaz (1981) is that there is no mention of knowledge of students as a self-standing category in spite of being a significant domain of teacher knowledge as discussed below.

3.7.1 Knowledge of students

Knowledge of students is an important element of teacher knowledge, evident in the model provided by Shulman (1987) and that of Turner-Bisset (1999). It is also highlighted by Mayer & Marland (1997). They examined the knowledge of five highly effective teachers in Georgia. Analysis of in-depth interviews showed that teachers held extensive knowledge about their classes, groups within it and individual students. Knowledge of the classroom was expressed by all teachers predominantly in terms of ability levels and previous schooling. Many teachers also discussed work habits, student personalities and attributes as related categories to knowledge of classes. As for knowledge of the student groups, the teachers identified within their classes, all the teachers outlined it in terms of a number of categories, namely, ability levels, work habits and shared personality traits within groups, with some teachers referring to attributes, interests of groups and behaviour in the playground.

This indicates that this area of knowledge could be an important focus when investigating the constituting domains of teacher knowledge. Knowledge of students' ability levels, learning habits and particular groups of students could help the teacher tailor teaching accordingly, prepare material that cater for the individual differences among the students, vary teaching to meet the individual learning style preferences of the students, and make use of students' characteristics to help them learn better.

Knowledge of students was also found by Meijer et al. (1999) to be a core area of the practical knowledge of 13 language teachers in the Netherlands. They distinguished it in terms of three categories: knowledge about students' characteristics, knowledge about their environment, and knowledge of their motivation. They found that the teachers held different views about students in general. Their opinions ranged from very negative (they are not motivated to go to school, they are passive, irresponsible, and chaotic) to very positive (they are kind, smart, discerning, and take initiative). The opinions of the teachers were associated with the ideas they had about the students' environment. They were

also related to their knowledge of how to motivate students. Teachers who generally had negative opinions about students tended to use external motivation strategies such as incentives tied to grading whereas teachers who generally thought positively about students tended to use motivational strategies intrinsic to the instructional task or materials such as linking the text to the students' interests to achieve a high level of student motivation and satisfaction. This indicates that different pathways of teaching could be followed based on the teachers' views of their students.

3.7.2 Content Knowledge

In addition to knowledge of learners, other areas of teacher knowledge were highlighted in literature. Knowledge of subject matter is an important requirement of the teacher. Norrish (1997) highlights that teachers need to be linguistically aware of elements of knowledge about language and aspects of language use. This is because it is difficult for the teacher to teach content which has not been fully mastered (Hegarty, 2000). Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1999) argue that knowledge is essential to the work of teachers. They state: "The assumption is that it is impossible for teachers at any level to teach students effectively and/or to meet the standards of the various subject matter professions without fundamental knowledge of the disciplines they teach" (p.258).

There is much debate about what constitutes the content knowledge of the EFL teacher. Borg (2006b) found that the content of language teaching is more complex and varied than that of other subjects adding that the subject matter of language teaching is harder to define. Johnston & Goettsch (2000) support this point arguing that the nature of the subject matter of language teaching is an open question. They state:

In a skill-focused field such as language learning, it is even harder to picture the 'body of knowledge' that might constitute the field. Do we mean procedural knowledge - the teacher's ability to speak the language - or declarative knowledge - the teacher's knowledge about the language, for example, the ability to articulate the rules of the language? (p.446)

Nevertheless, they argue that the conscious awareness of grammar structures is as much a part of the teacher's knowledge base as the ability to use them in practice. Likewise, Andrews (2001) uses the term '*language awareness*' to refer to knowledge about language (subject matter knowledge) and knowledge of language (language proficiency). He argues that teachers' language awareness is meta-cognitive in nature as it involves an extra cognitive dimension of reflections upon knowledge of subject matter and knowledge of language proficiency, which provides a basis for the tasks of planning and teaching.

Knowledge of subject matter is neither fixed nor final. Shulman (1987) stated that "much, if not most, of the proposed knowledge base remains to be discovered, invented, and refined" (p.12). He includes under the domain of content knowledge, for the English teacher, the following aspects:

The teacher of English should know English and American prose and poetry, written and spoken language use and comprehension, and grammar. In addition, he or she should be familiar with the critical literature that applies to particular novels or epics that are under discussion in class. Moreover, the teacher should understand alternative theories of interpretation and criticism, and how these might relate to issues of curriculum and of teaching (p. 9).

An instructional component could be noted here with regard to subject matter. It is not enough for the teacher to know about subject matter. What is more important is to know how to convey the language input according to the purposes of pedagogy. The teacher has a role to play in relation to conveying knowledge of subject matter. Shulman (1987) identifies the role of the teacher with regard to subject matter knowledge as follows:

The teacher has special responsibilities in relation to content knowledge, serving as the primary source of student understanding of subject matter. The manner in which that understanding is communicated conveys to students what is essential about a subject and what is peripheral (p.9).

It is also highlighted that for this role to be carried out successfully, deep understanding of the subject matter and a positive attitude are required from the teacher. Shulman (1987) adds:

This responsibility places special demands on the teacher's own depth of

understanding of the structures of the subject matter, as well as on the teacher's attitudes toward and enthusiasms for what is being taught and learned. These many aspects of content knowledge, therefore, are properly understood as a central feature of the knowledge base of teaching. (ibid)

The role of the teacher with regard to subject matter knowledge has a critical element. Troudi (2005) highlights the critical dimension of content knowledge. He bases his argument on the assumption that in order for the teacher to go beyond delivering a subject, he/she needs to be aware not only of the technical knowledge of language and the various discourses of the related fields, but also the cultural and socio-political issues that come with teaching English. Thus, in addition to having a good working knowledge of English language, its system and how people use it, TESOL teachers need to be aware of the ever-changing role of English and its increasing power in almost all domains of life. They also need to be aware of the attitudes towards English that learners and their communities have. This type of content knowledge could ensure that learners are exposed to English that reflects its changing nature and the cultural and ethnic varieties of its speakers.

Having a critical disposition towards the subject matter of English serves a variety of functions. Troudi (2005) argues that a critical approach to TESOL content knowledge will encourage teachers to be in a constant mode of questioning their knowledge about the subject matter, English, and its role in the global community. Thus, they could raise their learners' awareness of the socio-cultural, political and economic implications of learning English. This could be true of the current study where English occupies a high status and is seen as a gatekeeper to better job and professional opportunities.

Critical knowledge could, thus, constitute a new component of the teacher's professional practical knowledge. Although the ideas discussed above are specific to TESOL teachers, the element of criticality could be applied to other types of teacher knowledge such as pedagogical knowledge and curricular knowledge.

3.7.3 Pedagogical knowledge

Pedagogical knowledge has two aspects: general pedagogy and content pedagogy. General pedagogy includes broad principles and strategies of teaching in general (Shulman, 1987). Pedagogical content knowledge includes “the ways of representing and formulating the subject that make it comprehensible to others” (Shulman, 1986, p.9). Knowledge of pedagogy, whether general pedagogy or that related to the content area being taught, has been investigated as part of the content of teacher knowledge. Gatbonton (1999) investigated pedagogical knowledge of seven experienced ESL teachers (five female and two male). The participants taught two ESL courses to adult learners in the Canadian context. Analysis of stimulated recall following classroom observation yielded six general domains of pedagogical knowledge: handling language items, factoring in student contribution, determining the contents of teaching, facilitating instructional flow, building rapport and monitoring student progress.

Handling language items represented knowledge of how to manage specific language items so students could learn them. Pedagogical knowledge related to this domain was found to be the most frequently consulted by the teachers. Factoring in student contribution was found to consist of knowledge about students and what they bring into the classroom such as their personalities, abilities, needs, attitudes and reactions, backgrounds, and individual learning styles. Although these sub-areas of knowledge could be seen as constituting knowledge of students, they are included here under one area of pedagogical knowledge. This indicates that pedagogical knowledge in the study of Gatbonton (1999) is used as an umbrella term to include a variety of areas of teacher knowledge.

Determining the contents of teaching included knowledge about the goals and subject matter of teaching. Facilitating instructional flow represented experienced teachers’ knowledge about techniques and procedures. Building rapport included knowledge about student-teacher relationships. It represented the teachers’ awareness of the need to make contact with and have a good rapport with

students, to ensure student comfort, to protect them from embarrassment, and to reinforce and encourage them. This domain also included knowledge of desirable classroom atmosphere. Monitoring student progress represented teachers' knowledge about evaluating student task involvement and progress during the lesson.

Though the ESL context in this study and the type of learners are not identical to those in my current work, there are some similarities and some insights which could be drawn. The communicative language teaching experience held by ESL experienced teachers in the study could relate to the focus on communicative language teaching which has been adopted in the EFL Egyptian context since 1999. Thus, the practical knowledge drawn from the teachers in the above reviewed study could shed light on what practical knowledge could be constructed from teachers adopting the same teaching methodology. The study also provides insight on sub-areas of the teacher's practical knowledge such as language items, student contribution and contents of teaching which could all be included under knowledge of curriculum. Instructional flow could be an important focus of pedagogical knowledge. Rapport is an important element of a favourable classroom learning environment.

The study of Gatbonton (1999) was replicated by another in the Australian context. Mullock (2006) conducted a qualitative study to investigate the pedagogical knowledge base of four TESOL teachers as a partial replication of Gatbonton's study (1999). Her data derive from classes of low intermediate to advanced level students in general English and English for specific purposes classes. The greatest difference in the findings between Mullock's study (2006) and Gatbonton's study (1999) was in frequency of the domains of pedagogical knowledge. Unlike Gatbonton who found 'handling language items' to be the pedagogical knowledge domain most frequently consulted by her teachers, Mullock found 'factoring in student contribution' to be the most frequently consulted domain. Mullock (2003) also found that knowing and understanding students' needs, strengths and weaknesses were viewed as an essential aspect of the TESOL teacher's work.

The second most frequent domain was ‘facilitating the instructional flow’. ‘Handling language items’ came as the third most frequently consulted domain, not the first as in Gatbonton’s study (1999). Based on the results of her study, Mullock highlighted the need to include knowledge of how to improve specific language skills to the content of the original domain established by Gatbonton (1999). The fourth most frequently consulted domain was ‘monitoring student progress’ followed by ‘determining the goals and content of instruction’. Mullock highlighted the need to include knowledge of curriculum materials and promotion of particular learning strategies to this latter domain.

The least frequently consulted domain was ‘building rapport’ followed by ‘institutional factors’. The last domain was not originally in the six domains inferred by Gatbonton (1999). Mullock included under this area knowledge about institutional policy and teaching/learning facilities such as classroom size, shape, furniture, and permissible arrangements.

One conclusion which could be drawn from the two studies conducted by Mullock (2006; 2003) is the precedence of knowledge of students as an important area of teacher knowledge. This lends support to the above reviewed studies highlighting this element as core knowledge of the teacher. Similar to Gatbonton (1999), Mullock (2006) considers knowledge of students as part of the overarching pedagogical knowledge of the teacher. Thus, both of them consider pedagogical knowledge as an umbrella term including various aspects of teacher knowledge highlighted in the above reviewed literature. This might reflect the overlap in literature in classifying the various areas of teacher knowledge. This overlap could be also traced in the study by Borg (1998) who investigated an ESL teacher’s system of pedagogy while teaching grammar to adult learners in Malta. The teacher’s pedagogical system consisted of a range of issues the teacher had complex, interacting views about including: students, self (i.e. the teacher’s self perception), the subject matter taught, teaching and learning, curricula, schools, the teacher’s role, materials, classroom management, and instructional activities. These issues constituted the components of the teacher’s pedagogical system. In talking about work, the teacher revealed a network of

interacting and potentially conflicting views about a wide variety of issues related not only to L2 teaching, but also to teaching and learning in general. One example of these views was the teacher's view regarding L2 grammar teaching. Although the teacher viewed that formal grammar work probably made no direct contribution to students' communicative ability, it was included in practice for a variety of reasons mentioned by the teacher.

It could be concluded from this study that teacher knowledge needs to be investigated in relation to teacher reasoning. When the teacher in this study talked about his views, he did so by providing a set of reasons justifying his view and revealing the thinking which underpinned it. This kind of reasoning is both practical and contextual.

It is practical because it is used for justifying views that are relevant to the practice of teaching. It is also contextual because it is bound by the particularity of the practical situation. Another teacher from another class, school, or context could provide a similar or different set of reasons depending on awareness of the various inputs to teaching. This relationship between teacher knowledge and teacher reasoning needs to be taken into consideration when investigating the practical knowledge of the teacher.

Pedagogical knowledge of teaching grammar was also the focus of the study by Johnston & Goettsch (2000). They examined aspects of the knowledge base that four experienced ESL teachers in the USA drew on in their teaching, primarily in giving explanations of grammar and other language points. Analysis of classroom observation and subsequent interviews revealed a number of categories related to the teachers' pedagogical knowledge when giving grammar explanations. These included use of examples instead of giving grammar rules and meta-language. Though rules were not rejected by any of the teachers, none used them exclusively or even primarily in their explanations. As for the appropriate degree of meta-language use, the teachers' opinions varied primarily depending on the different levels of courses they were teaching.

Although the context of the above study is not identical to that of the current study, it has some similarity given that English was taught as a second language to a sub-group of students whose language background is the same as that of the current study. The approach is also insightful given that the focus of the above study is practical knowledge of the ESL experienced teacher. It is worth noting that when presenting two aspects of the teachers' views regarding teaching ESL grammar, this was related to the notion of teacher reasoning. This gives rise to the previously highlighted remark of the need to investigate teacher knowledge in relation to teacher reasoning.

Pedagogical knowledge of teaching reading comprehension is also dealt with in previous literature. Meijer et al. (1999) explored the practical knowledge about teaching reading comprehension to 16- to 18-year-old students of 13 experienced language teachers in the Netherlands. Based on analysing the interviews and concept maps, various areas of teachers' knowledge related to teaching reading comprehension were described. These areas included: content of reading, student learning and understanding, purposes of reading, reading curriculum, and instructional techniques to teach reading comprehension. The teachers had different views regarding various aspects of each area of practical knowledge, and provided reasons for their views.

Two comments are to be made regarding the above study. The first is that it supports the previous remark to investigate teacher knowledge in relation to teacher reasoning. The second is that the construct of pedagogical content knowledge is dealt with in a different way in the above study. Instead of considering it one area among others, it is used as an overarching area including all other areas of the teacher's knowledge. However, in doing so, linking with Shulman (1987), general areas of teacher knowledge which represent tools of the trade for all teachers could overlap with areas of knowledge which are the realm of particular subject matter teachers.

In another study, Meijer, Verloop, & Beijaard (2001) explored the similarities and differences in 69 language teachers' practical knowledge about teaching

reading comprehension to 16- to 18-year-old students. They developed a questionnaire that consisted of closed-format questions derived from their qualitative in-depth study (1999). The findings of the latter study revealed that 13.1 % of the questionnaire items were identified as shared knowledge whereas the respondents' views differed with regard to the rest of the items.

One point to be made is that the low percentage of shared knowledge could be attributed to the nature of the items included in the questionnaire. The authors mentioned that these items were reformulated based on their qualitative study (1999). They also mentioned that even if the item was mentioned by one participant during the interviews, it was included in the questionnaire. This justifies that most of the items are of an individual nature rather than a common one. The nature of qualitative enquiry also supports this argument because the aim of qualitative research is not to come up with generalizable truths about teacher knowledge. It emphasizes more the individual elements. Therefore, depending on the results of the qualitative study to design the questionnaire resulted in the low percentage of shared knowledge in the quantitative study. The authors themselves were reflexive enough to admit this methodological flaw stating, "It might have been better if we had not based the questionnaire on all the teachers' responses in the qualitative study" (p.183).

Some other implications could be drawn from the above study. One is that the use of surveys could be used to gain insight about what knowledge is shared or not shared by a particular group of teachers. This could be used in studies attempting to investigate the teachers' practical knowledge.

One lesson to be learned is that the survey design does not have to be informed by a preceding qualitative study. The opposite could be true. A quantitative survey could be followed by a qualitative study. The aim of such a study is to seek explanation from the participants of the particular views they hold about the areas of teacher knowledge. This is in line with the previous remark that teacher knowledge needs to be investigated in relation to teacher reasoning. The explanations or reasons provided by the teachers justifying their views makes

their reasoning and tacit knowledge explicit. It is not enough to say, as revealed by the above study, that variation of activities or the provision of a favourable learning environment is important. What is more important is to explain the reasoning behind these views taking into consideration that the views and the reasoning provided are made with reference to the teachers' practices and the particular contexts they work in.

A general comment to be made about the various areas of teacher knowledge reviewed above is that they are not isolated but integrated for the teacher to implement his or her lessons effectively. For example, a teacher may have good content knowledge but lack general pedagogical knowledge. In this case, he or she may not be able to share his or her knowledge of content with the learners effectively. It could be argued that the more knowledge bases are mastered and implemented strategically by the teacher, the more effective he or she is. Quantity matters, but also how they are used in practice is a matter of concern. For research considerations, every one of the knowledge domains will be dealt with separately. However, the different knowledge domains work in symbiotic and dynamic relationships. Johnston & Goettsch (2000) support this stance arguing that teachers' knowledge is as complex as the act of teaching itself. They state that:

While the 'categories' of teacher knowledge are a useful analytic concept, in reality these categories are melded together in complex and indeed inextricable ways to produce multifaceted, holistic accounts of, and actions in, language teaching (p.461).

Golombek's study (1998) provides an example of how more than one knowledge domain can be combined. She sees personal practical knowledge as a moral, affective and aesthetic way of knowing life's educational situations. She used the notion of personal practical knowledge as the basis of an examination of the practices of two ESL teachers. Her account goes beyond an analysis of interactive decisions and of the immediate factors motivating these; rather, the study shows how the teachers' work was shaped by four overlapping and interacting categories of personal and practical knowledge (knowledge of self, of subject matter, of instruction and of context) which the teachers held and used in

a holistic manner. Therefore, it is expected that when teachers talk about their knowledge, various areas may interact or overlap. Craig (2007) emphasizes that the stories told by the teachers relate to one another, and could involve many plotlines which bring multiple meanings to bear on their knowledge

3.8 Sources of teacher knowledge

A study of teacher knowledge entails an investigation into the sources which contribute to the shaping of this knowledge, which – in the current study – includes some aspects of beliefs and values. In order to understand teachers' classroom practices and the knowledge embodied in these practices, it is important to understand the sources of influence that shape teachers' conceptions of knowledge and practice (Tsui, 2003).

Experience is an important source of influence on the development of the teacher's practical knowledge. Verloop et al. (2001) maintain that input for the knowledge base of teaching can originate from teaching practice. Likewise, Hegarty (2000) suggests experience and interaction with pupils contribute in developing the knowledge base of teaching.

The role of experience as a mediating factor in influencing the content and development of teacher knowledge was highlighted by the study of Watzke (2007). He investigated through a two-year longitudinal study how pedagogical content knowledge is initially represented and changes during the beginning teaching experiences of nine foreign language teachers in Turkey teaching at the high school level. He collected data through reflective journal entries, classroom observations, and focus group interviews. He identified, through grounded theory analysis, four core categories to explain change in foreign language pedagogical content knowledge. These were: prior knowledge that frames instructional decisions, attitudes toward teacher control in the classroom, instructional goals for daily lessons, and considerations for responding to student affect.

The influence of the shift on teacher prior knowledge as a learner to experience as a teacher in framing instructional decisions was acknowledged. The study also

showed that with experience, teachers' attitudes toward control in the classroom transitioned from techniques and instructional content facilitating control to techniques and instructional content relinquishing control. As for instructional goals for daily lessons, the teachers' focus developed, with experience, from knowledge about the language to task performance and communication. Finally, more experienced teachers' considerations for responding to student affect changed from general instructional and academic considerations to language-oriented outcomes as a primary consideration. The study of Watzke (2007) provides valuable insights into the role of experience in the development of the core aspects of pedagogical content knowledge of foreign language teachers. This could be informing the current study to investigate how experience could shape the knowledge of practising teachers.

Not only experience, but also education could help in shaping knowledge of the teacher. Johnston and Goettsch (2000) looked at the sources of ESL experienced teachers' knowledge of English grammar. The teachers in their study mentioned their education and their experience as the two factors that played the biggest role in contributing to their content knowledge. The teachers' own education ranging from middle and high school grammar classes to graduate course work in linguistics courses focusing on the structure of English, were consistently mentioned as valuable sources of knowledge.

The teachers also articulated other sources of knowledge. Johnston and Goettsch separated them in three categories: building a database of knowledge, working through the process of knowledge, and drawing on outside resources. Johnston and Goettsch describe the first two sources as internal and the last one as external. As for building a database of knowledge, each teacher described her own mental processes of storing, sorting, and accessing bits of knowledge. In terms of working through the process of knowledge, a powerful thrust was noted in the data towards a more complex, holistic, and process-oriented view of teachers' knowledge. As for external sources, the teachers relied on various ones including textbooks assigned to their courses, other grammar reference books, other teachers and native speakers, and computer discussion lists.

All these sources, whether internal or external could be potential foci when investigating the sources of teacher knowledge in the current study. Classifying the sources into internal and external ones was elaborated by Gahin (2001). He found, in the Egyptian context in which the fieldwork of the current study was carried out, a set of internal and external sources which shape the teachers' beliefs about language, language learning, and their roles in the language classroom. Internal sources refer to those acting from within formal education. They include formal learning and teaching experiences such as school learning experience, formal teacher education in the university, in-service training, and present on-the-job teaching experience.

It was also found that the teachers' beliefs were shaped by school learning experience in terms of the influence of the teaching approach used by prior teachers. In addition, almost all the teachers gave examples of prior teachers who had influenced them either negatively or positively. Another internal source of influence related by the teachers in Gahin's study is teacher education. Influence of on-the-job experience such as travel abroad to work as an EFL teacher had a similar impact. Interpersonal contacts within the school were found to influence teachers' beliefs.

As for external sources, these refer to those acting from outside the formal schooling system. Sources, such as travelling, as a life experience, affected the teachers' beliefs about language education. Other external sources that were found to shape the EFL teachers' beliefs included informal contact with the speakers of the target language, religion, family members, and media.

All the above sources found by Gahin such as experience, teacher education, teacher training and social networks could inform the current study by identifying the potential sources of influence on the teacher's knowledge. This study is of particular relevance because it was conducted in the same context of the current study. However, my study is different from Gahin's study (2001). His study focused on the sources of teachers' beliefs about language and language learning whereas the focus of my study is on the various areas of experienced

teachers' professional practical knowledge. In addition, Gahin was interested in investigating the differences between the sources of beliefs of specialist and non-specialist teachers of English as well as the sources of experienced and less experienced teachers. Unlike the sample in Gahin's study, all the participants in my study are experienced teachers of English who had at least a BA in English language. These two variables of language training and experience could add to the sources of professional practical knowledge.

The more experienced the teachers are, the more sources they could make use of. Crookes and Arakaki (1999) examined the sources of 20 ESL teachers' beliefs and conditions while working in an ESL programme. They found that the teaching idea sources fell into six major categories: accumulated teaching experience, informal consultations with colleagues, pedagogically-oriented resources such as book series, spontaneous self-generation, pre-service training, and in-house workshops. Accumulated teaching experience was found to be the most often cited source of teaching ideas. Many of the teachers spoke about their teaching experience as being personally unique and self-contained entity, not a potpourri of teaching ideas from a variety of sources. Their personal experience was a history of knowledge and information gained through trial and error, concerning which ideas and their sources were effective in which circumstances.

It was, interestingly, noted that teachers who had had graduate training in ESL or related fields commented more often about getting new ideas from a wider variety of sources than did teachers without such coursework. These sources included materials they themselves had modified (e.g. a textbook) or real-world sources such as newspapers and television. By contrast, the teachers without such background more often referred to using conventional sources such as dictionaries, textbook (without modifying them), workbooks and teachers' handbooks.

It was also noted that for the teachers in the programme who had remarkably less teaching experience, their accumulated experience was cited as a primary idea source, but, by comparison, was characterized partially in terms of their recent

teacher education course work. These teachers planned to amass tools such as games and workshops for repeated use.

Inter-teacher communication was related as a teaching idea source by ESL teachers as found by Crookes and Arakaki. The teachers commented that informal talks with colleagues were preferable to more formal forums, such as teaching workshops and research conferences. Local workshops were dismissed by some as more suitable for networking than true opportunities to learn about teaching. In comparison, informal chats with a colleague were felt to be a more convenient means of sharing ideas. This highlights the role of feedback from the school community as an important source in shaping the teacher's knowledge.

Another way of classifying the sources of teacher knowledge is to identify them in relation to the various areas of knowledge of the teacher such as sources of knowledge about students. Mayer and Marland (1997) identified four main sources teachers in their study drew their knowledge of students from. These are: classroom observation, interactions with students, parents and teaching colleagues. They found that the teachers in their study reported using classroom observation and teacher-student interactions extensively. It was noted that the teachers identified groups and the kinds of knowledge they held about each group in light of their values, beliefs and goals and their personalised theories about good teaching and teacher roles. This, along with contextual differences, justified across-teacher differences in knowledge with the broad categories. Thus, different teachers could hold different knowledge about their students.

Other sources were related to influence other types of knowledge. Mullock (2006) identified initial teacher education, in-service teacher training, work experience and self-study as origins of the pedagogical knowledge of the four TESOL teachers in his study. She found that all teachers attributed the major sources of their pedagogical knowledge to their initial teacher training and their CELTA (Certificate of English Language Teaching to Adults) training. Some teachers listed in-service teacher development activities as providing them with additional knowledge. Another source was other work experience.

Sources of the personal dimension as an area of teacher knowledge were identified. Clandinin (1989) viewed the teacher's personal practical knowledge as having social origins in his personal and professional experiences. She found that it emerged from both the personal-private and educational professional spheres of the teacher's life. Partly, it could be explained as propositional knowledge learned from educational lectures important to work with children. Partly, it had an experiential origin coming from the teacher's ongoing experience of the world and from his narrative of experience. Another source is the teacher's professional training when he worked as a volunteer while he was a student.

Thus, classifying the sources of teacher knowledge according to its areas could be insightful to the current study. Although these sources could overlap impacting the development of more than one area of teacher knowledge, such classification could be a useful analytical tool to investigate in depth and detail not only the sources of influence, but how they could shape the knowledge areas.

Some insights could be drawn from the above reviewed literature on the sources of teacher knowledge. One insight is that there are various sources which could contribute in developing teacher knowledge including, but are not restricted to, teaching experience, prior learning experience, in-service teacher training, subject matter learning, social networks and feedback and consultations. Another insight is that it is useful not only to identify the sources of teacher knowledge, but also to show how these sources could help in the development of teacher knowledge. A further insight which is related to the presentation of the sources of teacher knowledge is that they could be classified according to the areas of teacher knowledge. This could arguably help in clarifying the distinctive features of each area of teacher knowledge. These insights could be made use of in the current study.

3.9 Teacher knowledge and practice

The relationship between teacher knowledge and practice could be understood when looking at teaching as a knowledge-based activity. What teachers do in the classroom is informed, and consequently could be justified, by what they know. Hegarty (2000) offers an explicit account of how teachers' classroom behaviour can be informed by their underlying knowledge. His account is focused on the teaching moment when a teacher is interacting with one or more learners so as to stimulate and direct their learning. Such moments happen within a context of prior contact, syllabus expectation, and lesson planning and so on. The account is based on viewing teaching as a form of intelligent behaviour subject to analysis and echoes Lonergan's (1957) notion of common sense. Lonergan (1957) describes a person with a common sense as characterized by a greater willingness in catching on, in getting the point, in seeing the issue, in grasping implications, and in acquiring know-how. Hargreaves (1998) holds that common sense constitutes the creative application of knowledge.

Common sense is premised on a grasp of the underlying principles of practice and mastery of the skills required. When confronted with a practical situation, the teacher employs common sense to choose from repertoire of knowledge bases whatever is best given the circumstances of the encountered situation. This interaction will leave the teacher with additional insights to be incremented to existing repertoire and to be made use of in similar situations or be part of a general insight informing a different situation. Hegarty (2000) states:

It requires both a body of relevant, general understanding and the capacity to apply it in concrete situations. This entails making a selection of insights appropriate to the situation in question and generating further, situation-specific insights to enable an intelligent response to it. These latter insights are no longer relevant when that situation has passed-though they may of course enrich the individual's general store of knowledge- and the set of insights reverts to its original, incomplete state ready for the next situation, which may require a different closure. Different situations need to be approached with different sets of insights, which need in turn to be completed in different ways. (p.461)

In his model about intelligent practical behaviour which guides the teaching moment, Hegarty (2000) posits the existence of a number of sets of relevant insights and competences which are variously completed in classroom practice. These sets are shown in the figure below.



Figure 3.1: Insights guiding the teaching moment

Source: Hegarty (2000)

Various requirements are outlined in this schematic model. As a first requirement, the teacher needs theory to figure out the situation encountered. It provides a general understanding, which is essential for subsequent action. Another requirement is subject matter because it is difficult for a teacher to teach something which has not been fully mastered. Unless accompanied with pedagogical knowledge and skills, subject knowledge may not be conveyed properly and, consequently, learning never occurs. Research knowledge bears on each of the other knowledge inputs because teaching techniques and materials are mostly rooted in research investigation and evaluation trials. Experience is a significance requirement for a teacher's intelligent practical behaviour in the model presented. The teacher's experience relies on an accumulation of insights that draws from, and contributes to, pedagogic knowledge, skills, and subject knowledge. The inclusion of a component entitled 'other knowledge' suggests that the cognitive inputs of teaching practice are neither fixed nor final, a position supported by Golombek (1998).

Hegarty's (2000) model is an interesting example of how teachers access the diverse knowledge bases of teaching and how their classroom behaviour is affected by underlying knowledge bases. According to the model, teachers draw upon a large number of appropriate inputs and are constantly developing them. They respond to the particularity of teaching situations by either selecting appropriately from their repertoire of knowledge and skills or generating new insights. The model further shows how the internalization of explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge can happen and how teaching excellence builds up over time. Above all, the model acknowledges teachers as professionals rather than passive technicians.

This model could have important insights for the current study on teacher knowledge. By looking at teaching as relating to the notion of common sense, the teacher's role is not only to cover the teaching points, but to respond to the contingencies of the teaching moment. Adopting a here-and-now approach to teaching could make the teacher mindful to what is going on in class. This presence could help the teacher make the right decision in the right moment.

Appropriate classroom decision making could be further enhanced by improving the knowledge inputs. It is also a matter of quantity. The more is known about the various elements of the teaching moment, the more appropriate are the decisions made by the teacher. The teaching moment itself could help in enhancing the knowledge bases provided that the teacher has a disposition in mind to look at teaching as both an action of common sense and a knowledge-based activity.

Thus, this model is useful to understand how the knowledge of the teacher is put in action and how it is shaped by it. This agrees with the argument made by Hiebert et al (2002) that teachers' knowledge is most relevant to their work because it is practically-oriented as it originates from practice and feeds into it. They state, "Practitioner knowledge is useful for practice precisely because it develops in response to specific problems of practice" (p.6). They further add, "Teachers create knowledge that is linked to practice in two ways: first, its

creation is motivated by problems of practice; and second, each new bit of knowledge is connected to the processes of teaching and learning that actually occur in classrooms” (ibid). This will be further pointed out in the following review of some studies which attempted to show the relationship between teacher knowledge and classroom behaviour.

Teacher knowledge could serve as a frame of reference through which teachers make sense of their classroom practice. Golombek (1998) revealed that the personal practical knowledge of the teachers in her study informed their practice by serving as a kind of interpretive framework through which they made sense of their classrooms as they recounted their experiences and made this knowledge explicit. Another way of representing the relationship between knowledge and practice in Golombek’s study was that knowledge informed practice by giving physical form to practice as it was teachers’ knowledge in action. Golombek also highlighted the role of context in reshaping teachers’ knowledge because teachers use their knowledge in response to a particular context. In this way, according to Golombek, L2 teachers’ personal practical knowledge shapes and is shaped by understandings of teaching and learning.

This understanding of the role of knowledge acting as both an interpretive framework and a physical form of classroom action could inform the current study. It is insightful in showing that teacher action needs to be understood in relation to what is known because the knowledge held by the teacher justifies the courses of action taken. This corresponds with the two notions of teaching as an action of common sense and teaching as a knowledge-based-activity. The relationship between teacher knowledge and classroom behaviour could also be identified in terms of the consistency between what is known and what is done. This accord makes knowledge a physical form of classroom action.

The consistent relationship between teacher knowledge and classroom action could be identified in the study by Borg (1998) who focused on the cognitive bases of an experienced EFL teacher’s instructional decisions in grammar teaching in Malta. He analysed the teacher’s personal pedagogical systems

(stores of beliefs, knowledge, theories, assumptions and attitudes) that played a significant role in shaping his instructional decisions. The analysis revealed a set of teaching behaviours that provided access to the teacher's cognitions in terms of six issues. These issues were: error analysis, reference to students' L1, grammatical terminology, grammar rules, practising grammar, and grammar and communicative ability.

Another way of understanding the relationship between knowledge and practice is through classroom decision making. Classroom decisions could be informed by underpinning knowledge which directs the teacher to act in certain ways. Tsang (2004) investigated how ESL teachers' personal practical knowledge informed their interactive and post-active decisions. The study was conducted with three non-native ESL teachers in training in Hong Kong where English is non-native language. He found that the teachers' personal practical knowledge informed their interactive decisions. The participants in her study had access to their personal practical knowledge, which guided about half of their interactive decisions (decisions made during teaching). Moreover, Tsang found that the teachers' personal practical knowledge played a part in informing post-active decisions (decisions made after teaching), and delayed accessibility to such knowledge nonetheless helped evaluate new maxims of teaching.

Classroom decision making as a manifestation of the relationship between knowledge and practice is further pointed out by the study by Mayer & Marland (1997) who maintain that teachers' knowledge of their students is relevant to classroom instruction as it informs what teachers do to boost the personal and social development of students. They found that knowledge of students was used in practice in five ways which made an important contribution to the teachers' instructional decision making. The teachers used knowledge of students in lesson planning, differentiated instruction, classroom interaction, classroom management and meeting students' expectations. Moreover, each category of student knowledge identified in the study including work habits, abilities, previous schooling, personality, interests, family background, playground behaviour, and peer relationships played a part in informing teaching of groups,

individuals and the class as a whole. All these insights reflect the role of knowledge in practice. The relationship between teacher knowledge and practice could be further understood in relation to the role of context in impacting on the actualisation of knowledge in practice. This is presented in the following section.

3.10 Teacher knowledge and contextual factors

One way to understand the relationship between teacher knowledge and practice is through context. The teacher's relationships inside and outside the classroom could have an impact on shaping the teacher's behaviour, which may not represent the actual knowledge incorporating beliefs and values he/she wants to put in practice. This could be particularly traced in conflicting situations when, for example, what is required by government prescription clashes with teacher judgment. This is the case when, as expressed by Xu & Liu (2009), "the authority tells sacred stories whereas teachers live their own secret stories" (p.504). Thus, context affects the relationship between knowledge and practice. Xu & Liu further add that the particularity of the location where the practice is situated either facilitates or inhibits teacher knowledge because it affects the teacher's sense of security.

Not all the knowledge a teacher has actually plays a role in his or her actions. This is supported by Verloop et al. (2001) who state: "Teachers can, consciously or unconsciously, refrain from using certain insights during their teaching" (p.445). They, thus, imply that teachers may intentionally avoid putting knowledge into classroom practice. Contextual factors or contingencies of the teaching-learning situation could intervene in the process. Alternatively, teachers may have the knowledge, but are unaware of how to realise their knowledge in classroom practice.

EFL teachers in Egypt face a variety of challenges in their work such as large class size, the EFL exam policy and lack of resources. These constraints could prevent the teaching of EFL from being entirely successful. Gahin (2001) examined the factors which affected the way EFL teachers in Egypt enacted their beliefs about language, language learning, and their roles in the language

classroom in practice. He revealed ten contextual constraints reported by 120 EFL preparatory school teachers in his study. These challenges were: large classes (69%), the pressure to cover the prescribed syllabus within the time limit (67%), lack and difficulty in getting enough and relevant resources (66%), individual differences amongst students (62%), the pressure of preparing students for the final examinations (53%), the pressure from the inspector to adhere rigidly to the syllabus (52%), examinations that focus on assessing students' reading and writing only (46%), parents' high expectations from the teacher (44%), inadequate initial training in EFL teaching at the university level (43%), and insufficient in-service training (40%).

Such constraints could have a negative effect on the actualisation of the various areas of teacher knowledge outlined earlier. For example, Borg (1998) examined the role of factors which mitigate the implementation of an EFL experienced teacher's pedagogical system while teaching EFL grammar. The teacher was sensitive to factors such as evidence of student understanding, and seemed to have built into his personal pedagogical system ways of responding to these factors and even pre-empting potential complications they could cause. Borg (1998) highlighted the need to consider teachers' decisions in light of contextual factors, which surface during the course of instruction.

This finding is insightful to the current study as it does not only reveal a potential challenge an EFL teacher could face to actualise knowledge of content pedagogy in action, but also shows how this challenge affects the teacher's classroom decisions. Therefore, when studying teacher knowledge and practice, it is necessary to examine the contextual factors which stand in front of the application of knowledge.

3.11 Theoretical influences on research on teacher cognition

Educational research in the last three decades has recognized the impact of teacher cognition – the unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching including what teachers know, believe and think – on teachers' professional lives and this has generated a substantial body of research. This research has been based on the

assumptions that teachers are active, thinking decision makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex, practically-oriented, personalised, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts and beliefs (Borg, 2003). Language teacher cognition research has been influenced by concepts established in general educational literature (e.g. Shulman's notion of pedagogical content knowledge), and consequently a range of different labels appear in studies on teacher cognition. Borg (2003) identified key dimensions in the study of language teacher cognition to include: *cognition and classroom practice* (dealing with the role of cognition in shaping what teachers do), *cognition and experience* (dealing with the role of experiences teachers accumulate and other sources in shaping their cognitions), *cognition and context* (dealing with the role of contextual factors in shaping what teachers do) and *cognition and teacher education* (dealing with the implications of this research for professional preparation and continuing development of teachers). The current study on teacher knowledge – which incorporates some aspects of knowledge, belief, assumptions, and values – belongs to studies on teacher cognition which examine what foreign language teachers think, know or believe in relation to various aspects of their work, and which, additionally, entail the study of actual classroom practices and of the relationships between cognitions and these practices.

By delineating its focus as such, the current work joins the many studies on teacher cognition which aim to better inform our understanding of teaching and provide a more sophisticated theoretical underpinning than the model of technical rationality. This latter model, which has been seen as a somewhat instrumentalist, if not reductive, approach to teacher education can be traced to its origins in American research into education rooted in behavioural psychology (Turner-Bisset, 1999). Accountability and value for money – two of the major themes in the late twentieth century influencing development in education – were also driving forces behind the dominance of the technical rationalistic model, which became the theoretical underpinning of initial teacher education and teacher training courses. Research on teacher cognition has emerged as a reaction against conceptualising skilled teacher performance as a craft to argue that

teachers are professionals who make sense of what they do and create new knowledge and insights from reflecting on their practice.

3.12 Summary of the chapter

The aim of this chapter was to review research literature pointing out how the reviewed research studies relate to and inform my study. The chapter started with a theoretical background about two models of teacher knowledge: the technical rationalistic model and the professional practical model. The domains of teacher knowledge were then reviewed. They comprised a big part of the review because they related to the main issue in the current study about what might constitute the practical knowledge of the EFL teacher. Analytical frameworks for categorising teacher knowledge were then reviewed. Research studies dealing with the various areas and types of teacher knowledge were reviewed with a particular focus on those conducted on the ESL/EFL contexts. Various sources of teacher knowledge were reviewed as well. Then, a model focusing on teaching as a knowledge-based activity was presented followed by previous research studies conducted to investigate this relationship. Finally, factors affecting the realisation of teacher knowledge were reviewed in relation to teacher knowledge. The chapter concluded with the theoretical influences on research on teacher cognition. This review of related literature informed the current study in various ways shown throughout the chapter.

Chapter 4

Research Design

Chapter 4: Research Design

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the methodology that guided the research process. The chapter begins with the ontological, epistemological and the methodological assumptions underlying the research, with particular reference to those related to investigating teacher knowledge. Then the aim and justification of the research methods used in the current study are highlighted. This is followed by a description of the study sample. Then, the data collection process is described. Two kinds of data were collected: quantitative and qualitative. The construction and administration of the tools to collect these two types of evidence are described. This is followed by describing the data analysis process which involved both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Ethical considerations guiding the research are then highlighted followed by the challenges encountered throughout the study.

It is worth noting that the review of literature in the previous chapter contributed in shaping the focus of the current study. Three research questions were formulated:

- 1- What constitutes the practical knowledge of Egyptian EFL preparatory and secondary school experienced teachers in Egypt and what are the sources of their knowledge?
- 2- How does EFL experienced teachers' knowledge inform their practice?
- 3- How does context influence the actualisation of teacher knowledge in practice?

Although these questions were stated in chapter one, they are presented here at the start of the design chapter to show that they were articulated based on previous studies and to inform the discussion of the current chapter. It is also worth noting here that teacher knowledge in the current study is viewed broadly to include some aspects of the teachers' beliefs and values.

4.2 Ontological assumptions

Crotty defines ontology as “the study of being. It is concerned with ‘what is’, with the nature of existence, with the structure of reality as such” (1998, p. 10). Unlike reality in the positivist traditions, which is about what experiments can reveal as definite (Ernest, 1994); the goal in this study is to understand the multiple constructions of meaning and knowledge.

The reality of practical knowledge is not external to the practising teacher. It does not impose itself from without. On the contrary, it is the product of the individual consciousness of the teacher shaped by the various experiences encountered. Therefore, it is the result of teacher reasoning and not a pre-determined given object. It is experiential in nature with social origins. It can be justified by the mind creating it. This makes it relative. Accordingly, there is no one reality, but rather multiple realities. These realities are subjectively defined by the actors whose lived experiences are not the same. Even if they have similar experiences, they construct them differently. This applies to the teacher’s practical knowledge.

Although the teachers might have similar experiences and work under similar conditions, this does not mean that their knowledge is the same, and thus constitute one reality. This is because their interpretive frameworks through which they filter these experiences and conditions are different. The way they deal with classroom situations is also different depending upon their personal, professional and institutional understanding. They might have similar views about the structure of this knowledge. However, their views can not be explained from one reality. It is the deep rather than the surface structure which makes this reality meaningful. This indicates that the teachers’ practical knowledge has multiple realities in the same way there are multiple constructions and justifications of the views held by them. A teacher’s practical knowledge, therefore, does not exist independently of teacher reasoning. It can not be captured and presented alone without subjective influences.

One of the assumptions of a relativist ontological stance is that reality is

constituted by human consciousness, and inquiry into social phenomena is the study of how humans construct and construe their experience, both subjectively and inter-subjectively. Therefore, in studying teacher knowledge, it is necessary to access teachers' reasoning of their views and practices. The subjective meanings expressed by the teachers constitute the multiple realities of the phenomenon under study expressed by relativist ontology. This ontology is consistent with the constructivist-interpretive research framework which informs the current study. This framework attempts to reveal the meanings articulated by the participants to justify their views and actions.

4.3 Epistemological assumptions

Epistemology plays an important role in understanding and verifying knowledge constructed through research. Wellington (2000) defines epistemology as “the study of the nature and validity of human knowledge” (p.196).

The current study adopts a mixed-methodology approach and an epistemological mix by combining qualitative and quantitative research as complementary strategies appropriate to different types of research questions. A quantitative survey – in the current study – was suitable to know the range of agreement or disagreement with the views related to the practical knowledge of the teachers whereas qualitative methods such as the interview and observation were used to understand the nature of these views, their relationship to practice and how this relationship was influenced by the context in which the teachers work. Thus, I align myself with other pragmatists who are more interested in ensuring a suitable ‘fit’ between the research methods used and the research questions posed than in the degree of philosophical coherence of the epistemological positions typically associated with different research methods (Snape & Spencer, 2003).

I adopted this approach for several reasons. The first reason is to address the practical realities of the epistemological positions of positivism and interpretivism. Adopting a positivistic stance helped me to include a survey in the study and to present the views of a large number of participants who could not have been involved if only qualitative methods had been used. Adopting

constructivism helped me in answering the research questions, accommodating emergent views and presenting personal and socio-cultural views held by the participants. The second reason is to allow for complementary extension. This was achieved by addressing both the number and the nature of some of the views – those which were not purely constructed from the qualitative evidence but guided by the survey items. Although I acknowledge that qualitative and quantitative data do not calibrate exactly because they represent different views of seeing the world, I use different forms of evidence to build greater understanding and insight of the social world than is possible from one approach alone. I could have done the study using qualitative methods alone, but, in doing so, it would not have been possible to know how the views were distributed across a large number of participants. The third reason is to be able to choose and implement the most appropriate research design because purism about the epistemological origins of a particular approach may undermine this ability. It would not have been possible to include a survey in the study if I had adopted one epistemological stance and rejected the other. Adopting mixed methodology – at the epistemological level – helped me to fix this philosophical problematic situation.

4.3.1 The role of the constructivist stance in the current study

Roberts (1998) suggests that the use of the *constructivist approach* offers the most adequate framework for language teaching. This is because it recognises the interdependence of the personal and social dimensions of teacher development. Valid knowledge is represented in the rendering of various views informing what constitutes the knowledge base of the EFL experienced teacher. Drawing on research on the development of teacher knowledge, Freeman & Johnson (1998) see that “a social constructivist view of language learning would seem to interface more directly with the nature of classroom language learning” (p. 411).

The constructivist approach does not only focus on the knowledge constructed of the individual, but also on the context in which it is constructed. Abdal-Haqq (1998) argues that constructivism emphasizes education for social transformation

and reflects a theory of human development that situates the individual within a socio-cultural context. Research informed by constructivism explores these perspectives and is not restricted by what is traditionally accepted about the knowledge base needed for the EFL experienced teacher. Crotty (1998) asserts that, “instead, such research invites us to approach the object in a radical spirit of openness to its potential for new or richer meaning. It is an invitation for reinterpretation” (p.51). Accordingly, truth is not discovered, but constructed. Therefore, the theoretical perspective informing this study is both interpretivist and constructivist.

Interpretivism provides an opportunity for understanding teacher knowledge and practice from the inside-out. This agrees with Pring (2004) who states, “To understand particular events, one must see things from the point of view of the participants or the people who are involved – how they interpret events and thereby constitute those events of a certain sort.” (p.100)

In addition, an explanatory or interpretive mode of inquiry is helpful in investigating and understanding teacher thinking and practice. This is because articulating and making explicit one’s cognitive processes of lived experiences could lead to increased awareness of practice and the reasoning behind it. It is this reasoning which is more important than the experience itself in making the most out of experienced practices. Otherwise, practice would become routine. This could also lead to unreflective application of actions which are not sensitive to context or circumstances of the situation being encountered. One of the propositions of interpretivism, which is particularly associated with qualitative research, is that knowledge of the world is based on one’s understanding which arises from thinking about what happens, not just simply from having had particular experiences (Snape & Spencer, 2003). Thus, it is important to highlight the interpretive aspects of knowing and the significance of both the participant’s and investigator’s interpretations and understanding of practice and the knowledge underpinning it.

The study is also informed by a constructivist stance. Constructivism in epistemology is compatible with relativism in ontology (Crotty, 1998). This is because the reality of an object is the sense made of it. Accordingly, Crotty (1998) states: “We will obviously hold our understandings much more lightly and tentatively and far less dogmatically, seeing them as historically and culturally effected interpretations rather than eternal truths of some kind.” (p.64)

The reality of knowledge of teaching is constructed from the perspectives of the teachers. This knowledge is influenced by the context they work in and the experiences they go through. In addition, the meanings they construct are personally shaped and practically oriented. This could reveal the idiosyncrasies of their knowledge and practices, and consequently the multiple realities which exist in the minds and actions of the subjects of the study. Given that much of the teachers’ practical knowledge is situational, experiential and contextual, it is legitimate for very individual views which can count as good teaching to be reported when studying practical knowledge (Vries & Beijaard, 1999)

The need to involve teachers when investigating their knowledge is highlighted. Connelly, Clandinin & He (1997) highlight that teachers are not mere screens who translate others’ intentions and ideologies into practice. This is sensible given that teachers come to the teaching situation with their own ideas, values and theories. Their previous experience, schooling and education also work as filters before they adopt certain philosophies. Thus, teachers’ voices need to be heard. In addition, classroom and schools are sites where new meanings and understandings are created and shared (Fitzclarence, 2003). Teachers are not mere consumers of others’ ideas. Besides, the practical ideas about teaching are mostly informed by what happens in actual classroom practices.

Thus, if research on teaching is to underscore the practical aspects of the teachers’ work, it needs to acknowledge teachers as co-producers of knowledge. Rogers (2007) stresses the importance of involving practitioners as integral players and leaders in developing and sharing knowledge necessary to carry out educational reform as a way of acknowledging, respectfully and effectively, the

expertise that practitioners bring to the difficult charge of improving schools. Likewise, Sen (2002) supports the argument stating that teachers' voices need to be acknowledged to boost educational reform in the post-modern age. With the advance of technology and consequent changes in lifestyle for younger generations, the needs of the teachers change as well. Without taking into account teachers' voices, any school reform initiative could lack sensitivity to the practical needs of change. This could have a negative impact on the intended outcomes of the introduced changes. Furthermore, acknowledgement of the teachers' voices and actions opens up the space for teachers to reach new understandings of their practice and take the step towards transformation which is integral to teacher learning (Sonneville, 2007). Husu (2004) adds that the accounts teachers provide about their knowledge are essential to understand teachers' work and learning.

Teacher research which is responsive to the teachers' voices and their needs gives rise to a constructivist rather than a positivistic tradition of research. Richards (1994) launches criticism against the positivist approach when researching teachers' knowledge and, instead, approves a constructivist approach arguing:

A view of knowledge as an external body of information is likely to lead to a focus on imparting that information, on content; if the knower is not separated from the known, the focus is more likely to be on engagement and exploration. This rather crude formulation of a complex debate revolving around the rejection of positivism ... provides a convenient distinction which applies as much to the investigation of teacher knowledge as to the knowledge itself. (p.402)

Freeman (1995) calls for a constructive approach when researching teachers' practice. He states that "it is imperative to examine how participants-teachers, students, parents, and others involved in schools and classrooms-construe their worlds, the actions they take, and the ways in which they explain those actions to themselves and to others" (p.581). Likewise, Golombek (1998) believes that the teacher knowledge base should not be imposed. It needs to be constructed through experience. She states that "L2 teachers' knowledge is, in part,

experiential and constructed by teachers themselves as they respond to the contexts of their classrooms” (p. 447).

Highlighting the role of experience and context, a practical epistemology could shed light on the relationship between knowledge and action and how it is researched. The role of knowledge in teaching could be understood in light of Dewey’s transactional theory of knowing, which is seen as one of the most powerful and sophisticated practical epistemologies available (Biesta, 2007). Accordingly, the question of knowledge is approached from within an action-theoretical framework, one in which knowing is understood as a way of doing. Knowing is not about a world ‘out there,’ but concerns the relation between our actions and their consequences. Thus, it could help to plan and direct actions better than blind trial and error. This ability is most important in situations in which a practitioner is not sure how to act. This could be true of teaching as the teachers are faced with novel situations every now and then.

According to Dewey’s transactional theory of knowing, a practitioner does not have any knowledge at all in order to act. This does not mean that a practitioner does not learn as a result of transactions with the world. The whole idea of experience is that one undergoes the consequences of doings and changes as a result of this. This change conditions further behaviour by acquiring habits or predispositions to act. The essence of habits is an acquired predisposition to ways or modes of response, not to particular acts. Reflection with the use of symbolic operations makes the difference between blind trial and error and an intelligent action.

Problem definition is key to the intelligent action and development of new habits. When a practitioner is faced with an indeterminate situation, an appropriate response is needed to maintain coordinated transaction which was interrupted by the new situation. Defining the problem is essential to find the appropriate response. Yet, according to Dewey, finding the solution and finding the problem are two sides of the same coin because a practitioner will only know what the problem really was after finding an adequate response. The best way to find the

appropriate response is through imagination of various competing possible lines of action. The success of the selected option will be apparent upon acting.

Thinking and deliberation cannot solve problems, not can it guarantee that the chosen response will be successful. What it can do is make the process of choosing more intelligent than it would have been in the case of blind trial and error. It is because experimental problem solving is embodied in symbolic operations, such as thinking, deliberation, explanations and the like, that a practitioner not only learns at the level of habits or responses, but also adds to symbolic resources for addressing future problems. Thus, gained knowledge is not about the 'world,' but about the 'relations' between action and its consequences in this particular situation. This outlook could inform research on teacher knowledge. Biesta (2007) states, "One of the main implications of this view is that inquiry, or research, does not provide us with information about a world 'out there,' but only about possible relations between actions and consequences" (p.15). Thus, research on teacher knowledge can tell us about possible relations between actions and their consequences. It can only tell us what 'worked,' not 'what works' or 'will work.'

4.4 Methodological assumptions

Wellington (2000) defines Methodology as "the study of the methods, design and procedures used in research" (p.198). The current study is adopting an explanatory methodology with a multi-method approach. The explanatory design has wide potential applicability in educational research (Punch, 2009). A two-phase multi-method design was employed where qualitative data was used to help explain and build upon initial quantitative results. The first stage was quantitative, the second stage was qualitative. Figure 4.1 shows the design of the study

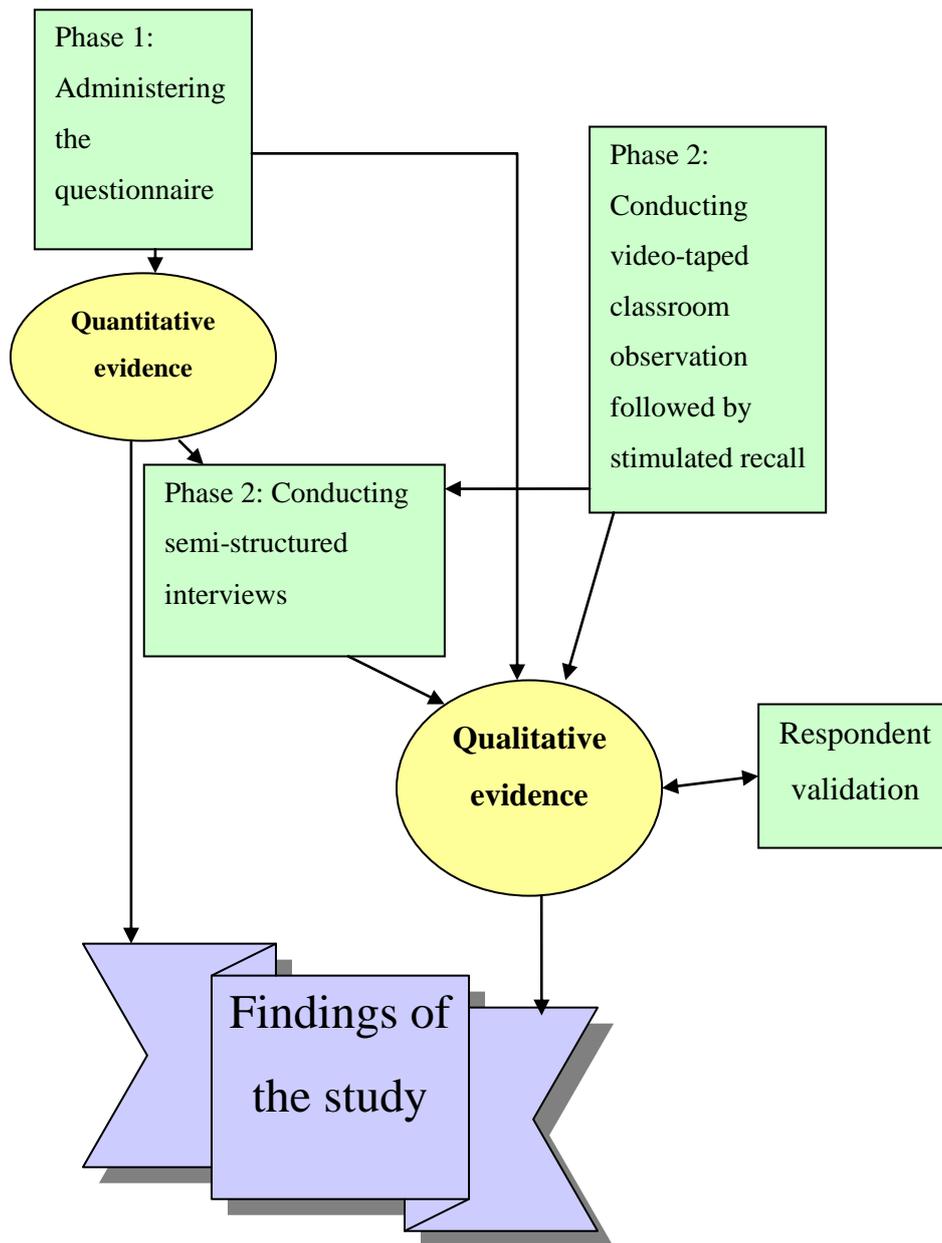


Figure 4.1: Design of the study

As indicated by Figure (4.1), multiple methods informed the findings of the study. The study began with the administration of the questionnaire. The quantitative evidence obtained from the statistical analysis of the questionnaire informed the administration of the semi-structured interviews. They were also informed by the data obtained from stimulated recall following the classroom observation. Thus, the qualitative evidence originated from a variety of sources. It was informed by the open-ended responses from the questionnaire and the analyses of the semi-structured interviews and stimulated recall data. It was also informed by the

respondents' validation of the interpreted data. Both quantitative and qualitative evidence informed the report of findings of the study.

This design is suitable for research on teacher knowledge because of the need not only to investigate the participants' views of professional practical knowledge, but also to explore the different understandings and interpretations which they bring with them to the situation. It is highlighted that while studying teacher knowledge, researchers should use methodologies that integrate teachers' perspective (Golombek, 1994).

Due to the benefits of combining methods for collecting different types of data, a multi-method approach is employed in the current study. One advantage of using a mixed-method approach is that it allows for patterns emerging in the survey data to be confirmed by, and explored further through, individual learner portraits emerging through interview and observation data (Lamb, 2007). Multiple research methods from different paradigms could be used in an interpretive study (Aldridge, Fraser & Huang, 1999). They highlight the need for combining methods for collecting quantitative data such as questionnaires and others for collecting qualitative data such as interviews and classroom observation. The data collected using questionnaires replicated previous research and could be used as a springboard and starting point for further data collection involving different research methods including interviews and observations.

Although it provides a parsimonious and economical view, quantitative data makes an important contribution to the bricolage of information built up during the study. A more in-depth understanding could be gained from qualitative data using interviews and classroom observation. Such methods explore causal factors associated, provide reasons for various actions, and reveal socio-cultural influences. They, thus, make the interpretation of the data more meaningful. The data collected using questionnaires, interviews and classroom observation is complementary and form a more complete and coherent picture. Besides, a multi-method approach allows triangulation of the methods and cross-validation of the data.

The use of one method alone when studying what is involved in teaching could not help a lot in clarifying the picture of what teachers do and the knowledge underpinning their actions. Questionnaires alone tell very little about the respondents' true accounts. Pring (2004) points out that, "Surveys which tot up similar responses to the same question might in fact give a much distorted picture of how the different people really felt about or understood a situation" (p.54). To overcome this limitation, semi-structured interviews were conducted for a deeper insight and clearer picture. Again, depending on interviews alone may not provide the whole picture. Pring (2004) adds that, "Given the claimed uniqueness of each individual's understanding of an event or an activity, it would seem impossible for the interviewer to grasp the significance of what is said" (p.40). This justifies the need for multiple methods.

The use of a mixed-method approach is also theoretically-grounded. Maxey (2003) argues that the use of multiple methods is acceptable to research a social phenomenon in a pragmatic way that makes use of the various benefits of different research methods. He states:

What is needed is mixed or multiple methods of social science inquiry that interlace 'techne,' or the technical skills of the research viewed as a craft (rather than routines of observation and enumeration where research is seen as a mechanical process); 'phronesis,' or ethical know how in which human researchers seek to understand human subjects and their actions from a practical moral perspective; and 'praxis,' or the mechanisms of deliberation, choice, and decision making regarding what ought to be done-all relative to the concrete problematic situations in which humans find themselves. (p.85)

Along the same lines, research on teacher knowledge requires the use of multiple methods because of the multi-dimensionality of the key variables in this kind of research (Calderhead, 1996). Supporting the same view, Verloop et al. (2001) point out the benefits of this approach when researching teacher knowledge. They state:

By means of multi-method triangulation, it is possible to cover not only the well-considered aspects of teacher knowledge, which are relatively stable and can be put into words rather easily, but also the ephemeral aspects. The aim is to enhance the internal validity of the research (p.452).

Therefore, both quantitative and qualitative types of research need to be combined for a fruitful investigation. Ritchie (2003) points out that quantitative and qualitative methods can be used in tandem to study the same phenomenon since it is often the case that there is a need to examine both the number and nature of the same phenomenon.

Both the use of interviews and classroom observation are suitable and complementary tools when studying teacher knowledge and practice. Shulman (2000) suggests that one model for researching professional practical knowledge is for the researcher to look for really good teachers, and ask them to indulge him/her so he/she can learn from them – from watching their work, talking with them, videotaping and engaging them in stimulated recall. Fenstermacher (1994) differentiates two strands of research on teacher knowledge. The first strand seems to infer knowledge about teaching from the accounts told by teachers while the other strand infers knowledge from action that arises in the course of experience as teacher. Advocates of each strand are also different in the status they accord to the role of the teacher in the research process. Supporters of the first strand, as could be predicted, accept teacher statements as knowledge. They argue that teachers produce and possess their own knowledge. On the other hand, the advocates of the second strand are more cautious about according the status of knowledge to what teachers say or do. They consider it far more of a task to tease out precisely what knowledge is involved in action and how this knowledge is altered in subsequent action. Fenstermacher felt the ambiguity “whether the insights and understandings teachers express in narratives are accorded the status of knowledge merely because they are teacher-articulated insights and understandings or whether they must meet some categorical standard before being accorded the status of knowledge.” (p.13)

Fenstermacher suggests that “Given that both strands seek the explication of the same epistemological type and that each uses novel and provocative methods for eliciting and understanding teacher knowledge, the explication of the concept of practical knowledge has much to gain from more dialogue between them” (p. 14).

This supports the use of a mixed-method approach when investigating the professional practical knowledge of the teacher and its relationship to practice. The research questions about teacher's knowledge can be answered through quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. This mixed approach could relax the quantitative-qualitative distinction. Punch (2009) states, "Rather than either-or thinking about the qualitative-quantitative distinction, or tired arguments about the superiority of one approach over the other...the methods and data used (qualitative, quantitative or both) should follow from and fit in with the question(s) being asked" (p.4). Thus, a pragmatic approach is adopted, at the level of methods, as a toolkit approach to investigate the topic under study with qualitative and quantitative methods as a part of this toolkit. Rather than focusing too much on the underlying philosophical debates, which may undermine the ability to choose and implement the most appropriate research design for answering the research questions posed, quantitative and qualitative methods are not seen as competing or contradictory, but instead are viewed as complementary strategies appropriate to different types of research, questions and issues (Snape & Spencer, 2003; Seale, 1999; Verma & Mallick, 1999).

It follows from the above argument that it is possible to combine research methods such as questionnaire, interview and classroom observation. Although some might argue that the use of the questionnaire reflects a positivistic paradigm, this is not the case in the current study. Rather than looking for generalizable truths resulting from the questionnaire, this data was intended to feed into the later qualitative stage of the research and to assist in the interpretive process. This position agreed with Troudi (2010) that the use of a particular research method should not be interpreted as an indicator of an epistemological position because it is what the researcher's approach to the study and what he/she wants to do with the data that reflects the paradigmatic nature of the work.

The use of semi-structured interviews is also compatible with the epistemological assumptions previously highlighted that meaning is jointly constructed between the subject and the object of the research. Its use presupposes that there is no one objective truth to be discovered. Wellington (2000) emphasises that given that

interviews are designed to elicit views and perspectives (the unobservable) it follows that their aim is not to establish some sort of inherent 'truth' in an educational situation. Interviewing is also an important follow-up stage after classroom observation. Wallen & Fraenkel (2001) indicate that interviewing (i.e. the careful asking of relevant questions) is an important way to check the accuracy of – to verify or refute – the impressions he or she has gained through observation. Interviewing the observed teachers gives them the chance to express their own personal views and gain different perspectives about teaching performance. In doing so, the advantages include: having access to the different insights, reducing the dangers of researcher bias, and triangulating the different perspectives of the key informants.

The purpose of triangulation is to obtain complementary quantitative and qualitative data bringing together the different strengths of the two methods (Punch, 2009). Likewise, Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007) emphasize that the use of a multi-method approach as one triangular technique has the power to explain more fully the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint, and, in so doing, by making use of both quantitative and qualitative data. This is evident in the current study. A questionnaire, classroom observation, and in-depth interviewing were all used to investigate the experienced EFL teacher knowledge and practice. This was illuminating in many ways. The findings obtained from the questionnaire represented a starting point for revealing the views of the participants which were studied in depth through the use of the semi-structured interview. Although some accounts of practice were provided during the semi-structured interviews, they were not fully grasped unless some lessons were observed and the teachers' practices were accounted for by the observed teachers. Evidence from stimulated recall classroom observation supported the consistency or the lack of it between the teachers' knowledge and their practice as well as the knowledge underpinning their practice. Interview evidence was used to explain this relationship as well as provide accounts of the views and practices the teachers adopted. Thus, the use of multiple methods revealed aspects of the phenomenon investigated which could not have been shown if one method only was used.

4.5 Research methods

This section provides a detailed account of the methods of data collection to ensure the trustworthiness of both the process and the evidence. Lewis & Ritchie (2003) stress the importance of giving a clear account of research methods as part of displaying the credibility of the evidence. They further add that written accounts need to explain not only how the research was conducted but also why particular approaches and methods were chosen to meet the aims of the research. Three research methods were used in the current study to collect quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions. These methods were: a questionnaire, a semi-structured interview and stimulated recall classroom observation. The aim and justification of each of them are presented below.

4.5.1 The teacher knowledge questionnaire

The teachers' knowledge questionnaire aimed to ascertain the EFL teachers' views in the current study of what constitutes the teachers' knowledge and practice as well as the challenges they face in their work from their own perspectives. Although the current study is mainly qualitative, the questionnaire was intended to act as a springboard for the other qualitative methods of data collection.

The use of the EFL teacher knowledge questionnaire was necessary and proved to be useful. One reason for using it is because of the familiarity of survey studies in the Egyptian educational research context. Furthermore, qualitative research using interviews is new to both me and the participants. Given these contextual considerations, using the questionnaire at the beginning of the data collection process is useful for the transition from the known to the unknown. It is also easy and simple to begin with a questionnaire, which could be completed in a few minutes rather than to begin with an interview, which is always difficult and complex. Using the questionnaire at the earliest stages was also necessary to get to know the study population and to know who were willing to participate in the other stages of the research and who were best suited to answer the research questions.

There are other reasons for using the questionnaire in a qualitative research study, such as the current one. It could be used to learn about the views of as many participants as possible who cannot be interviewed because of time limitations of the field study. Although the participants' views were not detailed or profound, still they reflect a broad spectrum of views of respondents in a way which could validate what was to be revealed in another way. Thus, the questionnaire could be a means for triangulating the findings resulting from other methods of data collection.

The use of a questionnaire to investigate teacher knowledge is evident in previous literature. For example, Meijer et al. (2001) used a 5 Likert closed format questionnaire to explore the similarities and differences in 69 language teachers' practical knowledge about teaching reading comprehension to high school students. This example suggests the possibility of using quantitative surveys when studying teacher knowledge.

4.5.2 The semi-structured interview

The interview is the main research tool in the current study. The interview is a major research instrument which aims at exploring how the interviewees construe their views of the world and make sense of their experiences (Brown & Dowling, 1998). Unlike questionnaires and experimental interventions, the interview is rarely used in educational research in Egypt especially in TESOL (Gahin, 2001). However, the interview is a widely used research method when investigating teacher knowledge and practice either in education in general or in TESOL in particular (Elbaz, 1981; Golombek, 1998; Borg, 1998; Johnston & Goettsch, 2000; Meijer et al., 1999; Tsang, 2004; Watzke, 2007)

The use of the semi-structured interview in the current study served a number of purposes. It dug deep into the minds of the interviewees to explore their views with regard to the EFL teacher knowledge and practices from their points of views. It also provided further insight justifying the claims made by the respondents to the questionnaire, and thus explaining the findings revealed by the questionnaire. In addition, the use of in-depth interviewing helped in revealing

the contextual factors affecting the realisation of teacher knowledge in action. Snape & Spencer (2003) highlight that qualitative research methods, such as the interview, provide a holistic understanding of research participants' views and actions in the context of their lives overall.

It is worth noting that explanations were sought not only for the views representing the majority of participants, but those representing the minority as well to provide a two-sided argument of the ideas presented in the findings chapter.

Most of the issues raised in the questionnaire and classroom observation were highlighted in the interviews as well. Thus, the interview served a triangular technique through which constant comparisons were made while presenting data yielded by the various methods. The teachers' accounts of views and practice were verbalized and elaborated by the interviewed teachers. Thus, the interview was a golden opportunity to explore in depth the issues raised by other methods.

4.5.3 Stimulated recall classroom observation

Stimulated recall classroom observation was used in the current study to collect data related to the teachers' practices and their underpinning knowledge. This type of observation was used in previous studies on teacher knowledge and practice (Golombek, 1998; Gatbonton, 1999; Mullock, 2006). Two lines of classroom observation techniques related to research on teacher knowledge were suggested by Farrell and Kun (2007). One way is for researchers and teachers to monitor, based on previously stated views of the teachers, classroom practices to see if there is evidence of these views in actual classroom practices (deductive approach). Alternatively, teachers can look at their teaching first and then stand back and examine what views are being manifested through actual classroom practices (inductive approach). This second approach was the one followed in the current study.

The inductive approach was followed because it fits the open-ended kind of observation used in the current study. I did not go to the teachers' classes to

verify a checklist of certain practices. Instead, I was interested in what actually happened in the classroom and the teachers' interpretations of these incidents to understand why the teachers acted in certain ways and what knowledge informed their practice. After I had video-taped the teachers' classes, I conducted follow-up interviews with the teachers to discuss them in the lessons observed. One advantage of discussion following classroom observation is that research occurs simultaneously with the teaching and is situated in the immediate environment (Norrish, 1996). The video-taped materials as well as my own notes of interpretation of the observed classroom events were used for stimulated recall.

Stimulated recall resulted in parallel stories representing my construction of the knowledge underpinning the classroom events versus the account provided by the observed teachers reflecting upon action. This element was referred to by Craig (1999) who highlights the possibility of interfacing the teacher's versions of their stories with the researcher's versions. Consequently, an element of parallelism enters the work both in the juxtaposed accounts and in the mutual responses received.

Stimulated recall classroom observation is a tool for investigating teacher knowledge underpinning practice and consequently presents one solution for the challenging methodological problem of probing teacher thinking (Mullock, 2006). The problem arises because of the difficulty of uncovering covert mental processes in teaching and the tacit and implicit nature of teacher knowledge within the teaching act. Although stimulated recall cannot reveal the entire thinking and knowledge involved during the lessons recorded, it can provide an indication of the areas of knowledge used and consulted by the teachers.

Because one of the aims in the current study is to establish the relationship between what an EFL teacher knows and what he/she does in classroom practice, part of the methodology in the current study is to observe the teachers in the workplace. Classroom observation provides a benchmark when investigating the teacher's knowledge as it reflects what a teacher knows and how he/she realises his/her knowledge in actual classroom practice (Vasey, 1996). However, not all

that a teacher knows is drawn upon in practice (Breen, Hird, Milton, Oliver & Thwaite; 2001). This is because teaching is a complex undertaking with so many intervening factors. Observing the teachers could also shed light on such factors by revealing the gap between what is claimed in theory and what is put into practice. This could be achieved not only by observing the teachers, but also by discussing with them what they do. Thus, the multiple realities of the classroom practice are revealed. The teachers' articulation during the stimulated recall sessions after classroom observation reveals the underpinning knowledge bases of their practices and the challenges they face while they are teaching.

4.6 Sample of the study

A purposive sample of EFL experienced teachers was intended for the current study. In purposive sampling, members of a sample are chosen with a purpose to represent a type in relation to a key criterion (Ritchie, Lewis and Elam, 2003). Care was taken while making the purposive selection to avoid any bias in the nature of the choices made. Ritchie et al. (2003) highlight the necessity of the process of purposive sampling to be clearly objective so that the sample stands up to independent scrutiny. A sample of 236 EFL experienced teachers from 38 schools (14 general secondary schools and 24 preparatory schools) took part in the study. Although this is a large number for a purposive sample, not all of them participated equally in the data collection process. Whereas all of them participated in filling in the questionnaire, fourteen of them were chosen for in-depth interviewing and three of them were selected for classroom observation.

Given the focus of the current study and the role of experience in shaping the views of the teachers, years of experience were used as one of the factors to select the participants. The study participants were selected from EFL teachers in the city of Menia, which is located in the middle of Egypt and stretching along both banks of the River Nile. It has a state university and is famous for its tourist attractions and Ancient Egyptian monuments.

The emphasis on choosing experienced teachers for the current study is because of the conceptual understanding of teacher knowledge in the current study as an

experiential and practical enterprise shaping the teachers' practice and is reshaped by their experience. With more experience, more knowledge could be expected from the teacher. Experienced teachers are in a better position than novices to do this. Reynolds (1995) emphasizes that, "expert teachers have established procedural knowledge for solving discipline problems than do novices, experts can divert more of their attention to problem definition, representation and strategy evaluation." (p.214)

Although expertise is different from years of experience, as the latter does not guarantee the former, it could be seen as one of its indicators. Gage and Berliner (1992) maintain that experience is the most important prerequisite for the development of expertise. Westerman (1991) takes five years of experience as being the benchmark time by which expertise may develop. To fulfil this requirement, the choice of the sample was restricted to secondary and preparatory school teachers. Almost all teachers who work in the secondary stage were experienced given that they had to work for some time as either primary or preparatory school teachers before they could work in the secondary stage. Likewise, preparatory school teachers are often more experienced than primary school teachers. Therefore, I chose to distribute the questionnaire to preparatory and secondary school teachers who had a good amount of EFL teaching experience. However, because of the difficulty of assigning those teachers who have more than five years of teaching experience especially those at the preparatory stage, I had to distribute the questionnaire to all teachers who agreed to participate. Then, 28 participants, who reported having less than five years of EFL teaching experience, were excluded from the analysis of the responded to questionnaires. In doing so, I ensured that all the 236 EFL teachers who participated in the study had five or more years of teaching experience. It is worth noting that 201 teachers of the sample (85%) had more than 11 years of teaching experience. This period of teaching experience is more than double the time identified by Westerman.

The table below shows the distribution of the questionnaire sample.

Table 4.1: Distribution of the questionnaire sample

Variable	Sub-variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	139	60.7
	Female	90	39.3
Age	25-29	7	3.0
	30-34	32	13.6
	35-39	55	23.3
	40-44	84	35.6
	45 or more	47	19.9
1st degree qualification	BA in English and Education	178	78.8
	BA in English	48	21.2
Additional qualifications	Diploma or Masters in Education	12	5.0
Years of teaching experience	5-10	30	12.7
	11 or more	201	85.2
Teachers according to school	Preparatory (grades 7 to 9)	137	58.1
	Secondary (grades 10 to 12)	97	41.1

As could be noted from table 4.1, the sample was heterogeneous in various ways. This was considered to allow for maximum variation of the participants and consequently the accounts they provide based on their various experiences and characteristics.

The questionnaire stage helped in selecting the sample for the semi-structured interviews and classroom observation. It proved very useful to get to know the community of teachers through informal chats and group discussions while administering the questionnaire. In addition, beginning with the questionnaire helped identify the teachers who showed willingness to participate in the other phases of the field study. More than half of the sample who completed the questionnaire provided consent to be interviewed. Most of them also showed no objection to being video-taped while teaching. However, due to the limitation of time of the field study (only one term of 12 weeks), not all of them could have been interviewed or observed. Therefore, the selection was focused on the most

experienced teachers for classroom observation and the semi-structured interviews. One of the selection criteria is the length of experience in teaching, the qualification in teaching (e.g. Master's degree), and/or the recommendation of the head teachers and other staff members in the school.

Fourteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with 14 EFL experienced teachers: 6 preparatory (3 male and 3 female) and 8 secondary (7 male and 1 female). For autobiographical details of each one of the interviewees, see appendix (F).

Three teachers: 2 secondary and one preparatory (2 female and one male) were observed throughout a period of 8 weeks. All of them were experienced with a teaching experience ranging between 10 and 25 years. One of the observed teachers had been teaching English for 10 years in a preparatory school. The other two teachers had been teaching English both in the preparatory and secondary stage. All the three teachers were recommended by the EFL staff members in the school and were known for being distinguished teachers.

4.7 Data collection

Two types of data were collected in the current study. These were quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data was collected by means of a questionnaire. Qualitative data was collected through a semi-structured interview, stimulated recall classroom observation and an open-ended section in the questionnaire. The construction of the tools and process of both types of data collection are presented in this section. The aim of this section is to provide a detailed account of the procedures of data collection to ensure the trustworthiness of the collected data.

Before embarking on the collection of data for the main study, required paperwork had to be completed either from the Graduate School of Education at the University of Exeter or the Education Authorities in Egypt. An ethical approval certificate was completed to conduct the field study for three months from the end of September till end of December 2008 (see appendix G). The certificate

was approved by the head of the ethical committee in the Graduate School of Education, University of Exeter. In addition, an agreement had to be obtained from the Ministry of Education and Local Education Authorities in Egypt to conduct the field study in the schools. I had also to obtain the teachers' consent to participate in the different phases of the study. Once all the agreements were completed, the first phase of the field study started. The data collection process lasted for three months. The table below illustrates the time plan of the field work.

Table 4.2: Time plan of the field study

Phases in weeks	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Week 1	(weeks 1-6) Administration of the questionnaire (concurrent analysis of questionnaire data)	(weeks 3 -10) Video-taped classroom observation followed by stimulated recall	(weeks 9-12) Semi-structured interviews
Week 2			
Week 3			
Week 4			
Week 5			
Week 6			
Week 7			
Week 8			
Week 9			
Week 10			
Week 11			
Week 12			

4.7.1 Collecting quantitative data

The collection of quantitative data represented the first phase of the design of the study. It was collected through the teacher knowledge questionnaire. Prior to commencing the collection of data of the main study, I conducted a pilot study to this research method. The questionnaire was distributed to 50 EFL teachers in Egypt in April 2008. Based on the analysis of the pilot study, some items which had low reliability as measured by Cronbach Alpha were dropped from the final version of the questionnaire. Other items were added as well as important demographic data such as the name of the school and which stage is taught by the teacher.

The pilot study of the questionnaire proved useful in the following ways: (1) checking the ways of contacting the respondents especially concerning the use of the interviews and classroom observation; (2) identifying inappropriate wording or ambiguities which may result in unreliable items; (3) deciding upon unreliable items whether to delete or rephrase them, (4) checking and anticipating the extent of responsiveness from participants, (5) ascertaining and organizing the timing of the field study and the time required to conduct the questionnaire; (6) checking the feasibility of conducting the study in the target research context; (7) determining the adequacy of the sampling frame; (8) establishing the adequacy of the questions to be asked; (9) checking the reliability of the instrument; (10) considering the suggestions made by the respondents, and more importantly (11) accessing a preliminary outlook of the range of views held by the participants.

4.7.1.1 Construction of the questionnaire of the main study

The EFL teacher knowledge and practice questionnaire consists of three parts. The first part asks the teachers to provide demographic information about themselves including name (optional), gender, qualifications, years of experience, school and stage taught. This part is important to describe the sample. It could also be used in inferential statistics. The second represents the content to be inquired into. It represents seven areas to be explored: knowledge of subject matter, knowledge of pedagogy, curricular knowledge, knowledge about students, knowledge about self, knowledge about contextual factors, and sources of teacher knowledge. The third part of the questionnaire is open-ended for the respondents to add their additions and comments. It also asks the respondent to write their contact details if they are willing to participate in the other phases of the research. The questionnaire ends with thanking the respondents for completing the questionnaire (see appendix A).

The construction of the questionnaire was informed by three sources: review of related literature and similar instruments, the advice of TEFL experts, and the personal experience working as a preparatory and secondary school EFL teacher as well as a teaching assistant at the university for six years from 2000 to 2006. A

thorough review of relevant literature to the EFL teacher knowledge and practice provided familiarity with the range of issues related to teacher knowledge and practice. Once the statements were decided upon, the questionnaire was sent to a panel of TEFL experts familiar with the Egyptian context to ensure the content validity of the questionnaire. Among the panel were the head of the TEFL department of the home university where I belong, other TEFL staff members and colleagues. Responses were obtained from 5 TEFL experts who helped in refining the questionnaire before its implementation. The items of the questionnaire were also validated concurrently by the teachers' responses in the interviews covering the issues included in the questionnaire.

Apart from face validity, the findings of the questionnaire were checked against either common sense and/or the participants' justifications of their views. The findings were also examined in relation to existing literature. Not all findings would be expected to match with existing literature. Otherwise, the originality of the current research might be jeopardized. Nevertheless, this attempt had been made to support the argument that the convergence between some of the findings of the current research and those of existing literature could be a step forward to ensure the validity of the questionnaire and the credibility of the participants' responses. In addition, some of the questionnaire findings were compared to findings of similar items existing in related literature. Thus, the concurrent validity of the questionnaire or some parts of it could be ensured.

The questionnaire in its final version consists of 42 items representing various areas of teacher knowledge, contextual factors, and sources of teacher knowledge. The design of the questionnaire followed the 5-item-likert scale. This design is widely used and easy to construct. It could also provide precise information about a respondent's degree of agreement or disagreement (Oppenheim, 2001). The overall consistency measure of the questionnaire was .731. This level is acceptable given that the study is mainly interpretive.

4.7.1.2 Translation of the questionnaire

I translated the questionnaire into the target participants' native language (Arabic) for the following reasons. First, all the target participants were non-native speakers of English. Second, translating the questionnaire into the teachers' native language would make it easier to complete and consequently did not take too much time from the respondent. Third, the translation of the questionnaire eliminated ambiguity resulting from the propositional terminology of some items which some teachers may not be familiar with.

4.7.1.3 Administration of the questionnaire

Because of the large number of the schools from which data was to be collected, I was careful not to waste most of the time in distributing and collecting the questionnaire. To overcome this problem, I had to arrange with the head teachers to see the senior EFL teacher in the school whom I gave letters to other members of the staff to take their informed consent. The senior EFL teacher in the school also helped in arranging for a meeting with those teachers who agreed on completing the questionnaire. Mostly, this meeting was held during the mid-day break to avoid conflict of the different teaching schedules. The aim of this meeting was to fill in the questionnaire while I was attending with the teachers to answer any question or clarification they may have. In most cases, after completing the questionnaire, a discussion emerged on the domains of the questionnaire. These informal discussions were very useful in getting to know the teachers and the views they held. This helped in selecting teachers for classroom observation and interviews from the big numbers of teachers who agreed on participating in other phases.

4.7.2 Collecting qualitative data

Qualitative data was collected from three sources: responses to the open-ended section of the questionnaire, the semi-structured interview, and stimulated recall classroom observation. There was a section at the end of the questionnaire asking the participants for any dimensions regarding teacher knowledge or related issues

that they would like to add. As for stimulated recall classroom observation and semi-structured interview data, they are presented below.

4.7.2.1 Classroom observation data

Once some teachers were known enough to be selected for classroom observation, the stimulated recall classroom observation had become concurrent with administering the questionnaires in the way illustrated earlier (beginning from week 3). It continued for eight weeks.

Open-ended classroom observation was intended to be a realistic representation of the classroom reality. To achieve this goal, I arranged with one of the teachers. The most experienced one, to observe him once a week over most of the term (eight weeks). One period was chosen and video-recorded each week. This was followed by stimulated recall audio-recorded interview with the observed teacher on the same day when the teacher did not have other teaching commitments. The discussion proved to be very insightful to investigate various areas of the teacher's performance and underlying knowledge.

Arrangement with the other teachers had to be made to observe their classes to avoid conflict given that they may be teaching during the same period. It is worth noting also that most of the duration of the classroom observation was parallel to the administration of either the questionnaire or the semi-structured interview. Fifteen classes were observed for the three teachers observed. I was keen to attend classes that cover the most possible areas of EFL, i.e. language skills and language aspects. The teachers also taught different grades (8, 10, and 12).

All the classes were video-taped. A portable digital video camera was used by me to video-tape the classes. The videos were downloaded on the computers of the multi-media labs of the schools where teachers were observed. They were watched with the teachers there. While watching the videos, they were stopped at certain points and the teachers started to verbalize their reasoning and thinking behind certain actions.

To facilitate recall, the time lag between teacher thinking while teaching and the

reporting was meant to be as small as possible, sometimes on the same day of recording. This way was suggested by Gas & Mackey (2000) – cited in Mullock (2006) – to ensure the reliability of recall. Stimulated recall interviews following classroom observation were audio-taped and constituted the raw material for investigating teacher knowledge underpinning their actions. Alternatively, a lesson script was sent to the teacher highlighting particular episodes of the lesson with comments to probe teacher knowledge regarding certain areas of their teaching. The scripts were completed and returned (see appendix E for an example). The completed scripts represented another source of stimulated recall raw material. Both the audio-taped material and completed scripts were analysed qualitatively.

4.7.2.2 Semi-structured interview data

The above two phases helped in reformulating the semi-structured interview schedule to include the new understandings gained from preliminary analysis of the collected data from the questionnaire and stimulated recall. The analysis of the questionnaire revealed the range of views of participants regarding the issues raised in it. Although the interview was not guided by the questionnaire items, there were times when the interviewees touched upon the range of views in the questionnaire while they were talking about their own views and practices. These opportunities were used as a springboard for discussion of the teachers' reasoning. This justifies that some of the categories in the findings chapter are presented based on the questionnaire items representing them. This also facilitated the integration of some of the findings resulting from the questionnaire and corresponding ones resulting from the interviews.

The initial phase of distributing and collecting the questionnaire forms turned out to be of crucial significance to the latter qualitative stage. Being in the school for the whole day was a wonderful chance to get to know the teacher and school community. Meeting and chatting with the teachers for a period of six weeks, six days a week, from 8 am to 4 pm provided very invaluable insights into the various areas of the teachers' work. Moreover, some of the teachers even invited

me to attend their classes and discuss their taught lessons. In addition, there were chances to hold individual and group meetings with the teachers and to listen to various views regarding their work. All these chances refined my thinking about the focus of my study and helped me to conduct informed interviews.

In addition to the questionnaire findings, the discussions which followed classroom observation informed the qualitative evidence collected from the interviews. These discussions were useful in understanding the relationship between knowledge and practice. It also deepened my understanding of the context where EFL experienced teachers work. This provided me with several opportunities for inquiry and discussion. It helped me become inquisitive about the practice of EFL teachers and the knowledge underpinning their work. I became eager to interview the teachers to listen to their stories. In addition, three of the interviewees were the observed teachers themselves. During the interviews, they related their views to actual episodes in their observed lessons. This justifies that while presenting interview evidence, some of the teachers talked about their views based on their actual teaching.

The format of the interview in the current study is semi-structured in the sense that I had, based on the conceptual and theoretical framework of the study, a list of topics or themes to cover in the interview. However, some other issues emerged during the interview. These emergent issues were not previously determined. Although I may have some understanding of what is to be explored; a lot of issues still remain the realm of the practising teachers. I had familiarity with the context of the interviewees out of being a student teacher, a practising teacher and a teaching assistant at the university. This helped – in addition to readings and relevant literature – to identify some major topics or themes to be discussed with the interviewees. However, being aware of the wealth of experiences of the interviewed participants, there was allowance for emergent issues to be discussed. Unlike the questionnaire and the structured interviews, the semi-structured interviews could provide rich data because it is not only a key venue for exploring the ways in which the participants experience and understand

their world, but also provides a unique access to their lived world describing, in their own words, their activities, experiences and opinions (Kvale, 2007).

The use of the semi-structured interview is coherent with the ontological and epistemological assumptions postulated in the current study that there are multiple realities existing in the minds of the participants. Unless these realities had been allowed to be constructed from the perspectives of those who live these realities, a whole picture of what constitutes the EFL experienced teachers' knowledge and practice would have never been approached.

The semi-structured format in the current study allowed accommodating emergent issues. It provided a mental orientation both to focus on what is to be investigated and accommodate what is raised from the interviewee's own perspective. This helped in providing a well-balanced discussion including both the agenda of the interviewer and that of the interviewee. Therefore, there was no tight control over the flow of discussion as long as it evolved around the big themes being discussed (For a sample interview script, see Appendix D).

With regard to the semi-structured interview schedule (See Appendix B), it was based on the research questions. Previous studies and other reading material were examined carefully long before the final version of the interview schedule was produced. In fact, the interview schedule had never been close-ended till the last interview to accommodate emergent issues raised by the respondents. Dimensions of the questionnaire were also considered when designing the interview schedule. I was keen to discuss the issues raised in the questionnaire in-depth when conducting the interview so that the data resulting from the interview could explain the claims made by the respondents of the questionnaire.

Due to the semi-structured format, I was flexible with regard to the use of the interview schedule. With this type of interview, what is more important than the interview schedule is a general sense of the questions or topics to be discussed as well as more communication skills in general, and listening and follow-up questioning in particular (Punch, 2009). After gaining some familiarity with the proceedings of the interview, the interview schedule was only used as a reference

to ensure the full coverage of an area to be explored. I was also flexible with regard to the wording and ordering of the questions. The original blueprint of the interview schedule was refined several times. It was refined by the results of the pilot and main questionnaire findings accommodating the quantitative evidence obtained from the teacher and their remarks on the open-ended section of the questionnaire. Again, it went through another cycle of refinement by the informal discussions held with groups of EFL teachers during the administration of the questionnaire and stimulated recall sessions following classroom observation. It could be said that the design and construction of the interviews made use of the accumulated experiences obtained throughout the whole data collection process. This adds rigour to the design and administration of the interviews. In addition, the decision to delay the conduction of the interviews till near the end of the period of the data collection was intentional to accommodate all the learning experiences went through.

I was aware that conducting a successful in-depth qualitative interview was not an easy task to be carried out. Given that qualitative research interviewers are themselves research instruments, the success of the interview depends, to a large extent, on the personal and professional qualities of the individual interviewer (Legard, Keegan & Ward, 2003). Although I was not previously familiar with qualitative interviewing, which is not a famous research tradition in the context of my study, I was very keen to listen to the interviewed teachers to see the world of teaching through their eyes, and to dig deep into what they tell. The interviewees were my source of knowledge and therefore, I had to acknowledge that they voluntarily had given me the chance to share their knowledge. Although I have had my own knowledge which I have constructed from my previous schooling, I never let my knowledge compete with theirs. I asked comprehension and clarification questions to probe further and understand rather than to test or check their knowledge. Therefore, as a qualitative interviewer, according to Legard et al. (2003), I was required to be: (1) a good listener who can decide how to probe further, (2) curious to know more about what has been told, (3) capable of establishing good rapport with the participants, (4) capable of displaying a

sense of tranquillity during the interview, and (5) recipient of the participant's wisdom without needing to compete.

The fourteen interviewees were selected from 12 preparatory and secondary schools representing most of the regions following Menia Education Authority. A list of all the schools and their contact details was initially provided by the Education Authority. Some of the interviewees were nominated by the head teacher or other TEFL staff at the school. Others were selected by me during the phases of conducting the questionnaire and classroom observation. Three out of the fourteen teachers were previously interviewed during the stimulated recall sessions following the video-taped classroom observation. However, they were interviewed again not for the purpose of stimulated recall though some references were made by them to the observed lessons.

The selected interviewees were contacted by telephone to arrange for an appointment to conduct the interview. Some of the interviews were conducted in the staff room at the school, in the school library, or in a meeting room in the school booked by the teacher. One interview was conducted in a training venue where the teacher to be interviewed was training other EFL teachers. The interview was held with her in the training hall after the end of the training session she was giving. I was keen to let the interviewees choose the place they like to ensure a favourable relaxed interview environment. Before starting the interview, I debriefed the interviewee about the aims of the research and the aim of the interview. The interviewees were assured about the confidentiality and safety of the data to be collected before their permission was taken to record the interview.

A very small portable digital voice recorder was used to record the interviews. The small size of the device made it unnoticeable and consequently less distracting during the interview. One good feature about the recorder was its ability to filter irrelevant surrounding noise. I could have used a microphone extension but felt it unnecessary because of the high quality voice of the recorder and to provide a comfortable hands-free environment. The date, time and

duration of the interview were recorded automatically by the recorder. I had to make sure that there was plenty of remaining time available in order not to lose data. For safety of the data, I transferred them from the digital voice recorder to a personal computer for back-up and then the data were transferred from the computer into a USB memory stick and copied on CDs for more back-up.

The time of the interview was set by the interviewee and lasted for one to two hours. This helped me to conduct the interview without interruption or teaching commitments. The interviewees were previously informed that the interview would last for at least one hour. In reality, some interviews exceeded more than two hours. I put a time plan to cover the areas within the first hour. Once I covered these areas, I made use of the opportunity to dig deep into the already covered areas or emergent issues till the end of the interview which had to be ended.

All the interviews were conducted in English because of the high proficiency level in English of all the interviewees who all had a university degree in English language and were experienced in teaching English as a foreign language for at least ten years. The majority of the interviewees (8 of them) had been in language development and teacher training courses either in the UK or the USA. (For the interviewees' profiles, see appendix F)

All the interviews were conducted face to face to establish rapport with the interviewees. I was also keen to keep reference to the interview schedule to a minimum. After a couple of interviews, I gained familiarity with the questions till I found it easier to conduct the interviews without looking at the questions because they were learned. This yielded a smooth flow of the interview. However, the schedule was kept to ensure that all the areas were covered during the interview.

The interview guide was useful in many ways. Arthur & Nazroo (2003) suggest three ways to make use of the interview guide as: (1) an aide-memoire to enhance the consistency of data collection, (2) a tool to ensure that relevant issues are covered systematically and with some uniformity, while still allowing

flexibility to pursue the detail that is salient to each individual participant, and (3) a mechanism for steering the discussion not as an exact prescription of coverage. These ways were relevant while using the interview guide during the interview process. It worked as a reference guide especially in the initial interviews. After some familiarity with the protocol of the interview process, minimal use was made out of it.

I was keen to listen carefully to what the interviewees were saying as well as their tone of voice. Emphasis placed on certain areas by the interviewees was further discussed with them. These are their own realities and their emphasis is surely justified. I was also keen to ask for clarification or elaboration from the interviewees. Sometimes, I made some comments and remarks to elicit more from the interviewee.

4.8 Data Analysis

The process of analysis of quantitative and qualitative data is presented in this section. Some parts of the analysis such as the preliminary analysis of the questionnaire and classroom observation were carried out while conducting the field study. In addition, analysis of the close-ended responses to the questionnaire was done electronically whereas the rest of analyses were carried out manually.

4.8.1 Quantitative data analysis

Descriptive statistics were carried out using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science). Although this interpretive study is mainly qualitative, descriptive statistical analysis was used to find out the frequency and percentage of agreement and disagreement among the participants regarding the various issues raised in the questionnaire. Their responses fed into and were integrated with the qualitative analysis.

4.8.2 Qualitative data analysis

Qualitative analyses of the interview and observation data as well as the responses to the open-ended section in the questionnaire are described below.

This analysis was done manually which was more convenient to my study habits. It proved helpful because while doing the transcripts, I had familiarity with and a feel for that data and what it involved. It helped me to engage well with the data. In addition, it gave me the chance to write memos while transcribing the data. Although there is no simple formula to ensure the good analytic quality of the data, careful and comprehensive analysis could help in achieving this goal (Gibbs, 2007). This was always sought by repeated reading of the data scripts and refining the analysis more than once based on the feedback received from the respondents, discussion with colleagues regarding the suitability of certain ideas under certain categories and the feedback from supervisors about the quality of the analysis. I had to drop some of the categories because, based on the feedback I received, they were judged to be irrelevant. Table (4.3) below summarises the amount of data that I have collected and the data reduced for final analysis.

Table 4.3: Amount of collected and analysed qualitative data

Type of data		Duration	Word count of data collected	Word count of data used in final analysis	Percentage of data used to data collected	
Interview Data	Interviewee 1	2hs.10ms.	9100 w.	1418 w.	15.5 %	
	Interviewee 2	2hs.20ms.	9870 w.	832 w.	8.4 %	
	Interviewee 3	1h.10ms.	5600 w.	562 w.	10 %	
	Interviewee 4	1h.15ms.	4950 w.	478 w.	9.7 %	
	Interviewee 5	1h.20ms.	7020 w.	448 w.	6.4 %	
	Interviewee 6	2hs.50ms.	14870 w.	213 w.	1.4 %	
	Interviewee 7	1h.	6600 w.	843 w.	12.8 %	
	Interviewee 8	1h.30ms.	5630 w.	480 w.	8.5 %	
	Interviewee 9	3hs.15ms.	19400 w.	2749 w.	14.2 %	
	Interviewee 10	2hs.15ms.	3240 w.	140 w.	4.3 %	
	Interviewee 11	1h.35ms.	9020 w.	458 w.	5.1 %	
	Interviewee 12	1h.55ms.	15610 w.	1490 w.	9.5 %	
	Interviewee 13	1h.25ms.	6550 w.	578 w.	8.8 %	
	Interviewee 14	1h.5ms.	7960 w.	1374 w.	17.2 %	
Total Interview Data		25 hours & 5 minutes	125420 words	12063 words	9.6 %	
Classroom Observation Data	Classes observed	Teacher 1	2hs.15ms.	4260 w.	594 w.	13.9 %
		Teacher 2	45ms.	3230 w.	681 w.	21 %
		Teacher 3	45ms.	1900 w.	196 w.	10.3 %
	Stimulated recall data	Teacher 1	3hs.	3120 w.	232 w.	7.4 %
		Teacher 2	3hs.	2830 w.	1020 w.	36 %
		Teacher 3	1h.15ms.	2100 w.	93 w.	8.4 %
Total classroom observation data		11 hours	18540 words	2938 words	15.8 %	
Open-ended questionnaire data		Not Applicable	1100 words	122 words	11 %	
Total amount of qualitative data		36 hours & 5 minutes	143960 words	15001 words	10.4 %	

4.8.2.1 Interview data analysis

The semi-structured interview data was analysed qualitatively. Three main processes were involved in the analysis. These were data management, coding and providing descriptive as well as explanatory accounts. These are described below. It is worth noting here that given that interview data in the current study were voluminous, it had to be reduced to a manageable size. Spencer, Ritchie & O'Connor (2003) highlight that qualitative data are usually voluminous, messy, unwieldy and discursive. This was evident in the current study.

This reduction occurred continually throughout the analysis. In the early stages, it happened through editing, segmenting and summarizing the data. In the middle stages, it happened through coding and associated activities such as finding themes, clusters and patterns. In later stages, it happened through conceptualizing and explaining. Two points were considered when reducing the bulky data: to reduce the data without significant loss of information and not to strip the data from their context.

Once all the qualitative interview data had been transcribed, the transcripts were then coded. This was done interview by interview. The interview data was divided into meaningful segments with categories and sub-categories being synthesized based on these meaningful segments. The categories and sub-categories of the first interviews analysed were given codes. These codes were then applied to the rest of the interviews. Other codes emerged as the process continued (For the list of analytical codes – both pre-determined and emergent – see Appendix C).

Data was reduced at this stage by not coding repeated or irrelevant data. The data was then classified according to the pre-determined and emergent codes. The classification process was carried out manually by cutting up transcripts and using envelopes to store all the cut pieces of data representing a particular code. Thematically-relevant envelopes were then grouped together to represent topics and sub-topics. These envelopes with the codes written on them and their contents were the reduced raw data classified. The contents of each envelope

were then analysed separately. Data was further reduced during this stage by excluding repeated quotations and points irrelevant to the idea being developed.

4.8.2.2 Interview data management

Data management involved deciding upon the themes or concepts under which the data were labelled, sorted and compared. An essential first step was to gain an overview of the data coverage through familiarization with the data to identify recurring themes or ideas and to construct an initial list of codes. The preliminary thematic framework went through a number of refinements after initial and subsequent applications. Some categories collapsed while others emerged. Some pieces of the data were multi-coded because they contained references to more than one category.

The next step was to sort the data so that the material with similar content or properties was located together. This helped in focusing on each topic and categories within it in turn so that the detail and distinction that lie within could be unpacked. The final stage of data management involved summarizing or synthesizing the original data to reduce data as well as to distil evidence for later representation. Much care was taken, during this stage, to inspect every word of the original material to consider its meaning and relevance to the object under study. To retain the essence of the original material during this stage, the three criteria suggested by Ritchie, Spencer & O'Connor (2003) were followed while reducing the data. First, key terms, phrases or expressions were retained from the participants' own language. Second, interpretation was kept to a minimum at this stage so that there was always an opportunity to revisit the original expression as the more refined levels of analysis were conducted. Third, material was not dismissed as irrelevant because its inclusion was not immediately clear.

4.8.2.3 Coding qualitative data

Coding is essential for sorting out qualitative data and keeping on top of its sheer volume as well as facilitating the relatively rapid retrieval and comparison of all the data marked with the same code (Gibbs, 2007). The data were coded putting

labels against pieces of the data. The point of assigning labels was to attach meaning to the pieces of data, and these labels served a number of functions. They indexed the data, providing a basis for storage and retrieval. The first labels also permitted more advanced coding, which enabled the summarizing of data by pulling together themes, and by identifying patterns. Thus, two types of codes were employed: low inference descriptive codes and higher inference pattern or conceptual codes.

Some codes were brought to the data while others were found in them. The pre-specified codes were guided by the issues raised in the teacher knowledge questionnaire and the theoretical framework of the study. However, other categories were suggested by the data.

Natural breaks were used in the manuscripts as cutting off points, and usually these breaks denoted a change in topic, but not always. Then, each section is examined in depth. It is believed that a close encounter with data in the beginning stages of analysis makes the analysis easier in later stages because there exists a stronger foundation and less need to go back to find the missing links. Although this detailed approach is more tedious than just doing a general reading of manuscripts and then pulling out some themes, it is this detailed work at the beginning that leads to rich and dense description (Corbin & Strauss, 2008)

Whilst some of the topics inferred were part of the conceptual framework of the study, others emerged from the interviews. A thematic chart for each topic was created including all the coded segments from all the interviews organized under a system of sub-topics and categories. The aim of this analysis was to reflect the realities expressed by the interviewees instead of applying the conceptual framework to what they mentioned. Of course, some of what had been mentioned by the interviewees was anticipated because, even in the most unstructured interviews, the discussion evolves around a concept. However, this does not mean to conduct the analysis with the aim of looking for what is in my agenda and excluding the agenda of the interviewee as long as it does not cohere with the conceptual framework of the research. In doing so, apart from being unethical,

the research would be ignoring the multiple realities of the phenomenon being investigated. This, in turn, could reveal the tension between the ontological assumptions of the researcher and the methodological practices followed. On the contrary, it is the acknowledgement of these realities which could lead to the contribution of the findings to what is already there. Therefore, while presenting the findings, some categories were guided by the questionnaire responses, while others were constructed from emergent issues.

Data analysis of the semi-structured interviews was carried out both deductively and inductively. Both deductive and inductive data analyses are important while conducting the qualitative data analysis in the current study. Lewis (2003) highlights that a balance needs to be struck between the researcher's hunches and working ideas guided by the research questions and the need to remain open to emergent concepts and themes. The research questions, the interview schedule and the questionnaire items gave access to some of the topics and categories to start with. Other topics and categories were constructed during the analysis. First, all the interviews were manually transcribed, and some topics and categories were reached from the accumulative notes taken while writing the scripts. The interviews were then revisited one by one to apply the resulting topics and categories and to find new categories that might emerge. The verbatim of each interview was divided into meaningful segments to synthesize the categories. Whenever none of the initial categories resulting from the transcription stage could be applied to an interview segment, a new category was constructed. At the end of the analysis of each interview, a list of all categories and sub-categories, which resulted from the analysis of the interview, was prepared. The resulting lists were used for combining similar categories. Then, thematic charts across all the interviews were prepared. Each thematic chart represented a category or sub-category shared by all the interviewees. Once all thematic charts were ready, the coded scripts were segmented and classified according to the thematic categories. Similar categories were grouped together into topics and sub-topics. Further refinement of the topics and categories took place during the analysis and after feedback from supervisors, colleagues and respondents to ensure that the ideas fit well under their categories and topics and to validate the analysis conducted.

Both topic and analytic coding described by Richards (2005) were used in the current study. While carrying out topic coding, labels were put against pieces of text according to its subject, analytic coding involved interpreting, conceptualizing and theorizing data. Moving beyond naming the topic of the text, analytic coding involved gathering and reflecting on all the data to reach overarching patterns and concepts. These represented the general domains or areas of teacher knowledge which was then used as an analytical framework to analyse qualitative data resulting from stimulated recall classroom observation data. It also involved considering the meanings in context and creating categories that expressed new ideas about the data. The topic and analytic coding are also similar to descriptive and explanatory accounts suggested by Ritchie, Spencer and O'Connor (2003).

4.8.2.4 Descriptive and explanatory accounts

Descriptive accounts involved three processes: detection, categorization and classification. Detection involved looking within a theme, across all participants in the study and noting the range of views and experiences which were labelled as part of that theme. This process was applied to the current study by inspecting cut segments of the data in each envelope labelled by a certain category. The aim of this step was to ensure the relevance of each idea articulated by the participants within this category and to develop an outline of the supporting ideas to be included under it. Categorization involved refining the initially detected categories and assigning data to the new refined categories. This took place when I, my supervisors or my colleagues with whom I discussed my analysis, judged that some of the ideas fitted better under other categories. In such cases, they were relabelled to belong to other parts. Classification involved further refining the categories and identifying fewer classes by which to sort, encapsulate and present the data. This happened in the data of the current study when the whole category was related to another theme. This process also involved reaching the overarching analytical framework to present the data.

One way to go beyond the descriptive data analysis is to look for patterns and relationships in the data (Gibbs, 2007). This was carried out by looking for similarities and differences across different cases. This was the case in the current study, especially, when some categories were presented based on the results of the questionnaire. Sometimes, the participants had similar views regarding certain issues raised in the questionnaire. At other times, there were differences in their points of views. Such searches resulted in the need to provide explanations and reasons for the occurrence of such patterns and relationships. Explanatory accounts involved: detecting patterns of association or clustering, verifying associations and developing explanations. Detecting patterns involved finding linkages and associations in the data. This was the result of both quantitative and qualitative data analysis in the current study. The results of the questionnaire highlighted many patterns of agreement and disagreement among the participants. Similarly, there were similarities and differences among the interviewees regarding certain issues that were detected and presented in the report of the findings.

Verifying association involved how the level of linkages and associations is distributed across the whole data set. This was shown by presenting the percentages of those who agreed or disagreed. It also involved showing where there was no matching of this kind under study. An additional step was to interrogate the patterns of association. Developing explanations was concerned with the reasons a pattern was occurring. It is worth noting that while searching for explanations, not only the cases that fitted the pattern were looked at, but also the cases that did not. Explanations were based on the explicit reasons that were given by the participants overtly appearing in the reasoning within their responses. Alternatively, reasons were provided based on inference from the participants' accounts using underlying logic and common sense. Other empirical studies were also drawn upon to borrow concepts or explanations to see how well they fitted the findings.

4.8.2.5 Analysis of stimulated recall classroom observation data

Verbal recall, resulting from interviews following the observations, as well as completed lesson scripts which were described in section (4.7.2) were analysed qualitatively. Most of the procedures followed to analyse the semi-structured interview data were used to analyse stimulated recall data. It is worth noting that analysis of stimulated recall data was informed by the interview data analysis. The analytical framework reached from the analysis of interview data was broadly applied to the stimulated recall raw data. Therefore, selective coding was used at this stage. In addition, preliminary analysis of the semi-structured interviews during the data collection process informed the issues and comments raised in the recorded lesson script material.

Areas of teacher knowledge emerging from the analyses of the interviews and questionnaires were used when analysing the classroom observation data. An analytical framework consisting of six broad areas emerged from these analyses. It was used as a guide to look for practices that reflect the teachers' views and accounts or practices that represent choices and decisions guided by these views and accounts. These six areas were: (1) *knowledge of subject matter in action* (any episodes when teachers exhibited knowledge of EFL language and its culture and how this knowledge affects their pedagogical choices), (2) *knowledge of pedagogy in action* (any teaching episodes reflecting views about general and content-related pedagogy or decisions made based on these pedagogical views), (3) *knowledge of students in action* (any teaching episodes highlighting practices that indicated knowledge of students or practices which are used based on this knowledge), (4) *knowledge of the classroom learning environment in action* (any teaching episodes reflecting this knowledge or guided by it), (5) *curricular knowledge in action* (any teaching episodes reflecting curricular knowledge or any decisions made based on this knowledge), and (6) *knowledge of self in action* (any teaching episodes which reflect the personality of the teacher and its relationship to teaching performance, i.e. personal characteristics or working in personally meaningful ways).

The classroom observation data was analysed manually. I watched and transcribed the video-taped lessons. The transcripts – in addition to my remarks and questions – were sent to the observed teachers to respond to them (For an example of a transcribed video-taped lesson including the remarks I made and questions I asked as well as the raw data I received from the observed teachers, see appendix E). Alternatively, I watched the lessons with the observed teachers and probed their thinking and reasoning about particular parts of the lessons. These stimulated recall sessions were audio-taped. The audio-taped material and the returned responses to the transcripts were manually analysed using the analytical framework outlined above.

Two concrete examples from the data are given here to demonstrate how this framework was used to analyse observation data. They represent curricular knowledge in action. One example is a teacher's decision to represent the reading material by dividing it into parts for group work and using supplementary work sheets informed by the difficulty level of the curriculum material and the time available for the lesson. Another example is another teacher's use of practice on exam questions as a reflection of a purpose of teaching to prepare students for exams.

This broad framework was used in analysis of classroom observation to triangulate the views and accounts representing topics and sub-topics resulting from the analyses of the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The teachers' practical knowledge was expressed through their views in the survey and their accounts of practice. More insights about the same issues were revealed from the teachers' comments on their observed behaviours. Examples of these could be traced in the findings of classroom observation which were presented broadly corresponding to those of the interview and questionnaire. Thus, the survey results and teachers' accounts of practice from interviews became more meaningful when seen in light of evidence based on classroom teaching episodes. In this respect, classroom observation data highlighted the role of interview qualitative evidence and assured the role of quantitative data.

4.8.2.6 Analysis of the open-ended responses to the questionnaire

The responses to the open-ended section of the questionnaire, stimulated recall classroom observation, and semi-structured interview data were analysed qualitatively. With regard to the responses resulting from the analysis of the open-ended section in the questionnaire, two criteria were used to include this evidence. The first is when the responses added new ideas that were not encountered when doing the analysis of the semi-structured interviews. The second was when the quotes from the questionnaire were more suitable for the development of the category than those from the semi-structured interviews.

4.8.3 Reporting and presenting quantitative evidence

While presenting the answers, especially those related to the first question about the areas constituting practical knowledge of the teachers, the quantitative evidence was presented first in the form of tables with percentages having certain opinions about the topics. One reason for using this format was to combine thematically-relevant issues together. Combining several items of the questionnaire helped me to reduce the number of topics to be dealt with. Another reason for the use of this format was to integrate quantitative and qualitative evidence together. The statistical information presented in the tables was useful in informing the qualitative discussion that followed. It helped to extend the argument by presenting the number and complementing it by discussing the nature of the issues addressed. This format also served as a triangular technique of quantitative and qualitative evidence. The numbers were not enough to fully understand the teachers' views. Similarly, qualitative information expressed the reality of the participant giving it. Presenting the tables of quantitative evidence highlighted the role of interview data. Correspondingly, presenting interview evidence after the tables assured the role of quantitative data.

4.8.4 Reporting and presenting qualitative evidence

Unless the constructed qualitative evidence is well reported and presented, it may be difficult to read and incapable of reflecting the social reality of the phenomenon under investigation. This is necessary because the carving out of the

data already takes the researcher at least one step from social reality (Holliday, 2002). He further highlights that the researcher must organize data and develop a strategy for writing about it because the text of the written study is considerably removed from and relatively uncomplicated by both the reality of the social setting and the data as it was initially collected. White, Woodfield, and Ritchie (2003) refer to four ways of enhancing the reporting and presenting of qualitative evidence. These are: (1) displaying the integrity of the findings, (2) displaying diversity, (3) being coherent, and (4) judicious use of verbatim passages.

The above strategies were considered when reporting the qualitative evidence in the current study. To ensure the integrity of reporting, the explanations and conclusions presented were generated from, and grounded in, the data. In addition, coherence was a must to provide guidance and sufficient directions for the reader to follow the story to be unveiled. Diversity was also accounted for by reporting and explaining the untypical as much as the more recurrent themes. A balanced use of verbatim passages was also considered to avoid providing a tedious research account and to provide some spaces for making commentaries on the data. I was also keen to keep the same language used by the interviewees themselves. However, due to the difference between the form of speech and the written form, I had to tidy up the speech – in some quotations – to appear in an intelligible written form with accurate grammar and punctuation marks. Yet, this was done putting in mind to keep the original meaning intended by the interviewee.

One additional remark to be made about presenting qualitative evidence is related to the transferability and claims made out of the findings. Given that the current study is mainly qualitative, its findings cannot be generalised on a statistical basis. However, representational generalisation could be a useful term in this regard. It refers to the extent to which findings can be inferred to the parent population that was sampled (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). They highlight that instead of generalising individual variants of circumstances, views or experiences, it is at the level of categories, concepts and explanation that generalisation can take place. Thus, it is the content or map of the range of views, experiences, outcomes or other

phenomena under study and the factors and circumstances that shape and influence them, that can be inferred to the researched population.

4.9 Ethical considerations

The current study was conducted taking into consideration a set of ethical issues which guided the research process. Wellington (2000) states that “ethical concerns should be at the forefront of any research project and should continue through the write-up and dissemination stages” (p.3). The study proceeded with these ethical principles in mind. Ethical considerations regarding the participants were accounted for. Classroom observation was video recorded and semi-structured interviews were audio recorded to help in reporting the research. I was aware of the need to protect the participants’ confidentiality and anonymity, and to give them the right to withdraw from the study at any stage. Actual names were not used when reporting the results of the study. Agreement was obtained from the participants prior to the administration of the research tools. The aims of the research and its procedures were explained to the participants. Securing the storage of the gathered data was considered. Participants who would have felt unduly uncomfortable in being interviewed were not selected for the interviews. In educational research, participants are humans whose autonomy, confidentiality, and vulnerability need to be considered as emphasised by Mason (2002) that “you must nevertheless think through the ethical implications, rather than assuming that ethics do not count” (p.80).

Ethics did count when conducting the current research. For example, when collecting the data during the field study, I was an outsider to the participants who were part of a centralized institutional structure following the Ministry of Education. This entailed from the teachers to represent themselves to me as part of this structure. This meant that they would be reserved with their answers so as not to expose the pitfalls of the structure they are part of given that part of the research deals with the challenges they face. However, because they were ensured about the confidentiality and anonymity of their identities, they started to feel free expressing their realities without fear.

4.10 Encountered challenges

One challenge faced during the fieldwork was the distribution of the questionnaire to the would-be participants. Although access to the schools was obtained from the LEA, no access was gained regarding the addresses of the research group. Therefore, it was impossible to either send the questionnaire forms to the sample either to their home or email addresses. This meant to distribute them to the teachers in the schools.

Distributing the questionnaire forms to the participants in the schools proved to be challenging in many ways. Firstly, the EFL teachers were scattered in many preparatory and secondary schools, which are located in different places. Secondly, when visiting the schools, there was no guarantee that meeting all the teachers was possible. Not all of them were available in the EFL teacher staff room. Some of them were teaching, busy doing school work, absent, unwilling to participate or out of the staff room. Thirdly, I did not meet most of the teachers before, so I had to introduce myself to them before I ask them to participate. Fourthly, not all the teachers were willing to complete the questionnaire on the day of the visit. This necessitated another visit to collect the questionnaire. Only 264 out of 350 forms were returned representing a response rate of 74%. Some incomplete forms were then excluded and the final questionnaire sample size became 236 representing 67% of the intended sample.

Another challenge faced was a methodological one. A methodological challenge facing researchers who investigate teacher knowledge is the language teachers use to describe teacher knowledge and how it is drawn upon in practice. Teachers, in the context of the current study, may not always have the language to discuss issues related to their practice and may not be used to talking explicitly about issues related to teaching and learning (Gahin, 2001). This makes it difficult for teachers to reflect and relate their experiences and knowledge.

One way to overcome this problem may to reduce the number of categories to begin with when collecting data on teacher knowledge (Loughran, 1999). The use of semi-structured interviews which allowed for the emergence of additional categories not thought of through interaction with teachers was consistent with

the approach suggested by Loughran (1999).

The challenge when conducting interviews with teachers to investigate teacher knowledge was for teachers to articulate their knowledge of practice and theorize what they do in the classroom. Some teachers are more able to articulate their thinking than others. One reason for this might be the lack of awareness from the part of the teacher of one or more aspects of practice. The choice of the sample in the current study helped, to some extent, to overcome this problem because all the teachers interviewed had no less than ten years of teaching experience with the majority of them holding a postgraduate degree in education, two of them had MED in TESOL, one had a master's degree in educational psychology, three of them were studying for PhD degrees in education, and one was studying for a master's degree in TESOL. Holding or undertaking a postgraduate degree in education in addition to having a long experience in teaching English as a foreign language could be argued to facilitate for them to articulate their knowledge because of their familiarity with propositional language, which most of them used competently to articulate their knowledge and comment on their classroom practice.

4.11 Summary of the chapter

This chapter started with discussing the ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions guiding the study. Then, the methods of data collection were justified. This was followed by a description of the study sample. The data collection process was then detailed. Research methods used were described and justified. The quantitative and qualitative analyses carried out in the study were then described. Then a discussion of ethical considerations and encountered challenges was presented.

Chapter 5

Findings of the study

Chapter five: Findings of the study

5.1 Introduction

The findings discussed in this chapter cover a broad range of topics associated with teachers' professional practical knowledge and the sources of this knowledge together with their professional practice, and the context in which it takes place. Although the particular focus is on EFL teaching in Egypt, some of the findings are related to teaching more generally since the knowledge bases of teaching (e.g. knowledge of students, general pedagogical knowledge, and knowledge of the classroom learning environment) are generic aspect of teaching. Particular elements that are linked to the EFL field include discussion of students' motivation in relation to EFL education in Egypt and giving instruction as an element of general pedagogical knowledge in relation to the use of the mother tongue in the EFL classroom. These examples highlight the relationship between general areas of teacher knowledge and the EFL teachers' work. Other examples are presented in the data. The range of topics was broadened by the sources of influence and the role of contextual factors that could have an impact on all teachers. Sources of teacher knowledge, such as experience, initial teacher education, in-service training, and feedback from the school community contribute to shaping general as well as discipline-specific knowledge. Therefore, when EFL teachers talked about these sources, they were expected to relate them not only to EFL teaching, but also to teaching in general. Similarly, contextual factors such as large class size and lack of resources could negatively affect various areas of any teacher's work such as difficulty to manage the class, difficulty to cover the curriculum material and difficulty to achieve various teaching goals. These areas are related to EFL teachers as well as to teachers in general. This, in turn, broadened the scope of the study.

The findings are organized in three parts. The first part reveals the views of the participants about what constitutes the knowledge domains of the EFL teacher from their perspectives as experienced practitioners and the sources of this knowledge. This knowledge incorporated some aspects of beliefs and values. Six

areas of teacher knowledge were identified from quantitative data analysis of the questionnaire and qualitative data analysis of the semi-structured interviews and responses to the open-ended section in the questionnaire. These six knowledge areas were: subject matter, pedagogy, students, classroom learning environment, curriculum, and self. The presentation of participants' views concerning each area of knowledge is followed by the sources which shaped these views. It is worth noting that the answer to this research question is the biggest part of the chapter. This is because it addresses the main issue of research on teacher knowledge about the core areas of teacher knowledge. It also deals with the sources which contribute in the shaping of teacher knowledge. Therefore, it is an answer to two main big issues of research on teacher knowledge.

The second part of the chapter reveals how each one of the six areas of teacher knowledge could inform the teachers' classroom decisions as evident from the interviewees' accounts of practice and classroom teaching episodes and teachers' comments on them. The third part of the chapter reveals how context influences EFL experienced teachers' knowledge actualisation in practice. This part draws on evidence from the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews.

5.2 Domains and sources of teacher knowledge

This part attempts to answer the following research question: *what constitutes the knowledge of the EFL teachers from the perspective of experienced practitioners and what are the sources of this knowledge?* The data revealed six constituents as the core domains of the EFL teacher knowledge. It is through talking about teaching practices that areas of teacher knowledge were revealed. The figure below represents these areas.

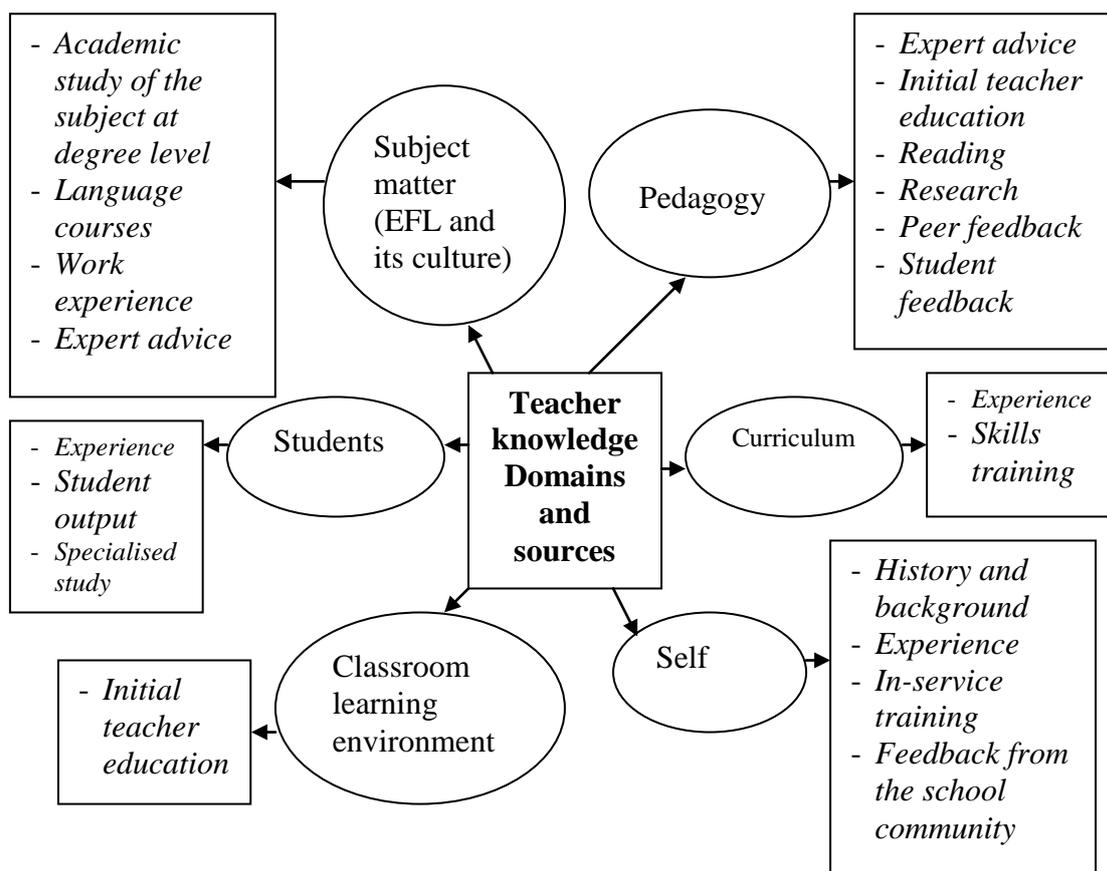


Figure 5.1: Domains and sources of teacher knowledge

5.2.1 Knowledge of subject matter

Knowledge of subject matter was seen as an essential part of the EFL teacher knowledge. Without proficiency in the target language, the teacher could not help students learn and use it. This was pointed out by a participant who stated:

The teacher’s proficiency in English has a great effect on his teaching. For example, if I am very much competent and proficient in using the four skills. This will easily help me quickly address the students’ needs and at the same time, I will be able to identify areas of weaknesses in their learning. At the same time, I will be able to transfer the competency to my students. (Interviewee 9)

An additional benefit of subject matter proficiency was related to the teacher as a lifelong learner. For instance, one participant stated, ‘*Being proficient in English will enable me to study and to learn about teaching inside the class and outside it.*’ (Interviewee 1)

One aspect of knowledge of subject matter was for the teacher to know about the origin of the language. The participants were asked whether they might agree or not that it was essential for the EFL teacher to know about the origin of the language including borrowed words. This aspect could reveal the inter-communication among culture and its influence on language. This is particularly important given that English is taught as a foreign language, and, at least, two languages exist in the EFL classroom. The participants' responses to this aspect are shown in Table (5.1).

Table 5.1: The participants' viewpoints of knowledge of the origin of L2

Responses		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	68	28.8
	Agree	87	36.9
	Neutral	13	5.5
	Disagree	60	25.4
	Strongly disagree	5	2.1
	Total	233	98.7
Missing	System	3	1.3
Total		236	100

The majority of participants highlighted the need of the EFL teacher to know the origin of the target language. One view was that knowing the origin of the language could instil a positive disposition towards language. For example, one participant stated: *'Knowing the origin of the language is important for me to develop a feel for and appreciation of the English language'* (A questionnaire respondent). Another view was that knowledge of the origin of language could help the teacher be proficient in class. It could also enable the teacher to answer questions coming from the students, especially those who were very knowledgeable. For example, according to one participant, *'I have to know the origin of the language. Suppose that I have a very good, smart student who is asking you a smart question, so how can I deal with this question!'* (Interviewee 10). A third reason for highlighting the importance of the origin of the language was to develop students' awareness of the inter-relatedness of some aspects of the mother tongue and the target language. For example, one participant stated:

It is very important for me to know where some words come from. For example, the word 'chemistry' has an origin in Arabic. By making such links in the classroom, the students will realise that languages are inter-related. Although the language has its own identity, it borrows some words from other languages. (Interviewee 9)

Lack of this sort of knowledge could limit the EFL teacher's work because without knowing the origin of culturally-bound idioms and expressions, the students will not have access to them in class. This was evident in one participant's account who stated:

Without this knowledge, I will not be able to understand some expressions and idioms such as 'by and large'. This expression will not have any meaning unless I understand that it has a special meaning for their culture, and unless I know this meaning, I will not be able to convey the correct meaning to my students. (Interviewee 1)

Another aspect relevant to knowledge of English for the EFL teacher was knowledge of the target culture. Although English language might represent many cultures all over the world, the British and American are the most prominent in Egypt especially in school curricula partly because of the widespread impact of these two cultures all over the world. The participants were asked whether they might agree or not with the view that teaching EFL entailed knowledge of the varieties of EFL culture. Table (5.2) presents their views with regard to this element.

Table 5.2: The participants' viewpoints of knowledge of L2 culture

Responses		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	44	18.6
	Agree	95	40.3
	Neutral	10	4.2
	Disagree	69	29.2
	Strongly disagree	17	7.2
	Total	235	99.6
Missing	System	1	.4
Total		236	100

The need to know about the target culture was seen as important by the majority of participants. Knowledge of culture could be very informative for the teacher given the unique lifestyles representing the target and native cultures and the

potential chances for classroom teaching, which could arise because of this. For example, according to one participant: *‘Knowledge and teaching of the target culture are related to the social traditions and customs, which could differ from one society to another’* (A questionnaire respondent). Another participant pointed out the importance of knowledge of the target culture. He stated:

Being aware of the target culture is very important for me as an English teacher to know where the cultural differences are and try to pinpoint these differences. Students are very much interested to know what other people of the same age do. The teacher should know this in order to answer students’ questions and to satisfy their knowledge quest. (Interviewee 9)

5.2.1.1 Sources of subject matter knowledge

Four sources of subject matter knowledge were revealed. These included: academic study of the subject at degree level, additional language courses, work experience, and expert advice.

Studying in the language department at the university was related as one useful source. All participants – as evident from demographic information in the questionnaire – had at least a bachelor’s degree in the English language. Academic study at degree level was seen as useful to build the proficiency of the EFL teacher, and consequently to build the teacher’s knowledge of the subject matter. According to one participant:

The university gave me the chance to read more, to comment, and to read about poetry, about poems, about great writers, great novels, great novelists, and this helped me to be fluent in English, and this is the first step. To be a good teacher, one should have a good command, a good mastery of English language. (Interviewee 2)

Studying in the language department was seen as essential for the teacher’s work to facilitate EFL students’ learning. This would be difficult to achieve without the teacher being a good learner of the language. The relationship between the previous study in the language department and the work of the EFL teacher was elucidated by one participant as follows, *‘It was very important because it put me on very good steps about teaching to my students. It helped me to get a lot of*

vocab., a lot of grammar, a lot of language skills which are still of good use for me and my students up till this moment.' (Interviewee 7)

Particular courses during the university study in the language department were named. For example, *linguistics* was seen favourably as a source of proficiency in the target language because of its direct impact on the teacher's work. For example, one participant stated: *'Studying linguistics affected me so much in pronouncing the words right.'* (Interviewee 11). Taking language courses after the completion of the university degree was also related as another source to build the teacher's proficiency in the target language. For example, one participant stated: *'After I finished the Faculty of Education...I took a course in the British Council to improve my language.'* (Interviewee 13)

Previous work experience and voluntary work were also mentioned as sources for improving knowledge and the use of the target language. For instance, one participant stated: *'When I worked, before teaching, as an interpreter in the military forces for six years, I got many benefits from this because this helped me a lot to speak English very easily.'* (Interviewee 2). Thus, previous work experience, which required the use of the target language, played a role in developing the teacher's skill to be a fluent speaker of the target language. Likewise, another participant stated, *'In summer holidays, I began to meet some small groups of tourists who visit Egypt...and began practising something like a local guide. This volunteer job was a good source for me to learn more and more of English.'* (Interviewee 6). The teacher, accordingly, highlighted the important role of interacting with English speaking people in improving knowledge of the target language. It was a sort of exposure to the target language that provided real opportunities to communicate in English.

Expert advice was also considered important for developing proficiency in the target language. For instance, one participant highlighted how an expert in teaching English was consulted. He stated:

When I face any difficulty in language, I consult a professor at the university or an English language institution I previously had a course in. The teachers there offered to provide advice with language issues if

required. I have this in mind, and whenever I have a difficulty, I could consult them. (Interviewee 3)

5.2.2 Knowledge of pedagogy

Knowledge of pedagogy is concerned with the grasp of teaching principles and skills. This area could be divided into two categories: content pedagogy and general pedagogy. Content pedagogy is concerned with knowledge of principles and skills of teaching related to the subject area. It focuses on knowledge of how to teach subject matter. Therefore, most of this knowledge is procedural and related to what teachers do to teach the content of EFL. General pedagogy is concerned with general teaching principles and skills. Sub-categories of general pedagogy include classroom management and content and task management. These two categories are constructed and presented below. Some of the sub-categories were guided by the survey items. They were used to back up or check the survey data. The aim was to seek explanations from the interviewees' perspective of the issues raised in the questionnaire. Others were aspects constructed from the participants' accounts. Figure 5.2 illustrates the main elements of pedagogical knowledge.

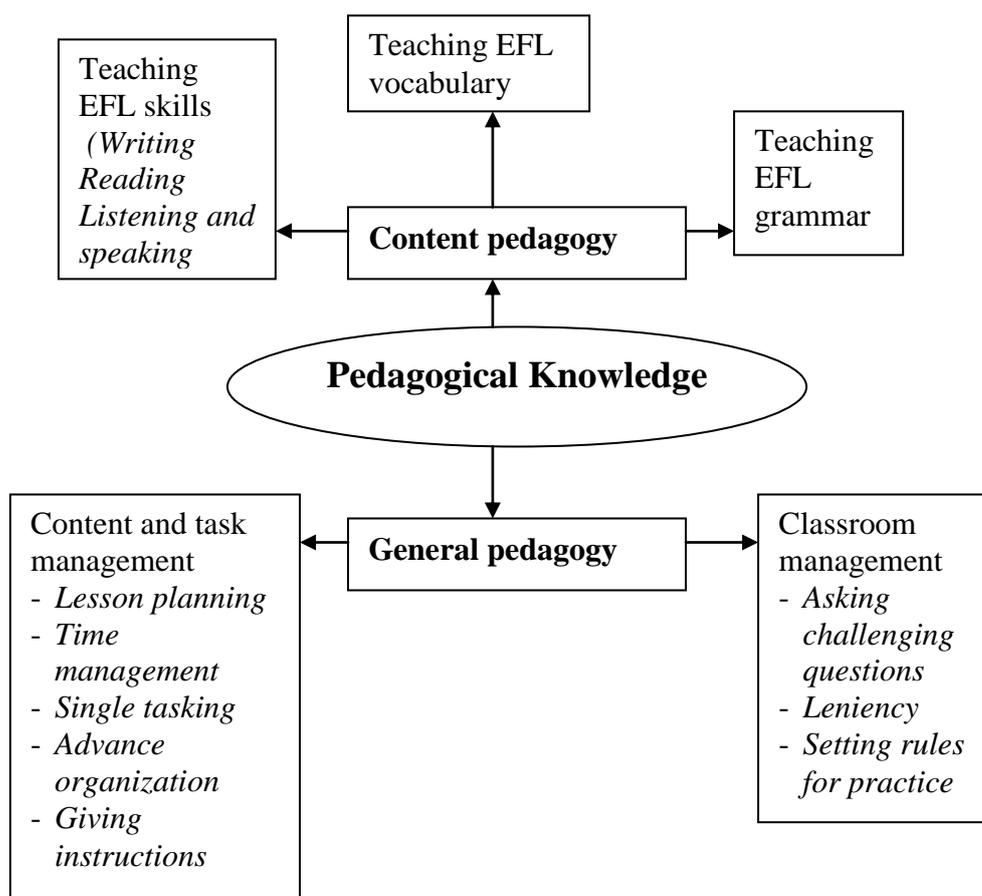


Figure 5.2: Components of pedagogical knowledge

5.2.2.1 Knowledge of content pedagogy

The participants highlighted not only knowledge of the subject matter, but also of how to teach the subject matter as core knowledge of a teacher. Three sub-categories were constructed representing views with regard to three areas related to EFL teaching: EFL skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing), EFL grammar, and EFL vocabulary.

5.2.2.1.1 Teaching EFL skills

There is a debate about the place of teaching aural-oral skills versus literacy skills in the EFL classroom with the latter being emphasized at the expense of the former. This issue is explored in the Egyptian context as part of the teacher's

pedagogical practical knowledge. In addition, the reform in EFL teaching materials in the Egyptian context emphasizing more on integrating language skills, communicative language teaching, and the maximum use of the target language in the EFL classroom could have an influence on the teachers' views regarding these issues. This is also explored in this section. The participants were asked whether they might agree or not with six statements related to teaching EFL skills as part of their knowledge of subject-related pedagogy. Their responses to these statements are shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: The participants' viewpoints of teaching EFL skills

Statement	Total no. of cases	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teaching EFL listening and speaking is as necessary as teaching reading and writing.	236	71.2%	28%	0%	.8%	.4%
Integrating EFL skills while teaching reinforces students' language learning.	230*	27.5%	55.1%	11.9%	2.5%	.4%
Students could learn EFL skills through communicative language teaching.	233	26.3%	55.5%	5.5%	10.2%	1.3%
The teacher needs to use communicative activities as well as meaningful and mechanical activities.	232	37.3%	55.9%	3.8%	.8%	.4%
The teacher needs to develop EFL students' fluency more than accuracy.	233	30.1%	47.5%	2.5%	17.4%	1.3%
The teacher needs to help the students use English as much as possible.	235	77.5%	21.2%	.4%	.4%	0%

* The variability of the total number of respondents to each item was because some participants did not answer some questions. However, the percentages used were those valid ones of the participants who actually responded to the items excluding missing data.

As indicated by the table above, almost all participants placed equal emphasis on teaching aural-oral skills as well as reading and writing. Focusing on particular language skills (i.e. writing and reading) more than others (i.e. listening and speaking) is not justified. This is because all skills are important for language learning. In addition, new technology has opened a lot of opportunities for the students to practice all skills on equal footing. According to one participant:

The opportunities for listening and speaking are the same as those for reading and writing. They are available any where especially now as the world is like a small village. Students in the preparatory and secondary school, now, sit down and surf the internet, make chats, are online all the time (Interviewee 10).

Another view supporting the teaching of all EFL skills was to avoid the fragmentation of language to serve a short-term goal, which was to pass the exam at the expense of the long-term goal, which was to make use of the language for further education. For example, one participant stated: *'I shouldn't be teaching the students just skills that they will be using in the exams. I should teach language as a whole. Students might make use of it when they finish their GCSE and go to university.'* (Interviewee 9). Likewise, another participant stated, *'Because language is a whole. If some skills are ignored, language will not be learned as a whole used for both oral and written communication. Otherwise, the learner will not be able to understand or use it in different situations which require different skills.'* (Interviewee 1)

The majority of participants also highlighted the value of integrating EFL skills while teaching because each skill reinforced students' learning of the other skills. Thus, language was viewed as a whole entity. For example, one participant stated, *'Talking about the same issue from different perspectives in terms of different*

language skills is important because it focuses students' attention on what they are doing'. (Interviewee 9)

Another reason for the need for whole language teaching was, as supported by the majority of participants, to reinforce students' learning. In other words, according to one participant, '*Because all of them serve each other*' (Interviewee 1). Likewise, another participant elucidated how integration could reinforce students' learning. He stated:

When the teacher addresses the language skills from different perspectives using integration of the four language skills, he will be meeting the different learning style preferences of the students. Somebody will be learning best by listening, somebody will be learning best by writing, and somebody will be learning best by speaking about it. (Interviewee 9)

The majority of participants were in favour of using the communicative language approach while teaching EFL. A variety of reasons were given for the need to teach EFL using communicative language teaching. One reason was related to the syllabus design. For instance, one participant stated: '*Communicative language teaching is in place because the syllabus is designed to be taught communicatively. The designer put in mind to shift the attention of the teacher from being exam-oriented and to use English as much as possible.*' (Interviewee 9).

This view of language learning reflects a balanced view of transmitting knowledge highlighted in the syllabus and emphasis on communicative language teaching. Knowledge in the syllabus is deemed very important for the students because it is of value for them to pass examinations. Reforming the syllabus by including communicative activities in it gives a message to the students that they are important and they have to study them well if they want to get good marks. Thus, a balance was struck between the transmission view of language learning and communicative language teaching.

Developing students' fluency and thinking skills were other favourable effects of communicative language teaching. A participant stated, '*Communicative language teaching could prepare students as fluent speakers of English who*

could get benefit from scholarship and job opportunities. This might be a reason. Communicative language teaching might also develop students' thinking skills.' (Interviewee 9). Another participant gave another reason, which was, *'To give students the opportunity to use language in real situations. Communication helps students to deal with native speakers.'* (Interviewee 1)

The majority of participants highlighted the need to use different kinds of activities while teaching EFL. This view was attributed to the need of different activities to achieve different goals. For instance, one participant stated, *'Communicative activities are important for developing students' fluency, whereas mechanical activities are important for developing students' accuracy and both are important at certain times depending upon the nature of the task.'* (Interviewee 9). Placing emphasis on both types of activities also reflects a balance between the transmission view of language learning with its emphasis on students' acquisition of knowledge and using it accurately and communicative language teaching with its emphasis on developing students' fluency.

Although it is difficult to prepare students to be fluent and accurate at the same time, there were some insights in the data that shed light on the relationship between fluency and accuracy. For example, one participant stated, *'Accuracy comes after fluency, and I always tell my shy students, remember, a broken sentence is better than no sentence.'* (Interviewee 14). This indicates that the students may be reluctant to participate because they want to be fluent, but they are afraid of not being accurate as well. The role of the teacher in this situation is to encourage students to participate and try to be fluent and gradually they will be both fluent and accurate. This balanced view is better for them than not participating at all. In the latter case, they will neither be fluent nor accurate.

Another feature which reflects a balanced view between the transmission view of language learning and communicative language teaching was the use of the target language versus the use of the mother tongue. Almost all participants were strongly supportive of enabling students to use English as much as possible. One view was for the teacher to use English and urge students to do the same. This

could help in communication using the target language. For example, one participant stated, *'When the teacher talks in English, he will be a good model. Students will imitate him and will be good communicators.'* (Interviewee 9)

Although the participants were in support of using the target language as much as possible, the mother tongue was not abandoned completely while teaching the target language. For example, one participant stated: *'I found giving instructions in Arabic easy for me and easy for them. I do say the instructions in English, but I translate it just to make the activity clear cut.'* (Interviewee 9). Likewise, another participant preferred to use the mother tongue (Arabic) with his preparatory school students when teaching grammar. He stated, *'The only exception in using Arabic is in teaching grammar to give my students clear instructions.'* (Interviewee 8). In addition, while talking about the target culture, the use of the native tongue was favoured to give students a more meaningful cultural equivalent. For example, one participant stated, *'I can use Arabic, but as a last resort, to make the students understand what is the difference between we as Egyptians, Americans, or the British or any other culture. When we come to culture, I can use Arabic.'* (Interviewee 7)

Thus, the mother tongue is used judiciously in certain situations, not for the sake of translation, but to serve a practical purpose in the classroom. The limitations of over-reliance on using the mother tongue in the EFL classroom were highlighted. One of these limitations was that over-use could result in EFL students thinking in the mother tongue while learning the target language which was seen as limiting to their learning. For example, one participant described one of his students who was struggling to answer a question. He stated, *'When he completed the dialogue, he translated what he understood in his mind into Arabic, and he prepared his answer in Arabic, then, he began to translate from Arabic into English mentally, and it took time.'* (Interviewee 6). Another participant was also aware of the limitations of thinking in the mother tongue while attempting to produce the target language. He stated:

I always advise my students not to think in Arabic while they are learning English. If they think in Arabic while they are learning English, they have to

translate their thoughts and it is very difficult if they learn in English. They need to think in English. I do my best to make my students practise how to express themselves in simple English (Interviewee 4).

Thus, the use of simple language could be an option instead of using the mother tongue. It was seen difficult to use English all the time because students were not accustomed in previous stages to use English as much as possible. However, it was seen possible to reduce the amount of using the mother tongue. For example, one participant stated:

I find it not appropriate to use Arabic inside my classes especially with high schools students. If necessary, I just say four or five words in Arabic, difficult words, and new words. For these words, I give the meaning in English at first, and then I can say the meaning in Arabic because I have slow learners, but then I give the meaning in English. I also try all the time to make the Arabic words less, perhaps three, the next time I make them two. Sometimes, I don't mention Arabic at all. (Interviewee 2)

Another alternative to reduce the amount of using the mother tongue in the EFL classroom was to act the meaning and to use gestures. For instance, one participant stated, '*Students come from prep. stage. They need to tell everything in Arabic. I insist to speak in English, simple English. Sometimes, I use acting. Other times, I use gestures to help students. They complained at first but I insisted until they got used to.*' (Interviewee 13)

Some categories were constructed from the interviewees' accounts regarding their views which reflected their knowledge of teaching EFL skills. These are presented below.

5.2.2.1.1.1 Teaching EFL writing

Writing occupies a prime position in the educational system in Egypt. All EFL exams in preparatory and secondary schools in the current study are based on written skills. There are no parts in the exam that measure the students' oral-aural skills. Due to the importance of writing in the EFL teaching situation, an emphasis was placed by the participants on what was involved in teaching EFL writing.

It was highlighted that there were four stages of teaching writing. For example, one participant stated, *‘Teaching writing involves a warm-up stage for the writing activity, the preparation stage before writing, the practice stage, and the follow-up stage.’* (Interviewee 12). Thus, writing was taught systematically in stages including pre-writing, while-writing, and post-writing.

A variety of techniques for teaching EFL writing were also highlighted. For example, one participant mentioned three pre-writing activities. She stated, *‘I discuss the writing topic with students, ask questions about the writing topic, and ask students to work in pairs or groups to generate ideas.’* (Interviewee 13). Another participant highlighted the use of a brainstorming strategy to teach EFL writing to his grade 12 EFL students. He stated, *‘I flash their minds to write, ok. I myself give an example on myself. I say and don’t write such statement because I don’t want my students to imitate me by copying what was written on the board in their notebooks’* (Interviewee 6). Similarly, another participant seized a variety of opportunities to encourage his grade 9 preparatory school students to write using the target language. He stated, *‘I ask them to answer questions in writing as homework assignments, write short paragraphs, and write new vocabulary items in their notebooks.’* (Interviewee 8). With his secondary school students, another participant brought into play a variety of techniques. He stated,

I encourage students to write a précis based on a previously taught reading topic. I also ask them to organize their writing composition to include an introduction, body and conclusion, use conjunctions while writing, make an outline as a pre-writing activity, choose the suitable tense to write, and write a draft as a way to reduce writing errors. This is important because students write in the target language which is not their first language. (Interviewee 2)

The participants were not only informed about the stages of teaching EFL writing, but also about the mechanics of teaching it. For example, one participant stated:

I tell my students, your handwriting must be clear, you must leave a space between words, try to write the word as you keep it by heart, try to memorize words by writing not by just saying because there are some silent letters, which are pronounced, but they are not written. Even I can teach them the symmetric of letter, for example some students write ‘h’ from

bottom to top. This is wrong. This helps them much, and this leads them to good handwriting. (Interviewee 7)

Thus, not only the mechanics of writing, but also phonological awareness was expressed by the participant.

A problem was noted with regard to the students' written output. For example, one participant complained of her students' inability to think in the target language while writing in a way that affects their written output. She stated; *'It is difficult to translate Arabic and write in English. We find a lot of mistakes.'* (Interviewee 13). Thus, a lot of collocation problems result from thinking in the native language and writing in the target language

5.2.2.1.1.2 Teaching EFL reading

The participants revealed their professional understanding of what is involved in teaching EFL reading to their preparatory and secondary school students. This was evident in the accounts they provided of the stages of teaching reading in the target language. Three stages were constructed based on the participants' views: pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading.

The value of the pre-reading stage for facilitating their students' learning during reading was appreciated. For example, one participant stated: *'Actually, the pre-stage is crucial...it is very important for the while one, so if you prepare the students for the reading task, they will not have any problem with it.'* (Interviewee 12). Another participant added, *'It is very important for students to have an introduction about what they will read about, an introduction, a scene, a picture, a poster.'* (Interviewee 3). He, thus, highlighted the sort of activities that could be used in the reading stage. Other participants were enlightened about a variety of techniques that they resorted to in the pre-reading stage. Most of the interviewees were aware of the use of pre-reading questions, presenting new vocabulary items, running a short discussion about the reading topic, or making use of titles and pictures accompanying the text. For example, one participant, informed by her knowledge about the textbook pre-reading activities, mentioned two of these techniques

It depends. Some readings have some pre-reading questions; others have some new vocabulary, just to help students to guess the meaning from text. The words are highlighted in a sentence for students to guess their meanings before they start reading. (Interviewee 13)

She valued the use of pre-reading questions ‘*to help students [with] what they are going to read.*’ Likewise, presenting vocabulary beforehand – according to her – could facilitate reading later on. Similarly, another participant viewed it necessary to teach new vocabulary in advance to facilitate students’ reading comprehension. She stated, ‘*You will have to just choose the active vocabulary that would hinder their understanding and just pre-teach it, and you will have to give a small practice about it.*’ (Interviewee 12). Alternatively, she preferred asking her students some personal questions related to the reading ‘*if it could be personalized*’. Similarly, another participant (Interviewee 14) preferred asking general questions as ‘*a leading-in activity*’ to what is to be read.

The value of asking questions during the pre-reading stage to activate students’ prior knowledge was acknowledged. For example, one participant stated, ‘*I can ask them some questions to refresh their knowledge about that topic.*’ (Interviewee 3). He gave examples of these from practice stating:

If the subject or the passage is about funfair, for example, a trip to funfair in Cairo, I can ask, have you ever been to funfair in Cairo? Magic land, for example, what did you see? What did you do? Did you enjoy it? Why and why not? And so on.

Likewise, another participant favoured asking warm-up questions related to the topic ‘*to elicit her students’ expectations about the topic*’ (Interviewee 11). Another participant, making the classroom environment more competitive, liked to ask guiding or warm-up questions for the class to find out ‘*how their views about this topic are different from what in the written text.*’ (Interviewee 9). He commented, ‘*It is good to activate students’ minds before reading.*’ Another participant was aware of the metacognitive regulatory function served by asking pre-questions and running a discussion with his students. He stated, ‘*When students start reading, they are eager to know more, to get more information about what they have discussed with the teacher.*’ (Interviewee 4)

A variety of pre-reading activities were highlighted. These included the use of titles, headings, illustrations, and/or pictures accompanying the reading text to help students understand the reading passage if the teacher let them study these before they start reading. For example, one participant stated, *'When you deal with the title, students will learn some information or some new words. They can get from the picture some vocabulary that they will meet during the reading.'* (Interviewee 14). Another participant made the most out of these by involving her students in a guessing game of what was to be encountered in the reading passage based on discussing the title, thus, making learning more fun to her grade 8 students, as she remarked, *'They like the announcement of winners, it is just like going to heaven to them.'* (Interviewee 12)

As a prelude to reading, it was highlighted that there was a need to define the purpose of reading. For example, one participant stated,

First, I should put some questions written on the board. These will be the aim of reading, and ask my students to read the reading passage silently in a fixed time. After reading it, I will ask some of them to answer the questions written on the board, but I never let them read without a purpose. There should be a purpose of their reading, so that they should benefit from it. (Interviewee 7)

Thus, setting purposes for reading worked as a metacognitive strategy used by the teacher to direct students' attention to focus on achieving these aims. Examples of reading purposes mentioned by the participants were to answer general or detailed questions about the reading topic. For example, one participant stated, *'One purpose of reading is to scan to answer some certain details inside the reading passage. Another is to skim the passage to answer questions which don't need specific details. They need general ideas about the text itself.'* (Interviewee 7). The regulatory function served by predefining the purpose of reading was highlighted. For example, one participant stated, *'Defining the purpose of reading is important for students to focus and concentrate on the goal of reading.'* (Interviewee 11)

During reading, the participants were aware of the sort of difficulties inherent in reading in the target language such as the passage containing some vocabulary

items, which were unknown to their EFL students. For example, one participant encouraged her students to tolerate ambiguous words while reading. She stated, *'They shouldn't stop and ask about the meaning of each word we ask them, read as a whole and try to get the main idea. If you don't know a meaning of a word, try to guess the meaning.'* (Interviewee 14). Informed by her knowledge about the anxious exam situation, she promoted the use of such a principle. She stated:

This is very important, to be patient, because in the exam, as you know, some students, when they don't know the answer, they get mad. Sometimes, they lose their nerves, they can't concentrate, but when we train our students how to be patient to get the knowledge, everything will not be so clear at first, but by practice, everything will be clearer.

The participants were erudite about the advantages and limitations of silent reading and reading aloud. They were aware of the benefits of silent reading. For example, one participant stated, *'Silent reading helps students to concentrate.'* (Interviewee 13). However, a risk was noted that students might not be actually reading when asked to read silently. For example, one participant stated, *'Perhaps some students look, just look with their eyes at the book and don't read. I can check them and make sure they read or not through questions.'* (Interviewee 3). He elaborated this stating: *'During reading, I can pause at a part or some part of the passage and ask them if they understand or not.'*

The limitations of reading aloud were highlighted. For example, one participant stated, *'I myself as a teacher when I read aloud, I don't concentrate, I just stress on my voice may be, my way of saying the word itself, how to utter it, but I don't get the meaning.'* (Interviewee 13). For this reason, based on her personal experience, she preferred not to encourage her students to read aloud. She justified her position stating, *'Because I know that students don't concentrate. They just say words, utter words without understanding.'* However, two uses of reading aloud were referred to. For example, one participant stated, *'Some students could read aloud at the end of the lesson for enjoyment provided that all exercises are covered and the reader is a good model and volunteers to read'* (Interviewee 7). Another participant highlighted that reading aloud could be used to emphasize a point missed by the students. She stated, *'Reading aloud is*

possible when I ask them, for instance, a question, and their answer is completely wrong, then, I assign the line and ask them to read it aloud, just as a kind of correction'. (Interviewee 13)

The significance of the post-reading stage was valued by the participants. For example, one participant (Interviewee 13) considered it very important *'to wrap up the main points of the lesson'* given that she had a lot of reading tasks to achieve. She utilized a variety of follow-up reading activities such as *'matching, solving a puzzle, or completing crosswords'*. This stage was seen as a good opportunity to develop the students' critical ability as well as their communicative skills by moving beyond what was in the textbook. For example, one participant stated, *'After reading, I ask the students additional comprehension questions to give critical and creative answers'* (Interviewee 5). Similarly, another participant who taught secondary school students stated, *'I let the student answer from his point of view. The students are not supposed to answer from just the text, because they learn English to communicate.'* (Interviewee 2). Equally, another participant suggested that the aim of this stage was to go beyond what is in the reading passage for students to get more ideas and widen their horizons. She gave examples of post-reading questions that she asked her students about after reading a passage about computers. Her questions were, *'What will be expected from using computers in the future? What will computers do for us? What will you learn from computer? Is very important to learn it or not? Will it be useful for you in general life or in real life or not?'* (Interviewee 11)

5.2.2.1.1.3 Teaching EFL listening and speaking

The aims of teaching EFL listening both in the preparatory and secondary stages were highlighted as elements of pedagogical knowledge. For example, one participant, a senior EFL preparatory school teacher, stated, *'Students can't get a hundred percent from the listening passage, but the aims of the listening passage, of listening, is just to be acquainted with listening to native speakers. This is the major aim of listening, to get the main idea.'* (Interviewee 14). Likewise, another

participant, a senior EFL secondary school teacher, stated, '*Listening is very important for students as you get them accustomed or get them used to listening to native speakers.*' (Interviewee 13). Equally, another participant made a similar point stating; '*When they listen, they have to listen carefully once, twice, and if necessary, three times to train their ears to listen to English.*' (Interviewee 4)

Therefore, the aim of teaching listening in the target language was to tune their students' ears to listen to the native accent, especially in the preparatory stage when students' ability to listen to and understand the target language was not high. Consequently, it was seen that students' inability to fully comprehend the listening material needed to be tolerated. For example, one participant stated, '*Sometimes, I ask students to listen to the English news, and give me just one piece of news.*' (Interviewee 14).

As for speaking, the aim was to enable students to express themselves rather than to go through the activities in the official EFL curriculum. For example, one participant stated, '*I am not supposed to stick to the textbooks in teaching speaking.*' (Interviewee 2).

A variety of activities were highlighted that could help students develop their oral fluency in the target language. For example, one participant stated, '*I give students the chance to make a conversation and have a free role play in which they improvise situations*' (Interviewee 2). Likewise, another participant stated; '*They can form dialogues with each other in front of the class.*' (Interviewee 11). Equally, another participant (Interviewee 3) referred to '*question-answer exchanges*' and '*students' comments and questions*' as other ways of encouraging students to speak. Similarly, another participant stated, '*In the warming-up activities, students negotiate their ideas and their views before we start the real lesson.*' (Interviewee 9)

Similar to speaking, a variety of activities to support students understand a listening passage were highlighted. For example, one participant (Interviewee 5) prefers to start teaching listening to his preparatory school students by presenting the new vocabulary items which '*might hinder their listening comprehension.*'

He also preferred to introduce the listening topic to give his students an idea about it. He stated, *'Students should know what they are going to listen to because they are listening to a foreign language and this is a challenge for them.'* Thus, introducing the listening topic served as an advance organizer to direct students' attention during listening. Defining the purpose for each time students listen to the passage was also highlighted. One purpose was to let students to tune their ears to the content of listening. Another purpose was to listen to complete a listening task. These two purposes were highlighted by one participant who stated:

In the first time, students grasp the whole meaning of a passage. They listen again to answer the questions. The questions are of different kinds. Some of them are 'listen and complete' some missing words. Other kinds of questions 'listen and point' to some special pictures, or some special words, and then 'listen and do'. In this kind of activity, students act what they listen to. (Interviewee 11)

The need to listen selectively was also highlighted. For example, one participant stated, *'They can listen a passage in a tape and then say the missing word, so they are listening and concentrate on the missing word.'* (Interviewee 11). The use of warm-up activities, such as using pre-listening questions, was seen as an important stage to get students involved. For example, one participant stated, *'Through the pre-listening questions, they get approached to what they are going to listen to, and get interested.'* (Interviewee 4). Likewise, another participant stated; *'You start with asking students some questions to refresh them, to make a warm up with your students about something in the listening text.'* (Interviewee 2)

Students were not pushed to answer listening comprehension questions before they were ready to do so. The justification for this approach was to facilitate students' learning for them. It was also seen necessary not to push the students to the feeling of frustration if they were over-challenged with questions they could not answer. For example, one participant stated:

I don't push students to answer especially with listening. This is easier for them because they are not so advanced. They listen once, twice, three times, they make notes and now they are ready to be asked. When they are asked, they can be easily motivated to answer, to initiate a complete sentence that

makes sense with simple wh-questions, when, why, where, how, and so.
(Interviewee 4)

Similarly, another participant let his grade 9 students listen more than one time to carry out easy listening tasks. He stated:

First of all, I give the students a general idea about the items they are going to listen to, so I let them listen for the first time without doing anything, then I give them some questions on the blackboard and let them listen again to answer the simple questions I wrote on the blackboard to make sure that they get something. For the third time, I make them listen, for the third time, to answer detail questions or to give me a summary of what they had listened to. (Interviewee 8)

It was highlighted that asking questions when teaching EFL listening needed to be well-timed. For example, one participant stated; *'I can pause when a complete meaning has ended, then I can pause and ask them questions then I continue.'* (Interviewee 3). The need to tailor their teaching accordingly was also highlighted. For instance, one participant gave a real classroom example stating, *'For example, if a dialogue is running on and I have to ask my students which photo is being talked about, I stop the cassette and then we get the answer right, and then we go, we continue back.'* (Interviewee 9)

5.2.2.1.2 Teaching EFL vocabulary

Teaching EFL vocabulary is essential for learning EFL. This is because vocabulary is involved in all language skills and aspects. The kind of instructional support provided by the teacher could facilitate or hinder the students' learning and retention of new vocabulary. In the EFL classroom, the use of code-switching while teaching vocabulary is controversial. In addition, students – in accordance with the progressive notion of learner-centred education which has become popular in the Egyptian context with the introduction of communicative language teaching in EFL curriculum material and teaching methodology – need to have an active role in language learning. Therefore, the different techniques of teaching EFL vocabulary were included as part of the teacher's pedagogical knowledge. The participants were asked whether they

might agree or not with two statements relevant to teaching EFL vocabulary. Their responses are shown in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: The participants' viewpoints of teaching EFL vocabulary

Statement	Total no. of cases	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Using EFL vocabulary teaching strategies such as examples is better for students' learning than translating the meaning.	236	62.7%	33.1%	.4%	2.5%	1.3%
The teacher could help students learn the meaning of EFL vocabulary through actions.	234	25.8%	59.7%	7.2%	5.1%	1.3%

The teaching of EFL vocabulary – as evident from the views of the participants – reflects a balanced view between the transmission view of language learning and communicative language teaching. Most participants highlighted the need for tasks with high involvement load while teaching EFL vocabulary. For example, one participant considered that for learning to be effective, the student had to be actively involved. She stated:, *'Actually, you have to do something, you have to take it as a motto, if you do an effort, exert an effort in learning something, you will never forget it, you know that saying, tell me I forget, teach me I remember, involve me I learn.'* (Interviewee 12)

Techniques based on action were favoured by most participants. For example, one participant stated, *'I may explain the new words in many ways, I can use miming, I can use acting, I can use drawing, I can use wall sheets, but you have to do something in presenting new words.'* (Interviewee 5). One view justifying the use of acting was because of its effectiveness in presenting the meaning of a new vocabulary item. This was given by a participant who stated, *'It conveys the meaning so quickly.'* (Interviewee 9)

Using context, giving examples, miming or acting, using gestures, using facial expressions, using antonyms and synonyms, real objects, drawing, wall charts,

pictures, flashcards, word analysis, the dictionary, giving definitions and showing a poster were other EFL vocabulary teaching techniques supported. Guessing the meaning from context, for example, was favoured as it helped students maintain learning because they needed to exert a mental effort while learning. According to one participant:

When they guess the meaning, it is very important for students when they get the meaning by themselves; it sticks the meaning in their minds because what comes easily goes easily. When I say the word easily or in Arabic or too fast, they may forget it. (Interviewee 13)

She added that it was also a useful strategy to train students to become autonomous learners who were expected to decipher the meaning of unknown words, for example, in a reading examination. She stated, *'It helps students to be independent because at the end of the year, they have a long passage with a lot of difficult words in the passage.'*

All these techniques highlight the need to involve students while teaching EFL vocabulary. Translation was not one of these techniques because of the teacher's concern that it could de-contextualise language learning and discourage students as autonomous learners. Being aware of these problems, a participant stated:

Translation is not one of the most successful methods because if I give the student the translation, perhaps, he will not be able to deal with the language freely if he is alone. He will be in need of help. This is one point. Another is that the student will find difficulty dealing with the target language. He will depend on translation and forget about the target language, which is more important for his learning. (Interviewee 1)

However, given that two languages existed in the EFL classroom while teaching EFL vocabulary, some teachers preferred to make use of this resource to support the learning of their students. Its use was justified by the need to respond to the students' needs for understanding. For example, one participant stated, *'I use translation especially in classes where there are a lot of slow learners'* (Interviewee 2). Similarly, another participant stated, *'I use translation of the new EFL vocabulary especially when the meaning of the word is difficult. In this case, I elicit the meaning in Arabic from one of the students to make it clear to*

everyone' (Interviewee 14). This approach indicates a balanced view between the transmission view of language learning and teaching language for communication. This balance was made to respond to the students' needs and expectations as well as to involve them and to prepare them for real communication opportunities.

5.2.2.1.3 Teaching EFL grammar

Unlike traditional approaches of teaching EFL grammar which focus on formal grammar instruction and grammar translation, the recent emphasis, in the Egyptian context, is on inductive grammar teaching and maximizing the role of the learner. These issues were explored with the participants as part of their pedagogical practical knowledge. The participants were asked whether they might agree or not with three relevant issues. Their responses to these areas are shown in Table (5.5).

Table 5.5: The participants' viewpoints of teaching EFL grammar

Statement	Total no. of cases	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teaching EFL grammar inductively maintains students' learning.	236	48.7%	43.6%	.8%	6.4%	.4%
A teacher's use of metalanguage facilitates students' learning of EFL grammar.	230	16.1%	52.5%	5.9%	19.1%	3.8%
Comparing EFL grammar with grammar of the mother tongue facilitates students' learning.	232	5.1%	26.3%	5.9%	46.2%	14.8%

Favouring inductive grammar teaching could indicate that the respondents were aware of the value of not teaching grammatical rules directly, but leaving their students to discover the rules from their experience of using the language. Beginning teaching with examples until students elicit the underlying pattern or grammatical structure by themselves could make EFL students more active while learning how the target language works. This was revealed by a participant who stated:

If you go inside the classroom and tell the students that we use the present perfect when we are talking about actions that have just happened and there is some evidence that they are still there. This is not effective. You are giving a composition about the present perfect. They will never use it. (Interviewee 4)

He added that inductive grammar teaching could develop the students' feel for using the language in the right way. He stated; *'If only you try to make them feel the language, I always tell my students that you have to sense the language. English is not taught by keeping by heart. It is learned by feeling, by sense.'* Likewise, another mentioned:

My style of teaching especially in grammar is based on comprehension...I need my students to understand the grammar. I don't want them to repeat it, memorize in their minds, and once they are outside of the class, they don't remember anything...grammar means focus on understanding more than anything else, and this will be clearly shown in the activities students can do. (Interviewee 9)

Favouring inductive grammar teaching was in agreement with objecting to teach grammar through translation. For example, one participant stated, *'I don't like translating grammatical structures because it doesn't give my students the chance to explore things by themselves. I like them to exert more effort to come up with the rule by themselves.'* (Interviewee 12).

As for using grammatical terminology, the majority of participants supported using it because of its facilitative role of students' learning English as a foreign language. For example, one participant acknowledged that using metalanguage could have a facilitative function for students *'to be familiarized with the language'* (Interviewee 10). Using metalanguage could also facilitate students' use of the correct terminology. For example, one participant stated:

After explaining the point of grammar, I told them what this tense was called because some students could be puzzled concerning the name of the point of grammar itself. For example, a lot of students know will, would, shall, should, may, might, but they don't know that these are called modal verbs. (Interviewee 7)

However, some participants were sceptical about its use. They only resorted to it as a 'last step'. For example, one participant stated, *'At first, I present the*

structure, then, students are accustomed to using it, then, I can use the names of the structures...because I know that it is more important to use the language than to know what it is.’ (Interviewee 1)

5.2.2.1.4 Sources of knowledge of content pedagogy

Three sources of knowledge of subject-related pedagogy were found. These were initial teacher education, reading in the field of EFL teaching and expert advice. As for student teaching experience, the participants were student teachers previously; therefore, they were asked whether they might agree or not with it as a source of knowing about teaching and the way they drew upon it. Their responses to these two aspects are shown in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6: The participants’ viewpoints of student teaching experience as a source of teacher knowledge

Statement	Total no. of cases	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Student teaching experience is a good source of knowing about teaching	235	11%	32.6%	7.6%	40.7%	7.6%
Student teaching experience enables the prospective teacher to link theory to classroom practice	235	14%	41.1%	9.7%	30.9%	3.8%

Some participants were in support of the student teaching experience during the initial teacher education programme as a good source. For example, one participant stated: *‘When we were student teachers, we had training at schools, at different schools in the third year and fourth year. This helped me to overcome the problems I face in the class.’ (Interviewee 8).*

Nevertheless, those participants who considered the student teaching experience as not a good source of knowing were more than those who showed their support. This could possibly be because of the problems surrounding the practicum component of the initial teacher education programme. This justification was made by one of the participants who referred to the lack of feedback from

mentors, large number of student teachers per school and being overloaded with university courses in addition to undertaking the practicum. He stated:

There is no body to tell you if you are right or wrong...well, mentors or supervisors at school are not free in the sense that we were about fifteen student teachers at school and at the same time, if you could imagine being a student and at the same time you have academic courses to cover, so teaching practice is a burden, you know. I know it is useful, but this is what I feel. (Interviewee 9)

Another reason for the participants' low support of the role of the student teaching experience as a source of knowing about teaching might be the superiority of the practical knowledge gained by the teacher from experience as a practitioner and not as a student teacher. This rationale was also provided by one participant who stated:

As a student teacher, I trained in a prep school, but I can't remember that it has a great influence on me because, as you know, from the very beginning, we were shy, and it was just a great experience to enter a class and to greet students and that's all, but our real work gives us much practice, much experience. (Interviewee 14)

Quantitative data analysis also revealed a significant difference with regard to considering student teaching experience as a source of knowing about teaching. The difference was in terms of the stage of the school, which the participants were teaching. EFL secondary school teachers were more likely than the preparatory school teachers to think that the student teaching experience was not a good source of knowing about teaching. One reason for this could be the teenage characteristics of secondary school students. Student teachers could find it difficult to deal with them in a way that might have a negative effect on prospective teachers' endeavours to make the most out of the experience. For instance, one participant stated:

Students at the secondary stage who are teenagers do not accept student teachers because they are accustomed to be taught by their regular teachers. Another point is that the students feel that these student teachers are not old enough to get information from them. The age gap is just four or five years only. Sometimes, they see them like them in body size. (Interviewee 1)

However, apart from the practicum component, particular courses during the initial teacher education programme were mentioned as a useful source. For example, one participant stated, '*Teaching methodology was the most important component because this subject helped me greatly in my class to convey the information and the learning material to my students.*' (Interviewee 7)

As for reading in the area of EFL teaching, it was related as another source of subject-related pedagogy indispensable for the EFL teacher. For example, according to one participant: '*A teacher without reading isn't a teacher. Teaching is one of the jobs which impel you to read much.*' (Interviewee 5). Likewise, another participant stated:

I am reading all the time books concerning methods of teaching and how can I handle this when I teach English as a foreign language. For example, communicative approach is very suitable for me to make the class enjoy the lesson. It is very important to know all modern methods of teaching English as a foreign language. (Interviewee 2)

Thus, reading was considered a useful source that helped the teacher expand knowledge related to teaching English as a foreign language.

Expert advice to know about EFL teaching was revealed as an additional source. For instance, one participant stated, '*It is very important for us as EFL teachers to be in contact with educationalists and specialists in teaching English to consult them about problems that we encounter during teaching a course.*' (A questionnaire respondent)

5.2.2.2 Knowledge of general pedagogy

Two categories were constructed under this topic. These were: approaches to classroom management and content and task management.

5.2.2.2.1 Approaches to classroom management

Three approaches to classroom management were constructed. These were: asking challenging questions, leniency, and setting rules for classroom practice.

Asking challenging questions was favoured because it had the power of controlling the trouble maker. For example, one participant revealed how she resorted to embarrassing the student who was making trouble by asking her questions she could not answer. She stated, '*When she is a trouble maker, I got her stand up and ask her what I was saying. Of course she will not be able to do anything.*' (Interviewee 12). She further added, '*The low level students, when they don't get the idea, they just start chatting.*' She preferred instead if her students complained to her about the problem. She lamented, '*If you don't get anything, don't chat with others, ask me and I will change my way of teaching.*'

An alternative way to control students who make trouble was to be lenient with trouble makers. For example, one participant followed a more lenient approach with her students in which the teacher controlled her emotions and discussed the issue with those students who made discipline problems. She stated:

The first thing is that the teacher should be patient because we shouldn't lose our nerves inside the classroom, and as you know, we have so many trouble makers...but if the teacher has a good relation with these trouble makers, if he is patient enough, if he respects them, and talks with them in private, they will appreciate his way of dealing with them, they will respect the lesson, they will respect him, and they will respect the class time sure, so it is very important also for the classroom management to make good relation with the trouble makers. (Interviewee 14)

Setting rules for practice was a third way for classroom management. This approach to classroom management was based on mutual respect setting rules for practice agreed upon by both the teacher and the students. This fair and democratic approach to classroom management, according to one participant, would be favourable to the students. She stated:

It is too difficult for students to accept the imposed rules, so from the very beginning of the year, we prepare something together with my students, the

rules poster, dos and don'ts. When they think of the rules themselves, they will respect them. (Interviewee 14)

She justified this stating, *'They put it themselves'*. Even when designing the poster, the teacher could involve her class. She stated, *'I ask one of my students to write the poster herself.'* This involvement could lead to a shared responsibility and thus throw the burden of classroom management from the shoulder of the teacher to those of the students. She further added, *'When they break a rule, I just point to the poster.'*

5.2.2.2.2 Content and task management

Six issues are included in this category because of their value for teachers in general and EFL teachers in particular. Lesson planning and time management are essential elements of teaching. They are particularly of relevance in the Egyptian context because of the government prescription in state schools to finish the assigned syllabus in a specific time plan set by the Ministry of Education. Task management is also important for the teacher to facilitate the instructional flow, cover the assigned material, respond to students' needs and involve them in learning. Therefore, these issues were explored as part of the teacher's pedagogical knowledge. The participants were asked whether they might agree or not with six statements as ways of facilitating the instructional process. Their responses are shown in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7: The participants' viewpoints of content and task management

Statement	Total no. of cases	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Lesson planning facilitates the management of instruction.	236	85.2%	14%	0%	.8%	0%
Time management helps the teacher finish the pre-planned activities.	236	44.1%	49.2%	.8%	5.9%	0%
The teacher could facilitate students' learning by focusing their attention on one task at a time.	236	30.1%	48.3%	3.4%	16.1%	2.1%

The teacher could help the students direct their learning by announcing the aim of a task in advance.	236	29.2%	55.5%	5.5%	8.5%	1.3%
The teacher could help students focus their attention by not repeating instructions.	235	8.5%	20.8%	3.8%	56.4%	10.2%
Giving instructions in the students' native language facilitates the instructional flow.	233	9.3%	27.1%	2.5%	48.7%	11%

Most of the above issues were supported as ways of facilitating instructional flow. Qualitative evidence revealed by the interviewees could shed the light on the reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the following five issues: lesson planning, time management, doing one task at a time, telling the aim of a task in advance, and giving instructions. These are presented below.

5.2.2.2.1 Lesson planning

Lesson planning could facilitate teaching by maximizing the instructional time in class. Almost all participants confirmed that lesson planning could facilitate the management of instruction with a very high percentage of strong agreement. Lesson planning was seen as essential for effective teaching. For example, one participant stated, *'Good preparation leads to a successful lesson.'* (Interviewee 14). Likewise, another stated, *'When I prepare well, I'll be more effective.'* (Interviewee 13). It was also revealed that lesson preparation could facilitate teaching in two ways: achieving the aims of the lesson by covering all the material to be taught and responding to students' questions confidently.

Lesson planning could give the teacher a clear idea about what needed to be achieved. For example, one participant considered lesson planning as *'very important'* for the teacher because it could help the teacher know the material to be presented and prepare difficult aspects of the material. He stated, *'I should think of the lesson before teaching. At least, I know the material which I are going to deal with...at least, I know the utterance of the new words.'* (Interviewee 5). He further added, *'I should think of the problems that may face me and not to*

be surprised with the problem. This gives me confidence and not to be shocked in front of the students, otherwise, I will be at a loss.'

Thus, lesson planning could provide the teacher with enough confidence when presenting the lesson and anticipating sources of difficulties and problems which might arise and how to deal with them. Without good preparation, the teacher might be shocked and be at a loss, which in turn could affect the teacher's image in front of the students. Preparing the lesson in advance could avoid the teacher these pitfalls.

The need to stick to the lesson plan was highlighted. For example, one participant stated, *'It is important to make an application to what I have planned.* (Interviewee 8). However, the need to be flexible with the application of the lesson plan was also highlighted. For instance, one participant underscored the need to prepare an alternative course of action, that is, according to her *'to put in mind plan A and plan B.'* (Interviewee 14). Sometimes, it was acceptable to divert from the lesson plan to achieve various purposes of teaching. For example, one participant stated:

I may leave my plan or I omit something of it to give much more time to another activity. Sometimes, I find that I and the class are engaged in an interesting discussion. In this case I devote some more time to this activity and leave out others. I do this because I like discussions and it is important for the students to express themselves. (Interviewee 8)

The need to strike a balance between planned activities and emergent issues was highlighted. For example, one participant stated, *'I can have some space in my plan to allow some time for any issue I didn't think of, which could help the students to understand'* (Interviewee 3) Alternatively, another participant preferred to leave some time at the end of the period for this purpose. He stated, *'I plan my lesson in a good way, so I am always left with minutes at the end of the class to talk about any topic the students like.'*(Interviewee 7)

5.2.2.2.2 Time management

With regard to time management, the majority of participants agreed that an essential aspect of classroom management was to plan time well. Time management was seen as a key skill for the EFL teacher to teach a successful lesson. As asserted by one participant, *'Whenever I define my time, I am successful.'* (Interviewee 13). Time management could also enable the teacher to distribute the time of the class period over the activities to be carried out. As pointed by one participant, *'I can time the lesson or the period properly, give exercise one, for example, five minutes, exercise two, ten minutes, and so on.'* (Interviewee 3)

This was particularly useful given the time limit of the English lessons and the amount of content to be taught. As stated by one participant, *'If I don't plan my lesson, I will lose the time. I have short time inside the class. If I don't plan my lesson well, I will do nothing, I will leave most of the subject.'* (Interviewee 8). Thus, without time management, the short period of time allocated for the English lessons would not be enough to cover the official EFL curriculum. Likewise, another participant asserted that lesson planning *'keeps time on track'* (Interviewee 7). He further added, *'I am obliged to a certain curriculum...so lesson planning is very important to save time and help the teacher a lot.'* Similarly, another participant stated, *'If I don't have a lesson plan...I may neglect some exercises, neglect some points, and the time itself may not be enough to cover the whole lesson.'* (Interviewee 3). Thus, lesson preparation was seen of paramount importance given the limited time allocated to cover the official EFL overloaded curriculum.

5.2.2.2.3 Single tasking

With regard to doing one task at a time, the majority of participants were in favour of this strategy. One view was that this could possibly help students focus their attention. One participant stated referring to dealing with students' written errors:

When I concentrate only on one aspect, students will realize that they may have many mistakes, but my teacher this time is correcting punctuation, is correcting spelling, is correcting grammar, is correcting verb-noun agreement only in grammar, so we should work on a focus. (Interviewee 14)

Quantitative data analysis using chi-square also revealed a significant difference according to age with regard to doing one thing at a time. The younger group were more likely to agree or strongly agree that the teacher could facilitate students' learning by focusing their attention on one task at a time. This might indicate that younger teachers were more likely to think in a convergent way with regard to their students' ability to learn. This could also imply that focusing on one thing at a time might be easier for their students in the same way it was for them. Perhaps they had not experimented yet in challenging students by involving them in doing more than one thing at a time which might be a better approach to improve their ability to learn. On the contrary, the older group, who were more experienced by credit of their age, saw it differently. For them, developing their students' divergent thinking was bound to involve them in doing more than one thing at a time. One justification was provided by a secondary school teacher who related the issue to the students' proficiency level in English. He stated:

It depends upon students' levels. When I was teaching preparatory school students, I preferred to do one task at a time because the students were not advanced language learners. But, for secondary school students, I could ask them to do more than one thing at a time. For example, to listen to a passage, answer the comprehension questions and write about the topic. So this is more than one task, but it depends on the level of the students. (Interviewee 9).

5.2.2.2.2.4 Stating the aim of task

Telling students the aim of the task in advance was seen favourably by the majority of participants. One reason for this was because of the meta-cognitive function this could have. For instance, one participant stated, '*It is better for students to know in advance why they are doing a task to be interested and directed.*' (Interviewee 2). Likewise, another participant pointed out how

describing the aim of a task in advance could help students' plan and regulate their learning endeavours. He stated:

When I tell students what they are going to do, they understand it better and they get ready psychologically and mentally to what they are going to do, so it is like a warming-up...It will make them more active learners because if I tell them that by the end of this task, they should be able to read the following words or pronounce the following words correctly, they should be working very hard to get it right. This will not be the case if I don't tell them the aims in advance. (Interviewee 9)

5.2.2.2.2.5 Giving instructions

Giving instructions only once was not supported by the majority of participants. One reason for this lack of support was the resulting habit formation of students to expect instructions to be repeated. For instance, one participant stated:

The teacher should accustom his students to saying instructions once to make them pay attention to what he is saying. When I repeat the instructions and students are accustomed to it, they will not listen to me carefully because they know that I'll repeat them again and again. (Interviewee 1)

However, the teacher commented that every rule has some exceptions as there were some situations when instructions could be repeated. He added, '*Sometimes, I repeat instructions because they are not clear and need some clarification, but if the instructions are clear, I prefer not to repeat them for my students.*'

Another factor which could oblige the teacher to repeat instructions was the students' level. For example, one participant stated:

It goes back to the students' level. When I was dealing with preparatory school students, I said it more than once because not all students could get the information from the first time, so I had to say it more than once in a different way, but for secondary school students, once is enough if all the students are paying attention. (Interviewee 9)

Although the majority of participants were not in favour of saying instructions in Arabic, some participants supported its use. One reason for this support was to facilitate the instructional flow. For example, one participant stated:

It is important for students to understand instructions even in Arabic. If they don't understand the instructions before starting a task, they will be puzzled and could not complete the task well, so in this case, I may sacrifice the use of English in giving instructions. (Interviewee 1)

Another reason for giving instructions in the mother tongue was to facilitate their understanding especially that of low level students. For instance, a participant stated, *'With beginning level, why not? It makes the task clearer, easier and quickly understandable by the students, but for advanced students, no.'* (Interviewee 9)

5.2.2.2.4 Sources of knowledge of general pedagogy

Three sources of knowledge of instruction were revealed. These were doing research, peer feedback and student feedback.

As for doing research, it was revealed to be a source of knowledge. For instance, one participant stated: *'I can log onto the internet and know new techniques.'* (Interviewee 3). Another participant revealed how he made use of research findings he reached by himself as a tool to develop his knowledge base about teaching and classroom practice. He stated:

I did a research on classroom management. I did a comparison between the helpful teacher, the calm teacher, and the aggressive teacher. Finally; I found that the best one is the person who is dealing with students confidently, the teacher who puts rules. (Interviewee 1)

With regard to peer feedback, it was revealed to be an important source of raising the teacher's awareness of inappropriate practice. For example, one participant stated:

Many people said to me, 'Don't turn your back to the students for a long time.' This was a very bad point of me, so I have been working on this also because I spent much time writing on the board, so my back was turning to the students. This is wrong. (Interviewee 2)

In the same way peer feedback helped the teacher realise his weaknesses, feedback from the students was related as a source of knowing one's own

limitations with regard to knowledge of instruction. For example, one participant stated:

Sometimes, they said my voice is very high inside the class. You have to speak a little slower. I have been working on this for four years and now my voice inside the class is very moderate. At home, when I prepare the lesson, I try to remind myself all the time. Don't speak in a high voice. (Interviewee 2)

Thus, student feedback worked not only as a source of knowledge, but also as a catalyst for change and development.

5.2.3 Knowledge of students

The participants in the current study described their students in terms of their learning ability, their learning styles and their social background. As for the students' learning ability, the participants were asked whether they might agree or not with the view that students needed to learn at different rates. Almost all of them (99.2%) supported this view with the majority of participants (65.7%) strongly agreeing with it.

With regard to students' learning styles, they were seen as differing from one student to another. Some students might learn best through visual stimuli while others might learn best by listening. A third group of students learn best by performing an action. This typology of students' different learning styles preferences was given by one participant as follows:

I have three kinds of learners. I have the visual learners, the audio learners, and the kinaesthetic learners. The kinaesthetic learner needs to see, hear, and manipulate things. I am a kinaesthetic learner, and I never remembered something that a teacher said unless he made me draw a picture. (Interviewee 12)

One way which was seen to cater for students' different style preferences was to use audio and visual aids. When the participants were asked whether they might agree or not with this approach, most of them (94.9%) were in support of it because it could reinforce students' learning.

The students were described in terms of the social and educational standard of their parents. For example, one participant made a distinction between two types of students in terms of their social background. He compared between students from urban areas to those from rural areas as follows:

The urban students are much more sophisticated. Their parents care for them very well. I have very obvious cases of students whose parents know everything about what they are studying in every subject, so they follow them up very well, ok, but, in the rural, no, the father is a farmer or what so ever, his mother is a house wife. She doesn't know how to read English, so they are not following. (Interviewee 9)

The participants also revealed that students lack the motivation to participate actively in classroom activities. For example one participant stated, '*Students are not interested to listen or speak in class.*' (Interviewee 4). He attributed this negative attitude to the students' concern with passing the examinations which focus on literacy skills rather than listening and speaking. He added, '*The student knows very well that he doesn't have to speak English very well in the last year exam to get a high mark. He can get the full mark without speaking English. That's why he is not interested to be a fluent speaker.*'

5.2.3.1 Sources of knowledge of students

Three sources were revealed in relation to knowledge of students. These were: experience, student output and specialised study.

As for experience, it was found to be a repeated source of various knowledge domains. This might indicate the acknowledgement of its role in knowing about teaching. According to one participant: '*Experience is the backbone of teaching*' (Interviewee 5). He expressed how important the role of experience was in knowing about the individual differences among students and how to deal with them accordingly. He stated, '*Experience helps much to differentiate between students. The experience also helps me invent my own way of teaching that suits most of them.*'

Student output was also viewed as a source to know about them. For example, one participant stated: '*I want to explore my students. How? Through speaking or*

writing, they reflect their ideas. How can I understand that they know this or that without writing it?’ (Interviewee 6). Likewise, another participant stated: *‘[In] writing, the student has the chance to express his feelings and his ideas freely.’* (Interviewee 3).

Students’ errors were also seen as a means to know about their ability. For example, one participant stated, *‘They will make mistakes which is good for me to know that these students can not digest so I start again with the students individually, you know because what a student needs is different from another.’* (Interviewee 9). Accordingly, students’ errors were not only an indication to identify students who could not understand, but also was behind the teacher’s action in the classroom to cater for students’ differing abilities.

Specialised study in areas related to the teacher’s work was also seen as a source to get more insight about how the students felt. For example, one participant who was studying a PhD course in psychology while working as a teacher stated:

When I began to study mental health, this subject began to help me how to deal with my students inside the classroom psychologically, and I began to understand their problems especially the psychological problems and the psychological needs more and more clearly than before. (Interviewee 6)

Thus, academic study provided the teacher with deeper awareness of the students’ emotional needs in a way that was reflected positively on treating them.

5.2.4 Knowledge of the classroom learning environment

Due to the fact that motivation is invariably invigorating, this issue could be an important concern for the teacher. Therefore, the provision of a motivating learning environment is essential. Given that too much emphasis, in the context of the current study, is on examinations, students are externally-oriented towards passing the examinations instead of the progress and enjoyment of learning. The role of the teacher here is to be aware of the features of an enjoyable and motivating classroom learning environment. This knowledge could enable the teacher to help the student learn not only for the sake of exams, but also for enjoying the learning process. Therefore, knowledge of the classroom learning

environment is explored in this section. The participants were asked whether they might agree or not with nine statements related to knowledge of the classroom environment. Table (5.8) presents the participants' responses to these statements.

Table 5.8: The participants' viewpoints of a good classroom learning environment

Statement	Total no. of cases	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The teacher could provide an environment conducive to learning by reinforcing students.	236	59.3%	38.6%	1.7%	.4%	0%
The teacher could establish rapport with the students by socializing with them inside the classroom.	236	72%	26.7%	0%	.8%	.4%
The teacher needs to establish rapport with the students outside the classroom.	236	36.4%	53.8%	3%	5.5%	1.3%
The teacher could help the students overcome their negative feelings by listening to their problems.	236	48.3%	45.8%	2.5%	2.5%	.8%
The teacher needs to provide a learning environment where students feel secure.	230	66.9%	29.2%	.4%	0%	.8%
The teacher needs to develop in the students the sense of the classroom as a community.	235	65.3%	33.9%	.4%	0%	0%
The teacher needs to tolerate students' errors.	234	32.2%	53%	.8%	11.4%	1.7%
The teacher could create a favourable learning environment by giving students the chance to ask questions.	236	72.9%	26.7%	.4%	0%	0%
The teacher could make the learning environment less stressful by accepting students' opinions and initiatives.	234	44.9%	47%	2.1%	4.7%	.4%

Table 5.8 shows the high level of agreement among the participants with all the nine statements. It is also notable that the majority of participants hold strong views supporting most of them. All of them agreed that allowing students to ask questions and developing the sense of the classroom as community create a favourable learning environment.

Obviously, the vast majority of the participants highlighted the role of the learning environment in their students' learning. They support that for the learning environment to be conducive to learning, it needed to be characterized with the constructed features of RESTA: Reinforcement, Emotional support, Solidarity, Tolerance, and Acceptance. These features help the teacher create a favourable classroom learning environment.

5.2.4.1 Reinforcing students' learning

Almost all participants were in support of reinforcing students' learning. This was because it could encourage students to continue learning. For example, one participant stated, *'When I praise a student for what he has done or when I acknowledge that what he has done is good or fantastic, this encourages him to carry on, but if I discourage a student or if I disregard his efforts, this will be very much frustrating.'* (Interviewee 9). Likewise, another participant highlighted the role of reinforcement as it could be stimulating and conducive to learning. He stated, *'When I encourage students, they give me the best they have. Any person likes to be praised for their good actions. When I praise them, they will try to do their best the next time to listen to these praising words again.'* (Interviewee 1)

5.2.4.2 Emotional support

Emotional support by pushing students forward was viewed as another requirement of a favourable classroom learning environment. This was viewed to be provided through establishing rapport with the students inside and outside of class, listening to their problems and concerns, and providing them with a secure learning environment.

Almost all participants thought that socialising with the students could establish rapport in class. According to one participant, *'It made me closer to them and they became closer to me. They liked me more.'* (Interviewee 9). Likewise, another participant pointed out the relationship between socialising with the students and bridging the gap between them as students and him as a teacher. He stated:

It encourages students to deal freely with the teacher. When students know that the teacher likes and is worried about them, they will do better. They will be free to ask about anything, and they will learn from him, putting in mind that there is respect, and students know that they are students and he is their teacher. There is no contradiction between love and respect. (Interviewee 1).

Socialising with the students out of class was also seen favourable as it could lead to better rapport in class. For instance, one participant highlighted that, out of class, he was *'Still in touch to bridge any gap in relationship between me and my students.'* (Interviewee 9). Likewise, another participant saw it inevitable to socialise with students out of class. He stated:

Some dialogues can't be made inside the classroom. Outside of class, teachers can express themselves and the burden of teaching, and students can tell the teacher their opinions about him freely, or some issues that worry them inside the class, so a good relation between the teacher and the students outside the classroom helps the good environment inside the classroom. (Interviewee 1)

A third aspect of emotional support was to listen to students' problems and concerns. This aspect was supported by the vast majority of participants. This was because it could overcome students' negative feelings. This justification was elaborated by one participant who stated:

It is important to listen to students' problems to help them feel that they are part of the classroom community, that they have a very good relation with their teacher, and that they can resort to their teachers when they need them as a friend. Sympathetic talking can help students get out of the problem and relieve his grief. (Interviewee 9)

Understanding students' problems and concerns could be informative to the teacher to understand the students' feelings and how to handle them. According to one participant:

When I understand my students' problems, I know how to deal with them. If I know that a student's father or mother is in prison or in hospital, I will be sensitive if I deal with this aspect in class. I may say words that make this student very angry, and I don't mean that. (Interviewee 1)

The provision of a secure and emotional environment was also highlighted as characterizing a favourable learning environment. For example, one participant stated, '*The teacher shouldn't spread a threatening atmosphere inside the class.*' (Interviewee 14). Promoting such an environment was seen important for students' learning. For example, one participant stated, '*It is very important for students to feel safe and to feel secure in their schools. This helps the students to learn more freely and more relaxed.*' (Interviewee 3)

5.2.4.3 Solidarity

Developing a sense of the classroom as community was supported by almost all participants. One reason for adopting such a view was to develop students as team workers and to increase their sense of belonging to the learning community. This was given by one participant who stated:

From the word community, it gives them unity. They are one family. It is important for students to feel that they are learning with their classmates and sharing the same characteristics, the same culture, and the same background knowledge. This instils the sense of community. They feel they belong to the whole class and to the group they work with. This gives them unity. (Interviewee 9)

Exchanging information and successful communication were also sought from instilling that feeling of community among the students. For example, one participant stated:

In doing so, the students could learn from each other. Each student is a representative of the family or the environment which he comes from. Developing a sense of community gives students the chance to learn from each others and to deal freely with others regardless of religion, ideas or

social class. Then, I prepare students for future life. A student who deals with as many as different people in class is more successful than a student who knows everything, but doesn't know how to deal with others well. (Interviewee 1)

5.2.4.4 Tolerance

Tolerating students' errors was seen as one way to lessen the intensity of the learning environment. The way the teacher dealt with the students' mistakes was an essential instructional skill which could have a psychological impact on students' participation and learning. It might be normal for students to make errors while learning. However, the students needed to be encouraged to consider mistakes as an opportunity for them to learn. For example, one participant stated, *'I tell them that mistakes should work with them not against them.'* (Interviewee 14). Likewise, another participant stated, *'It is O.K. to make mistakes. When they make a mistake, they wouldn't repeat it again.'* (Interviewee 2) He also found mistakes usual given that students are learning in a language that was not their own. He stated, *'I remind them all the time of the fact that we, all of us, make mistakes, we make mistakes while learning EFL because we are not native speakers.'*

5.2.4.5 Acceptance

Giving students the chance to ask questions could provide a favourable classroom learning environment in which students needed to feel free to have their say. This was given by one participant who stated, *'It is very important for the teacher to make sure that the students ask when they need to. It means that they are relaxed, and they know that they are free persons and they can express themselves freely in front of him.'* (Interviewee 1). Another participant gave an additional reason for the need to let the students ask questions in class, which could result in a less stressful classroom learning environment. He stated, *'It gives students the opportunity to clarify their understanding and to reveal any misunderstanding or any confusion in their minds. They will be happy and learning in a relaxed atmosphere.'* (Interviewee 9)

Accepting students' opinions and initiatives could also result in an open learning environment where students could express themselves freely, and this could ultimately lead to a more favourable classroom learning environment. For instance, one participant stated, '*When the students feel that their opinions are valuable, they will love the class and they will be waiting for the teacher to come, but when their opinions are scorned or disrespected, they won't like to go to school at all.*' (Interviewee 9). Two more reasons were provided for the need to accept students' opinions and initiatives. These were related to building students' characters and factoring in students' contributions. For example, one participant stated:

This will help the students to grow as persons. Unless I give them the chance to express themselves and their opinions, I do not develop their characters. Another point is that by stopping the students from expressing what they have, I will lose a good idea from a good student that may help me because we learn from our students' criticism. (Interviewee 1).

5.2.4.6 Sources of knowledge of the classroom learning environment

As for sources of knowledge of the learning environment, initial teacher education was considered as a useful source. For example, one participant referred to the importance of building rapport with the students. He learned this while studying for the teacher education programme. He stated:

I stick to a principle I learned from a university professor that in order to teach well, the first step is to establish rapport with the students. This will pave the way for the students to accept what they are being taught. Otherwise, a shield will stand between the students and the teacher. (Interviewee 8)

Likewise, another participant related the student teaching experience during the initial teacher education programme as a source of knowing about what could create a favourable classroom learning environment. He stated, '*When I was a student teacher, one of the comments I received from my supervisor was that I used all students' names while teaching and that created a very favourable learning environment.*' (Interviewee 9)

5.2.5 Knowledge of curriculum

EFL teachers in the Egyptian context are required to teach the EFL syllabus set by the MOE. This means that they have no choice in the selection of the material, which might not be suitable to their students' needs. Yet, the introduction of modern technology in Egyptian schools could provide the teacher with opportunities to redesign and present the syllabus in new ways. In addition, assignments for homework or self study are traditionally viewed in the Egyptian context as part of the school work. These issues are explored in the section as parts of curricular knowledge. The participants were asked whether they might agree or not with four curricular issues. Their responses to these aspects are shown in Table 5.9.

Table 5.9: The participants' viewpoints of knowledge of curriculum

Statement	Total no. of cases	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
It is more important for the teacher to respond to the students' needs than to go through the assigned textbook material.	233	16.5%	37.3%	3.8%	33.5%	7.6%
The teacher needs to have a critical awareness of the curriculum content and how it is taught.	233	40.3%	55.1%	2.1%	.8%	.4%
It is important for the teacher to know the uses of modern technology in teaching.	235	63.6%	33.9%	.4%	1.3%	.4%
Giving students assignments to finish at home consolidates their learning.	235	49.2%	45.8%	.4%	3.8%	.4%

Five categories were revealed under this theme. These are: material coverage, curriculum evaluation, the use of modern technology, setting homework and goals for teaching.

5.2.5.1 Material coverage

Going through the teaching material was highlighted because of the importance of covering the curriculum content as well as to respond to students' needs. This balanced view was referred to by a participant who stated: *'Both the curriculum material and the students' needs are important. They are related to one another.'* (A questionnaire respondent). Covering the teaching material before responding to students' needs might not be in the interest of students' learning because responding to their needs might be a prerequisite of effective implementation of the curriculum material. This view was exemplified by a participant who stated, *'For example, if the students need to know the difference between when to use 'shall' and 'will' in a grammar lesson, and I ignored it, this will lead to the misuse of it and their language production will be affected.'* (Interviewee 9)

5.2.5.2 Curriculum evaluation

Having critical awareness of the curriculum material and how to teach it was highlighted by the vast majority of participants. One reason underpinning this view was to adjust the teaching material to the students' actual levels. For instance, one participant stated, *'To find out whether the teaching material are suitable or not to the students' levels. If it is too difficult, I will be using scaffolding strategies to facilitate it to the students, and if it is too easy, I will make it challenging.'* (Interviewee 9). Expecting challenges and getting ready to solve them if they emerged was another reason for the need of the teacher to be critically aware. This was given by one participant who stated, *'Having this awareness will help me anticipate problems. I know that my students will find it difficult to understand this point, so I will be ready with a solution, not to be shocked in class.'* (Interviewee 1)

5.2.5.3 The use of modern technology

It was also highlighted by almost all participants that the teacher needed to know the uses of modern technology in teaching. This was seen valuable to stimulate students' interest. For example, one participant stated: *'More technology attracts*

students' attention.' (Interviewee 13). Another reason for the need to use technology was to provide a favourable learning environment. This was given by a participant who stated:

English should be taught using CDs and computer because I need to show my students pictures, sounds, examples, so they found it enjoyable to use the mouse, to use the keyboard when they learn the language, instead of the classroom, the desks, the board. It is a different environment. (Interviewee 7)

5.2.5.4 Setting homework

Giving assignments for self-study was supported by the vast majority of participants. One reason for adopting such a view was to enable students to turn classroom teaching input into learning intake. This was given by one participant who stated:

Homework helps the student integrate ideas together and find connections in what he has been taught. A student needs to find some relations between the information by himself. All of this will give the student the opportunity to understand better than just listening. (Interviewee 1)

Developing students as autonomous learners was given as another reason. For instance, one participant stated that it was important for the students to do some study by themselves, *'To develop their self-study skills. It is very important to teach the students to study some parts of the material on their own because in further education when they go to university, they will be self-studying most of the time.'* (Interviewee 9)

5.2.5.5 Goals for teaching

Four goals were revealed under this topic. These were: covering the teaching material, preparing students for examinations, preparing students for life, and providing students with a good example. These are presented below.

As for covering the teaching material, this goal was seen as the main goal for teaching to build students' knowledge. For example, one participant stated: *'Covering the material is important because it is the frame of what I want the students to know. Do you think that I can teach my students without having*

material?' (Interviewee 1). Covering the teaching material was supported as the main goal for teaching for a variety of reasons including avoiding being criticised by the students' parents and the teacher supervisor who might think that the syllabus could not be finished in time because the teacher was not efficient. In addition, finishing the course was seen as a burden thrown away from the teacher's shoulder. These were given by one participant as follows:

In order not to put myself in a critical situation in terms of the students' parents who may complain that the syllabus is not finished. Another reason is to be in the safe side in terms of the supervisor's report. If the teacher is contracted, the supervisor's report may result in not renewing his contract because he is not able to finish the course. This also brings us to the issue of the teacher's efficiency. If he is efficient enough, he will finish the syllabus. It is also psychologically relieving. The syllabus is over. (Interviewee 9)

Preparing students for exams was seen as an additional role to be carried out by the teacher. Two reasons for supporting such view were to meet students' expectations and to help students move to next educational stage. For example, one participant stated, '*Preparing students for exams is important for them to pass the exam with a good score and to join the department they like in the university.*' (Interviewee 6).

Although preparing students for life was not a seen target for the students, it was highlighted as an important role to be carried out by the teacher because school learning should be functional to help students make use of it in real life. For instance, one participant stated:

This is the most important role of teachers. Not everything that I teach students will remain with them, but what remains is what helps them in their life. I teach my students English, and perhaps they will forget some vocabulary, but I have taught them that English is very important in life. (Interviewee 1)

Providing students with a good example was highlighted as a role of the teacher as well because the teacher was seen as exposed to all students and might be under the scrutiny of public opinion. For example, one participant stated, '*The teacher is a model in class. He is watched by all the students inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, he should be a model.*' (Interviewee 5).

5.2.5.6 Sources of knowledge of curriculum

Skill training and experience were constructed as two sources of knowledge of curriculum. Skills' training such as training in how to use the computer was seen as a useful source to develop knowledge of how to represent the curriculum material in an attractive way. For example, one participant stated:

I had Intel and ICDL. These helped me greatly in my class. I design some lessons using the PowerPoint and students find it enjoyable and exciting. Nowadays, technology plays an important part in every field, so why couldn't we use it inside our classes. (Interviewee 7)

Experience was related as a source of knowing about which goals of teaching were salient in the context of the study. For instance, one participant stated: *'I have been teaching for a long time and the reality is that the aims of education are mainly to transmit knowledge and to prepare students for exams.'* (Interviewee 9)

5.2.6 Knowledge of self

Personal knowledge or knowledge of self was seen as an essential for being a teacher. This was because the person of the teacher could not be separated from the teacher as a professional. The participants described themselves in relation to their work in terms of two categories: reflection and self-image talking about personal qualities seen important for the teacher. These are presented below.

5.2.6.1 Reflection

Constant questioning of the self could facilitate teacher growth. Without self-evaluation, teacher growth and professional development could be difficult to achieve because the teacher might not realize if teaching went well or not. For example, one participant stated:

I am practising everyday. What's new? What is the difference between today and yesterday and tomorrow? How will I know the difference? Did I develop? Am I the same? Did I do anything wrong? I need some change in my life. I need to recharge my batteries. It is very good for a teacher to recharge everyday. How will I assess myself? Am I improving? Am I making

any kind of development? This is how I do it, through reflection (Interviewee 12).

Thus, the need for self evaluation was considered important to know one's weaknesses and strengths and to develop and consequently boost the learning of the students. Reflection on teaching could also work as a catalyst for change because of the constant questioning of the self and the desire to be better. Change for the teacher, as suggested above was necessary to avoid monotony which could kill the excitement of the teaching experience and which could result in an early teacher burn-out.

5.2.6.2 Self-image

The participants described themselves with personal images related either to what they do in the classroom or their attitudes towards teaching. They repeatedly referred to certain qualities to characterize themselves. For example, they describe themselves as having a sense of humour, being hard-working, flexible, lifelong learner, confident and having a positive disposition. These images were seen important to help the teacher cope with the demands of the teaching profession which was described by one of the participants as 'a *very difficult job*.' (Interviewee 5). These characteristics are presented in the sections that follow.

As for having a sense of humour, the participants were asked whether they might agree or not with this quality as characterising the teacher in order to alleviate the stress of the profession of teaching. The majority of them (87.3%) were in support. One reason for this support was because of the importance of having a sense of humour in easing the possible tension of the learning environment. This was given by one participant who stated:

This lets the students accept the character of the teacher, not to be bored of what is being said. It also helps the teacher change the students' mood. Some students are afraid of the teacher, but when the teacher has a sense of humour, this gives them the opportunity to learn better. (Interviewee 1)

Hard working was seen as a favourable trait characterising a teacher essential for the growth of the teacher and the development of knowledge. The need of the

EFL teacher to work hard was seen beneficial for the teacher to be both confident and successful. For example, one participant referred to two positive consequences of working hard stating, *'I am fully convinced of my abilities because I work hard. I am also fully convinced that hard working leads to a successful work.'* (Interviewee 7). Likewise, another participant stated, *'The more you give to your job, the better you get from it.'* (Interviewee 1). Hard work was also seen important for the teacher's image in front of the students. For example, one participant stated, *'To give students a feeling of sincerity that he is very much sincere in his teaching and likes to benefit them as much as he can.'* (Interviewee 9)

Flexibility was seen as another quality necessary for the teacher. Without it, a teacher might not be able to adapt with change. Therefore, flexibility is important for the teacher to facilitate growth and development. As stated by one participant: *'I changed many times. Teaching means flexibility. Every year and till you retire, you get information, you rebuild methods. You should be flexible.'* (Interviewee 5). This quality was also linked to a teacher's desire to experiment while teaching and make a difference. One participant characterised herself stating: *'I consider myself a changing person. I don't like to, even in my personal life, I don't like to stick to a routine. You will not know the right if you don't do the wrong. Slight changes make the difference.'* (Interviewee 12). Flexibility was also seen important to respond to students' needs. For example, one participant's justification for the need to be flexible was:

To accept students' reactions to different teaching situations. For example, if I put a student in a group that they don't like working with him, and he doesn't like working with them, so I should be flexible to change him into another group and substitute him. (Interviewee 9)

Being a lifelong learner was highlighted because of its relevance to the nature of the work of the teacher who needed to update his knowledge and cope with change. For example, one participant stated:

The information is developing, and for us, it's changeable. What is taught today is not taught in the future. If I don't update myself, I will not be able to teach well. Also, I must be aware of what is happening around me. It is

important not to let students know better than me. Even if they know something I don't know, I must know what source they got their information from to learn it. If they give me a new idea, I give them a similar idea.
(Interviewee 1)

Another reason for supporting this quality was to improve one's teaching. This reason was given by one participant who stated, *'Unless I am a lifelong learner, I will be the same old traditional person doing the same practice, but if I come up with a new idea and I try to apply it in class, I'll be a creative teacher.'* (Interviewee 9)

Confidence was seen as important for the teacher's psychological well-being. Teaching was seen as not about competition, but a journey of development. Without confidence in one's own ability, a teacher might become like a swinging pendulum who could be easily shocked every now and then by the success of other colleagues. This could cause frustration to the teacher. According to one participant: *'It doesn't make me sad when I see other teachers do better, maybe, I didn't do well this time, and I will do better next time. We differ. We will never be the same, be yourself.'* (Interviewee 12). Confidence was also seen as important because of its effect on the students' learning. For instance, one participant stated, *'Because confidence is felt and smelt and seen by the students. Students learn from the teacher who is confident.'* (Interviewee 1)

Having a positive teaching disposition was seen as a favourable quality of the teacher. This was because that outlook could have a good influence on performance. For instance, one participant stated, *'If you like your job, you will do better. We are more successful in the jobs we like more.'* (Interviewee 1). Likewise, another participant stated, *'If I love teaching as a career, I will be updating myself professionally all the time to be distinguished among all my colleagues.'* (Interviewee 9)

5.2.6.3 Sources of knowledge of self

Four sources were revealed in relation to the two aspects of knowledge of self outlined in the previous section. These were: history and background, experience,

in-service training and feedback from the school community. These sources are presented below.

5.2.6.3.1 History and background

History as a language learner who was taught by a variety of teachers could have an influence on shaping the personality of the teacher. For example, one participant pointed out how an image of a previous strict teacher shaped her view of a person of a teacher she did not want to look like. She stated:

I grow up with the image of the teacher to be stiff and tough and never listen. This is the teacher I grow up with the teachers that I have all my life were that like. I am not gonna be that teacher. I am not gonna be stiff. I am not gonna be an ugly teacher who comes and goes and just gives us content. (Interviewee 12)

On the other hand, another participant acknowledged the role of a previous teacher in shaping her positive attitude towards the profession of teaching. She stated:

I chose to be a teacher because I like teaching. From the very beginning in my learning, I loved an English teacher in the preparatory school, and she was so kind with me, so I loved her personally and I loved English, so it was my dream to be an English teacher like my English teacher in my preparatory school. (Interviewee 11)

Previous school background was also seen as a source of influence on the teacher's attitude towards teaching. For example, one participant stated: '*I have been a lover of English all my life. I graduated from a language school. My background helped me so much in this career.*' (Interviewee 4)

5.2.6.3.2 Professional experience

Experience was also related as a source of developing the teacher knowledge of self. It helped in developing a passion for the profession. For instance, one participant stated:

I didn't choose to be a teacher in spite of the fact that I love my job very much. As you know, the total mark of the GCSE suggests which Faculty you

can go, so I graduated from the Faculty of Education in 1988. I have been working for about twenty years. I love my job very much. (Interviewee 14)

Likewise, another participant stated: *'If you don't find what you love, you should love what you find. I worked according to this principle, and this helped me a lot.'* (Interviewee 1)

Moreover, a reciprocal relationship was noted between experience and teacher growth. This was illuminated by one participant as follows:

First of all and the most important thing is that the teacher should stand in the class, use the student's book and the workbook because the relation between the teacher and the students strengthens this experience. It plays a very good role in the teacher's life. (Interviewee 7)

Experience was also seen as helpful to deal flexibly with change such as that of curriculum material. For example, one participant stated, *'It helps me to overcome any problem, even if the course changes. Our English course changes every five or six years, but if I have long experience, I can deal with any course at any stage, primary or secondary.'* (Interviewee 8)

Experiencing other educational systems was seen also as facilitating teacher growth by working as an interpretive filter through which new experiences could be dealt with. For example, one participant pointed out how work experience abroad helped him in such a way. He stated:

I have worked abroad, and this helped me a lot. For example, I faced a problem here and got over it in some way or the other. I found that problem abroad, but teachers there got over it in another way, so I got another idea, I got another feeling towards that problem and how they got over it. (Interviewee 3)

Experience was also seen as facilitative of reflection and consequently teacher growth. For instance, one participant stated:

Over the years, I learned how to improve my way. If I have a certain problem to overcome, then I improve my way in the next lesson and so on and through years until I reached a frame for the way that I should have inside the class to teach students. (Interviewee 3)

Likewise, another participant stated that being in the profession for ten years helped him grow by providing him with a repertoire of knowledge and skills, well-developed from practice. He stated, '*I have learned a lot and have changed a lot although it was after ten years of being a teacher, but I have changed a lot because I have learned things that I haven't learned during the first part of my career.*' (Interviewee 1)

5.2.6.3.3 In-service training

In-service training was perceived as a useful source that contributed to the self and professional development of the teacher. For instance, one participant stated:

It is very important to better ourselves, so we attend many programmes. Such programmes help us a lot to improve our way of teaching and to develop professionally. As for developing my skills, I try not only to attend, but also to apply and share others. When I share others, I remind myself of the new techniques, and it is also a kind of application. (Interviewee 14)

Thus, maximizing the benefit of such training could be achieved by participating actively not just attending as a passive recipient. Another participant referred that another way of increasing active involvement was to critically evaluate what was carried out by the in-service trainer and use this thinking as a source of deliberation to better understand one's own work. He stated:

While being a trainee, I began to have the feeling, I stand in this place. What this person is doing may affect me. I began to think I will be in this place. I shouldn't be like that because it affects students badly. I should be like that because it affects students greatly. I put myself in the teacher's shoes and in the student's shoes. This helped me to understand the feelings of my students. (Interviewee 1)

Another benefit of in-service training was to cause a state of reflection for the teacher, an indicator of change and consequently of learning. This was clarified by one participant as follows:

At the beginning of the training, I wasn't me because I went there being the old teacher. We had classes, we had sessions. I am not the old teacher anymore, but I am not yet the new one, so I got lost in the middle. (Interviewee 12)

5.2.6.3.4 Feedback from the school community

Feedback from the school community was also considered as a source of knowledge about the self and development for the teacher. It included feedback from students, supervisors and colleagues.

As for feedback from the students, the vast majority of participants (96%) supported that a teacher could know about the success of the lesson by asking students at the end. One benefit of doing this – as revealed by one of the participants – was to help the teacher make an informed decision with regard to modifying his practice. He stated:

I am asking them at the end of the class if they have something they didn't catch inside the class. I can repeat it for them again. I ask them questions like: What about my way of teaching? Can I change my way in teaching? Do you like my way in teaching? Of course I can change my way in teaching after their response. (Interviewee 2)

Another participant pointed out how the feedback from the students was a valid source. She stated:

One day, I had a problem, so I entered my classroom in a bad mood. One of my students wrote in my mail box, that I told you I put in class, she told me, 'you aren't yourself today'. They feel. I was teaching. I teach. I work, but she told me, you aren't yourself today. You didn't use any teaching aids. You didn't have fun inside the classroom today. They use, really, they use their broken sentences, but I got their idea. (Interviewee 14)

Feedback from supervisors was referred to as useful, but with a tone of caution stemming from the position of power inherent in the supervisor-teacher relationship. This was pointed out by one participant as follows:

With my inspectors, whatever they advise me, I do, but really here, I discuss their advice. If they convince me, I do their advice. Either me, he, or she, should be convinced, so I discuss them politely. We aren't in a war, who will win? No. He came to tell me something for the sake of the students. Perhaps she doesn't know what is good for my students, so I give her background about the class, about the students in my school. (Interviewee 5)

Peer feedback was highly regarded as a source of knowledge and development. For example, one participant referred to the usefulness of viewing himself through the eyes of others. He stated:

We are teaching English as a foreign language, and if I am a good teacher, I have to listen to other people's points of view, and I have to convince myself that I am not perfect all the time. I have to get the desire to develop myself and catch up with modern developments also. (Interviewee 2)

Likewise, another participant, who was undertaking a postgraduate course in education, revealed the value of peer discussion in updating their knowledge. She stated: *'We sit together. We exchange experiences. When I learn something new in the university, I become anxious to tell it to others. We come here and discuss it.'* (Interviewee 12)

Feedback from peer observation on one's teaching was also regarded. For example, one participant stated: *'We attend some classes to our colleagues and we benefit greatly when we attend these classes.'* (Interviewee 7). Peer evaluation helped the teacher reflect on practice. This was pointed out by one participant as follows:

We visit each other inside the classroom. Sometimes, I invite some of my colleagues to attend my class, and write down their remarks about using warm-up, about my rapport with my students, about my presentation itself. Is it good, or somewhat good, or bad? In the second time, I take them into consideration. This sort of peer evaluation will be very good for developing me. (Interviewee 11)

5.3 Teacher knowledge in classroom action

The knowledge held by the teachers helped them make informed classroom decisions. This part addresses the following research question: *‘How does teacher knowledge as represented in the views held by the participants in the first part inform their practice?’* Two major findings are revealed in this section. The first is that most of the views of the participants in the previous section are consistent with their accounts of practice or classroom action. This indicates that the practising teachers are justified in what they do. Therefore, similar or additional reasons are provided by the teachers for their practices in the same way they have provided reasons justifying their views. This lends support to the assumption that giving reasons for one’s views and practices is an important aspect of teachers’ professional life. The second finding is that those teachers make practical decisions in the classroom informed by what they know and view. This could explain the relationship between what is known or viewed and what is done. Both findings shed light on the relationship between theory and practice. For analytical considerations, the topics in this part are presented one by one broadly corresponding to the six knowledge areas of teacher knowledge presented in the previous part. It is worth pointing out that all this section is about the practices of the interviewed and observed teachers. These practices are related to teacher knowledge in either one of the two ways that have just been highlighted.

5.3.1 Knowledge of subject matter in action

The majority of participants highlighted the need of the EFL teacher to be aware of the culture of the target language. Awareness of the varieties of the target culture was turned into action by introducing the students to two varieties of English relating them to two English speaking communities. Thus, the teacher made use of her knowledge to inform her work and enlighten her students about a difference between not only two forms of a language item, but also two cultural patterns indicated by the use of such forms. One teacher encapsulated her knowledge in the following example from her teaching. She stated:

I was once teaching about some words about clocks, and as I recall one student stopped at my pronunciation of the word 'clock' (the American pronunciation), she said it in the British way and I had to clarify that there are two ways of pronunciation for some words in English, why we have such a difference in pronunciation (the Americans like to do it the easy way with an open 'O' in words like dog, clock, lock, etc. (Interviewee 12)

She reflected on this example pointing out the importance of teaching the culture of the target language as part of teaching EFL. She stated, 'As a matter of fact, a teacher of English is not just teaching the language as it is (e.g. grammatical rules, pronunciation, etc); a teacher of any foreign language should be teaching the culture of that target language.' Her decision to highlight EFL culture in her teaching was informed by the status of the English language globally and her desire to prepare the students to be able to communicate appropriately using global English. Highlighting the cultural points while teaching could serve this aim as she stated:

The ultimate purpose of TEFL is for the students to know almost every thing about that new culture including language, idioms, proverbs, different slang, customs, foods, attitudes, ways of dealing with others, ways of expressing ideas, ways of living, etc. Therefore, teachers of EFL should make use of any chance that they might get to teach something authentic about the American or the British culture and relate what's he/she is teaching to the every day life of those people. (Interviewee 12)

Thus, the teacher's awareness of the need to know about EFL culture and to transfer this knowledge to her students could inform her teaching by making use of any emerging opportunities when EFL culture could be made aware of. She gave another example to highlight how knowledge of the target culture could be a sounding board for comparing the culture of the mother tongue to that of the target language. She stated:

Another situation was when I was teaching a lesson about weddings and I started by teaching about the rituals of marriage that they have and that differs from ours; the marriage vows; best man and best woman; the things needed for good luck (e.g. something new, something blue, something old and something borrowed), the ceremony held at the end of the wedding, etc.

She reflected on her practice revealing how it could enrich knowledge of the students, who could make use of their learning for possible real communication

opportunities. She commented that language teaching should not be reduced to the sake of language teaching, but there should be a reason for teaching the language. An obvious reason was to teach it for communicating with EFL culture as an integral component. She elucidated her view stating:

Being aware of all these little things about the culture of the target language will help the learner be able to deal with this culture, to take what is good and what coincides with our own culture and set aside what does not. The word here is 'Authentic Teaching' OR 'Teaching English for an Obvious Reason (TFOR)', if not then we are doing TEFNOR or 'teaching English for no obvious reason'.

5.3.2 Knowledge of content pedagogy in action

The participants' views regarding teaching EFL skills informed their practice. For example, it was seen that students needed to develop their fluency and let them use English as much as possible. These views had an impact on the pedagogical content choices made by the teacher. For example, one teacher was keen on involving students in general discussions in an attempt to encourage them to use the language. The following episode was recorded in one of his classes.

<p><i>T. Do you use the internet?</i></p> <p><i>S1. No.</i></p> <p><i>T. Why?</i></p> <p><i>S. Because I don't know how to use it.</i></p> <p><i>T. She is very frank. Anyone uses the internet?</i></p> <p><i>S2. Yes.</i></p> <p><i>T. Why do use it?</i></p> <p><i>S2. To get a lot of information about different subjects.</i></p> <p><i>T. Good. Who else?</i></p> <p><i>S3. I don't find free time.</i></p> <p><i>T. You are so busy. I myself use the internet because it helps me in my study.</i></p>

In this episode, the teacher was trying to teach speaking in spite of the fact that this skill was not tested in the final year exam. Besides, he tried to encourage the students to speak English as much as possible. When asked about the reason why it was important for the students to speak in English and to use it as much as possible, he commented:

It is very important for students to speak English though this skill is not tested in the final exam because speaking reveals if students can express their ideas orally and how much they control the language. Besides, speaking helps them overcome the feeling of being shy. It is a fact that speaking is the common way of communication and that is the basic aim of learning a language. (Teacher 1, stimulated recall)

Similarly, the teacher resorted to teaching the language through real-like situations. This was exemplified in the following episode.

- | |
|--|
| <p>T. Pay much attention please. Suppose that you are crossing a street and at the same time, you see someone in a hurry, and he wants to cross the street quickly and there is a car coming very fast. You imagine that situation?</p> <p>SS. Yes.</p> <p>T. What's your response then? Yes...</p> <p>S1. Take care.</p> <p>T. Or, we can say...</p> <p>SS. Be careful.</p> <p>T. Be careful because there is something dangerous that is going to happen. Ok. Another situation. During the break in the school yard, you see one of your friends who says, 'Oh Marwa, I feel tired. I have a bad headache. Oh, excuse me for that. I can't see you. I am going to fall down.' Now, what your response to that? Yes...</p> <p>S2. You should see a doctor.</p> <p>T. That's a good answer. Who can give me another response? Yes</p> <p>S3. You should take a rest.</p> <p>T. Ok. Another situation. At home, you are doing your homework and your mother says, 'Oh, your dad has bought a new car.' Your dad, your father, bought a new car. What would you say? Yes...</p> <p>S4. Wonderful.</p> <p>T. Oh, wonderful. Or, we can say...</p> <p>SS. Amazing.</p> <p>T. How amazing! Why do we say this? Is it a good or bad surprise?</p> <p>SS. Good surprise.</p> <p>T. So we say, 'How amazing!' or 'How wonderful!' Ok.</p> |
|--|

In this episode, the teacher was trying to teach the language through situations.

When he was asked about the thinking behind this practice, he commented:

Teaching through situations makes students alert during the class. Situations make it easy for them to speak, so they feel self- motivation to share. They feel self - confident at the same time. Situations also are easy to be stored and remembered. In addition, using situations connects students with both language and real life problems. Situations vary the activity inside the classroom by offering matters to be discussed and that encourages students to create new responses. (Teacher 1, stimulated recall)

With regard to vocabulary teaching strategies in action, a variety of techniques for teaching EFL vocabulary were supported. This could make teaching varied. The choice of one technique or the other to use in the classroom was informed by the teacher's knowledge of the content material and the students' ability to understand. For example, one participant stated, *'I explain, maybe, in a sentence, maybe, a definition, miming, gestures, real objects. It depends according to a lot of things, according to the exercise, according to the types of questions, what if students don't understand a definition.'* (Interviewee 13)

In the following classroom teaching episode, more than one technique was used.

T.	<i>Now, we move to the word 'location'. While some actors were making a film, one actor said, 'The location is so crowded.'</i>
SS.	<i>(Say the meaning in Arabic).</i>
T.	<i>Ok. What's another word for location?</i>
S1.	<i>Site.</i>
T.	<i>Very good. So location is equivalent to site. Do you think that our school has a good location?</i>
SS.	<i>No.</i>
T.	<i>I see. Why do you think so?</i>
S2.	<i>Because it is noisy.</i>

When the teacher was asked about the reason for using an example and asking for equivalent of the newly presented word, he commented, *'So as to satisfy the students' individual differences and meet their needs to understand.'* (Teacher 1, stimulated recall)

Thus, when teaching EFL vocabulary, the teacher was to make a decision as to which technique to use counting on the suitability of the selected technique to the curriculum material, students' comprehension, or even according to a personal orientation of the teacher. For example, another participant stated, *'For example, I get them sentences. Sometimes, I put the word in a situation. Sometimes, I model or use gestures. I like to use expressions of my face, lots of times; don't forget I am a kinaesthetic learner.'* (Interviewee 12)

Inductive grammar teaching was seen as maintaining students' learning. This informed the teacher's decision to present grammatical structures in context instead of overemphasizing explicit grammar teaching. As stated by one

participant: *'In teaching grammar, I always try to introduce the structure through the context. I let them read the passage which contains many present perfect expressions.'* (Interviewee 4)

Thus, grammar was taught indirectly by drawing students' attention to the pattern. This practice was justified in relation to the students' need to use the target structure in an appropriate way. The reason given by the teacher was: *'to make them feel why we use the present perfect, when we use the present perfect, and how we use the present perfect.'* (Interviewee 4)

This indirect approach to teaching grammar could encourage students to go beyond the level of recall when learning structures to the levels of comprehension and application and thus help them activate their intuitive heuristics and consequently develop their intellectual abilities.

The decision to introduce grammar while teaching reading might reflect the participants' support for integrating EFL skills and aspects while teaching. Another teacher chose to introduce grammar through reading to reinforce students' learning of the new grammatical structures. He stated, *'I do like to highlight grammar in context. For example, if I am reading a passage, and as you know, it is an integrative unit, so the grammar that will be dealt with in the unit will be highlighted in the passage.'* (Interviewee 9)

Thus, presenting grammar in this way could draw students' attention to the pattern to be acquired. It could also deepen the feel for language and how it worked, so when it comes to teach the grammatical points overtly, it might become easier for students to identify the underlining structural pattern themselves, and consequently students might become active participants in the process. This is supported by the teacher as he justified his practice stating, *'I just want to highlight students' attention to the form, for example, of the present perfect, you know, once, twice, and three times, so, something like making them aware of the rule, but subconsciously, you know.'* (Interviewee 9)

Inductive grammar teaching was referred to as less focusing on explicit teaching of grammatical rules, but focusing more on examples. According to one participant, *‘There is a traditional way of teaching grammar through presenting the rule, and then examples, but I prefer presenting first examples, then elicit or give the students the chance to elicit the rule itself.’* (Interviewee 3)

His justification to start with examples rather than the rule was as follows:

In this way, the student can have the chance to make sentences freely and correctly, but if I concentrate on the rule itself, he can learn by heart that the present perfect has ‘have’ or ‘has’ plus past participle, and he can’t make a new sentence by himself. (Interviewee 3)

This might indicate that teaching grammar inductively could enable the students to learn actively because the teacher was not going to spoon-feed them with the form of the rule. Instead, they had to exert an effort to identify the grammatical structure. Furthermore, in presenting grammar in this way, the teacher made language functional because students knew that they were required not only to recognize the form of the structure, but also to use it in a meaningful way. In this example, the teacher is using his knowledge of how to teach grammar (pedagogy). His practice is based on pedagogical knowledge.

5.3.3 Knowledge of general pedagogy in action

Knowledge of classroom management, content and task management informed the practices of the teacher. The following three sub-categories point how.

5.3.3.1 Knowledge of classroom management in action

One aspect of knowledge of general pedagogy was knowledge of classroom management. A classroom management approach favoured was to set rules for classroom practice. This view informed practice, for example, one teacher used singing for that purpose as evident in the following episode:

<p><i>T. Now, I have to go. Thank you very much. Are you happy now?</i> <i>SS. Yes [loudly].</i> <i>T. Tell me if you are happy.</i> <i>SS. [Start singing.]</i></p>
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When she was asked about how she could use singing for managing the classroom, she commented:

What will make you amazed is that some times I use this song as a kind of punishment to keep classroom management in class. I didn't do it this class because they were good students but when they make noise I mark five marks on the board, each for each time they make unnecessary noise without saying a word to keep order, when they come to the five, they know that they won't sing at the end of the class. (Teacher 2, stimulated recall)

She added that this management approach became one of her teaching routines when she found out that it was successful. By trial, she knew that this was the best option for her and her students. She stated:

It all started one time when I tried this and told them if you do 5 behavioural disorders, you won't sing, they stopped the noise at once and that's how I resort to it some times as a kind of punishment especially when we have a new song in hand and they are waiting desperately for it.

5.3.3.2 Content and task management in action

A second aspect of knowledge of general pedagogy was knowledge of ways of content and task management. Announcing the aim of a task in advance was seen as one of the ways for task management. An example from teaching reading was given by two participants as follows:

First, I should put some questions written on the board. These will be the aim of reading, and ask my students to read the reading passage silently in a fixed time. After reading it, I ask some of them to answer the questions written on the board. (Interviewee 7)

The reason for the choice of this way was to help the students focus on what was to be achieved. The participant further added: *'I never let them read without a purpose. There should be a purpose of their reading, so that they should benefit from it.'*

Likewise, another participant stated: *'While they read the passage or the paragraph, I ask them to try to answer a question.'* (Interviewee 11). Her justification was: *'The student knows very well that during reading, he is asked*

to answer the question written on the board, so he focuses and concentrates on answering.'

These justified practices reflected an informed decision from the part of the two teachers indicating that predefining the goal of a task in advance has a regulatory function. Setting the purpose in advance echoed the two teachers' meta-cognitive awareness that directing students' attention could help them focus on achieving the predefined aims. Defining the purpose of a task in advance was also evident in classroom teaching in the following episode:

- T. Now, you have a reading text on page no. 13. I want you to read the text quickly. I want an answer for this question. The title of this text. Do you remember the difference between title and address? [First part of the question was asked in native language]. What is a title for?*
- SI. An essay [in native language].*
- T. Or a...*
- SS. A book.*
- T. Very good. I need a title for this text. Would it be: John's dream, safety on ships or becoming good sailors? Would it be a, b, or c. Read quickly.*
- SS. [Read silently].*

In the previous episode, the teacher defined the purpose of reading (i.e. to choose the appropriate title of the reading text) in advance. Another teacher might ask the students this question after they finish reading. However, the teacher's decision was informed by the regulative function of setting a purpose in advance, time management and the nature of the task at hand. She highlighted the importance of setting goals for students to be goal-oriented. She was also keen that, in doing so, the students could maximize the benefit out of the learning situation. She commented:

I made myself one rule 'Set a purpose for any task beforehand' because we all need a motive to do anything in our lives and learning is no exception for this if not the most important of all. If I ask them to read first, then they will try to read every little detail in the text with no specific target and this will take time and effort for nothing. (Teacher 2, stimulated recall)

Content management was also mediated by the teacher setting and applying clear instructions as evident in the following classroom episode:

T.	<i>Clap for her. Dare me Amna? Yes or no?</i>
Sl.	<i>No, miss.</i>
T.	<i>Yes.</i>
Sl.	<i>Yes.</i>
T	<i>With me Amna.</i>
Sl.	<i>Sail ... sailor ... ship engineer [last word pronounced incorrectly]</i>
T. &	<i>Engineer [in correct pronunciation].</i>
SS.	
Sl.	<i>Terrible [pronounced incorrectly].</i>
T. &	<i>Terrible [in correct pronunciation].</i>
SS.	
T.	<i>Another mistake and you will sit down.</i>
Sl.	<i>Life boat [pronounced incorrectly].</i>
T.	<i>Sit down. Who else. Yes.</i>

In this episode, the teacher asked a student to pronounce the newly presented vocabulary items. However, after the student had made a number of mistakes, the teacher did not let her complete the task. When the teacher was asked about the rationale behind this decision, she justified her decision in terms of her desire to facilitate the flow of the activity informed by the nature of the task. She also justified her choice in relation to her intention to maximize the time-on-task. She stated:

This was because it was a dare me activity and this game requires giving the best performance in the least amount of time and the least number of mistakes. Giving her more than one or two opportunities to get back on track will only spoil the game for all her mates and will result in more time off task, so I had to take the decision quickly to give the others the opportunity to participate in the game that they mostly like and desperately wait for. I also like this game as it encourages all students to participate even the shy ones as they have nothing to lose if they make mistakes and they aren't ashamed of their mistakes. (Teacher 2, stimulated recall)

Although the teacher put the student down, she viewed that managing the interaction in this way in that particular situation was a must. She also added that the student was to be blamed because her concentration level was low. Unless she was stopped, the interest in the game could vanish. The teacher was convinced that her decision was made to serve the common good of the class. She stated:

We went through the vocabulary one by one and we drilled the pronunciation more than once, she made one mistake and we all corrected her and it was obvious that she wasn't paying much attention and will only hinder sequence of the game. I had to discard her at once to give other students the opportunity to have fun. Sometimes I have to set emotions aside and be firm to create more time on task with fewer disturbances as possible.

Giving instructions or asking questions in the students' mother tongue was seen as facilitating task management as evident in the following episode:

<p><i>T. All right. The second question now. What news did their mother tell them? First of all [phrase said in native language] did she tell good news or bad news? Good news or bad news?...yes</i></p> <p><i>SS. Bad news.</i></p> <p><i>T. What is the equivalent we mentioned earlier? [Question said in native language].</i></p> <p><i>SS. Terrible.</i></p> <p><i>T. Terrible news. Ok.</i></p>

The teacher's decision to ask this question in the students' mother tongue instead of English was because of her intention to facilitate students' understanding. Her knowledge of the students' levels and her intention to facilitate the task management without disorder and without wasting the class time were also behind her decision. She stated:

I know my students exactly and I knew that they would fall for this and make a mistake, thus I wanted to avoid the chaos beforehand and save time and errors. That is why I settled for the answer in Arabic at first and then led them to say the meaning in English. I was concerned precisely about their comprehension at any cost and that will facilitate lots of instructions ahead. (Teacher 2, stimulated recall)

5.3.4 Knowledge of students in action

One aspect of knowledge of students was knowledge of their learning ability. It was seen that students learned at different rates. Informed by this knowledge, one participant divided the class into groups with mixed ability students. He stated: '*Sometimes I have a good student in a group of weak students.*' (Interviewee 9). He justified this practice stating:

Sometimes, I start to get a good one just to help them as a kind of support, you know, to scaffold their learning. He is with them, you know, and

whenever he has a problem, he comes and asks me, as if a group leader and at the same time, he is one of them...He is helping them to understand a question and how to answer it. (Interviewee 9)

This support provided by students to their classmates could bridge the gap among the different levels and break the boredom bright students might experience if the teachers directed efforts to slow learners as well as frustration slow learners might feel if the classroom activities are beyond their abilities.

Mixed ability grouping was also highlighted by another participant who stated: *'You can ask the star students to go and sit by four or five of the low level students.'* (Interviewee 12). The teacher pointed out how this practice helped her with her work. She stated:

Actually, it helps me all the time because I don't have very much time to do the workbook. How will I do it? I will teach the workbook, in extra classes, maybe, I will do it with them at the end of the class, and the star students just mingle around, and, maybe, help four or five other low level students to do their workbooks, so I don't have to write it on the board. This is how they help me.

Knowledge of students' different learning styles also had an influence on one of the participants' decision to provide his students with differentiated instruction according to their needs identified by the teacher. He stated:

Every student is different. If a student has special needs in reading, in vocabulary, in grammar, I group students of this sort of weakness. For example, some students suffer from weakness in grammar, so I group them, and I start to explain to them, not to the whole class, the whole class is doing another different activity. (Interviewee 9)

The teacher further added that he did not confine his differentiated instruction to be delivered in the classroom. He stated: *'I did find some students who couldn't read, and I started to specify certain times outside class.'* His rationale for doing this was:

Because this will be unfair for the whole class to be teaching them reading, how to read, or basic reading skills while the rest of the class can already read, you know, so I just specify certain sessions when I am free, in these classes and you can come and see me in the teachers' room and we start to do it.

Another aspect of knowledge of students was knowledge of students' style preferences. This knowledge informed practice by making the teacher adapt teaching to attend to the various learning style preferences of the students. One participant described how this knowledge informed her practice stating, '*I have three kinds of learners. I have the visual learners, the audio learners, and the kinaesthetic learners. Now, I know how students feel. I know that, sometimes, when I say a word, some of them won't get it. When I write the word, maybe, they won't get it too.*' (Interviewee 12). Below, she described a lesson she taught about tools to her EFL preparatory school students in which she put her knowledge about the different learning styles of her students in classroom practice. She stated:

I drew pictures on the board and I have written one letter under each one. They tell me and I just write the rest of the letters with other colours, so that they would remember the mixing of the colours. Then, I ask students to sit in groups, think of one tool, and make a puzzle. We played Simon Says too. At the end of the class, we had some time, I gave them an extra work to do at home, to make a puzzle, do it on a flashcard and draw the tool.

Thus, the teacher attempted to make use of her knowledge to meet the different style preferences of her students through letting them see, hear and manipulate things. Although the lesson was mainly focusing on kinaesthetic learners, visual and audio learners could find in it activities that might appeal to their style preferences. The teacher further commented, '*They have seen the word, seen the picture, repeated the words, said sentences about it, and manipulated it doing the puzzle themselves. It is good for the visual learners, now they have another kind of learning.*' (Interviewee 12)

Knowledge of student motivation also informed the practice of the teacher. The participants know that students lack motivation in the EFL classroom. They used this knowledge to cater teaching accordingly in an attempt to increase students' motivation to learn actively. They used a variety of actions which were informed by their knowledge of the students. These actions included: varying activities, using games, using student error correction, using collaborative work, and maximising student talk.

Varying activities was seen necessary to get the students active, and consequently their motivation could be increased. For example, one participant stated, '*Generally, students get bored. As you know, they have short attention span, so I vary techniques to keep students motivated*' (Interviewee 14). Using games was supported as another way for helping students to learn in an enjoyable classroom environment. For instance, one participant stated:

Games are totally involving the students in the activity and in the language learning. When I use games, students become very much happy, enthusiastic and motivated to play, and these three psychological aspects affected their learning because they get what I want them to get unconsciously...Games activate them physically, intellectually and most importantly, they enjoy them, so they learn language while enjoying it. (Interviewee 9)

Likewise, another participant pointed out the benefit of using games in helping students to learn. He stated:

Students are more interested to acquire information through games than through traditional instruction. We know that we remember 10 percent of what we listen to, 50 percent of what we say and 50 percent of what we do. Games give the opportunity to listen, to speak and to do. (Interviewee 1)

Encouraging self-discovery by prompting students to correct themselves was seen as a third practice to motivate students as it could develop students as autonomous learners. For example, one participant stated:

I don't correct him directly. I give him a chance to know the mistake which he did. I am trying to throw a net around the mistake, so he can find some solution to correct it without me because in the exam, he will be alone so I am trying to increase my students' ability to depend on themselves (Interviewee 7).

Not interfering immediately after a student's production of a wrong utterance was also favoured in order not to discourage the student's further participation. For example, one stated, '*If I correct her right away, she will never speak again.*' (Interviewee 4).

Thus, students could be motivated if they were enabled to correct themselves. This was put into practice in the following episode:

T. *I need you to read the text again and I need the reason why was the mother afraid? This mother was the mother of...who are her sons?*

SS. *John and Mike.*

T. *She was afraid. Why was she afraid? Why was she afraid? Ok Marwa?*

S1. *I have lost my husband at sea.*

T. *I or*

S1. *She*

T. *Have or has*

S1. *Has*

T. *Yes*

S1. *She has lost*

T. *Who?*

S1. *Her husband?*

T. *Where?*

S1. *In the sea.*

T. *Very good. At sea. Thanks Marwa. Sit down.*

In this episode, the teacher insisted on the student correcting herself. When she was asked about her thoughts for that decision, she reflected on the situation revealing that her decision was informed by the benefits of self-error correction. These benefits included helping the student to learn actively by reflecting on her answer, encouraging learner autonomy, avoiding negative feelings, and encouraging further participation. She stated:

Self-correction is the best way to help students identify their errors and thus learn from them. Getting to the right answer by herself will give her the chance to analyze the sentence and apply the grammatical rule in that particular situation which will lead, in turn, to better learning and memorization. This will consequently get us to the ultimate goal of teaching: self-learning. Self-learning gives students the opportunity for on-going learning and will give more place for student centred education. (Teacher 2, stimulated recall)

In that situation, the teacher was not in favour of peer correction because it could have hindered not facilitated the student's learning from her mistake. The teacher pointed out that the student's feeling of embarrassment if corrected by a peer could have distracted her from knowing the right answer and consequently the point of correction could not have been achieved. The teacher also felt that peer correction could have badly affected the student's learning and further participation. The teacher gave these reasons stating:

Lets' assume that I asked one of her classmates to correct her, what might become of her?: (1) she might be embarrassed and might not concentrate in the correct sentence, (2) she won't recognize the application of the rule where she makes a mistake, (3) she might not become encouraged to participate voluntarily in the coming activities, (4) and she might make the same mistake again and again.

It was also highlighted that students' motivation could be enhanced through the use of pair work and group work because collaborative learning could increase their participation. For example, one participant stated, *'I ask students to sit in groups. The weak student will learn from his classmates, from his student leader, and from his teacher, and he will participate. He will not feel shy to participate with his classmates.'* (Interviewee 14). She further added: *'If you ask them to work in groups, they will be alert all the time because they are not listening. They are participating.'*

Collaborative learning was also used because it could engage misbehaving students in the learning process. For example, one participant stated:

I prefer what is called cooperative learning through group work and pair work to give the chance for all students and especially trouble makers or naughty students to participate. He can share an excellent student to have the chance to speak freely and not to be naughty. (Interviewee 3)

Involving all the students especially trouble makers to participate in classroom activities the teacher organized for students to learn cooperatively either in pairs or in groups was seen as a good way to use their activity for the benefit of their learning. Mixing groups and pairs so that trouble makers could work together with well-behaved students might make the naughty student feel responsible and consequently they are engaged more in the learning process.

Maximising student talk was another way of motivating students. This might give an indication about the kind of interaction encouraged among the students, i.e. one which depended upon involving the students as active participants in classroom interaction instead of having them as passive recipients. Therefore, more involvement and more talk from students were valued. For example, one

participant stated, *'I stick to a principle which is more student activities, less teacher talk. If I stick to this, I will go along the right lines.'* (Interviewee 2).

Maximising student talk is congruent – as evident from the quantitative evidence mentioned in previous sections – with the teachers' view that this approach encouraged their students to participate actively in the classroom activities. This is represented in the participants' views that students needed to use the target language as much as possible and to develop their fluency and their support of using communicative language teaching. They also supported prompting their students to correct themselves instead of doing this for them. This also could reduce the amount of teacher talk in class. Moreover, they were in favour of not repeating instructions. All these views could reflect a concern from their part with the teacher's need to maximize students' talk and reduce teacher talk.

5.3.5 Knowledge of the classroom learning environment in action

A learning environment in which students feel reinforced, respected, united, tolerated and accepted was supported by the majority of participants. The participants' views supporting the provision of a favourable learning environment was actualised in teaching as evident from the accounts they provided of their practice.

One aspect of knowledge of an encouraging learning environment was the need to reinforce students' learning. This was evident in practice. For instance, one participant stated, *'I reinforce students in different ways, sometimes through praising words, sometimes by rewards, but I am keen to do this to encourage my students to learn.'* (Interviewee 10). Likewise, another participant stated, *'When I ask the students to do an activity, I make it like a competition and encourage students to do their best. Every time, they were eager to hear the announcement of winners. They like it.'* (Interviewee 12)

The need to provide students with emotional support by socialising with them, listening to their problems and concerns and making them feel secure in class was also actualised in teaching. For example, one participant stated, *'Every now*

and then, I make chats with the students asking about them and their progress. They like this and most of them consider me a friend to them.’ (Interviewee 11). She also encouraged socialising with her students out of class stating, ‘I encouraged students to talk to me out of class, and I am friendly with them. They usually come to me in the school yard or in my office and talk about what worries them. I listen to them and help them overcome the problem.’

The need to provide a secure learning environment had also an impact on classroom action as revealed by one participant who warned against harming the feelings of the students. She stated:

We have to be very sensitive because sometimes we teach, for example, tall, thin, fat, and we ask students to come in front of the classroom, who is thin? Who is fat? Who is very tall? This is not a good way because some students feel depressed. I shouldn’t say, point to the fat boy, point to the tallest one. I can use, who has a sense of humour? Who is fluent in English? Some teachers unconsciously do that, but we have to put these points in our mind.

Thus, instead of mocking at students’ physical features which could spread an intimidating environment in the classroom, the teachers could make use of favourable characteristics and they need to be aware not to make students feel frustrated.

Another aspect of a favourable learning environment was to encourage students to feel united. A teacher, informed about the value of developing the students’ sense of the classroom as a community, used singing to achieve this purpose. She stated:

If you have the opportunity to sing and make movements with your body, why not you do it, why you skip it. This is how I know that they liked the lesson and not willing to stop learning. This is the feedback I receive from them beside the look in their eyes at the end of any class. I taught them many educational songs and each class they sing one of them for me of their own choice. (Interviewee 12)

This practice was seen as powerful in uniting the students regardless of their ability level. It was a kind of emotional support provided to the students to

prepare them to learn in a relaxed learning environment. This was justified by the teacher as follows:

Even the low students, if they don't get the words, they get the rhythm. If they don't get the rhythm, they get the movement. All of them become happy. You know. This is not about who is good and who is bad, who has high level and who has low level. All the students participate in this, so they don't have any differences between them. They just sing together. They need to recharge their batteries too.

The need to tolerate students' errors was seen important for a favourable learning environment. This was evident in practice in one of the teacher's accounts, who stated,

I accept students' mistakes without direct interference. If I stress on the error, the student will be embarrassed and will not learn from her mistake, but I do it indirectly to let my students feel no problem making a mistake and to be willing to participate without fear of making errors. (Interviewee 4)

Accepting students' questions and initiatives was supported as one way to provide a favourable learning environment. This was actualised in practice by a participant who stated, '*After we finished the lesson, one of my students told me, 'why don't you let us work in groups?' I gave them this opportunity and we spent a very nice time inside the classroom.'* (Interviewee 14)

5.3.6 Knowledge of curriculum in action

The need to have critical awareness of the curriculum materials and how to teach them was highlighted. This critical awareness informed the curricular decisions made in four ways: skipping curriculum material, using additional material, reorganizing the curriculum material, and building on students' prior knowledge.

Skipping curricular material was one choice made to serve a practical need. It was essential given the lack of time allocated for the class. This was revealed by one participant. She stated:

Actually, sometimes, they put two exercises, two successive exercises with the same goals. I don't have enough time for that. We have just thirty five

minutes for the class. How would I do that? So I have to skip some exercises; the repeated ones only. (Interviewee 12)

Thus, this choice was made to make a balance between the syllabus requirement and the time limit. In addition, skipping material was also informed by the teacher's understanding of the redundancy of some activities. Although these activities could be good practice for the students, the teacher had not have the luxury of time to cover them. The same applied for practice activities in the student workbook. One participant stated: *'Sometimes, I ask students to complete the workbook at home, just give clear instructions, give a model for one or two sentences. They know what they are going to do and they complete it at home.'* (Interviewee 13). Thus, the decision to skip the workbook exercises was based on the teacher's awareness that the activities added no new information and consequently the students could do them without too much support from the teacher. She stated: *'The workbook consolidates what is in the student's book.'* (Interviewee 13)

Another teacher's decision to skip curricular material was based on her understanding that the class time could be invested in practising the lesson material, which could facilitate students' learning of the lesson and consequently make it easy for them to do additional exercises by themselves. She stated: *'When they act, they will find themselves that they have studied the lesson very much and their workbooks will be done so easily because it is a kind of consolidation to the oral work.'* (Interviewee 14)

Another curricular choice made was the use of additional activities. This decision was informed by the priority of meeting students' needs instead of just going through the curriculum material. One participant's reason for the use of such activities was to help the students easily digest the curriculum material. She stated:

Maybe, you will have to get them background information today and tomorrow, we will go on with the activities. Maybe, I need another activity that I designed to warm them up, to prepare them for the task, maybe, to prepare them for the activities in the book even. (Interviewee 12)

Another teacher attempted to strike a balance between finishing the curriculum material and responding to the students' needs by providing additional material acknowledging both pursuits were important. He stated:

If students can not read, and I am teaching them a reading passage, I couldn't continue until I teach them how to read, so I do it half and half. I teach the student how to read and I start carrying on with my goal, so I don't leave their needs out. Sometimes, I get the focus of the lesson in about ten minutes, and then the rest of the forty five minutes highlighting the weakness that they have and how to tackle it. (Interviewee 9)

Another choice was made to reorganize the curriculum material. The decision was seen as a chance to resolve the conflicting situation of whether to respond to students' needs or to cover the curriculum material. This decision was based on the understanding of the priority of students' needs. It was also based on the need not only to finish the course, but also on how to finish it without sacrificing students' learning. One participant stated:

You will have to finish it anyway, but no one is pushing you to do the same steps every class. You can do the content your own. Just they push you with the content. That's all. They don't push you with the all exercises to do in the same day; maybe, you will have to postpone it till the next day. (Interviewee 12)

Critical knowledge of curriculum material could also inform the teacher's decision to represent the content as shown in the classroom episode below:

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| <p><i>T. Now, we are going to read. We have a passage. Look at the picture. What's the title of this story? Yes.</i></p> <p><i>S1. The old man and the sea.</i></p> <p><i>T. Does this title remind you of something? The old man and the sea! Who wrote this story?</i></p> <p><i>S2. Ernest Hemingway.</i></p> <p><i>T. Yes. Earnest Hemingway. This story is his most successful book. Now, we are going to read the story divided into four parts. Group 1, read the first part. Group 2, read the second part. Group 3, read the third part. Group 4, read the fourth part. Before you start reading, I am going to give you some questions about each part [the teacher distributing handouts to the groups]. Group 3, what are you going to do?</i></p> <p><i>SS. Read part 3.</i></p> <p><i>T. Why?</i></p> <p><i>S1. To answer these questions [pointing to the handout].</i></p> |
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- T. *Yes. You will have five minutes to read and answer the questions. Start. [The teacher went around the groups answering their questions].*
- SS. *[Reading]*
- T. *Have you finished? The five minutes is over.*
- SS. *Yes.*
- T. *Ok. Listen carefully to other groups to be able to put the incidents of the story in order.*

In this episode, the teacher had the decision to represent the content of the set text. Instead of letting the students read the story individually and silently, she divided the reading material into four parts distributed over the four groups, so that each group concentrated on reading just one paragraph in five minutes instead of reading the whole story. In the activity after reading, she directed the students' attention to what would be mentioned by the other groups as a condition to be able to complete a task, which would be assigned later. This decision was informed by the curriculum material, the students' levels and the time limit. She stated:

I divided them according to their levels not haphazardly. I gave difficult questions to group 2 because I knew that their level was high. When I was preparing this task, I thought it would be too difficult for the students to read all the parts. It was overloaded with information, so I divided them into groups and gave a part for each group to know the incidents and save time. They could learn from each other. After the task, I gave them some time to read all parts to better digest the story. (Teacher 3, stimulated recall)

Another teacher based her decision to represent the content of the syllabus on her understanding of the students' low levels versus the difficult level of the material. It was based not only on what she could do to assist them to learn, but also to amuse them with interesting presentations. She stated:

As for the content, some lessons are a little bit difficult for the students. This needs sufficient preparation. I mean, before we enter the classroom, we have to think to put ourselves in students' place. Is it suitable for their level or not? If not, we are not allowed to omit any activities, but we can use worksheets, change the idea by using a game, something that attracts students' attention. Also, we can use PowerPoint presentations. (Interviewee 14)

In doing so, a teacher could not only compromise between teaching the content and helping students understand, but also providing students with exciting experiences to enrich their learning. This view could reflect an understanding of curriculum materials as broader than what is available by government prescription. It doing so, a teacher could move beyond the teaching points to build on students' prior knowledge.

Building on students' prior knowledge could enrich the learning opportunities in the classroom. It could provide an additional input that might need to be welcomed from the students. The majority of participants (79.6%) viewed it important to provide input building on the students' prior knowledge. This was supported in classroom practice. In the following episode, a teacher prompted the students to elicit their prior knowledge and contributions.

<p><i>T. Today's lesson is about the...what is it about? The</i> <i>SS. Sea.</i> <i>T. What else? Sea, what else? Who can tell me anything in today's lesson?</i> <i>S1. Fish.</i> <i>T. Fish in the water. Very good. Excellent. Yes</i> <i>S2. Ship.</i> <i>T. Another word for ship? A small boat is called</i> <i>S3. Boat.</i> <i>T. Boat. Very good. What else? What can you find in the sea? Yes, Eman.</i> <i>S4. Whales.</i> <i>T. Whales. A big clap for her.... What's another word for whales and</i> <i>sharks?...Big fishes. Will you be afraid of big fishes?</i> <i>SS. Yes.</i></p>
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The teacher commented on the value of building on students' prior knowledge as follows:

Actually, activating their prior knowledge is of immense importance to me as a teacher in many ways: to start from what they already know and build upon that bit by bit till I get to the new information that I need to teach in that particular period. It's much easier for me as a teacher to have them produce some of the intended knowledge than to be the only source of knowledge. It's also easier for me to do so to get students more involved in the actions of the lesson and thus become more interested in the lesson. Building upon their prior knowledge gives the students the opportunity to connect new knowledge with those they already know and thus makes it easier for them to memorize this knowledge, and finally, and as I intended ,

I wanted to have them predict some of the content that's about to be presented so as to gain their interest in the topic. (Teacher 2, stimulated recall)

Thus, students' prior knowledge could provide additional input, which may not be part of the assigned syllabus. However, this input might be a golden opportunity to enrich students' learning. It was input coming from the students, and necessarily meaningful to them. This hidden curriculum might need not only to be welcomed when revealed, but also to be looked for by the teacher.

Some goals of teaching highlighted in principle were evident in practice. One of the goals of teaching highlighted was to prepare students for exams. Having this in mind, a teacher included some test practices while teaching EFL so that students were taught the way they would be tested. This was evident in the following teaching episode:

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| <p><i>T. Now, look at the third case of 'if conditional' and for your study, it is the most important case especially in your exams. In the final exam, the examiner always concentrates on this case, so please pay much attention to it. It says that 'if' then comes 'had' plus...</i></p> <p><i>SS. Past participle.</i></p> <p><i>T. Past participle. Then we have in the second sentence 'would'</i></p> <p><i>SS. Plus 'have'</i></p> <p><i>T. Plus 'have' ...plus</i></p> <p><i>SS. Plus past participle.</i></p> <p><i>T. Plus past participle. Now, I want you to analyse why we use 'would have' instead of 'would' plus 'infinitive'. Look here, we use 'if' plus infinitive. Here, we use 'would have' plus past participle. Why?</i></p> <p><i>S1. Because it needs the tense to be past perfect.</i></p> <p><i>T. Very good. It's past perfect. For example. If he had practised well, he - look for your options - (A) would win (B) would be won (c) would have to win (D) would have won. Which one of these options do you think is the right answer? Yes</i></p> <p><i>S2. Would have won.</i></p> <p><i>T. Yes. Would have won the match. Why didn't you choose 'would have to win'?</i></p> <p><i>S2. Because the second part needs to be past perfect.</i></p> <p><i>T. Yes, but here we have 'would have to' plus the infinitive, and in the third case, it is necessary to use 'would have' plus the past participle.</i></p> |
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In this episode, the teacher was trying to prepare the students for examinations by providing them with practice on exam questions. The teacher justified the need

for preparing students for examinations as a complementary role to the other roles performed by the teacher as follows:

Preparing students for examinations is a complementary role to the other roles performed by the teacher because it is the final outcome of work in relation to both the student to get an excellent mark to be able to join the faculty he or she most likes and to the teacher to know that he does well and if there is a fault, he can repair it or at least avoid making it further. (Teacher 1, stimulated recall)

Preparing students for real-life situations was also evident in the following classroom teaching episode:

T. *The father, John's father or mike's father. When they will die, they go under*
SS. *The sea*
T. *The sea? No, they go under ground. Bury them, put them in their graves and put a stone on their graves like this [the teacher drawing on the board]. He is buried here [referring to the drawing] and we put a big stone above his grave. This is the grave. He is buried here. We would like to write something on his grave. Who can tell what can we write? In groups, think of one sentence, a short sentence to remember the dead, a nice word...what will we say? For example, we can say, 'He was such a nice man.' Work in groups. I want you to draw the grave and write above it whatever you like [the teacher goes around the group, listens from them and helps them with guiding words]...Ok.*

When the teacher was asked about the point behind this activity, she described the aim of the activity stating:

This was the post-reading stage, which involves free practice of the new learned knowledge involving free speaking, writing or extra reading on the topic. There are many and various activities that can be employed to achieve that target, for example, singing, drawing pictures, stick figures, making book covers for the story, designing posters, role playing, re-writing the story events, writing postcards or letters expressing their opinion as long as the activity is related to the topic in hand. (Teacher 2, stimulated recall)

The teacher made use of the opportunity to teach the students about a life situation. Although the situation was about a sad moment, she handled it in an amusing way as she revealed stating:

Considering this lesson, with a man dead and a mother being full of fears about her kids at sea, there could be a moral lesson behind this that all could learn. That's why I like to resort to writing wise words on the marble stone of the deceased man, and if they are to think in groups of such activity, I thought why not to involve drawing to add fun to the task and help students participate. They like this activity too as they told me themselves.

5.3.7 Knowledge of self in action

Reflection was seen as important to facilitate teacher growth. It could have an impact on practice by providing the teacher with an orientation to reflect in action. For example, one teacher described how he could see himself in the reaction of the students whose outputs could provide an indication whether the teacher was successful or not during the lesson. He stated:

The teacher himself is the mirror of himself. In the stage of practice during the lesson, I find myself; I harvest what I have done in the presentation. I harvest what I have taught. During the stage of practice, I can find myself, I see yourself in the reaction of the students, I see my method, I see my personality during the practice stage. (Interviewee 5)

In addition to reflecting in action, reflection could be on action. As viewed by one participant, reflection was the tool she used to develop herself. She gave some criteria to put this tool in actual practice. For her, the content of reflection was the act of teaching with its various aspects whether the teaching practice or the relationship with her students. For her, reflection on action could be carried out after a lesson she had taught or even after a whole year of teaching to give implications for what might be needed to be modified or supported. She considered the intended learning outcomes the criterion to which she carried out the reflective practice. She stated:

I assess my performance, you teaching, my relationship with the students everyday, maybe after each class, maybe monthly. I don't have to do it everyday, and I can do it year by year by assessing the whole outcome of the students at the end of the year, and how would I change it with the new kinds of students at the beginning of the next year. (Interviewee 12)

Similar to reflection, the teachers' personal qualities could have an impact on practice. The teachers described themselves with certain qualities which helped them survive the profession of teaching. One of these qualities was to have a

sense of humour. Being aware about the need for this quality to alleviate stress in class, one teacher pointed out how he made use of humour in class. He stated:

I use jokes related to the lesson itself, a situation that arises from the lesson itself, but not from outside the learned subject which I am teaching, someone pronounced a word wrongly, someone pronounced a word in a funny way inside the class, so we make a good situation, or we make fun, but just for five or six seconds in the class, not more than that. (Interviewee 7)

In doing so, laughter could be generated from classroom related issues and in a way that was as quickly as possible in order not to waste the classroom instructional time.

Another participant highlighted that classroom humour was purposeful. She made it with a didactic purpose. She stated:

Sometimes I give students a joke or ask them to look for an educational joke or quiz and we can use the same language. For example, it is a good joke, please write it on the board, and after writing it, we can make a table, verbs, nouns, adjectives, question words. (Interviewee 14)

Her justification for doing so was twofold: to make the students enjoy and learn. She commented: ‘*You will find that students will learn in an amusing way. They will find themselves learning, enriching their vocabulary.*’ She showed her intention of making use of humour in class stating, ‘*From time to time, when I use some light activities like using puzzles, jokes, this will make fun inside the classroom, but it is good to use this fun, not fun for fun. There should be a purpose behind this.*’

Having a sense of humour also informed practice as evident in the following episode:

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| <p>T. <i>I have lost my husband. Was it in paragraph one, two, three or four? At last [with the teacher smiling], yes Norhan.</i></p> <p>SI. <i>Four.</i></p> <p>T. <i>Yes. Who does ‘I’ refer to? Does it refer to ‘me’, ‘John’, ‘Mike’ or ‘the mother? Who is ‘I’? I lost my husband at sea.</i></p> <p>SI. <i>John and Mike.</i></p> <p>T. <i>‘I’, John and Mike...I [with a laughing tone following by laughter by all the class].</i></p> |
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SI. *The mother.*

T. *Clap for her. I ...am. John and mike...are. 'It' takes 'they'. John and Mike...They. Ok.*

The teacher's resort to humour was informed by her awareness of the value of having a sense of humour in class to survive the profession of teaching. She stated:

I like to have fun while working. That's what keeps me going in this kind of job. Teaching could be dull for some teachers as they teach the same thing day by day. Having a sense of humour and seeing them laughing every now and then makes me satisfied deep within and I would want to go on teaching, after all one needs to recharge his batteries. (Teacher 2, stimulated recall)

Being flexible was also evident in practice. For instance, one participant stated, '*I accept my students' opinions and suggestions in class, and modifications if they have any. For example, they once said that they were fed up with group work and need to work individually, so I was happy that they suggested something new, something that's not common to be used.*' (Interviewee 9)

Working hard was seen favourably as well. Having this personal orientation towards school work, one participant described how it affected her regular practice. She stated:

As for me, I come earlier and do hard work inside the classroom, do my written work I am responsible for in a good way, not to be reluctant to enter my period, but enter my period before the bell rings, attend on time, not to be late for my period. (Interviewee 11)

Having a positive disposition about the subject matter and the profession of teaching was evident in practice as shown by a participant who stated, '*I encourage students that what they are learning is very important, not just for the purpose of exams, but for lifelong learning. This will help them view the language they are learning in a different way and value what they are learning.*' (Interviewee 9)

5.4 Contextual factors affecting teacher knowledge in action

This part of the chapter attempts to answer the following research question: *how does context influence EFL experienced teachers' actualisation of their knowledge in classroom practice?* Quantitative and qualitative evidence revealed a set of contextual factors and challenges which affected the participants to realise their knowledge in action. The following analysis will reveal how these factors had an impact on the application of teacher knowledge in the classroom. A set of contextual factors were constructed to explain the conflict between teacher knowledge and classroom practice in the current study. These were: the EFL exam policy, lack of time, support and resources, students' expectations and needs, and large class size. These are presented below.

5.4.1 The EFL exam system

An important contextual factor affecting the actualisation of teacher knowledge in action is the exam system. The EFL examination policy interfered with the teacher's attempts to actualise knowledge of content pedagogy in practice. Although almost all participants highlighted the need to focus on teaching EFL aural-oral skills as well as reading and writing, the reality of EFL teaching was found to be not a straightforward representation of the claims espoused, which were played down by the EFL examination system. For instance, a participant stated: *'The examination is based on reading and writing and the examiners ignore listening and speaking.'* (Interviewee 10)

The exam system resulted in an unbalanced focus on teaching the EFL skills marginalising listening. For example, a participant stated, *'We don't give much more attention to listening. All of us focus on reading and writing and listening comes at the end. No tests are done in listening, so all of us don't care about listening.'* (Interviewee 8). Likewise, another participant stated, *'When I gave the students listening texts, I noticed that some of them didn't care, and when I asked them, they said that they were not going to be specialists and in the exam at the end of the year, listening was not involved.'* (Interviewee 2)

On the other hand, teaching writing was seen important because of being examined. For instance, one participant stated: *‘Writing is very important because all testing is done in writing (Interviewee 8).*

The focus on teaching language skills was bound to the exam system. For example, one participant stated: *‘The language is a whole system and should be tested; the four skills of language should be tested at the same time.’* (Interviewee 4). Likewise, another participant stated: *‘Practising EFL skills is very important either in class or in testing. Now, tests are set to deal with writing and reading only. Tests need to include the four skills.’* (A questionnaire respondent)

The EFL exam system was seen as the reason for the students’ pragmatic view to learn EFL. For example, one participant stated:

Many of the students in high school are not interested in speaking or in pronunciation because they say ... the teacher at the end of the year corrects the written word, so I get the mark with the written word, why should I know the good pronunciation. (Interviewee 2)

It was also seen as the reason for the students’ unwillingness to communicate in class. This was pointed out by one participant who described his students stating, *‘They depend one hundred percent on written English, and they are tested in written English, and they are graded according to their written English. That’s why they are not concerned in class, that’s why they are not interested to listen or to speak.’* (Interviewee 4)

Similarly, the majority of participants were in support of the view that students need to be supported to develop their fluency in the target language more than accuracy. However, this view was resisted in practice because of the EFL exam system. For instance, one participant stated, *‘I want to teach my students how to speak English very well, how to use English in everyday situations, and at the same time, I cannot neglect that they are going to be tested in writing.’* (Interviewee 4)

5.4.2 Lack of time, support and resources

Lack of time, support and resources intervened with the actualisation of most areas of teacher knowledge in action. Lack of support and time was found out to be a contextual challenge to put knowledge of subject matter in action. Although the proficiency in the target language was highlighted as an important component of subject matter knowledge, that was not the case in classroom practice. For instance, one participant stated: *‘Sometimes, we find difficulties to explain things in English all the time...I want to say it in English, but it is difficult for me to express easily as in the past.’* (Interviewee 13). This lack of proficiency confessed by the teacher was attributed by her to the lack of support and time to improve or at least to keep the previous level of proficiency. She stated:

When I get out of my classroom, I find no one to practise with me speaking English...out of my class, it is rarely we speak English...and at the same time, I have no time to listen to something out of materials, for instance, to a series at TV or films. It is difficult to listen to such things. I have no time.
(Interviewee 13)

Thus, although the teacher might have the readiness to develop her knowledge of the target language, the surrounding context in the school was not supportive. In addition, personal commitments deprived her from the opportunity to improve her proficiency.

Another factor related to resources is classroom seats. Classroom seating arrangements in rows fronting the teacher in the classroom in the Egyptian context could hinder the organization of collaborative learning which could support students to learn actively and from one another. Although organizing collaborative learning was seen favourably by most participants as a kind of support to help students learn actively, classroom seating arrangement in rows was seen by the majority of participants (63.2%) as a challenge to put their views regarding instruction in action. Even when group interaction was organized, it was done in an uncomfortable manner either for the students or for the teacher. For example, one participant stated: *‘I do use group work and I do use pair work in class. I just make students face each other from two desks.’* (Interviewee 9).

Another participant stated: *'When they are doing any kind of group work, I can not just mingle around because the class is not too big for me, so I just climb the desk and have a whistle to stop the activity.'* (Interviewee 12)

The availability of visual and audio resources was seen as influencing the teachers' actualisation of knowledge of students' learning style preferences in practice. Although the vast majority of participants were in favour of the use of audio and visual aids to attend to their students' different learning style preferences, lack of such resources was viewed as a challenge to put this view in action. For example, one participant referred to the lack of visual material provided by the school. He stated, *'There are no flash cards provided by the school. Some students need to learn through them, but I can't buy them myself because this will be financially pressing on me.'* (Interviewee 9). Likewise, another participant highlighted the lack of audio devices to use it with his EFL students. He stated:

There is only one audio cassette player in the school. It is not enough because there are a lot of teachers in the school. This causes problems because sometimes I want to use it to present authentic material, but some other teachers may be using it at the same time. I then had to skip the activity. (Interviewee 8)

Lack of time was also related as an obstacle to respond to the students' individual needs and to provide differentiated instruction to students who were viewed as having different learning rates. For example, one participant stated: *'How can I deal with them individually in forty five minutes? If I divide the time of the period by the number of the students, I give only a minute for every student. This is not enough.'* (Interviewee 5)

The actualisation of knowledge of curriculum was also hindered by lack of time and resources. Lack of time was found out to be another challenge to go through the curriculum material given that not only did the textbook need to be covered, but also the practice exercises. For example, one participant stated, *'Sometimes we find little time to deal with workbook because the course really takes all our time.'* (Interviewee 8). Another participant similarly complained of the challenge

of the lack of time particularly because he was keen on providing students with expansive learning. He stated: *'The forty five minutes in the class are not enough because I highlight many things. I start to explain and clarify things. I want to make sure that students understand.'* (Interviewee 9)

Lack of resources had an adverse effect on putting knowledge of curriculum in action. Although there was a multimedia lab EFL teachers could make use of, it could not be used by all teachers at the same time, so the school organized the number of times a teacher could use the lab for teaching which was seen as not enough. For example, a participant stated, *'The lab is only one period every two weeks. This is too few.'* (Interviewee 8). Having modern technology in class could make a difference while teaching. However, the lack of facilities had a negative effect on making such improvement. For example, one participant stated: *'The class is not equipped with computers, with overhead projectors. If there are in my classes, they help me. This is the only obstacle which I can not solve because it is money. This is the budget of the school.'* (Interviewee 7)

Lack of time made it challenging to go through the curriculum material. Going through the curriculum material was further challenged by the overload in the curriculum material. For instance, a participant stated:

I am overloaded with units, some units that I teach only take one period for each lesson, some units need two periods for each lesson because I have grammar. I have vocabulary, and I have skills to teach. How will I go through the whole three stages of reading if you are teaching vocabulary, overloaded vocabulary and grammar in thirty five minutes! (Interviewee 12)

Thus, the teacher was referring also to the lack of time to go through all the curriculum material. Moreover, some material might be difficult to be digested in the time allocated for it. For example, she indicated that the pre-designed material could take double the amount of time given for it. Accordingly, the curriculum designer – unlike the teacher – did not have access to local knowledge regarding the suitability of the curriculum material to the students' levels. She stated: *'I have five lessons in a unit. It is already divided, and each*

lesson will take two periods and each lesson has its own new vocabulary and new grammatical points.'

Likewise, another participant complained of an overloaded syllabus. She gave an example from the textbook to point out how the course was loaded with too much material. This was apart from the workbook which included exercises for practice and which was required to be taught as well. She stated, '*We have, especially, in the listening; we have a long passage, reading as well, we have a long passage with five parts. In each part, we have a lot of knowledge; we have a lot of tasks. It is a must for this to go side by side with the workbook.*' (Interviewee 13)

Lack of time was seen as a challenge to put knowledge of goals of teaching in action. Although a teacher might be keen to prepare students for life in addition to other purposes of the teacher, the time of the class could run short to achieve this because of the non-instructional time wasted to manage a large class size. The teacher might not also have enough out-of-class time because of the emergent duties assigned to the teacher by the school administration. This was highlighted by a participant who stated:

It is very important for the teacher to prepare students for life, but I don't have time. Also, large class size is a very widespread issue. Even I have free time in the school, I am also overloaded with other commitments to the administration such as covering a teacher who is absent. (Interviewee 9)

Another challenge was the lack of teacher supervisor's support. The teacher supervisor's visits were seen as targeted to ensure that the teacher was covering the assigned teaching material according to the time plan. This could represent an additional pressure on the teacher to finish the material even at the expense of achieving other goals. He stated:

The administrative and supervisory practices are directing the teacher to cover the material in the first place not to prepare them for life as good citizens. This is the reality. Supervisors are all traditional. They graduated a long time ago, and expect me to teach the way they taught. (Interviewee 9)

This resulted in the teacher's lack of awareness to make use of arising classroom opportunities to achieve the various goals of teaching. For example, one participant stated:

Sometimes, you might find a teacher teaching a reading comprehension text and he doesn't exploit it to refer to a moral lesson. He just taught the content, so it is important to teach the teacher that he should pinpoint on these aspects when the chance arises. (Interviewee 9)

5.4.3 Students' expectations and needs

Mismatch between the teacher's knowledge of the students' expectations and needs and their actual expectations and needs was a third challenge facing the teacher to actualise most areas of teacher knowledge in action. Students' unwillingness to communicate using the target language hindered the teacher to actualise knowledge of subject matter in action. Although the teacher could have a good command of English, it was not possible to make use of it in the classroom because of the students' reluctance to use the target language. This was stated by a participant as follows:

One of the comments in my first year in teaching in the secondary stage when I spoke English with my class, with my colleagues, inside the class or outside the class, I heard the students laughing, they say, 'our teachers speak English inside the class, why didn't they speak in Arabic.' (Interviewee 2)

Accordingly, the students' reaction could be an undermining external factor, which might have a negative influence on the teacher's pursuit to put knowledge of English in practice.

The students' low ability level could also have an impact on the actualisation of knowledge of subject-related pedagogy in action. The students' low level could be an obstacle for the teacher to use communicative language activities, avoid using translation of EFL vocabulary, use inductive grammar teaching, and avoid using meta-language. This is in spite of the need of such practices to achieve the aims of EFL teaching in the context of the current study.

The majority of participants highlighted the need for using communicative language activities while teaching EFL skills. However, this view was challenged in practice due to the low level of students. Although the teachers had the willingness to use such activities, they refrained from using them informed about this by their knowledge of the students. For instance, one participant stated: *'They don't grow up to the level to do a free role play or debate.'* (Interviewee 12)

Another area where challenges were faced was the teaching of EFL vocabulary. Almost all participants objected to translating the meaning of the new vocabulary into the students' native language when presenting EFL vocabulary. However, this claim was jeopardized in practice due to the teacher's desire to make sure that all students including those whose proficiency was not very high were able to get the meaning of the presented new vocabulary item. This was elucidated by one participant as follows:

If they are key words, I ask students after my presentation, after I give examples, what does it mean in Arabic because, you know, students should know what I am saying...so the student who couldn't get the English meaning, they can listen to the Arabic one, but not from the teacher, from one of their classmates. (Interviewee 14)

An area of subject related pedagogy with many challenges was the teaching of EFL grammar. Although the vast majority of participants were in favour of inductive grammar teaching, the students' low ability level made it difficult to teach inductively. For instance, one participant stated:

I don't use it too much if the rule is tough, long, and they need to understand it. I am not teaching for five students in front of the class. I am teaching to the whole class. If it is ok and it is simple for them, maybe we do it this way. I can't teach inductively all the time. Sometimes I have to do it deductively. (Interviewee 12)

Thus, the use of inductive grammar teaching was conditional. Although the teacher supported it in principle, she could not use it because she did not have so many bright students who would be able to identify the underlying grammatical pattern by themselves.

Similarly, some of the teachers were not in support of using meta-language while teaching grammar. However, using meta-language turned out to be obligatory in practice because of the need of low level students of explicit instruction. This conflict was unavoidable for one participant who stated, '*I am trying to write meta-language on the board. I have to write it for slow learners because not all my students are top students.*' (Interviewee 2)

Students' needs also interfered with the intended coverage of the curriculum material in the allocated time. Although the EFL course was a national curriculum prescribed and followed-up by the Ministry of Education, the majority of participants put their students' needs before going through curriculum materials. This was because of their awareness that the curriculum materials may be beyond their students' actual levels. This was the case for one participant who stated, '*The phonetic symbols in the secondary stage are beyond the students' level because they haven't been introduced to the system of sounds in previous stages.*' (Interviewee 9).

Although the teachers might wanted to teach certain material, they were unable to do this because of the students' needs. The students expected the teachers to help them get good test scores even at the expense of learning necessary material. For example, one participant stated:

Sometimes, I sacrifice the listening for the sake of other questions in the exam students can not answer. They come up and say, well, teacher, I can not answer, for example, the translation question, how can you help me improve my level in this, so I start to sacrifice listening and I start to teach them how to answer translation. (Interviewee 9)

A mismatch was noted here between exam requirements and the curriculum material to be taught, which might contribute to the conflicting situation of either preparing students for examinations or providing them with activities that could help them as language learners. For instance, one participant stated: '*There is a gap between teaching English and testing English.*'(Interviewee 4).

Although the teachers might not be happy about neglecting teaching some aspects of the curriculum, they had to do it. For example, one participant stated:

I have a plan for listening, but it is students' need, you know, and they say, at the end of the, what they always tell me, at the end of the year, we are not going to be examined in listening, so listening is not important. I do discourage this, but I do agree with them in the assessment sentence. (Interviewee 9)

Student and parental expectations were seen as pushing the teacher to cover the teaching material and preparing them for exams at the expense of achieving other goals for teaching. For instance, one participant stated:

I am busy teaching all the time. I have lots of material to cover and at the same time the society is waiting for the final results. Why? Because the final result will transfer the student from one year to another especially in the GCSE. It transfers him from one stage to a different stage, so what is more important is the mark that the students get. (Interviewee 9)

5.4.4 Large class size

Large class size had a negative impact on the actualisation of various areas of teacher knowledge in action. It affected the teacher's ability to manage the classroom resulting in a lot of time wasted out of task. The majority of participants (78%) viewed large class size as a challenge to manage the classroom. In addition, it made it difficult for the teacher to establish rapport with the students. Consequently, this could make it not possible for the teacher to provide the students with a favourable classroom learning environment. Almost all participants emphasized that the teacher could create a favourable classroom learning environment by giving students the chance to ask questions. However, this view was challenged in practice because of the large class size. Instead of allowing students to ask questions in class, a participant asked her students to write to her, which made rapport not as natural as would be expected. She stated:

I feel difficulty to deal with every student in my class, so I thought of an idea, to prepare something I called it 'mailbox', and I put it at the very beginning of the class, and I tell my students to feel free to write to me whatever they want to say, but they are not supposed to interrupt me while I am teaching. (Interviewee 14)

Although the large class size created a distant relationship between the teacher and the students, this challenge did not prevent the teacher from establishing

rapport with the students though making it more demanding. The previous participant commented:

Every time I try to make good relationship with my students, I feel it is too difficult, but throughout using the mailbox, at least, I could know their names. I have a good relation with them because every one of them knows that he is very important to me. His questions, his problems, his needs are very important to me, and I will respond honestly to their problems.

The large class size also had a negative effect on curriculum coverage. The large number of students inside the class resulted in a lot of discipline problems which could take the teacher a lot of time out of the invaluable instructional classroom time. For example, a participant complained of spending a lot of time out of task to sort out students' behaviour problems in a way that had a negative effect on carrying out curricular activities. He stated, *'I can't teach everything that I want to teach because of the large class size. There are many distracters in the large classes. You are going there with a plan and with specific objectives and you find behaviour problems because of the large numbers.'* (Interviewee 9)

Large class size and the subsequent problems it results in made the teacher feel cynical about teaching and could lead to teacher burn-out. Although a teacher wanted to be seen in certain ways as a person, external challenges had a negative impact on the actualisation of such qualities. For example, a participant described her passion for teaching. She stated: *'I love my job very much'* (Interviewee 14). External factors such as large class size did not help her fully realise this passion. She paradoxically stated, *'My work in the past was easier because we had no overcrowded classrooms. I am suffering from seventy students in class, but in the past, I was teaching twenty, twenty five students, so it was so easy for me.'*(Interviewee 14). Although a class of that large size might be an extreme example, it was not an unusual story.

Chapter 6

Discussion of the findings

Chapter six: Discussion of the findings

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide a profound insight into the findings of the study in relation to its context and existing relevant research evidence. Four themes are discussed. These are: the core of the EFL teacher knowledge, the development of teacher knowledge, understanding teacher knowledge in action, and the role of context in the realisation of teacher knowledge. These themes are discussed in the following sections.

6.2 Core knowledge of the teacher

Six areas were found to represent the core of teacher knowledge in the current study. These areas were: subject matter, pedagogy, students, classroom learning environment, curriculum, and self. Knowledge about subject matter was found to be an essential requirement for the teacher. Various reasons justifying the importance of this domain were provided by the participants. Proficiency in EFL could enable the teacher to transfer this proficiency to the students. It could also provide the teacher with a positive disposition towards English and help in carrying on efforts to build more proficiency. Knowledge of the subject matter could also help the teacher to be knowledgeable in class. It was also found important for the EFL teacher to know about the origin and culture of the target language. Knowledge of EFL culture could help the teacher develop students' awareness of the interrelatedness of languages especially when encountered with EFL words or expressions similar to those in the mother tongue. Knowledge of EFL culture could also help the teacher enlighten the students about it and eliminate any misconceptions they might have about it. The findings in the current study regarding the importance of subject matter knowledge as a core area of teacher knowledge agree with existing literature both in general education and the TESOL field (Norrish, 1997; Toh et al., 2003; Mullock, 2003; Liu & Meng, 2009).

Another area of teacher knowledge found to be essential in the current study is knowledge of how to teach the subject matter. This agrees with Shulman (1987) and Toh et al. (2003) that mastery of pedagogical content knowledge is an important area of teacher knowledge. It was found important for the teacher not only to know about subject matter and how to teach it, but also about general principles of teaching. This type of knowledge was highlighted as it could enable the teacher to maximize learner involvement. This could ultimately lead to more space for learner-centred education. Two aspects of this knowledge are important with this regard. The first aspect is that it is important for the teacher to be aware of ways to facilitate the instructional process through the management of student behaviour. The second aspect was related to the teacher's capability of how to manage the content and the task. These areas agree with the domains referred to by Gatbonton (1999) and Mullock (2006) as constituting pedagogical knowledge.

Knowledge of students was found to be another core area of teacher knowledge. This agrees with existing research literature supporting this domain as an essential element of teacher knowledge (Shulman, 1987; Turner-Bisset, 1999; Mayer and Marland, 1997; Meijer et al, 1999). Without such knowledge, it might not be possible for the teacher to effectively adapt the teaching process to attend to the students' needs.

Knowledge of the dynamics of the classroom learning environment was found to be another area of teacher knowledge essential for the teacher to build rapport with the students. Five distinguishing features could be inferred from the participants' responses. These were grouped in the acronym RESTA (Reinforcement, Emotional support, Solidarity, Tolerance and Acceptance). Various reasons were provided by the participants justifying each one of these features. Highlighting knowledge of the learning environment as core knowledge of the teacher is consistent with research evidence which suggests that a favourable learning environment is an essential component of knowledge about teaching. Tolerating students' errors is a sign of a positive atmosphere. Norrish (1983) emphasizes the need for such a disposition from the teacher stating: "Learners should be given encouragement in the situation where errors arise

when they attempt to express what they have not yet been taught to say. Disapproval should on no account be shown” (pp.113&114). Other features for a favourable learning environment were supported. For example, Jennings and Greenberg (2009) maintain that supportive teacher-student relationships are related to healthy classroom climate. Likewise, Mullock (2003) concludes that establishing a good relationship with the students is crucial for good teaching. Good rapport and mutual trust between students and their teacher is considered a major ingredient of a successful lesson. Troudi (2005) argues that the TESOL classroom is not just a context for learning isolated and discrete language skills, but a community where ideologies and meanings are co-constructed and personalities are developed.

Knowledge of curriculum was found to be another core area of teacher knowledge. It was seen important for the teacher to have full grasp of the curriculum material to be able to build the students’ knowledge. It is also important for the teacher to have a critical disposition towards the curriculum material and how it could be taught to be able to adjust the teaching material to the students’ actual levels and to expect challenges and get ready to solve them. Procedural knowledge of technology in teaching was highlighted as necessary to help the teacher represent the content material and consequently provide the students with stimulating learning experiences. Accessing students’ prior knowledge was highlighted because of its importance in informing subsequent teaching and avoiding repeating knowledge already known to the students. It was also seen important for the teacher to know that students need to be provided with assignments for self-study to be able to turn classroom teaching input into learning intake. Knowledge of the purposes of teaching was found to be an important area of curricular knowledge. This area is supported by Shulman (1987), Elbaz (1981) and Turner-Bisset (1999) as a core domain of teacher knowledge.

Knowledge of self was found to be an important area of the core knowledge of the teacher. This is because the person of the teacher could not be separated from

the teacher as a professional. Leask & Moorhouse (2005) highlight that personality and personal style influence the effectiveness as a teacher.

Two aspects of personal knowledge are essential: reflection and self image. Reflection is important because of its importance for teacher growth and theory building. This is in agreement with Norrish (1996) that a teacher needs to develop techniques to stand aside from their work and reflect on it and, in so doing, becomes involved with theory construction. This is because, through evaluation, the teacher's initial understanding of the problem is modified or changed. Barlett & Leask (2005) point out that building professional knowledge and judgement can be developed through critical reflection which provides the means by which the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom can be evaluated as a prelude to improvement. Reflection is the mediator through which one learns from experience, and consequently, develops professionally. This agrees with Shulman's (1987) definition of reflection. He states:

This is what a teacher does when he or she looks back at the teaching and learning that has occurred, and reconstructs, re-enacts, and/or recaptures the events, the emotion and accomplishments. It is that set of processes through which a professional learns from experience (p.19).

Personal qualities were also seen important to survive the profession of teaching and to develop professional knowledge. This agrees with the conclusion of Turner-Bisset (1999) and Hegarty (2000).

The six areas of teacher knowledge outlined above represent the core knowledge of the EFL teacher in the context of the current study. They could represent a contribution to the debate about what constitutes the core knowledge of the teacher especially that of the EFL context. Some areas outlined echo existing literature of teacher knowledge especially the two overarching models provided by Shulman (1987) and Turner-Bisset (1999). However, there are some differences between the findings in the current study and these two models. Compared to the original list provided by Shulman (1987), a new category of knowledge, i.e. knowledge of self is constructed in the current study. Another difference is that Shulman's model (1987) is mainly theoretical. This is unlike

the knowledge areas in the current study which are constructed from experienced practitioners. As for the model provided by Turner-Bisset (1999), it delineates teacher knowledge from a context of student teachers of History studying a PGCE. This is different from the context of the current study of practising EFL teachers. Therefore, the findings of the current study could contribute to theory of teacher knowledge with a particular focus on the EFL context. In addition, the study is a response to the call of Freeman and Johnson (1998) to re-conceptualise the knowledge base of the language teacher education to focus on the teacher, the context and the pedagogy.

This is unlike the dominant view of teacher knowledge as the research evidence about what works. Although there are ways in which educational research and educational practice communicate and interact, the technical rationality model of teacher knowledge is not the most appropriate matrix for addressing this issue (Biesta, 2007). This is because it lacks practical value. Professional teacher knowledge in the current study was a result of experience and interaction with classroom situations which provided the teachers with insights about how to approach similar situations. It was not considered as a recipe for practice because of the existential contextual factors which condition further practice. Thus, the knowledge articulated by the practising teacher was an account of what ‘worked’ not what ‘works’ or ‘will work’.

In addition, the technocratic model of teacher knowledge overlooks the voices coming from the classroom and consequently denies the teachers a legitimate right. By dictating to practitioners the course of action they should follow, the technical model of teacher knowledge exhibits a democratic deficit. This deficit in educational research and its role in practice are highlighted by Biesta (2007) who stated,

To suggest that research about ‘what works’ can replace normative professional judgment is not only to make an unwarranted leap from ‘is’ to ‘ought’; it is also to deny educational practitioners the right not to act according to evidence about ‘what works’ if they judge that such a line of action would be educationally undesirable (p.11).

The teacher's professional value judgement is not unexpected in education because the very nature of teaching is moral. The moral dimension of teaching becomes evident when understanding the relationship between the means used to achieve certain educational ends and the ends themselves. Biesta (2007) argues that in education not any means can be used as long as they are effective because the means used contribute qualitatively to the character of the goals which they produce. For example, although physical punishment could be the most effective way of deterring or controlling disruptive behaviour, it should nevertheless be avoided because it teaches children that it is appropriate or permissible in the last resort to enforce one's will or get one's own way by the exercise of violence. This means that the means and ends of education are internally rather than externally related. This is why education is at heart a moral practice.

Furthermore, as suggested by the findings of the current study and supporting evidence from literature, the core of professional teacher knowledge should focus on the practice of teaching. It is through practice that teachers shape and reshape their knowledge. This practical knowledge, which incorporated some aspects of beliefs and values, represents the symbolic resources which could be made use of when encountering a problematic practical situation. Thus, teacher knowledge is experiential because it is through experience with that situation that the selected line of action is tested and proves whether it is successful or not. In addition, the core of teacher knowledge should focus on the situation and context of teaching. Professional knowledge is situational because it is the result of an interaction with a situation. Moreover, the cumulative old knowledge could provide available responses to new situations. However, these available responses do not guarantee the success of solving a problematic practical situation because of its existential conditions, which may change over time and place. This is why professional teacher knowledge should be conceived of in relation to the context of teaching.

Another aspect of the discussion of this topic is to consider the core elements of teacher knowledge as a model for good teaching (Vries & Beijaard, 1999; Hegarty, 2000; Mullock, 2003; Abdelhafez, 2010). Given that members of the

sample in current study are experienced EFL teachers, the accounts they provided and those of their practice could represent the required knowledge and practices of the EFL good teacher. There is a continuing debate about what is good teaching and who good teachers are. The suggested perspective considers teacher knowledge as a lens to conceptualise good teaching. It is supported that teaching is a professional activity which is enhanced by deep knowledge of various aspects of education, and therefore, knowledge of teaching will lead to a better understanding of the teaching situation (Vries & Beijaard, 1999). They further add that teachers' practical knowledge adds new information to the discussion of good teaching.

One essential characteristic of a good teacher - according to the findings of the current study - is to be knowledgeable about subject matter. The majority of teachers as supported by both quantitative and qualitative evidence highlighted that proficiency in the target language is necessary to the EFL teacher who is going to deal with the language. Some of the teachers also highlighted that it is good for teaching if the teacher knows the target language culture background.

Being knowledgeable about subject matter is seen as an essential characteristic (Ethell & McMeniman, 2000; Mullock, 2003). For example, Ethell and McMeniman (2000) argue that subject matter is important because it becomes the framework for constructing other forms of procedural and declarative knowledge that are important for teaching.

The findings in the current study also revealed that experienced EFL teachers were able to contextualise, situate and personalise the content for the learners. They tailored their teaching to suit their students' needs either at the preparatory stage or at the secondary stage. Some of them insisted on giving clear explanations so that the students could understand. Clark and Peterson (1985) highlight that the most important focus for teachers during the act of teaching is the procedures, moves or tactics they use.

Another aspect of restructuring the content according to the purposes of pedagogy for communicating linguistic knowledge according to the students'

needs was the teachers' flexibility in executing the lesson plan. This flexibility of implementation, which some of the teachers in the current study showed in theory and practice is congruent with another quality of the good teacher. For example, Mullock (2003) found that competent teachers are opportunistic planners who are able to change track quickly if the classroom situation dictates it. She further found that - according to TESOL teachers in her study - good teachers can generate contingency plans for situations that are likely to be encountered.

Another characteristic of good EFL teachers is their ability to establish a positive relationship with their students. This quality was highly emphasized by almost all teachers in the current study either quantitatively or qualitatively. Their accounts of practice also revealed how to actualise this feature in the classroom. They created a favourable classroom environment by developing positive teacher-student relationship, maintaining students' interest and enjoyment, and fostering students' involvement and participation, and encouraging students. This characteristic is also highlighted both in TESOL and general education. For example, Mullock (2003) concludes that the teacher's relationship with the students is crucial for good teaching.

The good relationship between the teacher and the students is also maintained through the way the teachers manage their classes. Most of experienced teachers in the current study favoured classroom management which is based on respect and mutual understanding and encouraging students to follow the agreed-upon rules to prevent discipline problems before they occur and waste the invaluable instructional classroom time.

A complementary component of what makes a good teacher is personal qualities. Although these qualities could vary significantly given that they are not only related to individual people, but also taken from the teachers' own perspectives about themselves, agreement over certain personal qualities as necessary for teachers could provide insight about what makes an effective teacher. Most of the teachers in the current study -according to both quantitative and qualitative

evidence - agree that a good teacher has a sense of humour. This finding is supported by a study in the TESOL area (Mullock, 2003) and in education in general (Arnon & Reichel, 2007; Liu & Meng, 2009).

Mullock (2003) also supported another personal quality which was revealed by the findings of the current study, i.e. being patient. Being passionate about teaching and about English was also revealed by some of the teachers in the current study. This finding is supported by Harmer (1998) and Mullock (2003). In addition, one characteristic which was revealed by TESOL literature (e.g. Mullock, 2003) and was not mentioned by the teachers in the current study is to have cross-cultural knowledge of students. The absence of this feature in the current study is attributed to the fact that all EFL learners in the schools investigated were homogenous with regard to their ethnic background.

6.3 The development of teacher knowledge

The development of teacher knowledge, as revealed by the findings in the current study, could be mediated via a variety of sources. One important source was experience. This agrees with Grangeat (2008) that professional knowledge is shaped by professional lived-experience at work. A variety of reasons are evident in the data highlighting the role of experience in developing teacher knowledge. It was supported that experience could help the teacher develop knowledge of subject matter. For example, relevant EFL work experience such as working as an interpreter could help the teacher be fluent in English and provide opportunities for real communication using English. Experience could also be a useful source of first hand knowledge about the students' individual differences and how to deal with them accordingly. Experience could facilitate teacher growth by working as an interpretive filter through which new experiences could be reflected upon. Furthermore, it could help the teacher grow by providing a repertoire of knowledge, beliefs, values and skills, well-developed from practice.

The findings regarding the role of experience in shaping and developing teacher knowledge replicate existing research evidence supporting experience as an indispensable source for the development of teacher knowledge. For example,

Verloop et al. (2001) maintain that input for the knowledge base of teaching can originate from practical experiences. Likewise, Hegarty (2000) suggests that experience is a source of developing the knowledge base of teaching. Golombek (1998) reveals that ESL teachers' experience shapes their understanding of L2 learning and teaching. Gahin (2001) refers to on-the-job teaching experience as shaping EFL teachers' beliefs about language, language learning and their roles in the language classroom. Likewise, Crookes and Arakaki (1999) relate accumulated teaching experience as a source of ESL teachers' beliefs. Mayer and Marland (1997) found that teachers draw their knowledge of the class and groups and individuals within it from interactions with students. Mullock (2006) identifies work experience as one origin of the pedagogical knowledge of TESOL teachers. Clandinin (1989) views that the teacher's personal practical knowledge as having social origins in personal and professional experiences. It has an experiential origin coming from the teacher's ongoing experience of the life world and from narrative of experience.

The initial teacher education programme in Egypt was also found to be important for the development of teacher knowledge. It was particularly seen important for the development of knowledge of subject-related pedagogy. Studying courses such as TEFL methodology was seen as helping the student teacher be aware of theory, which could find its way in actual practice. However, the initial teacher education programme, especially the student teaching experience during it, was not unproblematic as evident in the context of the current study. This could be because the lack of feedback from mentors, large number of student teachers per school, being overloaded with university courses in addition to having the practicum, the superiority of the practical knowledge gained by the teacher from experience as a practitioner and not as a student teacher, and the student teacher's difficulty to deal with school pupils.

Feedback from the students and colleagues was found to be another important source for the development of teacher knowledge and consequently practice. For example, peer and student feedback were found to be sources of developing knowledge of teaching. Various reasons were revealed by the data highlighting

feedback as an important source for developing teacher knowledge. Peer feedback could be an important source to raise the teacher's awareness of inappropriate instructional practices. Likewise, student feedback could be a source of knowing the teacher's limitations as well as a catalyst for change and development. Likewise, student and peer feedback could help in the development of personal knowledge. Students' feedback could inform the teacher about the success of the lesson in a way that might lead to modifying practice. Peer feedback is also a source of knowledge and development because of the value of seeing one's own work through the eyes of others. In addition, peer discussion and evaluation could help the teacher update knowledge and reflect on practice. This agrees with Sonnevile (2007) that a useful way for teachers to collaborate for self-development is to participate in learning conversations, during which they explore their own practice and they learn to facilitate others in their learning process. Similarly, Bartlett & Leask (2005) state:

Whilst continuing to cast a critical eye over what they do, it is important that teachers also share and discuss their 'findings' with fellow professionals. It is by doing this that they can refine their teaching methods, discover new approaches and compare how others have tackled similar situations. Thus, evaluation and reflection is central to the development of good teaching (p. 292).

In-service training was found to be a useful source that contributed to the self and professional development of the teacher. It was evident that the benefit from in-service training could be achieved by participating actively in the training sessions and critically evaluating what was carried out by the trainer and using this thinking as a source of deliberation to better understand one's own work. In-service training could also cause a state of lack of balance for the teacher, an indicator of change and consequently of learning.

There were other sources revealed to be useful for the development of the various areas of teacher knowledge constructed in the current study. For instance, academic study at degree level, language courses and expert advice were found useful to develop the teacher's knowledge of EFL. The academic study was found to be a useful source to build the EFL teacher's proficiency with regard to

language skills, vocabulary, grammar and culture. Additional further studying provided the teacher with the chance to have contact with native speakers and to communicate in small groups using EFL. Expert advice was also related as a source of updating the teacher's knowledge of English. Expert educationalist advice was found to be a source of developing knowledge of subject-related pedagogy. It was also developed through reading in TEFL. Research such as logging onto the internet or surveying opinions was found to be a tool to develop the teacher's knowledge base about teaching and classroom practice.

Student output and postgraduate studies were useful in developing knowledge about the students. Students' output such as their language production or even their errors was seen a source to know about their ideas, feelings and learning and to cater teaching accordingly. In addition, studying subjects such as psychology was found to be useful to better understand students as they could provide the teacher with deeper awareness of the students' emotional needs in a way that could be reflected positively on treating them.

Most of the above sources replicate what exists in literature regarding the sources of shaping teacher knowledge including: formal schooling in the past (Verloop et al., 2001); dialogue with colleagues, reading and formal professional development (Hegarty, 2000); input from readings, classes and professors (Golombek, 1998); and in-service teacher training and self study (Mullock, 2006).

The contribution of the findings of the current study with regard to the sources of developing teacher knowledge is that not only the sources are enumerated but also the ways of how they could be used to develop teacher knowledge. Another contribution is that the sources are presented with references to the various areas of teacher knowledge, which could provide an analytical framework for developing them.

6.4 Understanding teacher knowledge in action

The relationship between teacher knowledge and classroom practice could be discerned in two ways. The first way is that the practices followed by the teacher are based on underlying principles which could be revealed when analysing the teaching behaviour. Grangeat (2008) points out that professional knowledge constitutes an operative model which underpins practices. Likewise, Xu & Liu (2009) maintain that teachers draw on their knowledge as a basis of their judgement. This could become evident when there is consistency between what teachers know and what they do. The practices they follow and the accounts they provide justifying these practices could shed light on the relationship between what teachers know about the various areas related to their work and what they do. McEwan & Bull (1991) refer to this sort of relationship arguing that it is not what teachers know that makes them different from scholars, but what they do with what they know.

Another way of pointing out the relationship between what is known and what is done is to explain how knowledge can inform practice. Classroom decisions are supported by the various aspects of teacher knowledge. Therefore, they can be understood when teachers are stimulated to rationalize why they choose a particular course of action rather than another. This approach is supported by Calderhead (1987) that information about teacher knowledge is essential for understanding the decisions teachers make. Likewise, Eraut (2000) underscores that knowledge is important to construct artefacts that can assist decision making or reasoning. Given these two ways, this section discusses the complex relationship between the teacher's classroom behaviour and the various areas of teacher knowledge. The aim is to provide a profound insight into the role of teacher knowledge in classroom practice.

Knowledge of subject matter was found to inform the teacher's practice. Knowledge of the culture of EFL informed the teacher's work to highlight metropolitan varieties of English (British and American English). These two varieties are generally accepted as standard in Great Britain and the USA

(Norrish, 1997). He suggests two reasons which explain the widespread of these two varieties of English in Egypt. The first is that there is no restriction on the access to these two forms of the target language due to the availability of language learning tapes and the native speaker model. The second is that Egypt is not an Anglophone African country with a local variety of English.

The teachers also highlighted – in their teaching – the cultural patterns indicated by these two varieties. Being aware of the status of English language globally and the need to prepare students to be able to communicate appropriately using global English, the teachers highlighted EFL culture in teaching to serve this goal. Moreover, knowledge of EFL culture was a sounding board for comparing the culture of the mother tongue to that of the target language to enlighten the students about the two cultures so that they could make use of their learning in possible real communication opportunities. Thus, teacher knowledge of subject-matter is embodied in the act of teaching in the management of learning and the enactment of the curriculum (Tsui, 2003; Andrews, 2003).

Similar to knowledge of subject matter, views held regarding pedagogy were found to inform classroom behaviour. For example, being aware of the various techniques to teach EFL vocabulary informed teaching by choosing which technique to use counting on the suitability of the selected technique to the curriculum material, students' comprehension or perhaps the personal orientation of the teacher. Thus, four types of teacher knowledge were involved in such a decision: knowledge of techniques of presenting EFL vocabulary, knowledge of curriculum, knowledge of students and knowledge of self. This might reveal the complexity of teacher knowledge. The various types of teacher knowledge might interact in action working in a dialogic rather than a linear fashion (Golombek, 1998; Johnston & Goettsch, 2000; Craig, 2007).

Knowledge of students also informed the practice of teaching. One aspect of knowledge of students was knowledge of their learning ability. Students were known to learn at different rates. This knowledge informed the teacher's practice to divide the class into groups with mixed ability students. Knowledge of the

students' different learning needs also had an impact on the teacher's decision to provide students with differentiated instruction according to their needs identified by the teacher. This agrees with Lowe (2005) that differentiation can be achieved through the choice of activities given to the students. Another aspect of knowledge of students was knowledge of their learning style preferences. This knowledge informed practice by making the teacher adapt teaching to attend to the various learning style preferences of the students. The use of drawings to visualise the content was also informed by the need to attend to visual learners. This agrees with Andreou, Andreou & Vlachos (2008) that L2 teachers need to be more willing to try to accommodate all learning styles in the classroom.

Another aspect to highlight the relationship between knowledge and practice was the knowledge of students' lack of motivation, which informed the teachers' practice. The teachers were aware of their students' lack of motivation as well as the fact that motivation is invariably invigorating and generally considered to be one of the chief reasons of success and failure in the foreign language classroom. Therefore, the teachers used a variety of motivational strategies and techniques including: varying activities, using of games, using student self error correction, using collaborative work, and maximizing student talk.

Various reasons were given by the participants to rationalise these preferred techniques. Motivating students to learn actively was found to be another aspect of pedagogical competence which could lead to more student involvement and a shared responsibility in class. This agrees with Andreou et al. (2008) that L2 teachers need to be more willing to give learners more control over their own learning. Similarly, Garner (2005) emphasizes that the teacher needs to actively engage pupils in their learning so that they make their own meaning from it and their learning becomes increasingly independent. The advantages of motivational learning to pupils include greater personal satisfaction, more interaction with peers, promotion of shared activity and team work, greater opportunities to work with a range of pupils and opportunities for all members of the class to contribute and respond, and mutual respect and appreciation of the viewpoint of others (Allen, Taylor and Turner, 2005).

When students have an active role in what is going on in their class, they feel responsible for their own learning and can develop as autonomous learners. They consequently become more motivated. This is echoed by Spratt, Humphries and Chan (2002) who examined the relationship between motivation and autonomy. They found that motivation facilitated autonomy. The absence of motivation seemed to inhibit the practice of learner autonomy. Likewise, data from their interviews pointed to a strong relationship between higher levels of motivation and greater engagement in extra-class activities. Involving students in classroom activities also enriches the learning opportunities for all students through making use of and exchanging prior knowledge. This resonates with what was revealed in the current study when the teachers catered their teaching based on their knowledge of their students' lack of motivation.

The teachers in the current study were in favour of maximizing student talk in the classroom. This indicates the type of interaction EFL teachers promoted among their students. It is based on engaging students as active members in classroom interaction instead of viewing them as empty vessels to be filled with information. Thus, the teachers value more involvement and more talk from their students. Consequently, this results in a more effective classroom with more learning opportunities. This result is consistent with interaction analysis systems (Allwright, 1987).

Collaborative work was also considered an effective way to provide for student-student interaction and to maximize learning opportunities in class. It is evident from the teachers' accounts that using pair and group work that combines students of different proficiency levels was favoured by the teachers because low-achieving students could learn from their good classmates. McCormick & Leask (2005) point out that meaningful learning happens best where social interaction, particularly between a learner and more knowledgeable others, is encouraged, and where there is a co-operative and supportive ethos. Similarly, Shulman (2000) argues that group-based strategies such as cooperative learning could create an environment where groups of students have the expertise of making their prior ideas and learning explicit to other members of the group

instead of depending solely on the teacher's intervention, which might not be possible especially in large classes, those typical in the context of the current study. This, in turn, alleviates the burden of the teacher to provide individualized instruction for every student. Thus, collaborative work results in a shared responsibility in class. Consistently, Crabbe (2003) points out that dialogue about learning works toward the capacity to self-direct.

It is evident from the findings of the current study that the teachers know a lot about their students and use this knowledge to tailor their teaching to attend to their students' needs. Most of their knowledge about students is based on experience and embedded in the social context in which they work.

Curricular knowledge also informed practice. The need to have critical awareness of the curriculum materials and how to teach them was highlighted as one aspect of teacher knowledge of the curriculum. This critical awareness informed the curricular decisions made in four ways: skipping curriculum material, using additional material, reorganizing the curriculum material, and building on students' prior knowledge. Thus, the notion of classroom decisions is one way of pointing out the relationship between teacher knowledge and practice. This agrees with Tsang (2004) who found that the participants in her study had access to their practical knowledge, which guided their classroom teaching decisions.

Knowledge of self also informed teaching. Reflection, one aspect of knowledge of self, was found to have an impact on practice by providing the teacher with an orientation to reflect in and on action with the act of teaching representing the content of reflection, and the intended learning outcomes of the lesson the criterion to which the reflective process could be carried out. Similar to reflection, personal qualities were either reflected on practice or had an impact on it. This agrees with Elbaz (1981) that "teachers have self-knowledge and they work toward personally meaningful goals in their teaching" (p.47).

The ways of actualising teacher knowledge in practice in the context of the current study replicate relevant research evidence explicating the relationship between teacher knowledge and classroom practice. The rationalised practices

evident in the current study bear some resemblance to the account provided by Hegarty (2000) viewing teaching as a form of intelligent behaviour subject to analysis and echoing the notion of common sense, which was considered by Hargreaves (1998) as the creative application of knowledge.

Hegarty (2000) maintains that common sense is premised on a grasp of the underlying principles of practice and mastery of the skills required. He further points out that when confronted with a practical situation, the teacher employs common sense to choose from repertoire of knowledge bases whatever is best given the circumstances of the encountered situation. This interaction will leave the teacher with additional insights to be incremented to existing repertoire and to be made use of with similar situations or be part of a general insight informing a different situation. Page (2001) argues that common sense knowledge could offer a useful construct with which to study teacher knowledge empirically because the pedestrian aspects of teaching are essential to understand the practice and to place knowledge underpinning this practice in context as an inter-subjectively produced 'cultural system'.

Golombek (1998) also found that the L2 teachers' knowledge informed practice in two ways. First, it guided their sense-making processes as part of the teachers' interpretive framework to filter experience so that the teachers reconstructed their knowledge and responded to the exigencies of a teaching situation. Second, it informed practice by giving physical form to practice as it was teachers' knowledge in action. She also highlighted the role of context in reshaping teachers' knowledge because teachers use their knowledge in response to a particular context. This is in consistency with the findings of the current study.

Thus, teacher knowledge could inform the practices and decisions of the teacher. It is also the basis for teacher reasoning. This reasoning, which is the result of reflection on the informed practice, could lead to the generation of new insights. This cycle of knowledge, practice, reasoning and generation of new knowledge is represented in the figure below.

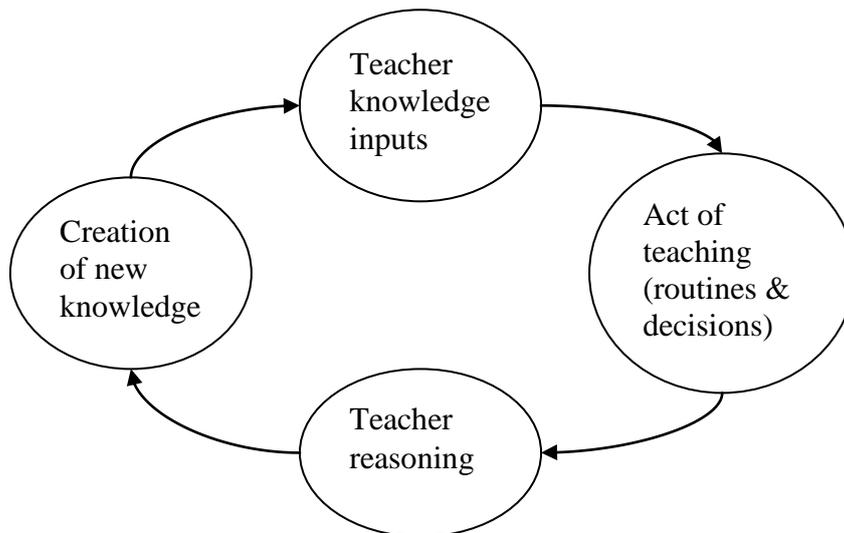


Figure 6.1: The cycle of teacher knowledge and action

It is worth noting that the role of teacher knowledge in action is to inform rather than to prescribe for the teacher what to do because knowledge, as shown in the figure above, is not a static entity. Instead, it is a growing body. This agrees with Biesta (2007) that knowledge acquired in previous situations – or knowledge by others in different situations – does not enter the process of reflective problem solving in the form of a rule or prescription. They could provide an understanding of possibilities of what worked, not what will work. Old knowledge cannot and should not be used to tell a practitioner what should be done. It could be used, instead, to guide first attempts to understand what the problem might be and then in the intelligent selection of possible lines of action. Thus, it helps approach problem solving more intelligently.

6.5 Context and the realisation of teacher knowledge

Although the previous section pointed out the consistency between teacher knowledge and classroom practice, this was not always the case as revealed by the findings in the current study. Not all teacher knowledge found application in practice partly because contextual factors intervened in the process. This is the focus of this topic. It discusses the role of context in relation to the actualisation of teacher knowledge. Three sub-sections are discussed here. First, the role of context is discussed in relation to code-switching. This aspect was made salient

because of the controversial role of L1 in the EFL classroom. The discussion of this sub-topic aims to contribute to this debate through a knowledge-action perspective. Second, classroom management will be discussed. This issue is of particular relevance in the context of the current study where large class size and other factors may affect the way of managing the classroom. This area will also be discussed in light of the most recent literature. Third, the role of context in curriculum implementation will be discussed guided by Bernstein's theory (2000) of pedagogic relations.

6.5.1 Context and code-switching

The findings of the current study revealed that almost all teachers believed that giving the Arabic equivalent of new vocabulary items was not an effective instructional technique. This is consistently supported by L2 research evidence. McCafferty, Roebuck, and Wayland (2001) maintain that for learning to occur successfully, the meaning and use of the new word need at some point to be consciously processed for a purpose which is perceived by the learner to be important. This could be achieved through work-oriented tasks such as looking up new words in a dictionary, putting them in given sentences, using them in original output in the form of isolated sentences, or incorporating them into compositions (Laufer, 2001). Likewise, Laufer and Hulstijn (2001), drawing on the notion of task-induced involvement, a motivational cognitive construct explaining and predicting the degree of task effectiveness with regard to the retention of new words, claim that when a word complexity factors are held constant, tasks with a higher involvement load will generate better vocabulary learning than tasks with a lower involvement load. Thus, it is obvious that a mere translation of a new vocabulary item is not going to help students a lot to learn vocabulary items.

However, in actual classroom practice according to the findings of the current study, this proved not to be the case. Giving the Arabic equivalent took place for key words when low-achieving students could not get the English meaning through other means. In this case, some teachers felt compelled to clarify the

meaning by eliciting the Arabic equivalent from a knowledgeable student. For those teachers who claim that students could be accustomed to use L2 exclusively, the time requirements and conditions of schooling (not all teachers adopt the same position), expectations of the students and their previous learning habits, little emphasis in classroom practices on communication skills, and exam requirements could be some of the challenges.

It was observed, in many classes where the EFL teachers exclusively used the target language that the students complained that they switched off mentally because they were unable to cope with a non-stop target language flow from the teacher. It is also evident from the teachers' accounts of practice that they were compelled to use Arabic at times because of practical considerations. The amount of using the mother tongue depended on a range of factors in their classes. For example, the teachers depended more heavily on using the mother tongue in a class of so many slow learners and vice versa. They also used more Arabic in grammar and vocabulary lessons compared to other aspects. Secondary school teachers used Arabic less often than preparatory (middle) school teachers. There is some support from literature to this argument. For example, students' reliance on the mother language while learning the target language declined as proficiency in their target language rose (Upton and Lee-Thompson, 2001). Similarly, Hu (2003) found a positive correlation between high L2 proficiency and the use of the target language.

It seems obvious that not all that teachers aspire to come true in classroom practice. Contextual factors intervene in the process and affect the realization of teachers' views in reality. This situation applies to using the target language which is faced with so many challenges in the Egyptian context. One of these challenges is the continuity from primary to preparatory and then to secondary school.

Given that teaching and learning EFL is an accumulative process, what EFL teachers do in one stage affects the work of other EFL teachers at other stages. English as a foreign language in Egypt is taught from grade 1 to grade 12.

Normally teachers at first grades are beginners who are more concerned with other issues (e.g. classroom management) than with using the target language in the EFL classroom. In many cases, as noted in the findings of this study, some secondary school teachers blamed those in previous cycles for students' bad learning habits. When students come to more advanced stages; they expect to learn in the same way. Conflict and mismatch occur when EFL teachers at advanced stages insist on using the target language extensively. The situation is further complicated because of the lack of time to teach the already overloaded curriculum and trying at the same time to get students used to use English in class and get rid of their old bad learning habits. This will be too demanding for the teacher. This is apart from the exam requirements which have nothing to do with encouraging students to develop their language skills to use English for communication. However, the issue of continuity is of particular interest here because of its direct relationship to what teachers do in the classroom. There is a real need for collaboration among teachers in different cycles to support their students' learning. Johnstone (2003) points out that given that teaching a foreign language at primary school is a major investment, it is obviously desirable that students should be supported in making the transition to secondary school, rather than being told explicitly or implicitly by their secondary school teachers more or less to forget what they had been taught at primary school because they were now to make a proper beginning.

Another challenge which faces the teachers to put to practice their views about using the target language is the students' attitudes. Most of the students were reluctant to use the target language. They prefer to use L1 instead as long as the focus of examinations is not on communication using the target language. This reveals a perceptual mismatch between learner expectations and teacher practices. However, this does not mean that the teacher is always right. Sometimes, the use of the first language could be more appropriate. One tends to support the position taken by Cook (2001) that the L2 classroom is a situation where two languages, i.e. L1 and L2 are permanently present, and a reasonable aim of L2 education is to produce students who have developed an overarching system which allows

them to operate both languages rather than aspire to become native speakers of the L2. She argues:

Treating the L1 as a classroom resource opens up several ways to use it, such as for teachers to convey meaning, explain grammar, and organize the class, and for students to use as part of their collaborative learning and individual strategy use. The first language can be a useful element in creating authentic L2 users rather than something to be shunned at all costs (p.402).

The mother language could be used as a source to be made use of for the students' advantage instead of being as a source of conflict. Because the teachers work with mixed ability students, they had to switch the code from L2 to L1 to attend to the different needs of their students, e.g. some of the teachers had to give instructions in English and then in Arabic. This makes the activity clear cut and eliminates ambiguity low level students face because of their limited proficiency. This agrees with Norrish (1997) that code-switching takes place in the classroom when teachers find it difficult to adjust their output to the learners' levels or when they doubt the learners' ability to learn in English. The mother tongue could be also used to give procedural instructions. This could have a lot of benefits such as saving classroom instructional time, making the tasks clear for everyone, and reducing classroom noise resulting from students not understanding what to do. This is consistent with Macaro (2001) that it seemed not unreasonable in certain types of context to use L1 for procedural instructions for keeping control of students especially with beginner teachers.

Likewise, the mother tongue could be a resource of learning in the L2 classroom. It could be used effectively to give a cultural equivalent of a target idiomatic expression which has originated in the target culture to which the students may not have access. Students will find it difficult to learn this cultural expression unless it is compared to a similar one in the culture of the EFL learners which they have already in their schemata. Thus, there is room for using L1 in the EFL classroom. Its judicious use is important to make EFL teaching more effective. This agrees with Lamb (2007) that L1 could be used strategically by the teacher.

6.5.2 Context and classroom management

There has been a move toward a more proactive approach to classroom management which is based on encouraging prosocial and cooperative behaviours through establishing warm and supportive relationships and communities, assertive limit-setting, and guidance, and preventive strategies rather than controlling negative behaviours through coercive measures such as punishment (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

Supporting the paradigm shift in classroom management was the development of the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) which proposes that the pursuit of extrinsic goals, such as rewards and honours, is associated with poorer well-being than the pursuit of intrinsic goals such as community and relationships.

However, many teachers deal with highly stressful emotional situations in ways that compromise their ability to develop and sustain healthy relationships with their students, effectively manage their classrooms, and support student learning (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). This is the case with some teachers in the current study, especially those working in schools in deprived catchment areas. They suffer a lot to manage students' misbehaviours in the classroom. Most of these students are slow learners and come from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. They show a lot of discipline problems such as fighting with each other and calling each other names. These behaviours annoy the teacher and disturb the class. They become emotionally exhausted. Emotionally exhausted teachers maintain a rigid classroom climate enforced by hostile and sometimes harsh measures bitterly working at a suboptimal level of performance and create a learning environment, which can have harmful effects on students (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

Some teachers in the current study resorted to a punishment measure which was embarrassing the trouble maker by asking him/her questions the teacher knew that he/she could not answer.

However, this measure result in a tense relationship between the teacher and the students instead of solving the problem because they just provide a run-away mechanism or quick fixes which are often ineffective to provide a permanent remedy for an ever-lasting occurring problem. Being rough with the students is a way of managing the classroom that is based on silencing the students and, in most cases, weakens the relationship between the teacher and the students in a classroom climate lacking freedom of speech.

On the contrary, an optimal classroom climate is characterized by low levels of conflict and disruptive behaviour. Jennings and Greenberg (2009) maintain that supportive teacher-student relationships and effective classroom management are related to healthy classroom climate. The management of behaviour is a prerequisite for the management of learning and part of the learning environment. Williams & Burden (1997) suggests that the management of students' learning is linked to teachers' ability to set an appropriate tone and gain learner respect and cooperation in class.

Most of the teachers in the current study, as revealed by the findings, hold similar views about effective principles and strategies for classroom management. They maintain that it is better to prevent the problem before it appears and spreads and consequently entangles the teacher into a vicious circle. They also assert that respecting all students and establishing a good relationship with trouble makers by engaging them in interesting activities with other good students or talking to them in private in spite of embarrassing them in front of the rest of the class are effective strategies for management. Likewise, they hold that collaborating with the students in setting rules for practice spreads democratic values in the classroom and creates a sense of shared responsibility and self-regulation in the classroom. This agrees with Leask (2005) that establishing rules decreases the likelihood of having to waste lesson time disciplining pupils at a later stage.

Teachers also view that the teachers should not spread a threatening atmosphere in the classroom. Instead, the findings of the study highlighted the need of the teachers to provide a favourable and secure learning environment. All teachers in

the current study, as revealed by both quantitative and qualitative evidence, hold strong views that providing a supportive and emotional learning environment is the key to effective classroom management. They maintain that this could be achieved by giving the students the chance to participate in class, establishing rapport with the students, providing a relaxed learning environment which accept students' opinions and initiatives, instilling a sense of community inside the classroom, listening to students' problem and concerns, and socializing with the students inside and outside the classroom. Some teachers found singing with the students an effective classroom management technique which refreshes the students and involves all the class in the activity.

Many of the findings in the current study with regard to classroom management are consistent with the definition of the teachers' social and emotional competence provided by Zins, Weissberg, Wang & Walberg (2004) – cited in Jennings & Greenberg (2009). Their broad construct involves five major emotional, cognitive, and behavioural competences: self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision making, self-management, and relationship management. They argue that socially and emotionally competent teachers know how to generate and use emotions such as joy and enthusiasm to motivate learning in themselves and others. They also know how their emotional expressions affect their interactions with others and are able to build strong and supportive relationships through mutual understanding and cooperation and can effectively negotiate solutions to conflict situations. In their relationships with students, parents, and colleagues, socially and emotionally competent teachers are culturally sensitive, understand that others may have different perspectives than they do, and take this into account.

Moreover, they exhibit prosocial values and make responsible decisions based on an assessment of factors including how their decisions may affect themselves and others. They respect others and take responsibility for their decisions and actions. Socially and emotionally competent teachers know how to manage their emotions and their behaviour as well as their relationships with others. They can manage their behaviours even when emotionally aroused by challenging

situations. They can regulate their emotions in healthy ways that facilitate positive classroom outcomes without compromising their health. They effectively set limits firmly, yet respectfully. They are also comfortable with a level of ambiguity and uncertainty that comes from letting students figure things out for themselves.

However, the findings in the current study revealed that the majority of EFL teachers found it difficult to realise their views in actual classroom practice because of the large class size which is not by all means less than 40 students in class, sometimes the number rises up to 70. This challenge is out of the teacher's hand. It calls for policy change in the form of building more schools to reduce the number of students per class. This could provide a basic requirement for creating the prosocial teaching and learning environment and consequently improve academic outcomes.

Large class size resulted in a lot of discipline problems which could take a lot out of the invaluable instructional classroom time. Rahmah (1997) – cited in Ibrahim (2003) – emphasizes that large class size is a common problem in most public schools in Egypt. Some reasons for this problem are the high rate of growth of the population, the state attempt to achieve full enrolment of children at school age and the inability to build more schools corresponding to the increase of population and students. This problem could have negative consequences on the work of the teachers in the classroom. In such classes, EFL teachers could face challenges in conveying linguistic input, content and behaviour management, attending to students' individual differences, covering the curriculum material, providing students with a favourable learning environment and enjoying the process of teaching.

6.5.3 Context and curriculum implementation

The findings of the current study revealed that most of the teachers differed in their reading of the objectives of the syllabus and consequently their implementation from those intended by the official curriculum. They highlighted that the curriculum materials do not reflect the needs of their students. Their

accounts of practice supported these views as they skipped some of the syllabus materials and replaced them with other materials they designed or selected to attend to their students needs.

They attributed this curricular practice to the repetition of some exercises in the syllabus. They did not also have enough time to go through all the textbook exercises. This agrees with Jones (2007) that unevenness in curriculum implementation is not unusual. Likewise, they used supplementary material because they felt that some activities in the textbook are beyond the students' levels. They also had to reorganize some of the activities to facilitate input to their students. Almost all teachers agreed in principle to the need to provide additional and innovative activities to enrich their students' learning.

However, this finding was challenged in practice because of the requirements of educational context. It is evident from the teachers' accounts that there is no relationship between the curriculum orientation (i.e. communicative language teaching) and the types of questions in the EFL exam paper. The reason for this problem is that the curriculum designers, normally experts from the UK, are different from those who set the final year exams which are paper-and-pencil-based. As a result, preparing students for these exams replaced the intended aims of English language teaching in Egypt. This situation is echoed in Olson & Craig's (2005) argument that because of institutional prescription, teachers feel compelled to claim to know (or show) what they know (but not as a favoured interpretation), and claim to not know (or show) what they do (as a favoured interpretation).

Moreover, other constraining factors, such as the fact that, although most of the teachers in the current study have a high degree of professional commitment out of being experienced, they must contend with large classes, a heavy teaching and administrative load, limited resources, lack of time, and an overloaded syllabus. Furthermore, their performance is generally assessed not on the quality of their teaching, but on the results of their students in the paper and pencil EFL public

examinations. All these constraining factors make it difficult for the teacher to implement the curriculum the way it is assumed to.

Another finding to point out this relationship was in the area of communicative language teaching. Although most teachers were in favour of communicative language teaching, the large class size and the seating arrangement in rows made it difficult for the teachers to use pair and group work. This indicates that teachers are in a conflict situation. This agrees with Nolasco & Arthur (1988) that in large classes, the rows of heavy desks would be a constraint on group work and management problems, and therefore, teachers feel a gap between the theory of communicative methodology and the reality of their own teaching.

Bernstein's (2000) theory of pedagogic relations is a useful means of understanding syllabus implementation. He offers a model of pedagogic relations for understanding the complex relations between higher education, national and local education authorities and classrooms. He argues that, through these relations, discipline-based knowledge is transformed into educational knowledge as consultants and advisors write the syllabus and teachers work to implement its requirements.

He identifies three arenas of curriculum knowledge. The first is that of knowledge production. Those who work in this arena (e.g. researchers) monopolise knowledge as they control access to differing forms of knowledge. They, thus, control the distribution of curriculum knowledge to other members, i.e. those who transform discipline-based knowledge produced into educational knowledge (curriculum materials) and those who implement the syllabus (teachers).

The second arena is the recontextualising one, which is the field of curriculum authorities who transform discipline-based knowledge into curriculum knowledge. In the current study, EFL curriculum designers, not practising teachers, dominate this arena. It is in this arena that specialist knowledge and discourses are reproduced in the form of official texts such as the syllabus taking into account the pedagogic discourse which regulates the selection, pacing, and

ordering of material. Linking with Bernstein's theory of pedagogic relations and drawing on evidence from two curriculum reform projects in Australia, Kirk & McDonald (2001) argue that most teachers do not operate as agents in the re-contextualizing field, even with the availability of opportunities to do so. This is in spite of the fact that teachers could make an important and invaluable contribution to the curriculum reform process through their adaptation of the materials to their local contexts of implementation (Kirk & McDonald, 2001).

Teachers themselves, as evident in the current study, have their own goals which are incorporated when teaching the curriculum. Haydon (2005) highlights that although much of the curriculum exists already as a framework within which the teacher works, its planning should depend on how the goals of teaching are conceived and therefore the teacher may well have the opportunity to contribute to discussion about the curriculum. Similarly, Xu & Liu (2009) stress that teachers' agency should be fully recognized before the implementation of policies, research findings and plans. This could be advantageous to the teaching and learning process. Troudi & Alwan (2010) call for involving teachers as agents in the process of curriculum development and change by modifying the materials and updating their content according to teachers' feedback. This should help teachers improve their morale and improve acceptance based on the realisation that the curriculum is a living entity subject to modification rather than a rigid one that is insensitive to feedback.

The third arena is the classroom in which the pedagogic discourse is realised. Bernstein argues that this arena is governed by evaluative rules which regulate specific pedagogic practices in the classroom in a way that may or may not lead to the success of the curriculum implementation. Thus, the teachers' views of the curriculum materials and the features of the local context determine the practices they foster. Accordingly, all or some of the assumptions of the curriculum may not be implemented if they contradict with the views of the teachers or the features of the local context. The teachers' practices in the current study diverted significantly from those anticipated by the official curriculum. Such diversion in

curriculum implementation provides important lessons for the recontextualising field as well as that of knowledge production.

6.6 Summary of the chapter

In this chapter, the findings of the study were discussed in relation to context and existing research evidence. Four themes were constructed. The first dealt with the core areas of teacher knowledge highlighting the professional practical element of these areas. The second theme outlined the various pathways for the development of teacher knowledge. Then, the ways of understanding teacher knowledge in action were elucidated drawing on practical examples evident in the data. The last topic dealt with the factors affecting the actualisation of teacher knowledge in action.

Chapter 7

Implications of the study

Chapter 7: Implications, recommendations and suggestions

7.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the implications of the current study, and what can be recommended and suggested for continuing research in teacher knowledge. It begins by providing implications with regard to teacher education, curriculum development and implementation, teacher professional development and educational research. It then presents a set of recommendations for policy making based on the findings of the study. Suggestions for a future research agenda in teacher knowledge are then outlined. The chapter ends with a conclusion of the study.

7.2 Implications for teacher education

The current study focused on experienced Egyptian EFL teachers' knowledge that incorporated some aspects of beliefs and values. It also focused on how this knowledge is built and developed and how it related to practice and context. Aligning with research on teacher knowledge, the current study suggests some implications for teacher education. One of these implications is that the data in the current study could be used in designing reflective tasks to prepare prospective EFL teachers for practice. Johannesson (2006) suggests that research findings on teacher knowledge could be used by teacher educators to strengthen the training of prospective teachers. Similarly, Borg (1998) highlights the influential role of L2 teacher cognition in shaping classroom practice recommending that teacher education programmes should provide prospective teachers with access to experienced teachers' practices and the cognitions underpinning them. He states:

Teacher education activities based on data which document both teachers' classroom behaviours and the rationale behind these behaviours are particularly valuable in sensitising participants on teacher education courses to the role cognition plays in teaching and in prompting them to explore the cognitive bases of their own work (p.

Thus, Borg (1998) argues for a dialogic relationship between research data and teacher education through which, teacher educators who design data-based teacher education tasks can foster in teachers the kind of analytical thinking about their work which underlies effective teacher development. He outlines some design principles upon which teacher educators can draw in devising their own data-based materials. These principles are: allowing teachers space for responding personally to the data to ensure the relevance of the issues which emerge from data about other teachers to their own practice, moving from a description of teaching to an analysis of the rationale, encouraging teachers to approach the data open-mindedly to accommodate multiple perspectives, engaging teachers in a process of inductive data analysis, and encouraging teachers to define objectives or continuing inquiry. Thus, Borg (1998) calls for an approach to teacher education which is sensitive to teachers' needs, credible in teachers' eyes, and effective in encouraging teachers to reflect on their own work. Similarly, Golombek (1998) underscores the need for acknowledging the role of teacher knowledge in L2 teacher education. She calls for connecting personal practical knowledge to empirical knowledge to encourage teachers to make sense of theory by filtering it through experiential knowledge gained as teachers and learners. She also calls for fostering reflection that contextualizes teacher knowledge and recognizes the power of the teachers' accounts of knowledge and practice in their development.

The above evidence highlights the need for making use of research data such as that revealed by the current study when attempting to develop teachers' knowledge. For example, the data obtained could be used for designing reflective tasks for trainee teachers since the current study has revealed that teacher education was an important source of teacher knowledge. However, it was also found that there was a gap between the theoretical knowledge provided through the teacher education programme and the practical knowledge obtained from experience due to contextual challenges. These findings have implications for training prospective teachers. Teacher trainees need to have access to the

knowledge bases intrinsic to the conduct of teaching. This cannot be achieved unless teacher educators are aware of the contexts of practice and make meaningful links to these contexts in their courses. This could provide a sounding board for educational theory and its relevance to classroom practice.

7.2.1 The role of teacher educators and experienced teachers

Teacher educators could make use of the practical knowledge generated by experienced practitioners to encourage prospective teachers to respond reflectively to the data and to accommodate multiple perspectives. This could be done by inducting prospective teachers in how experienced EFL teachers in a particular context behave and how their cognitions inform their practices. This would help trainee teachers realise that teaching is a knowledge-based activity. Trainees would also be more likely to understand that teaching is a rational action when teacher educators highlight teachers' knowledge as well as their practice as an integral component of the teacher education programme.

When there is a partnership between a Faculty of Education and practice schools in which teacher educators and experienced teachers interact and work together the experienced teachers can play an important role in teacher education. For example, experienced teachers could be invited to the university to participate in giving workshops making use of their actual teaching experience. Teacher educators could also arrange with experienced teachers in schools to learn about their work and about their life. Trainee teachers could also be involved in such interviews and seminars.

The above activities could be beneficial to all partners. Experienced teachers might develop professionally because of the opportunities they are offered to talk about their work since this would require them to reflect on their own teaching in order to make their thinking explicit. Teacher educators would also benefit from contact with experienced teachers because the latter group are a valuable source of knowledge about teaching. Educators can make use of this knowledge in their teaching (which would benefit trainees directly) and research (which might benefit future trainees).

This approach is supported by research evidence. Thiessen (2000) suggests that prospective teachers need to be trained in viewing teaching as a knowledge-based activity focusing, at the teacher education institution on ‘practically relevant propositional knowledge’ and at practice schools on ‘propositionally interpreted practical knowledge.’ However, there are some challenges to be considered before attempting to put this approach into practice. The first challenge is that such an orientation to teacher education requires training prospective teachers as practical theorists as well as academic practitioners. The second challenge is the need for a real partnership between the teacher education institution and the school. A third challenge is that before this relationship can be studied adequately, there must be a balanced view of both theory and practice (Verloop et al., 2001).

Teacher educators could also enlighten prospective teachers about the potential challenges they might face in their work. Expecting challenges could urge prospective teachers to think of possible solutions or at least to cope with the problems. Teacher educators are in a position to achieve this because most teacher educators in the Egyptian context, especially those working in TEFL departments, supervise student teachers while they carry out their teaching practice experience in schools. This responsibility gives teacher educators the opportunity to bridge the gap between the educational theory provided in the university context and the practical world of teaching practice.

7.2.2 Accessing experienced teachers’ knowledge

Teacher educators can facilitate access to practical knowledge of experienced teachers through attending classes taught by student teachers and by inviting experienced cooperating EFL teachers to meetings held with the student teachers to give them feedback on their teaching practice. By doing this teacher educators not only facilitate access to the knowledge and practice of experienced teachers, but also raise student teachers’ awareness of ways of linking classroom practice to educational theory. Hiebert et al. (2002) maintain that not having access to

what practising teachers know represents a major loss of the knowledge base of teaching. They state:

Most teachers who continually develop knowledge about their own practice have seldom accumulated and shared their knowledge. They have learned from each other only in the most haphazard way. As much as they might benefit from the knowledge of their colleagues, most teachers have not accessed what others know and must start over, creating this knowledge anew (p.11).

Thus, one implication for research on teacher knowledge coming from the current study is to make the knowledge of experienced EFL teachers accessible to student teachers during the initial teacher education programme. This is in agreement with existing literature that effective teacher education programmes should provide pre-service teachers with a means of access to knowledge of more experienced practitioners (Hedgcock, 2002). This is not easy to achieve because practising teachers do not find it easy to explain their own practice. For example, Brown & McIntyre (1993) state:

To them, most of what has happened in their lessons, and especially almost everything which they themselves have done in the classroom, is so ordinary and so obvious as not to merit any comment. ... They are seldom asked to articulate and elaborate on what they do in their ordinary, everyday teaching. For such reasons, this part of the professional knowledge of experienced teachers is communicated to beginning teachers only to a very limited extent, and the wheels of teaching have to be reinvented by each new generation (p. 13).

In spite of the difficulty of getting teachers to talk about their practice and the knowledge underpinning it, there are opportunities to make knowledge of teaching explicit and consequently transferrable to prospective teachers. The practicum of the initial teacher education in the context of the current study is of special relevance in this regard. It is when student teachers go to the school to practice teaching that the knowledge they acquire either from the subject matter

department or the educational departments is potentially realised in practice. Although new insights and understandings emerge from the interaction in the classroom and school contexts, student teachers come to the school with the insights and knowledge they have already gained from the teacher education programme. It could be argued that student teachers' ability to relate their knowledge to practice is contingent upon two factors. The first is the degree of convergence or divergence between the knowledge held and the requirements of the teaching situations. In other words, do student teachers hold valid knowledge suitable for the teaching situation? The second is the degree of support student teachers receive either in the university or in the school to realise their knowledge in practice and to reflect upon their teaching experiences.

For teacher education institutions to narrow the gap between theory and practice, they are faced with a challenge to frame courses which provide contexts and methodologies similar to the ones prospective teachers are expected to encounter when they start their teaching careers.

7.2.3 The need for incorporating teacher knowledge

Based on the findings of the current study, there is a need to incorporate experienced teachers' practical knowledge in the EFL prospective teacher education programme in Egypt. The findings of the current study call for a practical approach to educating prospective EFL teachers in Egypt. This approach takes into consideration the context-sensitivity of EFL teaching and the practical concerns of the teaching situation. When student teachers feel able to put into practice the theories and instructional activities they learn in teacher education, they realise that things are not as straight-forward as they might have imagined. They realise the need to take decisions about what would work for the special context they are working in and what would not work. This decision-taking process is at the heart of teaching which involves making decisions all the time. Whenever teachers have choices, they are likely to be more successful if they make an informed one. Informed decisions come from the practice of teaching and the reflection on this practice. That is why teachers need to be

enabled to articulate their views. EFL teacher educators can also play a crucial role in this regard. In lecture halls, through talk and conversation, teacher educators could emphasize the context-sensitivity of the teaching process and relate what they teach to real classroom problems encountered by the would-be teachers.

Haim (2004) highlights the need to train teachers to develop ‘meta-instructional’ awareness of their knowledge. They give an example of this type of awareness with regard to subject matter knowledge which constitutes a central requirement for teaching and learning to teach. Pre-service teacher education programmes could be designed in such a way as to help prospective teachers acquire deep and well-organized knowledge of various aspects and domains of their subject matter, as well as how it informs classroom practice. Thus, in addition to studying various aspects of subject matter, trainee teachers should be made aware of the instructional dimensions in which these aspects manifest themselves. The data and analysis in the current study could provide teacher educators with raw material and insight into the ways EFL teaching unfolds and is viewed by experienced EFL teachers. Analysis and discussion of this authentic material by teacher trainers and trainees could provide them with invaluable insights into experienced teachers’ cognitions, practices, and the challenges they encounter.

7.2.4 The benefits of incorporating teacher knowledge

There are several benefits of incorporating the element of professional practical knowledge of experienced teachers into the initial teacher education programmes in Egypt. Its inclusion not only bridges the gap between theory and practice, but also raises awareness of pedagogical options through exposure to the multiple realities of teaching. This approach could also develop prospective teachers as reflective practitioners who are encouraged to ask inquisitive questions about the work and views of other teachers and the obstacles they face in their work. This last benefit is asserted by Borg (1998) who argues that: “Teacher education activities which draw upon the vivid portraits of teaching and teachers documented in research data ... constitute an ideal platform for the kind of other-oriented inquiry which can facilitate self-reflection in teachers” (p.183).

Teacher educators could also help prospective teachers to theorize about their own practice. They could assign them to work on a small scale thesis or a graduation project writing about their experiences as pre-service teachers. This project could be problem-based. Students, either individually or as a group could choose a particular problem they encountered in practice or of relevance to them and carry out an action research project. In doing so, these students are encouraged to reflect upon this practice and articulate their knowledge of what it means to be teaching. Moreover, teacher educators could support student teachers to be life-long learners about teaching. This is necessary given the limited period of teacher education programmes and consequently their limited impact unless they could provide for that kind of lifelong learning.

A third benefit of this approach is that theory of teaching is linked to its practice. Through researching and reporting on their own practice, student teachers can provide feedback to teacher educators and play an active role in adding to the agenda of topics thought to promote teacher learning. The curriculum of the EFL teacher education programme would thus become jointly constructed by EFL teacher educators and their students based on a dialogical approach to teacher education underpinned in a constructivist view, which the teachers bring with them and which is made open to interpretation and discussion.

7.3 A proposed teacher knowledge-based model for teacher learning in Egypt

Based on the findings of the current study on teacher knowledge, a teacher knowledge-based model is suggested for pre-service teacher and in-service teacher continuing professional development. The model highlights the roles of knowledge inputs generated through reflection, experience and context in informing the practice of teaching. The suggested model builds upon and modifies the current model of teacher learning in Egypt making use of the findings of the current study to inform the suggested alterations. It has also been emphasized by the findings of the current study that experience plays a vital role in acquiring knowledge about teaching. Although student teachers lack this

experience, they work, during the practicum course of the initial teacher education programme, with experienced teachers who have this kind of knowledge. Teacher education programmes which are premised upon facilitating access of experienced teachers to prospective teachers will help student teachers relate sound educational theory and knowledge gained from experienced teachers to classroom practice.

The current practice in most EFL teacher education programmes in Egypt is to let the student teachers take the four-hour-a-week teaching practice course during the third and fourth years of their four year integrated programme. However, I would argue that this arrangement does not provide sufficient time for the prospective teachers to internalize the necessary knowledge of teaching, which is mostly the realm of those who practice it. This component of the programme is fraught with problems. Firstly, student teachers take the course only once a week. Being absent from the school for the rest of the week detaches them from the school events. This also has a negative impact on teaching the pupils. They teach a lesson every now and then in a way that make them unable to make appropriate curricular links. A second problem is that the student teachers have to devote time to studying courses at the university whilst they are undertaking their teaching practice. A third problem is that the student teachers do not have enough time or contact to learn from experienced cooperating teachers who see them only once a week. Moreover, there is always a tension between what student teachers learn at the university and the reality of the classroom teaching. Fourthly, the student teachers start the teaching practice experience without previous knowledge of teaching methodology in the first two years. A fifth problem is that there are few opportunities for the student teachers to reflect upon their work and discuss the problems and successes of their teaching practice.

Given all these complications and the significant role of the practical knowledge of the EFL experienced teachers, results from the current study suggest that the teacher education programmes in Egypt should be restructured. Student teachers need to be involved more in practice in the sense that they become interns in the school instead of trainees who come to the school once a week. They need to

have more contact with the pupils and the school environment. They need to become more familiar with the curriculum and learn from experienced teachers. They should not be expected to continue with university courses while they are taking their teaching practice experience. Instead, they should have the opportunity with the TEFL university staff to reflect upon how to develop and improve their practice.

There are several administrative and academic contradictions inherent in the programme especially with regard to the teaching practice course which is of paramount significance to the preparation of the prospective teacher. This importance is acknowledged by the regulation of the programme. Without passing teaching practice – unlike all other courses – the student cannot pass from the third year into the fourth year. If the student teacher is in the fourth year and fails to pass it, it has to be taken again for a whole year before graduation is possible.

All the above-mentioned complications suggest the need for an alternative model of initial teacher education programme for prospective teachers. The suggested modification is in the structure of the model. Instead of taking the four-hour-a-week teaching practice course during the third and fourth years of the programme, the student teacher could take the teaching practice experience during the second half of the fourth year (term 8 of the programme). No university courses would be taught during this period apart from a newly-introduced course, suggested to be called *Reflection* for four hours a week in which student teachers reflect upon and discuss with TEFL university staff their developing practice and the best ways to improve it. At the end of the course, each student teacher would be asked to submit a classroom-based research project as a requirement for passing the course. The courses which used to be taught in term 8 would be distributed over the other 7 terms, especially terms 5, 6, and 7 because teaching practice would no longer take place during these terms.

In adopting this model, many of the problems inherent in the current arrangement for preparing the EFL prospective teacher could be overcome. Student teachers

will have more involvement in the school as they will not be regarded as visitors who come to school now and then and are often seen by regular teachers and school administration as an unwelcome guest. Instead, they would become interns who attend the school daily for a whole term. This, in turn, would make them less detached from the students, the school environment, the school curriculum, and the experience of the cooperating teachers. Consequently, the suggested model could help to bridge the gap between educational theory and classroom practice. Student teachers would not start the teaching practice experience without any prior formal knowledge provided in the first two years of the EFL initial teacher education programme. Instead, by the time they reach the teaching practice stage, they will have studied all methodology courses which are expected to help them become aware of pedagogical options available for practice. In addition, they have another opportunity for growth when they take the proposed *Reflection* course which would enable them develop as practical theorizers. An additional benefit of the suggested model is that if some students fail to pass the teaching practice course in term 8, they could take it immediately in the following term and graduate a term earlier instead of spending a whole year just for taking one course of four hours a week.

The traditional model for the EFL initial teacher education programme has been in use for so many years without change and with a continuing divide between theory and practice when preparing the would-be teachers. The proposed model is underpinned by a practical approach to professionalism rather than a technical model. Simply presenting ideas for teachers to embrace does not recognize what learning about teaching entails (Theriot & Tice, 2009).

The model could be used not only for the training of prospective teachers, but also for practising teachers. The roles of training, context, teaching experience and reflection are important for all teachers for the practice of teaching to be informed. Continuous training helps teachers update their knowledge and cope with the demands of teaching. Reflection modifies practice and facilitates teacher growth. Teacher knowledge develops with teaching experience. Awareness of context informs judgment and teacher decision making. Thus, all these elements

contribute in teacher learning. They were all highlighted by the findings of the current study. The figure below gives a visual representation of the suggested model.

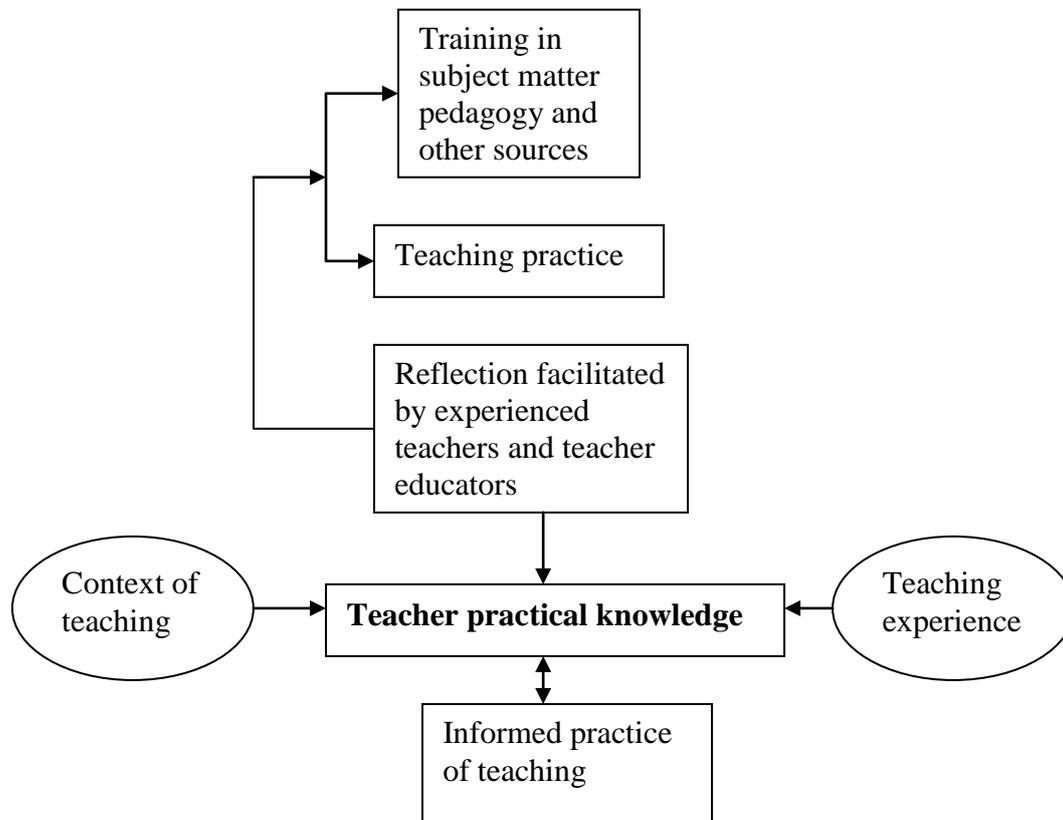


Figure 7.1: The professional practical model of teacher learning in Egypt

The above figure illustrates the role of the professional practical knowledge in teacher learning. The basic input for teaching is training in subject matter, pedagogy and other sources of teacher learning. This input is put to use when teachers start practising teaching. Reflection facilitated by experienced teachers and teacher educators provides insights into the relationship between teaching inputs and teaching practice. Consequently, the basic input for teaching is revised. New insights are added to the revised input through experience and awareness of the context of teaching. The inputs for teaching gained from reflecting on practice in addition to the added insights constitute the professional practical knowledge of the teacher. Teacher knowledge informs practice and is informed by it.

7.4 Implications for curriculum development

It was revealed by the current study that the teachers had their own goals for teaching, which were shaped by the learning contexts in the schools. This view was clearly evident in some of the teachers' responses. This knowledge implies the need for engaging practising teachers in designing school curricula. EFL teachers in Egypt teach the syllabus, which is pre-designed for them by others. A potential result of this process could be ineffective implementation of the curriculum. Teachers do not consider imposed innovations as practical (Brown & McIntyre, 1993). This is why Verloop et al. (2001) suggest that teacher knowledge "must be the starting point for any successful intervention or innovation" (p.453). They further add that: "To identify their authentic beliefs with respect to the basic ideas behind the innovation, a thorough investigation into the knowledge of the teachers themselves is required" (ibid).

This gives rise to research on teacher knowledge and its significance for educational innovation. Beginning with investigating teacher knowledge as a starting point for innovation makes it informed, practical and relevant to the needs of the involved teachers, who, in turn, will not abandon it when it comes to execution. Pajares (1992), Putnam & Borko (1997) and Golombek (1998) argue that teacher knowledge functions as a filter for interpreting new experiences or selecting from new information. Accordingly, examining the views of teachers about any suggested change is a pre-requisite for its effectiveness in practice. Verloop et al. (2001) argue that "before every major change or innovation, it makes sense to at least examine the filters or lenses of the teachers concerned" (p.454).

Moreover, curriculum development should take into account the good practice of experienced teachers as a starting point to design new curricula. The design should be based on an assessment of the reality of the teaching and learning situations so as to reflect the needs of the stakeholders. There should be a dialogue between teachers and curriculum designers. This could be achieved nationwide throughout conferences inviting teachers from all over the country to

express their opinions. Online and video conferences could also be arranged for this purpose. Delegates of curriculum designers could also visit schools and listen to teachers and their concerns. Curriculum development should also take into account the work conditions of the teachers. Teachers are faced with many challenges while doing their work and the proposed curriculum should take into account the constraints facing teachers and how to overcome them.

Therefore, teachers must have their say when it comes to curriculum design. The current study attempted to let the voices of the teachers be heard. Curriculum design which takes into account the local context of the teaching/learning process will not be detached from the needs of the learners. Teachers are in the best position to design this curriculum and have their own say in developing the curriculum which reflects the needs of the students and those of the local context. This could help to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

7.5 Implications for professional development

The findings of the study suggests that there is a culture which regards teacher knowledge as transferrable. It also aligns with existing research evidence suggesting the possibility of research on teacher knowledge in professional development activities. Research on teacher knowledge gives rise to school-based inquiry and supports the development, delivery, documentation and dissemination of reflective professional development (Curtis & Szestay, 2005). Teachers need opportunities to talk about what they know and do. Helping teachers to talk about their knowledge in a detailed and reflective way may enable them to assess whether their aims are being achieved in the classroom. It may also help them clarify areas they wish to change (Corrie, 1997). Verloop et al. (2001) suggest that findings from research on teacher knowledge are of use to practising teachers because the knowledge base of teaching becomes a public one and is made available to all professionals through publications and professional development activities. The findings of the current study revealed that feedback from colleagues was considered one of the sources of developing the EFL experienced teachers' knowledge and consequently their practice. Norrish (1996)

points out that classroom observation between peers is a productive method to enable teachers to realise that they know a lot more than they think they do.

The findings of the current study on teacher knowledge highlighted that sharing knowledge among colleagues was one way of developing it. This implies that it is important for teachers to participate in communities of practice and share ideas about teaching in seminars and conferences. For example, teachers need to participate actively in the video-conferences delivered by the MOE on a regular basis. These meetings are available for all teachers in all schools and the school could encourage participation by making it part of the annual assessment of the teacher's performance. Apart from fruitful discussions in these conferences, teachers are also updated with the most recent development in TESOL which could boost the teachers' professional development.

The current study also aligns with research evidence highlighting the useful implications of research on teacher knowledge in the contexts of collaboration and mentoring. For example, Hiebert et al. (2002) point out why it is particularly useful in these areas. They state:

As teachers collaborate to assist each other in solving problems of practice, and as they mentor younger teachers, this kind of local theorizing can be useful, and even necessary. It provides a principled way to move what was learned in one context or classroom into another. Collaboration and mentoring provide settings in which representing knowledge in more general forms is genuinely beneficial (p.8).

Thus, based on this evidence, inter-teacher communication within the school and especially in the subject staff-room needs to be promoted. Senior teachers could play an active role in this regard through arranging regular meetings with the teachers to discuss problematic issues and suggest possible solutions. Again, this could help in the teachers' professional development. Professional development programmes should also ask teachers to own their knowledge and experiences and to negotiate them with others. To achieve this goal of owning one's

knowledge and negotiating it, professional development should be critically reflective and should include opportunities for teachers to build from their current knowledge and practice (Hibbert, Heydon, & Rich, 2007). Kooy (2006) suggests that teacher clubs where teachers meet together and discuss stories from classrooms provide a place and space for relational learning. This unconventional approach to teacher development could open the way for a process of lifelong learning. This is because within interpretive communities where teacher accounts intersect and interact, teachers expand their imaginative capacities, recreate the stories of their professional lives, and reconstruct their professional knowledge (Kooy, 2006). The reference made in the context of the current study regarding knowledge as transferrable implies the need for such professional development activities. The sharing of teacher knowledge is expected to expand the knowledge base for teaching, which, in turn, could better inform practice.

7.6 Implications for educational research

The current study could also have implications for further educational. There is a need to promote the qualitative mode of inquiry and the interpretive-constructivist research framework among the educational research communities in Egypt (Gahin, 2001). The current study is a response to Gahin's call. By acknowledging the multiple realities of the research participants and letting them construct their own knowledge and reflect upon their own practice, and by mainly using in-depth interviewing, classroom observation followed by stimulated recall interview sessions and open-ended questions in the questionnaire, an attempt is being made to help others realise the suitability of the qualitative mode of inquiry in providing profound insights into the complexity of teaching English as a foreign language in Egypt.

Another point is concerned with implications for research on teacher knowledge. Teacher knowledge in the current study was viewed broadly to incorporate some aspects of beliefs, perceptions and values. In addition, when teachers talked about these aspects, they did so in relation to practice and reasoning. Teaching is a conscious effort in which teachers encounter countless novel situations to

which they have to respond or decide what to do. Any course of action taken, which is most likely to be different from one teacher to another, is a deliberate action based on rational reasoning. It is this supply of reasons which is required to establish the justification of the practical knowledge claims made by the teacher. Fenstermacher supports this view arguing that the giving of good reasons is well suited to addressing the demands of the epistemic warrant of knowledge claims. He states:

The provision of reasons, when done well, makes action sensible to the actor and the observer. That is a minimal form of warrant for practical action. Such reasoning may also show that an action is, for example, the reasonable thing to do, the obvious thing to do, or the only thing one could do under the circumstances. Each of these is, I believe, a contribution to the epistemic merit of a practical knowledge claim. Practical reasoning may also address the moral aspects of action, indicating that it was fair, right, or the best of a number of poor alternatives (p.45).

The above argument highlights the importance of justifications of knowledge claims when studying teacher knowledge. Fenstermacher maintains:

If the potential of the notion of practical knowledge, knowledge-in-action, personal practical knowledge, or teacher knowledge is to be realized, all who would study it face an obligation to take seriously the fact that they are studying notions of knowledge and, as such, must work through matters of warrant and justification. (p.49)

Accordingly, it is important to seek justifications for the knowledge claims held by the teachers. Therefore, researchers on teacher knowledge might need to consider not only their participants' views, but also the justifications they provide for their views. Unless this is considered throughout the initial stages of the research, for example, when collecting the data, it will be difficult to present an account about teacher knowledge. This constructed knowledge articulated by the

teachers does not only tell us that teachers know, but also that they ‘know what they know’. This meta-knowledge constitutes an essence for teacher learning.

7.7 Recommendations of the study

The findings disclosed a variety of contextual challenges which faced the teachers when attempting to actualise their advocated knowledge claims into classroom practice. These challenges were perhaps symptoms of greater problems inherent in the educational system. However, most of the teachers’ reactions suggest that they viewed these challenges as sources of development. Looking ‘out of the box’ provided the teachers with individual solutions to overcome problematic situations. Though valuable, these individual efforts could not be a permanent substitute for a longer-lasting remedy for the problems inherent in the system.

Large class size was revealed to be a widespread problem. Its negative impact reached almost all areas of the teacher’s work. Without reducing the number in the over-crowded classes, all the sincere efforts made by the teachers could be in jeopardy. The findings in the current study revealed that the majority of EFL teachers found it difficult to realise their views in actual classroom practice because of the large class size which is sometimes rises up to 70. This challenge is out of the teacher’s hand. It calls for policy change in the form of building more schools and training and employing more teachers to reduce the number of students per class. This could provide a basic requirement for creating the supportive teaching and learning environment and consequently improve academic outcomes.

Another recommendation of the study is related to the provision of support and resources for the teachers to be able to actualise their knowledge in practice. There is a need to change the current seating arrangements in the Egyptian classroom to encourage collaborative learning. Arranging the classroom seats in rows hinder student-student interaction and implies that the teacher is the only source of knowledge in class. This is incongruent with the need to provide more space for student-centred education. This also highlights the need for reducing

class size. This could be achieved by schools operating in two shifts, which is the case for some of the schools. This is feasible given that the school day in the schools operating for one shift finishes as early as 1:00 pm. In doing so, the number of students per class could be reduced by half. With fewer students per class, more communicative activities could be carried out. The current practice does not encourage the role of the teacher as a facilitator of the students' learning by working as a guide. Instead, the teacher's role is dominant. There is also a need to equip Egyptian classrooms with modern technology such as interactive boards, educational audio and video players and overhead projectors. This could help teachers provide a stimulating learning environment to promote the progress and enjoyment of the learners.

Reforming the exam system should also be among the priorities of enhancing the educational service. Without transforming the view that examinations are the ultimate goal of the educational process and replacing it with a view that examinations should be one part of the endeavour. It seems inevitable that change in attitudes towards teaching and learning EFL listening and speaking is bound to including these skills in the exam system. This will provide a motive for teachers and learners to find value, even if caused extrinsically, in listening in and speaking the target language. Language is a whole system and unless all language skills are tested in the Egyptian examination system, the over-emphasis on teaching writing and reading at the expense of listening and speaking will continue.

In addition to the above logistical issues, other recommendations can be made. Given that the findings of the current study are based on the views of experienced EFL teachers in the Egyptian context, many recommendations can be drawn based on their views. Experienced teachers are a source of knowledge and guidance. Therefore their views and practice can provide much information about the profession of teaching and what it involves.

Based on the findings of the current study, several recommendations need to be considered by EFL teachers in the Egyptian context. EFL teaching means

focusing on all language skills without overemphasizing some at the expense of others. This is because all of them are important for language learning. An emphasis needs to be placed on communicative language teaching and the development of students' fluency. EFL vocabulary instruction should focus on techniques which encourage students to make an effort while learning. Similarly, grammar instruction should be done inductively to help students discover the rules by themselves and consequently become active learners.

There are other recommendations for teachers in general. Teachers should adopt classroom management approaches which are based on setting rules for practice agreed upon by both the students and their teachers. It is very important for teachers to be aware of general teaching skills such as lesson planning, time management, single tasking, advance organization, using games, and the provision of learning opportunities. Teachers should be aware of their students' different abilities, learning styles and social backgrounds. Furthermore, teachers should be aware of the ways of creating a favourable classroom learning environment such as reinforcing students' learning, supporting them emotionally, tolerating their errors and accepting them. Teachers should also know about curriculum evaluation and the role of technology in teaching. They should also be aware of the role of reflection and personal qualities necessary for the development of their knowledge and practice.

Teachers should also know about the various ways of developing their knowledge such as teacher training, experience, previous schooling, skill training and various sources of feedback. In addition, teachers should realise that the relationship between their knowledge and practice is not linear. Although their knowledge can sometimes inform the classroom decisions, it is, at other times, challenged in practice. Therefore, teachers should be aware of the various factors intervening in the actualisation of their knowledge in action.

7.8 The future research agenda of teacher knowledge

The current study highlighted the positive role of experience in the EFL teachers' cognitions and practices in the Egyptian context. There is a need for a developmental study to investigate how the content of teachers' knowledge develops with experience and how their practices are affected as a result. There is also a need for studies which compare the cognitions and practices of experienced EFL teachers with those of novice teachers to identify the similarities and differences and ultimately determine the needs of novice teachers which could be salient issues for either in-service professional training or pre-service teacher education.

In another comparative study, the views of TEFL teacher educators about what constitutes the knowledge bases and practices of the EFL teacher could be compared with those of practising teachers to identify the tensions between theoretical and practical ones. There is also a need for studies to identify the impact of the EFL teachers' knowledge and practices on their EFL students' learning outcomes.

The data presented in the current study could be a source of developing research tools to investigate the knowledge and practice of the EFL teacher. It could be also used for developing a training programme addressing what EFL teachers should know and how this knowledge can be actualised in practice. General guidelines could be provided using the material in the current study to enlighten those interested in working in teaching EFL in the context of the current study.

7.9 Conclusion of the study

Studying teacher knowledge seems to carry forward understanding of the role of the teacher. However, such study needs to be considered in light of the context in which it is carried out. This is because what teachers know and the sources which help them shape their knowledge are related to the contexts that they experience with the relationship between what they know and what they do being either mediated or hindered by context. Another point is that no full understanding of

the role of teacher knowledge can be obtained without studying it in relation to practice. Practitioners can provide profound insights into how their teaching is shaped by their knowledge. Practitioners, especially those who are aware of what they know as well as the role of this knowledge in practice and can articulate their thinking about what they do and know are the best group suited for an investigation into teacher knowledge and practice. Experienced teachers or those undertaking postgraduate study in the field of teaching are well aware of the terminology that needs to be used for the purpose of research. Therefore, the accounts they provide could reflect a profound understanding of what knowledge is necessary for teaching and how it can be actualised in teaching.

Studying teacher knowledge, and its relationship to classroom practice, therefore, requires the use of research methods which could access this knowledge and how it shapes practice. Surveys, interviews and classroom observation followed by post-observation interviews could help in digging deep into what is implicit. As for the findings reached in the current study, they could shed some light on the relationship between theory and practice. The core areas of teacher knowledge revealed in the current study could contribute to the theory of teaching with a particular focus on the EFL context of the current study. The findings revealed relate to the Egyptian context and therefore they could provide insights into the knowledge and practice of EFL teaching in such context. The propositional language used to present the findings could be accessible to both teacher educators, EFL teachers, and educational research to get some insights into four issues: the core areas of knowledge essential for the EFL teacher, the sources which could help in shaping what teachers know, the ways teacher knowledge are put in classroom practice and the role of context in actualising teacher knowledge in action.

Finally, I would like to conclude with some reflections on the whole journey of this work. I have chosen this area of research not only because I like it, but also to find out more about knowledge of teaching. When I finished the data collection and analysis processes, I realised the wealth of knowledge teachers

have. It is practical knowledge and, as such provides a true reflection of their world and experiences.

The study also means a lot for me as a researcher. Completing research training at the School of Education, University of Exeter gave me access to abundant knowledge with regard to nature of educational enquiry, interpretive and scientific methodologies and communicating educational research. It is through this training and the successful completion of four four-thousand-word assignments that provided me with a solid background of the educational research tradition in the UK context. It also helped me develop my skill as a qualitative researcher in addition to procedural knowledge of how to carry out quantitative analyses using SPSS. I also learned how to use and used the *Endnote* programme to construct my own library of references. In addition, my study journey helped me develop my general knowledge and skills. I learned a lot of study skills including: time management, identifying priorities, task management, working under stress and time pressure, and engaging in intellectual discussion with my supervisors and colleagues to get my ideas across, and thinking of and trying out different pathways to solve problems. It improved my presentation skills as I had to externalise my ideas to different audiences who might not be familiar with my work. It also improved my academic reading and writing skills. All these benefits will make it easier for me to produce further academic work.

By the end of the thesis, I feel that the journey has not ended. It has just started. It is a beginning of a new era of thinking about what could be done in the field of teacher knowledge to contribute to knowledge and to help me continue to develop professionally. No work is perfect. There is always something to be added. However, I did my best, given the time and my ability, to produce this thesis. This work seemed to me like a developing moon. In the early nights, the picture was very dim and unclear. Bit by bit, the scene has become more recognizable and the picture appeared clearer and nicer. In spite of all the struggle and effort, the real enjoyment was in seeing it develop and grow until it becomes a whole entity. These moments of joy alleviated the burden of the long hours of hard work. The most joyful moment was when seeing it complete. This

moment eradicated all the tiredness of the long and tiring journey waiting for the final result.

Postscript

The aim of this postscript is to reflect on some of the problems and issues that arose in the field work and data analysis of the study. Since I chose to prioritise breadth in the research rather than focusing on particular topics (for the reasons I outlined in section 1.5), several problems emerged when collecting and analysing the data. In the field work, I had to try to ensure that all areas were covered. This was sometimes difficult e.g. because of the limited time available for some of the interviews. Much of the data that was collected was related to pedagogical knowledge because most of the teachers liked to talk about this area, which is closely-related to what they do. As a consequence much of the analysis focused on issues relating to pedagogical knowledge with less emphasis being given to other analytical sub-categories. In addition, many issues emerged from the data which necessitated the use of many codes to capture and convey the complexity of the data that was collected.

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Appendices

Appendix A: The teacher knowledge questionnaire

Dear participant:

This questionnaire was designed to consult your views regarding the various areas of your work. It is part of a research project I am carrying out to understand what constitutes the various areas of the EFL teacher's knowledge, how it is drawn upon in practice, what shapes it and what factors are related to the actualisation of teacher knowledge in practice. Your cooperation is much appreciated.

Part A: Personal information

Name (optional):.....

Gender: Male () Female ()

Age: 20-24 () 25-29 () 30-34 () 35-39 () 40-44 () 45 or more ()

Qualification:

Teaching experience: Less than 5 years () 5 to 10 years () 11 years or more ()

The stage you are teaching in : Preparatory () Secondary ()

Part B (the close-ended statements)

Please read the statement carefully and put a tick under the response which represents your point of view.

Statement	Total no. of cases	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teaching EFL requires knowledge of the target culture.						
It is essential for the EFL teacher to know about the origin of the target language.						
Teaching EFL listening and speaking is as necessary as teaching reading and writing.						
Integrating EFL skills while teaching reinforces students' language learning.						
Students could learn EFL skills through communicative language						

teaching.						
The teacher needs to use communicative activities as well as meaningful and mechanical activities.						
The teacher needs to develop EFL students' fluency more than accuracy.						
The teacher needs to help the students use English as much as possible.						
Using EFL vocabulary teaching strategies such as examples is better for students' learning than translating the meaning.						
The teacher could help students learn the meaning of EFL vocabulary through actions.						
Teaching EFL grammar inductively maintains students' learning.						
A teacher's use of metalanguage facilitates students' learning of EFL grammar.						
Comparing EFL grammar with grammar of the mother tongue facilitates students' learning of EFL grammar.						
The EFL language system is different from that of the mother tongue.						
Lesson planning facilitates the management of instruction.						
Time management helps the teacher finish the pre-planned activities.						
The teacher could facilitate						

students' learning by focusing their attention on one task at a time.						
The teacher could help the students direct their learning by announcing the aim of a task in advance.						
The teacher could help students focus their attention by not repeating instructions.						
Giving instructions in the students' native language facilitates the instructional flow.						
Students learn at different rates.						
Using audio and visual aids reinforces students' learning.						
The teacher could provide an environment conducive to learning by reinforcing students.						
The teacher could establish rapport with the students by socializing with them inside the classroom.						
The teacher needs to establish rapport with the students outside the classroom.						
The teacher could help the students overcome their negative feelings by listening to their problems.						
The teacher needs to provide a learning environment where students feel secure.						
The teacher needs to develop in the students the sense of the classroom as a community.						
The teacher needs to tolerate students' errors.						

The teacher could create a favourable learning environment by giving students the chance to ask questions.						
The teacher could make the learning environment less stressful by accepting students' opinions and initiatives.						
It is more important for the teacher to respond to the students' needs than to go through the assigned textbook material.						
The teacher needs to have a critical awareness of the curriculum content and how it is taught.						
It is important for the teacher to know the uses of modern technology in teaching.						
Giving students assignments to finish at home consolidates their learning.						
It is important for the teacher to provide input building on students' prior knowledge.						
A good teacher has a sense of humour.						
A teacher can know about the success of the lesson by asking students at the end.						
Student teaching experience is a good source of knowing about teaching						
Student teaching experience enables the prospective teacher to link theory to classroom practice						
Classroom seating arrangements in						

rows does not allow the teacher to organize group work.						
Classroom management is difficult because of the large class size (more than 40 students in class).						

Part C : (open-ended questions)

What areas of teacher knowledge are essential for the EFL teacher? *You may write your response in the box below.*

What are the sources which shape teacher knowledge?

What is the relationship between teacher knowledge and practice?

What challenges do you face to put knowledge of the various areas of you work in practice?

Dear participant,

I may need your participation in another stage of this project including doing an interview and classroom observation. There is no compulsion for you to participate and you may at any stage withdraw your participation. Any information which you give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, and all information you give will be treated as confidential.

If you wish to participate in the interview, classroom observation or both, please give me your contact details below.

Name:.....

Telephone number/Mobile:.....

Email:.....

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix B: Interview Schedule

At the beginning, the interviewee will be informed about the aim of the investigation and will be assured that the recorded interview data will be used for research purposes only.

Area to Explore	Likely Questions
Sources of teacher knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tell me about your experience in studying TEFL at the university? - Do you feel your own education has had any influence on the way you teach? How? - Relate any episodes you see have had any effect on your work today
Subject Matter Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the sources of your subject matter knowledge? - What areas of subject matter knowledge are most important for you? Why? - How does your knowledge about subject matter affect your teaching?
Knowledge of EFL pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What knowledge is important for teaching EFL? - What do you know about teaching (EFL skills, vocabulary, grammar)? - Is this knowledge important? Why? - Do you make use of this knowledge in your teaching? - Could you give me some examples for classroom teaching showing how you make use of your knowledge in teaching?
Pedagogical knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What approach do you follow to manage the classroom? Why do you prefer it? - What areas of knowledge about teaching in general you see important? Why?
Knowledge about students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you describe your students? - What kind of students do you like? Why? - How does your knowledge about your students affect your own

	teaching?
Curriculum knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do you think is the primary role of the EFL textbook? - What are the requirements for teaching the assigned textbook? - What are the resources available for teaching? - Are there any aspects which need supplementing? What kind of supplementary materials do you use? - How does your knowledge about the curriculum affect your teaching?
Knowledge of the learning environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do you do to create a favourable learning atmosphere in your classroom? - How do you develop rapport between you and your students?
Knowledge of self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you describe yourself as a teacher? - How has your own teaching been affected by your experience as a teacher? - How does your knowledge about yourself affect your teaching?
Role of contextual factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you describe your school environment/context? What effect does this have on your own teaching? - What kind of relationship do you have with the school community? - What constraints do you face in your job? - How does your knowledge about context affect your teaching?
Knowledge into practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you make use of the different knowledge domains in your classroom teaching? - Do you find it easy to put your knowledge of the various aspects of your work in practice? Why? Why not? - Do you make your classroom decisions based on what you know? Give examples of actual teaching?

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix C: Pre-determined and emergent analytical codes

Analytical codes related to areas of teacher knowledge	
Knowledge of subject matter	
English as a Foreign Language Proficiency	EFL-Pro.
English as a Foreign Language Origin	EFL-Orig.
English as a Foreign Language Culture	EFL-Cult.
Knowledge of content pedagogy	
Emphasis of EFL skills	TEFL-Emp.
Integrating EFL skills	TEFL-Int.
Communicative Language Teaching	CLT
Prioritising either Fluency or Accuracy	Flu. vs. Ac.
The use of the mother tongue	L1
Teaching EFL Writing	TEFL-W
Teaching EFL Reading	TEFL- R
Teaching EFL Listening & Speaking	TEFL- L& S
Teaching EFL Vocabulary	TEFL- Voc.
Teaching EFL Grammar	TEFL-Gra.
Knowledge of General Pedagogy	GP
Approaches to Classroom Management	GP-CM
Lesson Planning	GP-LP
Time Management	GP-TM
Single Tasking	GP-ST
Stating the Aim of Task	GP-SAT
Giving Instructions	GP-GI
Knowledge of Students	SS
Knowledge of Students' Learning Styles	SS-LS
Knowledge of Students' Background	SS-Bac.
Knowledge of Students' Motivation	SS-Mot.
Knowledge of the Classroom Learning Environment	
Reinforcing students learning	RESTA-R
Emotional support	RESTA-E

Solidarity	RESTA-S
Tolerance	RESTA-T
Acceptance	RESTA-A
Knowledge of Curriculum	Curr.
Material Coverage	Curr-MC
Curriculum Evaluation	Curr-CE
The Use of Modern Technology	Curr-MT
Setting Homework	Curr-SH
Goals for Teaching	Curr-GT
Knowledge of Self	Self
Reflection	Self-Ref.
Self-Image	Self-Im.
Analytical codes related to sources of teacher knowledge	
Sources of Knowledge of Subject Matter	SSM
Academic Study	SSM-AS
Additional Language Courses	SSM-ALC
Work Experience	SSM-WE
Expert Advice	SSM-EA
Sources of Knowledge of Content Pedagogy	SCP
Initial Teacher Education	SCP-ITE
Reading in the Field of EFL Teaching	SCP-Rea.
Expert Advice	SCP-EA
Sources of Knowledge of General Pedagogy	SGP
Research	SGP-Res.
Student Feedback	SGP-SFee.
Peer Feedback	SGP-PFee.
Sources of Knowledge of Students	SSS
Experience	SSS-Exp.
Student Output	SSS-SO
Specialised Study	SSS-SS
Sources of Knowledge of Classroom Learning Environment	SCE
Initial Teacher Education	SCE-ITE

Sources of Knowledge of Curriculum	SCurr
Skills Training	SCurr-ST
Experience	SCurr-Exp.
Sources of Knowledge of Self	SSE
History & Background	SSE-H&B
Experience	SSE-Exp.
In-service Training	SSE-IT
Feedback from the School Community	SSE-Fee.
Analytical codes related to Teacher Knowledge in Action	
Subject Matter Knowledge in Action	
Highlighting Varieties of English	Vari-E.
Comparing EFL and L1 Cultures	EFL & L1 Cult.
Knowledge of Content Pedagogy in Action	
Encouraging the Use of English	EFL Use
Teaching EFL through Situations	EFL Sit.
The Choice of Vocabulary Techniques	Voc.Tech.
Teaching Grammar in Context	Gra.Cx.
Knowledge of General Pedagogy in Action	
Using Singing to Manage the Class	Sing-CM
Stating the Aim of Task in Action	SAT-A
Giving Instructions in Action	GI-A
Knowledge of Students in Action	
Mixed Ability Grouping	Mis-SS
Differentiated Instruction	Diff-Ins.
Using Games to Motivate Students	Gam-Mot.
Encouraging Self Error Correction	Err-Mot.
Using Collaborative Activities	Coll-Mot.
Maximising Students' Talk	Talk-Mot.
Knowledge of the Classroom Learning Environment in Action	
Reinforcement in Action (Praise)	RESTA-Pra.
Emotional Support in Action (Chatting)	RESTA-Cha.
Solidarity in Action (Singing)	RESTA-Sing.

Tolerance in Action (Error Management)	RESTA-Err.
Acceptance in Action (Initiatives)	RESTA-Init.
Knowledge of Curriculum in Action	
Skipping Curriculum Material	Curr-Skip.
Using Additional Material	Curr-Add.
Reorganizing Curriculum Material	Curr-Reorg.
Building on Students' Prior Knowledge	Curr-Prior.
Use of Practice on Exam Questions	Curr-Exam.
Highlighting Moral Lessons Behind Teaching points	Curr-Life.
Knowledge of Self in Action	
Reflecting on Lessons	Ref.Less.
Using Jokes	Jok-Pers.
Punctuality in School	Punc-Pers.
Passion for English	Pass-Pers.
Analytical codes related to Contextual Factors	
Exam Policy	
Marginalising Listening and Speaking	Exam-Marg.
Students' Pragmatic View to Learn EFL	Exam-Prag.
Students' Unwillingness To Communicate	Exam-UCT
Hampering Students' Fluency	Exam-Flu.
Lack of Time, Support and Resources	
Inability to Sustain Proficiency	Lac-Prof.
Difficulty to Manage the Classroom	Lac-CM
Inability to Attend to Students' Learning Styles	Lac-LS
Inability to Provide Differentiated Instruction	Lac- Diff.
Inability to Use Modern Technology	Lac- MT
Inability to Cover the Curriculum Material	Lac- MC
Inability to Achieve Various Teaching Goals	Lac-Goal.
Mismatch Between Students' Expectations and Needs	
Unwillingness To Communicate	Mis-UCT
Difficulty to Use Communicative Language Teaching	Mis-CLT
Difficulty to Use Inductive Grammar Teaching	Mis-Gra.

Difficulty to Reduce Meta-language	Mis-Meta.
Difficulty to Cover the Curriculum Material	Mis-MC
Difficulty to Achieve Various Teaching Goals	Mis-Goal
Large Class Size	
Difficulty to Manage the Class	Size-CM
Difficulty to Establish Rapport with the Students	Size-Rapp.
Difficulty to Cover the Curriculum Material	Size-MC
Difficulty to Cope with the Demands of Teaching	Size-Cope.

Appendix D: A sample interview script

I gave the interviewee teacher a brief introduction about the topic of his research. He asked the permission from the interviewee to record the interview to use the data for his research purpose. The interviewee was given assurance about the privacy and the confidentiality of the data. Then, I started recording.

R: Let me start by trying to explore your teacher education. Why did you choose to be a teacher? What about your experience in the Faculty of Education when you were a student teacher in terms of the components of the programme which you find useful and those components which you find not very useful to your work today?

T: My name is Sarah Youssif (pseudo name). I am a teacher of English. I teach at a prep stage. As for your first question, why did you choose to be a teacher? Let's speak more frankly. I didn't choose to be a teacher in spite of the fact that I love my job very much. As you know, in Egypt, the total marks of the GCSE suggest which faculty you can go, so I graduated from the Faculty of Education in 1988. I have been working for about twenty years. I love my job very much, and all the time, I am trying to improve myself, to be a good teacher at least. The components of the programme helped me to some extent, but, you know, the practical stage is better because practice makes perfect.

R: I see what you mean.

T: As a student teacher, I trained in a prep school, but I can't remember that it has a great influence on me because, as you know, from the very beginning, we were shy, and it was just a great experience to enter a class and to greet students and that's all, but our real work gives us much practice, much experience.

R: I see what you mean.

T: Dealing with students is the real practice. As you know, in the classroom, you find here in Egypt different levels, mixed ability classes, so this is a great problem that we all face that needs much thinking how to match large classes with different abilities, so we always think of new ways, alternative ways to deal with such great number with different levels. For example, for me, I feel difficulty to deal with every student in a class of seventy.

R: Oh, seventy!

T: Great number.

R: The class size is very big.

T: Yah. So I thought of an idea to prepare something I called it mailbox and I put it at the very beginning of the class, and I tell my students to feel free to write to me whatever they want to say, but they are not supposed to interrupt while I am teaching. I told them that fell free to tell whatever you want to tell me about and I will respond to your requests, but during the next lesson, so if you want to tell me something, don't interrupt the lesson because our time is limited and we have a curriculum, certain points to cover, so you can't interrupt.

R: It's a very interesting idea. I am really amazed by this because, you know, this is something which is a good solution for a pressing problem inside the classroom. I know the class size is very big and many teachers suffer from this problem, so this is a good solution for it, using a mailbox so students can put their problems, their complaints, even their questions, and, in this way, you are trying to cover the curriculum which has a limited period of time.

T: As for the mailbox, when students ask common questions or they want to be quite clear about certain points mentioned inside the classroom, in the beginning of the next lesson, we* talk to the whole class because maybe some other students need clarification for the same points. As for the students who have special needs, we call them after class privately if they have problems, if they want to tell something and they don't want their colleagues to know about, we give them the chance to do that. This way is wonderful because every time, I try to make good relationship with my students, I feel it is too difficult, but throughout using the mailbox, at least, I could know their names. I have a good relation with them because every one of them knows that he is or she is very important to me. His questions, his problems, his needs are very important to me, and I will respond honestly to their needs. Something else, as you know, it is too difficult for students to accept the imposed rules, so , from the very beginning of the year, we prepare something together with my students, the rules poster, dos and don'ts.

** The use of the plural pronoun here, and henceforth, may refer to the collective practice of the mailbox by all English staff in the school where the interviewee is teaching. This account is supported by the fact that the same idea was mentioned by another interviewee who teaches in the same school. Alternatively, the teacher may be*

influenced by her position as the senior teacher in her school, and thus is speaking on behalf of the other staff members. A third justification is that, sometimes, the first person plural pronoun 'we' is used instead of the first person singular pronoun 'I' as a matter of courtesy.

R: Very good, like a constitution of what to do and what not to do.

T: Yes.

R: This is very interesting, and could you give me examples of the dos and the don'ts in this constitution.

T: When they think of the rules themselves, they will respect. Be sure about this. For example, one of my students, one day, said, 'I don't like students to laugh at my mistakes.' I asked her to concise this sentence into just one or two words to be written. We wrote, 'respect others' opinions' and 'be in class on time'.

R: Very good.

T: 'Before class, your things should be ready.' When I enter the classroom, I should find the blackboard clean, your books are out of your bags, not to interrupt the lesson to be ready for the class, so we write a very short simple sentence, 'be ready for class.' That's it, be, don't be, do, don't do, so and so, and they give me their ideas.

R: Do you mean something else to be included or to be excluded from the rules? Do you mean that you discuss the rules with them?

T: Yah. They put it themselves.

R: They put it themselves!

T: Also, I ask one of my students to write the poster herself.

R: So do you mean that they share even in designing the poster.

T: Yah, sure.

R: Does this sense of being involved make them responsible for what they do?

T: Yah, and when they break a rule, I just point to the poster.

R: You mean as a reminder to them that you ourselves make these rules, so it is better to follow them. I think this is very interesting. Now, let's move to subject matter knowledge.

T: what do you mean by subject matter knowledge?

R: It has two elements. The first element is your proficiency as a teacher, your proficiency in speaking, in the different skills of English, your proficiency in using English inside the classroom, and the other part is the subject matter of the textbook itself, the content and what is needed from the teacher to teach it?

T: Nowadays, the Ministry of Education gives due care to training teachers. It is very important to better ourselves, so we attend many programmes such as video-conference courses, and sometimes we travel to Cairo to attend conferences. Such programmes help us a lot to improve our way of teaching and develop proficiently. As for developing my skills, I try not only to attend, but also to apply and share others. When I share others, I remind myself of the new techniques. It is also a kind of application. As for the content, some lessons are a little bit difficult for the students. This needs sufficient preparation. I mean, before we enter the classroom, we have to think to put ourselves in students' place. Is it suitable for their level or not? If not, we are not allowed to omit any activities, but we can use worksheets, change the idea by using a game, something that attracts students' attention. Also, we can use PowerPoint presentations, and nowadays, in most of our schools, students in our schools can use computers freely and teachers can enter their classrooms with data show to use PowerPoint presentations.

R: Which is very good.

T: Yes. Yes.

R: So do you mean that you reorganize the content to suit the needs of the students?

T: This is what we are allowed to do, to substitute, to exchange, but not to cancel.

R: I see what you mean because still there are activities to be covered, so you could substitute an activity with an easier one to make it easier for the students.

T: Yes. As you know, good preparation leads to a successful lesson.

R: Very good point. So, do you think that it is important for the teacher to prepare the lesson well before entering the classroom?

T: yes, and to check the equipments and to put in his mind plan A and a backup. I mean plan A and plan B.

R: In case that plan A is not successful or cannot be used, there is another plan. This is a very good principle as well.

T: And it's also very important to know a background about the class and the students.

R: It is very important. By the way, I am coming to this, tell me, please go ahead because this is very important, knowledge about students, what do you need to know about students? About their characteristics? About their types? In terms of their achievement? In terms of, even their social and economic status and how do these factors affect your work as a teacher?

T: Sure, the number of students affect our work and as I told you, we think of ideas to just facilitate the heavy burden.

R: Of course.

T: And also, as you know that students are different. Human beings are different.

R: Yes. Everyone has his own interests, and we as teachers, we try to satisfy these different needs. We have different intelligences.

R: Yah. Yes of course, multiple intelligences.

T: Yes, and also some students are silent learners. They love working individually. Others love work in groups, so we have to vary our techniques, not to use the same techniques. We just need to think how to satisfy the different needs, to do something in groups, to give them the chance to do something silently, to read silently, to do something on their own. This is very important, not to let the class to work using one rigid style only, work in pairs, work in pairs, work in groups, work in groups. How about students who prefer working, who concentrate more when they work on their own? We have to give them the chance to do that at least at the beginning of the activity. Read silently and be ready, then share your ideas.

R: Do you mean that if they feel that they are not involved in classroom activities, they will feel marginalized and this will affect even their psychologies and even their further participation in classroom activities afterwards?

T: I remember something written by Stephen Krashen, *i* plus one.

R: Yah, comprehensible input.

T: Input plus one, that your input should be above the students' levels by one, not minus one, not plus five

R: I see. You are referring here to the role of the teacher to scaffold students' learning just one point above their level, and why not minus one and why not plus five? **

** *Exploring issues stressed by the participants qualitative Interviewing 2007 The Sage Qualitative Kit*

T: If it is minus, they will get bored. We know everything. Why should we concentrate? You will find no concentration in class and if it is above their level, they will feel frustrated.

R: because they will not be able to answer your questions.

T: No.

R: Not at all. And in this case, it will be too difficult for them to participate.

T: Yah.

R: I see what you mean. You are referring to something which is very important which is providing students with input, with activities, with situations which are suitable to their levels, but don't you think that students' levels may be less than expected for you to cover the activities in the curriculum?

T: Yah. Sure. As I told you from the very beginning, we have different abilities in one class, so we can ask students to sit in groups, but the groups should be varied, not with the same level because the good ones will teach the weaker ones. I mean if every group has a leader, a good student works as a leader, the weak students will learn from his colleagues, from his student leader and from his teacher and he will participate. He will not feel shy to participate with his colleagues.

R: Of course. This is something which may take me to something else related to knowledge about students, which is knowledge about context. Here I mean the micro level of context, which is the classroom. What do you do as a teacher to create a favourable learning atmosphere in your classroom, to establish a good relationship, a good rapport between you and your students and how do you see this as important for your classroom teaching?

T: Yah. The teacher shouldn't spread a threatening atmosphere inside the classroom.

R: I totally agree.

T: And from time to time, when the teacher uses some light activities like using puzzles, jokes, these will make fun inside the classroom, but the good teacher should use this fun, not fun for fun. There should be a purpose behind this. For example, if I give the students a joke, or ask them to look for an educational joke or quiz and we can use the same language. For example, it is a good joke, please write it on the board, and after writing it, we can make a table, for example, verbs, nouns, adjectives, question words, try to analyse this joke, how many verbs are here? How many nouns? How many adjectives? We can extend this activity by asking students, look at the same vocabulary and please try to put every word in a different sentence, try to form or create a story using the same verbs and the same nouns. You will find that students will learn in an amusing way. They will find themselves learning, enriching their vocabulary.

R: So you see that involving students in the activity is the key for the teacher to establish this good relationship between him or her and her students.

T: Sure. When students feel that they feel that they are involved, they are responsible for the learning process. Sometimes, the teacher can give students time to take a part in the lesson. For example, who wants to take a part to present this activity? Students will be creative. They will think of different interesting ideas and I have tried this in classrooms, and when I asked a student to be ready the next time to introduce the lesson for his colleagues, you realise something very important. All the students stand on their toes.

R: Oh. I see what you mean. Very good image.

T: Yah. They want to listen to their colleague. They want to learn from him. They want even to criticise him, so, it is a very, very nice experience to let the students participate

in the classroom, to feel that this is their own learning process. They have to do something for their class.

R: So, this also takes me to an important point, which is your style of teaching because this, for me, I see that this also reflects some characteristics of the distinctive approach or style you adopt with your students in terms of teaching the different skills and the different language aspects. Please tell me something about how do you describe your style of teaching. Is it based on direct presentation? Is it based on elicitation from the students? Do you follow one specific method to teach?

T: it depends on the nature of the lesson itself. You know, teachers work as doctors. They deal with reading lessons differently from listening, form writing. We follow certain techniques for each skill, but generally, students get bored. As you know, they have short attention span, so teachers have to vary their techniques, not to follow one rigid teaching way.

R: So, one important characteristic of your style is variation.

T: Yes. Variation.

R: You see variation as a very important point for students to be involved in classroom activities.

T: Sure.

R: What about the methods you follow? Do you use an eclectic method? Or you may use a certain method here, but you may use a different one with a different student or in a different situation.

T: Yah, sure. It depends.

R: So, it depends on the activities you are going to present, not necessarily to be explanation all the time.

T: No. Participation. As you know, if you imagine that we have forty five minutes for the lesson, I want to talk about students' attention. At the very beginning, students' attention will be high. Gradually, they will lose their attention, and the teacher's role here has to think, how can I grab my students' attention again, so we should put in our mind that we have different activities. We shouldn't use them only at the very beginning

of the lesson. We have to use them in the middle or before the end, just to attract them to keep your students' attention all the time. The teachers have to read their students' eyes.

R: T read their students' eyes. You mean here, are you referring to eye contact?

T: Eye contact and their concentration. If they are yawning, you have to do something at least. Sometimes, when I feel that I am losing my students' attention, I ask them to do something, for example, stand up, stretch, sit down, greet your friends, clap, to do anything, just to get them with you again.

R: But why? Are you activating them physically?

T: Yah. Why not?

R: Ah, why not, you see that this is some kind of refreshment for them.

T: In spite of the fact that we have seventy students in class. You ask them just to stand, sit, stand, sit, stand, sit, exchange your places, in minutes, they will be refreshed.

R: Of course, and then, they will be ready.

T: With you again.

R: With their attention, with their mind which is not very troubled or muddled.

T: Yah, and if you ask them to work in groups, they will be alert all the time because they are not listening; they are participating with a group.

R: you see something else to maximize their participation to learn actively is to let them work in groups as well.

T: And to use authentic materials.

R: Authentic materials.

T: Yah, if you have something like a map, a picture and use it before the end of the lesson, you will find that they are with you again. They will not lose their attention.

R: I see what you mean. So you also, you are referring here to the importance of using aids.

T: Yes.

R: Yah, tell me something about the materials you use, the audio-visual aids, the board for example, yourself, maybe you make use of your students in teaching, the worksheets, the pictures, charts, and so on and so forth.

T: Sure. They have great influence upon students' concentration, but we have to say something. We have to be very sensitive because sometimes we teach, for example, tall, thin, fat. We ask students to come in front of the classroom. Who is thin? Who is fat? Who is very tall? This is not a good way because some students feel depressed. Even if they are fat, don't say, point to the fat boy, point to the tallest one. No. Try to avoid students as teaching aids. You can use: who has a sense of humour? Who is fluent in English? And so on.

R: This is a very important point. It seems that you don't want to embarrass your students.

T: Sure.

R: Why are you making this issue sensitive? Why not taking it as something easy and try to be easy with your students? It will not affect their personalities.

T: It will affect.

R: It will affect?

T: Because who wants to be too fat?

R: Nobody.

R: who wants others to laugh at him?

R: Nobody.

T: No. Nobody. So some teachers unconsciously do that. I am sure unconsciously, but we have to put these points in our mind.

R: You mean the sense of respect.

T: Respect.

R: It should be one important principle inside the classroom.

T: Yes, it should.

R: Now, about the knowledge of the person of the teacher or knowledge of the teacher about himself, how do you see that the important characteristics of a good English language teacher in our society, what is important for him in terms of his or her personality traits? Does he or she have to have certain personal qualities and characteristics to teach well to the students?

T: Yes. Sure. The first thing is that the teacher should be patient because we shouldn't lose our nerves inside the classroom and, as you know, we have so many trouble makers nowadays, especially nowadays?

R: Especially nowadays?

T: Because punishment is prevented from our schools.

R: I see.

T: So many students don't appreciate that.

R: Ah.

T: So they know that teachers have no control upon them, so sometimes they try to annoy the teacher, they try to disturb the class, but if the teacher has a good relation with these trouble makers, if he is patient enough, if he respects them and talks with them in private, they will appreciate his way of dealing with them. They will respect the lesson. They will respect him and they will respect the class time sure, so it is very important also for the classroom management to make good relation with the trouble makers.

R: And patience is the key to this.

T: Yes.

R: If the teacher is not patient, he will be nervous.

T: Yah.

R: And problems will arise.

T: Yah.

R: But what about the other qualities?

T: Knowledgeable. The teacher should be honest and knowledgeable.

R: So you are saying here also that being knowledgeable is another important quality of a good teacher.

T: I mean that nowadays the teacher is not the only resource for knowledge for the students. Students can get knowledge from the internet, from other resources, so the teacher should develop his own knowledge and be honest and frank with his students. If he doesn't know something, he should tell his students, I will search for it and I will give you the correct answer next time because students will know the correct answer, so the students should respect their teacher.

R: So being honest as well is important.

T: Yes.

R: And what about dealing with the students? Should the teacher be fair?

T: Yah. No bias. No bias. Sure. Sure. He shouldn't have pets.

R: What do you mean by that?

T: The most favourable students to him.

R: I see.

T: As you know, as parents, we have one child that we love most, so we shouldn't do that in our lives or in our classes. We should treat them all the same, the boys like the girls, the naughty ones like the polite, the most polite ones, the excellent ones with the slow learners because everyone has his own ability.

R: I see what you mean.

T: so we have to respect them.

R: But, is it easy for the teacher to be like this given that we are human beings and we are affected in a way or another.

T: Yah, it is not so easy, but if we put this in our minds, we will try to do that. If you put this in your mind, you will realise that you are giving due care for certain students, so the next time, try to give due care to others and so on, practice, by practice.

R: As you mentioned a good principle earlier, practice makes perfect.

T: Yes, sure. Sure.

R: And now tell me about yourself as a teacher in terms of your personal qualities, in terms of the principles you stick to most in teaching, in terms of your philosophy about teaching, about learning and so on.

T: Yah. I believe that teachers have great influence upon students.

R: I see.

T: When the teacher becomes honest, loves his job, does his work honestly, honestly, he will treat students equally, he will leave great influence upon his students. The teacher shouldn't neglect certain aspects. He should open his eyes to see what's behind. I mean that if a student needs a piece of advice, the teacher can do it and remember that we can't go everywhere our students go, but our words can.

R: I see. Very good. It is a very important image for me to be like this, and does it affect the way you teach the different skills. I mean teaching reading, teaching writing, teaching listening, and teaching speaking? How do you deal with these skills when you teach to your students? For example, how do you support your students understand a reading text?

T: Yah. There is a certain technique. If you want to have an idea about it, it is ok.

R: Yah, please go ahead.

T: Yah, before we deal with a reading text, we have to do something we call leading-in activity or a warming-up.

R: I see. Is it in the form of pre-reading questions?

T: The pre-reading questions or before the pre-reading questions.

R: Even before the pre-reading questions.

T: Yah, for example, if we are going to talk about certain animals, we can ask general questions: have you ever been to the zoo? What animals did you see? And so, a leading-in.

R: I see.

T: Then, we ask students to read the pre-reading questions, to talk about the pictures. Some teachers neglect talking about the title and the pictures. It is very important because when we deal with the title, students will learn some information or some new words. They can get from the pictures some vocabulary that they will meet during the reading.

R: Yah. That's right.

T: So, here we have to follow something very important that we call tolerance of ambiguity.

R: Ah. Very good image or very good principle.

T: Some students need direct translation for each word. What does it mean? What does it mean? No. When we lead them, if we lead them in a good way, we will facilitate the lesson for them. And we ask them just to read as we read our newspapers in Arabic. For example, they shouldn't stop and ask about the meaning of each word. What does it mean? What does it mean? No. We ask them to read as a whole and try to get the main idea, the main idea. If you don't know the meaning of a word, try to guess the meaning. This is very important; to be patient because in the exams, as you know, some students, when they don't know the answer, they get mad. Sometimes, they lose their nerves. They can't concentrate, but when we train our students in how to be patient to get the knowledge, everything will not be so clear at first, but by practice, everything will be clearer, so be patient. If you don't know a word, if you don't know what does it mean, read it as a whole, read it as a whole, but don't point at every word, don't ask about the meaning, no, read as a whole to get just the first understanding. Then, part by part, with the teacher, everything will be clear. Here I want to concentrate on tolerance of ambiguity.

R: Very important principle. It's a very important principle. Is it just for reading, or is it also in listening as well when you support your students to understand a listening passage, do you follow the same technique?

T: Yes, sure, sure, the same, the same. We can't get a hundred percent from the listening passage, but the aim of the listening passage, of listening, is just to be acquainted with listening to native speakers. This is the major aim.

R: Of listening.

T: Of listening, to get the main idea.

R: But, for the teacher, he is a good model for the students to listen to English as well.

T: Sure. Sure. Sometimes, we ask students to listen to the English news and give me just one piece of news.

R: I see.

T: One.

R: Very important activity.

T: Yah. One piece. One piece.

R: I see.

T: Yah.

R: What about speaking? Do you encourage your students to speak in English in class? In using English as an attempt to improve their fluency or do you insist on them being accurate and may stop them in using Arabic?

T: Sometimes, we should think of, which comes first? Which comes first: fluency or accuracy? We have to encourage our students just to speak, to make mistakes and speak. We shouldn't stop our students at every mistake. Give them the chance to make mistakes, to speak and unconsciously they will improve themselves.

R: Very good.

T: But if you are after teaching a certain structure. We have to stop to correct the structure, but as for speaking, fluency is more important than accuracy because accuracy comes after fluency, and I always tell my shy students; remember, a broken sentence is better than no sentence.

R: Yah. I remember this very important principle I listened to in the first interview. Very good. Very good. Is dealing with students' writing the same?

T: Yah.

R: In terms of writing?

T: As for writing, one day, I have been told not to use much bloody correction, you know the bloody correction.

R: Correcting everything.

T: With the red pen.

R: With the red pen. Ah.

T: when a student opens his notebook and finds many many many crosses with the red pen, he will shut his notebook very quickly. He will not learn from his mistakes, but tell him that mistakes should work with you, not against you. This time, I will correct spelling, only spelling. Next time, I will correct your punctuation rules. Next time, I will correct grammatical mistakes, so every time, when the teacher concentrates on only one aspect, students will realise that they may have many mistakes, but my teacher, this time, is correcting punctuation, is correcting spelling, is correcting grammar, is correcting verb-noun agreement only in grammar, so we should work with a focus.

R: Yah. You mean focusing on one thing at a time.

T: Yah. Yah, to help students be encouraged, not afraid of the teacher's correction.

R: I see. Bloody correction.

T: And sometimes, some teachers say: it's better to correct with a pencil. If they don't like the red one. Ok. Avoid using it because what is the rationale?! We are behind improving our students' standards not to catch their mistakes.

R: Just the idea of having a red pen is to highlight the errors, no more or less because if it is in pencil, students may not be able to notice them.

T: Yah, but it's an informal correction, just for your sake.

R: I see what you mean.

T: But if it is an exam. Ok. We are supposed to use the red pen, but if it is practice, ok.

R: Not a problem. It doesn't matter a lot.

T: No.

R: What about teaching grammar? In terms of teaching grammar especially to prep school students and approaches vary.

T: Yah, deductive and inductive.

R: Yah. In your point of view, what is the best way o teach grammar?

T: As for me, I love transparency in everything, so I love giving the rule. First, I give examples to show the meaning, just to show the meaning. Then, I ask my students to repeat the structure after me. The third step, I write the structure on the blackboard. The most important point is the coming one. I ask students to give me similar examples.

R: Very good.

T: Similar examples. At first, I realise that one or two students take the risk to participate. I wait until I feel that most of the students raise their hands, till I feel that they have their own sentences, they can master this point of grammar, I switch to another point. This is my way.

R: So, basically, you start with examples, then you give the rules, then you encourage students to give sentences from their own.

T: I give the example. I give the rule. I write the structure on the blackboard and I ask students to give me their own different examples.

R: And in terms of encouraging students to use the structures, is it possible for students in this stage, at the prep stage, to use the different structures when, for example, writing. In this way, you are integrating more than one skill at a time.

T: I elicit oral examples not written, oral examples and when we finish, in their textbook, you find rewrite or MCQ activities for students to practise the grammatical points.

R: You mentioned MCQ activities?

T: Multiple Choice Questions.

R: Oh. Multiple Choices. It's an acronym.

T: Yah.

R: Multiple choice questions. Is it to prepare them for examinations?

T: Yes. It is the main item in the exam paper.

R: Why is it multiple choices that are preferred in examinations given that you mentioned that grammar is taught contextually?

T: It is not only multiple choice. Sometimes we give students questions in which they are required to change the structure.

R: You mean like rearranging the sentence.

T: Yes, rearranging and rewriting. I mean to write something and put a word, for example, into brackets and students are asked to rewrite the sentence using the word in brackets. This kind of questions need higher level.

A: Of course it does because it's not just to memorize.

T: No, they construct their own sentences.

R: What about teaching vocabulary items? What you do to teach your students new vocabulary items?

T: As for the vocabulary. It depends. If the words can be seen, I use flash cards or real objects. If they are abstract nouns, I ask students to put them in sentences, and at least if they are keywords, I ask students after my presentation, after giving examples, about their meaning in Arabic. No harm is done because, you know, they should know what am I saying, and I do not explain in Arabic. I ask one of them just to say the word in Arabic so the students who could not give an English meaning, they can listen to the Arabic one but not from the teacher from some of their classmates.

R: So do you think that translation should come last?

T: Not translation. Just the meaning of the word. What does it mean in Arabic, in a word to make sure that all students are on the track.

R: all right. As for the techniques. Do you follow different techniques in presenting a word?

T: Yes, visual aids, sentences, examples...and so on.

R: Very good, what about, for example, if you find that students cannot know how to pronounce a certain word?

T: Yes, before practice, first comes meaning, then the repetition. Students should not repeat unknown words. They are not parrots. They have to know the meaning, then to repeat the words. Even when we teach dialogues, we explain the dialogue and ask students to repeat. We use different techniques, for example, for long sentence, I use back chaining all building up.

R: You mean back chaining to start sentence from the back from the last word first to the word before the last word all building up.

T: Yes, because you know. They always remember the beginning of the sentence, but when you start from the end, they can remember.

R: So in this way, a student could remember what is being said. Ok. What about examinations? Are you the one who prepare the exam for students?

T: Unfortunately. This year, I will.

R: Why are you saying unfortunately?

T: I do not like setting exams

R: Why, don't you like it?

T: It is time

R: Do you mean that setting an exam is difficult?

T: Not difficult, but it needs a clear mind. You know, because in English, it is different from any other subject because if I ask about something in a dialogue, I should not repeat it in a rewrite activity, for example, because if a student does not know the answer in exercise one, he will repeat it again, so instead of missing a mark, he will miss two.

R: Or the other way round, he may get the answer from the second activity, so then he could know it as if he could know the answer from the examination paper, not being tested.

T: Yes, some students look for the answer in the other questions, so it needs clear mind really

R: So it is a burden. But in terms of the relationship between curriculum and the examinations, how do you see this kind of relationship?

T: Nowadays there is a strong relation.

R: In what way?

T: As for prep stage, after each unit there are some test practices which are seen at the final exam, so if students are paying much attentions to their student books, they will get a high mark in the exams, but in the past, we have some curricula like ‘Welcome to English’, the course was in one direction, and exam paper in a another. But nowadays, we all depend completely on using the student book and the work book.

R: So you think that the student book and work book are enough for the examination.

T: I use both while I set the exam.

R: But for some questions, probably this is not case, because, you know, English is more than what is in the textbook. How do you see the role of the teacher in terms of this? What can the teacher do inside the classroom to supplement the material in the textbook to make students not just memorize what is in the book, but to develop their skill to handle even difficult questions which are not in the textbook.

T: When they practice what’s in their hand, when I give them more, they will do. For example. as for me, I ask students to be responsible for this. One day, I asked one of my students to prepare a transparency, you know, for the projector. She prepared it herself. She used her imagination, and I revised it. We entered the computer lab and whole class saw it, so the teacher should think of way to through away the burden from his shoulders upon his students’ shoulders because this is their own learning process, they have to be responsible for that and they will love that, really.

R: But being responsible is not easy to achieve.

T: They will be very proud. They will think, my classmates are doing the activities I designed. They will be very proud and other students will be encouraged to do that.

R: You mean this creates a great competition inside the classroom. Students will feel proud because their work is acknowledged by their classmates, and this is very important for engaging students in class.

T: Really I learn for them. They have their own ideas. We are after the idea of creating critical thinkers, and to let our students think creatively. Last week, I was teaching a lesson about some students who were in touch with a professor called Dr.Latif. They were sending emails to him. There were four persons. Every person had a problem. He sent his e-mail to the Prof. Latif and Prof. Latif gave them the suitable advice. After I finished the lesson, one of my students told me, Miss ‘Why do not you give us time to work in pairs, one is Dr. Latif and the other thinking of the problem.’ I gave them this opportunity and they thought of wonderful problems and wonderful solutions. One of them was funny and we spent a very good time inside the classroom. This came because we are not restricted to the curriculum. Students know that they can add their ideas, so when they prepare something at home and at class they ask permission, ‘I had an idea may I say something’. Our students had wonderful ideas.

R: But what about the textbook.

T: They are following the same. The whole lesson was about four problems, and when we finished, they asked me to give more to pretend that they are sending their emails to Dr.latif under the same umbrella of the lesson.

R: So the aims of the lesson are the same, but do you find time extra for this?

T: You know that in some lessons, we are given time for much practice, but in others, we have some written work book. For these, I explain one example, and they answer just one and get it as a homework, so I tell them, ‘let’s act’. When they act, they will find themselves that they studied the lesson very much and workbooks will be done so easily because it’s a kind of consolidation for oral work.

R: So, you mean that, here, you are even consolidating the oral work, not just the written work. this could be practised as well. Do you try to get feedback from your students on your work as a teacher?

T: I use my e-mail for this, the class e-mail not my personal e-mail, because most of my students don't know how to email, but if someone asked me to teach them that, I will be so happy, but they put their reflection on a piece of paper. By the way, one day I had a problem, so I entered my class in a bad mood. One of my students wrote in my mail box. 'you are not yourself today'. They feel. I was teaching, but she said, 'you did not use visual aids, you did not have fun in class today'. They use their broken sentences, but I got their ideas. I told my colleague, 'see how our students can read eyes, our feelings, our students feel.'

R: So your relationship with your colleagues is not just a formal one, you know, the work and the supervision because you are the senior teacher, but it extends beyond this. In terms of your relationship with your colleagues, or even with your administration, how you could see that this facilitative to work as a teacher?

T: Yes, you know, when the atmosphere is stressful it affects our performance inside the classroom because we are human being, so we try, but if you have problems this will affect your work, but we are trying to convince ourselves that we have to put limits. When I enter my classroom, I have to put every problem outside the classroom. Students are not the reason. I should not blame them for something they did not do.

R: But, it seems to me that you are following a very humanistic approach in dealing with your students, but don't you think that punishment is also a way to deal with students who may make problems inside the classroom. What about discipline problems that might arise, if one of the students, for example, does not know her rights and your rights. You are dealing with her in this way, and in return, you are not finding this student polite in the way you like them to be, have you ever seen this example?

T: This happened this year. I have about five trouble makers. If someone of them tried to raise her hand to answer, the others laughed at her, so they encouraged themselves to make terrible inside the classroom. When I realized that, I neglected the situation, but after the lesson I asked the five persons to come outside. I told them, 'I can ask you parents to come here, to meet the administration, your position will be very critical and I love you and I respect you as you see so, do you respect me?' They said, 'yes Miss' I told them, 'This is a bad relation between me and you. You are not really friends because good friends push themselves forward, not backwards. I know that you need fun, you need to laugh. It's ok but when we work please we work together. I have the authority to call your parents to come here, but I do not like to do that, do you

appreciate that?’ Really they appreciated this point and they began, especially in my lesson, to sit apart, so I realized that talking in private with students was so good.

R: You succeeded in solving it.

T: To some extent.

R: At least in your classroom they are not trouble makers.

T: But we need to control ourselves.

R: You mean you yourself should give them a model of how not to be nervous.

T: Yes

R: But have you changed as a teacher throughout your career. I mean reaching this stage of emotional balance is not easy. What did you do to achieve this, to reach to this stage of being emotionally balanced, being able to absorb students’ feelings of nervousness?

T: You know, I have kids, and I love them very much, so I want people to treat my kids as I treat the others. When I put this in my mind, I say to myself, ‘my kids at home do the same, and I am patient enough with them. Why am I not patient with these kids. They need advice.’ So I am trying to be patient.

R: But before you had kids, were you a teacher?

T. No.

R. I mean in terms of your teacher development process, you practice makes perfect, your experience provides you with this kind of style of teaching to reach this status, but what about at the beginning, was it the same, did you start being a teacher like you are now?

T: Believe me. When I started teaching, I was teaching 3 classes, nowadays, I teach one class but my work in the past was easier.

R: In what way was it easier?

T: I had no overcrowded classes. I am suffering from 70 students in a class, but in the past, I was teaching 20 or 25 students, so it was so easy for me.

R: I do thank you for this chance you gave to me to conduct this interview with you which is very beneficial to my work, and give me please another chance if I need anything to e-mail you?

T: Sure.

R.I do thank you very much.

T: Thank you. I wish you good luck

Appendix E : A lesson script with stimulated recall data

(Teacher stimulated recall input in italic)

T: Hi.

SS: Hi.

T: Loudly.

SS: Hi.

Episode 1: Questioning strategy: nominating a student who was not volunteering to answer a question

- | |
|---|
| <p>T. Let's start. Have you ever been on a ship? On a ship? Have you ever been on a ship? Anyone? Never? Never in your life? Do you like water? Do you like sea? Do you like water? Are you afraid of water or do you like water? I'm afraid of water. I'm afraid of ships. What about you, Norhan? Do you like water? Do you like the sea?</p> <p>S1. Yes.</p> <p>T. Do you think if you get on a ship, will you be happy or afraid? Norhan, stand up? If you are on a ship, where does the ship sail? Where? In the</p> <p>S1. Sea.</p> <p>T. Very good. Will you be happy or afraid? What do you think? Happy or afraid? What's wrong with you Norhan.</p> <p>S1. Happy.</p> |
|---|

In the above episode in the box, you nominated a particular student to answer your question, probably to make them active especially at the beginning of the lesson. Were you trying to encourage them to participate by personalizing the situation? Why did you choose Norhan in particular? Was she used to being active previously?

You could write your comments in the box below.

<p><i>Actually, Norhan was one of my star Ss (Volunteering to answer at any situation and under any circumstances, having a sense of humour and encouraging all her mates to participate in group work, always willing to generate new ideas and is joyfully responding to any assignment or homework at all times). Having her not responding, absent minded or even not showing full capacity involvement in the classroom discussions could affect my teaching in many ways: (1) I'm emotionally involved with these students and I just cannot help knowing that they didn't benefit from my teaching at any level and seeing this in her eyes could hinder my immediacy, concentration and willing to go on teaching; it's the look in their eyes that keeps me on track, (2) she is an active student and thus encourages her group mates to participate, having her not stimulated to participate will affect other star students the thing that will surely affect the overall atmosphere of the class, and (3) her sense of fear could be spontaneously passed over to the rest of the class and that's the last thing I want to have in my class. And on that particular day she was terrified from the idea of being observed by a stranger outsider and thus consequently she didn't seem happy with the situation and didn't initiate any conversation. Her face was showing her fears and I could tell that from the very beginning of the class. I had to deal with this from the start so that I ensure a clear</i></p>

and enthusiastic start for my teaching.

As for personalizing the situation, when I first asked the question, I received no immediate responses and I had to rephrase the question in an easier way so that they could easily comprehend the content of the question and then find easy words to express their answers. Usually I start with emphasizing certain key words in the question or in the required answer (like ship and ever in this situation); then when I find no answers I resort to rephrasing the question with other easier words to help them find their way with the question and encode its components; Finally, and that what happened in this particular case, to ask easier related questions one step at a time that will eventually lead them to the required answer. That way I ensured that I paved my way to the answer smoothly and students answered correctly, subconsciously and fearlessly.

T: Very happy. You are not afraid of water. Ok. Sit down.

Episode 2: Building of students' prior knowledge

T. Today's lesson is about the...what is it about? The
SS. SS: Sea.
T. What else? Sea, what else? Who can tell me anything in today's lesson?
S1. S: Fish.
T. Fish in the water. Very good. Excellent. Yes
S2. Ship.
T. Another word for ship? A small boat is called
S3. Boat.
T. Boat. Very good. What else? What can you find in the sea? Yes, Eman.
S4. Whales.
T. Whales. A big clap for her.... What's another word for whales and
sharks?...Big fishes. Will you be afraid of big fishes?
SS. Yes.

Building on students' prior knowledge could enrich the learning opportunities in the classroom. It could provide an additional input that might need to be welcomed from the students. In this episode, you promoted the students to elicit their prior knowledge and contributions. What was your rationale?

Actually, activating their prior knowledge is of immense importance to me as a teacher in many ways: (1) to start from what they already know and build upon that bit by bit till I get to the new information that I need to teach in that particular period, (2) it's much easier for me as a teacher to have them produce some of the intended knowledge than to be the only source of knowledge, (3) it's also easier for me to do so to get Ss more involved in the actions of the lesson and thus become more interested in the lesson, (4) building upon their prior knowledge gives the Ss the opportunity to connect new knowledge with those they already know and thus makes it easier for them to memorize this knowledge, (5) and finally, and as I intended , I wanted to have them predict some of the content that's about to be presented so as to gain their interest in the topic.

T: By the way, fish is singular, the plural is, the plural of fish, fish, two, three fish.

SS: Fish.

T: Fish and fishes, the two is ok. Yes Hadeel?

S: Sea snake.

T: Sea snake, very good, but not in the ocean. Now, I have some words for you [on pictures]. Who can tell me the first word? A...

SS: Sail.

T: A sail. What is a sail? What is a sail? This is a sail.

S: [Says the meaning in native language.]

T: Very good, excellent, a big clap to Shaima.

Episode 3: Using meta-language or grammatical terminology

T.	T: A sail. So, this is a noun or verb?
SS.	Noun.
T.	Noun. Excellent. A sail is a noun. Sail. Sail. I sail at sea. Sail is...is it a noun or verb?
S1.	Verb.
T.	Verb. A big cap for her. What about sailor? What about sailor? Yes Gehan. The person or the verb?
S2.	A noun.
T.	A noun. Very good. A person is a noun. Very good. Excellent. A sailor. We call it noun.

Using meta-language could help in differentiating among the derivatives of a word. For example, in this episode, you encouraged students to use grammatical terminology to be aware of the different forms of a word. What made you make such a decision? In other words, why do you think it was necessary to use it in your class?

<i>Simply because in the previous unit, they were taught parts of speech (verbs, nouns, Adjectives and adverbs) and language is a solid whole that cannot be taught in separately. That's why I like to recycle what we studied before every now and then and every time that I get the chance to do so with three successive purposes: (1) to use the new knowledge (new vocabulary, grammatical points, language function) in real and authentic context, (2) when doing so, Ss make connections between what they knew and what they will learn and the knowledge gets into their schema and becomes part of a whole, (3) This makes it easier for them to memorize this knowledge and learn it by heart.</i>
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Episode 4: Vocabulary teaching strategies

T.	When we go into the sea, you can find storms. A storm . a storm is lots of rain and wind. So when I say storm, it means wind plus, yes...
SS.	Rain.
T.	Very good. Rain. So what is a storm? Yes...Samer?
S1.	[Says the meaning in native language].
T.	T: Thanks. Very good.

In this episode, you were trying to teach the word 'storm'. Although you used a definition which was very clear, you also accepted the Arabic equivalent from the students. Don't you think that using English as much as possible might have been a better option? Is it because of the students' level or limited time of the period? Could you elaborate a bit on this?

This School is located in a low status district of the city; people here are characterized by a special culture and most of the parents are either unemployed or employed with small income. Ss drop out of school to work and seek daily wages and most of those who stay at school are not interested in the learning process itself, they come because their parents ask them to do so. Very few of them (5 of 20) are well educated with literate parents and that's why I like to resort to native language some times to make sure that all of them follow me and perfectly understand what I'm saying. After all I don't want to have them loose track and make noise, loose interest, hate the English language, or stop their active participation even for a little bit. I believe that I'm there for all of them not for the brilliant ones only.

I also happened to know their background schema and I absolutely know that they don't have any other word for storm in English (synonyms) and I had to cut it short due to the time limits and the amount of content that I have to teach in that lesson.

T: I have another word. It has two parts. It has the part of a ship and it has an engineer.

So ship is a...ship is a...yes

S: [Says the meaning of the two words in native language].

T: Only the ship. And the small one of a ship is called?

S: Boat.

T: Very good. Boat, so I have a ship and I have a boat. What about engineer? What do I mean by engineer? If I do it like this. I omit the er, engine, engine. What is the engine...yes

S: [Says the meaning in native language].

T: Very good. What if I add the er?

S: [Says the meaning in native language].

T: And without the er?

S: Engine.

T: And in this way [adding er at the end].

S: Engineer.

Episode 5: Teacher talk

T. T: So a ship engineer is a ...he works at sea, or he works on land?

S1. At sea.

T. On ships or on boats.

S2. On ships.

T. Of course. Boats are very small. It doesn't need an engineer. Thank you sit down. So a ship engineer a sailor?

SS No.

T. He doesn't have to be like this. Very good. Excellent.

In this episode, you followed the classical IRF (Initiation, Response, Feedback) format. You started with a question, followed by students' answers and then your feedback. It seems to me that your talk was more than that of the students. This is in spite of the fact that your nice comments could have been elicited from the students, and consequently their talk could be more? I wonder what the reason behind this was. Was it students' level, lack of time or the students' unwillingness to communicate?

I'm not sure about this one, actually I intended to orient them and get them in the mood of speaking, and it was only the beginning of the class and they were only learning about the new active vocabulary (not yet at the reading text) and I thought that they weren't ready yet for giving full statements on the topic as I didn't pave the way for this just yet. After all I like to keep the free speaking for the final stages of the lesson (the post reading stage). I was trying to elicit the word ship engineer from them to make it sound easy to learn, yet upon looking at my teaching and having to reflect on it, I actually agree that I might have got off track and spoke more than It should have been.

T: I have another word. Who can pronounce this?

SS: Terrible [pronounced incorrectly].

T: no it is not.

SS: Terrible [correctly this time].

T: Terrible. Very good. Excellent. What does it mean? Terrible? Ok. Listen to me. My grandmother dies. Died. Died. My mother came to me and said: "Terrible news". She said: "Your grandmother is dead". So, what does I mean by terrible news?

S: [Says the meaning in native language].

T: Can anybody tell me another simple word for it. It is the opposite of good...yes

S: Bad.

T: Bad. Bad news. A big clap for her. Whoever is going to tell me, it is your birthday today. It would be very good news. Right so it will be good news. terrible has another word which is...bad. ok. Safe.

SS: Safe.

T: Safe. What does it mean? I am not afraid. I am safe. Ok. So, if I say safety safely, what does it mean?

S: [Says the meaning in native language].

T: Very good. Repeats the meaning in native language. Ok. This is the last word I think that we have taken this word before. This is...

SS: Sink.

T: What is the meaning of sink? Yes, Amna?

S: [Says the meaning in native language incorrectly].

T: ok. But when you sink, are you on the top of the water or on the bottom of the water? If someone like me sinks in water

S: [Says the meaning in native language correctly].

T: Very good. Clap for her. What is the past and past participle of sink. Who will say it and a big clap for her?

S: Sink. Sank. Sunk.

T: Very good. So, a big clap for Shaima. I have another word for you. This is a ship or a boat [shown on a picture]?

SS: Boat.

T: What is this?
 SS: Ship.
 T: and this?
 SS: Boat.
 T: And this?
 SS: Boat.
 T: And this.
 SS: Ship.
 T: And this?
 SS: Boat.
 T: Very good. If you have a storm in water. A storm. Rain and wind. The ship will sink.
 Right. I, as a passenger, what do I need? What this small thing you need? I will
 make a life
 SS: Boat.
 T: Very good. Why?...As you can see. This is a big ship and there was a big storm in the
 sea. People will need to take the ...
 SS: Life boat.
 T: To go to the land. Right. Do you know now what it means. I tell you something.
 What is this? A
 SS: Shark.
 T: What if the shark is to say something to people, what would it say? It is showing its
 tongue to them. It is nagging them [last sentence said in native language]. What
 would it say?
 SS: I'll eat you.
 T: I'll eat you. What else do we say when the food is good?
 SS: Delicious.
 T: Delicious. I'll eat you. Ok. Repeat after me [the teacher pointing to words]. This is a
 SS: Ship engineer.
 T: Again.
 SS: Ship engineer ... sail ... sailor ... storm ... safe ... terrible [pronounced incorrectly].
 T: Terrible.
 SS: Terrible.
 T: Terrible.
 SS: Terrible...safe...life boat [pronounced incorrectly].
 T: Life boat.
 SS: Life boat.
 T: Who dares me? Who dares me? Who dares me? Norhan, what about you coward?
 Stand up Norhan. [Pointing to discrete words].
 S: A sail. Ship engineer. Terrible. Storm. Sink. Life boat. Ship engineer. Sailor. Sail.
 Storm.

Episode 6: Students' different learning rates

T.	T: Clap for her. Dare me Amna? Yes or no?
S1.	S: No, miss.
T.	Yes.

S1. Yes.
 T With me Amna.
 S1. Sail ... sailor ... ship engineer [pronounced incorrectly]
 T. & Engineer [in correct pronunciation].
 SS.
 S. Terrible [pronounced incorrectly].
 T. & Terrible [in correct pronunciation].
 SS.
 T. Another mistake and you will sit down.
 S1. Life boat [pronounced incorrectly].
 T. Sit down. Who else. Yes.

In this episode, you asked a student to pronounce the newly presented vocabulary items. However, after she made a lot of mistakes, you did not let her complete the words? Why did you make that decision? Don't you think that students' rates of learning are different and that was the reason behind her errors? Why didn't you give her more time?

This was for two reasons: (1) It was a dare and this game requires giving the best performance in the least amount of time and the least number of mistakes, giving her more than one or two opportunities to get back on track will only spoil the game for all her mates and will result in more time off task, I had to take the decision quickly to give the others the opportunity to participate in the game that they mostly like and desperately wait for. I also like this game as it encourages all Ss to participate (even the shy ones as they have nothing to lose if they make mistakes and they aren't ashamed of their mistakes in all the actions and fun). (2) We went through the vocabulary one by one and we drilled the pronunciation more than once, she made one mistake and we all corrected her and it was obvious that she wasn't paying much attention and will only hinder sequence of the game. I had to discard her at once to give other Ss the opportunity to have fun. Sometimes I have to set emotions aside and be firm to create more time on task with fewer disturbances as possible.

S. Sailor ... life boat ... safety ... ship engineer ... sail ... safe ... ship engineer ... life boat.
 T: A big clap for her.

Episode 7: Defining the purpose of a task in advance

T. Now, you have a reading text on page no. 13. I want you to read the text quickly. I want an answer for this question. The title of this text. Do you remember the difference between title and address? [First part of the question was asked in native language]. What is a title for?
 S1. An essay [in native language].
 T. or a...
 SS. A book.
 T. Very good. I need a title for this text. Would it be: John's dream, safety on ships or becoming good sailors. Would it be a, b, or c. Read quickly.
 SS. [Read silently].

In this episode, you defined the purpose of reading (i.e. to choose the appropriate title of the reading text) in advance. Another teacher might ask the students this question after they finish reading. Why did you prefer to set the purpose of a task in advance? Is it

because to make the students meta-cognitively aware? Is it because this is the way the textbook is organized? Or is it because this might facilitate the instructional flow?

I made myself one rule 'Set a purpose for any task beforehand' because we all need a motive to do anything in our lives and learning is no exception for this if not the most important of all. If I ask them to read first then they will try to read every little detail in the text with no specific target and this will take time and effort for nothing. To spare the class time, I had to ask them for the specific information I need from the text. This was a skimming question and I should involve reading quickly for a general piece of information and this is supposed to take the least amount of time possible and this wouldn't be successfully achieved unless with providing sufficient directions beforehand and clarifying the required task as possible (what they are going to do? Why? Where are the questions they are required to answer in the text book? and how to answer exactly?).

T: finished...Samer. What would you choose? A, b or c?

S: C.

T: C. You choose John's dream. Who has another opinion? Yes, Hadeel?

S: Safety on ships [ships pronounced incorrectly].

T: on ships. Why? Why safety on ships? What is the thing we need on ships to become safe?

S: Life boats.

T: Ok. Sit down. Now, I need you to read again and look for ...I need two names. Two names. In my name there? Is Rasha there?

SS: No.

T: Neither Hadeel?

SS: No.

T: Neither Marwa?

SS: No.

T: Then, who? Yes

S: A John.

T: A John [stress on A].

S: John.

SS: John and Mike.

Episode 8: Proficiency in action

T. T. [Underlining the first name previously written on the board with e at the end]
Does John has e at the end?

SS. No.

T. So I made a mistake and on one told me about. Who can discover the mistake?

S1. John with no e at the end. J...o...h..n [spelling out individual letters].

T. I'll give you two marks because of this.

In this exchange, you had a slip of proficiency, but you handled the situation properly. Generally speaking, how do you think that the teacher's proficiency in English could inform her classroom decision making. Could you relate any classroom examples when your proficiency informed your teaching, e.g. enriching students' learning by providing them with English idioms, cultural items or English words of special origin?

As a matter of fact, a teacher of English is not just teaching the language as it is (e.g. grammatical rules, pronunciation, etc); a teacher of any foreign language should be teaching the culture of that target language. The ultimate purpose of TEFL is for the students to know almost everything about that new culture (including language, idioms, proverbs, different slang, customs, foods, attitudes, ways of dealing with others, ways of expressing ideas, ways of living, etc) with the purpose of creating a generation that's connected to the world, a generation that's capable of surviving within any community. Reaching for that ultimate purpose, teachers of EFL should make use any chance that they might get to teach something authentic about the American or the British culture and relate what's he/she is teaching to the every day life of those people. As an example, I was once teaching about some words about clocks, and I as I recall one student stopped at my pronunciation of the word 'clock' (the American pronunciation), she said it in the British way and I had to clarify that there are two ways of pronunciation for some words in English, why we have such a difference in pronunciation (the Americans like to do it the easy way with an open "O" in words like dog, clock, lock, etc, while the British people like to stick to the origins of the language), which of them is more accurate, etc. Another situation was when I was teaching a lesson about weddings and I started by teaching about the rituals of marriage that they have and that differs from ours; the marriage vows; best man and best woman; the things needed for good luck (e.g. something new, sth blue, sth old and sth borrowed), the ceremony held at the end of the wedding, etc. Being aware of all these little things about the culture of the target language is what makes sense of the learning process, why am I learning the English language? To be able to deal with this culture, to take what is good and what coincides with our own culture and set aside what does not. So that whenever I visit one of the English speaking countries, I know who to deal with the people over there. The word here is 'Authentic Teaching' OR 'Teaching English for an Obvious Reason (TFOR)', if not then we are doing TEFNOR or 'teaching English for no obvious reason' and the result is NULL.

T. Can we read in this way without knowing that there is a mistake? Haven't you read the text? Can't you see the extra e in john? Remind me to give you two marks [addressing the student who discovered the mistake]. Now the names are

SS: John and Mike.

T: John and Mike. Very good. [writing John on the board incorrectly again].

SS: John. O-h-n.

T: So, another mistake. Ok.

Episode 9: Students' self error correction

T. T: I need you to read the text again and I need the reason why was the mother afraid? This mother was the mother of...who are they?

SS. John and Mike.

T. She was afraid. Why was she afraid? Why was she afraid? Ok Marwa?

S1. I have lost my husband at sea.

T. I or

SS. She

T. Have or has
 SS. Has
 T. Yes
 SS. She has lost
 T. Who?
 SS. Her husband?
 T. Where?
 SS. In the sea.
 T. Very good. At sea. Thanks Marwa. Sit down.

In this exchange, you wonderfully led the student to correct her self (same as in episode 10). Why did you insist on this instead of you correcting her or letting her classmates interfere? What were your thoughts for this decision?

Self-correction is the best way to help students identify their errors and thus learn from them. Yes she made a mistake and yes I can easily correct this mistake and I can also ask other students to do so but having the student herself identify the error in her answer (where exactly the mistake is, how she made this mistake, why this is wrong, how to get to the right answer and finally repeating the correct answer) will give her the chance to analyze the sentence and apply the grammatical rule in that particular situation which will lead, in turn, to better learning and memorization. This will consequently get us to the ultimate goal of teaching (self-learning). Self-learning gives Ss the opportunity for on-going learning and will give more pace for student centred education. Lets' assume that I asked one of her classmates to correct her, what might become of her?: (1) she might be embraced and might not concentrate in the correct sentence, (2) she won't recognize the application of the rule where she make mistake, (3) she might not become encouraged to participate voluntarily in the coming activities, (4) and she might make the same mistake again and again.

Personally I like to start with self-correction (giving prompts and hints on where she made the mistake), if she didn't get the point then I ask one of her classmates for correction (peer-correction), if not then the rule is unclear and that's when I resort to correcting them my self, if they make the same mistake again I have to re-teach the rule in any spare period.

T: Look for this sentence, the one that has just been said by Amna [second part of the sentence instructed in native language].

Episode 10: Having a sense of humour

T. I have lost my husband. Was it in paragraph one, two, three or four? At last [with the teacher smiling], yes Norhan.
 S1. Four.
 T. 'I' is the 'me', 'John', 'Mike' or 'the mother? Who is 'I'? I lost my husband at sea.
 S1. John and Mike.
 T. 'I', John and Mike...I [with a laughing tone following by laughter by all the class].
 S1. The mother.
 T. Clap for her. I ...am. John and mike...are. it takes they. John and Mike...They.

Ok.

A sense of humour could alleviate the stress of the learning process. In this episode, you made the girls laugh while they were learning? Why do you think that was important?

I like to have fun while working that's what keeps me going in this kind of job (teaching could be dull for some teachers as they teach the same thing day by day). Having a sense of humour and seeing them laughing every now and then makes me satisfied deep within and I would want to go on teaching, after all one needs to recharge his batteries. I also believe that students learn better when they are having fun; dull day-to-day situations make the teaching-learning process a little bit harsh on every one. Having a few laughter with the Ss (of course within limits) paves the way for better and stronger rapport with them which results in more familiarity, intimate and loving classroom environment, and this way I ensure that Ss will study not only for the sake of the subject itself, but also for ME.....To make me happy and proud of them. After all this is what any teacher would want....having his\her Ss learning and studying, isn't it?

T:I need some answers for these questions. What job did the boys' father do?...yes.

S: Ship engineer.

T: He is a ship engineer...He works at...

S: The sea.

T: Sea. This reminds me of something [sentence said in native language while drawing a person's eyes on the board].

S: See.

T: What is the meaning of the first one?

SS: [Say the meaning in native language].

T: And the second [Pointing to the drawn eyes]?

SS: [Say the meaning in native language].

T: What about 'say' she mentioned earlier? [question mostly asked in native language] say. S...a...y. what does it mean?

SS: [Say the meaning in native language].

T: What about this? [Pointing to sea]

SS: [Say the meaning in native language].

T: And this one is? [Pointing to the eyes again]

SS: [Say the meaning in native language].

T: I have two eyes and I can...

SS: See.

T: Very good.

Episode 11: Checking students' learning

T. T: All right. The second question now. What news did their mother tell them? First of all [phrase said in native language] did she tell good news or bad news? Good news or bad news?...yes

SS. Bad news.

T. What is the equivalent we mentioned earlier? [Question said in native language].

SS. Terrible.

T. Terrible news. Ok.

In this episode, you tried to make sure that the students digested the previously taught material. What made you do this? Why were you keen on assessing students' learning?

I was simply trying to lead them to differentiate between two words that might be confusing for them (look & see), then I tried to lead them to recognize the difference between (see & sea) as I know that these confusing pairs might hinder their understanding of what I would like them to learn. I know my students exactly and I knew that they would fall for this and make a mistake, thus I wanted to avoid the ciao beforehand and save time and errors. That why I settled for the answer in Arabic at first and then led them to say the meaning in English. I was concerned precisely about their comprehension at any cost and that will facilitate lots of instructions ahead.

T: What did she tell them? Yes Doaa

S: His father is dead?

T: His?

S: Your.

T: She said, "your father is dead". Ok. Why did their father not get into a life boat? Their father, why didn't he get into a life boat? ...Yes Gehan.

S: Because there weren't enough life boats on ship.

T: Very good. Ok. What did John start to read about? What did John start to *read* about? [stressing on read]. Look for 'start' in the textbook. Amira, read the text please.

T: What about you Amna today? Don't be afraid my dear. [the two notes of encouragement said in native language]. What about you Samer, yes.

Episode 12: Students' self-error correction

T. I started to read about my father and the sea.

SS. I? He was talking about himself.

S1. He started to read about my

T. About my?

SS. No.

T. So what?

SS. His.

T. His. His father. What if it is she?

S1. Her father.

T. He is a boy, so, his father. All right.

This has been already covered in episode (7). Would you like to add any comments with regard to monitoring students' learning?

No but I just like to go back and stress earlier taken grammatical rules and vocabulary to make sure that Ss have absorbed them quite well and that they use what they learn in actual speaking situations not just mingling their minds with accumulated rules.

T: Sit down. Now, the other question is, What did the mother ask the brothers to do?
 What did the mother ask the brothers to do? New faces, girls. Omnia, yes?

S: Became good sailor, you must buy a good

T: So, number one, to become a good sailor, you, yes

S: You must buy a good boat. You must memo me every day on the radio [pronounced incorrectly].

T: Radio [said in the same way pronounced by the student].

SS: Radio [pronounced correctly].

S: Radio [pronounced correctly] so I know how you are. Finally, you must take a lifeboat so you will be safe if your boat sunk.T: Very good. Thank you. What question did she ask her sons at the end? Eman, what question?

S: what will I do if I lost my sons.

T: Very good, excellent. Lose. Now. I want you to do something. Look in groups. In groups, read the text again. I need you to find sentences in he past simple tense. Which group will be the first? You remember the present. I need sentences, circle the sentences, in the past simple tense. how many are they?

SS: [Start working in groups].

T: [Talking to one of the groups, explaining again what they are going to do giving examples and encouraging students to work together]. [After a while] How many sentences are there? In the four paragraphs? In all paragraphs?

SS: Six.

T: Only six.

SS: Seven.

T: They have seven.

SS: Twelve.

T: Who else?

SS: Nineteen.

T: Nineteen. A big clap to them. So the first one is, yes Amal.

S: He was a ship engineer.

T: This one is preceded by other two sentences [in native language]. What is the first?

S: Wanted to say.

T: This is preceded by another sentence [said in native language]

S: were.

T: At last, why didn't you say it from the beginning? [said in native language with an encouraging tone]. So, we have were, wanted to say, in the next line, was a ship engineer, in the next line, yes

SS: Told us

T: Are there any in the next line?

SS: Yes.

T: What is it? No. There isn't any. The next one?

SS: Went.

T: Went. Two. Paragraph number two. Yes, Amna.

S: I went to

T: No, what is the first one?

S: Walked.

T: Well done. What is the base form? [Asked in native language].

S: Walk.

T: Yes...There are some more?

S: forgot.

T: What is the base form? [Asked in native language].

S: forget.

T: Next one?

S: Was.

T: What is the base form? [Asked in native language].

S: Be.

T: What is next?

SS: Started.

T: What is the base form? [Asked in native language].

SS: Start.

T: What is next?

SS: Walked.

T: What is the base form? [Asked in native language].

SS: Walk.

T: Very good. What is next?

SS: Said.

T: What is the base form? [Asked in native language].

S: Say.

T: To say...yes

SS: Said . said

T: Excellent, the last one is [the teachers means in paragraph two]

SS: Answered.

T: What is the base form? [Asked in native language].

SS: Answer.

T: Very good. Next.

SS: Told.

T: What is the base form? [Asked in native language].

SS: Tell.

T: Tell, told, told. Next?

SS: Said.

T: Base form [Asked in native language].

SS: Say.

T: Next? Paragraph four. Paragraph number four.

S: Did.

T: And the base form [Asked in native language].

S: Do. T: Very good. Anything else?

S: Asked.

T: This makes them twenty. I didn't do this one... What else?

S: Before we left.

T: And the base form [Asked in native language].

S: Leave.

T: Left, left. Very good. My mother

SS: Spoke

T: And the base form [Asked in native language].

SS: Speak, spoke, spoken.

T: Very good. At last, she

SS: Said.

T: The total is twenty one...Listen to me. Who is this in the story? Who is this? Yes, Norhan? You coward Norhan! Wake up.

S: Father.

Episode 13: Going beyond teaching: students express emotions

T. The father, John's father or mike's father. When they will die, they go under

SS. The sea

T. The sea? Bury them, put them in their graves and put a stone on their graves like this [the teacher drawing on the board]. He is buried here [referring to the drawing] and we put a big stone above his grave. This is the grave. He is buried here. We would like to write something on his grave. Who can tell what can we write? In groups, think of one sentence, a short sentence to remember the dead, a nice word...what will we say? For example, "He was such a nice man." Work in groups. I want you to draw the grave and write above it whatever you like [the teacher goes around the group, listens from them and helps them with guiding words]...Ok.

What was the point behind this activity? Why did you ask the students to work in groups? Why did you use drawing?

This was the post-reading stage and according to the reviewed literature on this particular point this stage involves free practice of the new learned knowledge (involving free speaking, writing or extra reading on the topic). This stage should include fun and kinaesthetic manipulation of the learned knowledge and accordingly there are many and various activities that can be employed to achieve that target (e.g. singing, drawing pictures, stick figures, making book covers for the story, designing posters, role playing, re-writing the story events, writing postcards or letters expressing their opinion) as long as the activity is related to the topic in hand. Considering this lesson, with a man dead and a mother being full of fears about her kids at sea, there could be a moral lesson behind this that all could learn. That's why I like to resort to writing wise words on the marble stone of the deceased man, and if they are to think in groups of such activity, I thought why not to involve drawing to add fun to the task and help other influential Ss participate in one way or another. I want then all involved in the actions not just the brilliant ones and they like this activity too as they told me themselves.

Episode 14: Emotional support: letting the students sing to provide a favourable classroom learning environment

T. Now, I have to go. Thank you very much. Are you happy now?

SS. Yes [loudly].
T. Tell me if you are happy.
SS. Start singing. If you are happy

In this episode, you asked the students to sing similar to what happened at the start of the lesson. What is the importance of this action for the classroom learning environment? Does it make a difference in your class? In what way?

This is how I know that they liked the lesson and not willing to stop learning. This is the feedback I receive from them (besides the look in their eyes) at the end of any class. I taught them many educational songs and each class they sing one of them for me (of their own choice).

What will make you amazed is that some times I use this song as a kind of punishment to keep classroom management in class.

I didn't do it this class because they were good students but when they make noise I mark five marks on the board (each for each time they make unnecessary noise) without saying a word to keep order, when they come to the five, they know that they won't sing at the end of the class. It all started one time when I tried this and told them if you do 5 behavioural disorder, you won't sing, they stopped the noise at once and that's how I resort to it some times as a kind of punishment especially when we have a new song in hand and they are waiting desperately for it.

Many thanks for your cooperation

Appendix F: Profiles of key participants in the study

Interviewee 1

Interviewee 1 was 44 years old. He had a BA in English from the Faculty of Arts and Human Studies, Menia University. He attended in-service teacher training held by the Ministry of Education. He was also selected by the Ministry of Education to attend overseas teacher training in the USA. He had 12 years of teaching experience. He was currently teaching at a secondary school for girls in the centre of Menia.

Interviewee 2

Interviewee 2 was 38 years old. He had a BA in English from the Faculty of Arts and Human Studies, Menia University. He had 10 years of teaching experience. He was also selected by the Ministry of Education to attend overseas teacher training in the UK. He taught to preparatory school students. He was currently teaching in a secondary school for girls in the north of Menia.

Interviewee 3

Interviewee 3 was 44 years old. He had a BA in English and Education from the Faculty of Education, Menia University. He attended additional language training at the American University in Cairo. He had 20 years of teaching experience. He worked as an EFL teacher abroad. He was currently teaching in a preparatory school for boys in the centre of Menia.

Interviewee 4

Interviewee 4 was 49 years old. He had a BA in English and Education from the Faculty of Education, Menia University. He was selected by the Ministry of Education to attend overseas teacher training in the USA. He was a senior teacher and had 25 years of teaching experience. He was currently teaching in a secondary school for girls in the north of Menia.

Interviewee 5

Interviewee 5 was 47 years old. He had a BA in English and Education from the Faculty of Education, Menia University. He was a senior teacher, and had 23 years of teaching experience. He was currently teaching in a preparatory school for girls in the centre of Menia.

Interviewee 6/Teacher 1 (Participated in classroom observation)

Interviewee 6/Teacher 1 was 50 years old. He was currently teaching in a preparatory school for boys in the centre of Menia. He also had a special diploma and a master's degree in psychology. He was studying for a PhD in the same field. He was a senior teacher with 29 years of teaching experience. He taught in different regions all over Egypt including Fayoum and Kena. He was selected by the Ministry of Education to

attend overseas teacher training in the USA. He was currently teaching in a secondary school for girls in the west of Menia.

Interviewee 7

Interviewee 7 was 38 years old. He had a BA in English and Education from the Faculty of Education, Menia University. He also had a special diploma in TEFL. He had 14 years of teaching experience. He was currently teaching in a secondary school for girls in the centre of Menia.

Interviewee 8

Interviewee 8 was 44 years old. He had a BA in English and Education from the Faculty of Education, Menia University. He was a senior teacher with 20 years of teaching experience. He participated in in-service training held by the Ministry of Education. He taught both at the secondary and the preparatory school. He was currently teaching in a preparatory school for girls in the centre of Menia.

Interviewee 9

Interviewee 9 was 34 years old. He had a BA in English and Education. He had teacher training in TEFL in Cairo. He had a special diploma as well as a master's degree in TEFL. He had 11 years of teaching experience. He taught in rural and urban areas. He taught also in both preparatory and secondary schools. He was currently teaching in a preparatory school for boys in the north of Menia.

Interviewee 10

Interviewee 10 was 35 years old. He had a BA in English and Education. He had a special diploma as well as a master's degree in TEFL. He taught to students both in the preparatory and secondary schools. He had 12 years of teaching experience. He was currently teaching in a secondary school for boys in the north of Menia.

Interviewee 11

Interviewee 11 was 37 years old. She had a BA in English and Education from the Faculty of Education, Menia University. She also had a special diploma in TEFL. She had 13 years of teaching experience. She was a senior teacher and was responsible for supervising other EFL teachers in her school. She also attended in-service teacher training held by the Ministry of Education. She was also selected by the Ministry of Education to attend overseas teacher training in the USA. She was currently teaching in a preparatory school for boys in the east of Menia.

Interviewee 12/Teacher 2

Interviewee 12/Teacher 2 was 34 years old. Her first degree was a BA in English and Education from the Faculty of Education, Menia University. She also had a special diploma in TEFL. She completed her master's degree in TEFL and was currently

studying for a PhD in TEFL. She had 10 years of teaching experience. She was also selected by the Ministry of Education to attend overseas teacher training in the UK. She was currently teaching in a preparatory school for girls in the west of Menia.

Interviewee 13/Teacher 3

Interviewee 13 was 44 years old. She had a BA in English and Education from the Faculty of Education, Menia University. She also had additional language training from the British council in Cairo. She attended in-service teacher training held by the Ministry of Education. She was a senior teacher and had 20 years of teaching experience. She was currently teaching in a secondary school for girls in the west of Menia.

Interviewee 14

Interviewee 14 was 43 years old. She had a BA in English from the Faculty of Arts and Human Studies, Menia University. She was a senior teacher. She had 19 years of teaching experience. She attended in-service teacher training provided by the Ministry of Education. She participated in teacher training workshops and seminars which were organized at a national level by the Ministry of Education.

Appendix G: Certificate of ethical research approval

STUDENT HIGHER-LEVEL RESEARCH



School of Education and Lifelong Learning

Certificate of ethical research approval

STUDENT RESEARCH/FIELDWORK/CASEWORK AND DISSERTATION/THESIS

You will need to complete this certificate when you undertake a piece of higher-level research (e.g. Masters, PhD, EdD level).

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, then have it signed by your supervisor and by the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: <http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/guides.php> and view the School's statement in your handbooks.

READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND THEN COMPLETE IT ON YOUR COMPUTER (the form will expand to contain the text you enter).

DO NOT COMPLETE BY HAND

Your name: Ahmed Mohammed Mahmoud Abdelhafez

Your student no: 560027086

Degree/Programme of Study: PhD

Project Supervisor(s): Dr Salah Troudi & Dr Nigel Skinner

Your email address: amma201@ex.ac.uk

Tel: 07907584509

Title of your project:

The EFL teacher knowledge and practice in Egypt: Implications for curriculum design

Brief description of your research project:

My research project aims at exploring what constitutes the EFL teachers' knowledge from their own perspectives and how they draw upon knowledge in their classroom teaching to provide implications for designing the curriculum of the EFL prospective teacher at the Faculty of Education, Minia University in Egypt.

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee
last updated: September 2007

Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):

The participants planned to be involved in the study are the EFL practising male and female middle and high school teachers in Minia Local Education Authority in Egypt.

Give details regarding the ethical issues of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) a blank consent form can be

downloaded from the SELL student access on-line documents:

To take the agreement of the prospective participants in the field study, information will be given to the EFL teachers concerning the aims and purposes of the study and the broad areas to be explored through the different methods. There will be no compulsion for the participants to participate in this research project and, if they choose to participate, they have the right to withdraw at any stage. Regarding the anonymity of the respondents, the researcher will make every effort to preserve their anonymity. The names of the schools visited will not be published and pseudonyms of participating teachers will be used when written in the research report. As for confidentiality, all information given will be treated as confidential. The participants will be assured that the data collected will be protected and used only for research purposes. The participants will also keep the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about themselves

Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:

The researcher is also keen not to expose the participants to any stressful situations. Therefore, the teachers who feel unduly uncomfortable of being audio or video taped during the interviews or classroom observation will be excluded from the audio and video taping. Field notes will be taken instead. The participants will also have the freedom to complete the teacher knowledge questionnaire or not.

Give details of any other ethical issues which may arise from this project (e.g. secure storage of videos/recorded interviews/photos/completed questionnaires or special arrangements made for participants with special needs etc.):

The collected data will be saved by the researcher in secure places. Once the videos were taped, they will be deleted from the camcorder and will be saved in the secure file given by the university IT service. The hard data such as the questionnaires and the transcripts will be saved in the university locker allocated to the researcher in the Research Student Unit.

Give details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):

There are not any exceptional factors which may raise ethical issues given the nature of the study about teacher development and teacher education.

This form should now be printed out, signed by you below and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School's **Research Support Office** for the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given above and that I undertake in my dissertation / thesis (delete whichever is inappropriate) to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed: Ahmed Abdelhafez date: 25-07-08

N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor

This project has been approved for the period: oct 2008 until: Dec ~~08~~ 09

By (above mentioned supervisor's signature): Salah Badi date: 25/07/2008

N.B. To Supervisor: Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occurs a further form is completed.

SELL unique approval reference: 2/07/08/41

Signed: Salah Badi date: 25/07/2008
Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

This form is available from
<http://www.education.ex.ac.uk/students/index.php> then click on On-line documents.

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee
last updated: September 2007