

**Teachers' Engagement in an
Omani University Foundation
Programme**

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Abstract:

This study is about teachers' engagement in a University Foundation Programme in Oman. In particular, the study probes the learning-teaching beliefs that both teachers and students hold inside the classroom in an Omani context. These students are in their first university year and come from a range of settings in Oman, so these learning beliefs could result from learning styles in the school being different to those in a university. The students were not used to be taught English as a second language in schools and they are not used to be taught by native speakers of the language. These changes in students' learning environment could influence teacher engagement inside the classroom. This study used both quantitative and qualitative methods to answer the research questions. The Engaged Teacher Scale (ETS) and the Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction (QTI) were both used in this study. The Engaged Teacher Scale was in teachers' questionnaire, students' questionnaire and in the form of a closed diary every two weeks. The Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction (QTI) had two versions, one for teachers and one for students. Semi-structured interviews were conducted for both teachers and students to give reasons for their responses in the questionnaires and diaries. Analysis of variance showed a main effect of Students' Level on their Social Engagement with their teachers. Teachers' data also shows that Pre-Foundation (A) teachers were more socially engaged with their students which agree with the students' data, but Social Engagement was not significant with Teachers' data. Results from Teachers' Diaries also indicated that participants did rate the three Emotional Engagement differently and that these differences were statically significant. This showed the importance of Teachers' Emotional Engagement when the decreasing significance of Emotional Engagement can decrease all components of Teachers' Engagement.

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Author's declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.

Dedication

To the souls of my brother, my father.

To my mother.

To my family.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This study helps both teachers and students to identify the mismatch they face in the classroom and to understand how to overcome it in order to become fully engaged.

1.1 Scope and Importance of the Study

Work engagement was analysed in the literature review with relation to administration job demand. It was also considered with regard to management. This study identifies work engagement in the area of education, since it is about teacher engagement. In addition, learning-teaching mismatch has been acknowledged in the Omani context, but not related to teacher engagement. Cultural mismatch was also pointed out, but not discussed in the Omani context or in terms of teacher engagement. This study explores teachers' emotional and social engagement and teacher-student mismatch.

There are differences between the teaching of English in schools and in universities in Oman. For example, in government schools, English is taught as a foreign language, while students learn other subjects in Arabic. In comparison, at university, English is used as a second language to teach all courses. Students are expected to communicate in and study all courses using English. Many find this a big challenge to learn English during their first year at university.

In addition, Ibrahim(2013, p. 34), points out that Arab students may experience the language classroom in schools as “static rather than living.” They depend on examinations and memorising vocabulary and grammar to learn the language, while at university level they are expected to use communication skills. Matthew (2001, p. 5) notes, furthermore, that students' learning styles come from “students' educational background (school experiences), or popular wisdom (Cortazzi 1990:54; Tudor 1996:114, 118; Jordan 1997:95) and/or their cultural and L1 background (Stebbins 1995: 110; Littlewood, Liu & Yu 1996: 71).”

Furthermore, Fenran (2008) argues that students have different learning styles because they come from different cultural and social backgrounds. Holtbrügge (2010, p.

625) defines learning as “culture-bound” (Abramson et al., 1996). Different learning styles depend on many factors, such as age, level of study, gender and educational specialisation (Holtbrügge, 2010).

Moreover, Rezler & Rezmovic(1981, p. 28) differentiate between learning preference and learning style. Learning preference “is the choice of one learning situation or condition over another”, while learning style is described as “the manner in which an individual perceives and processes information in learning situations”. Learning style is also defined by MacKeracher (2004, p. 71); it is “the characteristic cognitive, affective, social, and physiological behaviours that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment”.

Since “the emphasis on social relationships with students characterises the heart of the work of teaching” (Klassen, Yerdelen, & Durksen, 2013), this study considers whether there is a relationship between the mismatch students experience and teachers’ emotional and social engagement inside the classroom. This is because effective teaching is more related to emotional and social engagement inside the classroom. It is also discussed how the teachers’ engagement affected by this mismatch may change over time, and how teachers’ engagement can affect teacher-student relationships.

The study sheds light on students’ different experiences of learning English at university level compared with school. Since, moreover, “teachers usually teach in the way they were taught or learned best or emulate teachers they admired” (Matthew, 2001, p. 5), the study guides teachers using the learning styles preferred by students. Teachers and students can also understand each other’s culture.

If this mismatch between teachers and students could be overcome, then there would be more positive relationships, and they would become more engaged inside the classroom.

1.2 The Education System in Oman

Education has developed rapidly in recent years in Oman. Omani students study English at school for twelve years. They study all other subjects at school in their first language, which is Arabic. This means that English is a foreign language for Omani students during their school years.

On the other hand, the higher education system in Oman, which includes institutes, colleges and universities, depends on teaching English as a second language. This is because most courses are taught in English. This means that Omani students need a strong English foundation programme before they enrol on academic courses.

1.2.1 English Language Teaching in Oman

English is considered an essential language in Oman. Since 1970, when his Majesty Sultan Qaboos ruled Oman, improving the education system in the country has been a priority. One of the main changes was introducing English as an important international language for the wider community.

1.2.1.1 Higher Education in Oman

When students in Oman finish grade 12, they study at a higher education college or university. The Oman Accreditation Council (OAC) follows international rules to guarantee the quality of higher education by supervising institutions, including colleges and universities. In 2007, the OAC established a new rule that any students who finished grade 12 and enrolled at a higher education institution must attend a General Foundation Programme (GFP). This programme includes many courses, such as English Language, Maths and Computer Skills and General Study Skills. However, students are not required to take the English Language course if they score 5.0 in the IELTS exam, with at least 4.5 in all the four skills (writing, speaking, listening and reading), or 500 in TOEFL. In addition to the English Language requirement, if students pass the Maths and Computer Skills entry exam, they are exempted from the General Foundation Programme (GFP), and awarded a certificate for completing the Foundation Programme.

1.2.1.2 Education Reform

However, according to Ali S Al-Issa & Al-Bulushi (2012, p. 142), “the vast majority of the students who leave Grade 12 and join different public and private higher education academic institutions lack the ability to use language effectively and appropriately in all four skills throughout the range of social, personal, school and work situations required for daily living in a given society”. For this reason, a new educational system was introduced in Oman. This new system, called the Basic Education System (BES), was launched in 1999. Omani students start learning English as a foreign language in school

from Grade 1. In addition, the new BES uses new methodology in teaching English, such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and all school subjects.

In relation to the BES, Al-Issa & Al-Bulushi(2012, p. 144) explain, this is “an ambitious scientific and pedagogic education development project, which consists of 10 years of schooling and covers substantial changes in areas such as the school system, curriculum content, textbook development, means of assessment and teacher training. This is followed by the introduction of the Post-Basic or Secondary Education which lasts for 2 years of schooling (Grades 11 and 12)”. Al-Issa & Al-Bulushi (2012) also affirm that one of the main aims of the BES is to have more student-centred learning, which helps develop personal, social and communication skills.

The former General Education System (GES) in Omani schools was more about using a curriculum which depended on traditional ways of teaching. English language was only taught from Grade 4. The new BES replaced the old GES gradually until June 2010, when it reached all schools in Oman. Any educational change required new strategies, which faced financial and intellectual difficulties.

1.2.1.3 Education Reform and Reality

Despite the BES, which was introduced in 1999, Al-Issa & Al-Bulushi(2012, p. 146) note that in 2008, the World Bank development report on MENA countries (Middle East and North Africa) confirmed that “there is a gap between what the MENA educational systems currently produce and the needs to achieve their development objectives”. There exists a gap because teaching in MENA countries is mostly about “delivering and memorising facts, repetition of definitions, passive reception of knowledge, acquisition of declarative knowledge at the expense of procedural knowledge, textbook dependency, didactic, adoption of teacher- centeredness, while giving less attention to individual differences in the classroom, interactive learning, student-centeredness, and the introduction and development of higher-order cognitive skills” (Al-Issa & Al-Bulushi, 2012, p. 147). Akkari(2004, p. 151) explains that “Today’s students must be taught the technical skills that are needed to function effectively in tomorrow’s world.” According to Akkari (2004), “technical skills” means “problem solving, critical thinking, innovation, creativity and cooperation”. Furthermore, for Al-Zufairy(2003), one of the reasons for the

“unemployment crises” in the Gulf countries is having a system of education which does not qualify graduates for the job market.

Student participants in the study of Al-Mahrooqi(2012) explain that they were taught some basic English skills such as debating, group work and presentations, but they never learned how to interact with people of different ages or backgrounds. Although the new BES in schools should prepare students for university, most participants learned English using Arabic. They only learned English at private institutes or from relatives who helped them to communicate in the language. This could be the reason why students graduate from schools without proficiency or confidence to speak in English. Curriculum and methodology could be considered as the main factors responsible for the lack of speaking skills in Omani schools.

In addition, Al-Issa (2006a), suggests that Omani students lack the ability to use English language in communication, interaction and forming correct sentences, but they may be good at grammar, since there is more focus on this in schools. When learning English, students do so in a linear way, even when they read, listen or write about a topic.

Furthermore, Al-Issa (2002) explains that knowledge is delivered to the students in a very controlled way because the teachers are not given flexibility in teaching English. Students are also restricted by cultural values, since they think it is inappropriate to investigate their way of learning English. There are many reasons for this English low proficiency such as the school educational system, the curriculum, the rare use of technology inside the classrooms and insufficient time to teach English as a subject in schools.

In addition, Al-Issa (2005) emphasises that using technology inside the classroom encourages the students to be more independent as they develop greater skills. In addition, using technology helps the students interact indirectly with native speakers. Teachers are required to finish the curriculum at a certain time for exam purposes. Al-Issa(2014) observes that school assessment depends more on the memorisation of content than understanding and practising English. Society, including parents, considers grades as a reliable indicator of children’s achievement. As a suggestion, there should be a new programme, whereby the school works with society to raise awareness of students’ performance and how it is more important than memorisation and exams. This motivates

the students to change their way of learning and to practise English in more real-life situations.

Students should be confident when learning a language and trust in their ability to succeed (Al-Mahrooqi, Abrar-UI-Hassan, & Cofie, 2016). Teachers should also encourage students and promote their learning by giving them positive feedback. Students need to understand that this feedback is part of their learning process and it will help them to develop; having feedback does not mean that they fail to learn. Language learning will be more effective if the learner has less anxiety and is using different methods (Banya & Cheng, 1997). This view encourages students to have a more positive attitude towards learning English. In turn, motivation leads to improved performance in class, and students believe that learning English is not difficult, which will encourage them to make more effort.

Additionally, Khan & Al-Mahrooqi (2015) argue that Omani English learners at university level are more anxious about speaking in the classroom. The students' anxiety is also more related to their teachers – and the assessment they use – than other students in the classroom. This is even greater than the anxiety of evaluation because the students are worried that the teacher will be angry if they give a wrong answer. Stress about tests and evaluation could be because students worry that they must get high marks in exams. For this reason, Omani students avoid speaking in the classroom. Moreover, they are not exposed to English culture, and they search for words when speaking. The teachers, in this case, should care about their students and help them to avoid anxiety. They should also encourage the students to speak about subjects related to their culture and traditions, because they will feel more comfortable and have more information.

Furthermore, Mathew, Job, Al Damen, & Islam (2013) acknowledge that both female and male Omani students experience the same level of anxiety towards assessment and lower anxiety towards their classmates. In addition, females perform better than males. This could also show that having both genders inside the classroom, although it is the first experience for students compared to being separated at school, makes them feel the same stress and anxiety. Students could first work in pairs or as part of a group until they build their self-confidence and then individually to express their own opinions.

Researchers such as Rababah (2005) argue that Arab learners have a problem communicating in English since they use Arabic daily. This means that they lack the necessary vocabulary for communication. In addition, practising English in real life situations is very important to master the language. The big gap between Arabic culture and English culture could also be an important factor in demotivating students who are learning the language.

1.2.1.4 Teachers' Role in the Educational Reform

Teachers are considered the most important factor in any educational system. They are expected to meet students' needs by applying new methods of teaching. Unfortunately, the World Bank development reports on MENA countries reveal that teachers are still considered as "factory workers along a production chain, delivering a range of skills and knowledge to a homogenous group of students" (Mondiale, 2008, p. 291). In addition, some English teachers in Omani schools are still using Grammar-Translation and Audio-Lingual methods (Al-Issa, 2002). However, others are applying new methods of teaching in schools and following the training programmes of the new Basic Education System (BES). According to Al-Issa (2002) and Al-Toubi (1998), school assessment is based mostly on memorisation and learning English for exam purposes. This makes it difficult for students to use higher-thinking skills, such as analysis and discussion. Al-Issa (2006b) proposes more developed programmes to prepare teachers and supervisors to help the students to reach a high level of English proficiency.

Teachers should also be interested in students' behaviour inside the classroom, since this will help to improve their learning. For example, if the students are heavily engaged in a task inside the classroom, then they are motivated from their teacher's point of view. Petrides (2006) also suggests that students' negative attitude towards learning English could be because the teachers are demotivated and not interested to teach the language or because they are insufficiently qualified. This means that teacher's motivation is important to create a positive atmosphere inside the classroom, which will transfer to the students and encourage them to realise the importance of English.

In addition, it is argued that teachers should design tasks that are at the students' level, so that they will be able to do other tasks independently (Williams, 1997). These tasks should be challenging, but at the same time not too difficult. Students must be

involved in taking decisions in the learning process, since their requirements may differ. The teachers should lead the class in a friendly and understanding way to motivate the students to learn the language. For example, teachers should understand the students' emotional, psychological and sociological interests. This can be achieved by building trust between teachers and students, who will not be afraid to make mistakes. Teachers should also make it clear the importance of learning English to the students, who, through the best available methods of instruction, are given the freedom in class to be responsible for their learning. Teachers need also to encourage their students to have positive attitude and self-esteem, so that they are more confident to communicate in English.

Moreover, Williams (1997) notes that learning-teaching is a social process that happens inside the classroom and depends mostly on teachers' views about the subject taught and their students. It is also concerned with students' views about the purpose of learning a language, despite the methods or course books used to teach. This means that changing the learning-teaching views about learning a language should be a goal of any educational institution before aiming to change course books or methodology. Teachers should also select tasks that represent both their own and their learners' views, which will help them to achieve their aims. Another important factor related more to the students is the environment and the context to which they belong and how this can encourage them to use the language outside the classroom. Thus, the use of language depends on the culture of the students and how much it is similar or different from the culture of the language they wish to learn.

Teachers should also master the language, since it is used for classroom management and it is the only form of communication with the students. Using technology and designing interesting activities, which suit the students' needs, is also indicative of a teacher's motivation. The students are further encouraged when they see the teacher's efforts. Peacock (1997) asserts that using authentic materials is important to motivate the students and engage them more in classroom participation. Authentic materials could be poems, newspapers or magazines. Teachers should also be given the freedom to choose the materials that suit their students' needs and to reflect continuously

on this material to improve its quality. This will stimulate the students to learn the language in a more effective manner and to be more independent in their learning.

1.3 Place of study

The Foundation Institute at this university prepares the students for their academic study by offering basic, obligatory courses, which should be taken in their first year. These are academic courses in English, maths, computer skills and life-long learning skills. One of the main aims of the Foundation Institute is to prepare the students for their specialisation courses by having the necessary English, maths and computer skills. Life-long learning skills courses also help the students to adjust to university life and to develop independent learning and critical thinking.

1.4 Placement Test

When the students come to the induction week, they are given a placement test. This is an English test which examines their English proficiency in general. It consists of listening, reading and writing questions. According to the scores that students achieve in this test, they will be placed at the right level. The teacher and the level coordinator will observe performance from the beginning of the semester, and if they notice that students are not at the correct level, they will move them quickly to the appropriate level.

Level	Placement Test Score
One (Pre-Foundation)	0-40
Two (Elementary)	41-70
Three (Pre-Intermediate)	71-100

Table 1.1 Placement Test Score for each Level

1.5 Aims of Intensive English Language Programme (IELP)

The main objective of the Intensive English Language Programme (IELP) is to improve students' English language proficiency. According to the Oman Academic Accreditation Authority, the Intensive English Language Programme must reach specific outcomes at the end of the course. For example, students should be able to participate in the classroom by sharing information and expressing their opinions. They should also be able to paraphrase information from reading texts, prepare a short presentation for at least five minutes and be able to respond confidently to students' questions. In addition, students must write at least 250 words on a topic showing evidence that they can organise their ideas and use the correct grammatical and spelling rules. They must also write a 500-word research project to practise using references and summarising ideas. In addition, the students are expected to develop their listening skills by listening to monologue or dialogue texts and practise taking notes and answering questions. Finally, the students are also required to extract specific information from reading texts and answer analytical and prediction questions.

1.6 Courses of Intensive English Language Programme (IELP)

The Intensive English Language Programme (IELP) at this university is considered one of the most important programmes with at least 1000 contact hours. The programme comprises three levels, starting with Pre-Foundation, the lowest level, and ending with Pre-Intermediate, the highest level. If the students pass the three levels, but do not score 500 in the TOEFL exam, then they will join Level Four to complete the remaining courses of Pre-Intermediate level. On the other hand, if the students do not achieve the pass mark of any of the levels, which is 70%, then they will have to join the consolidation level. For example, if a student fails at Pre-Foundation, he or she will take a course called 'Pre-Foundation Consolidation', in which they practise the same skills required at Pre-Foundation but using different teaching materials. The same is applied when students fail to pass at Elementary or Pre-Intermediate Levels.

Level	English	Basic Mathematics	Computer Skills	Life-Long Learning Skills
One (Pre- Foundation)	25 contact hours a week	4 contact hours a week	4 contact hours a week	1 contact hour a week
Two (Elementary)	20 contact hours a week			
Three (Pre- intermediate)	17 contact hours + 6 hours of TOEFL			

Table 1. 2 Contacting Hours Programme for each Level

Level One (Pre-Foundation) is the lowest level in English. Students join Level One if they score 70 or less in the placement test. The course code for Level One is IE001, and this course is designed to help the students gain confidence in learning English. At this level, students study the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, with an additional study skills course, which is taught in Arabic. They must score 70 to pass Level One and transfer to Level Two. If they score below 70, then they take Consolidation One in the next semester.

Level Two (Elementary) is the middle level. Students are placed at this level if they score between 40 and 70 in the placement test or if they pass Level One. This means that Level Two students could be in their first semester or transferring from Level One. The Level Two course consists of teaching English at a more advanced level compared with Level One. For example, students will be further taught to write in an academic style. Level Two students also take part two of the study skills course beside mathematics and computing. They must also score at least 70 in the course assessment to progress to Level Three. If they score less than 70, then they will take Consolidation Two in the next semester.

Level Three (Pre-Intermediate) is the highest level in IELP. Students at this level have scored 70 or more in the placement test or they have passed Level Two. At Level Three, they are also taught English for academic purposes. In addition, Level Three students are taught a further six hours of the TOEFL course. They may also take the study skills course if they did not study it before. Students must pass Level Three with a score of 70 and gain at least 450 in the TOEFL exam to start their specialisation courses. If they do not pass Level Three, then they study Consolidation Three. However, if they pass Level Three, but they do not achieve the required TOEFL mark, they are transferred to Level Four. Level Four gives the students more practice in Academic English.

The TOEFL course is an important component of the Foundation English Programme at this university. Students must score at least 500 in the TOEFL to start their major courses. The internal TOEFL exam at the university consists of three sections, which are listening, structure and written expression and reading. If the students pass the foundation levels, but score less than 500 in the TOEFL, then additional English courses will be provided. These courses may focus on listening, structure and written expression or reading. Students are allocated to these courses according to the section of the TOEFL exam in which they had the weakest score. They may start taking some of their major courses beside these English courses.

1.7 Students' Psychological Difficulties in Learning English

The Students' Guidance Book highlights that students have other psychological difficulties. For example, they have difficulty in understanding themselves. "Based on our experience, we know that some students undervalue their skills and abilities, have no self confidence, believe that they are unlucky, imagine that they are not smart enough and are not able to acquire knowledge" (Foundation Institute, 2012/ 2013, p. 41).

The Students' Guidance Book emphasises that attitudes are very important for learning and that the students should be positive towards learning English. They must also overcome the negative attitude that they cannot learn English. More advice is given in the Students' Guidance Book: "If you are one of these students who are discouraged then, starting from now, change your views and discover the talents given to you by Almighty Allah. You are not inferior to those successful students. You are

smart...capable...unique, and you have the right to success and to enjoy it like others do” (Foundation Institute, 2012/ 2013, p. 41). Students are also guided to understand the skills of learning English.

1.8 Students’ Behaviour in the Classroom

Classroom behaviour is emphasised in the Students’ Guide Book, so that there is awareness that teachers have the right to take actions against any misbehaviour that goes against university rules. For example, the students are not allowed to arrive more than five minutes late for the class. Furthermore, they cannot drink or eat inside the classroom. Also, the students are not allowed to speak Arabic or any other language inside the classroom unless the teacher gives them permission for learning purposes. They must bring their textbooks daily and they cannot invite other members to the class unless they are allowed to do so by the teacher. The students cannot use their mobile phones or leave the class without permission. They cannot misbehave in any way, such as sleeping or using bad language to speak to their teacher, their peers or other university staff. The students are responsible for keeping their classroom clean by not writing on the walls or leaving rubbish.

Classroom interaction is very important, so the students must participate and they should not interrupt the teacher without good reason. They are not allowed to have any type of physical contact with the teacher or any other student in the university. If the student repeatedly misbehaves, then the teacher has the right to consult his or her advisor, who may contact the Students’ Affairs department to issue oral or written warnings.

1.9 Teachers’ Behaviour in the Classroom

On the other hand, since most teachers are expatriates, they are also advised in the Policy and Procedures book to be aware of the students’ culture. This helps to facilitate classroom interaction. For example, they are advised to read about the customs of the country before they arrive. Building good relationships with the students is based on trust, and respect is an important starting point for classroom interaction. In addition, teachers are advised that the university is the students’ first experience of co-educational learning. Teachers are expected to guide male and female students to respect each other.

It is also advised that females are separated from males during group work, and teachers should be culturally aware of their style of dress.

In addition, students are sensitive and saving face is very important for them, so teachers should not to criticise them in public or in front of the classroom. Teachers should also try to avoid discussing issues which may affect positive relationships with students, such as religion. Furthermore, teachers should also expect to receive the highest respect from students, even before the first class, since they are considered as the transferers of knowledge in Arab culture. Teachers should take advantage of this to build a relationship of trust and respect with the students. However, teachers should also apply good discipline within the classroom, which contributes to a safe and happy environment and facilitates the learning process. Good discipline also helps to manage students' behaviour within the classroom. For this reason, teachers must advise the students of the management rules from the first day. In the case of misbehaviour, the teachers should first advise the students and then refer to the students' advisor if the misbehaviour is repeated.

1.10 Theoretical Framework of The Reasearch

This research is more about Teacher Engagement, Teacher-Student Relationship and Learning-Teaching Beliefs and how these three factors are affecting each other.

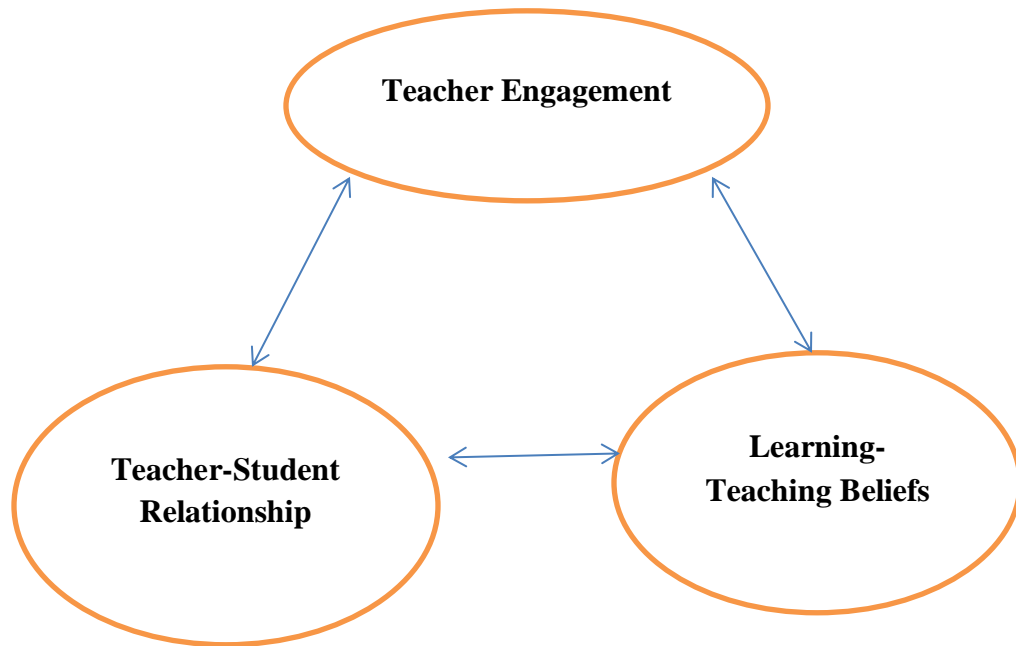


Figure 1.1 Theoretical Framework of The Research

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model

The job demands-resources model has developed from other models such as the demand-control model (Karasek, 1979) and the effort-reward imbalance model (Siegrist, 1996). The job demands-resources model was proposed by many researchers, such as (Bakker et al, 2003a, 2003b) and (Demerouti et al, 2001a, 2001b). Bakker & Demerouti(2007a, p. 312) define job demands as “physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological (cognitive and emotional) effort or skills and are therefore associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs.” Work pressure and emotional exhaustion are examples of demands. Emotional demands are experienced in some jobs, for example, teaching. Job demands may become job stressors and require high efforts to overcome them.

Such efforts could be the job resources. Bakker & Demerouti(2007a, p. 312) refer to job resources as “physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspects of the job that are either/or: functional in achieving work goals, reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs, stimulate personal growth, learning, and development.”

Job resources could be at many levels; for example, the organisational level, such as payment and job security. It could also be at the interpersonal level, such as social relationships with the supervisor and the team. Organisation of the work could be one of the job resources; for example, how often can the employees participate in decision-making and are they given specific job roles? Finally, the level of the task could also be considered one of the job resources. Availability of job autonomy and giving the employee feedback about his or her performance are examples of level of task job resources.

JD-R is a dual process

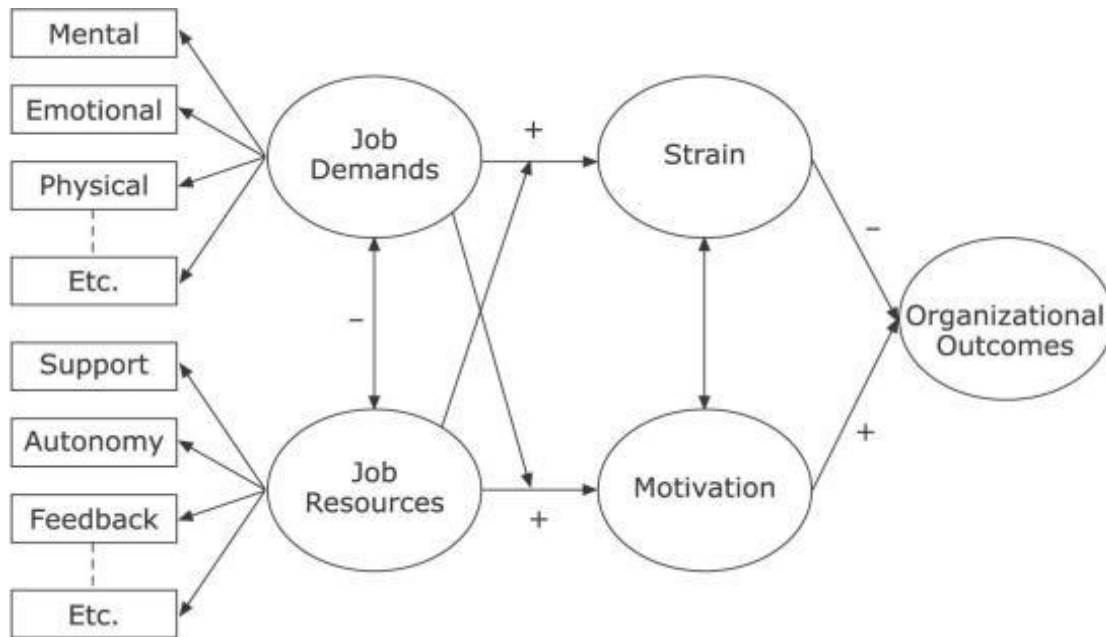


Figure 2.1 The Job Demands-Resources Model , cited from (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, p. 313)

The JD-R model is considered to be a dual process. This is because it includes two opposite psychological processes, which are job strain and motivation. Job strain or job demands may lead to exhaustion, such as work overload and emotional demands. In the long term, this may result in health problems, individual loss of energy and an employee's breakdown.

The second process is more motivational, and includes job resources which “have motivational potential and lead to high work engagement, low cynicism, and excellent performance” (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007a, p. 313). Job resources represent intrinsic or extrinsic motivational roles. Intrinsic motivation resources are more about the basic human needs. Autonomy, competence and relatedness are examples of these needs. For example, receiving proper feedback increases job competence. In addition, having the freedom to take decisions increases job autonomy. Social support also increases the need to belong.

Job resources also include external motivational roles. Meijman, Mulder, Drenth, & Thierry (1998) emphasise the importance of environment as an external motivation, which can support dedication to work. Having supportive colleagues and getting proper supervisor's feedback are examples of external job resources. Both internal and external motivational job resources will result in work engagement, while their absence may lead to negative attitudes towards work.

Job demands and resources may interact with each other to predict job strains. There are many factors that may influence job strain. For example, it can be overcome if it is predictable, such as performance feedback. In addition, job strain will be less if it is comprehensible, such as understanding the information provided by the supervisor. Furthermore, if job strain can be controlled then this will result in more job autonomy, which helps employees to deal with difficult demands.

One of the main factors of the JD-R model is job resources. Hobfoll & Shirom (2001) propose the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, which holds that individuals should bring their own resources to the workplace. In addition, the more resources individuals have, the less they will experience loss of resources. On the other hand, if individuals do not have access to strong resources, they will experience more loss of resources.

The JD-R model is a dual process, since it is about both demand and job resources processes. Job demands can predict some of the negative organisation outcomes; for example, absenteeism. Emotional demand could be an aspect of the teaching job.

Furthermore, job resources such as job performance and time control may predict positive organisation outcomes. For example, dedication and commitment to the organisation facilitate work engagement. (Hakanen, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2006) find that burnout is one of the job demands of Finnish teachers. On the other hand, teachers are more engaged because of job resources, which results in organisational commitment.

2.2 JD-R and Work Engagement

There are some studies which identify the relationship between work engagement, job demands and job resources. Bakker et al. (2007 b) find that job resources, such as job autonomy, feedback and supervisory coaching, are more experienced by the high

engagement group than the lower engagement group. Job autonomy helps employees to take their own decisions to overcome job demands. Feedback also helps employees to develop their performance. Social support does not make a significant difference as a job resource. Nevertheless, both high engaged and low engaged groups experience the same job demands.

There are other studies which use the JD-R model to show that there is a relationship between job resources and work engagement when job demands are high. Ahola & Hakanen (2007), in their study of Finnish dentists, find that having different professional skills and peer contacts are the most important job resources to achieve work engagement, especially if there are high job demands.

Another study by Hakanen et al. (2006) investigates the influence of job resources on teachers' engagement. The high demand these teachers experience interacts with students. They note that there are many job resources which may help teachers engage inside the classroom, such as supervisor support, innovativeness, appreciation and organisational climate. Personal resources such as self-efficacy, self-esteem and optimism are not enough to overcome job demands, but these personal resources may help to develop job resources.

However, the JD-R model has developed mostly from self-report measures. For this reason, having other measures (such as customer satisfaction, productivity and absenteeism in business) may help to decrease the bias of the results. Additionally, some employees may create more job demands because of their negative behaviours. This leads to a greater workload and a negative work climate. In comparison, engaged employees may create their own resources. They should not be passive about the information they receive from their jobs, but rather they should be active in using this information to formulate their own work environments.

2.3 Work Engagement

Work engagement is "a positive work-related state of fulfilment that is characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006, p. 701). According to another definition, it is "a positive, fulfilling, affective-motivational state of work-related well-being that can be seen as the antipode of job burnout" (Bakker,

Schaufeli, Leiter, & Taris, 2008, pp. 187,188). In addition, Bakker, Albrecht, & Leiter (2011) mention that engagement is “emotional involvement or commitment”. It is, furthermore, “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption” (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002, p. 74). Salanova, Agut, & Peiró (2005, p. 1218) state that “when employees feel vigorous, involved, and happy in the workplace (i.e., engaged), they may experience positive perceptions about their work characteristics and service climate.”

Engagement can be classified according to the objectives of engagement. Schaufeli & Salanova (2011) mention “work engagement in general”, related to the usual “work-day engagement”, is about specific days, and “task at hand engagement” is related to a particular task. Engagement is the opposite of burnout. This is because “in the case of burnout, energy turns into exhaustion, involvement into cynicism, and efficacy into ineffectiveness” (Bakker et al., 2008, p. 188).

Vigour means making the effort to face challenges at work. Dedication is strong involvement and enthusiasm at work. Absorption happens when a person feels happy at work and time passes quickly. According to Christina Wilmar (2001), burnout and exhaustion are the opposites of vigour and dedication. Saks, 2006 (p. 601) adds attention as an element of work engagement. Attention is defined as “cognitive availability and the amount of time one spends thinking about a role”. Furthermore, Schaufeli & Salanova (2007, p. 190) argue that “efficacy could be considered an element of engagement.”

The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) is usually used to measure work engagement: “it seems acceptable to use the UWES to compare work engagement of different race groups” (Storm & Rothmann, 2003, p. 68).

2.3.1 Factors Affecting Work Engagement

There are many factors that may affect work engagement. Work engagement may not be affected by age, but it may increase slightly with age. In addition, gender does not affect work engagement. On the other hand, work engagement may be affected by “occupational groups”. Schaufeli et al. (2006, p. 713) point out that “blue-collar workers were less engaged compared to managers, educators, and police officers”.

There is a difference between workaholics and engaged employees. Workaholics “work hard because of a strong and irresistible inner drive”, but engaged employees work hard “because for them working is fun” (Gorgievski, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2010, p. 85). Furthermore, Schaufeli & Salanova(2011) disagree with Bakker et al.(2011) that work-engagement leads to workaholism. Schaufeli & Salanova (2011, p. 44) argue that “Spending a lot of hours working or thinking about work is a necessary but not sufficient condition for workaholism” since workaholism involves more “working compulsively” and “toxic (rather) than working very hard”. This means that work engagement is more related to intrinsic motivation, while workaholism is more about extrinsic motivation.

There are also other factors which may make work engagement an easy process; for example, job resources and personal resources. Job resources are the “physical, social, or organisational aspects of the job that may reduce job demands, be functional in achieving work goals, or stimulate personal growth” (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, p. 312). Autonomy, social support from colleagues and skills variety are examples of job resources.

Work engagement can be predicted in a better way using job resources than job demands. Examples of these job resources are job control and organisation-based self-esteem, which are considered the best predictors of work engagement. Schaufeli & Bakker (2004) show that there is a relationship between job resources and turnover intention using work engagement as a mediator in this relationship.

Personal resources can also encourage work engagement. Bakker & Bal(2010) suggest that employees’ positive emotions help to build personal resources, such as social relationships and self-efficacy. These positive emotions make teachers feel good about the future. Personal resources are also called psychological capital (PsyCap). This is the positive condition for the psychological development of an individual. There are many characteristics of psychological capital; for example, having enough self-efficacy to overcome difficult demands, thinking positively about the future, planning successful goals and solving difficult problems and challenges. Engaged workers can transfer the positive attitudes that they have to their colleagues regardless of the available job resources they have. Engaged workers like to have more job challenges, so that they can maintain their engagement.

2.3.2 Negative and Positive Sides of Work Engagement

Unfortunately, there are negative aspects of engagement. For example, if work engagement makes an individual's arousal too high, this may stop cognitive performance. In addition, high, positive engagement may lead to random performance in processes which may need more controlled performance. This high work engagement may also lead to family conflict.

Furthermore, some engaged employees may experience days when they have poor performance, so keeping a daily diary may help to explain the reasons for this. It may be relevant to consider whether engagement could be achieved through training courses. Saks (2008) adds that there should be greater focus on behavioural engagement, which is more observed by the organisation.

On the other hand, engagement has positive effects. Engaged workers experience fewer psychosomatic health problems, such as headaches and chest pain, while there is still no evidence that engagement affects physiological health. Additionally, researchers, try to determine the relationship between work engagement and burnout. Schaufeli & Salanova (2011, p. 41) emphasise that "not feeling burned-out does not necessarily mean that one feels engaged, and not feeling engaged does not necessarily mean that one is burned-out." In addition, work engagement may lead to burnout when employees are investing their best efforts without receiving appropriate feedback, which means that there is no balance between "give and take" processes.

Furthermore, Borup, Graham, & Drysdale (2014, p. 793) define six elements as the "core of teacher engagement". These are "(1) designing and organising learning activities, (2) facilitating discourse with students and parents, (3) providing students with one-on-one instruction, (4) nurturing a safe and caring learning environment, (5) motivating students to engage in learning activities and (6) closely monitoring student behaviour and learning."

2.4 Teacher Engagement

Engaged teachers can be defined as teachers "who feel energetic and dedicated, and who are absorbed by their work" (Bakker et al., 2008, p. 188). This means that engaged teachers or "engaged employees work hard (vigour), are involved (dedicated), and feel

happily engrossed (absorbed) in their work” ((Bakker et al., 2008, p. 190). They also “(1) often experience positive emotions, including happiness, joy, and enthusiasm; (2) experience better psychological and physical health; (3) create their own job and personal resources (e.g., support from others); and (4) transfer their engagement to others” (Bakker et al., 2008, p. 193).

Teacher commitment is related to teacher engagement. Collie, Shapka, & Perry, (2011) point out that there is a strong relationship between teacher commitment and students’ emotional and social engagement. Commitment here means the way teachers are attached to and involved in the teaching process. This commitment, which can predict teacher performance and burnout, will also motivate the teacher to search for the best teaching methods that can influence students’ engagement, efforts and self-confidence.

2.4.1 Factors Influencing Teacher Engagement

There are many factors which influence teachers’ engagement. Bakker & Bal (2010) explore the influence of job resources on teachers’ engagement. For example, teacher engagement is related to job resources in the school, such as supervision, support and social atmosphere. Students’ appreciation of teachers’ efforts is also considered one of the job resources that support teachers’ emotional engagement. Emotionally engaged teachers experience positive emotions, such as arousal, activation, happiness, energy and enthusiasm.

In addition, Klassen et al.(2013) assert that teachers should be cognitively, emotionally and socially engaged in their work. Social engagement includes having good relationships with colleagues and students. This is very important to motivate students. Teacher engagement influences teacher-student interaction and the relationship between teachers and students may influence teacher engagement too. These types of engagement may change over time: “a teacher may exhibit high levels of social engagement at the beginning of a career but lower levels of cognitive engagement” (Klassen et al., 2013, p. 48). Therefore, there should be training workshops to help teachers engage in their work.

Furthermore, having good teacher-student relationship will develop students’ cognitive and social outcomes even in the future (Davis, 2003). However, this relationship is influenced by many factors; for example, students’ views about themselves and their teachers. Teacher-student relationships also depend on teachers’ motivation and

interpersonal and social skills, and on how well both teachers and students are engaged with the material taught inside the classroom. The culture of the school and the classroom may also shape teacher-student relationships.

In addition, Den Brok, Levy, Brekelmans, & Wubbels (2005) observe that there are more differences in the motivational aspects between the same teacher teaching different classes than between different teachers. This means that the same teacher may behave differently in different classes in terms of motivating the students. Den Brok et al.(2005) also explain that it is important that teachers create a positive atmosphere inside the classroom by being helpful, friendly and understanding to their students with minimal strictness or restricted corrections of behaviours. This will also help to improve students' comprehension of English language. Teachers should also be aware of students' perceptions, since this affects their behaviour. In addition, students' perception can be used to predict their learning outcomes more than any other perceptions including that of teachers or administrators.

2.5 Teachers' Emotions & Emotional Intelligence

Recently, there has been a strong need to explore teachers' emotions in psychology. Nias(1996) mentions three important reasons for including emotions in teaching. First, "teachers do experience intense emotions in their teaching" (Nias, 1996, p. 293). Secondly, there is a strong relationship between teachers' emotions and cognitions. Thirdly, teachers' cognition and emotions are shaped by "social and cultural forces" (Nias, 1996, p. 294).

Basic emotions are "pre-packaged multicomponential response patterns or as subjective feelings" (FrijdaParrott, 2011, p. 407). The emotional process includes "appraisal, subjective experience, physiological change, emotional expression, and action tendencies" (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003, p. 329). Teachers' emotions and cognition are connected and cannot be separated from each other. There are many theories of emotion, as mentioned by Van Veen & Slegers (2006) in their explicit theory of emotions and cognitive social-psychological theory of emotions. Schutz & Pekrun (2007) add that control-value theory may explore how emotions affect learning and performance.

The positive emotions which are related to teachers are “love and caring”. These have been noted by many researchers. Sutton & Wheatley (2003) mention researchers in Canada (e.g. Hargreaves, 1998b) and England (e.g. Woods and Jeffrey, 1996). Usually, “women and elementary teachers” care more about their students (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003).

Furthermore, Cowie (2011) explores the importance of having positive emotions towards students. This should be by educating the teachers about students’ needs, interests and abilities. Teachers should try to develop a friendly relationship with the students by talking to them in and out of the classroom. A language teacher should go beyond teaching by discussing with the students different kinds of life issues.

In comparison, there are negative emotions such as frustration and anger. Sutton & Wheatley (2003) suggest that this could be because of “students’ misbehaviour and violation of rules”. Although teachers’ negative emotions can influence the students, there are some ways for teachers to control their negative emotions inside the classroom. For example, it is better to describe the students as “trying hard but slow” than as “lazy” (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003).

Furthermore, there is a relationship between positive emotions and teachers’ intrinsic motivation. Positive emotions are important to motivate teachers intrinsically, but not necessarily a pre-requisite for it. In addition, teachers’ emotions are important to form personal identity, which will guide them to care about their students. Nevertheless, this may depend on other factors, such as professional roles and institutional structures (O’Connor, 2008).

Students are influenced by their teachers’ emotions. Michael (2000) states that “one person’s emotional expression impacts other persons”. For example, students can understand teachers’ observable physiological changes and specific facial expressions. Furthermore, teachers’ and students’ emotions interact in classroom settings (Schutz & Pekrun, 2007). This influence can affect students’ successes and failures. However, these emotions have different effects on teachers and students since teachers are older and have come from different cultural backgrounds.

Emotional Intelligence is also an important element related positively to teacher engagement. Emotional Intelligence is more about the ability to control the emotions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). In addition Emotional Intelligence could be considered an important personal resource that helps the teachers to face problem-solving situations in a positive reaction (Mérida-López, Extremera, & Rey, 2017) . Hurley & Cammack(2014) pointed out that Emotional Intelligence is important to prepare trainee teacher.

2.5.1 Culture and Emotions

Culture, context and teachers' emotions can relate to each other. For example, some cultures may appreciate positive emotions in teaching, while others may consider them unacceptable. Furthermore, some cultures may believe in “strong self-regulation,” which is controlling the emotions, while others may encourage “self-expression of emotions”. Sutton & Wheatley (2003) emphasise that emotions are more regulated in interdependent Asian countries.

There are many researchers who explore teachers' emotions in different ways. For example, the management of teachers' emotions in the classroom is examined by (Nias ,1996), (Schutz and Pekrun ,2007), (van Veen and Lasky ,2005) and (Zembylas ,2005). The relation between emotional understanding and care in effective teachers is studied by (Noddings ,1992). This is because “teacher effectiveness” is the combination of both cognition and emotion. In addition, Zembylas (2005) correlates between teacher emotion and teacher views, and Andy(1998) points out that teaching itself is an “emotional experience”.

There are three emotional “settings” to understand teachers' work (Damasio, 2004). The first is “background emotions” (not moods) such as energy or enthusiasm, which can be considered a predictor of a teacher's effectiveness. The second is “primary emotions”, which includes anger, fear, sadness and happiness and may affect teachers' well-being. Social emotions constitute the third emotional setting, which is more related to the context, such as sympathy, shame, guilt and admiration. Social emotions may affect teachers' or others' “moral standards” (Andy, 1998). For example, students may relate “sympathy and praise” to “good” teachers and “embarrassment and shame” to “bad” teachers. In addition, teachers' social well-being is associated with managing these three types of emotion.

This means that teachers' emotions are also related to forming a good relationship with students, which is of mutual benefit.. In addition, the relationship between teachers and students is considered an emotional investment leading to teachers' success and fulfilment. Howes et al. (1998) adds that good relationships between teachers and students can extend for many years. On the other hand, poor academic achievement can be related to many factors and negative teacher-student relationship could be one of them.

2.5.2 Factors Influencing Emotions

Emotions are influenced by many factors. Solmon & Boone(1993, p. 112) differentiate between emotion and mood: "There are passions which need not even begin with a particular incident or object, which need not be about anything in particular; these are moods", while emotions are "structures of feelings" (Michalinos, 2002, p. 188). Furthermore, if these emotions are exhausted by an unsupported environment, this may lead to teacher burnout. Nevertheless, some teachers believe that teaching depends on a culture that appreciates learning.

There are other factors which may affect teachers' emotions; for example, gender differences. Paris & Winograd (2003) stress that caring and nurturing are natural feminine traits. Blackmore, Weiner, Weiler, & Yates (1999) also note emotions as female characteristics, while Paris & Winograd (2003) argue that emotions are transferred between teachers, for example, female and male teachers.

2.6 Personality

The relation between personality and job performance has been investigated through many stages. It is claimed that in the first stage, from 1900 to the mid 1980s, there was no relationship between performance and personality. The reason for such a finding could be that the studies were not conducted in a clear and systematic way. In contrast, it is argued that during the second stage, from the mid 1980s to the present, performance and personality have been related to each other (Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001).

2.6.1 The Big Five Theoretical Framework

The 'Big Five' is a common theoretical framework of personality (McCrae&Costa 1987). It consists of five domains of personality. The first dimension is called extraversion, which is about being social and having positive emotions. Agreeableness is the second domain and it is characterised by cooperation and trustfulness. Experiencing low levels of depression and anxiety is the third dimension and is called emotional stability. The fourth factor related to personality is conscientiousness, which means being dependable and working hard towards achievement. Aiming for accomplishment is an important factor of job motivation. Thus, conscientiousness could be considered an important personality dimension that can predict job performance. Klassen & Tze (2014, p. 73) point out, "individual psychological components (e.g. conscientiousness) might play a larger role than other components in influencing behaviours". Creativity and openness to experience is the fifth and final domain of personality.

2.6.2 Personality and Job Performance

Some of these five dimensions of personality can affect job performance. For example, job performance has a positive relationship with conscientiousness and emotional stability. Barrick et al.(2001, p. 11) explain that "emotional stability and conscientiousness will be positively related to measures of teamwork performance, and that conscientious will be positively related to performance in training".

The other three dimensions of personality are related to specific jobs or situations. For example, extraversion is related positively to jobs that need interpersonal skills such as sales and business. The last two dimensions of personality, which are agreeableness and openness to experience, generally have weak correlation with job performance. However, agreeableness and openness to experience have positive correlation with specific situations of job performance; "agreeableness will be positively related to ratings of teamwork, while openness to experience will be positively related to training performance" (Barrick et al., 2001, p. 12).

2.6.3 Teachers' Personality

Teachers' psychological features such as personality can affect their performance and students' achievement. Thus, "investigations into the scale of the relationship between teachers' psychological characteristics – such as self-efficacy and personality – and effectiveness would lead to a better understanding of the pathways to effective teaching and positive student outcomes" (Klassen & Tze, 2014, p. 61). Furthermore, Rimm-Kaufman & Hamre (2010) underline the need to investigate more broadly teachers' personality since it may be related to teacher effectiveness or burnout depending on the social teaching context. One of the conclusions of Klassen & Tze (2014) in their meta-analysis is that there is a significant relationship between teachers' personality and teaching performance. Conscientiousness could be considered one of the important personality dimensions that can affect teacher behaviour.

2.7 Teacher-Student Interpersonal Relationships

It is important to have a good relationship between a teacher and students. Classroom interaction is made easier by having a good teacher-student interpersonal relationship (TSIR) (R. Maulana, Opdenakker, Den Brok, & Bosker, 2012). This encourages students to be more motivated inside the classroom learning environment. It also means that students have lower motivation if their interpersonal relationships with their teachers are not strong.

Moreover, teachers' interpersonal behaviour can influence students' motivation inside the classroom (den Brok et al., 2005). Teachers' positive behaviour here is related to being helpful, friendly and understanding. On the other hand, teachers' negative behaviour might be related to other domains such as strictness and dissatisfaction. This means that students can be more motivated by teachers' interpersonal behaviour related to proximity than teachers' influence.

2.7.1 Factors Influencing Teacher-Student Interpersonal Relationship

Teacher-student interpersonal relationship depends on many factors. The context in which this is investigated is one of the most important factors. For example, the context of Western countries may differ from that of Asian countries. Another factor concerns the

interpersonal relationship of students with their teachers. Students, for example, could be at school or university level.

In addition, Wubbels (1985) explains that teachers could be aggressive or tolerant in a misbehaving classroom. Moreover, novice teachers may not have enough experience to control the classroom such as involving misbehaving students in a task. If the teachers suddenly become angry after a long time of silence, the students will consider such behaviour as illogical, which may create a negative atmosphere inside the classroom. However, more experienced teachers have greater leadership skills, which can control misbehaving students. This provides further opportunity to be more helpful and friendly with the students in the classroom. Furthermore, the students consider as good teachers those with more leadership skills, who are helpful and friendly.

Moreover, Wubbels (1985) also consider teachers' age as an important factor to determine teacher-student relationship in the classroom. For example, older, more experienced teachers can be less friendly and understanding than younger teachers. This is because the younger teachers are affected by school rules and older teachers, which makes them more authoritarian with their students. In addition, tolerant teachers take care of the students in the classroom and are ready to explain things to them more than once. Although the class may still be noisy with a tolerant teacher, he or she may be considered as friendly for being more interested in the subject matter than the misbehaviour. This will also make the students feel regret about their misbehaviour in the classroom with a tolerant than an aggressive teacher.

2.7.2 Elements of Teacher-Student Interpersonal Relationship

Teacher-student interpersonal relationships may include many elements, such as teacher-student closeness, students' participation, classroom control and belonging. The extent to which the teacher is engaged in the classroom is also considered an important factor that affects teacher-student interpersonal relationships. All these components of teacher-student interpersonal relationship increase students' motivation and create a positive attitude towards the course, which will increase academic achievements.

According to Al-Mahrooqi et al.(2016), teachers should not be too formal in the classroom, and show enthusiasm to their students, so that this will create a comfortable atmosphere. For example, teachers should demonstrate to their students that they care

about them in the classroom. Al-Mahrooqi et al.(2016) also note that students should consider their teacher as a role model. In this respect, the teacher's personal behaviour helps to engage students in the classroom. Dörnyei & Malderez (1997) also suggest that students do not prefer strict teachers, but democratic teachers who share decision-making with them. This reduces students' anxiety in the classroom and enhances the learning-teaching process for both teachers and students, who, as a result, gain more language knowledge.

Furthermore, Al-Mahrooqi et al. (2016) add that teachers should show students that they care about them by acknowledging their efforts and celebrating their success, which will stimulate self-belief. Furthermore, according to Zhao(2012), teachers should give their students reasonable tasks, so that the students can sustain achievement and success. Teachers should also help students to identify their academic progress by comparing their achievements with their level in the past, instead of comparing themselves with other students. In addition, teachers should make students aware that they care about them by developing a relationship of trust and respect. Praising students with positive feedback also helps to promote progress.

Furthermore, Stevick (1980) and Williams & Burden (1997), quoted in Cutrone (2009) argue that teachers should demonstrate interest in students' personal lives by being informal with them and making the classroom environment friendlier. This show the students that the teacher wishes to take care of them. The teachers can also encourage the students to speak about themselves without constantly correcting them, and placing them under stress because of many interruptions. The students may ask their teachers for corrections, while they do not like to see oral or written corrections. Furthermore, the teachers should first gain the trust of their students and then evaluate their progress.

2.7.3 Model of Interpersonal Teacher Behaviour (MITB)

The Model of Interpersonal Teacher Behaviour (MITB) is a good theoretical framework to explain teacher-student interpersonal relationships (Wubbels & Brekelmans, 2005). This model consists of two main components, which are influence and proximity. Influence is more related to the teacher's control and authority, while proximity is more about being a friendly teacher.

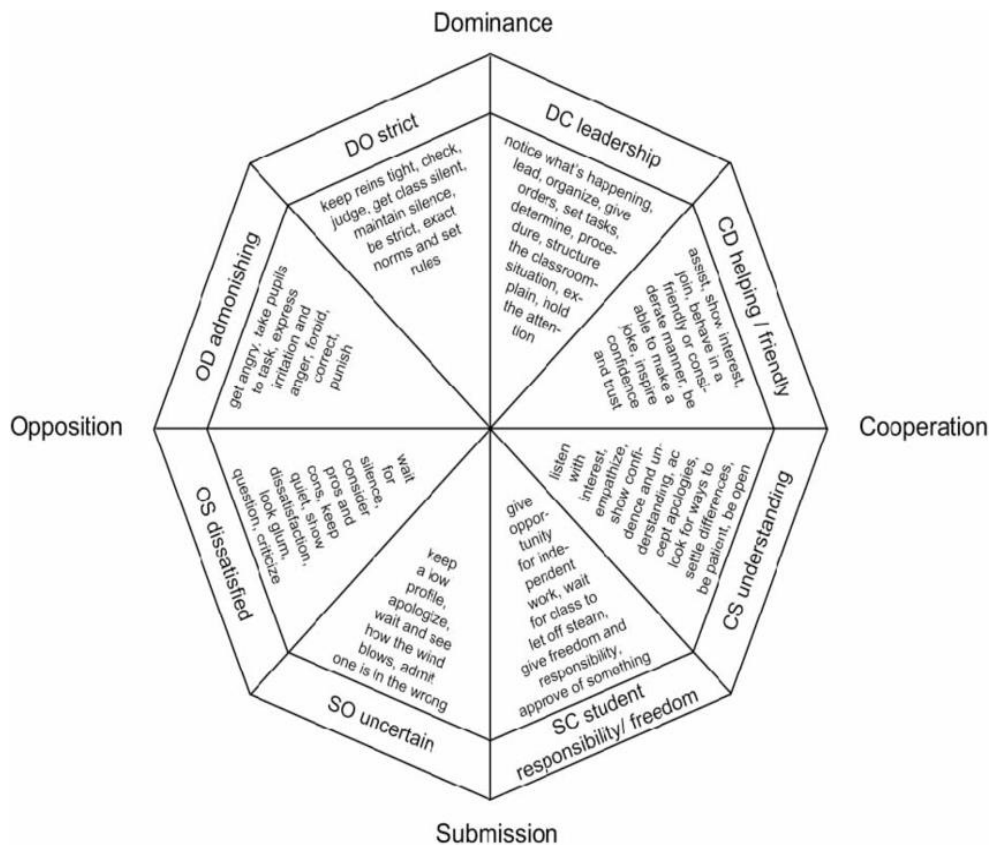


Figure 2.2 Model of Interpersonal Teacher Behaviour, Cited from (Wubbels & Brekelmans, 2005, p. 5).

Each of the two components, influence and proximity, has two opposite values, which are dominance vs. submission and cooperation vs. opposition. The Model of Interpersonal Teacher Behaviour consists of eight types, which are “(1) Leadership (DC), (2) Helpful/ Friendly (CD), (3) Understanding (CS), (4) Student Freedom (SC), (5) Uncertain (SO), (6) Dissatisfied (OS), (7) Admonishing (OD), and Strict (DO)” (Maulana, 2013, p. 461).

These values can be measured using the Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction (QTI), which was first used in the Netherlands with 77 items; another American version was developed in 1988 with 64 items. It was translated into many languages such as

English, French, German, Russian, Slovenian, Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Singapore Chinese and Indonesian. This research uses two sections of the QTI, which are Helpful/Friendly (CD) and Understanding (CS), following the proximity dimension.

2.8 Cultural Communication

The ability to understand nonverbal communication is considered an important factor of intercultural communication. For example, a technical instructor from the United States complained that his Iranian students were looking at him during the class without taking any notes. Based on his experience in the United States, he thought that taking notes showed students' interest. He did not know that, according to Iranian culture, the students expect the lecturer to follow the text, so they do not need to take notes.

Furthermore, Johannesen (1974, p. 264) observes that “silence in Asia has commonly been entirely acceptable, whereas in the West silence has generally been considered socially disagreeable”. In the United States, one must speak in order to participate since silence means “lack of attention”, while in China “silence means agreement” and you should only speak if you want to say something important. In addition, Harper, Wiens, & Matarazzo(1978) mention that during conversation, Arabs, Latin Americans and Southern Europeans may gaze at the eyes or face, while Asians, Indians, Pakistanis and North Europeans may gaze little or none at all.

There are other differences between cultures which may lead to misunderstandings. For example, North Americans have the idea of “personal space”, which means that people do not stand beside each other in a small space, such as an elevator. In comparison, Arab culture may allow people from the same gender to stand closer to each other, but there are strict moral rules for physical contact between adult males and females. Another example is that some cultures do not like body odour and think that it is “distasteful”, while others, such as Arabs, mask their bodies with perfumes.

Cultures can also affect perception. Hall(1976) explains how cultures affect perception by exploring the idea of “high and low context cultures”. According to this theory, Europeans are low context, in which things are considered analytically and

objects are more important than the context. On the other hand, East Asians are high context, meaning that context is more important for them and people perceive things holistically. In low context cultures, context is not important because the meaning is understood from the “explicit code”. The opposite applies to high context cultures where the meaning is more understood from the physical environment or the context that people share.

2.8.1 Cultural Communication in Education

It is important for expatriate teachers to understand their students’ culture. A journal article entitled "Education for Teachers of English in China" by Boyle (2000) discusses the education needed for expatriate teachers in China teaching English. This has many similarities with expatriate teachers’ education in Oman and Omani students, since both China and Oman have high-context cultures.

Moreover, teachers’ motivation alone is not enough and may cause problems, especially if they lack experience regarding their students’ culture (Boyle, 2000). For example, a teacher may experience “lack of response” in the classroom and may consider this as “dullness” or “lack of cooperation”, while it is “in fact a reticence based on a cultural form of respect” (Boyle, 2000, p. 148). In addition, allowing adult males and females to work together in group work is “straightforward to a Western teacher, while it may not be acceptable in other cultures”. Boyle(2000) also adds that native-speaker teachers should understand that they are learners of Chinese culture. Boyle(2000, p. 150) recommends that “in the new recruitment exercise for native-speaker teachers (NETS), the ability to adapt to the local culture is rightly being seen as of paramount importance”.

However, classroom management is easy with Chinese students, since they are grateful for any support. They “appreciate the presence of the foreign experts as an opportunity to talk ‘real English’ (Boyle, 2000, p. 151). Teachers should not discuss sensitive topics with their students, such as politics. They should also try to learn the language of their students. This is because the students will be more appreciative if the teacher can speak a few words of their language.

Furthermore, expatriate teachers should accept the idea that, unlike Western culture, Chinese students may not consult their teachers directly when there is a

disagreement or conflict. Instead, they go to the administrators, who may take their own decisions.

Moreover, Western and Chinese teachers use different approaches in teaching. “Chinese teachers emphasise English language knowledge, content, teacher-centred classrooms and exam results; while Western teachers favour the skills and realistic use of English, student-centred classrooms and the process of learning” (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996, p. 72).

Chinese teachers emphasise teaching grammar and vocabulary lists, which will be in the national exams. For this reason, Chinese students prefer to be taught using the “exam-oriented” approach, which may be considered “dull and geared” by Western standards (Wang, 1999). On the other hand, Chinese students appreciate Western teachers’ “free-wheeling” because it gives them the opportunity to get to know the teacher and their classmates more by using the language in debates and role-play.

Moreover, Western teachers may be used to admitting that they do not know the answer to every question or that they are uncertain of some grammatical rules in their culture, which is not the case with Chinese students. This is because they consider teachers as “engineers of the human soul”, who will give a definite answer to every question.

Moreover, teachers should learn about the culture of their students, so that they can understand the reasons that stop them from speaking in the classroom (Cutrone, 2009). For example, teachers should understand the topics that are interesting to students. They should also build good relationship with their students and help them to know each other. This informal atmosphere will help to reduce the anxiety and stress in the classroom and the students will feel freer and engage easily when they work with each other and with the teacher.

2.8.2 Some Suggestions to Resolve Teacher–students’ Cultural Communication Conflict

Researchers such as Al-Issa (2005) point out that understanding students’ culture is important to facilitate the learning process in the classroom. He also explains that experiencing a new culture is a challenge for anyone, especially for expatriate teachers who should experience cross-cultural communication with their students. This task could

even be more difficult for expatriate teachers if they are teaching students who are from a completely different culture; for example, Western versus Eastern culture. Al-Issa(2005) concludes that teachers should be guided by helping them to create their own theoretical framework to resolve the cultural conflict with their students.

In conclusion, expatriate teachers in any country should educate themselves about the culture and history of their students. They also should be careful about discussing issues which may be culturally sensitive to the students. Atiyah(1996) recommends programmes to train managers, since any cultural misunderstanding may lead to expatriates leaving their jobs and this may affect the recruitment process.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Research Paradigms

Some researchers such as Tashakkori(1998) explain how the paradigm war ends and the movement from monomethods to mixed methods takes place. This stage is divided into three periods. In the first period, through the 1950s, just two methods existed, either quantitative or qualitative. It was in the second period from the 1960s through to the 1980s when mixed methods were introduced as a new methodology of research. Finally, studies called “mixed model studies” emerged during the 1990s, and they were about applying mixed methods methodology when each method or both methods are used at different stages.

3.2 Mixed Methods Design

This research is using a mixed methods design. Mixed methods mean that the research has both quantitative and qualitative data. Creswell(2015, p. 2) defines mixed methods as “An approach to research in the social, behavioural, and health sciences in which the investigator gathers both quantitative (closed-ended) and qualitative (open-ended) data, integrates the two, and then draws interpretations based on the combined strengths of both sets of data to understand research problems”. Robson (2011) and Bryman (2004) stress that it can also be called “multi-strategy designs”, since this method includes more than one strategy. Many researchers, such as Tashakkori & Teddlie (2003) give more advice on how to use this kind of research. Creswell (2015) explains that mixed methods research is not just about gathering quantitative and qualitative data together. There should be a strong rationale for using mixed methods, and quantitative and qualitative data should be integrated.

3.2.1 Reasons for Using a Mixed Methods Design

Many researchers believe in using a mixed methods design. Bryman (2006) identifies many of these reasons. For example, triangulation is used to relate quantitative to qualitative data. Denzin (1970) identifies four types of triangulation: data triangulation,

investigator triangulation, theoretical triangulation and methodological triangulation. Data triangulation is more about collecting data in different contexts with different participants. Investigator triangulation is what happens when more than one researcher works on the same study. Using different theories to explain the data is called theoretical triangulation. Finally, using more than one methodology in the same research is called methodological triangulation.

However, Bryman(2004) concludes that triangulation follows the realism view where there is one single approach to interpreting the data in social science, while constructionism assumes that research findings could be explained using more than one approach and that triangulation can enrich the research findings. Furthermore, triangulation explains the data collected using different methodologies to answer a research question in the same way, while there could be different social circumstances associated with each methodology.

The second reason could be complementarity, by using the results of one method to explain the results of the other method used in the research. Development is also used when the results of one method are used to develop the results of the other one. In addition, when the results of one method are used to find the contradiction to the results of the other method, then this is called initiation. Finally, expansion could be one of the reasons for using mixed method research when we are interested in increasing the range that the study covers.

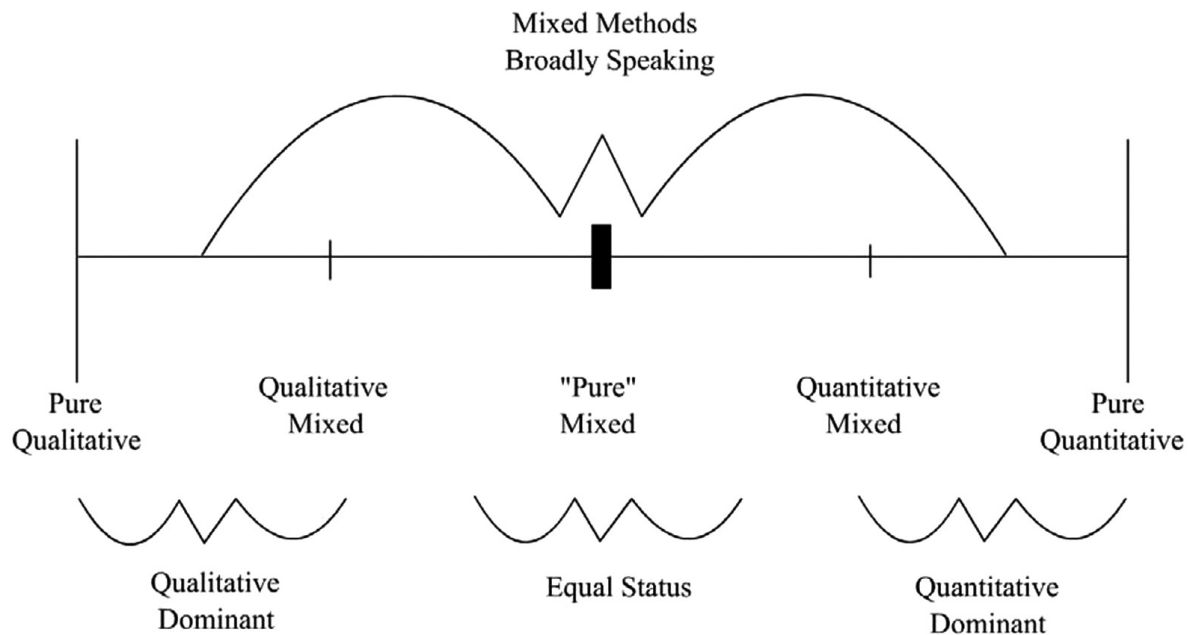
There could also be other reasons for using mixed methods, such as combining the strengths of both methods to overcome the weaknesses, which is called offsetting. Furthermore, we sometimes need to combine both methods since the quantitative method provides structure data while the qualitative method will be more about process data. The results of one method could be used to explain the results of the other. Furthermore, if we get unexpected results from one method, then the other method could be used to clarify the reasons for such results. In addition, a mixed method could be used to develop the instruments used in the research, such as better questionnaires or scales. Using mixed methods also helps to sample the results and increases their credibility. Mixed methods also helps to better understand the context when quantitative data does not cover all the

needed information and this will also help to illustrate the quantitative data. Results coming from mixed methods will also be more practical to apply. Moreover, when a qualitative method is used to generate a hypothesis, then the quantitative method can be used to test this hypothesis. Using mixed methods also helps to join different quantitative and qualitative views and to enhance the research by having data from more than one approach.

3.2.2 Arguments against a Mixed Methods Design

In contrast, other researchers argue that quantitative and qualitative methods use two different paradigms, so they cannot be combined. Sale, Lohfeld, & Brazil(2002, p. 43) claim that “Because the two paradigms do not study the same phenomena, quantitative and qualitative methods cannot be combined”. On the other hand, Howe(1988, p. 10) affirms that “there are important senses in which quantitative and qualitative methods are inseparable”. This is because the similarities between quantitative and qualitative research are greater than the differences. Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner (2007) explain that there are three research paradigms: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. In this research, the “quantitative dominant mixed method” is defined as a “type of mixed research in which one relies on a quantitative, post-positivist view of the research process, while concurrently recognising that the addition of qualitative data and approaches are likely to benefit most research projects” (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 124). The following graph explains the types of mixed methods research.

Figure 3.1 Graphs of the Three Major Research Paradigms, Including Subtypes of Mixed Methods Research, cited from (Johnson et al., 2007, p.124)



This type of methodology is also called “sequential explanatory design”, where the study depends mainly on the quantitative data, while the qualitative data are used to explain the findings of the quantitative data in an integrative way. Creswell (2015) calls it “explanatory sequential design”, since the qualitative data are used to gain deeper understanding of the quantitative data.

3.2.3 Things to be Considered before Using a Mixed Methods Design

In contrast, there are many things a researcher should consider before using the multi-strategy design. For example, skills and training are needed for both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. In addition, it could be time consuming, since qualitative data may need more time to collect and analyse than the quantitative data. Moreover, the

qualitative data may not add any further explanation to the quantitative data. For example, qualitative data should not be used just to illustrate the findings of quantitative data. Finally, the findings of quantitative and qualitative data may not integrate with each other. This is why a researcher using mixed methods should be given enough time, resources and training.

However, Moffatt, White, Mackintosh, & Howel (2006) acknowledge some strategies to deal with the differences between quantitative and qualitative findings. For example, each method's findings can be analysed differently to show that there are different views of real-world research in social science and to try to identify the reasons for getting differences between quantitative and qualitative data. For example, the number of participants or type of required participation. Furthermore, it is possible to compare the two data groups to find if there are big differences in their outcomes. Another suggestion would be collecting more quantitative and qualitative data to get more support for the findings of each method. Moreover, the conditions where each method was used should be revised to find out if they are related to such differences. Finally, findings of quantitative and qualitative data should be explored. This is because they would result in different outcomes, since some factors could be measured or answered by one method, but not the other. Some researchers believe that either the similarities or the differences between quantitative and qualitative data would enrich the recommendations of the study.

3.3 Diary Study

The diary in this research will be semi-structured and will contain closed and open questions. Alaszewski (2006, p. 33) explained that “Diaries provide a rich source of data for researchers who wish to explore the development of an individual life, and the activities and relationships of particular groups in society.” Diaries can be used with other methods to explore things that are difficult to observe, such as emotions and feelings. Oatley (2009, p. 207) also added that “a research method that fits well with the Communicative Theory is the emotions diary”. Conway & Briner(2002) used a diary

study to investigate emotions in a workplace. Laukenmann et al.(2003) also used a six-week diary for students to record the relationship between their learning and emotions.

3.3.1 Advantages of Using Diary Studies

There are many advantages to using quantitative diary studies to measure work engagement. For example, they depend on individual feelings or opinions which make them different from regular surveys. In addition, when work engagement is measured separately from other factors such as job performance, then it is easy to relate work engagement to job performance. It will also be easier to notice the changes in work engagement in a weekly diary. Bakker & Bal(2010, p. 194) pointed out that “previous studies have indicated that people are generally accurate in their judgments of affect over the course of a week”

3.3.2 Disadvantages of Using Diary Studies

However, diaries could be criticised for being biased. For example, the participants may change their behaviour to make their diaries look good for the researcher. This is why it is recommended that diaries are combined with other research methods, such as interviews and questionnaires. This will increase the reliability of the diaries used in the research. Diaries are also self-report questionnaires, so the participants need to understand what to do and when they should complete their diaries. The researcher should also check with respondents that they do not face any difficulties completing their diaries over time. To make diaries more effective, the researcher should explain the recording system to the diarists and check the “accuracy of the records”, Alaszewski (2006, p. 68), to make sure that the researcher’s questions are answered and to limit the possibility of bias.

3.3.3 Analysing Diary Studies

There are different methods for analysing diaries. Alaszewski (2006) explained numerical analysis, content analysis and structural analysis. Numerical analysis is used when the data are divided into variables and codes. Then these codes will be analysed to “test or generate hypotheses” (Alaszewski, 2006, p. 90). Content analysis is used when we classify different texts into categories and then synthesise these categories into a new

text. Structural analysis is used when we consider the context in which the text was produced and the methods that were used for narration. In this research, numerical analysis will be used to analyse the diaries. Bryman & Cramer (2011) add that the NVivo software programme could be used to analyse numerical data.

3.4 Using Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA)

The data diaries in this study will be analysed using ANOVA for repeated measures designs. Robson(2011, p. 454) defines a repeated measure as when “the same person produces a score under each condition”. In this instance, participants are called “subjects”. RalitzJohn (2004) mentioned that ANOVA is used to measure repeated measure data. This programme is preferred by many researchers, since it has the ability to deal with missing data and to control the measures over time. There should be an equal time point between each observation for the same individual.

3.5 Scales

Scales are self-report measures to assess people’s performance, feelings or attitude towards something. The reliability and validity of the scale should be checked when it is used in a different context or culture. This happens by piloting the test with a chosen sample and checking its reliability. Pallant(2013) explains that reliability is the internal consistency of a scale.

Cronbach’s alpha coefficient is an indicator used to check reliability. If Cronbach’s alpha coefficient is above .7, then reliability can be considered good. However, if the reliability is below .5, then the mean correlation between the inter-items needs to be reported. The reliability of the same scale may differ depending on the sample where the scale is applied. The researcher should also make sure that the items of the scale are not negatively worded before checking the reliability of the scale. In addition, if the scale contains subscales, then the reliability of each subscale needs to be checked separately. Using an existing scale also gives the opportunity to compare the scale with previous studies which used it.

3.5.1 Scales Used in the Study

3.5.1.1 Engaged Teachers Scale (ETS)

The Engaged Teachers Scale (ETS) will be used for the weekly diary. Gorgievski et al.(2010) affirms that the UWES (Utrecht Work Engagement Scale) is the most derived measure of engagement. Klassen et al.(2013) explain that the ETS “correlates positively” with the work engagement measure (the UWES).

This diary will consist of eight closed questions: four questions about teachers’ emotional engagement and four questions about social engagement with students. These two domains were chosen because this study was more about teachers’ emotions and because the fourth question in the research will be about the teacher–student relationship, which could be explored further using social engagement with students’ questions. There will be an open question at the end of the diary for the teachers to express anything that happened inside the classroom which they think is related to students’ educational or cultural backgrounds.

3.5.1.2 Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction (QTI)

A Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction (QTI) will be also used in this research. This questionnaire consists of eight sections, which are leadership, helpful/friendly, understanding, student responsibility/freedom, uncertain, dissatisfied, admonishing and strict. This questionnaire was first developed in the Netherlands and was then used in many countries, such as the United States, Australia, Singapore, Korea, India and Hong Kong. AtaraDennis (2013) confirms the validity of QTI and how it can be used to find a relationship between the interpersonal behaviour of teachers inside the classroom and students’ cognitive and affective learning outcomes. It can also be used to predict students’ attitudes towards their teachers.

Two sections will be chosen from this questionnaire. These are helpful/friendly and understanding. This is because we wanted to find out more about the relationship between teachers and students inside the classroom and whether they understand each other. The last five questions in the questionnaire will be the questions which were added by Matthew(2001) to the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ

1987). Matthew Peacock's questions were chosen because they describe the learning-teaching mismatch in the Hong Kong context, which is similar to the Omani context.

There will be a students' version and a teachers' version of the same questionnaire. Bakker & Bal (2010, p. 203) acknowledges "self-ratings of performance, which due to their subjectivity, may be biased". The students' version helps to address the question of common-method bias that depends only on teachers' diaries or questionnaires, which are self-reports. The students' questionnaire may help to decrease this bias. Both teachers' and students' questionnaires consisted of a five-point scale.

3.6 Interviews

There are different types of interview. For example, fully structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews. In this research, semi-structured interviews will be used. In semi-structured interviews, the order of questions may be changed according to the flow of the interviews and new questions may be added depending on the interviewee's responses. Non-verbal expressions during the interview help the researcher to deeply understand the verbal expressions and analyse the situation.

3.6.1 Things to be considered before Conducting Interviews

The researcher should also have enough skills and professionalism to make the interviewee feel comfortable and to make sure that the interview is not too short or too long. For example, it is recommended that the interview should not take less than half an hour or more than an hour. This is because if the interview is too long, it may lead to "respondent fatigue" and the interviewee may not be able to continue the interview. The interviewer should also be fully prepared by arranging interview timetables and having recording equipment if needed. The researcher should also take into account that the transcription of one-hour interviews may take ten hours. The interviewer should also spend more time listening to the interviewees than speaking to them.

The interview questions should also be clear and the interviewee should feel relaxed and free to answer to their best understanding of the questions. The interviewer should also try to make the interview enjoyable for the interviewee as much as possible by using different facial expressions and changing their voice according to the interviewee's responses. Furthermore, the researcher should try to avoid long, complex questions and the interviewer should not use difficult concepts or vocabularies which are difficult for the interviewee to understand. Moreover, the interviewer should avoid asking leading questions and be as neutral as possible in asking the questions or receiving the answers.

3.6.2 Stages of Conducting Interviews

There are several stages that the interview goes through. First, the interviewers should introduce themselves and explain the purpose of the study and assure the participants of the confidentiality of the interview. Second, the interviewer should start the interview with easy, warm-up questions. Third, the main part of the interview with the most difficult questions should come at the end, so that the interviewee will be guided in a nice way. The next stage is closing the interview with direct questions to remove the stress of the interview. Finally, the interviewee should be thanked and invited to provide any additional information they wish to contribute after the interview is ended.

3.6.3 Interviews in this Research

Qualitative data will be used to explain quantitative data. There will be in-depth, semi-structured interviews. These interviews will be analysed using descriptive codes which are related to the research questions. Then these codes will be analysed, which created a "data matrix" for each respondent. If these data explored further new questions, then further interviews will be conducted with these teachers or students. The first and second interview segments will be compared in order to write a summary of the results.

3.6.3.1 Semi-Structured Interview

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with teachers and students to find the reasons for the quantitative results of the diaries and questionnaires. Interviews help us understand how teachers and students understand "helpfulness" and "understanding"

from their own points of view. Interviews will also help to explore teacher–student mismatch and the job resources suggested by the interviewees to overcome this mismatch. Interviews will also give more suggestions to help both teachers and students to have strong relationships with each other. Another interview will be conducted with one member of the administration team to discuss what job resources might be available for both teachers and students to overcome the mismatch, which is considered as one of the job demands.

3.7 Ethical Issues

Ethical issues are very important in any research. In social science, ethical issues include consideration of participants' right to know and respect this, understanding the rules of social science research and the researcher's rights. This includes a consent form for participants where the research is explained and they are encouraged to participate. The researcher has to make sure that participants understand the research. Confidentiality and preserving the privacy of participants is a very important ethical issue.

Ethics is very important in Education research. Brooks, Te Riele, & Maguire (2014) emphasised that there are many reasons for considering ethics an important issue in any research including Education research. For example, the teacher –researcher has many responsibilities and the researcher's loyalty is divided between many people included in the research such as other teachers, students and parents. This will make the researcher lose the focus of ethics and may face many dilemmas. In addition, schools and colleges are considered sensitive work places for research to be conducted compared to other working environments. This is because the researcher has first to get the consent of the principal, head teacher or the director of the college to conduct the research. Moreover, it might be difficult to include the students in the research depending on their age and stage of the study.

Furthermore, the educational researcher might be under more pressure and more controlled if the research was funded and certain policy should be followed. In addition, the society may be more suspicious than other research and may avoid participation. This

is because that educational research may be misunderstood as being too critical to describe the educational institutions.

Researchers should also be aware that ethics is important in all quantitative and qualitative research methods. This is because some researchers may consider more ethics during the interview since there is more real contact between the researcher and the participants. However, researchers must also follow the ethics' rules in quantitative data by explaining the research to the participants, having their consent and keeping the data as confidential as possible and stored in a locked place or a locked password electronic device.

3.8 Validity & Consistency of Research

The conclusions of any research must be trusted by finding the real relationships between variables. This is called “internal validity” and it is more related to descriptive, qualitative research. It also means that the researcher is confident that the results match the real world. This confidence will make it easier for the researcher to defend the research conclusions. In quantitative research this confidence can come from the way the variables of the research were controlled and in qualitative research by using more than one method for data analysis. This is why it is advisable to use mixed method data, so that the trends of the results from one methodology can be overcome by comparing the results of the other methodology used in the same research to conclude with consistent and credible conclusions.

We can conclude that any research should have an “inferential consistency audit”. Tashakkori(1998, p. 69) defines this as “the degree to which the inferences and interpretations are consistent with the analysis of obtained data/information and with other inferences/conclusions made in the same study.”

There are six judgments that prove the research reached the “inferential consistency audit”. First, if there is a credible correlation between the variables. Second, if the design of the research (including the methodology) matches the theoretical framework. Third, if the researcher got the expected results at the end of the research.

Fourth, if the researcher made sure that there is no other logical explanation for the results. The fifth judgment is to compare the consistency of the credible results to the literature review. If the results were unexpected, then the findings and conclusions should clarify this inconsistency. Finally, data analysis should match the researcher's interpretations by making sure that the research did not end up with different explanations or conclusions.

3.9 Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted at the Foundation Institute of an Omani university. A letter was sent to the Director of the Foundation Institute asking for his consent to conduct the pilot study. The aim of the study was explained in the letter with the guarantee of keeping the confidentiality of the participants and that the pilot study would not interrupt the learning–teaching process inside the classrooms in any way.

3.9.1 Participants

The participants in the pilot study were eight teachers. These participants were the coordinators of the levels and coordinators of TOEFL and learning centres, and one was a member of the administration, who is the assistant director. These eight teachers were from different cultural backgrounds including Oman, the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada and Hungary.

These coordinators were chosen for the pilot study because they supervised other teachers in the Foundation Institute, so they will be able to give proper feedback about the scale and questionnaire that will be used in the main study by explaining which questions may not have been clear to their teachers. In addition, these coordinators were teaching before they were assigned as coordinators, so they experienced the mismatch students have and they were able to express this experience through questionnaires or interviews. Furthermore, these coordinators would not participate in the main study in any way, so that the participants in the pilot study would be separated from the participants in the main study.

Participants in the pilot study also included 53 students. These students were chosen from different levels. As it was mentioned in the context of the study, there are three levels of English in the Foundation Institute at this university. These levels are Level One (the lowest level), Level Two (the middle level) and Level Three (the highest level). Each level has about 20 sections which range from Section One, which usually has the best students, to Section Twenty, which usually has the lowest-achieving students in that level.

Section One, which is the highest section, was chosen from Level One. Section Ten, which is the section in the middle, was chosen from Level Two. Section Nine, which is the last section, was chosen from Level Three.

3.9.2 Procedure

The pilot study was conducted during the second semester according to the Foundation Institute calendar. The researcher went to Oman to the Foundation Institute at the university. Hard copies of diaries and questionnaires were given to the coordinators in their offices. The researcher went to their offices to get feedback for every question in the questionnaire and the diary. They were also asked to answer the questions to their best understanding. The researcher made sure that the questionnaires and diaries were kept in a safe place.

Three volunteers agreed to semi-structured interviews with the researcher. These interviews were conducted in their offices, with the researcher making sure that the door was closed and there was no interruption during the interview. These interviews were conducted during the coordinators' spare time so that they did not clash with any of their daily duties.

The researcher also went to the students' classes, after they finished the class and their teacher left the class. Permission was taken from the teachers of these classes to allow the researcher to distribute the questionnaires to the students in these classes. Teachers of these classes were assured that students' questionnaires were confidential. The researcher made sure that the students understood each question by explaining the questionnaire and asking them to give any feedback about the questions.

Three volunteers, two females and one male, from the students agreed to semi-structured interviews. One student from each level was interviewed. These interviews were conducted by the researcher in a small meeting room, whose door was closed, and it was ensured that there were no interruptions during the interview. Students did the interviews during their free time after they finished their classes.

3.9.3 Translation

The QTI (Questionnaire of Teacher Interaction), students' version, was translated from English to Arabic by asking a qualified translator to translate it. During the pilot study, the researcher noticed that the students still did not understand the Arabic translation of the QTI, so thankfully another translator who worked at the same university, from Translation Department, helped the researcher to correct some of the translation.

The interviews with the students were also conducted in Arabic. During the interview the researcher tried to use both English and Arabic to encourage the students to speak English as much as possible during the interview. The interview transcripts were translated from Arabic to English by the researcher.

3.10 Research Questions

The main aims of this study were to identify the learning–teaching beliefs that both foundation students and teachers at an Omani University experience and how these beliefs can influence their teachers' emotional and social engagement within the classroom and teacher–student relationships. These learning–teaching beliefs could be considered as one of the job demands that need job resources. This study also identified how teachers' emotional and social engagement can influence the relationships between teachers and their students. These aims could be obtained by answering the following questions:

1- How does teachers' (emotional, social) engagement influence teacher– student relationships and learning–teaching beliefs from both students and teachers' points of view? (Questionnaire data)

2- Do different domains of teachers' engagement (e.g. emotional and social engagement) change over time? (Diary data)

3- Is there a difference between beginner and advanced students in their social engagement and relationship with their teachers? (Questionnaire data)

4- What are the learning–teaching beliefs that may affect teacher engagement within the classroom from both teachers and students' point of views? (Interview and questionnaire data)

5- How do teachers and students define teacher engagement and the teacher– student relationship from their points of view? (Interview data)

Chapter 4: Quantitative Findings

4.1 Scales Used in the Main Study

4.1.1 Engaged Teachers Scale (ETS)

The ETS was used in the teachers' questionnaire. A student version of social engagement was also included in students' questionnaire. Teachers' emotional engagement was not included in the students' questionnaire, since the students may not be aware of their teachers' emotions towards teaching. The ETS was also used for the weekly diary. This diary consisted of eight closed questions: four questions about teachers' emotional engagement and four questions about social engagement with students. These two domains were chosen because this study is more about teachers' emotions and because a research question is about the teacher–student relationship, which could be explored further using social engagement in the students' questions. There was an open question at the end of the diary for the teachers to express anything that happened inside the classroom which they thought was a challenge and was related to students' educational backgrounds. Teachers completed a diary every two weeks, ending up with three diaries.

4.1.2 Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction (QTI)

A QTI was also used in this research. Two sections were chosen from this questionnaire. These are helpful/friendly and understanding. This is because we want to find out more about the relationship between teachers and students inside the classroom and whether they understood each other. The last five questions in the questionnaire were questions which were added by (Matthew, 2001; Williams, 1997) to the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ 1987). Matthew Peacock's questions were chosen because they describe the learning-teaching beliefs in the Hong Kong context, which is similar to the Omani context.

There was a students' version and a teachers' version of the same questionnaire. The students' version helped to address the question of common-method bias that

depends only on teachers' diaries or questionnaires, which are self-reports. The students' questionnaire may have helped to decrease this bias.

Questionnaires were distributed to the Foundation students during the process of distributing teachers' questionnaires, diaries and interviews. The researcher went to the students' Life Skills classes to explain the main aim of the study and the importance of their participation. Life Skills classes were chosen because the students usually sit in a big lecture room and there are at least 200 students in every class.

The researcher took the permission from the administration and the teachers to go to their classes to distribute the questionnaires. The researcher went at the end of the classes so that the students' learning-teaching process would not be disturbed. The researcher made sure the teacher of the class went outside the class, so that the students would feel comfortable and have the freedom to ask the researcher any questions about the research. The researcher guided the students step by step in how to answer the questionnaire, explaining any unclear questions for the students. The researcher emphasised to the students that they must not write any extra personal information about themselves, for example their ID or their section number, so that they can secure their confidentiality and privacy. The students were guided to only provide the requested demographic information. Students' questionnaires and the explanation of the study were in Arabic, since the students were still in the process of learning Basic English. The researcher made sure that the questionnaires were distributed to students from different English levels by checking with administration and the teachers of the class which level was available in each class. Some English levels were not available in Life Skills classes, so the researcher went to a few Computer and English Classes to distribute the questionnaires to these students following the same procedure.

4.2 Translation

The Questionnaire of Teacher Interaction (QTI), students' version, was translated from English to Arabic by asking a qualified translator to translate it. During the pilot study, the researcher noticed that the students still did not understand the Arabic translation of

the QTI questionnaire, so another translator who works at the University, Translation Department, thankfully helped the researcher to correct some of the translation.

Before the main study data collection, another back translation was done to the QTI, Engagement Teacher Scale (Social Engagement), students' version. This translation was done by a qualified translator to translate the Arabic version back to English. The researcher compared the translated English text with the original English version to make sure that there was no big difference in meaning. Another translator at the same university from the Translation Department rechecked the translation of the students' questionnaire before it was distributed to the students.

4.3 Quantitative Data

4.3.1 Cronbach's Alpha of Teachers' Questionnaire

Cronbach's alpha coefficient is an indicator used to check reliability. If Cronbach's alpha coefficient is above .7, then this can be considered good reliability. However, if the reliability is below .5, then the mean correlation between the inter-items needs to be reported. The reliability of the same scale may differ depending on the sample where the scale is applied. The researcher should also make sure that the items of the scale are not negatively worded before checking the reliability of the scale. In addition, if the scale contains subscales, then the reliability of each subscale needs to be checked separately. Using an existing scale also gives the opportunity to compare the scale with previous studies which used it.

Cronbach's alpha is used to check the reliability of items in a subscale. The questionnaires were given to 63 teachers. These teachers were from different nationalities: 13 South African, 9 British, 8 American, 6 Canadian, 5 Polish, 4 Iranian, 3 Hungarian, 2 New Zealand, 2 Tunisian, 2 Belarusian, 1 Egyptian, 1 Sudanese, 1 Turkish, 1 Check, 1 Russian, 1 Pakistani, 1 Turkmenian, 1 Australian, 1 Bosnian. The teachers' questionnaire consisted of five sections. The first section was about emotional engagement with the students.

Table 4.1 Emotional Engagement Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.899	4

Emotional engagement (ETS) in the teachers' questionnaire was found to have high reliability (4 items; $\alpha = .90$)

Cronbach's Alpha was also checked for the second section of the teachers' questionnaire, which was about teachers' social engagement with the students.

Table 4.2 Teacher Social Engagemnt Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.765	4

Social engagement with students (ETS) in the teachers' questionnaire was found to have good reliability (4 items; $\alpha = .77$)

The third section of teachers' questionnaire was about being helpful/friendly to the students.

Table 4.3 Teacher Helpful/Friendly Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.621	6

Helpful/friendly (QTI) in the teachers' questionnaire was found to have good reliability (6 items; $\alpha=.62$)

Cronbach's alpha was also checked for the last scale question, understanding (QTI)

Table 4.4 Teacher Understanding Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.523	6

Understanding (QTI) in the teachers' questionnaire was found to have low reliability (6 items; $\alpha=.52$)

Table 4.5 QTI Teachers Understanding Deleted Items Reliability

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q.15 I trust students.	18.49	2.060	.266	.525
Q.16 If I don't agree with the students, we can talk about it.	17.86	2.479	.381	.419
Q.17 I am willing to explain things again.	17.56	3.315	.188	.517
Q.18 If students have something to say, I will listen.	17.62	2.982	.386	.456
Q.19 I realise when students do not understand.	18.06	3.028	.081	.572
Q.20 I am a patient teacher.	17.79	2.457	.550	.352

The reliability will still be low even if item 19 were deleted (5 items; $\alpha = .57$) This could be because the QTI questionnaire was originally for students and in this research another version was made for teachers.

However, this sub-scale was checked during the pilot study and it had high reliability (6 items; $\alpha = .78$).

4.3.2 Cronbach's Alpha of Students' Questionnaire

Four hundred forty-five students participated in this study. These students were from different English levels. These levels, from the lowest to the highest, are Pre-Foundation A, Pre-Foundation B, Elementary, Elementary Consolidation, Pre-Intermediate, Pre-Intermediate Consolidation. A questionnaire was given to these students before conducting the interviews. Cronbach's alpha was checked for all 445 questionnaires.

Table 4.6 Students Social Engagemnt Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.869	4

The social engagement with the teacher (ETS) in the students' questionnaire was found to have high reliability (4 items; $\alpha = .87$)

Cronbach's alpha was also checked for the second section of students' questionnaire.

Table 4.7 Students Helpful/Friendly Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.842	6

Helpful/friendly (QTI) in students' questionnaire was found to have high reliability (6 items; $\alpha = .84$)

Understanding (QTI) was the last sub-scale in the students' questionnaire.

Table 4.8 Students Understanding Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.820	6

Understanding (QTI) in the students' questionnaire was found to have high reliability (6 items; $\alpha = .82$)

4.4 Correlations

The correlation coefficient is used to find the linear relationship between two variables. The correlation could be weak or strong, positive or negative, depending on the distribution of the data. A correlations test was used to answer one of the research questions:

1- How does teachers' (emotional, social) engagement influence teacher–student relationships and learning–teaching beliefs from both students and teachers' points of view?

Table 4.9 Correlation between Teacher Engagement , Teacher-Student Relationship and Learning-Teaching Beliefs from Teachers' point of view

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Emotional Engagement	-	.569**	.936**	.371**	.512**	.254*	.011	.322*	.272*	.230
2 Social Engagement		-	.823**	.503**	.782**	.215	.166	.241	.131	.261*
3 Total Teacher Engagement Scale			-	.472**	.690**	.267*	.079	.326**	.245	.271*
4 Friendliness				-	.540**	.134	-.097	-.027	.104	.128
5 Understanding					-	.206	-.002	.098	.155	.178
6 Traditional Role						-	.017	.168	-.083	.025
7 Correcting Errors							-	.388**	.051	.257*
8 Providing A Model								-	.239	.235
9 In class discussion									-	.323**
10 Independent Learning										-

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

For all teachers, the table shows the teachers' points of view of teacher engagement in relation to the teacher–student relationship and learning–teaching beliefs. When the teacher is emotionally engaged, this means that the teacher is socially engaged ($r = .57$, $p < .01$), the teacher is totally engaged ($r = .94$, $p < .01$), the teacher is friendly ($r = .37$, $p < .01$), the teacher is understanding ($r = .51$, $p < .01$), the teacher will have a traditional

role inside the classroom ($r = .25, p < .05$), the teacher will provide a model ($r = .32, p < .05$), the teacher will provide in-class student discussions ($r = .27, p < .05$).

When the teacher is socially engaged, the teacher will be totally engaged ($r = .82, p < .01$), the teacher will be friendly ($r = .50, p < .01$), the teacher will be understanding ($r = .78, p < .01$), the teacher will encourage independent learning ($r = .26, p < .05$).

When the teacher is totally engaged, the teacher is friendly ($r = .47, p < .01$), the teacher is understanding ($r = .69, p < .01$), the teacher has traditional role ($r = .27, p < .05$), the teacher will provide a model ($r = .33, p < .01$), the teacher will encourage independent learning ($r = .27, p < .05$).

When the teacher is friendly, this means that the teacher is understanding ($r = .54, p < .01$). When the teacher corrects students' errors, this means that the teacher will provide the students with a model ($r = .39, p < .01$) and the teacher will encourage independent learning ($r = .26, p < .05$). When the teacher provides in-class student discussions, this means that the teacher encourages independent learning ($r = .32, p < .01$).

Table 4.10 Correlation between Teacher Engagement, Teacher-Student Relationship and Learning-Teaching Beliefs from Students' point of view

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Social Engagement	-	.729**	.683**	.755**	.055	.256**	.161**	.069	.275**
2 Friendless		-	.754**	.940**	.070	.299**	.171**	.095*	.287**
3 Understanding			-	.932**	.105*	.348**	.171**	.110*	.304**
4 Friendliness & Understanding				-	.093	.345**	.183**	.110*	.315**
5 Traditional Role					-	.328**	.233**	.190**	.211**
6 Correcting Errors						-	.467**	.262**	.370**
7 Providing A Model							-	.203**	.274**
8 In class discussion								-	.375**
9 Independent Learning									-

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

From the students' points of view, when the teacher is socially engaged, this means that the teacher is friendly ($r = .73, p < .01$), the teacher will be understanding ($r = .68, p < .01$), the teacher will be friendly and understanding ($r = .76, p < .01$), the teacher will correct their errors ($r = .26, p < .01$), the teacher will provide them with a model ($r = .16, p < .01$) and the teacher will encourage independent learning ($r = .28, p < .01$).

The students' data also show that when the teacher is friendly, then the teacher is understanding ($r = .75, p < .01$), the teacher is friendly and understanding ($r = .94, p < .01$), the teacher corrects their errors ($r = .30, p < .01$), the teacher provides a model

($r = .17, p < .01$), the teacher provides students' discussion ($r = .01, p < .05$), and the teacher encourages independent learning ($r = .29, p < .01$).

The students' data also show that the teacher who understands them will be friendly and understanding ($r = .93, p < .01$), will have a traditional role ($r = .11, p < .05$), will correct their errors ($r = .35, p < .01$), will provide them with a model ($r = .17, p < .01$), will provide in-class discussion ($r = .11, p < .05$), and will encourage independent learning ($r = .30, p < .01$).

The students' data also show that when the teacher is friendly and understanding, then the teacher will correct their errors ($r = .35, p < .01$), provide them with a model ($r = .18, p < .01$), provide in-class discussion ($r = .11, p < .05$), and encourage independent learning ($r = .32, p < .01$).

From students' points of view, the traditional teacher role is related to correcting errors ($r = .33, p < .01$), providing a model ($r = .23, p < .01$), providing in-class discussion ($r = .19, p < .01$) and encouraging independent learning ($r = .21, p < .01$).

Students are also relating correcting errors to providing a model ($r = .47, p < .01$), providing in-class discussion ($r = .26, p < .01$) and Encouraging independent learning ($r = .37, p < .01$).

Students also agree that providing a model is also related to in-class discussion ($r = .20, p < .01$) and independent learning ($r = .27, p < .01$). Students are also relating in-class discussion to independent learning ($r = .38, p < .01$).

4.5 Analysis of Variance

Analysis of variance is called "one-way ANOVA". One-way ANOVA is also used for repeated measure when subjects are responding to the same task for more than one time interval. This programme is preferred by many researchers since it has the ability to deal with missing data and to control the measures over time. There should be an equal time point between each observation for the same individual. One-way repeated measure ANOVA was used to analyse the following research question:

2- Do different domains of teachers’ engagement (e.g. emotional and social engagement) change over time?

Diaries were given to 56 teachers. These diaries were given to the teachers every two weeks. These diaries consist of Engagement Teacher Scale (EE “Emotional Engagement” and SES “Social Engagement with Students”) which are eight closed questions with one open question at the end about the challenges teachers face inside the classroom.

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Composite of Four			
Emotional Engagement	4.7813	1.15706	56
First Diary			
Composite of Four			
Emotional Engagement	4.6205	1.17260	56
Second Diary			
Composite of Four			
Emotional Engagement	4.3661	1.42379	56
Third Diary			

Table 4.11 Composite of Emotional Engagement Diaries

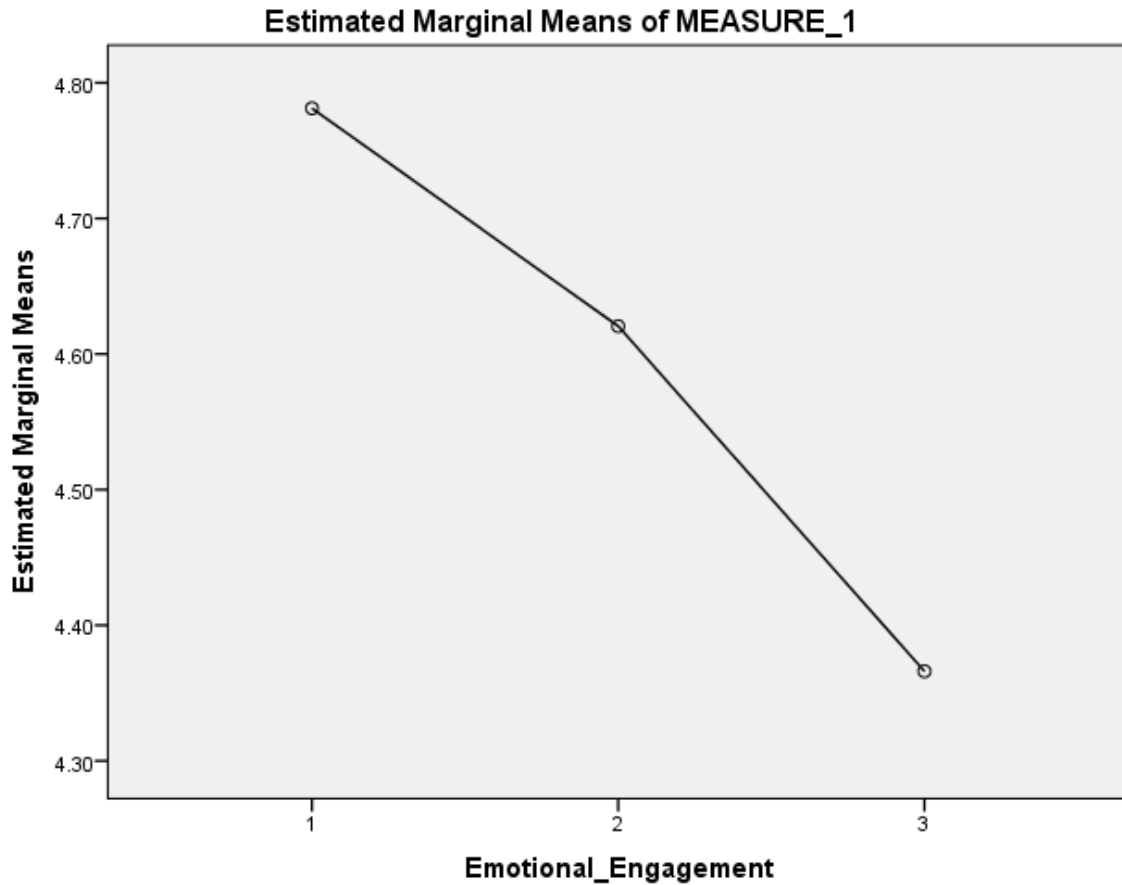


Figure 4.1 Changing in Teachers' Emotional engagement over time

Results indicated that participants did rate the three emotional engagement differently and that these differences were statistically significant, $F(1.96, 107.70) = 7.14, p < 0.01, \eta^2 = .12$

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Composite of Four Social Engagement with Students First Diary	5.2768	.66003	56
Composite of Four Social Engagement with Students Second Diary	5.1979	.77956	56
Composite of Four Social Engagement with Students Third Diary	5.1652	.89732	56

Table 4.12 Composite of Teacher's Social Engagement Diaries

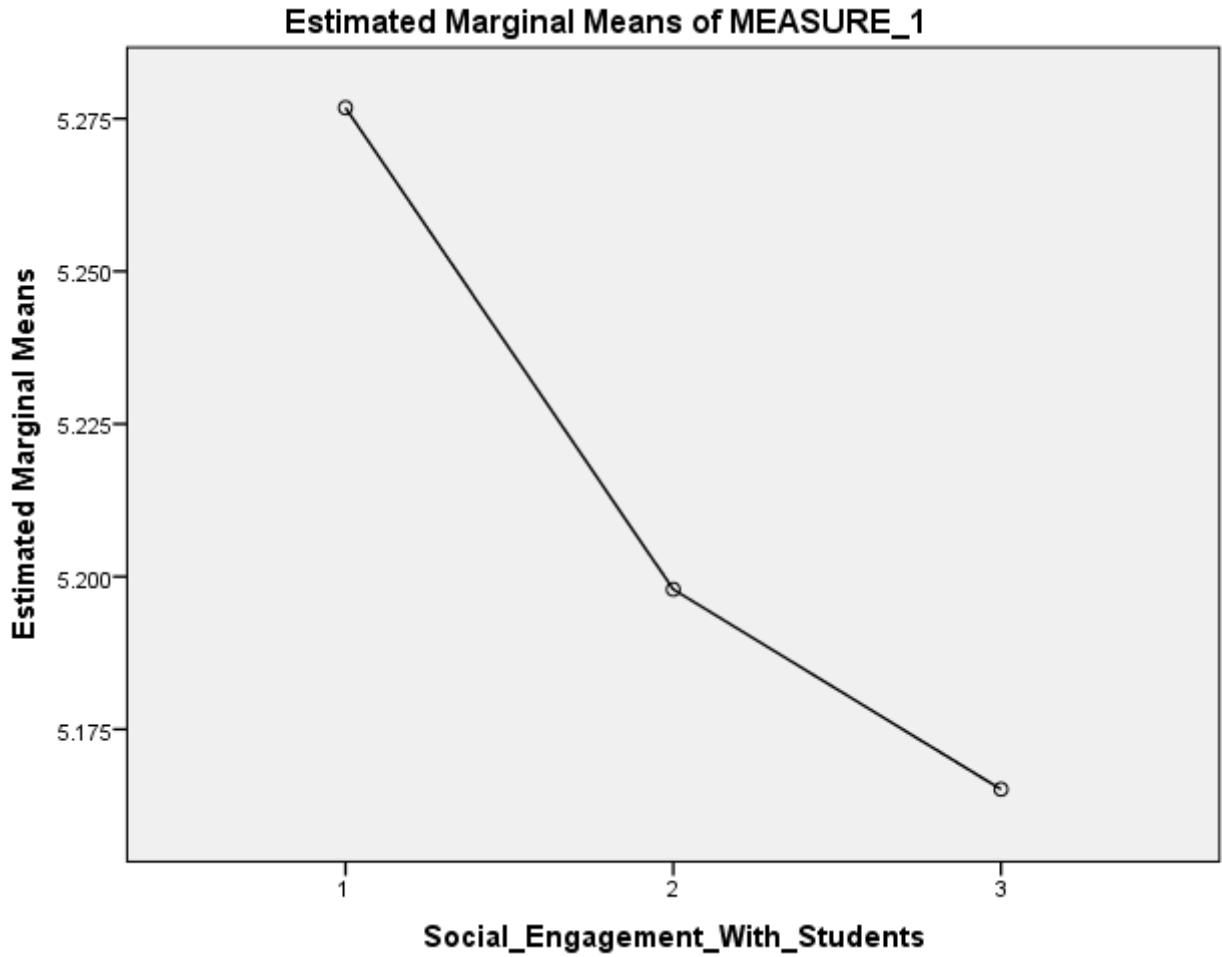


Figure 4.2 changing in Teachers' Social Engagement over time

Results indicated that participants did rate the three social engagement with students differently and that these differences were not statistically significant: $F(1.73, 95.36) = 1.12, p > 0.05, \eta^2 = .02$.

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Composite of Eight Components of Teacher Engagement Scale First Diary	5.0290	.80622	56
Composite of Eight Components of Teacher Engagement Scale Second Diary	4.9082	.89368	56
Composite of Eight Components of Teacher Engagement Scale Third Diary	4.7656	1.05880	56

Table 4.13 Composite of Total Teacher Engagement Diaries

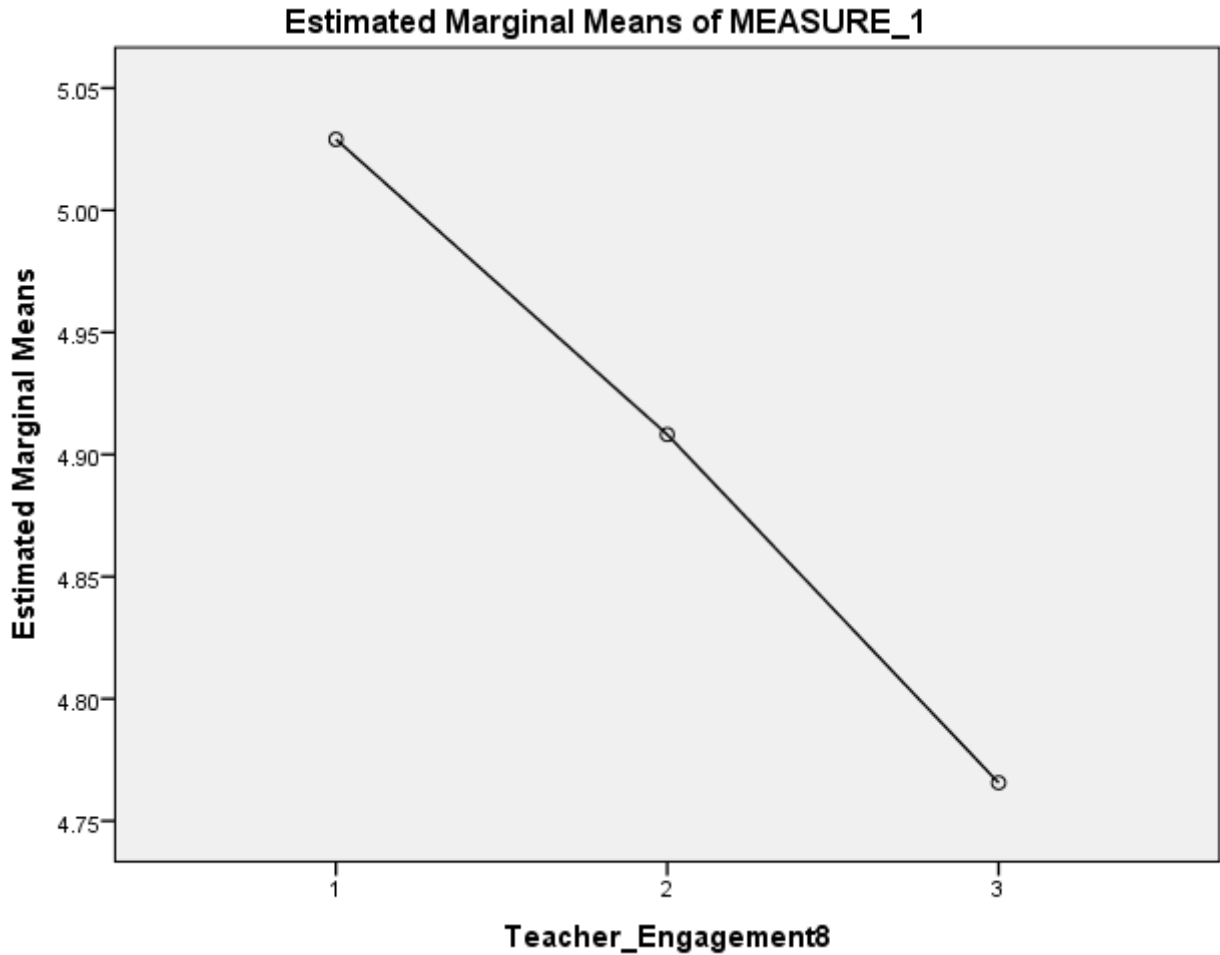


Figure 4.3 Changing in Total Teacher Engagement over time

Results indicated that participants did rate the three teacher engagement scale (all eight components) differently and that these differences were statistically significant: $F(1.77, 97.30) = 5.51, p < 0.01, \eta^2 = 0.09$. Teacher engagement decreased during the semester, which could be because the semester is too long, as the teachers mentioned in their diaries. Another reason could be that the second and the third diaries were given after the mid-term exams, where some teachers pointed out that students' low results can affect their engagement.

Below are the same charts after creating the same minimum and maximum values for all of them

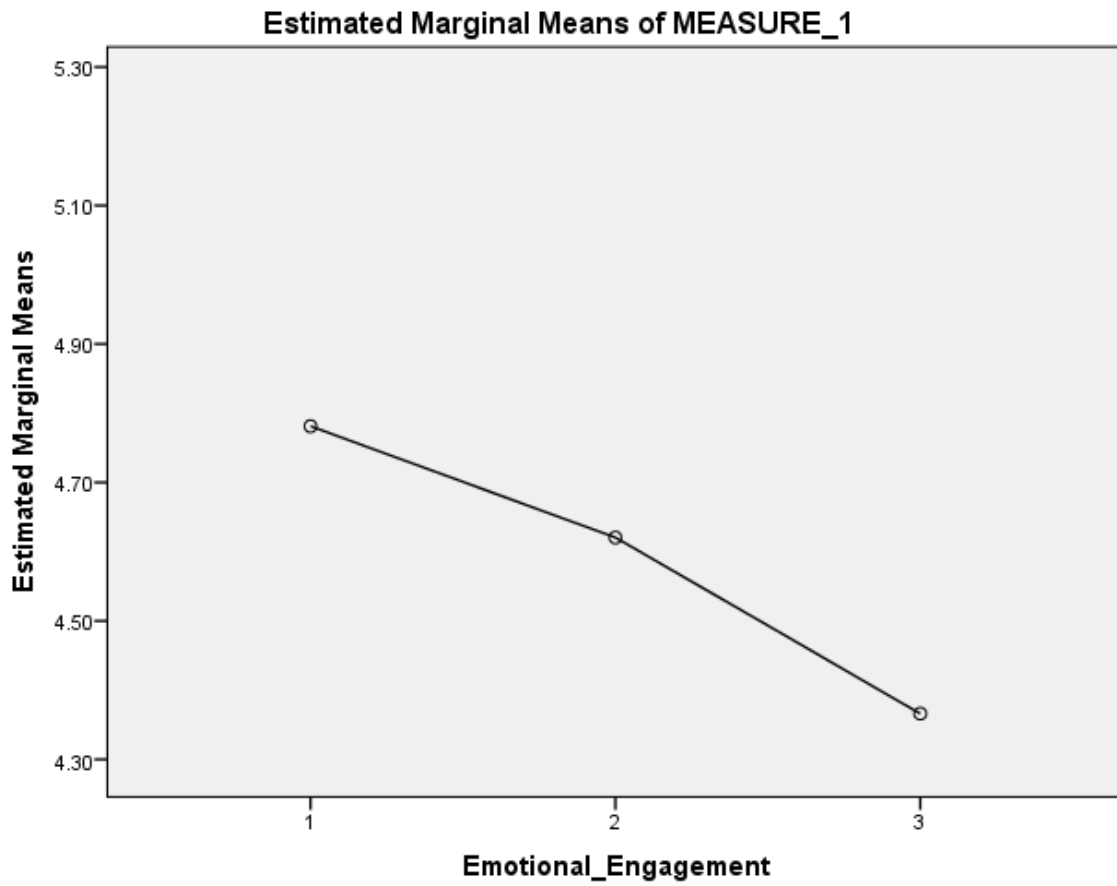


Figure 4.4 New diagram for changing Emotional Engagement

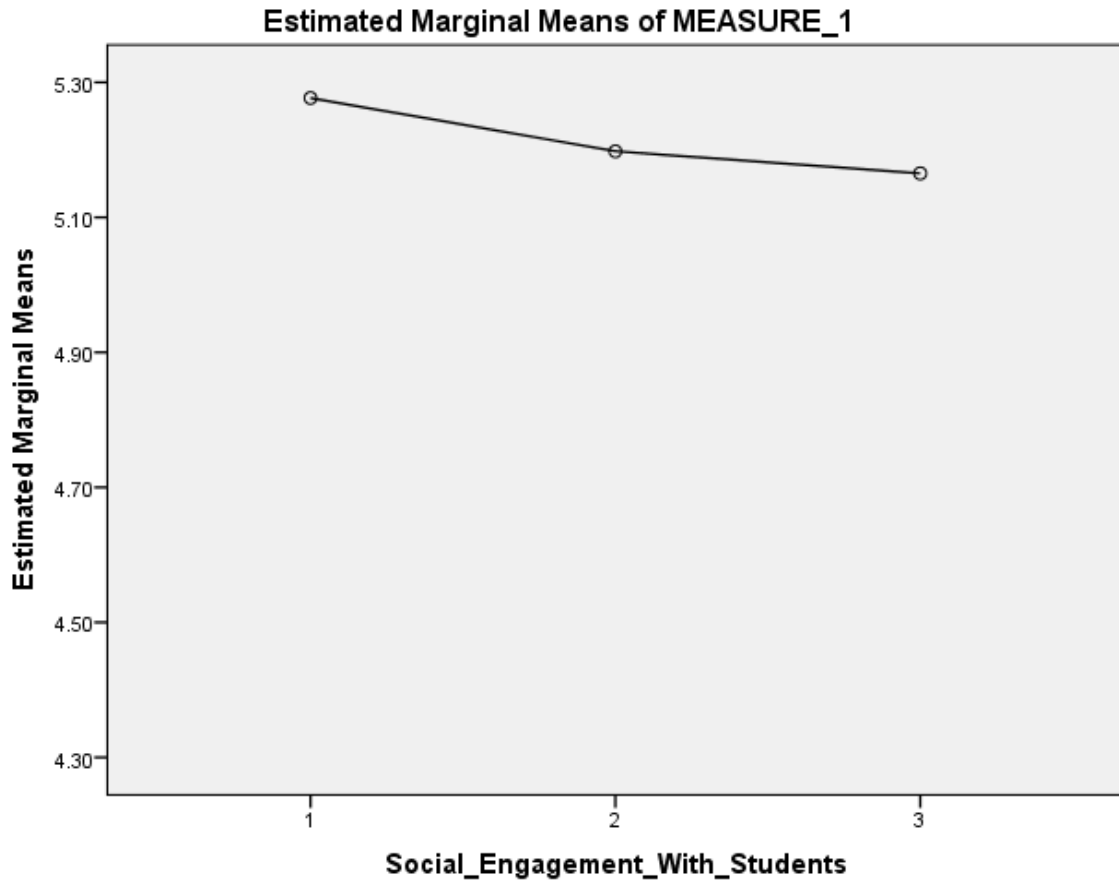


Figure 4.5 New Diagram for changing Social Engagement

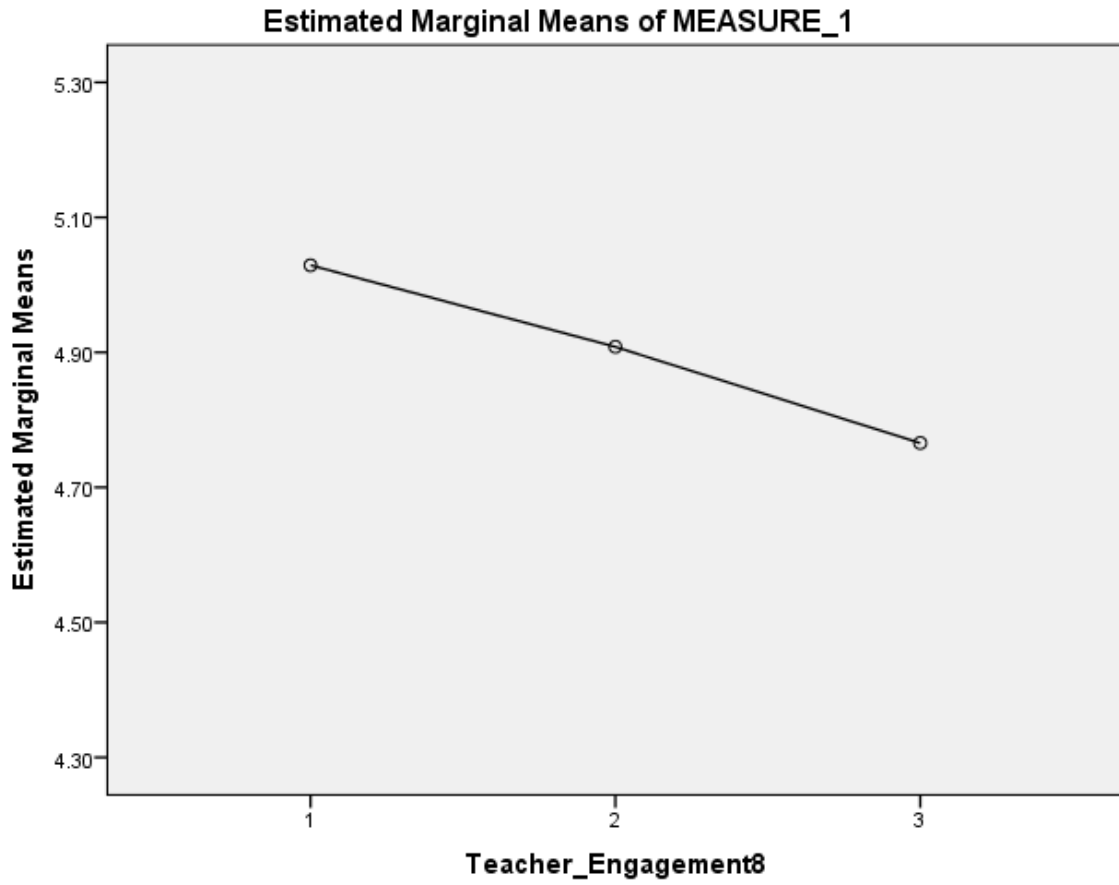


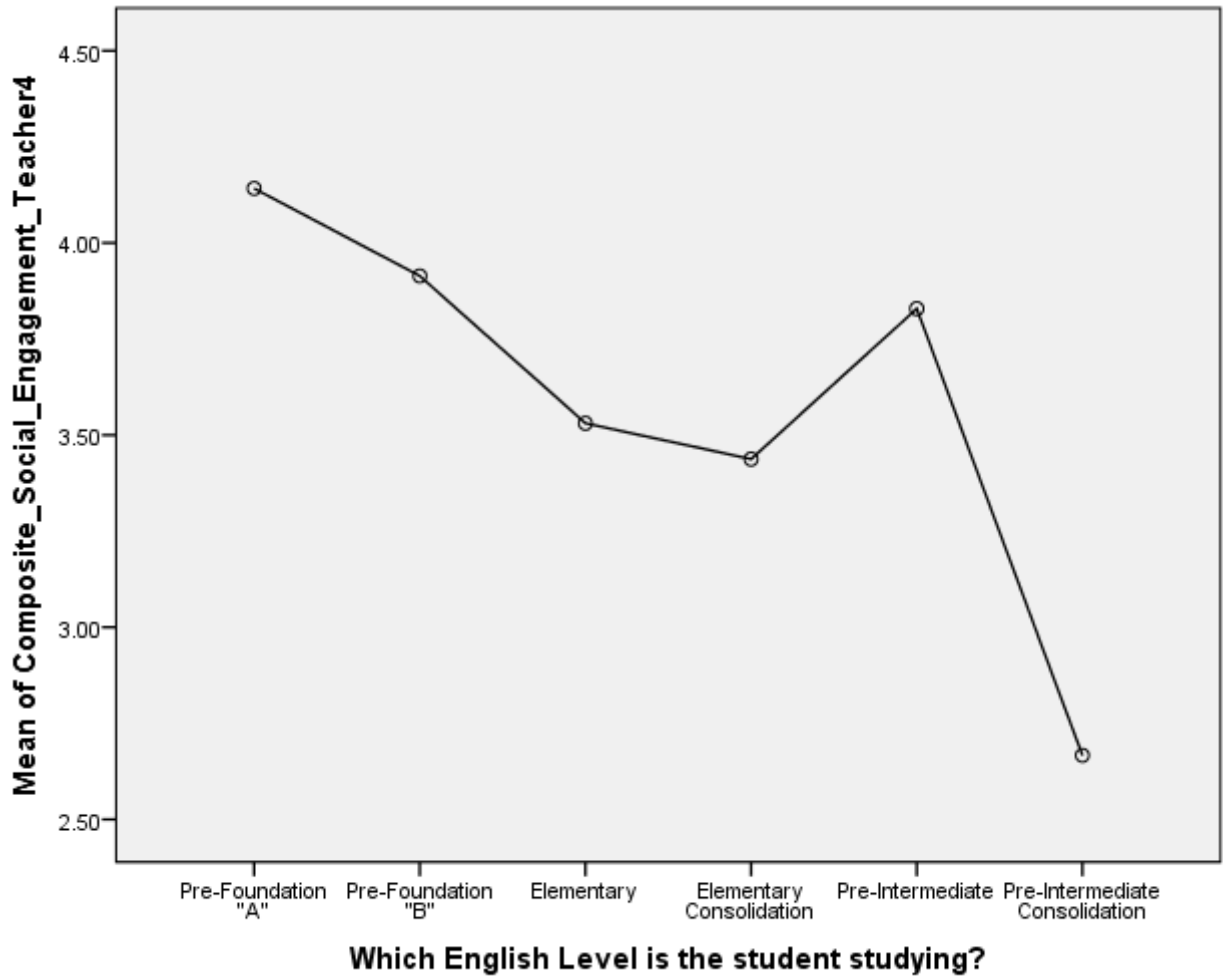
Figure 4.6 New Diagram for changing Total Engagement

Analysis of Variance was also used to compare the mean values of more than two groups. In this case, the factor or independent variable is the students' levels, which are six levels (Pre-Foundation A, Pre-Foundation B, Elementary, Elementary Consolidation, Pre-Intermediate and Pre-Intermediate Consolidation). The dependent variables are the students' social engagement with the teacher, QTI helpful and friendly and QTI understanding. One-way ANOVA was used to answer the following research question:

3- Is there a difference between beginner and advanced students in their social engagement and relationship with their teachers?

One-way ANOVA was used to see if students' English level is affecting their social engagement and relationship with their teachers. Students' levels from the lowest English level to the highest are Pre-Foundation A, Pre-Foundation B, Elementary, Elementary Consolidation, Pre-Intermediate, Pre-Intermediate Consolidation.

Figure 4.7 Difference between students in Social Engagement



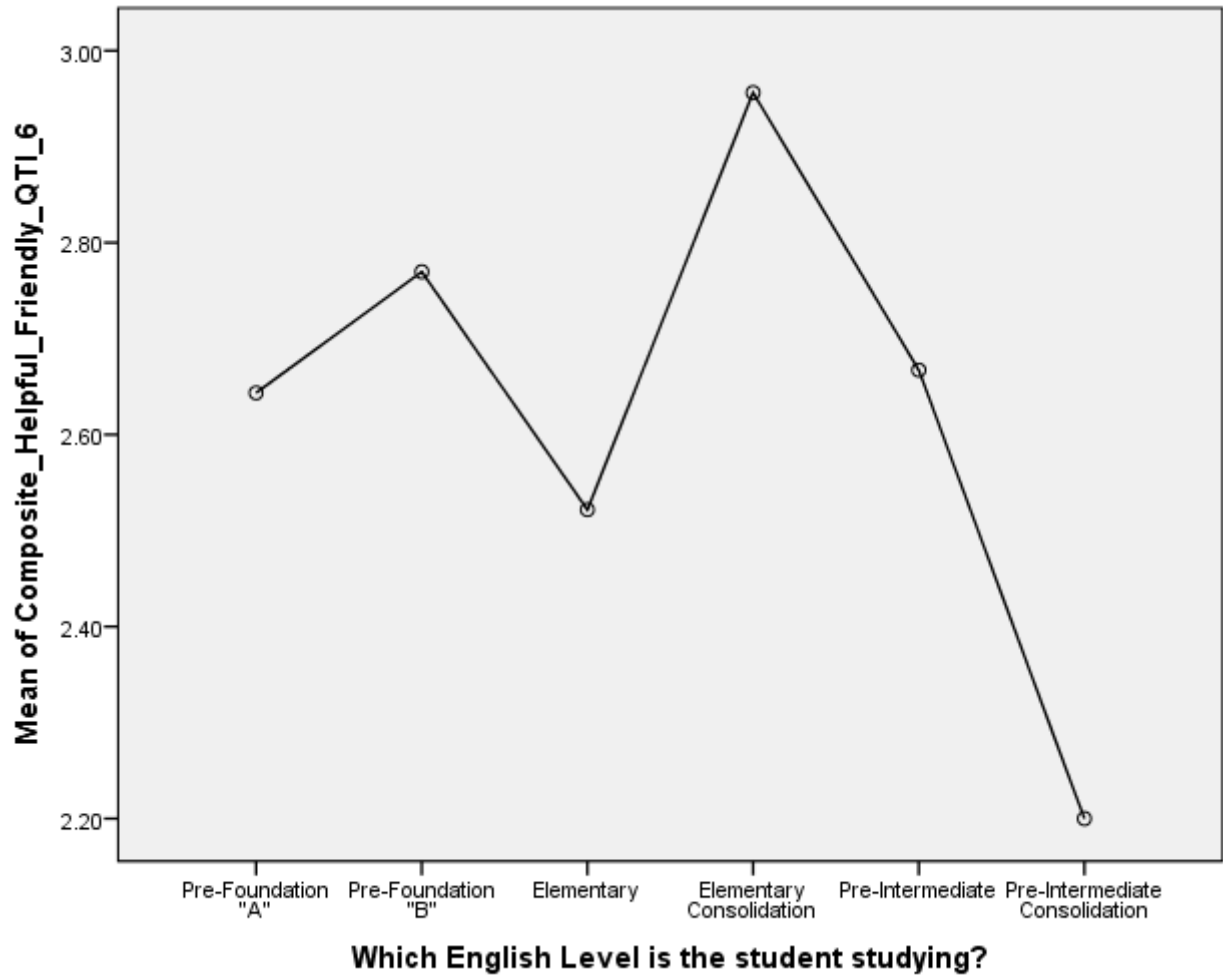


Figure 4.8 Difference between students in Helpful/Friendly QTI

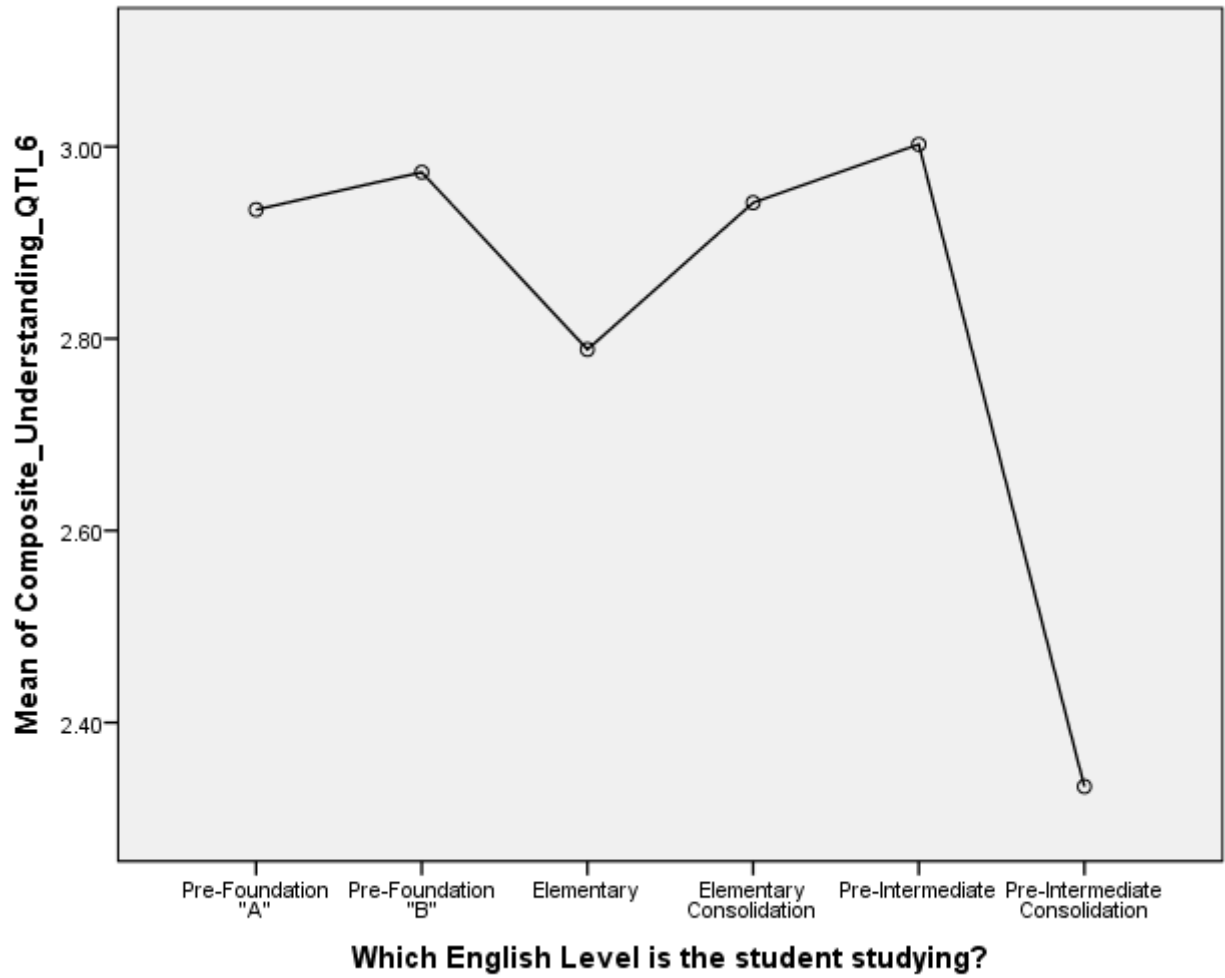


Figure 4.9 Difference between students in Understanding QTI

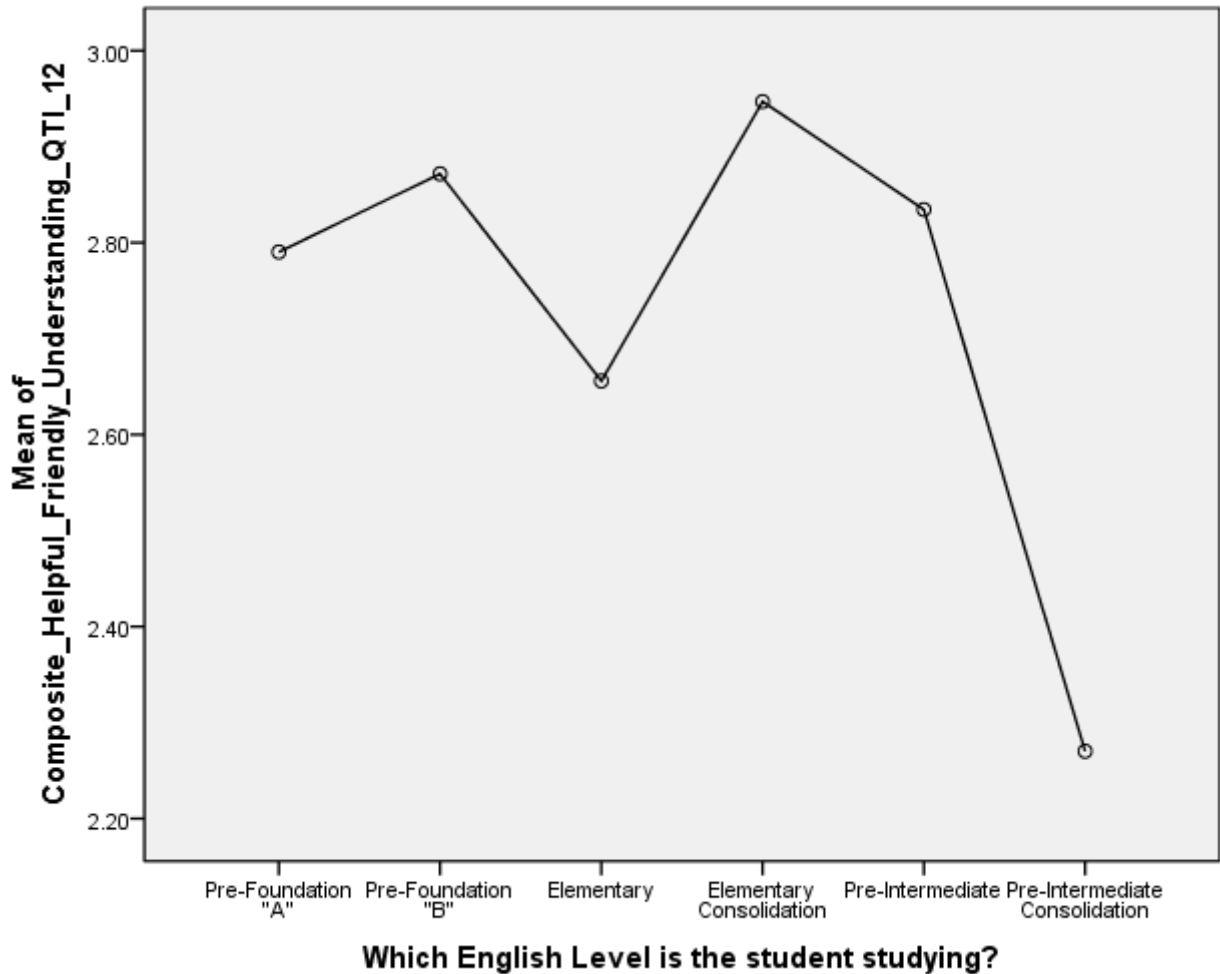


Figure 4.10 Difference between students in total QTI

Analysis of variance showed a main effect of Students' level on their social engagement with their teachers. $F(5,432) = 2.81, p = .017$.

Post-hoc analyses using Tukey's HSD indicated that there was a significant difference between Pre-Foundation A and Pre-Intermediate Consolidation in their social engagement with their teachers ($p = .043$), but students' levels did not differ significantly in any other domains.

It was also noticed that there was a decline from Pre-Intermediate Level to Pre-Intermediate Consolidation Level in all composite scales of social engagement,

helpful/friendly and understanding. Another one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare Pre-Intermediate Level to Pre-Intermediate Consolidation Level.

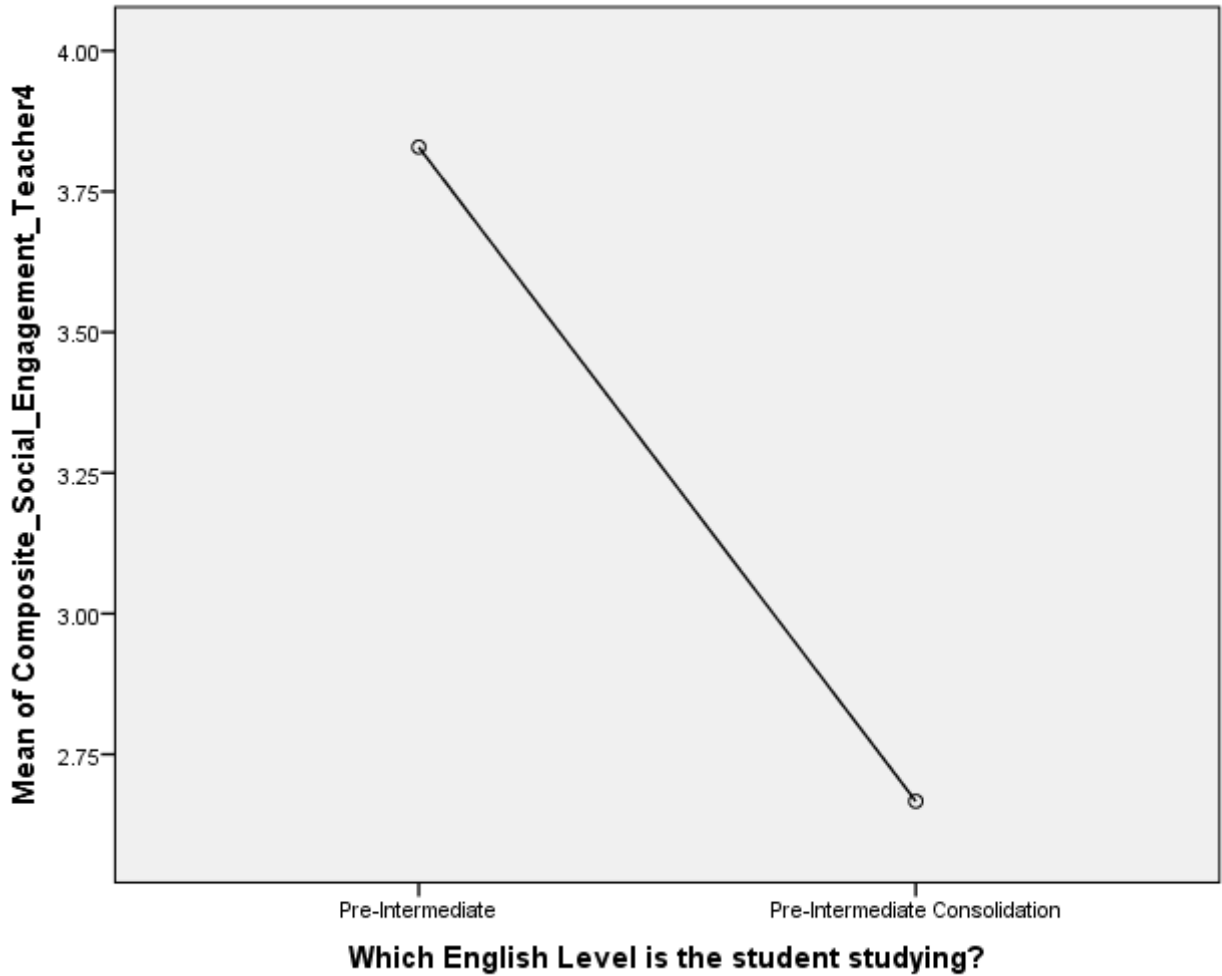


Figure 4.11 Difference between Pre-Intermediate students in Social Engagement

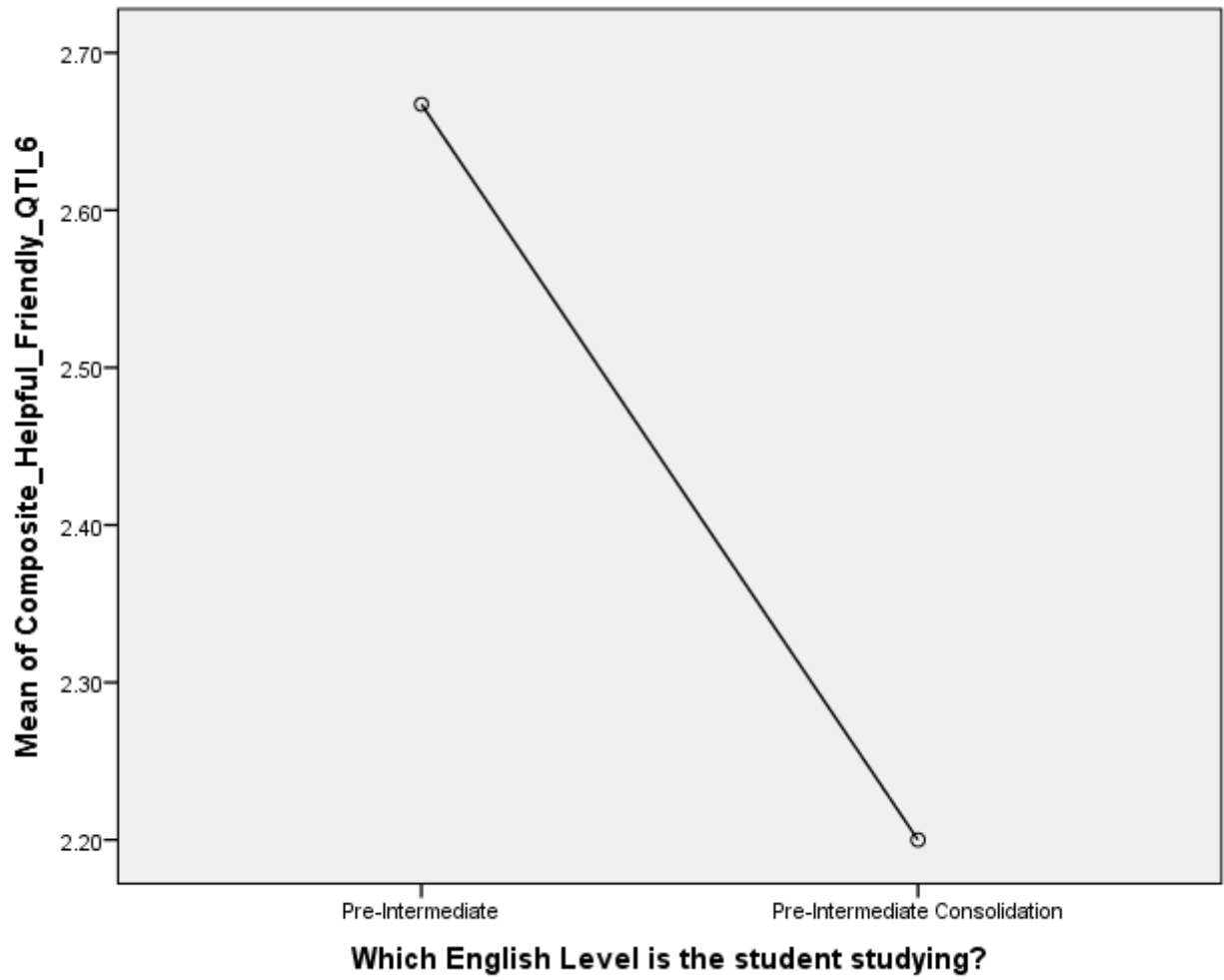


Figure 4.12 Difference between Pre-Intermediate students in Helpful /Friendly

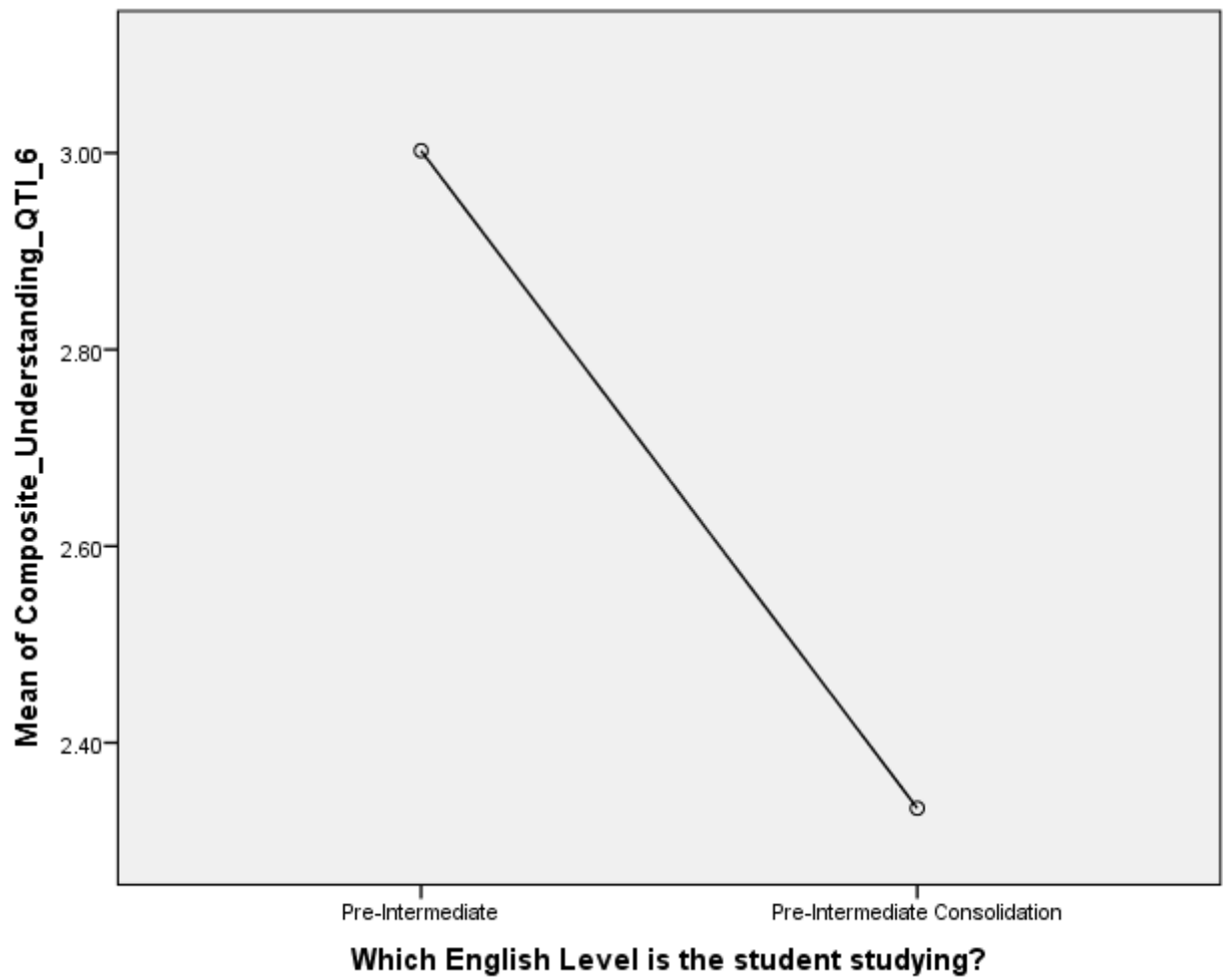


Figure 4.13 Difference between Pre-Intermediate students in Understanding

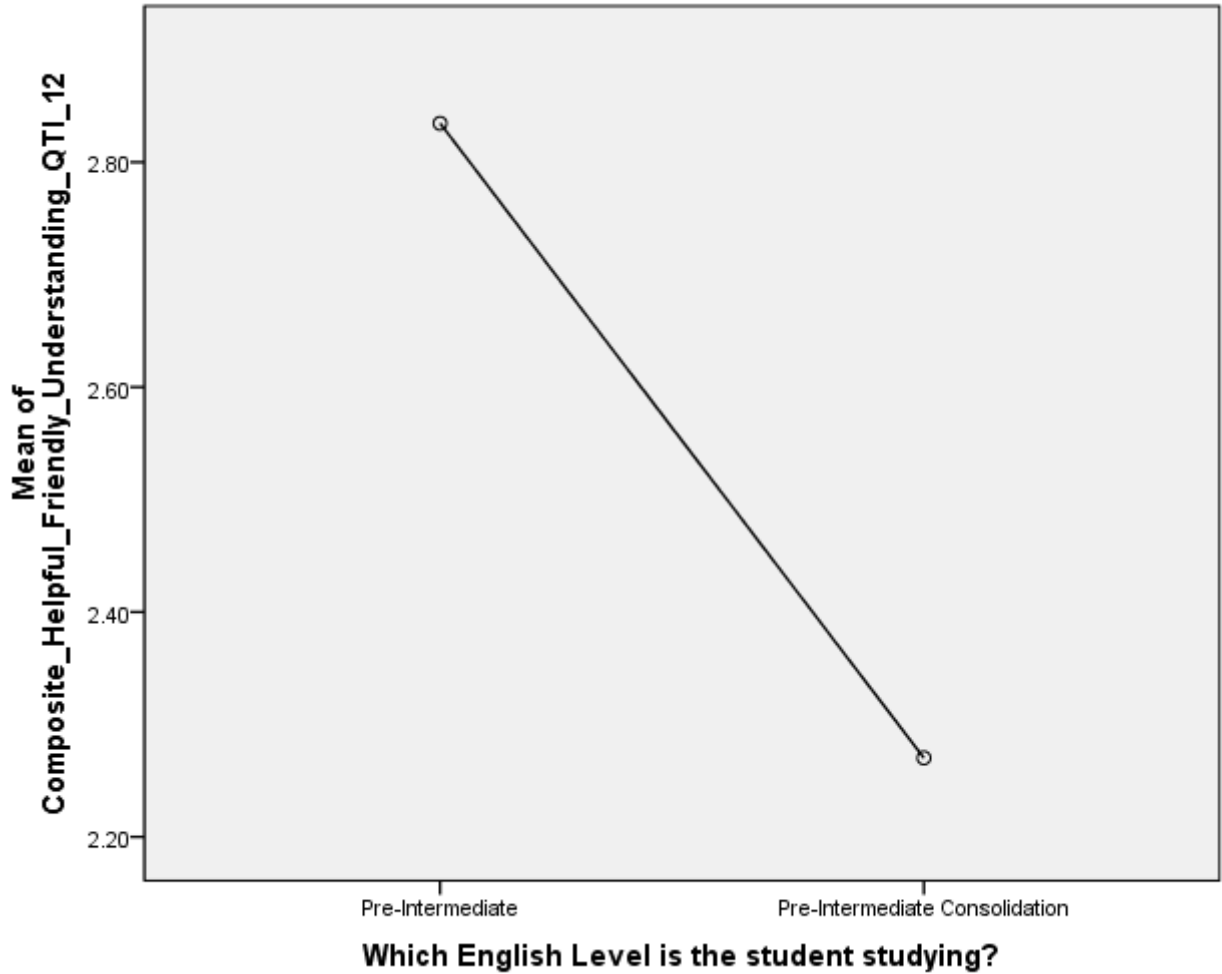


Figure 4.14 Difference between Pre-Intermediate students in Total QTI

Analysis of variance showed a significant difference between Pre-Intermediate and Pre-Intermediate Consolidation students in their social engagement with the teacher, $F(1,66) = 5.37, p = .024$, in their understanding $F(1,66) = 6.51, p = .013$ and in the total helpful, friendly, understanding scale $F(1, 66) = 4.49, p = .038$.

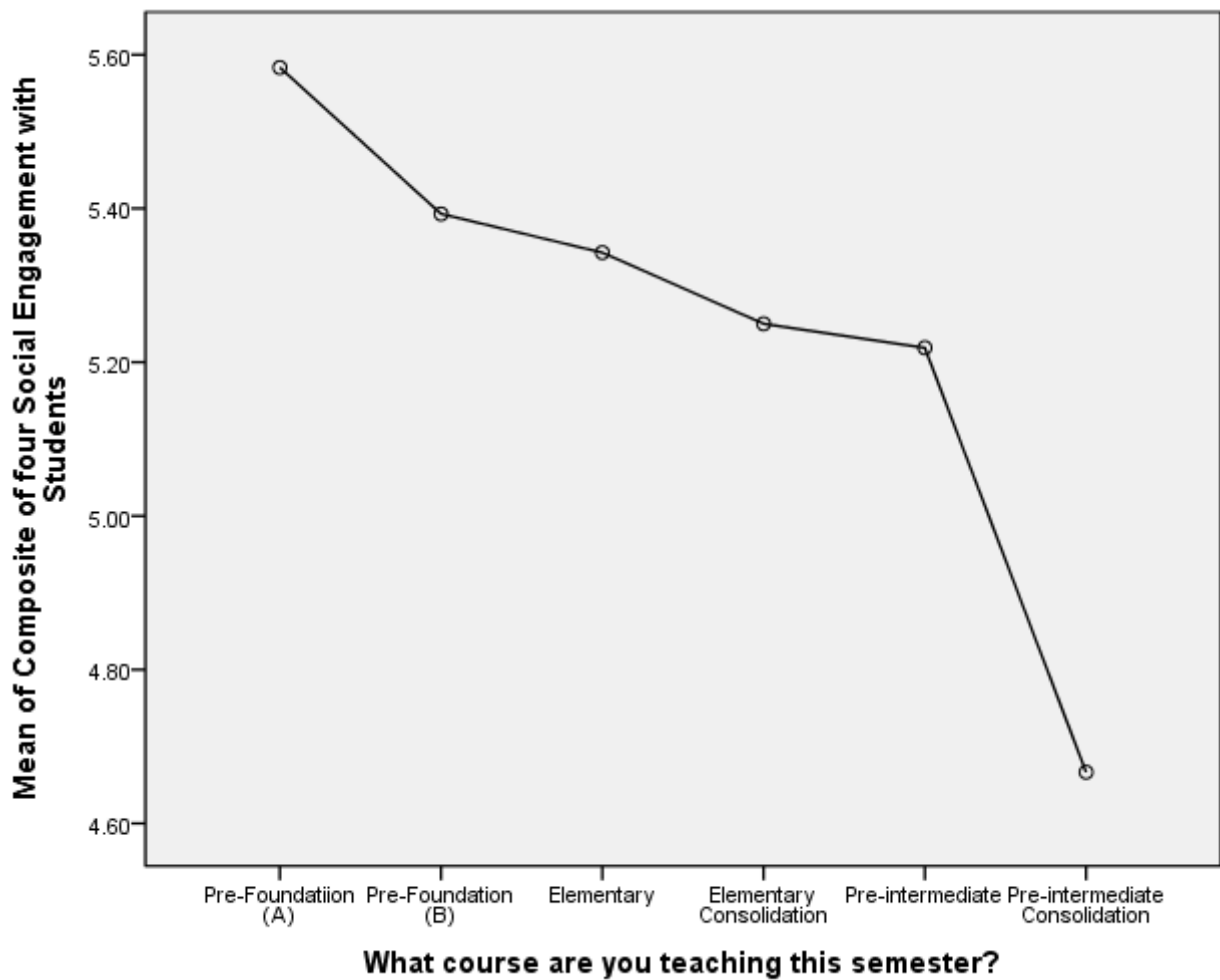


Figure 4.15 Difference between teachers in Social Engagement with students

Teachers' data also show that Pre-Foundation A teachers were more socially engaged with their students, which agrees with the students' data, but social engagement was not significantly correlated with teachers' data. Another limitation is that the number of teachers was too small in each level, 2 in Elementary Consolidation, 3 in Pre-Intermediate Consolidation, 8 in Pre-Intermediate, 27 in Elementary, 6 in Pre-Foundation A and 14 in Pre-Foundation B.

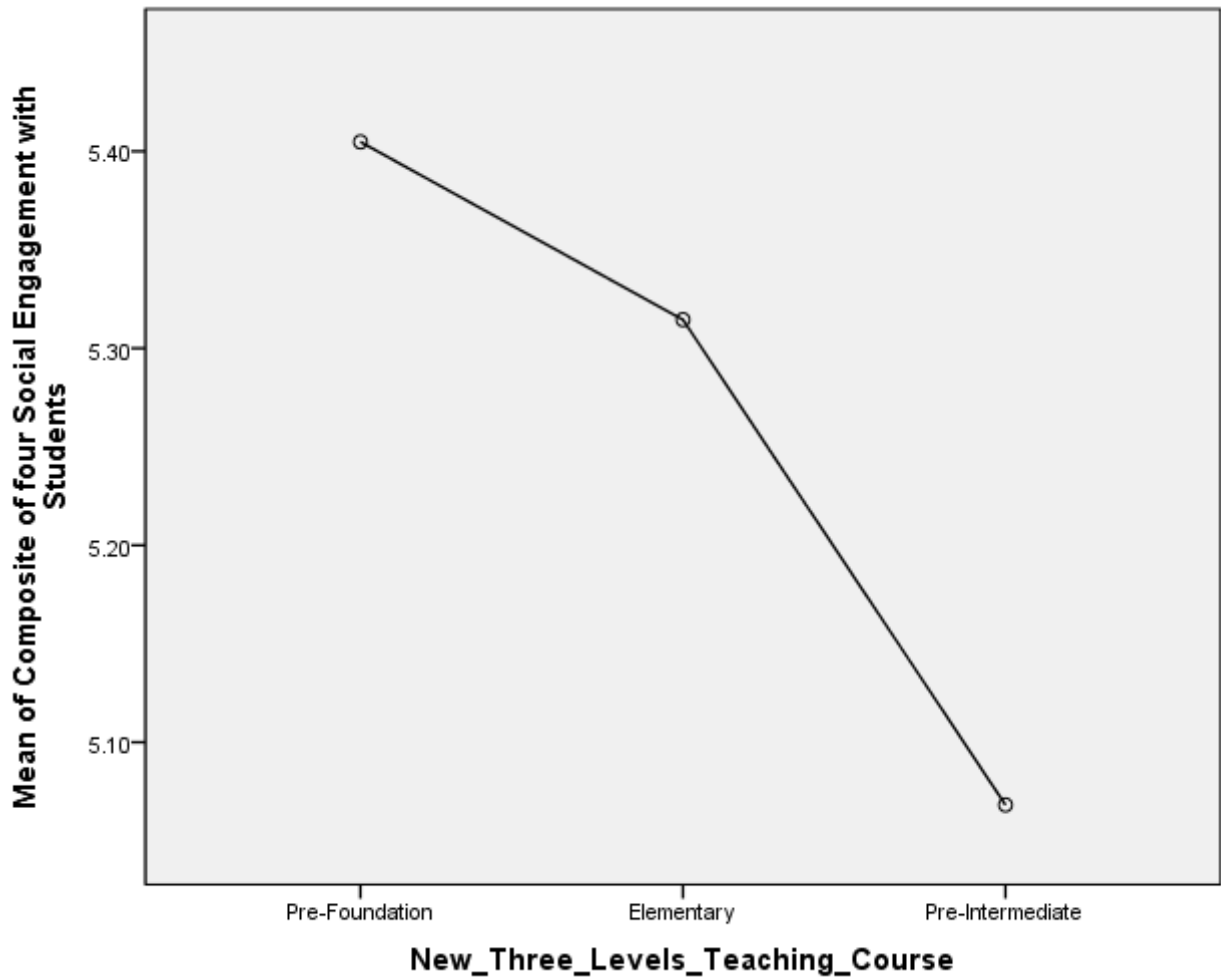


Figure 4.16 Social Engagement of new combined level teachers

When the three teaching courses were combined,

Pre-Foundation A + Pre-Foundation B = Pre-Foundation

Elementary + Elementary Consolidation = Elementary

Pre-Intermediate + Pre-Intermediate Consolidation = Pre-Intermediate,

it also showed that Pre-Foundation teachers were more engaged with their students than Pre-Intermediate teachers, but it was also not significant.

4.6 Independent Variables

Table 4.14 Correlation between Teacher Engagement, Teacher-Student Relationship, Age and Months of Experience

	1	2	3	4	5
1 Age	-	.438**	-.160	-.146	-.069
2 Months of Experience		-	-.271*	-.275*	-.206
3 Emotional Engagement			-	.936**	.492**
4 Complete Teacher Engagement				-	.646**
5 Complete QTI					-

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

An interesting finding is that the teachers with fewer months of experience in this workplace are more engaged in teaching ($r = -.28, p < .05$).

Analysis of variance also showed a main effect of gender on teachers' emotional engagement: $F(1, 61) = 5.22, p = 0.03, d = 0.59$.

4.7 Analysis and Discussion:

These results agree with Klassen, Yerdelen & Durksen (2013) that social engagement with the students is considered the main factor in teaching. Social Engagement with the students is also not related to the students' level. As we can see, the students with the lowest level of English level were more socially engaged with their

teachers than the students with the higher level of English. This also encourages the teachers to teach the students with the lowest English level and take advantage of this social engagement to increase students' level. Williams (1997) also pointed out that learning- teaching is a social process and that it depends on teachers' views about the students despite the methods or the curriculum used for teaching.

Furthermore, Petrides (2006) confirms that teachers' motivation is very important to create students' positive attitudes to learn the language and the teachers should also be qualified for teaching. This means that teachers' positive engagement towards teaching can transfer to the students and motivate them to learn the language. Teachers' engagement keeps changing according to the external factors that the teachers are exposed to. For example, teachers' engagement has decreased during the semester could be because of the students' low results as the teachers mentioned during the interview. This also agrees with Meijman, Mulder, Drenth & Thierry (1998) that the environment is very important to increase the motivation and dedication to work. Hakanen et al. (2006) also confirm that the high demands that the teachers experience may influence their social interaction with their students. In addition, having external job resources such as supportive organisational climate can enhance teachers' engagement more than personal resources such as self-efficacy and self-esteem.

The analysis also shows that emotional engagement is very important aspect of teacher engagement. This result support Bakker, Albrecht&Leiter (2011) that engagement is "emotional involvement or commitment". Collie, Shapka, & Perry (2011) affirm that teacher commitment is related to students' emotional and social engagement. This appears in the analysis when the students with the lowest English level were the most socially engaged with their teachers. This could be related to their teachers having more commitment to teaching despite the students' low English level. Results also show that teachers with less teaching experience are more emotionally and socially engaged than other teachers. This is also supported by Klassen et al (2013) that teachers who have just start teaching may experience high levels of social engagement, but their cognitive engagement could be less than experience teachers. On the other hand, Nias (1996) argued that there is a strong relationship between teachers' emotions and cognition.

Chapter 5: Qualitative Findings

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers and students to find the reasons for the quantitative results of the diaries and questionnaires. Ten interviews were conducted with the teachers after giving them the questionnaires and during the diaries period. Another ten interviews were conducted with the students after giving them the questionnaires. One interview was conducted with one of the administration teams to discuss what job resources might be available for both teachers and students to overcome the challenges which are considered part of the job demands.

Ten semi-structured interviews were also conducted with volunteer teachers. These interviews were conducted after distributing the questionnaires and during the six weeks diaries. The researcher read the students and teachers' questionnaires and diaries on a daily basis to get a general idea of the challenges that teachers and students faced, which can be discussed during the interviews. All interviews were conducted in a locked room and participants' permission was taken to record the interview. The interviews were recorded on password-protected electronic devices. These devices were kept in the researcher's handbag, making sure that no one could access them.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten volunteer students. The interviews were conducted after distributing the questionnaires. These interviews were conducted in a locked room and the students' permission was taken to record the interviews. The interviews were recorded on password-protected electronic devices. The researcher makes sure to interview students from different levels and to include both males and females. The researcher also checked the students' questionnaires on a daily basis to raise any issues the students mentioned in the questionnaires during the interview. The interviews were mainly conducted in Arabic, sometimes shifting to English.

During the last week of the main data collection process, a final semi-structured interview was conducted with the Assistant Director for Quality Assurance in the Foundation Institute at the university. This interview was conducted after the teachers' and students' main data collection finished, having an idea of the challenges that teachers

and students faced inside the classroom and the solutions they suggested. Some of these challenges and solutions were mentioned during this interview. The interview was conducted in the assistant director's office at the end of the day to make sure the atmosphere was quiet and no one would interrupt the interview. The interviewee's permission was taken to record the interview on password-protected electronic devices. The interview was conducted in English, and the researcher thanked the assistant director for his time.

Students' interview questions were also translated by a qualified translator and checked by another translator at the university during the pilot process. The translation was done again during the main study by the same translators, since some interview questions were changed. Students' answers to the open question and the interview codes and themes were in Arabic and the researcher translated them to English.

5.1 Thematic Analysis

5.1.1 What is Thematic Analysis?

Interviews and open questions in teachers' diaries and students' questionnaires will be analysed using thematic analysis Braun & Clarke(2006, p. 79) defined thematic analysis as “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and describes your data set in (rich) detail.” Thematic analysis is used a lot to analyse qualitative data. Holloway & Todres(2003) classified thematic analysis as one of the generic skills that balance narrative and illustration. Thematic analysis follows the phenomenology dimension to describe a general or specific experience. The data collected through interviews or narratives are used to understand the depth of the experience.

Thematic analysis is analysing the data by going backwards and forwards between the meanings. The results are usually presented in different themes or in a narrative way or a combination of both. It leads to empathic understanding of the experience and it is usually used in philosophy and psychology.

5.1.2 What is a Theme?

In addition, Braun & Clarke(2006, p. 82) define theme as “something important about the data in relation to the research question, and [and something that] represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set.” There is no specific representation of the theme in the data. A theme could appear in most of the data, some or none at all.

Data are considered a theme when they are strongly related to one of the research questions. A theme could be considered according to the number of speakers who mention the same theme or according to the repetition of the same theme in the whole data set. This means that thematic analysis is a flexible method and there are no right or wrong ways to assign themes. The most important thing is to be consistent in using the same way to answer all research questions.

The data set could be described in different ways according to the themes. For example, some researchers may describe all the data, so that the reader can have an idea of all the important themes. Another way could be by giving a deep description of one specific theme which answers one particular question in the research by following a semantic approach.

5.1.3 Types of Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis can be inductive or theoretical. Braun & Clarke(2006, p. 83) defined inductive analysis as “a process of coding the data without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame, or the researcher’s analytic preconceptions.” Inductive analysis is also known as a bottom-up way that data is collected to answer a specific research question. This means that the data themselves provide us with the themes, and these themes are not related to any themes which were identified in the theory of the research.

The second type is the theoretical or deductive thematic analysis. It is also called the top-down way. Braun & Clarke(2006, p. 84) explain that theoretical thematic analysis is “driven by the researcher’s theoretical or analytic interest in the area, and is thus more explicitly analyst driven.” This means that in theoretical thematic analysis the

researcher is more interested in the theoretical background of the research question and is relating the themes according to the available theory.

Another classification of thematic analysis is according to the level of analysis. Themes can be grouped into semantic or latent themes. Braun & Clarke (2006, p. 84) explain that theoretical thematic analysis is “driven by the researcher’s theoretical or analytic interest in the area, and is thus more explicitly analyst driven.” This means that in theoretical thematic analysis the researcher is more interested in the theoretical background of the research question and is relating the themes according to the available theory.

Another classification of thematic analysis is according to the level of analysis. Themes can be grouped into semantic or latent themes. Braun & Clarke (2006, p. 84) defined the semantic approach as where “themes are identified within explicit or surface meanings of the data, and the analyst is not looking for anything beyond what a participant has said or what has been written.” This means that semantic analysis is just descriptive or a summary of the data and this is usually used when themes are related to the previous literature review in the same area of research.

However, latent themes were defined by Braun & Clarke(2006, p. 84) as themes that go “beyond the semantic content of the data” and start “to identify or examine the underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualizations – and ideologies – that [are] theorised as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data.” This means that latent themes go beyond descriptive analysis of the data to make their own theory. A discourse analysis framework would help to analyse the data-producing latent themes.

There are also many types of questions which are related to qualitative data. For example, there are the research questions which the researcher tries to answer through the project. There are also the questions that the participants answered through interviews. Finally, there are the questions that help the researcher to understand the data. It is usually expected that there is no relationship between the three types of questions. In addition, a researcher must understand that the questions participants are asked should not be considered as “themes”. Braun & Clarke (2006, p. 86) explain that thematic

analysis aims “to find repeated patterns of meaning.” The researcher should explain in the report why certain themes were chosen.

5.1.4 Advantages and Disadvantages of Thematic Analysis

There are many advantages to using thematic analysis. Flexibility is one of these advantages. Thematic analysis does not follow a specific theoretical framework such as conversation analysis, grounded theory, discourse analysis or narrative analysis, although thematic method does follow phenomenological analysis in a limited way. On the one hand, thematic analysis does not belong to any theory, but at the same time it can be applied to any theoretical framework in psychology. This makes thematic analysis provide detailed and rich data.

On the other hand, thematic analysis can provide complex data. It can also be used in a limited way. This is why there should be clear guidelines for interviews and analysing the data using thematic analysis. Antaki, Young, & Finlay (2002, p. 436) pointed out that “The opportunities for deviations from the official account are amplified when the interviewees show difficulties in understanding the questions and coping with interviews’ requirements.” Attride-Stirling (2001) added that researchers may be familiar with the theoretical background of thematic analysis, yet unaware how to use it in analysis.

Furthermore, some other researchers claim that thematic analysis is “branded” and does not follow any analysis, such as narrative analysis. For example, Braun & Clarke (2006) mentioned that thematic analysis should be considered as an independent method without following any specific dimension. However, Braun & Clarke(2006) argue that thematic analysis is widely used, but it is either given another name (such as content analysis) or not given any specific name at all. In addition, the researcher should be active in analysing the data and forming themes according to the interest of the researcher, not to the way they emerge in the data.

Since thematic analysis does not follow a certain theoretical framework, it can represent many methods. For example, it can describe participants’ experiences and individuals’ psychological motivation. This is referred to as an essentialist or realist

method. The second type of thematic analysis is the constructionist method which explores the factors within society that affect this experience. The contextualist method is a combination of both realist and constructionist methods. The contextualist method usually follows a theoretical framework. For example, it can be characterised by critical realism which focuses on the contributions of both the individuals and the social context of the experience and how any other limitations can affect this experience. A good thematic analysis will relate the interview data to the real world.

5.1.5 How Thematic Analysis is used in this Research

In this research the experience is the learning–teaching beliefs that students have when they transfer from school to university and how they can affect teacher engagement and teacher–student relationships inside the classroom. These beliefs and challenges that both teachers and students face inside the classroom were investigated by conducting interviews with both teachers and students and answering open questions in teachers’ diaries and students’ questionnaires. The data represented was analysed thematically into codes and themes.

The thematic analysis used in this research will follow a contextualised theoretical framework where both individuals (teachers and students) and social context (school and university) contribute to the experience (learning–teaching beliefs). Thematic analysis of open questions answers and interview data will reflect the reality of these beliefs and how can they challenge the teachers inside the classroom. Themes will be considered according to the repetition of the same themes in all the interviews and open questions data. In this research, specific themes will be described in detail to answer particular research questions. These themes will be identified in an inductive, bottom-up way, since the themes will not be related to any previous research. Themes will also be latent in order to understand the underlying meanings of the data represented. Some themes will be deductive by relating them to the questions mentioned in the questionnaires given to teachers and students.

4- What are the learning–teaching beliefs that may affect teacher engagement within the classroom from both teachers and students’ point of views?

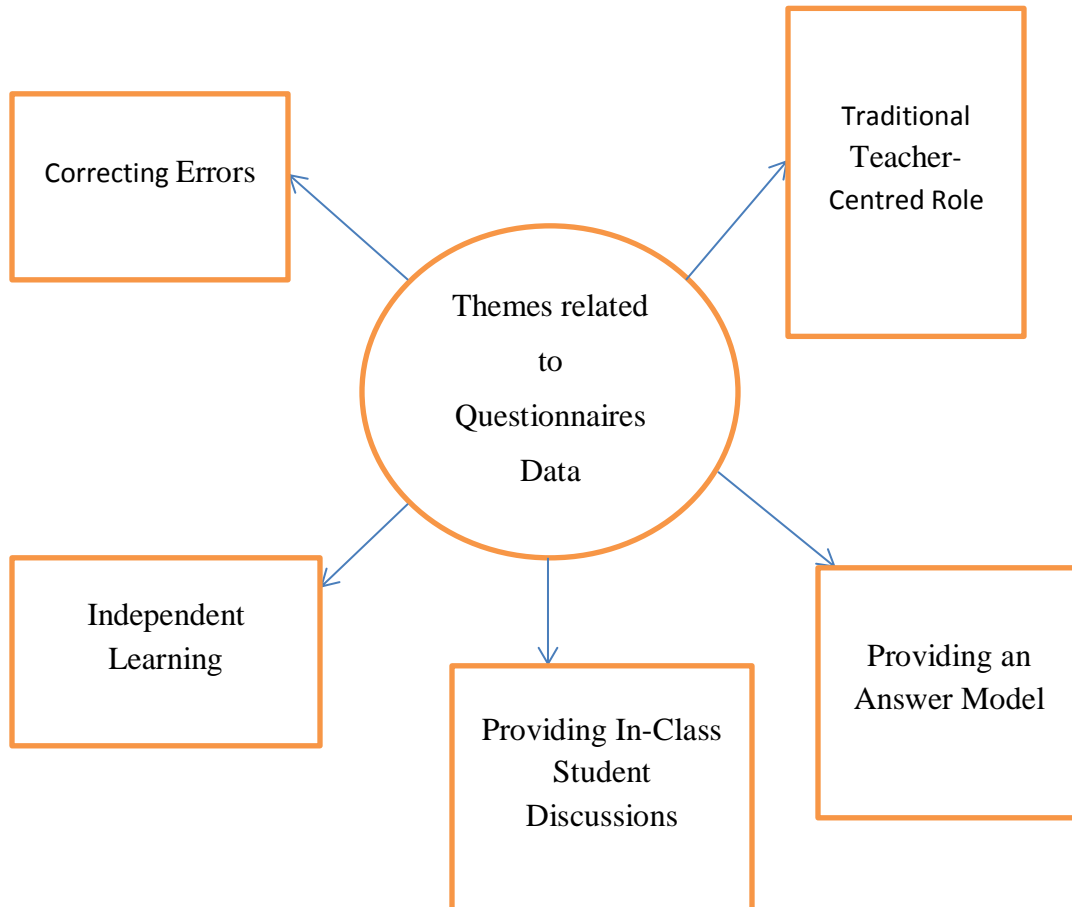


Figure 5.1 Themes related to Questionnaires Data

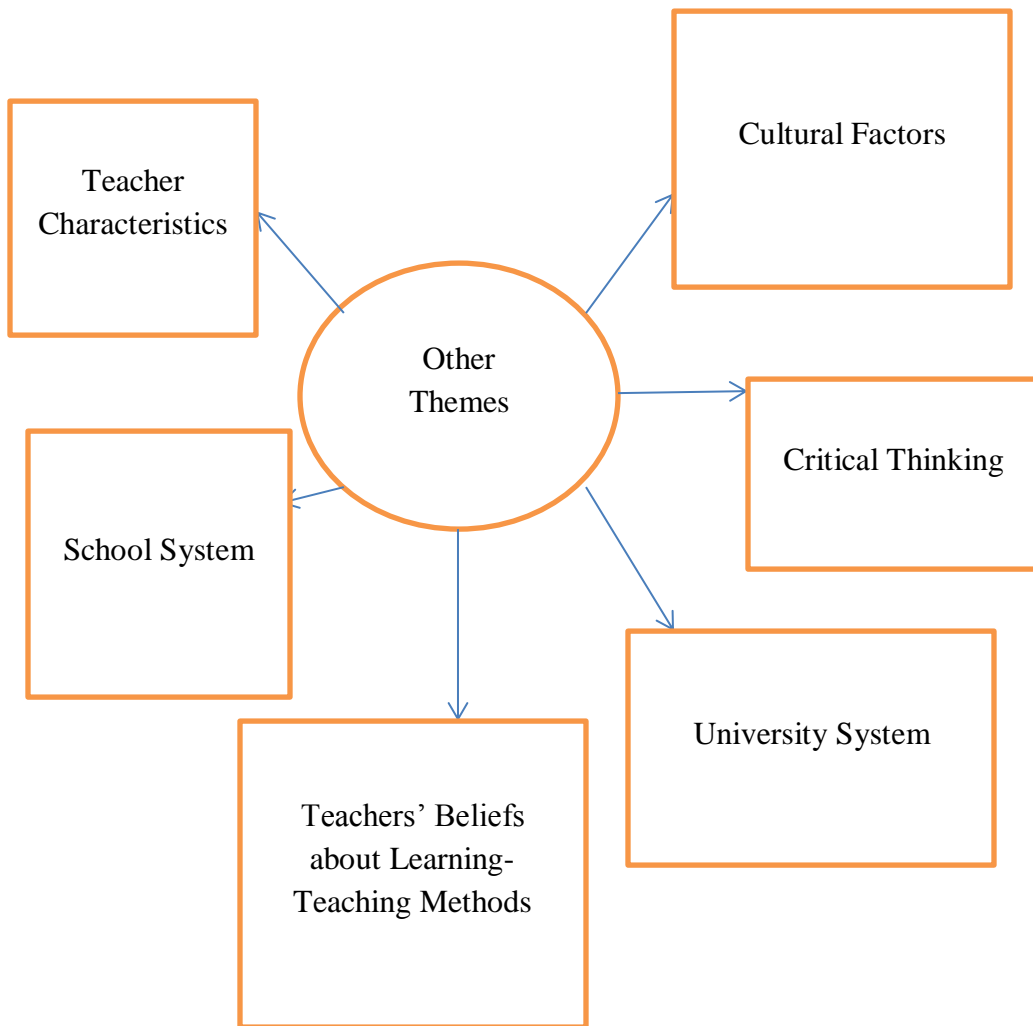


Figure 5.2 Other Inductive Themes

Teachers' interviews reveal many learning-teaching beliefs. Some of these themes are related to the Questionnaire of the Quantitative data, which asks about the following learning-teaching beliefs:

5.2 Themes related to Qualitative Data

5.2.1 Traditional Teacher-Centred Role

Teachers have different beliefs about the Traditional Teacher-Centred Role. An elementary teacher stated that using a suitable method depends on the students, since some like the traditional teacher-centred role and others prefer group discussion. The teacher was asked:

‘Q: Do you think the students here – from your experience – they like traditional teacher-centred role. They don’t like discussion or group discussion. They want the teacher to feed them all the time.

A: That’s an interesting question. I’ve had groups – both sides. I’ve had groups that prefer discussion and working in groups and I’ve also had classes where they really didn’t like anything that wasn’t just a teacher teaching. So I think it’s very mixed. I think you get different things in different groups.’

A teacher of special needs, who taught other students before the semester, believed that students generally find the traditional teacher’s role boring and they like group discussions and to be part of the learning process. The teacher was asked:

‘Q: In the middle. Do you think that the students here like the traditional teacher’s role that the teacher, like, speaks all the time, they don’t like group discussion...

A: I think they like group discussions much more. They like the freedom of it. They get bored very easily when you sit in the front and say open your book to page 22 and let’s read. It’s boring for them, and they don’t like that. They like to be part of everything and try their skills – and even if they make mistakes. Especially later on, maybe after the first three or four weeks, they really like to be part of whatever they – and they like to do something interesting. They hate boring stuff.’

A Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher remarked that Consolidation Level Students prefer the traditional teacher role. This could be because they are repeating the same level:

‘Q: Maybe they believe in traditional teacher role?’

A: That's what I noticed. That is what I noticed that my job is to talk; their job is to write or listen. They don't want to discover.'

The same Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher believed that it is difficult to change the teacher-centred approach, which students are used to in their schools. The teacher added:

'A: But it also depends how they learn it. If they have a teacher-centred approach, in high school and primary school, it's very difficult for them to demand something different at the university.'

A Pre-Foundation "B" teacher believed that students prefer a modern teacher with a modern role, but some traditional aspects should be kept such as teacher's dominance.

The teacher said:

'A: Exactly. So I personally believe they like to see more of a modern teacher with a modern role, activities, blah, blah, blah, than a traditional one, although some traditional aspects of teaching need to be kept. Some aspects like teacher's dominance – that's what I talked about just minutes ago. So they like to see all this. But more modern, I think.'

All this means that traditional teacher-centred role depends on many factors such as students' level and educational background, and their experience of different approaches at school. In addition, teachers may understand the traditional teacher-centred role in different ways. As one interviewee pointed out, it is good to keep some aspects of teacher's traditional role such as teacher's dominance. This means that understanding traditional role depends on teacher's educational and cultural background.

5.2.2 Correcting Errors

Correcting students' errors is another learning-teaching aspect, which the teachers were asked about in the questionnaire. For the elementary school teacher, students want to be corrected since they believe that this is a way of learning. At the same time, they do not like being corrected, since they become disappointed if they make a mistake. The teacher explained during the interview:

'A: That's – listen, they want to be corrected, but they don't like being corrected. They think that correcting them is a way of learning. That's what they think. If I don't check everything, they won't learn that. But, when I need to correct that, then they are feeling a bit disappointed because they made a mistake. And they think if I don't see that, if I don't check that, if I don't correct that, nothing happened. But, when I do that, they don't feel well. So it's not easy to find a balance between.'

The same Elementary teacher remarked that students were used to having everything checked at their school:

‘A: Yes. Yes. Not easy. Probably coming from schools where everything was checked, ticked and corrected – and that’s what they are expecting from me.’

A management member, who was also interviewed, commented that providing feedback could be time-consuming for the teachers. The question answered concerned the skills which students needed more feedback on:

‘Q: In which areas particularly do the students want more feedback – in writing or in reading or listening?’

A: Mostly in writing because it’s, as you know, one of the important and difficult skills, and some teachers are reluctant to spend more time on these skills because it’s time-consuming.’

On the other hand, the same management member believed that teachers should answer all students’ questions and correct their errors:

‘Q: And do you think, Doctor, our students here always want the teacher to correct their errors and give them an answer model?’

A: Yeah, and actually students are complaining about teachers who are not giving them feedback, whether it is written feedback or oral feedback. They come and complain about those teachers “We are not having lots of support from our teachers”, and I receive many complaints – or such kind of complaints from students about their teachers – and that’s why we encourage the teachers whenever they can they should address all the students’ questions, answer all their questions. If they require to go back and meet them in their office hours, they ask them to come to their office hours and discuss all the issues of their learning.’

The management member also stated that teachers should give students feedback and correct their errors:

‘Q: So you think that giving feedback is important for the students?’

A: Definitely.

Q: For their learning.

A: True.

Q: And also correcting their errors.

A: Of course. Of course. Whether it is verbal or written. They’re also mistakes.’

The Elementary teacher stressed that errors should be corrected and students provided with an answer model:

‘Q: Do you think also, our students, they like the teacher to correct their errors all the time and they want an answer model?’

A: Yeah. The good ones do. There are some students just don't care, but, yeah, most of them – if they've done the work, they want to know if they've got it right, otherwise they're not learning anything, I think. They have to have the results.'

According to the Pre-Foundational "B" teacher, serious students always want their errors to be corrected, and it is important to explain to them what you are doing and why:

'If they're a serious student and they want to improve, they will always want their errors correcting. I think what's important is the teacher tells the student what the teacher's doing.'

The Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher noted that students will be encouraged if they are given feedback:

'Q: Do you think the students always want a model – an answer model – and they want also someone to correct their errors, give them the feedback?

A: They definitely want the feedback. If you don't give them the feedback, that would be very discouraging for them, and next time they won't do anything, because, if they know there won't be any feedback, it doesn't really matter what they do.'

The Pre-Intermediate teacher suggested that students can correct their errors in writing by doing peer marking:

'Q: Do you think the students want an answer model and someone to correct their errors each time?

A: Not each time. For writing, what I do also, I let them – I do a lot of peer marking.'

The same Pre-Intermediate teacher believed that the teacher should explain to students the reasons for the correct answer. The teacher added:

'Just to explain the – if you give them – you don't just say this is wrong and that's right. If you tell them why, then they learn something. If you don't tell them why or if they – I always try to get them to figure out why. If they learn why themselves, they are going to remember, but if I tell them all the time, then they have to go and study to remember.'

An Elementary Consolidation teacher remarked that correcting students' errors depends on their feeling towards correction. Some emotional students prefer peer reviews. The teacher explained this point of view:

'Q: Maybe it depends on the skill. If it is writing you have to correct or is it all the same?

A: Well, for example, in grammar – when teaching language components like grammar and vocabulary and all this, it should be corrected, but not the way – it also

depends on who you are correcting. If you are aware of students' feelings, for example, this is an emotional student, if you know that it would hurt this particular student – it doesn't matter for me if it's writing or listening or grammar or any skill, because he will learn it anyway. For example, in peer reviews – when they do the group activities – this student may learn the thing from the other students. This discouragement shouldn't come from the teacher, I believe, for these types of students – emotional students. With others, for example – a teacher should also be aware of students' feelings at this point. Who to correct, who not to correct – you should be more careful with some students and with others you can be okay. You need to establish the balance.'

The same Elementary Consolidation teacher observed that correcting students' errors depends on the activity. Students should not always be corrected, so that they do not feel so demotivated that their participation lessens. The teacher added:

'Q: Do you think, the students, they want someone to correct their errors all the time and they want an answer model to guide them?

A: I'm very careful of correcting students' mistakes. For example, in controlled practice activities. I have practice activities and controlled practice activities. In controlled practice activities, I always correct my students' errors, but, in practice, I don't correct. It's the same when I introduce a new topic to my students. I'm again careful. I check their knowledge of this new topic in the beginning, so, when I check their background knowledge of the topic, which I'm introducing now, for example, I check their background knowledge – in that case, I don't correct students' errors because I believe that correcting students' errors doesn't actually help very much. The teacher should not always correct students' errors because at some point they get fed up with that and then they become closed. I mean, their participation becomes less.'

Another teacher of special needs students, talking about her previous experience with Omani students, in general, suggested that giving them extensive feedback was better than correcting their errors:

'Q: Do you think our students want someone to provide them with an answer model always and to correct their errors?

A: I don't think they always want an answer. I'm not sure how much they like error correction. I don't like error correction. I don't like it when someone corrects my work, but I understand that it's a good thing. So, I always mark their paragraphs. I always take their paragraphs in. I always mark them with a red or a green pen – whatever – and I give them extensive feedback on everything that they did wrong. So, I don't make them rewrite the paragraph, but so that they can see what their mistakes were. So, I do that.'

Another Pre-Foundation "B" teacher, who previously taught in a school, remarked that fluency was more important than accuracy and correcting mistakes in speaking. The teacher said during an interview:

‘Correctness, accuracy, is not very important, even when you speak with native speakers. He can get what you want as long as you are fluent as you can express your ideas. Even in words here or there, even if you make mistakes, even if you don’t conjugate in the right tense, even if you forget to add the S to the third person singular, even if you add S when you are not supposed to – it’s okay as long as you – but only in this stage because I want them to get over that – because this is like – I don’t know.’

All the interviewees explained that correcting students’ errors depended on many factors such as teachers’ and students’ views of this approach, the skills that should be corrected and the activity. For example, students’ opinions are formed by their experience of school, where they were used to everything being checked and corrected by the teacher. However, at the same time, they do not like to see many mistakes corrected.

Teachers believe that, depending on the activity, certain skills need correcting, except for speaking. Additionally, there is agreement that students learn more from each other. Some teachers also argued that students can be sensitive about correcting their mistakes, so this should be taken into account.

5.2.3 Providing an Answer Model

Teachers were also asked in the questionnaire about providing an answer model. An Elementary teacher commented that students always want a model. In the interview the teacher was asked this question:

‘Q: Do you think they want an answer model?’

A: Oh, yes. They are dying for that. They always want a model.’

Another Elementary teacher stated that feedback may not be important in communicative activities, but in centred skills activities such as reading, listening or writing, so that students can improve. The teacher explained the reasons for giving feedback:

‘Q: So you think the feedback is an important thing for the students and for you as a teacher also?’

A: Yeah. Totally. I mean, in very open activities like discussions or communicative activities, then it’s not so important, but that’s actually quite a small part of what we do in foundation. Mainly it’s centred around the skills reading listening, writing, so there’s much less of that, and for all the skills – listening, reading, writing and grammar as well – the feedback is very important because they are not going to get better if they don’t know what they are doing wrong.’

An Elementary Consolidation teacher recommended that students should be given an answer model such as a model paragraph. The reason for this was explained:

‘Q: Do you think the students want an answer model for them. For example, if you give them writing, they want to see a model paragraph first.

A: Yeah. I think it is easy for students. They want to see the model and I also prefer that. For example, when I teach what paragraph is, I write the whole sample essay on the board and I show my students this is a concluding paragraph, this is a topic sentence, these are the details, these are the examples, this is the way how we explain the examples if you want to give an example. You write the word “for example” or “for instance”. I give in an example so that they have something in their mind to compare – that they can refer to when they themselves start writing. They can go back to my sample essay on the board, and it can help them, I think. I prefer that.’

According to the Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher, students on every level need a model:

‘A: I think for every level. You need a model. If I tell you, okay, you’re going to write a report, then I must show you what I mean by report.’

The Pre-Foundation “B” teacher maintained that students need an answer model and examples because instructions alone are not enough:

‘I feel that, yes, they like to see examples. Because the instruction is already in the book. There is no point to repeat the same thing. You have to do something more. Okay? Even I try to illustrate it – not just this is the example, look at the example – I do it on the board. I explain it, and then students know what to do. Because the worst thing that may ever happen to a student is when a student doesn’t know what to do in class.’

On the other hand, a special needs teacher who previously taught general classes argued that students generally do not need an answer model. The teacher explained this during the interview:

‘Q: Do you think they want an answer model, like, paragraph? They want to see a paragraph first, or?’

A: I don’t necessarily think so. I think when you first get them – when they are new at the university and they don’t understand what’s going on – it’s good to just give them a model. Sometimes, they will just copy that, but then just give them another one to go and practice the same skills that we’ve just done. I don’t like teaching them a paragraph that they can just give back, because what are they learning then?’

This means that most teachers from different levels believe that students should be given an answer model, so that they can improve by learning from their own mistakes. The teachers also agreed that an answer model can be important for some skills more than

others. For example, giving a sample paragraph in Writing, or an answer model in Reading or Listening, is more important than communicative activities such as Speaking. On the other hand, for some teachers students should not be given an answer model, which they can produce by themselves. For example, students should not be given a paragraph, which they can write by themselves.

5.2.4 Providing In-Class Student Discussions

Providing in-class student discussions was also asked to the teachers in the questionnaire.

A management team member noted that students are used to group work since school:

‘Q: Doctor, what do you think about our students here in terms of their learning teaching. Do you think that they prefer teacher traditional centred role and they don’t like group discussion?’

A: Good question. Actually, in the schools or in the school system, they encourage group work. As far as I know, in the basic education schools they encourage group work, always put the students to sit in groups and, so, when they come here and want the teacher start to establish or to have this or to run this way in the classroom where the students are – they sit together, they discuss, they work in groups or pairs – these students are familiar to this ways of teaching, let’s say. So it’s not new for them. On the contrary, they would like also to have such kind of activities in the classroom where they work in groups.’

The same management team member asserted that teachers can help themselves by asking high-achieving students to help low-achievers. This point of view was explained during the interview:

‘We give sometimes advice that they need maybe – every time they choose group of students who can be monitored and focus on certain group of students, and then the next day or after two days they focus on other groups, just to facilitate and make it easy for the teachers to follow up the written production of the students.’

The management team member also added that teachers should make sure that all students are participating in group work:

‘A: ...Yes. And this is where the teacher’s role come here. For example, rotating the group leaders in this groups or asking each time – avoid that one student is dominating the work of that group and try to engage and participate all the students in discussions or the work of the groups.’

An Elementary teacher observed that when students explain things to their friends, they realise their mistakes. The teacher said during the interview,

‘That’s why I tell my students try to explain that to your friend. When you are explaining something, then you are realising that sorry, I was wrong.’

The same Elementary teacher did not mind if the students use Arabic in group work as long as it is within context:

‘Q: ...So you don’t mind if they use Arabic – some Arabic?’

A: No. As long as it’s within the context. As long as – that’s why they need to use the examples in English, so that I’m sure that they are talking about that.’

This Elementary teacher also believed that students prefer class discussion if they trust the teacher:

‘For the first three weeks, they don’t discuss. They are checking if I’m the one they can trust. I’m the one they can share some parts of their thoughts, but they prefer discussions.’

Another Elementary teacher emphasized the difficulty of managing group discussion since it depends on students’ motivation and preferred learning styles. The teacher said:

‘As a teacher, I find that it’s often difficult to manage some kinds of group discussion work. It really needs a class that want to work that way. In some classes you can say okay, get into groups and talk about this problem, and then five minutes later you ask them what they’ve talked about and they have nothing. They’ve not talked about anything for five minutes or they’ve been talking about what was on TV last night, or something. And then other groups you can tell that to and they’ll just get down to it and have great ideas. I think it’s – that’s not so much motivation, but it’s partly motivation. I think it’s also just individual learning styles – what different people like.’

A Pre-Foundation “B” teacher explained that students’ participation is very important:

‘I like my students to participate for two reasons. One, I believe that if they’re participating, they will take in the knowledge much more quickly, and also that lesson will pass a lot more quickly for them.’

Another Pre-Foundation “B” teacher, who previously taught English in a school, stated that students like classroom discussion and perhaps they learn from each other more than from the teacher:

‘Q: Okay. Do you think the students here, they like the traditional teacher-centred role and they don’t like classroom discussion a lot?’

A: No. They like. The group I’m teaching right now, they like discussion. They discuss a lot.

Q: So they like discussion?

A: Yeah. They like. I encourage them to do that. For example, ask your friend – I engage students with students because I belong to the new teaching school. I don’t

like the old school. I like to be there as a monitor. I like the role of the monitor in class. I cannot accept that I dominate them. This is as if I'm stealing their joy of learning. Their opportunity to learn something because student can learn from student. Maybe student at some point can teach his fellow students better than me.'

For the Pre-Intermediate teacher, comfortable classroom dynamic will encourage the students to speak and they will not feel shy or fearful. The teacher explained this point of view during the interview:

'Q: Do you feel that students are sometimes shy from the other students or fear – when they speak, in speaking.

A: I don't have that problem. I think it depends on the classroom dynamic. If the students feel comfortable in the class, then they're going to speak. Like, I've got twelve students, and luckily it's a small class, they all speak and. ...'

The same Pre-Intermediate teacher commented that students learn more through classroom discussion:

'Q: Do you think the students want teacher-centred role and they don't like classroom discussion?

A: No. I think they love classroom discussion. I think they like that. I think that they learn more in classroom-centred discussion where you're interacting with one another. They learn more like that.'

On the other hand, the Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher remarked that students do not like classroom discussion:

'Q: What about classroom discussion? Do you think the students they like it?

A: No. Here, they hate it.

Q: They don't like it. They just want the teacher.'

An Elementary Consolidation teacher believed that students like classroom discussion more and even if they could not discuss things in English, they like other activities such as games. The teacher explained this point of view:

'Q: Do you think that, the students, they don't like much classroom discussion and they want the traditional role of the teacher – the teacher is explaining...?'

A: Well, I don't think so. I don't think that the traditional role – if I were a student, I wouldn't like that. It must be the same for the students. They are much into classroom discussion and other activities. Well, at this point, I can't say discussion because I don't have students who have an ability to discuss things in English. I can't organise debates or these kinds of things in the classroom, but other activities, like, game-like activities – not exactly game, but activities that students can enjoy and at the same time can learn something. I more into this kind of activities in the classroom, rather than teacher in front of the classroom explaining – the conventional teaching. I mean, traditional teaching.'

A special needs teacher talked about students in general and that group work should stop if the students are out of control and start speaking Arabic:

‘...and I like to do group work. I like to prepare work where I check what they are doing all the time. Once it feels like you’re starting to lose control and they go into Arabic, I stop that.’

All this means that providing in-class student discussions depend on many factors; for example, students’ understanding of classroom discussions and whether they can communicate in English. Some teachers also suggested that it may depend on students’ motivation and preferred learning style. This is because what works in one class may not work in another. It was argued, additionally, that students will discuss if they trust the teacher and feel comfortable inside the classroom. Other teachers agreed that students could still engage in simple classroom discussions, even if their level of English was low, such as games. Classroom discussions should also be managed, so that the students do not start speaking about other topics using their first language.

5.2.5 Independent Learning

Independent learning was the last question asked to the teachers in the questionnaire. An Elementary teacher noted in the interview that students were used to being dependent on their school friends and teachers:

A: Yes, that’s what I think, and then I remind them remember, independent learner, so that’s what I saw when I first got here, completely dependent on their friends and teachers, believing that everything comes from the teacher. So completely, completely dependent.

Q: Maybe this comes from the school.

A: The schools. That’s what I see. That’s why they still believe if I don’t check every single answer they write – I check that, but they won’t see a mark – a tick.’

The same Elementary teacher suggested that independency means finding reasons for the answers and the administration should help students to be independent. The teacher explained this point of view:

‘A...That’s what they think. Yes. Not exploring, not trying to figure out why that answer was that way.

Q: So they misunderstood even what independent...

A: Completely. That’s why I’m telling you the administration should do something about that. It’s not being independent going to Anjis because, see, they are there, but they are waiting for me.’

Another Elementary teacher believed that independency could mean asking a teacher for help, but students rarely read English books or watch English movies. The teacher explained what independency means for students:

‘Q: In which way are they independent or not?’

A: There are some – they do sort of ask for help if they have problems with specific things. I’ve noticed that quite a lot. My students are quite happy to come and ask and say they have a problem with this grammar point or they don’t know why they are getting a low mark in writing for one category. They have been asking about that, which is good, but it’s very, very rare – from where I’ve taught before in China or Thailand, students would read books in English on their own because they wanted to or they’d watch movies in English on their own because they wanted to. I don’t think they do that here very much. Some, but most students don’t. It’s unusual.’

The Pre-Foundation “B” teacher highlighted the connection between independent learning and student personality:

‘Q: Do you find the students here are – they want the teacher to encourage them to be independent and they are enough independent learners.’

A: Some. Some of them. Some of them want to be. Again, it depends on the characteristics of that person and the personality of that person.’

When interviewed, the same Pre-Foundation “B” teacher suggested that doing homework is a type of independent learning:

‘Q: For example, what kind of independent learning do the students show you?’

A: Well, homework.’

She stressed that students can become independent by learning from other advanced students:

‘But for those that don’t, I would hope that during the lessons and not just learning from me but learning from their peers, they will become like that by looking at the more advanced students.’

Another Pre-Foundation “B” student believed that students could become independent gradually by designing tasks and showing them how they can depend on themselves. The teacher was asked about independence:

‘Q: How can we teach them? What are your advices to the student to be independent?’

A: Well, we don’t do any explicit or any direct advice. Again, by designing tasks – tasks are very important – we show them that, okay, at first, you’re doing twenty per cent and I’m doing eighty per cent and, at the end, you’re doing ninety per cent and I’m just there for you, to help.’

According to the same Pre-Foundation “B” teacher, a good teacher can gradually encourage independence in students:

‘Q: Okay. So do you think they depend on you for everything or they can do some things themselves?’

A: A good teacher should bring up independent students. That doesn’t happen in a jiffy – very fast – in a session. It takes time, so bit by bit they learn that they need to be independent. At first, it’s like a little kid – like a toddler – you take their hand, you just show them the way and put them on their way, but bit by bit they know that they should do things by themselves on their own.’

An Elementary teacher noted that teachers’ appreciation can encourage students to become independent:

‘Q: Do you think the students, when they come to the university; they want the teacher to encourage them to be independent? They are trying?’

A: Yes, of course. They want to be encouraged, and, I think, appreciation could do wonders. You can make students to come back in the stream or you could motivate them by appreciation ...’

In the interview, the same Elementary teacher remarked that students want to be independent, but they do not know how:

‘Q: So you think the students want the teacher to encourage them to be independent?’

A: Yes. They want, but even they can’t express this thing. They don’t know what to say. They know what to say, but they don’t know how to say it.’

A management team member believed that students’ independency relates to their level of learning:

‘Q: Okay. Do you think our students here, they want to be independent learners or they want the teacher to encourage them to be independent learners?’

A: Well, I hope, but this is a hope. We hope and we try also to establish this culture for those students to be autonomous and we tried also to advise our teachers to lead these students to that point, but, yes, in the beginning or the lower levels students need more support from the teachers. Maybe at that level students’ needs are more attached to their teacher’s meaning. They need more support from the teachers, more monitoring, more following up with the students – but, by the time they go to the upper levels, they become more independent.’

The same team management member commented that higher-level students are more independent because they are more confident using English to talk to their teachers:

‘Q: So you think the more the students in the higher level – they will be more independent than the students who are in their pre-foundation A or B?’

A: Correct. Correct. Because they will gain confidence as they move on to the upper levels where they can express themselves very well to the teachers, so they can go to this teacher, to that teacher, talk to this person, talk to that person and get help from other person, and, yeah, because of the language they become more.’

For the Pre-Intermediate teacher, students’ independency is also relative to their learning level:

‘Q: So do you think the students are independent and want the teachers to encourage them to be independent?’

A: I think if your students are not very weak, then there is a lot of independence. If the students are not weak. If the students are weak then they are dependent, like the class I told you about. There’s no way they’re going to be independent because what they are going to do on their own, they are not going to help themselves. They are dependent because of the little English that they have. So they are dependent. I think, generally, the students are independent.’

The same Pre-Intermediate teacher added that students show independence by doing writing exercises. The teacher gave some examples:

‘Q: For example? What are the evidence that you can see that they are independent?’

A: That they would go home and – I don’t have issues like the late-term project. They would go home and they would do their research. In the past, I had a lot of problems with plagiarism, but there’s not that now. Now they actually do go home and come back with something that they have written themselves.’

In comparison, the Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher argued that students are not used to independent learning:

‘Yes. It’s just they are not used to this model of learning alone. Preparing stuff on their own. They just think if it’s important the teacher should do it with me.’

An Elementary Consolidation teacher emphasised the difficulty of encouraging low-level students to become independent. However, students can be helped through group work and homework. The teacher was asked about this subject:

‘Q: Okay. Do you think the students want the teacher to encourage them to be independent? Are they enough independent.’

A: Well, yeah. Independence is important. I don’t know if my students – if this section I’m teaching now – these students are aware of my eagerness to make them independent, but, yeah, I try to make them independent. At this level it’s a bit harder. Group discussion actually helps them in terms of this. The more group discussion you make – I mean, group work – it helps them, and they discuss questions among themselves and it helps them to become independent – independent learner. For

example, homework. When I assign them homework, some students are – they feel that responsibility and they do the homework. Some students I can see that in the beginning of their class they copy from a friend. Yeah, that means the students have no idea of being independent – independent learner.’

The Pre-Foundation “B” teacher, who previously taught English in schools, stated that students need to be taught how to be independent:

‘Q: So, they need time to be independent? You mean not from the beginning. The teacher should push...

A: Yeah. You have to put them on track first. They are still – I consider them kids. They are kids.’

The special needs teacher observed that students generally like working independently, but they still do not fully understand their objectives. The teacher explained this point of view:

‘Q: Do you think the students here are enough independent and they want the teacher to encourage them to be independent?

A: I think they like working independently. See, they are just becoming grown-ups. They are not grown up yet. So, they don’t have the full mental picture of where they are going and what we are trying to help them with. They need to find that out as they are growing up. Back with us, we didn’t know everything – we just did it because the teacher said so. So, sometimes, you just have to say there is no argument just does what I tell you. Sometimes they can negotiate. They can work independently if they want to.’

This means that independent learning is still a challenging skill for the students to learn. It also depends on many factors such as the educational background of students, and whether they were dependent on their teachers and friends at school. It also depends on teachers’ understanding of independent learning. For example, some teachers consider the students independent if they do homework by themselves or if they find reasons for their answers. Other teachers believed that they themselves can teach students how to become independent gradually, irrespective of low-level group work. It is arguably the case that students want to be independent, but they do not know how.

5.3 Cultural Factors

There were different points of views about cultural factors and whether they affect the learning-teaching process inside the classroom. An Elementary teacher suggested that

students control themselves, and probably for cultural reasons, they do not disagree with the teacher:

‘It’s – they control their emotions too much. They control themselves too much. It probably comes from the culture. I keep telling them it’s okay when you disagree because we always end up “Thank you, Teacher.” They always smile at me and they always say, “Okay, Teacher. Okay, Teacher. Good, Teacher.’

A management member noted that speaking is a difficult skill for students because they do not converse in English outside the classroom. This point of view was explained:

‘Q: I forgot to ask you, doctor, what do you think from your experience here is the most difficult skill that the students usually have a problem with? Is it speaking or writing or reading or listening?

A: Yeah. Uh... Probably speaking skill and then the writing. Why? Because of the nature of EFL context. Our students, they use the language and experience the language extensively only in classrooms. Even outside the circle of the classroom, they will meet their classmates, friends, and they will talk in Arabic, so the environment is not helping. When they go home, they speak Arabic, or they go out in the community, function in the community, they speak Arabic. There is a very limited chance for them to use English outside the classroom time.’

According to the Pre-Intermediate teacher, understanding the culture of the students is very important:

‘Q: So, do you think the culture of the students – it is important to understand the culture of the students?

A: Oh, definitely. I think the culture is the most important thing. There’s a lot of Westerners teaching here. They should be aware that the culture of people here is very different.’

On the other hand, for the Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher, cultural difference between the teacher and the students is not an issue as long as both are open-minded and tolerant. The teacher explained:

‘Q: What do you think also about the cultural mismatch between the teacher and the student. How can we help both the teacher and the students to understand the differences?

A: I don’t think it’s a big issue.

Q: You don’t?

A: I don’t think it’s a big issue as long as the teachers – depending which country they come from – probably an English teacher from Pakistan or from India would have a different perception than myself, a teacher from Europe, and also I have a different perception because I taught in China, so now it’s the second different culture that I’m dealing with. So, I don’t think it’s an issue, the cultural differences, as long

as both sides are, sort of, open-minded and relatively tolerant, I don't think there is a cultural issue here.'

An Elementary teacher also believed that cultural differences between teachers and students are not a major factor and teachers can use students' first language to provide explanation, but not all the time. The teacher added further opinion during the interview:

'Q: So do you think the teacher also should understand the culture of the students? Is it important? Do you find difficulty to understand the culture?

A: Well, culture, I think, doesn't make any big difference. Culture doesn't make any big difference. Yes, it could be a factor but not the major factor, because students are in the class, they are learning, they want to learn English.

Q: Even if the teacher is from, like, Western culture or something?

A: On some issues it could be.

Q: But it is not like...

A: It is not a big, major – it is one of the reason, but not the major reason. It could affect – but this could affect on initial level, like if the students have a very weak base, then it could. But teacher shouldn't use frequently Arabic in their class. Somewhere in the beginning – because these are monolingual classes, if teacher is teaching, like, multiple lingual class like the students from different countries, then they have to use English only. But in monolingual class like ours in Arabic schools, all students are from the Arabic background, so teacher can use first language – their language – for some meaning and to explain some meaning, but not frequent about it. It can help.'

Some teachers agreed that the cultural background of the students could affect them when they do not practise speaking English outside the classroom. Students' culture, furthermore, can affect their interaction inside the classroom when they do not show their real emotions to their teachers. In comparison, some teachers argued that culture is not a major issue as long as there is tolerance and understanding between teachers and students. Overall, culture could be considered a minor factor.

5.4 Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is an important skill for students to learn. Some teachers were asked about this ability. An Elementary teacher suggested that students have critical thinking skills despite their broken language:

'A: They can express them— of course, in their broken language, but I let them use their phones and they are using words, but I'm reading them. They can go so deep that I cannot follow them.

Q: So they have this...

A: ...They have. I don't know why people say they don't have critical thinking skills.'

Another special needs teacher talked about, generally, students' ability to think critically even if they are struggling with the language. The teacher was asked:

'Q: So they can be critical?

A: Oh, yeah. They can.

Q: Even if they are in the lower level?

A: Oh, yes. They struggle sometimes with language, but they know enough easy words to get through it.'

This means that students can be critical despite their low-level English. Critical thinking is important since the students will need it at university and to prepare them for employment after graduation. This also should encourage teachers to engage the students in more critical tasks.

5.5 Other Factors Related to University System

There are other factors related to the system that both teachers and students are following at the university and may affect the learning-teaching process inside the classroom. An Elementary teacher commented that the book is more focused on assessment than authentic materials:

'the book means including more authentic texts. Shorter academic texts, but, no, we are just assessing them.'

The same Elementary teacher observed that students are afraid of assessment and give up easily:

'But, when it comes to their assessment, it's the fear. It's the fear, and they give up easily.'

Another Elementary teacher believed that students' motivation depends on the reason why they came to the university:

'If they come here because the family says they have to come here, then they're not going to be motivated. If they come here because they have a career they want to do – they want to achieve something – then they're normally more motivated.'

The same Elementary teacher felt that seeing the students often makes it difficult to keep the class interesting:

‘I think seeing students too much mean that it’s difficult for me to always make it interesting or vital for the students. You know, I have lots of fun activities, but not that many. They run out after a certain amount of time, whereas, if you see the students less, it’s sort of easier to keep the interest level up.’

A third Elementary teacher mentioned that sometimes the problem could be in the material used in teaching and the testing styles, not the students. The teacher explained this point of view:

‘Omani students have a very unique kind of intelligence, but if we don’t explore them, we don’t guide them proper way — if thirty of the thirty students have failed in the class, then it’s not the problem of the student. The problem could be teaching or in the material or in the testing.’

The Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher suggested that students’ low motivation could be because of their intense timetables:

‘Q: Some teachers also mention in their diaries maybe their students here they get tired very quickly and you find them, like, lazy...

A: Oh, yeah. That is also true that the input is different. I saw my Chinese students twice a week for one-and-a-half-hour sessions each and my Omani students I see every day, twice a day or sometimes even three times a day for one hour and forty minutes, so I also understand that at the end of the day they are a little bit tired of me and English. I know it’s an intense course in English, but that also might be the factor why they are....’

The special needs teacher stated that some students, generally, are transferred to a level which they are not prepared for. The teacher was asked in the interview:

‘Q: Do you think the students are sometimes transferred to a level, but they are not prepared for that level? Do you think there is a big gap between the levels?’

A: Yeah, they are not helping the students when that happens. Really. Because the next level assumes that the students know these skills and have mastered them. If they haven’t, they frustrate themselves, they frustrate their classmates, who have to sit and translate, they frustrate their teachers because they are not where the others are. It’s really difficult.’

Therefore, not only are students or their educational or cultural background to blame for their low level. There are other factors which cannot be changed such as intense timetables, being placed in the wrong level and seeing the teacher often, as much as twice or three times a day, which makes it difficult for both teachers and students to remain interested in the teaching-learning process. The curriculum used in teaching the students and the assessment tool could also have a big influence in learning.

5.6 Other Teachers' Beliefs about Learning-Teaching Methods

There are other teachers' beliefs, which may affect learning-teaching methods inside the classroom. An Elementary teacher believed that students should have Experiential Learning, which is learning through experience:

'Experiential learning. Learning through experience. Let's put everything in front of them; let them experience.'

The same Elementary teacher added in the interview that scaffolding is better than shocking therapy in teaching students:

'We have different approaches. You know, I prefer scaffolding, showing them how much they know and how much – how far they can get – I don't like that kind of shock therapy: see how much you don't know so you work hard because you don't know. For me, that's a kind of reverse psychology. You know?'

The Pre-Foundation "B" teacher commented that students will engage and focus if they have an interesting lesson and explained:

'...the challenge of trying to make what you're teaching them as interesting as possible so that they will engage and they will focus and they will learn from it.'

The same Pre-Foundation "B" teacher also believed that there should be a mixture of methodologies for teaching such as communicative approach by adding:

'I believe in a mixture of methodologies for teaching students and I believe that if you present it properly – like a communicative approach – in my experience, the Omani students will respond to it.'

Another Elementary teacher pointed out that unstructured learning is more difficult for the students than structured learning:

'Q: So you mean it is sometimes positive to have traditional teacher-centred role, for some students?

A: Some students seem to like that? There's a range. It's not just either teacher-centred or student-centred. I think there's a difference between sort of structured learning and unstructured learning. I think the less structured it is, the more difficult that can be. For instance, talking in groups is very unstructured. It's student-centred, but it's unstructured, whereas I'll often have students working on questions together – it's sort of somewhere in between traditional teaching and modern teaching, 'cause they're still working together, but they're working on very fixed questions.'

The same Elementary teacher argued that motivated, hardworking students make teaching easier:

‘But I have really nice students this semester that are very motivated, and that makes all the difference. When they want to work hard, it makes it a lot easier to teach.’

The same Elementary teacher added that “Speaking” and “Writing” are the most difficult skills for the students:

‘ Q: Do they like speaking, for example? Do they speak?’

A: Actually, I think speaking could be the worst skill – the most difficult. Not so much in their ability, but, I think, we don’t do a lot of it. Actually, I think they are good at communicating. When we have things like the presentation, they are not very good at speaking English accurately, ‘cause they don’t get much practice at it, but I don’t know if that’s terribly important. If they can communicate, that’s fine. Next up would be writing. Writing is an issue for a lot of students. Just getting to that stage of having structured writing is very difficult for a lot of students. Grammar, obviously, is difficult, but it just stays difficult forever. There’s always more to learn.’

Another Pre-Foundation “B” teacher commented that students will be engaged if communicative tasks are designed for them with good monitoring:

‘Students learn by doing some communicative tasks, and they need to interact, but it’s still – the problem is that the teacher has to monitor very closely because students – if they feel that there is lack of monitoring, they would keep on Arabic – keep on speaking Arabic. So, if the monitoring is efficient and you designed the communicative tasks to reach your goal, then the students will be engaged.’

The Pre-Foundation “B” teacher believed that students should be relaxed inside the classroom, and that they do not notice that they are learning something:

‘The students in an experienced teacher’s class should not notice that they’re learning something.’

A management team member discussed teaching integrated skills:

‘Here we are teaching integrated skills and we require teachers to teach all the skills in a session, for example. So writing is taught throughout other skills and vice versa...’.

The same management member also believed that speaking is difficult for the students because teachers themselves neglect teaching speaking. This point of view was explained further:

‘Q: So you think speaking is even more difficult than writing for the students?’

A: Yeah, it is even more difficult. We are an academic context and the students, you know, also have to acquire academic writing, for example, which is important when they go to their majors, but also speaking skill is a kind of neglected skill even from teachers, which is assumed that it could be acquired within the, you know, when they teach other skills. We need to focus on the speaking skill more.’

According to the same management member, the learning-teaching gap between teachers and students becomes less over time by saying:

‘So, yes, that mismatch happen usually in the early or the lower levels when the first meeting with the students, probably for a month or two. Then, after that, when they move on to another level or they move on with their own classes, they come to – or this gap become less.’

Another Elementary teacher noted that failure is not only the students’ responsibility, by explaining:

‘In a class of twenty-five, for example, if twenty-three are fail, do you think this is students’ problem. This is common in every part of the world. In class of twenty-five, maybe four or five are weak. Right? Ten or twelve are average, but there are seven or eight – those are brilliant. There you can say, yes, the students there don’t want to learn, but, here, if you see listening skills, all classes fail in listening. Many person fail in reading, so this shows we should think about the other possibilities also.’

According to the same Elementary teacher, students’ gap in learning can be filled in their comfort zone and then they can be guided to the zone of proximal development:

‘Q: So you think we can develop the students even if they are very weak.

A: Even they are weak. We know they are weak because of poor or inadequate teaching practices. There’s some gaps. We need to fill those gaps. When we fill those gaps in their comfort zone, then we can enter into the zone of proximal development and then we can guide them towards our objectives.’

The Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher mentioned that writing is difficult for the students because they are translating from their first language. The teacher was asked in the interview

‘Q: Maybe they are thinking in their first language?

A: Of course, and they are writing or translating from it or they’re using Google translate if they do it at home.’

The same Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher added that Consolidation Level Students have low motivation:

‘They have very low motivation, they don’t want to study; therefore, they fail. They fail so they are forced to take the consolidated course. They don’t want to study. They have low motivation. They fail. This is how I feel it is.’

The Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher further noted that students of other Non-Consolidated Levels are more motivated:

‘Q: Okay. And what about your previous classes? Did you feel also the same about them?’

A: No. Absolutely not. No. Most of them – they were driven, they wanted to study, and most importantly they wanted to pass the level. I got more attention than from those students right here. They know all the quizzes, they know how it works.’

This Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher also believed that higher-level students are more engaged:

‘Q: ...In many cases. So not just only with consolidation?’

A: ...I had one good group. They were super good. They were level 3 and they would tell me. They would cooperate with me. So, it might have something to do also with the level of the students.’

The same Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher believed that English was being taught for the exam, and not for using in real life:

‘Q: What about the quizzes and the tests? Do you think they are far away from what you are teaching?’

A: No. No. Actually, they are very close to what I’m teaching. Sometimes I’m under the impression that I’m teaching my students for the quiz, not to use English in real life or to study in English, because that’s English for academic purposes that we are doing here. Very often I notice that I’m teaching them for the exam, for the quiz.’

Additionally, this Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher explained that students lacked autonomy:

‘That is what they are lacking. The autonomy. They should know those things before they move to university, before they decide to take up the education. They should realise that they will be expected to do a lot of things on their own.’

The Pre-Intermediate teacher remarked that having a weak or strong class does not depend on the level of the students:

‘Q: Do you think that the class being good or weak depends on the level? For example, pre-intermediate – it will be a good class, while...

A: ...No...

Q: ...Pre-foundation will be a weak class?’

The same Pre-Intermediate teacher also believed that Omani students do try, but the problem arises when they are not ready for the level:

‘Q: So it depends on the section.

A: It depends on the section. Omani students generally – you don’t have majors challenges. They will engage anyway. They will try. Even if they can’t, they will still

try. You know? But the difficulty is when they just push through every time and they are not ready for the level that they're in. Then, that's a problem.'

The Pre-Intermediate teacher also commented that very weak students need a teacher who understands their language:

'Q: So do you believe that some very weak students need...

A: Definitely. I think some very weak students definitely need a teacher who understands their language.'

The special needs teacher suggested that, generally, knowing the students' first language can help:

'You as a teacher, because you cannot understand the Arabic, you don't always know exactly what their problems are. So that is a bit difficult to understand.'

The teacher added that students are shy at the beginning of the semester, but they become more confident over time. This point of view was explained during the interview:

'Q: Okay. You also mention that some students are shy. How can, do you think, we overcome this shyness of the students?

A: Once the students have been in the class for two, three, maximum, usually, four weeks, as a class they get as a group, and then they become a family and then it's much better, but in the beginning they are very shy.'

This special needs teacher also emphasised that listening is difficult for the students because they are translating when listening:

'Q: Which skill do you find more difficult for the students? Is it in the listening or the speaking or the reading or the writing?

A: When it comes to marking exams, usually the listening skills are where they have the most trouble. They've told me that because they have to listen, then translate into Arabic what they heard, especially at the lower levels, then try and read and find out where they have to write it in, then translate back into English and then try and write it down. So there's a lot that needs to happen, whereas, when they have the text in front of them, it is easier for them to work with something concrete.'

The Pre-Foundation "B" teacher, who previously taught English in schools, commented that fear prevents students from participating:

'Q: ...She came by herself?

A: Yeah. And I was very glad she did. She started talking to me about her worries. She's worrying about – we didn't do anything, no marking, no exam, no mid-term, no quiz, but she felt apprehended. That apprehension is just – was just crippling her.

Crippling her brain. She said, “I used to be good in English, but I don’t know why I feel this fear. I feel frightened in class. I want to succeed or something.” I told her this is only in your head, in your brain. You can do well. If you give it a try, you will see. Just get out of these dark thoughts. Just forget about them. Stash them behind your back and everything will be okay. It’s okay to feel fear.’

An Elementary Consolidation teacher believed that students are shy and do not want to speak because of lack of self-confidence. The teacher was asked about this subject during the interview:

‘Q: Do you feel that the students are shy or they don’t want to speak?’

A: Yeah. It’s in terms of that. Well, it is mainly because of the self-confidence. They completely believe that they are not able to. They’re not able to speak. So they are not actually fully aware of their potentials. It is because of their lack of confidence.’

For this Elementary Consolidation teacher students find it difficult to engage in communicative language activities because they do not have adequate level of English:

‘That is what actually I try to implement in the classroom. Student-centred approach and communicative language learning, but lack of adequate knowledge of English – adequate level of English proficiency – actually makes it a bit harder for students to get involved in all activities, but in general it’s fine.’

Teachers have many views about learning-teaching methods, which may affect engagement inside the classroom such as experiential learning, scaffolding and moving between structured and unstructured learning depending on the students’ level. Others were of the opinion that teaching integrated skills and designing good communicative tasks and monitoring will motivate students and engage them more inside the classroom. Teachers also stressed that failure may not always be students’ responsibility, since there are other factors beyond the students’ and teachers’ control, which may affect the learning process. Some teachers also noted that having a relaxed atmosphere is important for the students to overcome their difficulties. Additionally, teachers have different opinions about which skill is more difficult for the students and that shyness and lack of self-confidence may affect participation inside the classroom.

5.7 Other Factors Related to the School System

Some factors are related to students’ educational background and school system. An Elementary teacher underlined that students are influenced by school culture, that they

will pass whatever they do and achieve high scores. This teacher explained this point of view in the interview:

‘Q: Why do you think some students are not motivated?’

A: So many reasons why students might not be, and it’s an interesting thing. I think...

Q: Do you think cultural or something?’

A: I think it’s partly cultural. I think it’s often where they’ve come from – the culture they – the schools they’ve been in before here. I think some students come here thinking they can pass whatever they do. It doesn’t matter, they will pass. So they think that they don’t have to try, and then they don’t try. They think it’s boring and they do want to just get higher scores.’

The Pre-Foundation “B” teacher believed the most significant challenge is that students are more listeners inside the classroom:

‘I would say that the most significant challenge that I face in my classes, specifically with Omani students, is that they are more listeners. Their concept of classroom at the university, still, is that you have to sit down, do not speak and the teacher will just explain everything. That’s the big issue I’m facing.’

The same Pre-Foundation “B” teacher suggested that the students are not shy, but they believe that they should be quiet inside the classroom and the teacher should speak:

‘That’s not because they are shy; that’s because they think this is how a classroom should be like. You know? The classroom should be just that the students should be quiet and teacher should speak.’

According to a management team member, the principal mismatch between the students and the teacher is the students’ low level of English because they came directly from schools. This point of view was explained:

‘Q: Okay. Doctor, from your experience here in the foundation institute, what do you find the most mismatch between the teacher and the students here? Is it because the teacher is from another culture or because the students are not used to communicative approach here at the university?’

A: Well, there are many, many factors and the main – from my own point of view, the main factor is the level of English of the students, because sometimes we receive students who are fresh graduates from the school and they come directly to the university level. Unfortunately, those students lack the language knowledge and they have quite – problems with the teachers in communication exactly and most of it because of lack of knowledge.’

The same management member also believed that the biggest gap is between school and university, where, in the former case, students are used to a more relaxed system:

‘Q: Okay. What are the challenges that usually the teachers have when they come to you, from the students here?’

A: The main challenge is that these students are not – they don’t understand the instruction that they give them during class time. Also, those students – some of these are – they need more support because they are not used to the university level system. They are used to the school system where there are more relaxed system, more – their teachers are sometimes originally from Arabic countries, they are a bit lenient with them. Here we have strict rules, policies that they have to acquire – that they have to apply in their life in the university and accommodate themselves to the system here we are using. Maybe this is the gap which we are talking now when those students come from the school system to the university or high education system.’

An Elementary teacher noted different issues: students cannot get out of some of the school learning habits which they have become used to, and it is difficult for university teachers to fill the gap between school and university:

‘Actually, there are some information gaps in their learning. It’s coming from the school.

Q: From the way they complete the school?

A: Yes. Many practices which has become now, like, their routines, so they can’t get out of it. It’s not easy. The school teachers have made the university teachers’ job difficult. The gaps which are produced there – here we’re not filling those gaps and we are trying to achieve our objectives only. That’s why a large number of students – they couldn’t perform well. We don’t see at their level. We want to achieve our objectives only. Anything we design, that is to achieve our objective. That’s why students can’t perform well in level 1, level 2 or level 3.’

The same Elementary teacher believed that students have weak communicative competence because of schools since they are passive learners:

‘What is this gap, for example? Can you give us an example of the practices that they are used to in schools and they are not here in university.

A: Look. Students have speaking and writing incompetence. They don’t have sufficient skills. Their communicative competence is very weak, both in writing and speaking. And speaking and writing both have productive skills. If you don’t link the other skills, listening and reading, with it, they can’t improve their reading, they can’t improve their listening, so we need to integrate all these four skills, but, in my research, what I have observed in schools, there was almost no speaking. There was listening, but usually inside the classroom the teacher used to pay attention on two or three students only. Those who were work well in the reading and the rest of the class was, like, passive learners.’

This Elementary teacher also observed Arabic style English teaching at school and that students are just listeners:

‘Q: So you mean they are not used to native-speaker teachers and also the main focus in the school was not in communicative – you mean in school there was like

memorisation?

A: Yes. In school, the style – what I observed – I’ve observed about forty-five teachers in Omani schools and I attended their classrooms – the whole lesson. What I saw – many teachers were teaching English in Arabic style. They were using Arabic while explaining English. Students were not given more chances to speak and teacher talk time was very high, like ninety-five per cent or ninety per cent, not less than, so those were lectures, not lessons. These students need lessons in which – student-student interaction, teacher-student interaction should be there. It looks like the teacher is only playing the role in the class and students are there to listen only.’

The same Elementary teacher stated that students in schools are given tasks beyond their abilities, which makes them used to passive learning. This point of view was further explained:

‘That is a condition in which a student – meaning like a student who is capable enough to complete any assignment without assistance of any friend or a teacher. You need to explain them what to do and then they could guide themselves – they are self-motivated – and they can work individually on assignments. The topics went beyond the vocabulary range and imagination of the students. So, naturally, they couldn’t perform. They were passive learners. This create a kind of negative learning, like, what they have already learnt, they’ll forget it. Because they don’t understand any sensible use of the language they have learnt. They’ll learn different thing you are making them to listen something different. So that is how. Students like to be a passive learner instead to become an active learner in the class.’

This Elementary teacher also believed that students’ difficulties come from being used to school teachers with local accents. At university, they are taught by native speakers:

‘Q: They are used to this for twelve years and suddenly when they come to the university – so do you mean this is why most students say, “We feel shy and fear when we come to university. We don’t want to participate.”?’
A: Yes. It could be one of the reasons, but, you see, for twelve years they were listening a local teacher. English in the local accent. Now, all of a sudden, if you expose them to a native speaker who is fluent in this language and they use lots of idioms and collocations in their language – anything – students will understand it. First time they become open to some original or genuine pronunciation, so that’s how they get confused.’

The same Elementary teacher also noted that there is a big gap between grades 4 and 5 in schools, which makes it difficult for the students to understand the material used at university level. The teacher explained this point:

‘Q: So you think the big gap is from grade 4, where it’s cycle 1, to cycle 2 grade 5.
A: This gap created at that time. The books we were using last year here, these books – seventy per cent of the material was same which is in Omani schools in grade 7, 8 and 9. This is written on the same pattern or the same material. How could you

improve the level of the student by just improving the level of material. Students are not – both are not suitable for each other. This material is not bad, but you can't use it for these students. It could be used for any other area, but not for these students.'

The same Elementary teacher also believed that school teachers are under pressure to finish the curriculum, so they cannot always be blamed for students' weak level:

'In Omani schools, teachers have to finish one unit, for example, in two weeks. That unit have five sub-units, and those five sub-units have some more points to teach. A teacher has to finish to finish that unit in the required time. She or he has to run with the syllabus. That's why they don't bother – students understand or no. The supervisor is going to ask them did you complete or not.'

This Elementary teacher also emphasised that students are used to traditional teacher-centred role, their errors being corrected and receiving an answer model at school. This teacher was thus questioned during the interview:

'Q: Do you think our students want the traditional centred teacher role and they don't like classroom discussion, they also want someone to correct their errors and answer model?

A: Actually, I have to go back again in the schools. The practices in which, the students, they have passed their twelve years, so they're badly registered with this kind of attitudes, practices and responses.'

The special needs teacher stated that students, in general, are used to different teaching approaches in schools:

'but, I think, when they first come here and they didn't have any experience with any teachers other than Omani teachers in the school teaching English, initially, I think, the different ways in which we teach – different methodologies we may use – they find that strange – the approach that we have to teaching.'

For the same special needs teacher, students are not used to teachers with different accents and who speak quickly, and because they are young they feel shy or embarrassed to ask questions:

'and then also the accents. We speak fast. We have different accents and I think it is hard for them, especially when they are low-level students. They don't always understand everything. And then they are in the age – they are not older, they are not experienced, so they don't want to ask questions which would be embarrassing to them. They will ask questions so that we can have a bit of a laugh or something like that, but, serious work-related questions, they are often shy to ask.'

This special needs teacher also commented that, generally, students at school are used to sitting quietly:

‘at that stage, the students were more expected to sit down and be quiet. Not to be as engaged in classes as we expect of them.’

The Pre-Foundation “B” teacher, who previously taught in schools, noted that Arabic is used in English lessons in schools because it is written in teachers’ books:

‘it is written in the teachers’ book – they tell you in the teachers’ book if the students didn’t get it in English, switch to Arabic – make them understand in Arabic – and this is what I did because many students not get the directions when I – and they have to understand the directions to be able to complete the task.’

The same Pre-Foundation “B” teacher argued that Arabic should not be used to teach English in schools, since the classroom is the only place where the students experience the language:

‘and it was like a crazy period because I refused to speak Arabic in class. I told them this is very – you don’t have any other opportunity to speak or to experience the English language except in this classroom. If I, in this hour – one hour a day – if I switch and talk with you and I speak with you in Arabic, how could you improve your English?’

5.8 Teacher Characteristics

Management believe that specific teacher characteristics should be considered when recruiting. A management team member emphasised that teachers should be native speakers:

‘We try to bring teachers from all over the world and mostly we attract native speakers, but we also have some other nationalities – non-native speakers. This is according, of course, to their background knowledge, educational background, their accent and some other simple issues.’

The same management team member also noted that the basic requirement when recruiting teachers is an Education Qualification:

‘Q: Okay. So, for example, if a teacher is not in the field of education but they only have a certificate, TESOL or – do you consider this enough?’

A: No. No. Actually, the basic requirement is to have – the teacher has to have a background or qualifications in education. Yes. Education field.’

The same management team member also believed that information about the students should be sent to the teachers before recruiting them:

‘Q: And maybe they got also an idea about the students and what they expect?’

A: Thank you for asking this question. Yes, it is an important question. That’s what we send the teachers before the interview. When we schedule the interview through the communication with the emails we send all the information about the university, about the foundation institute, some policies, some information about our students, all of these, we send them to the teachers before we schedule the interview so they can read the details and the information and, if they agree to all the – what we require from them, then, yes, they will reply to us with their agreement to schedule an interview.’

This management team member also recommended that students should acquire the language from native speakers:

‘Q: Is this also the policy that you always want a native speaker of the language teaching?’

A: No. Actually, we need native language teachers because we want these students to acquire the language to acquire the language from its origin. We think, or we believe, that the native speakers are the best source for this, but, of course, we require other, qualifications, as I talked to you in the beginning of this conversation.’

This means that Educational Qualification is the most important factor when recruiting the teachers. Information is also sent to the teachers about what type of students they may expect in the classroom. This also means that the teachers should be qualified enough to

deal with any issues or difficulties that they may face with the students during the learning-teaching process. For example, a teacher who is a native English speaker should make sure that he or she is understood by the students, since they are not used to native speakers in schools.

5.9 Teachers' Diaries

Teachers were given three diaries for six weeks – a diary every two weeks. There was an open question at the end of each diary, and teachers were required to write the difficulties that they faced inside the classroom.

The first diary was at the beginning of the semester. Teachers mentioned that they were under pressure to finish all the materials before the exam. The technology was also not set up in the classroom in the correct way and the students did not have access to the audio files. In addition, slow learners need repetition. Some have negative attitudes towards learning and lack motivation, which can discourage teachers. It is also difficult to make students concentrate in late afternoon classes. However, some teachers were positive about their students in the first diary and described them as hardworking and serious in class.

In addition, one teacher pointed out that when students became more relaxed in the classroom, they talked loudly, which made instruction more difficult. Other teachers mentioned that it was difficult to do speaking activities because students are shy. It was also mentioned that students often controlled their emotions, and thus teachers questioned whether their engagement with them was really natural. Other teachers affirmed that TOEFL is demotivating students since it required unrealistic standards. Students have personal, family problems, which affect their engagement with teachers.

However, one teacher confirmed good relations inside the classroom, but mentioned, with a smile, the inability to speak Arabic. Other teachers mentioned that students were tired, sleepy and spoke Arabic inside the classroom. One teacher affirmed that there was no problem engaging with students on a personal level, such as having casual conversations, however, it was frustrating to engage with the students on an educational level because they were passive and unconcerned. Other teachers pointed out

that students' motivation was negatively influenced by the high outcomes they were expected to produce.

The second diary was given to the teachers after the mid-term exam. One teacher mentioned that students who did not perform well had not used the resources available to them. For example, they did not go to the teacher during the office hours, which meant they fell behind the class and distracted other students. This affected the teacher's mood and led to frustration. Other teachers mentioned that students understood their kindness as weakness, so they left their books at home, copied the homework from each other and came to class late. One teacher added that since the semester was near to an end, it was difficult to keep the students for the duration of the class.

One teacher pointed out that when the students became comfortable with each other and with the teacher, they started to lose focus and the teacher struggled to get them to pay attention during the lesson. Another teacher added that students were too talkative when they were in groups and they did not work on activities. The teacher also mentioned that students lacked motivation in the last classes and did not want to cooperate. One teacher also commented that students placed in the wrong level created difficulties for teachers and other students inside the classroom.

It was also noted that students were too dependent on the teacher, who at times pretended not to care, so to encourage in them a sense of independence. This teacher was also concerned that the students would become disappointed by their level of engagement towards the end of the semester. Another teacher mentioned that most of the students in the class got low marks in the mid-term exam, which made it difficult to motivate them and it affected the teacher as well. In addition, students felt homesick towards the weekend because they were very close to their families. Another reason for students' lack of enthusiasm was because of the tight timetables. Students were also tired because there was a large amount of work that should be covered in a short time.

The third diary was given to the teachers during the last two weeks of the semester. One teacher mentioned that students became tired during this period and their memory was less. Students knew that the semester was ending and the work was done, so it was

difficult to keep them interested in the lesson. Another three teachers observed that students were impatient. They were also tired and unwilling to do anything even play games.

Moreover, students became more relaxed as the semester preceded, which, as a result, created a good rapport between teachers and students. At the same time, students became less focused and less interested in class work. One teacher pointed out that getting ready for the final exam added more pressure for both teachers and students, and there was no time to listen to them. The teacher was slightly harder on the students and pushed them. It was also noted that there should be a bridge between Foundation and TOEFL material and that speaking skill should be tested, so that all the skills are more integrated.

5.10 Students' Learning-Teaching Beliefs

The students' interviews show many themes related to learning-teaching beliefs. The codes and themes were translated by the researcher from Arabic into English, since the students' interviews were conducted in Arabic. Some of these themes are related to the Questionnaire of the Quantitative data, which asks about the following learning-teaching beliefs.

5.10.1 Traditional Teacher-Centred Role.

Some students believe that teachers should have more than one way of teaching, so that they will not feel bored. One Elementary Level student interviewee said,

‘The way teachers explain things is too boring...it never changes, even when we sometimes tell him to change how he teaches...for example, using games or such like...It is good to change the way teaching is carried out.’

This shows that some students prefer to see different teaching styles inside the classroom, such as using games.

Other Elementary Level students commented that they should be taught integrated skills by practising reading, speaking, writing and listening in the same lesson. The following conversation took place between the researcher and an elementary level student interviewee.

‘Me: So you don’t want...you mean the skills...you don’t want to spend the whole day reading...for example, reading with listening, writing and grammar?’

SS: Yes.’

A third Elementary Level student also emphasised that there should be a reaction within the classroom and the lessons should not consist of the teachers teaching in the traditional way. The interviewee made the point by saying,

‘No...we should react, so that we can understand what he is explaining because, if there is no reaction, we would not be able to understand. If we react and participate, then we can remember.’

This means that some students believe that they should participate inside the classroom, so that they can remember what the teacher is saying.

Students who failed the Elementary Consolidation level and are repeating this level also prefer classroom discussions rather than the teachers adopting their traditional role in teaching. This means that students have the same beliefs even if they are repeating the level again. The following translated conversation was with an Elementary Consolidation Level student.

‘Me: Do you want the teacher to be more traditional in explaining things? So that he is the centre of learning? You are just listeners? Without any discussions, without anything.’

SS: No, I prefer discussions.’

Another Elementary Consolidation level student also stated that classroom discussion is better than teaching the traditional way and commented,

‘No, no, it is better to have discussions between the teacher and the students. It is different when the teacher explains and does everything. It is better when the students hold discussions and participate.’

A pre-Intermediate Level student, which is the highest level for students in English, also believe that the teacher should not follow the traditional role in teaching English and that students can learn from each other through group discussions. In addition, students in the classroom could also be responsible for explaining various points beside the teacher. One pre-intermediate student added,

‘No...I do not like the teacher to explain all the time, we need time...give us time to answer and discuss things.’

Me: So, you like classroom discussions.

SS: Yes, it is for our benefit; the students' benefit and we learn from each other.'

5.10.2 Correcting Errors

Elementary level students also believe in correcting errors. When one student was asked why they wanted the teacher to correct every error they made they said,

'So that I can learn from my own mistakes. Know the benefit and write each mistake and each correction, so that I can know what my mistake was and how I should say something correctly.'

Elementary Consolidation Level students also believe that teachers should use a number of corrections. This could be because these students failed the level earlier and they believe that being corrected may help them to pass the level.

One Elementary Consolidation level student thought that corrections would help them to learn from their own mistakes. This student was asked the following question during an interview.

'Me: What is the benefit of corrections for you? Do you consider them important?

SS: Yes, correcting is important because, if I do not know the correct version, the teacher will correct me and repeat it again.'

A Pre-Foundation "A" student, who is in the lowest level for English, also confirmed that correcting errors is essential so that they can learn from their own mistakes. I asked the student,

'Do you want the teacher to correct your errors in speaking, reading and writing?

SS: Of course, so that we can learn from our mistakes and we can answer correctly next time.'

Pre-Intermediate students, who are the highest level for English, also believe that correcting errors helps a great deal in learning English. One student commented,

'I want the teacher to correct my errors in everything because I want to learn the English language. I really want to learn the language.

Me: So you think correcting errors helps you in...?

SS: Yes, it helps a lot.'

Another Pre-Intermediate student also believed that the teacher should correct their errors every time and for every skill. I asked this student,

‘So you want the teacher to correct your errors?’

SS: Yes, every time.

Me: Even in speaking and writing and everything?

SS: “Yes, I hope so.’

5.10.3 Providing an Answer Model

Elementary students believe that they want an answer model in a very simple way. One student said in the following conversation when I asked the student,

‘So you want the model answer, but in very simple way?’

SS: Yes.

Me: Not very complicated?

SS: I mean...not a model answer...we want the answer to be simpler...very simple.’

One Elementary Consolidation student thought that there should be a model for long answers, but not the short ones. I asked the student the following question:

‘An answer model...is it important for you? For writing or reading?’

SS: Oh...sometimes...not always.

Me: When is it more important for you?

SS: If it is a long answer, we need a model, but if it is a short answer, we can do it by ourselves.’

Another Elementary Consolidation student believed that an answer model is important for exam purposes and that there is no need for a model for writing skills. I asked the student the following question:

‘Do you want a model paragraph to follow or not?’

SS: If you have a model, you can revise for the exam. If there is something wrong, you will revise the model and correct your mistakes.

Me: You said there is no need for a writing model. Why?

SS: Because I like writing. I do not think there is any need for a model.’

One Pre-Foundation “A” student believed that an answer model makes it easier to learn the language and answer the questions in exams. When asked the following question about an answer model,

‘Do you want an answer model? In writing or reading or...?’,

SS: An answer model makes it easier to learn the language and we can answer the exam questions easily.’

On the other hand, one Pre-Intermediate student, who is in the highest level for English, believed that there should not be an answer model and students should learn things by themselves. I asked during the interview,

‘You don’t think that there should be a model? You think the students should learn by themselves?’

SS: Yes, even near from the correct answer.’

Another Pre-Intermediate student also believed that there should not be an answer model. When I asked,

‘An idea about the answer, so you don’t want an answer model?’

SS: Yes.’

A third Pre-Intermediate student also believed that there should not be an answer model for writing.

‘Me: So you don’t like to follow a specific model?’

SS: Yes, I don’t like to. I mean, I prefer to follow my own method. I understand that the teacher wants us to follow a certain order, but there are many details to write. I mean in writing.’

5.10.4 Providing In-class Student Discussions

One Elementary Consolidation student, who failed the level, liked in-class student discussions. When the student was asked in the interview

‘So you like student discussions

SS: Yes.’

One Pre-Foundation student believed that classroom discussions are useful, when one student speaks and the others listen. During the interview I asked the student

‘Do you encourage classroom discussions inside the classroom? Or do you prefer the teacher to speak most of the time?’

SS: I like classroom discussions when one speaks and the others listen. I do not like it when all the students speak together at the same time.’

A Pre-Intermediate student thought that classroom discussions are a way to learn from their friends. When asked

‘So you prefer classroom discussions?’

SS: Discussions with other students. For example, asking my friend, not always the teacher.’

On the other hand, the same Pre-Intermediate student thought that some classroom discussions may interfere with the learning atmosphere. When the student asked about discussions with students during the interview said,

‘I answered ‘I strongly disagree’.

Me: Why don’t you agree?

SS: Because if the students start a discussion, it is difficult for the teacher to return to an atmosphere of learning. For example, I may be talking to my friend about the football match, and so I will be thinking about the match more than the lesson.’

Another Pre-Intermediate student believed that classroom discussions are more interesting when they are about realistic topics.

‘Me: You like classroom discussions?

SS: Yes, discussions between groups and games. SS: Yes, and what I like the most is that the teacher discusses topics that are not related to the book, and so we look in depth at topics to do with our own lives. Realistic topics, so we understand the teacher and he understands us.’

5.10.5 Independent Learning

One Elementary student believed that Independent Learning is about asking for help from other students and searching on the net for the information.

‘Me: So independent learning for you is like also asking other students, like the older students, to help you?

SS: Yes.

Me: And sometimes you search on the net, on Google or somewhere else?

SS: Google.’

One Elementary Consolidation student also believed that Independent Learning is about searching for the information by themselves. When asked

‘Independent learning? Do you encourage it? What does independent learning mean for you?

SS: Independent learning is where the student is given information by the teacher and they carry out a search about it and summarise the information.”

Me: “Ok.”

SS: “Or the student is given homework not related to the book topic and the student carries out a search about it.’

Another elementary consolidation level student believed that Independent Learning is going to university learning centres on your own and watching YouTube English lessons.

The student explained what they do to practise independent learning during the interview, saying,

“Ah! independent learning means go to “Anjis” without the teacher telling you to do so, and learning by yourself; you can even learn from your phone...so you do it by yourself.”

Me: “What are the things that you use when you learn? You said sometimes you go to Anjis.”

SS: “Ah...sometimes you learn from the phone.”

Me: “You mean YouTube? What do you use?”

SS: “Yes, YouTube channels that teach you English and help you to improve the language; watch them.”

One Pre-Foundation “A” student thought that Independent Learning takes place more at university.

Me: “So, you didn’t find it difficult, learning English? Did you find it different in the university?”

SS: “It was different...in that you look for the information by yourself.”

Me: “So, you prefer this?”

SS: “Yes.”

Me: “Independent learning?”

The same student also explained something about independent learning.

Me: “What does independent learning mean for you?”

SS: “Independent learning means that the teacher gives us the main points and I look for them. I search to look for the information by myself.”

Another Pre-Foundation “A” student believed that Independent Learning is watching English videos and translating the script. When I said in the interview

“Yes, by independent learning I mean the student learns the language by himself or helps himself. How can the student help himself?”

SS: “They help themselves by searching for and reading English stories. ..or watching TV on ‘MBC2’ or ‘MBC Actin’, which have English films. ..or searching on YouTube for English videos...or writing the script when they speak and translate it into Arabic.”

On the other hand, one Pre-Intermediate student, who is in the highest level for English, believed that Independent Learning may confuse the students and cause them to feel lost.

The student explained the reasons for his belief by saying

“Honestly, I do not encourage independent learning.”

Me: “Why? Why don’t you?”

SS: “Because the student will be confused. For example, another teacher will have a different opinion. This is why schools forbid private lessons, because the student will be confused by many topics! This is a different explanation and that is another one and this

has different method! So, the student will become confused! The same applies to independent learning from the internet; for example, one teacher may be from Egypt and the other from the US, and so different methods are used and the student will feel lost.”

Another Pre-Intermediate student believed that independent learning is trying to understand things by themselves.

Me: “Independent learning. What does independent learning mean for you?”

SS: “Independent learning is what I do...I try to understand and do the things by myself, without the teacher’s help. I do not depend on the teacher for everything. I learn by myself. I come to learn and try.”

Another Pre-Intermediate student believed that students become independent by practising all the skills by themselves.

Me: “How can I encourage students to practise independent learning?”

SS: “They should practise everything by themselves, in writing and in listening by using the CDs attached in the books.”

5.10.6 Learning-Teaching Beliefs Related to Schools

5.10.6.1 Students’ beliefs about themselves

Some students believe that their answers must be correct according to the school system.

One Elementary student said, “I am afraid that my answer could be wrong.”

The same Elementary student also believed that their speaking ability is not good enough and commented, “Maybe because I cannot speak English very well, because I am still a foundation student.”

Another Elementary student also believes that their answer must be correct. The student explained the reasons why they are not participating in the classroom.

Me: “When you try to participate with the teacher, what are the challenges? Why do you not participate? What are the things that prevent you from participating?”

SS: Sometimes fear...fear that the answer could be wrong. Ahhh...being hesitant, for example, hesitating between two answers...I am hesitant although sometimes one answer could be correct but I am hesitant about participating.”

One Elementary Consolidation student also believed that their answers must be correct and that other students feel shy about giving the wrong answer.

A Pre-Foundation “A” student also believed that they should form correct sentences when they speak. The student explained the reasons for the difficulty they have speaking, saying,

“Ahhh...I find it difficult to speak English sometimes.”

Me: “You mean speaking?”

SS: “And pronouncing some difficult letters. To form a correct sentence.... I mean I cannot form the sentence correctly. I do not know how to form it at that moment.”

One Pre-Intermediate student believed that they must have enough vocabulary and form correct sentences when they speak to the teacher. The student described how they feel when they speak to the teacher, saying

“I feel nervous when I want to speak to the teacher. I do not have enough vocabulary to form continuous sentences. I mean, I have to wait a little bit to be able to form sentences and then continue.”

5.10.6.2 Using students’ first language in learning English

One Elementary student explained that they are used to being taught English in the Arabic language. The student said,

“Here, we use English; I mean the teacher speaks English, not Arabic. There, at school, the teacher speaks Arabic and English at the same time”.

Another Elementary student also believed that they should use translated vocabulary when writing. The student explained how they overcome their difficulty with writing by using their first language, saying

“I do not have much vocabulary.... I have a very limited amount. This is why, when I want to do some writing, sometimes I know the word in Arabic, but I do not know how to translate it into English.”

The same Elementary student also believed that some things should be explained in Arabic.

Me: “So, you like someone to explain things to you in Arabic?”

SS: “Yes, a little in Arabic sometimes.”

This Elementary student also believed that translation is useful for learning the language.

Me: “Useful? In which part of the language is translation useful?”

SS: “Mostly in vocabulary because we are searching for words.”

One Elementary Consolidation student was used to using Arabic to learn grammar and vocabulary. The student said when asked about studying vocabulary, “I know some vocabulary and I use the translator.”

5.10. 6.3 Using memorisation when learning English

One Elementary student believed that students should memorise vocabulary to learn to speak.

Me: “Do you feel that you do not have enough vocabulary? This is why speaking...?”

SS: “Yes, we do not memorise enough things...vocabulary.”

The same Elementary student believed that they should use memorisation to learn grammar. The student gave advice to other students learning English.

Me: “What do you advise them when they are learning English, so that they will approach it with confidence?”

SS: “First, they should memorise the words in the past and present and know that....”

One Elementary Consolidation student also believed in memorising vocabulary. The student was asked about writing.

Me: “When you write, do you have enough vocabulary?”

SS: “Yes, because I memorise words.”

Me: “So, you can memorise vocabulary?”

SS: “Yes.”

A Pre-Foundation “B” student also believed that memorising vocabulary is important for speaking. The student talked about their participation in the classroom.

Me: “What are the things that stop you from....or mean you can’t participate in the classroom or engage with the teacher?”

SS: “The first problem I face is I do not have very much English vocabulary. When I want to ask the teacher a particular question, I can’t ask him because I remember so few words.”

5.10. 6.4 Having a different system at university to that at school

One Elementary student believed that the university system can encourage them better to learn the English language. The student said, “The normal form of communication here at the university is English, so we must know...we have to learn English.”

The same Elementary student also believed that Basic Education students at school are more fluent in English, since they have learned English from Grade One.

Me: “Do you think that, if you were a basic education graduate, you would be more fluent in the English language?”

SS: “Yes...because I feel the general system...I mean the basic system...I mean, I did not learn English in grades One, Two or Three, but the basic students learn English from Grade One...and Grade One is an early stage when you have more ability to memorise and understand.... I feel it is different...so we started from Grade Four. And they started from Grade One.”

The same Elementary student also believed that the basic education system at schools is more effective than the general system. “Some students from the basic system can speak more...I think the teaching system in basic education is stricter than in the general system.”

Another Elementary student reported that they were used to being dependent on the teacher in the school, saying “Yes, the student takes on the responsibility maybe...in school...we are just doing 10%...90% is on the teacher...the teacher is telling us everything even...giving us enough practice before the exam.... But when we come to the university...we search for the information by ourselves.”

The same Elementary student thought that students are still dependent on others in the university. “I have to look for someone to explain things to me and we should have the same free time.”

They also thought that other students hold certain beliefs related to learning in schools, such as feeling that these English classes are not important in schools.

“Students should not miss classes, especially in the English language. A high percentage of students are missing English classes”.

Me: “You mean in the schools?”

SS: “Yes, in the schools.”

In addition, they thought that this learning belief transfers to university, when students think that the foundation year at the university is not important. The student was asked about other students.

Me: "So you think that...they think that it is like they are on holiday because this is just the foundation year, and is not important?"

SS: "Yes."

One Elementary Consolidation student also thought that students are still dependent on others, even during group work. When asked during the interview "So, you think that the students really can depend on one student", student replied, "Yes a lot."

The same Elementary Consolidation student also believed that English is explained in more detail at university than at school. The student explained the difference, saying, "The way we learned English in school was general, but here at the university grammar is explained in detail...the rules of grammar are explained more. Now I can understand grammar more than when I was at school."

Another Elementary Consolidation student also thought that some students are still dependent on others.

Me: "Do you think students work cooperatively in group work or do you think they are dependent on one student and the other group members are not doing anything?"

SS: "No....Some groups work cooperatively, but some other groups are dependent on one student."

A Pre-Foundation "A" student reported that students at schools were used to being dependent and receive explanations about the language in Arabic. The student described the school experience as follows: "I am not saying that schools are wrong...but you find everything ready....So the English will be....I find it here and the teacher in school did not speak English all the time...but spoke Arabic."

Another pre-foundation "A" student believed that there is more concentration and time involved in learning English at university than at school.

Me: "What is the difference?"

SS: "Here.... I mean...for example...we do not concentrate too much on the paragraphs....

Based on...but here we concentrate...even the teacher asked us if we understand or not....

If we don't understand, he will repeat what he said."

One Pre-Foundation "B" student believed that they are learning easier vocabulary at university than at school. The student said, "There were more new words in Grade 12. These words have difficult meanings, which I could not understand, but here the words are easy and I can understand them."

A Pre-Intermediate student reported that students in schools were used to explanations in Arabic about the English language. The student explained the difference between the school and the university, saying

“The difference is that there the teacher explained things in Arabic.”
Me: “In Arabic in schools?”

SS: “Yes, explains the grammar in Arabic. But here they do not; the teacher explains in English and you try to encourage yourself to understand the English because the teacher explains things in English and you do not understand everything.”

The same Pre-Intermediate student also thought that there should be separate books for each language skill. The student said, “I think there should be separate book for speaking and writing; so each skill should have its own book.”

The same Pre-Intermediate student also thought that students with different abilities should work in groups. Me: “So, you think that, in one group, there should be students with different abilities?” SS: “Yes, different abilities, so that students benefit from each other.”

Another Pre-Intermediate student believed that many learning systems at university are different from at school, such as lectures and independent learning.

Me: “When you came last year, what is it when you were learning the English language that you never became used to? Or were you shocked here at the university? Anything in learning or teaching English?”

SS: “Being independent.”

Me: “So, being independent?”

SS: “Many things fall on the student, not the teacher. Maybe just 5% falls on the teacher and the rest on the student. . . . There is the hour system, which stipulates that I should be there from the beginning of the lecture because, if I weren't, I would miss a great deal. The writing and exam systems are different from school. The teacher speaks English continuously and I can't stop him so that I can understand what he is saying.”

The same Pre-Intermediate student also thought that each skill should be taught individually. Me: “So, you want each skill to be taught individually?” SS: “Yes.”

5.10.6.5 Students' beliefs about the characteristics of the teachers who teach them the English language

One Elementary student believed that they would learn more English if the teacher only spoke English. The student commented during the interview, “If he was English, we

would have to learn English...even...if we searched...we asked what this word is. So that we can say it to the teacher, so we can know the word and learn it at the same time.”

One Elementary Consolidation student also believed that they can learn the English language better from a native speaker of the language. Me: “So, you prefer a native speaker of the language?” SS: “Yes.” Me: “Ok.” SS: “So we can learn from the teacher the words that we do not understand.”

Another Elementary Consolidation student believed that the teacher should know some Arabic if the students do not understand English.

Me: “Now you are taught by native speakers do you think...? Do you like a teacher who can only speak English? Do you prefer a teacher who can speak Arabic or do you prefer one who can speak English?”

SS: “No. I think I prefer a teacher who can speak Arabic and English, so that, if I do not understand English, he would speak Arabic.”

One pre-foundation “A” student believed that you can learn English more from a teacher who only speaks English. The student said during the interview, “But the teacher who cannot speak Arabic...forces you to learn English.” Me: “So, you think it is better to have a teacher from another culture or an expatriate?” SS: “Yes, it is better.”

Another Pre-Foundation “A” student also believed that they can learn the English language better from a native speaker of the language. Me: “So, his first language is English?” SS: “Yes, so that I can acquire the language. And...when the teachers are natives we can understand the language better because we are learning the language from them...we can see how the letters are pronounced and how the words are used.”

A student from the Pre-Foundation “B” class believed that a teacher who can only speak English will make them work harder to find the meanings of the words. Me: “Ok, so you like the idea that...that the teacher does not know Arabic, so that you will try your best? You want to work hard to find the meaning?” SS: “Of course. This is something good and it will help us.”

One Pre-Intermediate student also believed that a native speaker knows how to teach them the English language better. He wrote, “But when the teacher is a native speaker he

can speak the language better than us. He knows what is easy and how to teach us gradually.”

Another Pre-Intermediate student also believed that they would learn the English language better from a native speaker. The student said during the interview, “I prefer a native speaker because he will always speak to me in English, so I can speak to him directly. In the end I will become used to speaking the English language.”

Another Pre-Intermediate student also believed that a teacher should only speak English inside the classroom. Me: “So, you don’t want an Arabic teacher and, if you do want an Arabic teacher, you don’t want that teacher to speak in Arabic at all?” SS: “Yes”

5.11 Learning-teaching Beliefs Related to the Students’ Open Questions

The students were asked in the questionnaires distributed to them about the learning-teaching beliefs that affect their engagement inside the classroom. The questionnaire was distributed to the students in their first language, Arabic, and the students answered the questions using their first language, so that they could express themselves easily. The researcher translated the students’ answers into English. These answers are classified according to the students’ level, from the lowest to the highest level:

Pre-foundation “A” students

Pre-foundation “A” students are the students with the lowest level of English. The first pre-foundation “A” student believed misunderstanding occurs, as they wrote in the questionnaire, “Most of the time it is because of misunderstanding.”

A second Pre-Foundation “A” student wrote in the questionnaire, “It is difficult knowing how to form a correct sentence to be able to participate. It is a problem speaking the English language. It is difficult to be familiar with certain vocabulary in English to form a correct sentence to participate and explain things. Sometimes I find it difficult to understand what the teacher is saying, and so I find it difficult to understand and engage in the classroom. I am not sure of the correct answer because sometimes I misunderstand things, and my answers are wrong. I feel embarrassed in front of the teacher when the answer is wrong because the teacher is an expatriate, and so he has more experience and

skills and he can speak English fluently.” This Pre-Foundation “A” student believed that students should form correct sentences when speaking; they do not understand what the teacher is saying and their answers should be correct, and they should speak fluently like the teacher.

A third Pre-Foundation “A” student believed that the teacher’s pronunciation is not clear and wrote, “Some of the teacher’s pronunciation is not clear for me.” A fourth Pre-Foundation “A” student believed that the teacher’s explanation is often not correct and wrote, “He does not explain things in the correct way during the lecture.”

A fifth Pre-Foundation “A” student believed that they do not practise the language very much and they have no interest in English. They wrote, “I have a problem with the fact my learning of the English language is slow; I do not practise the English language and I do not have enough interest in English as a subject.” A sixth Pre-Foundation “A” student believed that they do not have enough vocabulary to be able to speak and wrote, “I am unable to speak the English language because I do not have enough English vocabulary.” A seventh Pre-Foundation “A” student believed that student discussions may be disruptive, saying, “The students are disruptive in the class. The students interrupt me while I am participating. The teacher is interrupted while he is speaking because of the students.”

An eighth Pre-Foundation “A” student believed that the teacher’s questions are not clear. They wrote, “The questions are unclear and the teachers’ way of teaching is difficult for us.” A ninth Pre-Foundation “A” student believed that they cannot express themselves to their teachers; they do not understand the teacher’s pronunciation and their answers should be correct. They wrote, “I have difficulty speaking the English language and I find it hard to express what I mean to the teacher. Sometimes I do not understand the words that the teacher is saying. I worry sometimes in case the answer could be wrong.”

A tenth Pre-Foundation “A” student believed that classroom discussions are a waste of time, especially if the students do not understand the topic. They wrote, “I do not like the time that is wasted in discussions in the lectures, which go on for a long time. Sometimes I feel shy about discussing things with the teacher. When I do not know the topic or

understand it, I feel that I do not have the ability to talk about it.” An eleventh Pre-Foundation “A” student believed that the teacher should show enthusiasm in their teaching. They commented, “I feel bored during the lecture and sometimes I feel sleepy because the teacher is explaining things in a dreary way and just keeps repeating what he is saying. It is like a routine that does not change and I feel bored. There is no enthusiasm in the classroom. We rarely have discussions. I have a problem with that.” A twelfth Pre-Foundation “A” student believed that there should be both English and Arabic explanations of the language. They stated, “I do not want to talk too much. I just prefer to explain things continuously using both the Arabic and English languages (Arabic explanations).”

This entire mean that Pre-Foundation “A” students do not understand what the teacher is saying. This could be because they are still not used to native speakers of the language or it could be because their level of English is too low since these are the students with the lowest level of English. Their low level of English could also be the reason that they want explanations in Arabic and do not like classroom discussions very much. These students need more interesting activities, so that they will not feel bored and can continue participation during the English lessons.

Pre-foundation “B” students

Pre-Foundation “B” students are the students with second lowest level of English. The level of their English is higher than that of the Pre-Foundation “A” students. The first Pre-Foundation “B” student believed that the teacher does not understand the students. They wrote, “Usually, it is difficult for the teacher to understand the students.” A second Pre-Foundation “B” student believed that they cannot understand the teacher and commented, “Sometimes I do not understand the teacher. I love the English language, but I can’t understand it.” A third Pre-Foundation “B” student believed that they cannot understand the teacher or talk to him. They reported, “I cannot understand what the teacher is saying. I find it difficult to talk to the teacher.” A fourth Pre-Foundation “B” student believed that they have difficulty using the correct words in discussions and wrote, “I have difficulty with the English language sometimes. Using some words for discussion.”

A fifth Pre-Foundation “B” student believed that it is difficult to understand the teacher because his pronunciation is different from theirs. In the questionnaire they wrote, “I cannot understand the teacher when he speaks because his pronunciation is different from ours.” A sixth Pre-Foundation “B” student believed that they are used to Arab teachers. “Because I am not good at English, I do not understand what the teacher is saying because he is not an Arab.” A seventh Pre-Foundation “B” student felt that the teacher does not understand what they are saying; they feel there should be an answer model, for correcting their errors, and all students should be given the chance to participate. They stated, “It is difficult for the teacher to understand what we are saying and difficult to explain things. He does not give us a model so that we can understand the rules of grammar. There is no revision in which to correct our errors. He does not listen to what the student is saying and discriminates between the students in the lecture. He just chooses the high achieving students and rarely the medium achieving students.”

An eighth Pre-Foundation “B” student believed that classroom discussions can disrupt the class and the teacher should ask easy questions. They felt, “There are a number of discussions when we participate. The teacher asks difficult questions.” A ninth Pre-Foundation “B” student believed that classroom discussions may disrupt the class and it is difficult to understand the teacher. They felt, “It is difficult to understand the teacher. Students disrupt him when he is answering. The students are not calm in the classroom.” A tenth Pre-Foundation “B” student believed that they should express their personal opinions while participating and the teacher should understand this. They wrote, “I don’t have the chance to express my personal opinion. The teacher does not understand me and is not engaged.”

This means that, although Pre-Foundation “B” students are higher level students, they still do not understand what the teacher is saying. They also still have difficulty choosing the correct vocabulary for discussions. They do not understand the teacher’s pronunciation, since they are used to Arab teachers in schools. However, these pre-foundation “B” students would like to participate and express their opinions, have an answer model and have their errors corrected. Pre-foundation “B” students agree with the pre-foundation “A” students that classroom discussions can disturb the classroom.

Elementary students

The Elementary level is the middle level of English and is higher than the Pre-Foundation level. The first Elementary student believed that the teacher should correct their errors and wrote, “The teacher is not giving me the chance to participate. He does not try to correct my errors when I try at home (like writing or reading the story). He thinks that I am better than the others, and so he does not give me many chances to ask questions.”

A second Elementary student believed that teachers and students should speak the same language. They commented, “I cannot communicate with the teacher because of the language difference between the students and the teacher.” A third Elementary student believed that the teacher’s personality is important for learning and wrote, “The teacher’s personality”. An Elementary Consolidation student, who was repeating the same level again, believed that the classroom should not be too quiet, so that they would have the confidence to participate. They wrote, “A large number of students want to participate. The classroom is too quiet, so I do not want to speak, and bother the class and the students. There are a large number of male students. The teacher does not look at me when I raise my hand.”

This means that Elementary level students, although they are at the middle level, still want their errors to be corrected. These students can evaluate their teachers more, since they highlight the teacher’s personality. These Elementary students are the opposite to the Pre-Foundation students since Elementary students do not like the classrooms to be too quiet and want to participate. This means that the level of the students can affect the classroom atmosphere.

Pre-intermediate students

Pre-Intermediate students are students with the highest level of English. The first Pre-Intermediate student believed that the students should accept each other’s ideas, writing “Sometimes the students have different points of views and my idea is not accepted.” A second Pre-Intermediate student believed that having enough vocabulary, the teacher’s personality and the chosen topic for discussion are important for learning by writing.

They replied, “The vocabulary that I have. The teacher’s personality. How exciting is the topic for the classroom?”

A third Pre-Intermediate student believed that there should be an answer model; they wrote, “Usually the teacher does not have an answer model that I can use. The students should have the same chance. Some students are not there for learning.” A fourth Pre-Intermediate student believed that they are exposed to new ways of learning and teaching. They wrote, “Facing some linguistic mistakes. Different way of learning and teaching”. Another Pre-Intermediate consolidation student, who was repeating the same level, believed that the teacher does not understand them and that they should only participate if they are sure that their answer is correct. They wrote, “Usually the teacher’s pronunciation is not clear or he does not understand me. I do not participate because I am afraid that my answer will be wrong.”

This means that Pre-Intermediate students, who are at the highest level for learning the English language, can evaluate their learning process more than students at other levels. For example, they realise the importance of accepting each other’s ideas. These students can also see the importance of the teacher’s personality and they also can differentiate between different topics for discussions. These Pre-Intermediate students also reach a higher level of critical thinking by understanding that they are exposed to new ways of learning and teaching. However, they still do not understand the teacher’s pronunciation and still believe that their answers should be correct, as with students at other levels.

5- How do teachers and students define teacher engagement and the teacher–student relationship from their points of view?

5.12 Teacher Engagement

5.12.1 Emotional Engagement

Teachers were asked during the interview about how they understand Emotional Engagement in the questionnaire given to them, and how their emotions towards teaching affect their engagement inside the classroom. An Elementary teacher believes that the happiest time is in the middle of the semester, because the teacher and students are creating something out of nothing, explaining during the interview:

“Q: Do you think your emotions are changing over time? Maybe at the end of the semester you are more happy because you said that you can see...

A: The happiest I am is somewhere in the middle of semester.

Q: In the middle.

A: Somewhere in the middle of the semester is when I am the happiest. And that’s when I actually find the work a bit – not that fun as I start it. Sometimes it is, like, fun because we are creating something out of nothing, but sometimes it’s quite hard work to create something out of nothing, but if you like what you do most of the time it is fun. It takes me, for example, fifteen minutes to create all the material I need. Not to find that on the internet and print that out – just to develop my ideas of how something should be presented, to write a short paragraph or instructions for writing or whatever. So, it is fun because we are creating something.”

The same Elementary teacher stated that teachers should control their emotions inside the classroom, saying:

“Q: But in the personality, can I make a change?

A: It’s controlling. It’s controlling yourself. If you do not know how to control yourself outside of the classroom, then how can you control yourself – oh, there are moments when I’m – when I get mad – we have done this. I have told you. I have explained hundreds of times, but that’s when I tell myself to keep calm. Keep calm. They are here to study. There are kids, they don’t understand, keep calm, and then I say okay, let’s go again.”

A Pre-Foundation “B” teacher believes that a teacher’s heart should be in teaching, otherwise it will be a difficult job and the students will not be interested. This point of view was explained during the interview:

“Q: So you think also this relationship affects your emotions toward teaching – you like teaching more, you feel more excited about teaching?”

A: I think that teaching as a job – as a career – if it doesn’t make you feel excited, then you shouldn’t be teaching. It’s a job where if your heart’s not in it, it’s going to be the most difficult, challenging job in the world. Your heart’s got to be in it, otherwise it’s impossible to teach properly – I feel. I know for a fact I couldn’t go in a classroom and teach if my heart wasn’t in it. I just couldn’t do it. It’d be a long time and – I’m quite an expressive person – my students would know straight away if I am not interested. So, but, when I go in a classroom, even if I’m not feeling like it before I go in that room, if I’m not in the right frame of mind, I would hold that every time I go in that room suddenly I can switch into teaching mode and I get into, with interest, what I’m teaching – because if I’m not interested in it, the students are not going to be, whereas, if I am interested in it, you will at least get the students’ attention because they will see that you’re interested in what you are doing. There is more of a chance that they will be interested as well.”

The same Pre-Foundation “B” teacher commented that once you are engaged in teaching, you will put anything else in the back of your mind, and that it is good to show some of your emotions to the students:

“Q: So you are, maybe, engaged in teaching and you forget anything else.

A: Not forget, but I can put to the back of my mind, whereas, maybe, if I wasn’t teaching, if I’m just out with my friends socialising – I probably can’t control it if I got a problem outside that group and that will come into my mind, but, when I’m teaching, for some reason, it stays out because I’m focused on what I’m doing with those people at that time. That’s just me personally. I don’t know about other people. I’m not a very good actor and I’ve got a sort of characteristic face so that people know my feelings. But I think it’s not always a bad thing that you show your feelings. Students need to see that you’re not a robot, you’re a person. So, sometimes, you know, it’s – maybe it’s something that’s happening in the classroom – yeah, I will show my emotions sometimes. It’s just a natural thing, but it’s not really a bad thing all the time.”

Another Elementary teacher believes that teachers' Emotional Engagement and desire towards teaching are affected by students' attitudes inside the classroom, explaining:

“Q: Okay. When, for example, if you didn't have that good students, do you think this affects your emotional engagement towards teaching, that you don't find teaching fun anymore and you don't feel excited about teaching?”

A: Oh, totally. Totally. I've had classes where I can tell that the students don't care, they don't want to be here, they want to finish as soon as possible, and, if I tell them things, they're not really listening, they're playing with their phones – that makes me not very motivated for the class because I know whatever I do for them they don't really care, so I don't feel the same motivation or the same desire to do well by them or to spend time on making good exercises for them.”

The same Elementary teacher believes that students' motivation can affect Teachers' Engagement inside the classroom more than the students' level, saying:

“Q: So you think also the students' level can affect teachers' motivation and engagement?”

A: Level not so much. More the students' motivation. If you have students of a very low level that really want to learn, then that's fine. I think that can be very motivating for the teacher as well. The problem is students that aren't motivated. If they don't want to learn, whatever level they're at – even if they're really, really good – if they're not interested in learning more, then that's demotivating for the teacher. That makes it feel frustrating.”

The same Elementary teacher commented that the teacher can feel bad if the louder students in the class are not motivated, saying:

“Q: Okay. Do you think if you have a class of some students who are not motivated, it can affect the students who are motivated or can affect the teacher – even if they are just a small group?”

A: Totally. I mean that's – it depends on the individuals. It's the louder students. If the louder students are motivated and the quiet students aren't motivated, it doesn't really affect the class too much. There might be some students who don't get involved, but most of the class sort of stays involved. If you have loud students that aren't motivated, then it can be problem because they can disrupt it for the rest of the class and make the teacher feel bad.”

Another Pre-Foundation “B” teacher believes that experience gives the teacher more patience and understanding of teaching, explaining:

“Q: Even, for example, if you’re trying your best but the students don’t want to participate, they are still very passive – does this also make you, like, I don’t like teaching anymore?”

A: No, no. Come on.

Q: Does this affect your...

A: ...No, I’m too old to say this ((laughs)).

Q: Do you mean the experience gives you...

A: Of course.

Q: Even if it is not with these students?

A: Experience gives you more patience, more understanding, more perseverance in your teaching career – maybe once, years ago when I just started teaching I said, okay, I’m not going to teach again, I don’t like it, but now no, of course. I love teaching.”

Another Elementary teacher states that teachers lose creative thinking when they are over-burdened, and they will not have time to practice with their students,:

“Q: Okay. Does this whole situation influence your emotion towards teaching so that you feel you don’t like teaching? You don’t find teaching fun and these things?”

A: Yes. When the teacher is over-burdened – of course, anybody. When he or she is over-burdened, his natural potentialities, they go down. And creative thinking – he loses creative thinking when a tired or preoccupied mind or tired mind can’t think in a creative way.

People lose their creativity when they’re over-burdened. Give them time to digest and give them time to practise with the students.”

A Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher believes that their excitement towards teaching does not affect the students if they don’t care, saying

“Q: So do you think their negative emotions are transferring to you? That you are excited...”

A: ...I try to avoid that sort of transfer, but I also know that, excited or not, most of my students, at least in this group, they won’t care. Excited or not. They won’t care.”

The same Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher believes that they should hide negative emotions from their students, adding:

“Q: In the classroom.

A: Yes. Not to show anger. Even if there are reasons for anger, I think it’s very important that you hide your negative emotions from your students.”

The Pre-Foundation “B” teacher also believes that teachers should hide their negative emotions from their students, explaining during the interview about her previous experience with school students:

“the one who wants to show off and they disrupt the class. I am not hiding that they piss me off, but I cannot let anything show. It means that I have to be cool and smiling, although I’m boiling inside ((laughs)).

Q: You mean the teacher has to mask their emotions?

A: ...((laughs)). But I don’t let my emotions show, especially the hate part. I don’t hate them, but I hate the behaviour and the naughtiness.”

The same Pre-Foundation “B” teacher believes that students’ misbehaviour can influence teachers’ emotions towards teaching, and make teachers hate teaching, explaining:

“Q: How can the teacher – does this sometimes influence your emotion towards teaching, that you don’t love teaching or that you don’t find teaching fun anymore because of some behaviour – some misbehaviour of some students?

A: I didn’t experience this in Oman, during this term, but going back to my teaching years, yes. There were days where I felt I was pissed off. I hated teaching. I hated the class. They are so unruly, especially boys. So unruly, so – not stupid – but so lazy. They didn’t want to make the tiniest effort – even the homework, and they can do it – even in front of the classroom. Even five minutes is enough, but they don’t. It was as if they were challenging me. And I hated that. Sometimes I’d just take days off. Just to relax. Just to reload.

Q: To back up yourself.

A: Yeah.”

An Elementary Consolidation teacher believes that students' exam results may affect teachers' emotions, and make teachers feel worried more than the students themselves, saying:

“Whenever the exams approach I'm more worried than students. I worry about the students because I know that they will fail. I know they will get low marks and I know it's going to be a very hard week for them to get used to the other week – to forget the exam results and to prepare them for a week without an exam. It's really devastating for students – the exam results. Whenever the exam approaches, I feel more worried about their marks because of the way they are assessed.”

This means that the qualitative data also shows that teachers' emotions change over time, since some teachers feel happiest in the middle of the semester. A number of teachers also think that teachers should hide their negative emotions inside the classroom, so that they will not affect the learning–teaching process. However, one teacher thinks that the teacher should show some emotions sometimes, so that the students will know that the teacher is a normal human being. It is also important that you love what you are doing, otherwise teaching will be a long, difficult job. The teacher should also put their problems in the back of their mind once they are in the mood for teaching, since students will know if the teacher is interested in teaching or not. Teachers' emotions in general are affected by students' attitudes inside the classroom.

5.12.2 Social Engagement with Students

Teachers' Engagement also includes how the teacher is socially engaged and aware of students' feelings. An Elementary teacher believes that the teacher can feel students' emotions when they have fear because they do not understand, saying:

“Q: So you can feel it when they don't understand?”

A: That's the only way I can feel their emotions, because there is some kind of fear. I don't understand. They don't think, “But she's here. It's her fault. She needs to deliver the message” ((laughs)) – no. But they see that some of them understand and they don't, so they probably think “If they understand, I need to understand as well.” Probably the way of living in big families...”

This Elementary teacher also can feel the calmness in students' faces after group discussion, adding:

“Q: ...because you don't understand also the girls' language.

A: Yes. Yeah. But I see their faces, the calmness which comes after that. It's like watching a movie. She is so engaged there, you know, using her hands, pointing, and then – and then she turns around, looks at me and the calmness on her face – like, now I'm ready. That's what I never mind, even if they write, draw, whatever, but that's what I want to see – the calmness on their face because I don't like the fear I can see when they don't understand.”

This Elementary teacher also feels pity for the students when they are worried or afraid, but does not show them this feeling, to keep authority in the classroom, adding:

“Q: Do you think the students' emotion can transfer to you? If they fear, you're also, like – or if they're worried, you're also worried why they are worried, or...”

A: No. It's not – they are worried, they are afraid, but it's not that I feel the same way. It's just at that point I pity them, but I'm not showing them because I need to keep my authority, you know? I pretend that there is nothing. Yes. I don't tell them that, yes, I can read how much you understand.”

The same Elementary teacher believes that if they show their real emotions to the students, they will lose control of the classroom, saying:

“Q: So you mask your emotions?”

A: Of course. That’s why I have “Majlis”. That’s my weapon. Because if I show them how compassionate I am, then I’m losing control, and I need to be in control all the time. Sometimes I would sit and cry with them, but no. I stay calm and strict.”

The same Elementary teacher confirms that teacher personality is important for teachers’ Social Engagement with the students, adding:

“Q: So do you think the personality of the teacher can affect the teacher inside the classroom? The real personality?”

A: Yes, completely. Completely.

Q: Because, some teachers, they said that...

A: ...If you are grumpy at home, you are grumpy with your colleagues. How can I expect you not to be grumpy with your students? Because...

Q: ...So you are expecting the same? A: The same.”

This Elementary teacher also believes that caring about the students comes from being social with them, explaining:

“Q: So you mean being social outside is, like, affecting, like, being social also with the students inside?”

A: Of course. Of course. Otherwise if you’re not social enough, you don’t care.

Q: So this ‘careness’ comes from being social?”

A: Of course. You need to care about other people. First it comes from your family. You need to care about your own family. You are taught to care, so that’s how we can build people. You are taught by your parents. You see how your parents care about you, and then you care about your parents and your siblings and then you care about other people. You are taught to care about other people. If you are not taught to care about other people, then...”

A Pre-Foundation “B” teacher believes that the teacher should be aware of the students’ feelings to be engaged with them, saying:

“Q: So do you think this relationship affects the teacher’s engagement inside the classroom and can make it easier?”

A: Yes. Obviously, it’s a lot easier if as a teacher you feel that the students trust you and they’re responding to you and they’re working with you. It makes the teacher’s job a lot easier. As a teacher, you should be perceptive to the group of students as a whole – how they’re feeling. I feel I can. I know if students are comfortable and I know when they’re not comfortable. Even if there’s one in a group of twenty-three. If there’s one that doesn’t look right – maybe on a grammar point or something you’re teaching them – as a teacher, I would hope I can see that and I could basically pick up on that point. As a group – you have got to be aware of the students as a group, but also individually as well.”

The same Pre-Foundation “B” teacher believes that the teacher should be aware of the students’ feelings by understanding their facial expressions, so that it will be easier to develop the students, adding:

“Q: So you think also the teacher should be aware of students’ feelings?”

A: Oh, it’s essential. I believe it’s essential. If you’re not aware of your students’ feelings, then you’ve not got much hope of developing that student if you don’t understand their feelings. Any normal teacher, not just by body language but by facial expressions, should know what that student is feeling. Yeah.”

Another Pre-Foundation “B” teacher believes that students’ emotions do not affect the teacher’s emotions, but the teacher cares about students’ emotions and problems, saying:

“Q: Do you think, for example, if the students have negative emotions in their face – does this affect you also in a negative way?”

A: Well, it used to. Not now. Not anymore. When I had just started teaching it did affect me. It’s still – I care about it. I care a lot. What’s wrong? What’s her problem? What’s his problem? Is it something because of me or is it a personal problem? – Whatever. I try to understand the student. I try, while they’re doing activities – I try to approach the student and have a very short chat with him or her so I understand what’s going on, but of course it affects teachers. It doesn’t affect me now, but I care about it.”

The same Pre-Foundation “B” teacher believes that students sometimes test if the teacher cares about them or not, adding:

“Q: So this also affects you?

A: Of course it does. And the students – you know, the students are very clever. All of them. No matter how naive you think they are, and they sometimes might be, they’re very clever, and they understand you. They test you and they evaluate you the very first time you put your step in the classroom. You know? And there are two or three sessions. You may not know the students because there are many of them, but they have just one teacher. There is just one person who is all they need to care about. So they know their teachers – what their teacher likes, what he dislikes – you know? They know everything about their teacher, so they know that you’re a caring one, actually.”

The same Pre-Foundation “B” teacher believes that it is difficult to be engaged with the students at the beginning of the semester even if the teacher understands the students’ culture, because he or she needs to know the personal attitudes and personal traits of each student in the class. Towards the middle of the semester, the teacher believes that they know the students better, explaining:

“Q: Do you find your engagement with the students – at the beginning of the course was more difficult and in the middle it is, like, easier?

A: Of course. As a person from a different country, as a foreigner, expat – whatever you may call it – it is difficult, although I knew the culture, although I knew the students’ personal traits, whatever, blah, blah, blah – still, I think that it takes time for you to know the students. It has nothing to do with culture for me, because I know the culture. It has to do with their personal attitudes, personal traits. So, you have to know your students one by one. Now we are midway through, we just passed the mid-term, and now I feel that 100 per cent I know the students. So, no. At first it seems difficult.”

A Management member believes that the more experienced the teacher, the more he or she will engage with the students, explaining:

“Q: So do you mean, here, the more the teacher is experienced, the more the teacher will be more engaged with the students?

A: Correct. Yes. Because they will know the students well over the time they spend here, they know the culture, they know what can be discussed with the students, how they would deal with the student problems – either behaviour problems or pronunciation problems or,

you know, general language problems. So they become better...

Q: ...with them.

A: Yeah.”

A Special Needs teacher talking about the students in general believes that Teacher Engagement at the beginning of the semester might be more difficult because the teacher doesn't know many things about the level of the students, saying:

“Q: Do you think teacher engagement at the beginning of the semester is not that much and then it becomes more by the end?

A: I think everyone is maybe a little bit uneasy initially. You don't know what exactly the levels of your students are. You haven't assessed them yet. You haven't had that interaction so that you know exactly how much they know. Do they understand you? Are they more critical or are they okay with being there? You just don't know. There's just so many things – as a foreigner – that you are not aware of, that it can be difficult.”

The same Special Needs teacher believes that the teacher shows that they care about the students by listening to them, adding:

“I think they just want to see that you really care and that you're also listening to them as much as you want them to listen to you.”

An Elementary Consolidation teacher believes that the teacher feels empathetic towards low-achieving students, but this empathy motivates the teacher to search for new approaches in teaching, explaining:

“Q: Do you think this experience is influencing your emotions toward teaching, that you feel you don't like teaching?

A: I feel really sorry. For example, the other day, when I showed my students their mid-term results, mid-term marks, I was nearly crying to see a student who was feeling miserable, who was really unhappy to see how low his mark was, and the problem was he couldn't even explain to me his unhappiness, his emotions. He couldn't express his emotions that this is not the way it should be – that he is unhappy.

Q: You could see it in his face.

A: Yeah, I could see. He was mentioning Arabic words, something in Arabic, and he was trying to express his...

Q: A male student?

A: Yeah, a male student – it was. I think it's his third semester and he has to pass and there's also a TOEFL test there waiting for them. I really feel sorry for these students and I don't think – it doesn't change my attitude on teaching – about these issues. On the contrary, it actually motivates me because this is what it is. This is what teaching is. Of course, good students are always good. It's easy to teach them – the important part is dealing with these low-achieving students, and I feel motivated, but I try to – theoretically, I try to find information on how to deal with, how to put up with these students, in terms of approaches and methods. I always try to find information on the internet to apply in the classroom – which approach would fit with my students – but, theoretically, things are different than when it comes to practice. Things are completely different for the students.

Q: So you feel, maybe, empathetic with the students.

A: Yeah. I feel empathetic. Empathy. I try to do that because I can understand them. They never see English at home. They are exposed to the English language only in the classroom – I think. Not..."

This Elementary Consolidation teacher also believes that being aware of their students' negative feelings can upset teachers and make them feel sorry, adding:

“Q: Do you find it difficult to be aware of your students' feelings, problems?

A: It's not difficult for me. I can – as I said, I was nearly crying to see a student – it makes me upset. Even at home, for example, it comes to my mind. For the whole semester I've been discussing – at home, when I go home, with my wife – how my students are, how I feel sorry about them – yeah, all this – it affects me.”

The same Elementary Consolidation teacher also believes that sharing students' feelings with their teachers will create trust, but at the same time the teacher should be strong and encourage the students, saying:

“Q: Do you find like your emotions, you were very motivated before the mid-term exam and the marks and now you find yourself, like...

A: It is a bit hard, but, if it is hard for me, it is going to be two times harder for my students. So I try to be strong and to encourage my students again.

Q: So, you don't show them this?

A: I don't show it. Oh, of course, no. To some extent it is good if they see that you feel sorry and you are sharing their feelings. It's good that they start believing you. They gain trust. They will start relying on you in terms of trust. It's good, but it's bad if you – it discourages them if you show all the time – it discourages them more – and they start to think that things are impossible, so they shouldn't believe that things are impossible. They should always believe that nothing is impossible.”

This means that Social Engagement with the students is a very important component of Teacher Engagement. The teacher is socially engaged with the students when the teacher cares about students' feelings, especially negative ones that are related to exam results and interaction inside the classroom such as fear and sadness. Caring about students' feelings will create trust between teachers and students. At the same time, a teacher's authority should be kept inside the classroom, so that the students will feel strongly against their negative emotions and will be motivated. Teachers should also be aware that students sometimes test if the teacher cares about them or not. This is why it is important to understand students' personal attitudes, so that the teacher can socialise with them easily. Teacher's empathy towards the students can also motivate teachers to search for new methodologies for teaching.

5.13 Teacher-Student Relationship

5.13.1 Helpful/ Friendly (QTI)

Teacher-Student Relationship is also an important element in classroom interaction. An Elementary teacher believes that the relationship between teachers and students should be relaxed and balanced, saying:

“Q: So, how do you think the relationship between the teacher and the student should be like inside the classroom?”

A: Relaxed. And there should be balance. That’s what I usually tell my students. You may not ask for me to give you more than I can get from you nor may I ask from you more than I can give. So there should be a balance – a harmony between giving and taking. That’s my idea of harmony in life, not only in the classroom. If I ask more of them than I can give, there is no harmony; that harmony is being destroyed.”

The same Elementary teacher believes that a friendly teacher should be social outside the classroom, adding:

“Q: So do you think, like, a non-friendly person can be friendly with the students inside the classroom? Can I teach the teacher?”

A: Well, it depends – these are – being friendly or unfriendly, it mostly comes from if you are ‘excentric’ or ‘incentric’, so if you don’t want people around then should not be in the classroom because classrooms are full of people. If you don’t want to hang out with other colleagues, that does not mean that you don’t want to be surrounded by people. It’s different cultures, different perspectives, stay somewhere – stay aside. Just because you don’t have the mutual language – in that case – that doesn’t mean that you are not social enough. You are just picky when it comes to friends. But if someone wants to be alone all the time, then that person should not be in the classroom. That person is not social.”

A Pre-Foundation ‘B’ teacher believes that the teacher-student relationship has certain boundaries and the teacher should be friendly with the students, but not over-friendly, , explaining:

“Q: How do you think the teacher can trust the student, in which way, and be friendly withthem?”

A: Well, that's good...

Q: Inside the classroom.

A: Yeah. There's a fine line between being friendly and over-friendly, but, at the end of the day, it's a professional relationship. Everybody knows that. The students have got to realise that, and the teacher has got to realise that, so you don't go there as their best friend, you don't go there as their family, but you go there with a mutual respect of the fact that it's a professional situation. The students need to know the boundaries and the teacher needs to know the boundaries, and it's possible to build up – as I say, it is a relationship. It is a kind of relationship – teacher-student – but it's an appropriate relationship where you're both comfortable expressing yourselves to each other and working for the benefit of each other. So, obviously, there are boundaries you don't cross, because it's like in any professional relationship with a colleague. You know, there's certain things you don't do. Both parties have to understand what the relationship is and, as long as both sides know the guidelines and the parameters, then it should be okay.”

Another Elementary teacher believes that they can have better relationships with the students if the teacher knows the students' names, strengths and weaknesses, saying:

“On the other hand, here, I remember my students' names, and that's nice. There's a much better relationship with the students, because I can remember everyone's names. I know who they are and their strengths and weaknesses.”

The same Elementary teacher believes that the teacher-student relationship depends on students' motivation. If the students are motivated, then it will be a friendly and trustful relationship where the teacher works with the students to reach the same goal in learning English. On the other hand, for an authoritarian relationship with unmotivated students where the teacher has to be an authority, the teacher added:

“Q: And emotions. Okay. How do you think the relationship between the teacher and the student should be like inside the classroom? How friendly? How trustful?”

A: Well, I think it should be friendly and trustful. I like it if I can sort of have ... talk frankly with my students, and I like it if it's more ... I feel like we should be working together. When their goal is to learn more, I feel like I'm working with them to reach their goal to learn English. It's a problem – you can't always be like that. There are times when

if there are unmotivated students who don't care, then it's more like the teacher is trying to trick them into learning or to force them into learning, and that's a different kind of relationship. That's more, sort of, an authoritarian relationship where the teacher has to be an authority. I don't like that. Sometimes it has to be like that, but I prefer when it's not. I prefer it when you can be sort of working together for the same goal.

Q: So you think the relationship also depends on the students' level of motivation.

A: That's right. Yeah. Totally”

Another Pre-Foundation ‘B’ teacher believes that the teacher should be friendly with the students, but not their friend and the teacher should understand students’ emotions by saying:

“The relationship is friendly, but I'm not a friend. I'm not their friend, but the relationship is, of course, friendly. The reason for that is I love my students.

Q: So you like them?

A: I don't like them. I love them one by one. They are like my children. I have always loved my students so much. I've been teaching for fourteen years – thirteen years – a professional for twelve years and now students mean a lot to me. So that's why I always try to understand them. I was a student. I was not just a – I have not always been a teacher since I was born. So I understand them. I know how they feel in specific cases, and I watch my face, my gesture – you know, the emotions of students are very important to me. I can just damage the emotions by very simple action in class. I'm careful about my gestures, what I say, what I do – everything – posture – whatever. So I'm friendly, but not a friend, and I try to understand them. To put it short [laughs].”

The same Pre-Foundation ‘B’ teacher believes that it is important to create a sense of humour inside the classroom without getting the students to make fun of one another, by adding:

“Q: Because they are sensitive?

A: Yeah. They know that I'm very sensitive about making fun of one another. They can't do it. I never directly say don't laugh, don't make fun of one another – no, they know this. I always make fun of myself in the classroom so that we all laugh together, and we have other reasons to laugh. Okay? The situation you create is very important. The atmosphere

and, at least in my classes, it hardly ever happens. I try to encourage shy students to get more out of shy students than those who just tend to speak all the time – and that’s good. I let them speak, because if you stop those who speak a lot – this is worse. The story is gonna to turn upside down, but I always try to ask more from those who are, well, shy. You understand shy students.”

A member of management believes that they can help the teachers to establish good communication and good relationship with the students by saying:

“Q: So the teachers understand when the students?

A: Yes. That’s why they come – usually they come and ask for our help in this regard. Whenever they have this kind of mismatch, kind of misunderstanding, they immediately come and talk to us, and we can interfere and put the two entities – the student and teachers come together and we try to establish or help the teacher to establish a good relationship with the students, good communication, procedures, ways of how to have a rapport with their students.”

The same member of management believes that teachers should be aware of students’ sensitive issues such as culture and religion in order to have good relationships with the students ,adding:

“Q: Also maybe the males when they work with the females?

A: Correct. Yes. Because we have here mixed gender classes. We have girl students, boy students and teach – we, you know, inform the teachers that these classrooms which have mixed gender – they need to be more careful of dealing with the students. For example, we don’t require the teacher to force female students to come in front of the classroom and talk or, let’s say, force the students to be paired in male and female or female students in a group of all male students, so we don’t encourage that in the classroom because sometimes it creates problems that the female students refuse to work with male students or they come and complain about their teacher that they are forcing them to do that and that’s why these sensitive and cultural issues are important.

Q: And the teachers are aware of this before they start teaching?

A: Yes. When – or before – we receive the teachers, we send them some information about the policies and procedures that we follow in the foundation institute so they will be aware

of the culture, the religion, the community, the students, and these are sensitive issues we explain to the teachers also when they arrive, in their orientation week or day.”

Another Elementary teacher believes that students’ weak language communication competence make it difficult to have social relations between the teacher and the students and the distance between the teacher and the students takes time to be covered, explaining:

“So, now, here, their communicative competence is very weak. They have language problems. Especially a teacher from any native country – so they are not familiar with Arabic, that’s how in the classroom they can’t make those social relations quickly, which are important for a class, which a student and teacher should have, so that their students can feel relaxed when they talk with teacher. There is a distance which takes time to be covered.”

A Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher believes that a teacher’s relationship with the students is more like a father or mother figure , saying:

“Q: Okay. What do you think about teacher-student relationships? How should it be inside the classroom?

A: Well, it should be civil, obviously, but I’m also not – I don’t support the idea of treating teachers and students as equals. It doesn’t work that way. Not at university, at least. There is still a difference between a teacher and a student.

Q: So, for example, not like a friend, like a mother, or like...

A: ...No, no. Well, more like a mother/father figure? Yes. That’s what I would say.”

The same Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher believes that a friendly teacher should offer help to the students and criticism at the same time, not be over-optimistic, adding:

“Okay. How friendly do you think a teacher should be?

A: First of all, a teacher who is willing to help, who is offering to help, but also a teacher who is offering certain criticism, who is not over-optimistic. Because that’s also the sort of – the optimist can be misread as lying. If I tell them all the time, come, on you can do it, I’m sure you’ll pass, and then they fail, they say the teacher lied to me. The teacher told me

I would pass and I failed, so the teacher is guilty because they lied to me. I also think that lying is not the best idea. Basically...”

A Pre-Intermediate teacher believes that it is difficult to build a relationship with students who cannot understand English at all because there is no chance of communication, explaining:

“Q: Do you think that this affects your relationship with them? Do you think the relationship is affected by the level of the students, if their English is good?
A: I wasn’t negative to them. I really did try, but I couldn’t have the same relationship with them that I have – like, this class that I have now, section 19 also – they are not strong, but they can communicate with me. Those students couldn’t even understand me. Right? So, there was no chance of communicating because they didn’t know what I was saying. If I would say something, they would understand something totally different. That was the problem. They didn’t understand English, so no matter how much I taught – they needed an Arab teacher to teach them English.”

A Special Needs teacher talking about the students in general believes that a teacher should be friendly with the students within a boundary, so that the students will not think that this is an easy teacher, explaining:

“Q: How much, like, friendly should the teacher be with the students?
A: I’m always very friendly with my students, and I have had students who then think you are an easy teacher. So that happens, but it takes two weeks of them thinking that I’m an easy teacher, and you explode once, and then they know there’s boundary. They just need to know what the boundary is.”

Another Pre-Foundation ‘B’ teacher believes that the relationship with their students is the most important thing that the students will remember, explaining:

“A: They will forget about whatever I teach – the grammar – because we forgot. You understand? The human relationship I consider the most important thing.

Q: Even between the teacher and the...

A: ...The teachers and the students.”

The same Pre-Foundation 'B' teacher believes that teachers should understand that students are teenagers and may be influenced by other factors outside the classroom, adding:

“Q: So you think the students are influenced by their life or by outside life?
A: But the teacher’s role here is that he has to take into consideration, he has to read between the lines, he has to understand those are teenagers. I made every topic possible to be discussed with me because I understand – I used to be a teenager too.”

This Pre-Foundation 'B' teacher believes that it is good to take a joke inside the classroom if you can easily return back to the lesson, adding:

“Maybe. Maybe. Girls, you see, we laugh, we make jokes and then I say [claps] ‘go back to your desk’ and everything is ship-shape. They don’t argue, they don’t keep making noise, or ... I like that. I like that when we open for a parenthesis we joke, we do whatever we want and then it’s easily to be – it was not easily to close with boys in class when I have youngsters.”

An Elementary Consolidation teacher believes that a teacher should make jokes in the class, so that the students will not get bored and there is no need to show your authority to the students if the students respect you, explaining during the interview:

“So they – for example, I make jokes in the beginning or in the middle when students get bored. I try to make it funny. I try to make the class funnier so that they don’t feel me kind of, as I mentioned, an authority. They feel me as if – because these students, especially Omani students, I have never had any problem with the discipline. They always respect you. You know? I don’t feel the necessity to get obsessed showing students as if you are the power, the authority, in the class. You should feel my authority and you should respect me. There is no need to go for such efforts in the class, because students already are coming from respect. Their background culture – they have an idea of respect, what respect means, respecting older people, people older than you – they already have that in their culture. So I don’t really feel that. So that’s why I try to make the teacher’s power in the class less powerful. You understand?”

This means that being helpful and friendly is a very important component of the teacher-student relationship. At the same time teachers should be friendly with the students

within certain limits. Teacher-student relationships also depend on students' motivation and attitude inside the classroom. For example, some teachers think that the relationship should be authoritarian with unmotivated students. The member of management pointed out that being aware of sensitive issues related to culture and religion is very important to establish good relationship with the students. Students' weak language can make it difficult to have good communication between teachers and students. One teacher affirms that being friendly with the students does not mean being over optimistic with the students about their level of English.

5.13.2 Understanding (QTI)

Understanding is the second element of teacher-student relationship which was asked of the teacher in the questionnaire, and teachers explained how they understand it during the interviews. An Elementary teacher believes that students trust the teacher and follow the instructions after three weeks , saying:

“A: Mhm. Yes. But it’s always the same. The first three weeks it’s – they don’t trust me at all. It usually takes them three weeks to start trusting me, to start accepting me. That’s...

Q: ...How do you feel that they don’t trust you?

A: Because they are not following the instructions. They are not following the instructions as ‘Uh, who cares what she talks about?’ It usually comes through extra work that they should do. So the first three weeks they don’t do that. As I’m telling them to do something that they can’t or they don’t want, but whatever you tell them, they look at you the way, you know, ‘Mhm. Yeah. Fine.’ Again, they do not disagree or agree. They do not express themselves, but you can feel that. They don’t trust us for the first three weeks. That’s my...

Q: ...Three weeks?

A: ...Three weeks. After – somewhere – some of them start trusting me at the beginning, but these are usually the most ambitious ones. For having all of them trusting me, it’s usually three weeks.”

The same Elementary teacher believes that if the students trust the teacher, they want to know more and they don’t give up, adding:

“...and then I give them extra work, and if they follow the instructions, if they want to know more, then they trust me. If they give up, then they don’t trust me. That’s how I feel

if they trust me or don't trust me. Because if you have a feeling that this teacher is here to help me, then you follow the instructions. If this teacher is here [just] to be here, then you don't care, you will do what you have to – sometimes not even that – but you won't do any extra work. That's the trust I'm talking about – trusting me and following my instructions – not trusting me I'm your best friend, but trusting me as a teacher.”

A Pre-Foundation 'B' teacher believes that having good relationship with the students and trusting them will help the students to overcome their shyness, saying:

“Q: Do you find the, like, shyness or fear or something?

A: Some are shy, but not particularly. I think when you first meet them, yes, but you have to build up a rapport relationship with them. I find that, in my experience with Omani students, once you build a bit of a relationship with them and they know you and you know them and they are comfortable with you, then generally they will express themselves and they will overcome their shyness. If they trust the teacher, if they get along with the teacher – yes.”

Another Elementary teacher believes that trusting the students develops over time and it depends on students' attitudes, explaining:

“Q: How can the teacher trust the students?

A: How can – you mean how they show trust?

Q: Yes, or the teacher trust the students.

A: I think trust sort of develops over time. As a teacher you learn what the attitudes of the students are and you sort of begin to realise what you can trust them about, what you can't – for instance, when my students say, 'Teacher, I really need to go to the bathroom.' Most of the time they don't need to go to the bathroom. They just want to skip out of class for a few minutes, and, to be honest, they don't do it very often, so I mostly let them. If they did it all the time, I wouldn't let them. Another example is if students say that they're sick and can they leave early or can they miss the next class. It's nice with my current class. I can trust them. With my current class, if they say they're feeling sick, I would let them go, and I believe them. Previous classes I've had, I would not do that because I know they will do

it in every class or they will do it too many times. I know that it's not something that I can trust.

Q: So it depends also on the students?

A: Yeah. It's a relationship that you build up with the students, so it depends on them.

Q: So the relationship can be friendly or authoritative – depends also on the students. A: Yeah. That's right.”

A member of management believes that the relationship between the teachers and the students should be based on the trust from both teachers and students and understanding the students' culture, explaining:

“Q: Doctor, how do you think the relationship between the teacher and the student should be like inside the classroom.

A: Ideally the relationship should have some features, such as trust from both sides. So students trust that their teachers will give them the necessary knowledge, language knowledge, and they need to move on with their education, and also the trust from the side of the students – I mean, the teacher trusts that the students will understand his instructions, will follow his instructions whenever he or she gives, you know, any instructions or homework or asks them to do some activities in the classroom. Yeah, so this mutual trust is important. Another important issue in the classroom is that the teacher should understand the culture of the students.”

A Pre-Intermediate consolidation teacher believes that a teacher should be honest with the students in a nice way, saying

“Q: ...Be honest with them.

A: Yeah, be honest with the students, but, of course, in a civil way. Not say you're nothing, you're zero, but I always say you must try harder, instead of saying your level is really low. I rephrase it as you must try harder. Please come over more often. I will help you. So I think that the sort of offering support is also very important. And to smile, also.”

A Pre-Intermediate teacher believes that if the teacher trusts that the students will obey the rules, both teachers and students will feel comfortable and relaxed inside the classroom, saying

“Q: How can we make the students comfortable? What do you think the teacher – with the atmosphere of the class?

A: I think they need to feel comfortable with the teacher. I tell the rules. I never read the rules. We are supposed to, but I find that at the university the students are generally well behaved, so I never waste time going through. I give them the code of conduct – the forms that they have to sign. I tell them: these are the rules; this is what you should know. The one rule that I give them is plagiarism. I say, when you write, that is something that you need to know. But, with regard to behaviour, mobile phones and everything like that, I trust that they will obey, because generally they are good students. I mean, they don’t do wrong things. So, I feel very comfortable with them and, I think, they then feel relaxed and they don’t act up. I’ve never needed to be strict and whatever. They do their work when they’re supposed to do their work. They do their homework. They do everything.”

A Special Needs teacher talking about the students in general believes that trusting the students by treating them as grown-ups and teaching them whatever they do has consequences, saying:

“Q: How do you think the teacher can trust the students?

A: You have to remember the time when you were a student. When you would sometimes play with the truth to get something. They are exactly like that. This is how we worked with our parents. This is how they work with their parents. Dad, Mum said it’s okay. Mum, Dad said it’s okay if you say it’s okay. So it’s the same thing. You are actually a parent out here. Just in a much looser sense, and treating them as if they are grown-ups, and treating them as if you trust them, and telling them I’m going to follow up on this and if I find that this is not a valid reason then just know next week I’m going to make you sit in an extra half hour. Something like that. They understand that whatever they do has consequences.”

Another Pre-Foundation ‘B’ teacher believes that a teacher should have self-confidence, so that the students will feel comfortable and they can trust the teacher, explaining:

“A teacher must make her students feel how self-confident he is or she is before dealing with him. You cannot trust someone who is just stuttering or doesn’t know what to say, what to do, what kind of advice. If they come to me and they cannot have the right advice – thank god, when any students come to me, I make him feel comfortable. I have that talent. Maybe it’s something from God. I can help not only with academic achievement, but on other levels too. This is intertwined. How can you engage him when you don’t know him?”

An Elementary Consolidation teacher believes that gaining the trust of the students could be a challenge for the teacher, explaining:

“Gaining the trust – the students trust you. You know, that is an important factor and it didn’t take much time in my previous sections, but this particular section, as I have just mentioned, is becoming a bit challenging.”

The same Elementary Consolidation teacher believes that the teacher should not be that power authority who commands the students; instead it should be smooth relationship with the students to gain their trust, by adding:

“It’s mostly a kind of brother-brother and brother-sister, and I mentioned that in the beginning of the classroom that students – so that the students trust you – students do not see you as a kind of powerful authority in front of the class who, for example, commands, who give orders to students to do this and that and this. Not that. I try to establish smooth relationship with the students – relations with the students in the beginning of the semester. And it works, actually. That makes students less shy.”

The same Elementary Consolidation teacher believes that a teacher will feel happy when students ask them to explain things again because this shows that the students can express themselves and they trust the teacher, explaining:

“Q: Do they usually ask to explain the things again from you. When they don’t understand, Do they tell you ‘We don’t understand?’

A: Yeah. They tell me. That’s what I like about them. Sometimes I explain things two, three times. I’m not bored with that. I’m happy that they are asking. It would be really difficult if they couldn’t express that they didn’t understand. I mean, if they couldn’t be open enough. They couldn’t express themselves. If they were afraid, I mean, of expressing

that things are not understood – if they didn't have that, that would be more difficult

Q: Maybe because they trust you?

A: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I believe so. Yeah.”

This means that understanding the students is also a very important component of the teacher-student relationship inside the classroom. Trust is a very important element in helping both teachers and students to understand each other. Most teachers agree that it takes time for the students to trust their teachers and it can be a challenge in very low level classes. Some teachers believe that students trust them when they follow their instructions. The teacher should also show the students enough self-confidence, so that the students will trust and follow the teacher. Other teachers see the trust when the students want to know more about the topic and they do not give up. This trust will also help the students become more self-confident and believe in themselves. Trust also depends on students' attitudes inside the classroom if they are behaving in a good manner where the teacher can trust them. Other teachers also believe that trust happens when the teacher is honest with the students about their real English level. Asking the teacher to explain things again also shows that the students trust the teacher. This trust will create a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere inside the classroom.

5.14 Students' Point of View about Teacher Engagement

5.14.1 Social Engagement with Teachers

Students were asked about their social engagement with their teachers in the questionnaire and during the interview. These interviews were conducted in Arabic and the codes were translated by the researcher into English. An Elementary student believes that the teacher takes care of problems by giving simple materials and taking care of sick students, explaining:

“Me: In some sentences, ‘our teacher cares about our problems.’ What type of problems do you expect the teacher to take care of inside the classroom?”

SS: Problems? For example, if we are weak in the subject, he tries to help us, I mean give us ... summaries and lessons; I mean tries to give us the materials as much as simple ... in

this way ... if anyone is sick or had an emergency ... I mean he understand the female students.”

The same Elementary student believes that the teacher is aware of students’ feelings by being aware of sick students, by adding:

“Me: Amm ... ‘is aware of our feelings.’ How do you think the teacher can be aware of a student’s feelings? I mean ... the same thing you said about sickness and such things?

SS: Yes”

An Elementary Consolidation student believes that the teacher takes care of problems such as preventing the students from using their phones inside the classroom, explaining:

“Me: When I said ‘the teacher is taking care of your problems’, what kind of problems do you ... do you think I mean here inside the classroom?

SS: ... and now the teacher does not allow the students to open their phones in the class, so he controls the problem.

Me: Ok, so this kind of problem.”

The same Elementary consolidation student believes that the teacher is aware of students’ feelings if they are tired, by adding during the interview:

“Me: Ok. So you think this ... he takes care of your feelings. If you are tired ...

SS: Yes.”

Another Elementary consolidation student believes that the teacher is aware of students’ feelings by repeating the explanation. This point of view was explained during the interview, saying:

“Me: ‘The teacher is aware of our feelings and cares about our problems.’ How do you want the teacher ...?

SS: For example, when we say to the teacher, we do not understand, he will repeat ...

Me: Explanation.”

The same Elementary Consolidation student believes that the teacher cares about problems such as classroom management, adding:

“Me: ‘The teacher cares about our problems.’ Which ‘problems’ do you think the teacher should care about inside the classroom?”

SS: That there are no distractions.

Me: You mean classroom management.”

The same Elementary Consolidation student believes that the teacher is empathetic towards the students when he allows them to leave the class few minutes before, by explaining:

“Me: ‘The teacher is empathetic towards us inside the classroom.’ How do you feel the teacher is ‘empathetic’? What should he do?”

SS: Ah, empathetic means ... he allows us to go home few minutes before the class end, so we can catch the bus. When the lecture is long, he is empathetic towards us.”

A Pre-Foundation ‘A’ student stated that the teacher shows warmth to the students by taking care of them psychologically, saying:

“Me: ‘The teacher shows warmth to us.’ What care do you expect from the teacher?”

SS: Psychological care. I mean ... he can feel when someone is angry or sick.”

The same pre-foundation ‘A’ student believes that the teacher cares about problems, such as students’ diseases, adding:

“Me: The teacher cares about our problems ... what problems does the teacher care about inside the classroom?”

SS: Sometimes, diseases.”

A Pre-Intermediate student believes that the teacher is aware of students’ feelings when other students are making fun of them, by explaining:

“Me: ‘What are the feelings that the teacher should be aware of?’”

SS: For example ... for example, when students are making fun of each other, sometimes the teacher is aware and sometimes not ...”

Another Pre-Intermediate student believes that the teacher cares about problems related to studying, saying:

“Me: For example, the teacher cares about our problems. What ... how do you understand this question? Which problems inside the classroom?

SS: Problems, for example ... studying problems ... our problems in ‘speaking’ or our problems in ‘writing’, so he tries to explain to us, where the mistakes are, and what are the things that we all have.”

The same Pre-Intermediate student believes that the teacher should be aware of students’ feelings by not embarrassing them if they give the wrong answer, by adding:

“The teacher is aware of our feelings.’ Which feelings? How do you think the teacher is aware of your feelings?

SS: By not embarrassing us. Even if we said the wrong answer, it should not be a problem.”

Another Pre-Intermediate student believes that the teacher should care about problems related to students who need slow speakers of English, saying:

“Me: I asked you some questions about what you expect from the teacher. The teacher, he ‘takes care of our problems’; what kind of problems inside the classroom?

SS: ... I mean some students need a teacher who speaks slowly and explains things to them, so the teacher should take care of these students.”

The same Pre-Intermediate student believes that the teacher should be aware of students’ feelings when they are sick, by adding:

“Me: Ok, ‘the teacher is aware of our feelings, empathetic towards us and shows warmth to us’. What kind of feelings do you think the teacher should be aware of?

SS: For example, when the student is sick.”

This means that the students also think that it is important for their teachers to be socially engaged with them. The interviews show that the students are expecting their teachers to take care of their personal problems, such as when they are sick, tired or when they want to leave the class early. The students also assume that classroom management is something that the teacher needs to take care of. The students need their teachers to take care of them psychologically more than academically. For example, a teacher should not embarrass the students when they give the wrong answer. Teachers should be aware of students’ needs when they want to socially engage with them.

5.15 Teacher-Student Relationship

5.15.1 Helpful/ Friendly (QTI)

Students were also asked about their relationship with their teachers in the questionnaires and during the interviews. An Elementary student believes that a good teacher-student relationship happens when the teacher is kind, which encourages the student to come to the class every day.

“Me: Okay, what are yourokay, the relationship between the teacher and the student, do you think that it affects the interaction inside the classroom?”

SS: Of course....I mean....if the teacher is kind, we will like the English subject and we will always come to class, we will never be absent if he makes us like the subject.”

The same Elementary student believes that the relationship between the teacher and students should be like a father or a brother, but with limits

“Me: Okay, what kind of relationship do you think there should be between the teacher and the student?”

SS: The relationship has limits...the teacher is like a father or a brother to the student, but with a limit.”

Another Elementary student believes that if the relationship between the teacher and the students is not good from both sides, it may affect students’ motivation more than the teacher:

“Me: Do you think the relationship between the teacher and the student can affect classroom interaction?”

SS: Yes, I think it can.

Me: How do you think so? How do you like the teacher to treat the student?

SS: I mean...if the teacher treats the students in a bad way and the students treat the teacher in a bad way too, then this will influence the interaction...for example...the teacher will do nothing, just decreasing students’ marks, but if the teacher is not treating the student in a good way, the student will not interact with the teacher, will not do the homework, will not interact inside the class and will not study for the exam....”

The same Elementary student believes that the teacher helps the students with their work by giving them feedback:

“Me: The teacher is helping you inside the classroom. What kind of help are you expecting from the teacher?”

SS: The teacher ‘does not help me with my work’, but when we have a project, he will correct it and tell us the mistakes, what we should do or not be doing. I mean encouraging us when we present, telling us not to be scared...

Me: So you think the teacher should give you feedback.

SS: Yes.”

An Elementary Consolidation student believes that the student must show respect, responsibility and commitment, so that the teacher can have a good relationship with them:

“Me: Okay, do you think other factors such as teacher-student relationship may affect Teacher Engagement inside the classroom?”

SS: Yes, if the student is not respectful or responsible, I feel the teacher does not accept the student.

Me: Okay, so you think there should be respect.

SS: Yes, the student must have ‘responsibility’ - I mean responsibility between them, so the student should be responsible, having commitment and respectful and...so the teacher respect him.”

The same Elementary Consolidation student believes that the class can be pleasant if the teacher can act as a funny person:

“Me: ‘The teacher makes the class interesting’. How?”

SS: For example, the teacher is acting as a funny character in the middle of the class. This is very interesting and our teacher is creative in this thing.”

Another Elementary Consolidation student believes that the teacher helps the students with their work by checking and revising the homework:

“Me: ‘This teacher helps us with our work’ - what kind of “help” do you expect from the teacher inside the classroom?

SS: For example, when he gives us homework, he should check it and revise it again, so that we can correct our mistakes.”

The same Elementary Consolidation student believes that if the teacher has a sense of humour and can take a joke, this can change the class routine:

“Me: ‘This teacher has a sense of humour’, ‘This teacher can take a joke’. Humour. Are these things important for you?

SS: Yes.

Me: That the teacher is laughing with students....

SS: Yes, it is better when he laughs so....he can change the lecture routine.

Me: So you want the teacher at least to laugh and have a sense of humour and all of these things.”

The same Elementary Consolidation student believes that the class is pleasant if the students can laugh in the class:

“Me: How can the teacher make the class pleasant?

SS: For example, laughing.....”

A Pre-Foundation “A” student believes that the teacher can have a good relationship with the student by respecting the student and encouraging him by saying “Good, excellent”:

“Me: How do you think teacher-student relationship should be? What do you think the teacher should do?

SS: The teacher should respect the student and understand if he is sick by not giving him low marks.

Me: Okay.

SS: Tell the students the words that will encourage him to answer again such as ‘Good, Excellent’ ”.

The same Pre-Foundation “A” student believes that the teacher is helping the students with their work by helping them in writing:

“Me: ‘This teacher helps us with our work.’ How do you want the teacher to help you?

SS: For example, helping me when I am writing about a topic and I do not know how to form a sentence, meaning or spelling, he will come and help me.”

The same Pre-Foundation “A” student believes that the teacher makes the class pleasant by being calm, laughing inside the class and encouraging the students:

“Me: ‘This teacher’s class is pleasant’. How can the class be pleasant?

SS: The class is pleasant, I mean....the teacher is not coming to the class angry...he should be calm....and laughing....encourage the students by saying ‘excellent’....does not give us a lot of things....does not make things difficult for us....making the lecture easy ...and interactive.”

A Pre-Foundation “B” student believes that students will have a good relationship with the teacher if the teacher helps them relax:

“Me: So you like the teacher and you feel like relaxed with the teacher because he is trying to helping you as much as possible

A Pre-Intermediate student believes that the teacher can have a sense of humour by using comedy inside the classroom to have a good relationship with students:

“Me: How do you think your relationship with the teacher should be inside the classroom?

How should the teacher be with the students to help them engage?

SS: The way it is now...by encouragement and help...give students questions and using comedy, especially when we are under pressure, the teacher should use comedy such as jokes.”

The same Pre-Intermediate student believes that the teacher helps the students with their work when he guides the students in their writing:

“Me: ‘This teacher helps us with our work’ inside the classroom - how do you understand this sentence?

SS: The teacher is helping me when he is asking me to do ‘writing’ inside the classroom, so he goes around the class to check the students’ writings.”

Another Pre-Intermediate student believes that some students think the teacher-student relationship does not influence their engagement inside the classroom:

“Me: Okay, ah....do you think other factors such as ‘teacher-student relationship’ can affect your engagement inside the classroom?

SS: No, I do not think teacher-student relationship can affect students’ level, I mean, student engagement inside the classroom.

Me: Why?

SS: Maybe the student does not have a good relationship with the teacher, but that student engagement is not influenced by that weak relationship, I think so.”

The same Pre-Intermediate student believes that the teacher helps the students with their work by guiding them to the materials included in the exam:

“Me: How do you want the teacher to help you with your work inside the classroom?

SS: Ahh....Helps us I mean....in some exam questions; for example, in our last exam we asked him what are the things included in the exam.”

Another Pre-Intermediate student believes that the different culture of the teachers encourages the students to have good relationships with them:

“So that we show the teachers a good picture of us, since they are from different culture, so I think the student should have good relationship with the teacher.”

This means that being helpful and friendly with the students is an important element in having a good relationship between teachers and students. The students understand that the teacher is helping them by giving them feedback. The students also like the teacher who is funny inside the classroom. The students are also expecting the teacher to help them academically by checking the homework and helping them in their writing. On the other hand, one student thinks that teacher-

student relationship does not influence students' engagement inside the classroom. Another student pointed out that having teachers from another culture encourages them to have good relationships with them.

5.15.2 Understanding (QTI)

It is also important for the teachers and the students to understand each other in order to have a good relationship. An Elementary student believes that the teacher trusts the students by encouraging them to pass:

“Me: He trusts you, you mean he pushes you, he does not make you down or something. He will tell you that you will pass and you will be a good student.

SS: Yes, encouraging us because some teachers discourage us by saying that we will not pass.”

The same Elementary student believes that the teacher should explain things again in a simple way a second time:

“Me: So you mean the teacher should explain things in a simple way in the second time.

SS: Yes.”

This Elementary student also believes that the teacher sometimes realises when the students do not understand:

“Me: ‘This teacher realises when we don't understand’ - do you feel the teacher realises when the students do not understand?

SS: Sometimes. Sometimes.”

This Elementary student also believes that the teacher should be patient regarding the students' misbehaviour:

“Me: ‘The teacher is patient’ about what?

SS: Ahhh...by the students' dissatisfaction about their marks...when their marks are low, for not being attention during the lecture, being absent for many days from many students and disrespect from students”

An Elementary Consolidation student believes that the teacher trusts that the students will do what he asked them to do, even if he is absent:

“Me: So he trusts that you want to learn and that you will do what he asked you to do.

SS: Yes”

The same Elementary Consolidation student believes that the teacher should explain things again, at least twice:

“Me: ‘The teacher is willing to explain things again’.

SS: Of course.

Me: How many times do you want the teacher to explain things again?

SS: At least....maybe twice if it is a difficult explanation.”

This Elementary Consolidation student also believes that the teacher is patient by explaining things again:

“Me: How can the teacher be patient?

SS: For example, if we ask the teacher to explain things again and again, he will be patient and explain things again.”

This Elementary Consolidation student also believes that the teacher realises when the students do not understand by explaining the things again:

“Me: ‘This teacher realises when we don’t understand’? Do you think the teacher realises by himself that the students do not understand?

SS: Yes.

Me: Even if you do not raise your hand?

SS: Yes, for example, if he explains difficult thing and he realises that we do not understand, he will explain it again.”

Another Elementary Consolidation student believes that the teacher explains things again by giving new examples:

“Me: Give more..... You think that the teacher should use new examples when they re-explain the things again.”

The same Elementary Consolidation student believes that the teacher is patient by not being that angry if the students are late:

“Me: Patient? How do you think the teacher should be ‘patient’ with the students?

SS: Ahh...patient...for example, when we are late from the lecture, he shouldn’t be too angry or strict.”

A Pre-Foundation “A” student believes that the teacher trusts the students by believing that they did the writing by themselves:

“Me: You mean the teacher trusts that the student did the writing by himself.

SS: Yes”

The same Pre-Foundation “A” student believes that the teacher realises when the students do not understand if they are quiet:

“Me: Do you think the teacher realises...when you do not understand? Of course all the students said “yes”, although some of them do not understand.

SS: He realises when we do not understand because we will be quiet and he will say, “look” and sometimes he will use signs, so that we can understand.”

A Pre-Intermediate student believes that the teacher trust that the students will pass the exams and do the homework by themselves:

“Me: So he has.....so he trusts the students that they will pass and that they will do the homework.”

The same Pre-Intermediate student believes that the teacher gets to know when the students do not understand by asking them:

“Me: ‘This teacher realises when we don’t understand’.

SS: Yes, he realises the students who do not understand.

Me: He knows them.

SS: Yes, he knows them student by student. I mean he will ask the students that do not understand ‘Did you understand?’ ”

This Pre-Intermediate student also believes that the teacher shows patience by explaining things again:

“Me: Okay, I mean, ‘the teacher is patient’ by explaining things again.

SS: Yes.”

Another Pre-Intermediate student believes that the teacher trusts that the students will be good and will go to the places where he asked them to go:

“Me: ‘This teacher trusts us’. How do you think the teacher trusts the student?

SS: Ahh....trust that the student...will....will cooperate with him...will be good students....and if we told him that we went to the place where he asked us to go, he trusts us. He does not think that we are going to go another place.”

The same Pre-Intermediate student believes that the teacher realises when the students do not understand by explaining more, even if the students do not ask him to:

“SS: He tries to make us understand things more, even if we said that we understood, he will explain more in everything he can do.”

Another Pre-Intermediate student believes that the teacher trusts that the students are doing the homework by themselves:

“Me: Okay, so you think that some teachers don’t trust the students that they did the things by themselves.”

The same Pre-Intermediate student believes that even if the teacher realises when the students do not understand and explains again, the students still do not understand:

“Me: So the teachers are repeating, but the students still do not understand from the first or second time.

SS: Yes.”

This Pre-Intermediate student also believes that the students can help the teacher to explain things again to their friends:

“Me: So you think other students are also helping...”

This means that teachers and students should understand each other to have a good relationship. Trust is a very important factor in establishing strong relationships. The students think that the teacher trusts them by encouraging them to pass, trusts that the students will do what the teacher has asked them to do, even if the teacher is absent, and by teacher believing that they did the writing by themselves. The teacher should also explain things again in a simple way using new examples. The students also expect that

the teacher will explain things again at least twice. The students also assume that a patient teacher should not be angry if the students are late.

5.16 Analysis and Discussion:

All these factors related to the school system align with the findings of the literature review. For example, Al-Mahrooqi (2012) affirms that most students in schools are used to learning English using the Arabic language. Therefore, school curricula and methodology could be considered as the main reasons for students' weaknesses in speaking skills. In addition, A. al-Issa (2006) points out that students lack communication skills and they control themselves in learning English. Moreover, A. S. M. al-Issa (2002) provides other reasons for students' low proficiency, such as school teachers who use only certain curricula, and which must be completed in a limited time, and students restricted by their cultural values, which makes it difficult to improve their English. Technology is also not used in an effective way in schools to learn English. In addition, according to Ali SM al-Issa (2014), other factors for students' low English level include assessment, which depends on memorisation, and the parents who prefer the assessment grade system and find it stronger evidence for their children's performance than understanding and practising English.

Teacher- student relationship was also considered an important factor to enhance teacher engagement inside the classroom. This was confirmed by different interviewee including teachers, students and the management member. Al-Mahrooqi et al (2016) pointed out that the teacher should create comfortable atmosphere inside the classroom by being not too formal inside the classroom. This what the students mention during the interviews that they want teachers who care about them psychologically and who trust them, so that they can have more confidence in learning the language. Dornyei & Malderez (1997) also affirm that students prefer domestic teachers who share decision-making with them. Zhao (2012) also certifies that the teachers should design reasonable tasks for the students, so that the students can feel their success. Students should also be encouraged by giving them positive feedback and this was also pointed out by the

students themselves during the interviews. Zhao (2012) also emphasises that trust and respect are the basics of having successful relationship with the students and it is the way that shows the students that the teacher cares about them.

5.17 Job Resources suggested by the participants:

Participants in this study including teachers, students and management team are more aware of the difficulties that they are facing in this work place, so they recommended many job resources for practice. An Elementary teacher suggested accepting students as they are and don't try to change them, saying:

“Q: Okay. Do you think – for all these, like, a job demand for the teacher – what are your suggestions to help the students and also the other teachers?”

A: Just accept them the way they are. Don't try to change them. You cannot change them. Don't try to change their lives. Don't try to change – because they do have critical thinking skills. Don't try to teach them, because they already have them.”

The same Elementary teacher stated that teachers should give the students time to be independent, explaining:

“Q: ...Yes. Okay. Thank you very much. Do you want to add anything or any advice for the students or the teachers?”

A: They need to be more independent. Much more independent. Teachers should give them time. Teachers should just give them some time and should accept them the way they are.”

A Pre-Foundation “B” teacher emphasised that teachers and students should believe in what they are doing and be interested to achieve success, commenting :

“Q: Okay. At the end, what suggestions would you like to give teachers and students to be more engaged inside the classroom?”

A: Just believe in what you're doing and be interested in...

Q: ...For them...

A: ...Yeah, believe in what you're doing and be interested in what you're doing, and if that's the situation then you'll achieve success.”

Another Elementary teacher believes that if students found something practical they like in English such as poetry or TV shows, they will be more motivated towards the language, saying:

“Q: Yes. So maybe you think the students need someone to give them, like, workshops about the importance of English? Maybe in the induction week?”

A: Possibly in induction week. Yeah.

Q: Maybe in Arabic if they don't understand English?

A: Possibly. Yeah. I sort of feel like for some of the students that aren't motivated giving them another talk about it – so sometimes you need to discover things. If they find something they like in English – if they find poetry they like or if they find TV shows, comic books — it doesn't matter what it is, but, if they find something that they feel strongly about, then they'll learn. But I don't know if having a lecture is going to help particularly.

Q: So you mean something practical – give them something practical?

A: Yeah. Give them something practical that's actually – yeah.”

The same Elementary teacher advised that teachers should try new things in teaching and the difficulties they experience could be considered a chance to improve or expand, saying:

“Q: And what about the teacher? What suggestions do you give for the teachers to deal with such students? For example, if I become stressed because my students, what advice would you give to me?”

A: Always try something different. If something's not working or if the students are getting too frustrated, it's always worth trying new things. A friend of mine was a teacher and he said to me if you don't go into class – sometimes you go into class and you try something new and the students hate it and it's really bad and it's really a difficult class for you and difficult for the students – you have to do that sometimes. You have to try things. And if you're not having classes like that, that means you're not trying anything

new and that's wrong. You should try. Sometimes it will be difficult, but more often it will be good and you'll have new things to work with.

Q: So you mean the difficulties that the teacher experiences is not always a negative thing, sometimes it is positive?

A: Yeah. A bit of change is positive or it's a chance to improve or a chance to expand.

Q: And to get more experience with the students.

A: Yeah.”

Another Pre-Foundation teacher stated that teaching depends on teacher's characteristics, personality, beliefs and ideas. Teaching depends on students' needs, objectives, purpose and personality trait, commenting:

“Q: Okay. What are your advices or your suggestions to help more the students and the teachers to be more engaged inside the classroom – for other classrooms, for example.

A: I can't make any suggestions. Teaching is very personal, you know? It depends on teacher's characteristics, personality, beliefs, ideas. It's not my personal idea. It's what the new – the latest teaching trends, the latest methodology – whatever – says that it depends on you students – on any specific – you may observe me teaching different students, and you may see different teachers within me. I'm a teacher in a different way; Mr X in a very different way. So I base my teaching on students' needs, students' objectives, their purpose and their personality trait, so I don't think I can give any advice for teachers in general.”

The same Pre-Foundation “B” teacher believes that if teachers love teaching and love their students, have theoretical knowledge and practical experience, they can do it, saying:

“Q: For the teachers?

A: If they have the right knowledge, if they love teaching, if they lover their students, if they have theoretical knowledge and practical experience, they can do it.”

This Pre-Foundation “B” teacher also stated that we can only work on teachers to change their personality if teaching was at the top of their list from the beginning and they meant to be teachers, adding:

“Q: Can we teach the teachers to love – these personal things – to love teaching, to be friendly with the students – do you think that we can teach – can we change the personality of the teachers?”

A: To love teaching?

Q: Yes, and to be friendly with the students.

A: Not if it was the last choice of their life. You know what I mean? If they didn’t have any other choices, if they couldn’t do any other jobs, couldn’t take up any other profession and they do teaching, you can’t do anything because it wasn’t at the top of their list. Okay? But if they really meant to be a teacher, okay. You can work on them.”

A management member stated that teachers can come to the management to talk about any problems they face, saying:

“Q: So also the teachers come, not only the students?”

A: Yeah. Even the teachers. Even the teachers. We encourage both of them, actually, when we talk to them, for example, during the orientation week that our doors are open to everybody, whether teachers, students – they can come at any time and talk to us with any problems they face.”

The same management member added that teachers should give the students sometime to observe, understand and trust what the teacher is doing inside the classroom, adding :

“Q: Doctor, I want to ask you about what do you think or suggestions for some of the – if you want to say in general what suggestions would you like to give to enhance teacher engagement inside the classroom?”

A: All right. First of all, the teacher needs to understand the students’ culture, of course, the students’ way or what is the suitable style that he or she can use in the classroom to get their trust, to engage them in classroom activities, classroom discussions and address

any issues immediately with the students. Give them sometimes – or give them time – to observe, understand what you give them or teach them in the classroom, don't be rushed, gain their trust that you are their main source where they can come at any time and get help and get support from you. So building a rapport with the students is important regarding this matter.”

The same management member advised that that teachers should be patient with the students and the students should work hard and do not consider the foundation period a relaxation period, explaining:

“Q: Okay. I think that's all. Do you want to add anything or a final thing you want to – advice for the students or for the teachers?”

A: Uh...My advice to the teachers that they be more – be patient with the students. Try to understand their needs, try to address these needs in the classrooms, do their best to help those students, because these students, you know, they trust you that you will improve their language, and they come here for this purpose. So, yes, please do your best in your job. I encourage also our students to work hard. The foundation period is not a period for relaxation. It's a period where they have to improve their language knowledge and – because they are going to use it in their majors.”

Another Elementary teacher suggested that if teachers can teach different sections, this will be more refreshing for both teachers and students and teachers can practice reflective teaching, explaining:

“Q: But fresh for the teachers also and the students.

A: For example, if I'm teaching three sections and I'm teaching speaking, if I'll teach in one section, I could reflect over my teaching there: oh, I missed this point. This could be good example. I forgot. In the section, in the next class, my lecture will be better than the previous one and in the third one I will be perfect. You got my point?

Q: So even if it's good for the teacher. Good practice.

A: Yes. Good practice. This is very important, by the way, the teacher learns himself from his mistakes. This is called reflective teaching.”

The same Elementary teacher added that the listening scripts should be short and from the students' social context, adding:

“At this level why are we using those long listening scripts? Make them small and make listening skills from their social context mostly. If you are speaking about the culture of Japan, a student who has never heard those things about or – he can't realise them – why can't you use the same thing in your context? When they can understand the context, then you can change the context slowly.”

This Elementary teacher also added that teachers need more workshops to improve students' level, saying:

“Q: So you think we can help the students by developing the materials and also more workshops, maybe, for the teachers?

A: Yes. We need more workshops for the teachers. We are not challenging anyone, authority, on information or knowledge. This is something we have to cover on the student level, then we can improve their level.”

A Pre-Intermediate Consolidation teacher asserted that technology should be available in every classroom, explaining:

“Q: So, with all these demands, because the research is about job demand and we are looking for job resources, what do you think are the job resources that should be available for the teachers, to help the teachers and also the students inside the classroom?

A: First of all, technology.

Q: They are not available in the classroom?

A: Not in every classroom. Not every classroom's got a computer. Not every classroom has got a working projector, because computer is not everything, but the projector is also very important. If the projector doesn't work, I have no need to use my computer.”

A Pre-Intermediate teacher explained that teachers should be given orientation week on what the students are like and what the classroom could be like, saying:

“Yeah. They give orientation on daily life. Accommodation or whatever, but, I think, teachers need to know – they need to be aware culturally this is what our students are

like, this is what your classroom could be. You could have all girls, you could have –
.....”

The same Pre-Intermediate teacher believed that students should be taught that if they have a problem with the teacher, then you should speak to the teacher first before going to somebody else, adding:

“Q: Someone should also tell the students. There should also be some advisers.

A: I actually tell my students that in the beginning. I tell them, if you have a problem, I would really like you to tell me first. I tell them we’ll try to sort out the problem before you go anywhere else. If you can’t deal with me, if you feel that you can’t, then go to somebody else – no problem – but, generally, come and speak to me first. I tell them that.”

A Special Needs’ teacher believed that if the teachers like what they are doing, like the students, trust the students and have comfortable atmosphere inside the classroom, they will overcome the job-demand inside the classroom, saying:

“Q: What do you think, after all this discussion, this job demand for the teachers and for the students, sometimes, to be engaged inside the classroom. What suggestions do you give, for example, for other teachers to be more engaged with the students and for the students who say that they fear and shy from other students in the class?

A: There is nothing you can say really. The only thing is for a teacher to be comfortable with what they are doing. If the teacher likes the job, and if the teacher likes students, that is the right person to have in the class, even if you make mistakes. I make many mistakes. I forget my book or I didn’t mark something or whatever. And they can forgive you for that as long as they know that they can trust you and you trust them. I think trust is really, really important. It’s not something that you can build. It’s something that happens when you’re honest with them as much as you can when they ask you a question. For example, if they ask me what is my salary, I will never say my salary is whatever. I’ll say, you know what, my salary is enough and I’m very happy with that. And they take that. Money is not something we talk about, or they’ll ask me how old I am. I say twenty-one. And they say, “Teacher, nah.” Yes, and if you say it’s not the truth I’m going to give you

minus five in your quiz. When another teacher comes in I'll say, now, tell this teacher how old is your teacher. Our teacher is ((giggling)) twenty-one. And they know I'm lying and I'm making a joke, but that kind of makes it a nice atmosphere to work in the class in. A little joke, a little silly something – at my expense; not at their expense. I don't like to joke about things that I notice about them because they are easily embarrassed.”

The same Special Needs' teacher suggested peer observation by having experienced teachers visiting new teachers' classes, may help the new teachers to build good communication with their students, explaining:

“Q: So you think it is like cultural communication between the – and also communication with people with such teenagers.

A: Yes. And maybe teachers who have been successful, who have shown through the years that they are good as teachers. Let them come and sit in your class and observe. See how you do it and what you do. Just to understand the process of it and what works and what doesn't work.

Q: So you mean also peer observations.

A: Yes.”

This Special Needs' teacher also asserted that colleagues should trust and support each other in any difficulties they face inside the classroom, adding:

“Q: So maybe there should be also trust between the colleagues because some teachers maybe feel embarrassed and think other teachers will not trust – or they will think he is not a good teacher because he is asking a lot of questions.

A: Yes. Absolutely. We are all just human beings. Nobody wants to look stupid. We are working at university; we need to be clever. This is why we are here, but we are all just people. We are all insecure.”

A Pre-Foundation “B” teacher advised that teachers should choose the right strategy when teaching and teachers should motivate the students, trust them and do not make fun of them, since students are sensitive, saying: “A: What suggestions?

Q: Yes, like, for some students who are still not engaged and some teachers who are still

find difficulty to be engaged with the students

A: This will be about motivation and choosing the right strategy when teaching a lesson. To be more human, to know how to gain the trust of students, because they are teenagers and they are sensitive – sensitive to every word. First of all, we have to avoid sarcasm, because sometimes students – and we are teaching a different language. Foreign language, as it is – they may not understand everything. They may get misunderstanding sometimes. They may not understand the word. They may get it wrong or they may spell it wrong. We have to avoid sarcasm and making fun of students. Maybe we joke, but we should not make fun of students because this will affect them. If I am – I was suffering from silent students, and I suffered a lot to make these silent students speak. This is shortest road for him to go back to the silent student. So, we should encourage them instead of reprimanding or just making fun of them. And motivating them. Motivating is like – when you correct especially the first exam, one has to try to be generous. Sometimes they make bad marks – they make bad results – but then we shouldn't stop at every tiny mistake.”

An Elementary Consolidation teacher suggested that there should be orientation week for the teachers to make them aware of the students' culture, explaining:

“Q: At the end, what suggestions do you want to give to make the student and the teacher more engaged inside the classroom – or solutions?”

A: Yeah. I would say that any teacher should be careful with the students' culture, first of all. Before expecting respect from the students, the teacher should respect their values, their cultural values in the classroom, because it really hurts them if you, for example, say something about – for example, if you mention a negative comment on /dishdasha/, for example. It's just an example. I didn't do this in the class, but I know that if you do that it really hurts them.

Q: How can we make the teacher aware if, for example, a new teacher from Western culture – how can we make this teacher aware.

A: Well, I think, through the inductions. In the beginning before a new teacher starts

there is already, I think, orientation week for the teachers, and during the orientation it can only be explained to the teachers.”

The same Elementary Consolidation teacher added that students should be placed in the appropriate level and taught the appropriate materials, so that it will be easier to break the ice with the students and get them out of their shyness, saying:

“A: What else? Well, students should be put in an appropriate level. In the placement, they should be placed in an appropriate level and the materials should be an appropriate level for the students and the outcomes. It’s mainly about the decision-makers. The comments I’m making now are mainly for the decision-makers, so they should take all this into consideration when they place the students. We should break their ice. If they are shy students, it’s a bit challenging to teach shy students. If the class is mainly of shy students, it is twice more challenging. Break their ice. We should encourage students not to be shy, to be active and – yeah.

Q: So you think these students, if they were put in their appropriate level and materials, they would do better then?

A: Of course. They will be encouraged. When you put them in the wrong level with the wrong materials, with the wrong outcomes, they are discouraged. They are lost. They are really lost. For example, I have students now – only a week passed after the mid-terms and they collapsed.”

Students also suggested some recommendations. An Elementary student suggested that there should be training courses for students to teach them self-confidence and time-management, saying: “SS: Training courses for the students how to be self-confidence and how to manage their time.” The same Elementary student also suggested using more technology in learning English, explaining:

“Me: So you like computer andyou like using like technology.

SS: Yes.”

An Elementary Consolidation student suggested watching English videos to learn vocabulary, saying: “You would like to see this more. Watching videos to learn vocabulary especially.”

Another Elementary Consolidation student suggested the teacher should learn some words from the students’ first language, saying “SS: ...If the teacher can speak little Arabic”.

A Pre-Foundation “A” student suggested that there should be some English videos inside the classroom, saying : “SS: ...having some English videos inside the classroom.”

A Pre-Intermediate student suggested having more TOEFEL classes, explaining:

“SS: Either to cancel the TOEFEL or make it a daily lesson because it is just once a week.”. The same Pre-Intermediate student added that there should be a big hall for learning English using games, saying: “SS: Yes a big hall for learning English using games.” The same Pre-Intermediate student suggested having a separate book for each skill, adding “SS: The books have all the skills together and the students are confused.”

Another Pre-Intermediate student suggested using games in learning English, saying

“SS: Teaching us using games.” The same Pre-Intermediate student also suggested having a different book for each skill, saying: “SS: We want different book for “reading” and another one for “grammar”.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

This Chapter summarises the findings of the study. It is also about the Limitations of the study and Recommendations for future practice and research.

6.1 Summary of Findings

This study finds that the learning teaching beliefs that both teachers and students have may affect Teacher Engagement and Teacher-Student relationship inside the classroom. The study explores more the learning routines that students used to for long years in the school system and how the students are still following these learning styles at University Level. There might be other factors that are affecting both students and teachers' learning-teaching process such as the rules followed by the educational workplace including the materials used in teaching and the basics for forming students' levels.

Teacher-Engagement is a very important factor for teaching effectiveness and motivating the students. Teachers' emotional engagement is very important for the teachers since teaching is an emotional process where emotions of both teachers and students interact with each other. For example, teachers may feel worried about their students' exams and may empathise with the students if they get low grades.

This study expands the area of work engagement research instead of always relating work engagement with job satisfaction and administration demands. In this research teacher engagement is also related to other factors which may affect teachers' satisfaction more than others, since the teachers spend most of their time with their students. This study also explore how other factors such as cultural differences can affect work engagement, especially when working in different countries. Emotional engagement in any job could be considered as the basics of work engagement despite the environment that the employee is exposed to. For example, a teacher who really finds teaching interesting will try every possible way to overcome any difficulties they face outside the classroom. This means that in our future research about work engagement, we should first check if that job was the employee's first choice since internal factors are more important than the external ones.

6.2 Limitations

There are many limitations to this study. For example, the research was applied in one institution and did not include any other educational institutes. This could be because due to the sensitivity of the research it may be difficult to get approval from any other educational workplaces.

In addition, although students' learning beliefs come from school systems were they get to be used to for long years, schools teachers or any of the policy makers in schools were not included. This could be because that there was enough explanation in the recent literature review about the school system and the difficulties the system is facing until today. Moreover, some of the teachers who were interviewed in this study worked in school before or worked on a research related to schools including observations of some of the teachers and trainers working in schools.

Furthermore, all the teachers participated in this study were expatriate teachers since these were the only teachers teaching during that semester. Including Omani teachers may not make a big difference, since the big challenge comes from the students' educational and cultural background and not from the teachers. As some students state that having a teacher from a different culture may encourage them to have strong relationship and to practice the language.

Having only three diaries during a semester may also be considered a limitation. The researcher was planning to have more diaries, but because of the limit of time which was only a semester to apply this research. In addition, it will be difficult for the teachers to complete more than three diaries during the semester due to their teaching responsibilities. There also should be the same time limit between each diary.

6.3 Recommendations for practice

There should be some job resources available for both teachers and students to overcome the job demands that are affecting teacher engagement inside the classroom. Starting from the schools' system, there should be real practice for communication skills in English classes. Students at schools should be exposed to real English by taking them to trips or activities outside the school where they meet real speakers of the language and practice using the English language. Technology should also be provided to schools, so that the students can use online resources and practice using the language with students from other countries of the world who are native speakers of the language. Students should also be given activities which encourage them to practice using the language in their own environment such as speaking activity to practice the language with their families or friends outside the school. Teachers at schools should also take the students and organise some visits to the language centres at the universities. During these visits the students should have an idea about the university system and how it is different from the school system. School teachers should also meet university language centres teachers during these visits, so that they can identify students' difficulties in learning the language and work together to find solutions for the students.

At university level, the teachers should be given an induction week to explain to them the students' educational and cultural background, so that the teachers can have an idea about what kind of students they will have inside the classroom and how to deal with them. The students should also be informed during the induction week how to behave with teachers from different culture and what are the teachers expecting from them. The students should also be trained how to be independent by organising some competitions about reading more English books and watching more English programmes. The administration should also help both teachers and students by trying as much as possible to set more flexible timetables, so that the students will not lose their interest in learning the language. The learning objectives which are given to the teachers to achieve at the end of the course should be more adequate to students' level. The exams should also match these learning objectives, so that the results will not affect the learning- teaching process inside the classroom.

6.4 Recommendations for Further Research

There are some recommendations for future research related to this study. For example, learning –teaching beliefs should be explored in depth by observing some classes at both university and school level. In addition, each of the four skills, Speaking, Reading, Writing and listening should be investigated separately, so that we can know where exactly the students’ main difficulty is. Interviews should also be conducted to school teachers and students.

Engagement Teachers’ Scale can also be applied for a longer period to collect more diaries. For example, for the whole year, so that we can measure the changes in Teacher –Engagement Scale during the year and explain it according to the circumstances related to each period of the year.

Another idea is using a scale to measure Student Engagement of these teachers to see if Student Engagement is related to their Teacher Engagement. Student Engagement could also be measured more than once to see if there is a relation between the changes in both teachers and students’ Engagement.

Teacher-Student Relationship Scale (QTI) could also be measured over time for both teachers and students, by having both teachers and students’ versions, to see if teacher-student relationship is changing over the year. Different domains of QTI could be compared to see if strictness or friendliness is more related to Teacher Engagement.

Interviews should also be conducted to management teams from Ministry of Education to explore the reasons behind students’ difficulties in learning English and why some students and teachers at schools are still following memorisation and translation in learning English.

There also should be further research on how to design workshops to help the expatriate teachers to understand the culture of other students. The teachers should be given an orientation week describing the situations that they may face inside the classroom and how to deal with them. Students should also be aware about the university system and how it is different from the school system. Training workshops should be conducted for both teachers and students.

6.5 Conclusions

In conclusions, Teacher Engagement is an important factor for achieving teacher's well-being and Teacher Engagement should be checked by the management from time to time, so that any job demands will be revised and solved. In addition, there should be good relationship between teachers and students. Finally, students should get enough support to change their learning beliefs which are affecting their teacher's engagement and may affect students' employment in the future.

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Appendix A :Teachers' Questionnaire

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*

PSYCHOLOGY IN EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTRE

Informed Consent Form

I understand that I am being invited to participate in a research study conducted by Salama Al-Ruqaishi. The study will take approximately 5 minutes and will be presented to you three times in the next six weeks.

I understand that the purpose of this research study is to explore teachers' engagement within the classroom.

I understand that should I wish to ask questions about the project prior to taking part in the study, this option is available to me.

I understand that I will be providing information through answering this questionnaire.

I understand that I may decline to answer any questions and that I may withdraw my agreement to participate at any time during the study or for up to 14 days after completion of the study. At that time, I know that I may indicate whether or not the data collected up to that point can be used in the study, and that any information I do not want used will be destroyed immediately.

I understand that no other use will be made of the data without my written permission and that any responses will be recorded solely for the purpose of analysis. I understand that the data will be handled and stored for five years in a manner that ensures that only the researcher can identify me as their source. Personal details will be held electronically in a password protected or encrypted area and hard copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. I understand that I am being offered confidentiality in any written report or oral presentation that draws upon data from this research study, and that none of my comments, opinions or responses will be attributed to me, or to any other person discussed in the study.

I understand that this research study has been reviewed and received ethics approval following the procedures of the Department of Educational Studies, University of York.

If you have any questions, please contact, my supervisor,

**Professor Robert Klassen (robert.klassen@york.ac.uk) or
Education Research Administrator, Helen Parker, (educ529@york.ac.uk).**

Completion of the questionnaire indicates consent.

Teachers' Questionnaire

The Code consists of

(First two letters of your mother's first name, date of birth, month of birth)

e.g. First two letters of my mother's first name: AZ

Date of birth: 14

Month of birth: October = Month number "10"

My code is: AZ- 14- 10

Teacher's Code: - -, - -, - -

- 1- Gender: **Male/Female**
- 2- Age:
- 3- Nationality:
- 4- Teaching qualifications relevant to EFL/ESL teaching:
- 5- Other teaching qualifications:
- 6- Number of years of experience in English language teaching:
- 7- Number of years of experience in teaching other subjects:
- 8- Did you work as an English teacher in Oman before coming to the University of Nizwa? **YES NO**
- 9- Have you taught Arab students before coming to the University of Nizwa? **Yes No**
- 10-How many years or months of experience do you have at the University of Nizwa?
- 11-What course are you teaching this semester?

Below you will find a list of statements describing your general experiences as a teacher. Please indicate your personal response to each of these statements by circling the number that best represents your answer.

0 = Never 3 = Sometimes 6 = Always

	Never	Rarely	On occasion	Sometimes	Often	Frequently	Always
1. I am excited about teaching.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I feel happy while teaching.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I love teaching.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I find teaching fun.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. - In class, I show warmth to my students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. In class, I am aware of my students' feelings.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. In class, I care about the problems of my students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. In class, I am empathetic towards my students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Never Seldom Sometimes Often Always
 0 1 2 3 4

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
9. I help students with their work.	0	1	2	3	4
10. I am a friendly teacher.	0	1	2	3	4
11. Students can depend on me.	0	1	2	3	4
12. I have a sense of humour.	0	1	2	3	4
13. I can take a joke.	0	1	2	3	4
14. My class is pleasant.	0	1	2	3	4
15. I trust students.	0	1	2	3	4
16. If I don't agree with the students, we can talk about it.	0	1	2	3	4
17. I am willing to explain things again.	0	1	2	3	4
18. If students have something to say, I will listen.	0	1	2	3	4
19. I realise when students do not understand.	0	1	2	3	4
20. I am a patient teacher.	0	1	2	3	4

Strongly Disagree **Disagree** **Undecided** **Agree** **Strongly Agree**
0 **1** **2** **3** **4**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
21. Students want teachers to have a more traditional, teacher-centred role.	0	1	2	3	4
22. Students want teachers to correct their errors.	0	1	2	3	4
23. Students want teachers to provide them with a model.	0	1	2	3	4
24. Students want teachers to provide plenty of in-class student discussions.	0	1	2	3	4
25. Students want teachers to encourage them to be independent learners.	0	1	2	3	4

Appendix B: Teachers' First Diary Questions

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*

PSYCHOLOGY IN EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTRE

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I understand that should I wish to ask questions about the project prior to taking part in the study, this option is available to me.

I understand that I will be providing information through a diary.

I understand that I may decline to answer any questions and that I may withdraw my agreement to participate at any time during the study or for up to 14 days after completion of the study. At that time, I know that I may indicate whether or not the data collected up to that point can be used in the study, and that any information I do not want used will be destroyed immediately.

I understand that no other use will be made of the data without my written permission and that any responses will be recorded solely for the purpose of analysis. I understand that the data will be handled and stored for five years in a manner that ensures that only the researcher can identify me as their source. Personal details will be held electronically in a password protected or encrypted area and hard copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. I understand that I am being offered confidentiality in any written report or oral presentation that draws upon data from this research study, and that none of my comments, opinions or responses will be attributed to me, or to any other person discussed in the study.

I understand that this research study has been reviewed and received ethics approval following the procedures of the Department of Educational Studies, University of York.

If you have any questions, please contact, my supervisor,
Professor Robert Klassen (robert.klassen@york.ac.uk) or
Education Research Administrator, Helen Parker, (educ529@york.ac.uk).

Completion of the questionnaire indicates consent.

First Diary

The Code consists of

**(First two letters of your mother's first name, date of birth,
month of birth)**

e.g. First two letters of my mother's first name: AZ

Date of birth: 14

Month of birth: October = Month number "10"

My code is: AZ- 14- 10

Teacher's Code: - -, - -, - -

1- Gender: **Male/Female**

2-Age:

3-Nationality:

4- Teaching qualifications relevant to EFL/ESL teaching:

5- Other teaching qualifications:

6- Number of years of experience in English language teaching:

7- Number of years of experience in teaching other subjects:

8- Did you work as an English teacher in Oman before coming to the University of Nizwa? **YES NO**

9- Have you taught Arab students before coming to the University of Nizwa? **Yes No**

10-How many years or months of experience do you have at the University of Nizwa?

11-What course are you teaching this semester?

Below you will find a list of statements describing your experience as a teacher **DURING THE LAST TWO WEEKS.**

Please indicate your personal response to each of these statements by circling the number that best represents your answer.

0 = Never 3 = Sometimes 6 = Always

DURING THE LAST TWO WEEKS

	Never	Rarely	On occasion	Sometimes	Often	Frequently	Always
1. I was excited about teaching.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I felt happy while teaching.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I loved teaching.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I found teaching fun.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Never	Rarely	On occasion	Sometimes	Often	Frequently	Always
5. In class, I showed warmth to my students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. In class, I was aware of my students' feelings.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. In class, I cared about the problems of my students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. In class, I was empathetic towards my students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

9- What challenges did you face inside the classroom during the last two weeks which made it difficult to be engaged with the students?

Appendix C: Teachers' Second Diary Questions

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*

PSYCHOLOGY IN EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTRE

Informed Consent Form

I understand that I am being invited to participate in a research study conducted by Salama Al-Ruqaishi. The study will take approximately 5 minutes and will be presented to you three times in the next six weeks.

I understand that the purpose of this research study is to explore teachers' engagement within the classroom.

I understand that should I wish to ask questions about the project prior to taking part in the study, this option is available to me.

I understand that I will be providing information through a diary.

I understand that I may decline to answer any questions and that I may withdraw my agreement to participate at any time during the study or for up to 14 days after completion of the study. At that time, I know that I may indicate whether or not the data collected up to that point can be used in the study, and that any information I do not want used will be destroyed immediately.

I understand that no other use will be made of the data without my written permission and that any responses will be recorded solely for the purpose of analysis. I understand that the data will be handled and stored for five years in a manner that ensures that only the researcher can identify me as their source. Personal details will be held electronically in a password protected or encrypted area and hard copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. I understand that I am being offered confidentiality in any written report or oral presentation that draws upon data from this research study, and that none of my comments, opinions or responses will be attributed to me, or to any other person discussed in the study.

I understand that this research study has been reviewed and received ethics approval following the procedures of the Department of Educational Studies, University of York.

If you have any questions, please contact, my supervisor,
Professor Robert Klassen (robert.klassen@york.ac.uk) or
Education Research Administrator, Helen Parker, (educ529@york.ac.uk).

Completion of the questionnaire indicates consent.

Second Diary

The Code consists of

(First two letters of your mother's first name, your date of birth, your month of birth)

e.g. First two letters of my mother's first name: AZ

My date of birth: 14

My month of birth: October = Month number "10"

My code is: AZ- 14- 10

Teacher's Code: - -, - -, - -

1-Gender: **Male/Female**

2-Age:

3-Nationality:

4- What course are you teaching this semester?

Pre- Foundation A

Pre-Foundation B

Elementary

Elementary Consolidation

Pre-intermediate

Pre-intermediate Consolidation

Below you will find a list of statements describing your experience as a teacher **DURING THE LAST TWO WEEKS.**

Please indicate your personal response to each of these statements by circling the number that best represents your answer.

0 = Never 3 = Sometimes 6 = Always

DURING THE LAST TWO WEEKS

	Never	Rarely	On occasion	Sometimes	Often	Frequently	Always
1. I was excited about teaching.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I felt happy while teaching.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I loved teaching.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I found teaching fun.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Never	Rarely	On occasion	Sometimes	Often	Frequently	Always
5. In class, I showed warmth to my students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. In class, I was aware of my students' feelings.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. In class, I cared about the problems of my students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. In class, I was empathetic towards my students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

9- What challenges did you face inside the classroom during the last two weeks which made it difficult to be engaged with the students?

Appendix D: Teachers' Third Diary Questions

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*

PSYCHOLOGY IN EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTRE

Informed Consent Form

I understand that I am being invited to participate in a research study conducted by Salama Al-Ruqaishi. The study will take approximately 5 minutes and will be presented to you three times in the next six weeks.

I understand that the purpose of this research study is to explore teachers' engagement within the classroom.

I understand that should I wish to ask questions about the project prior to taking part in the study, this option is available to me.

I understand that I will be providing information through a diary.

I understand that I may decline to answer any questions and that I may withdraw my agreement to participate at any time during the study or for up to 14 days after completion of the study. At that time, I know that I may indicate whether or not the data collected up to that point can be used in the study, and that any information I do not want used will be destroyed immediately.

I understand that no other use will be made of the data without my written permission and that any responses will be recorded solely for the purpose of analysis. I understand that the data will be handled and stored for five years in a manner that ensures that only the researcher can identify me as their source. Personal details will be held electronically in a password protected or encrypted area and hard copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. I understand that I am being offered confidentiality in any written report or oral presentation that draws upon data from this research study, and that none of my comments, opinions or responses will be attributed to me, or to any other person discussed in the study.

I understand that this research study has been reviewed and received ethics approval following the procedures of the Department of Educational Studies, University of York.

If you have any questions, please contact, my supervisor,
Professor Robert Klassen (robert.klassen@york.ac.uk) or

Education Research Administrator, Helen Parker, (educ529@york.ac.uk).

Completion of the questionnaire indicates consent.

Third Diary

The Code consists of

(First two letters of your mother's first name, your date of birth, your month of birth)

e.g. First two letters of my mother's first name: AZ

My date of birth: 14

My month of birth: October = Month number "10"

My code is: AZ- 14- 10

Teacher's Code: - -, - -, - -

1- Gender: **Male/Female**

2- Age:

3-Nationality:

4- What course are you teaching this semester?

Pre- Foundation A

Pre-Foundation B

Elementary

Elementary Consolidation

Pre-intermediate

Pre-intermediate Consolidation

Below you will find a list of statements describing your experience as a teacher **DURING THE LAST TWO WEEKS.**

Please indicate your personal response to each of these statements by circling the number that best represents your answer.

0 = Never 3 = Sometimes 6 = Always

DURING THE LAST TWO WEEKS

	Never	Rarely	On occasion	Sometimes	Often	Frequently	Always
1. I was excited about teaching.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I felt happy while teaching.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I loved teaching.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I found teaching fun.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Never	Rarely	On occasion	Sometimes	Often	Frequently	Always
5. In class, I showed warmth to my students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. In class, I was aware of my students' feelings.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. In class, I cared about the problems of my students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. In class, I was empathetic towards my students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

9- What challenges did you face inside the classroom during the last two weeks which made it difficult to be engaged with the students?

Appendix E: Students' Questionnaire

Informed Consent Form

I understand that I am being invited to participate in a research study conducted by Salama Al-Ruqaishi. The study will take approximately two months.

I understand that the purpose of this research study is to explore teachers' engagement within the classroom.

I understand that should I wish to ask questions about the project prior to taking part in the study, this option is available to me.

I understand that I will be providing information through answering this questionnaire.

I understand that I may decline to answer any questions and that I may withdraw my agreement to participate at any time during the study or for up to 14 days after completion of the study. At that time, I know that I may indicate whether or not the data collected up to that point can be used in the study, and that any information I do not want used will be destroyed immediately.

I understand that no other use will be made of the data without my written permission and that any responses will be recorded solely for the purpose of analysis. I understand that the data will be handled and stored for five years in a manner that ensures that only the researcher can identify me as their source. Personal details will be held electronically in a password protected or encrypted area and hard copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. I understand that I am being offered confidentiality in any written report or oral presentation that draws upon data from this research study, and that none of my comments, opinions or responses will be attributed to me, or to any other person discussed in the study.

I understand that this research study has been reviewed and received ethics approval following the procedures of the Department of Educational Studies, University of York.

**If you have any questions, please contact, my supervisor,
Professor Robert Klassen (robert.klassen@york.ac.uk) or**

Education Research Administrator, Helen Parker, (educ529@york.ac.uk).

Completion of the questionnaire indicates consent.

Students' Questionnaire

1-Nationality:

2- Age:

3- Gender: **Male/Female**

4- Level: **Pre-Foundation "A"** **Pre-Foundation "B"**

Elementary

Elementary

Consolidation

Pre-Intermediate

Pre-Intermediate

Consolidation

5- Are you studying this level for the first time: **Yes/No**

6- Year of study at University of Nizwa:

First Year **Second Year** **Third Year**

7- Student transfer from other college: **Yes/ No**

8- Governate student coming from:

9- Type of school where the student finished grade 12:

Government/ Private

10 - Type of grade 12 diploma student has:

General Education "B" / Post Basic Education "A"

11- Overall percentage of grade 12 Diploma:

12- English mark in Grade "12" Diploma :

Below you will find a list of statements describing your general experiences as a student. Please indicate your personal response to each of these statements by circling the number that best represents your answer.

Social Engagement

: Teacher

Never Rarely On occasion Sometimes Often Frequently Always

- | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1- | In class, our teacher shows warmth to us. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2- | In class, our teacher is aware of our feelings. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3- | In class, our teacher cares about our problems. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4- | In class, our teacher is empathetic towards us. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
0	1	2	3	4

Helpful/Friendly (QTI)

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
5- This teacher helps us with our work.	0	1	2	3	4
6- This teacher is friendly.	0	1	2	3	4
7- This teacher is someone we can depend on.	0	1	2	3	4
8- This teacher has a sense of humour.	0	1	2	3	4
9- This teacher can take a joke.	0	1	2	3	4

10-This teacher's class
is pleasant. 0 1 2 3 4

Understanding (QTI)

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	
Always					
11- This teacher trusts us.	0	1	2	3	4
12- If we don't agree with this teacher, we can talk about it.	0	1	2	3	4
13- This teacher is willing to explain things again.	0	1	2	3	4
14- If we have something to say, this teacher will listen.	0	1	2	3	4

15- This teacher realises when we don't understand. 0 1 2 3 4

16- This teacher is patient. 0 1 2 3 4

Strongly Disagree Disagree Undecided Agree Strongly Agree
0 1 2 3 4

Learning- Teaching Mismatch

Strongly Disagree Disagree Undecided Agree Strongly Agree
 17- I want the teacher to have a more traditional, teacher-centred role. 0 1 2 3 4

18- I want the teacher to correct my errors. 0 1 2 3 4

19- I want the teacher to provide me with a model. 0 1 2 3 4

20- I want the teacher to provide plenty of in-class student discussions. 0 1 2 3 4

21- I want the teacher to encourage me to be an independent learner. 0 1 2 3 4

22- What are the challenges that you face when you are trying to engage with the teacher within the classroom?

Appendix F: Teachers' Interview Questions

Informed Consent Form

I understand that I am being invited to participate in a research study conducted by Salama Al-Ruqaishi. The study will take approximately two months.

I understand that the purpose of this research study is to explore teachers' engagement within the classroom.

I understand that should I wish to ask questions about the project prior to taking part in the study, this option is available to me.

I understand that I will be providing information through a semi-structured interview.

I understand that I may decline to answer any questions and that I may withdraw my agreement to participate at any time during the study or for up to 14 days after completion of the study. At that time, I know that I may indicate whether or not the data collected up to that point can be used in the study, and that any information I do not want used will be destroyed immediately.

I understand that no other use will be made of the data without my written permission and that any responses will be recorded solely for the purpose of analysis. I understand that the data will be handled and stored for five years in a manner that ensures that only the researcher can identify me as their source. Personal details will be held electronically in a password protected or encrypted area and hard copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. I understand that I am being offered confidentiality in any written report or oral presentation that draws upon data from this research study, and that none of my comments, opinions or responses will be attributed to me, or to any other person discussed in the study.

I understand that this research study has been reviewed and received ethics approval following the procedures of the Department of Educational Studies, University of York.

If you have any questions, please contact, my supervisor,

Professor Robert Klassen (robert.klassen@york.ac.uk) or

Education Research Administrator, Helen Parker, (educ529@york.ac.uk).

Your involvement in the interview indicates consent.

Interview Questions for Teachers

- 1- What are the challenges that you face when you are trying to engage with the students within the classroom?**
- 2- What do you think are the challenges that students have which make it difficult to engage with them?**
- 3- Do you think other factors ,such as teacher –student relationships, may affect the teacher’s engagement inside the classroom ?**
- 4- What job resources do you think should be available to enhance both students’ and teachers’engagement inside the classroom?**

Appendix G: Students' Interview Questions

Informed Consent Form

I understand that I am being invited to participate in a research study conducted by Salama Al-Ruqaishi. The study will take approximately two months.

I understand that the purpose of this research study is to explore teachers' engagement within the classroom.

I understand that should I wish to ask questions about the project prior to taking part in the study, this option is available to me.

I understand that I will be providing information through a semi-structured interview.

I understand that I may decline to answer any questions and that I may withdraw my agreement to participate at any time during the study or for up to 14 days after completion of the study. At that time, I know that I may indicate whether or not the data collected up to that point can be used in the study, and that any information I do not want used will be destroyed immediately.

I understand that no other use will be made of the data without my written permission and that any responses will be recorded solely for the purpose of analysis. I understand that the data will be handled and stored for five years in a manner that ensures that only the researcher can identify me as their source. Personal details will be held electronically in a password protected or encrypted area and hard copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. I understand that I am being offered confidentiality in any written report or oral presentation that draws upon data from this research study, and that none of my comments, opinions, or responses will be attributed to me, or to any other person discussed in the study.

I understand that this research study has been reviewed and received ethics approval following the procedures of the Department of Educational Studies, University of York.

If you have any questions, please contact, my supervisor, Professor Robert Klassen (robert.klassen@york.ac.uk) or Education Research Administrator, Helen Parker, (educ529@york.ac.uk).

Your involvement in the interview indicates consent.

Interview Questions for Students

- 1- What are the challenges that you face when you are trying to engage with the teacher within the classroom?**
- 2- What do you think are the challenges that other students have which make it difficult for the teacher to engage with them?**
- 3- Do you think other factors, such as teacher –student relationships, may affect teacher engagement inside the classroom?**
- 4- What job resources do you think should be available to enhance both teachers' and students' engagement inside the classroom?**

Appendix H: Management Interview Questions

Informed Consent Form

I understand that I am being invited to participate in a research study conducted by Salama Al-Ruqaishi. The study will take approximately two months.

I understand that the purpose of this research study is to explore teachers' engagement within the classroom.

I understand that should I wish to ask questions about the project prior to taking part in the study, this option is available to me.

I understand that I will be providing information through a semi-structured interview.

I understand that I may decline to answer any questions and that I may withdraw my agreement to participate at any time during the study or for up to 14 days after completion of the study. At that time, I know that I may indicate whether or not the data collected up to that point can be used in the study, and that any information I do not want used will be destroyed immediately.

I understand that no other use will be made of the data without my written permission and that any responses will be recorded solely for the purpose of analysis. I understand that the data will be handled and stored for five years in a manner that ensures that only the researcher can identify me as their source. Personal details will be held electronically in a password protected or encrypted area and hard copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. I understand that I am being offered confidentiality in any written report or oral presentation that draws upon data from this research study, and that none of my comments, opinions or responses will be attributed to me, or to any other person discussed in the study.

I understand that this research study has been reviewed and received ethics approval following the procedures of the Department of Educational Studies, University of York.

If you have any questions, please contact, my supervisor, Professor Robert Klassen, (robert.klassen@york.ac.uk) or Education Research Administrator, Helen Parker, (educ529@york.ac.uk).

Your involvement in the interview indicates consent.

Interview Questions for Management

- 1- In which perceptions do you find the mismatch between teachers and students mostly happened? Cultural? Learning-Teaching?**

- 2- What do you think are the challenges that teachers face when they try to engage with the students within the classroom?**

- 3- Do you think other factors ,such as teacher –student relationships ,may affect teacher engagement within the classroom ?**

- 4- What job resources do you think should be available to enhance both students' and teachers 'engagement within the classroom?**

Appendix I: Interview Transcript Teacher 1

(21:02 min total)

Interviewer: Q

Interviewee: A

Q :Thank you very much for your time.

A: You're welcome.

Q: Have you read the consent form? It's just about do you agree to do this interview.

A: Yep. That's fine.

Q: Okay. Thank you very much.

So I think you have been here since - a long time.

A: I think, maybe, four years now? Almost four years. Three years and ten months or something.

Q: So you know a lot about the students here and - is this your first experience in Oman or did you work in other places?

A: This is my first experience, when I came here. It's the first time in Oman.

Q: And in the Middle East.

A: And my first time in the Gulf. Yeah.

Q: So how did you find it at the beginning when you come here - if you just remember in your first year - to deal with the students?

A: When I first came, I think I was lucky. When I first came I was given the top section in the university - in foundation. It was section 1 of level 4. The best, best students. So, when I came, I was very impressed. I thought that there was quite a high level of ability. A very high level of communication ability and also sort of writing and grammar was excellent. So that was my first impression, but it wasn't very accurate, because later I

found out that - when I taught other levels, I realised it wasn't quite so good. I was just lucky that first time. [01:41]

Q: Did you find it difficult to understand the student culture when you first came here?

A: Uhm...

Q: Inside the classroom, I mean. Their behaviour or their attitude.

A: Not so much. I taught in universities before, and I found the student here generally - there's a similar kind of attitude. I think there the students work well together, they have that kind of idea of working in a group or being part of a group, so I think that was something I'm used to. What was different here is that here it's always - you spend a lot of time with the same students. Previously, I would see the same students two or three times a week, and, here, I see them twice a day - two times every day - so there's a lot more contact with the classes here. [02:40]

Q: Okay. Do you feel bored when you see the students - or do you take advantage of this?

A: I don't feel bored. I think I worry that they'll feel bored when they see me. There are advantages and disadvantages. I think seeing students too much means that it's difficult for me to always make it interesting or vital for the students. You know, I have lots of fun activities, but not that many. They run out after a certain amount of time, whereas, if you see the students less, it's sort of easier to keep the interest level up. On the other hand, here, I remember my students' names, and that's nice. There's a much better relationship with the students, because I can remember everyone's names. I know who they are and their strengths and weaknesses. [03:36]

Q: You said when you came here for the first time you got, like, the top students. Okay. Now, the students this semester - how did you find them? I think elementary?

A: Now elementary, yes. Actually, I've got a nice section again. Not so much in their abilities. They're quite good, but they're at elementary level. But I have really nice students this semester that are very motivated, and that makes all the difference. When they want to work hard, it makes it a lot easier to teach. They listen to what I say and they do their homework, which is very nice. So, previous semesters, I've not always had that, but now - yeah, they're good students. [04:19]

Q: Okay. When, for example, if you didn't have that good student, do you think this affect your emotional engagement towards teaching, that you don't find teaching fun anymore and you don't feel excited about teaching?

A: Oh, totally. Totally. I've had classes where I can tell that the students don't care, they don't want to be here, they want to finish as soon as possible, and, if I tell them things, they're not really listening, they're playing with their phones - that makes me not very motivated for the class because I know whatever I do for them they don't really care, so I don't feel the same motivation or the same desire to do well by them or to spend time on making good exercises for them. [05:08]

Q: So you think also the students' level can affect teachers' motivation and engagement?

A: Level not so much. More the students' motivation. If you have students of a very low level that really want to learn, then that's fine. I think that can be very motivating for the teacher as well. The problem is students that aren't motivated. If they don't want to learn, whatever level they're at - even if they're really, really good - if they're not interested in learning more, then that's demotivating for the teacher. That makes it feel frustrating. [05:46]

Q: Why do you think some students are not motivated?

A: So many reasons why students might not be, and it's an interesting thing. I think...

Q: Do you think cultural or something?

A: I think it's partly cultural. I think it's often where they've come from - the culture they - the schools they've been in before here. I think some students come here thinking they can pass whatever they do. It doesn't matter, they will pass. So they think that they don't have to try, and then they don't try. They think it's boring and they don't want to just get higher scores. There are some students that come here and they want to learn, but - I guess another thing is what are the reasons for coming here. If they come here because the family says they have to come here, then they're not going to be motivated. If they come here because they have a career they want to do - they want to achieve something - then they're normally more motivated. [06:56]

Q: Okay. Do you think if you have a class of some students who are not motivated can affect the students who are motivated or can affect the teacher - even if they are just a small group?

A: Totally. I mean that's - it depends on the individuals. It's the louder students. If the louder students are motivated and the quiet students aren't motivated, it doesn't really affect the class too much. There might be some students who don't get involved, but most of the class sort of stays involved. If you have loud students that aren't motivated, then it can be problem because they can disrupt it for the rest of the class and make the teacher feel bad. [07:36]

Q: So this also can affect teacher also.

A: Totally. Yeah.

Q: And emotions. Okay. How do you think the relationship between the teacher and the student should be like inside the classroom? How friendly? How trustful?

A: Well, I think it should be friendly and trustful. I like it if I can sort of have - talk frankly with my students, and I like it if it's more - I feel like we should be working together. When their goal is to learn more, I feel like I'm working with them to reach their goal to learn English. It's a problem - you can't always be like that. There are times when if there are unmotivated students who don't care then it's more like

the teacher is trying to trick them into learning or to force them into learning, and that's a different kind of relationship. That's more, sort of, an authoritarian relationship where the teacher has to be an authority. I don't like that. Sometimes it has to be like that, but I prefer when it's not. I prefer it when you can be sort of working together for the same goal. [08:45]

Q: So you think the relationship also depends on the students' level of motivation.

A: That's right. Yeah. Totally

Q: How can the teacher trust the students?

A: How can - you mean how they show trust?

Q: Yes, or the teacher trust the students.

A: I think trust sort of develops over time. As a teacher you learn what the attitudes of the students are and you sort of begin to realise what you can trust them about, what you can't - for instance, when my students say, "Teacher, I really need to go to the bathroom." Most of the time they don't need to go to the bathroom. They just want to skip out of class for a few minutes, and, to be honest, they don't do it very often, so I mostly let them. If they did it all the time, I wouldn't let them. Another example is if students say that they're sick and can they leave early or can they miss the next class. It's nice with my current class. I can trust them. With my current class, if they say they're feeling sick, I would let them go, and I believe them. Previous classes I've had, I would not do that because I know they will do it every class or they will do it too many times. I know that it's not something that I can trust. [10:19]

Q: So also it depends also on the students?

A: Yeah. It's a relationship that you build up with the students, so it depends on them.

Q: So the relationship can be friendly or authoritative - depends also on the students.

A: Yeah. That's right.

Q: Do you think the students here - from your experience - they like traditional teacher-centred role. They don't like discussion or group discussion. They want the teacher to feed them all the time.

A: That's an interesting question. I've had groups - both sides. I've had groups that prefer discussion and working in groups and I've also had classes where they really didn't like anything that wasn't just a teacher teaching. So I think it's very mixed. I think you get different things in different groups. As a teacher, I find that it's often difficult to manage some kinds of group discussion work. It really needs a class that want to work that way. In some classes you can say okay, get into groups and talk about this problem, and then five minutes later you ask them what they've talked about and they have nothing. They've not talked about anything for five minutes or they've been talking about what was on TV last night, or something. And then other groups you can tell that to and they'll just get down to it and have great ideas. I think it's - that's not so much motivation, but it's partly motivation. I think it's also just individual learning styles - what different people like. [11:57]

Q: So you mean it is sometimes positive to have traditional teacher-centred role, for some students?

A: Some students seem to like that? There's a range. It's not just either teacher-centred or student-centred. I think there's a difference between sort of structured learning and unstructured learning. I think the less structured it is, the more difficult that can be. For instance, talking in groups is very unstructured. It's student-centred, but it's unstructured, whereas I'll often have students working on questions together - it's sort of somewhere in between traditional teaching and modern teaching, 'cause they're still working together, but they're working on very fixed questions. [12:50]

Q: Do you think also, our students, they like the teacher to correct their errors all the time and they want an answer model?

A: Yeah. The good ones do. There are some students just don't care, but, yeah, most of them - if they've done the

work, they want to know if they've got it right, otherwise they're not learning anything, I think. They have to have the results.

Q: So you think the feedback is an important thing for the students and for you as a teacher also?

A: Yeah. Totally. I mean, in very open activities like discussions or communicative activities, then it's not so important, but that's actually quite a small part of what we do in foundation. Mainly it's centred around the skills reading listening, writing, so there's much less of that, and for all the skills - listening, reading, writing and grammar as well - the feedback is very important because they are not going to get better if they don't know what they are doing wrong. [13:54]

Q: Which skills did you find, in general, the most difficult skill for the students?

A: Uhm...

Q: Do they like speaking, for example? Do they speak?

A: Actually, I think speaking could be the worst skill - the most difficult. Not so much in their ability, but, I think, we don't do a lot of it. Actually, I think they are good at communicating. When we have things like the presentation, they are not very good at speaking English accurately, 'cause they don't get much practice at it, but I don't know if that's terribly important. If they can communicate, that's fine. Next up would be writing. Writing is an issue for a lot of students. Just getting to that stage of having structured writing is very difficult for a lot of students. Grammar, obviously, is difficult, but it just stays difficult forever. There's always more to learn. [15:06]

Q: And listening - do you find that they understand it? They get answers?

A: Generally I find listening - the listening and reading exercises that we do here - they have less trouble with. They tend to do better. I think they have less problems with those.

Q: So maybe writing is the main issue for the students.

A: Yes.

Q: Maybe it depends also on the level of the students? They said listening, some of them.

A: Oh, okay.

Q: So it depends. Okay. Do you think the students here want the teacher here to encourage them to be independent? Are they really enough independent learners?

A: Some are, but not most.

Q: In which way are they independent or not?

A: There are some - they do sort of ask for help if they have problems with specific things. I've noticed that quite a lot. My students are quite happy to come and ask and say they have a problem with this grammar point or they don't know why they are getting a low mark in writing for one category. They have been asking about that, which is good, but it's very, very rare - from where I've taught before in China or Thailand, students would read books in English on their own because they wanted to or they'd watch movies in English on their own because they wanted to. I don't think they do that here very much. Some, but most students don't. It's unusual.
[16:43]

Q: So you think reading - they don't read a lot.

A: Yeah. Not things they don't have to read. Not things that aren't part of the course.

Q: So you have also got experience in China and...

A: ...Thailand.

Q: So Asian students.

A: Yeah.

Q: But this is your first with Arab students.

A: Yeah. Yeah. That's right.

Q: Okay. At the end, what suggestion would you like to give for the students who are not motivated and who are not enough independent?

A: Uhm...

Q: ...And for the teachers how to deal with such students?

A: Ooh, that's tough. If the teachers know how to deal with it, please tell me. ((laughter))

I'm not sure. For students to be motivated - I wish some of the students who kind of think they're going to pass anyway and sort of don't feel like it's important for them in their career - I wish I could explain to them more that it's actually a life skill. When they leave, English isn't going anywhere. All the movies that they like or a lot of the movies they like will be English first and a lot of the media that is on the Internet will be in English. They would experience much more out of life if their English is just a little bit better, and it's worth studying now to have that later in life. I'd like to say that. I don't know how many would listen. ((laughs)) [18:14]

Q: Yes. So maybe you think the students need someone to give them, like, workshops about the importance of English? Maybe in the induction week?

A: Possibly in induction week. Yeah.

Q: Maybe in Arabic if they don't understand English?

A: Possibly. Yeah. I sort of feel like for some of the students that aren't motivated giving them another talk about it - so sometimes you need to discover things. If they find something they like in English - if they find poetry they like or if they find TV shows, comic books - it doesn't matter what it is, but, if they find something that they feel strongly about, then they'll learn. But I don't know if having a lecture is going to help particularly.

Q: So you mean something practical - give them something practical?

A: Yeah. Give them something practical that's actually - yeah.

Q: And what about the teacher? What suggestions do you give for the teachers to deal with such students? For example, if I become stressed because my students, what advice would you give to me?

A: Always try something different. If something's not working or if the students are getting too frustrated, it's always worth trying new things. A friend of mine was a teacher and he said to me if you don't go into class - sometimes you go into class and you try something new and the students hate it and it's really bad and it's really a difficult class for you and difficult for the students - you have to do that sometimes. You have to try things. And if you're not having classes like that, that means you're not trying anything new and that's wrong. You should try. Sometimes it will be difficult, but more often it will be good and you'll have new things to work with. [20:01]

Q: So you mean the difficulties that the teacher experiences is not always a negative thing, sometimes it is positive?

A: Yeah. A bit of change is positive or it's a chance to improve or a chance to expand.

Q: And to get more experience with the students.

A: Yeah.

Q: Thank you very much for your time. Would you like to add anything else?

A: No, that's okay. Thank you very much for your time. It's been interesting.

Q: Would you like a transcript for your interview, 'cause I'm still not...

A: No, no. It's okay.

Q: Thank you very much.

END OF RECORDING

Key:

- indicates addition/interruption of thought or repetition

... indicates interrupted, incomplete utterance

(()) additional description

[00:00] indicates time

Appendix J: Interview Transcript Teacher 2

Q: Thank you very much for allowing me to do this interview with you. Have you read the consent form?

A: Yes.

Q: So you agree to do this interview.

A: Yeah, sure. I do.

Q: Thank you very much for your time.

A: You're very welcome.

Q: Tell me about your engagement with the students. What do you think are the main challenges that you face?

A: My current students - them classroom - or generally speaking in my career?

Q: In the classroom with Omani students.

A: With Omani students. Well,
- they are reticent and they don't tend to break the ice and start the conversation. Okay? Because what we do in our classes and what we have to care about is to increase students' talking time and reduce teacher's talking time, so this is a challenge for us. I would say that the most significant challenge that I face in my classes, specifically with Omani students, is that they are mere listeners. Their concept of classroom at the university, still, is that you have to sit down, do not speak and the teacher will just explain everything. That's the big issue I'm facing, but, still, I'm trying to - that would be the next question how I tackle with this challenge?
[01:34]

Q: No, you can talk.

A: Okay. So I try to design activities in a way that it demands the students to cooperate, to do pair work, group work so that the students work more, and also there is

something, as you know, in language teaching in particular, called TBLT (task-based language teaching). Students learn by doing some communicative tasks, and they need to interact, but it's still - the problem is that the teacher has to monitor very closely because students - if they feel that there is lack of monitoring, they would keep on Arabic - keep on speaking Arabic. So, if the monitoring is efficient and you designed the communicative tasks to reach you goal, then the students will be engaged. [02:21]

Q: Do you have male and female?

A: Yes. But two male students and the others are female. Eighteen female students.

Q: Do you feel the male are also shy or something?

A: Well, they are not shy, but, as I told you ... That's not because they are shy; that's because they think this is how a classroom should be like. You know? The classroom should be just that the students should be quiet and teacher should speak. This is the concept, so I'm just trying - every day I talk to them, you know, directly. Explicitly I explain that you need to speak more, this is your class, not mine, so use it - benefit from the class. [03:06]

Q: Do you find difficulty in understanding the culture of the students?

A: Not at all. Not at all. No. No. No. Not up to now. I haven't faced - I haven't encountered any issues, because, I told you, I know the culture. I know Arabic culture ...

Q: Maybe because you are one of them, so you know a lot about them.

A: And we have the same religion - so I know everything because of that.

Q: So you said you are designing activities for them?

A: Yes.

Q: How do you think the relationship between the teacher and the students should be inside the classroom?

A: Well, for one thing, if we want to - if we go all the way through based on some language methodologies that we study in books, the modern language methodology says that a teacher is a friend among friends. [04:09]

Q: Okay.

A: Or should be one of them. Of course, I don't agree with this. First of all, I don't agree because of some reasons - some scientific reasons - not just some personal ideas, Teacher needs to be a bit of authority in the classroom. Okay? Otherwise classroom management will be a problem for a teacher if this teacher is like a Western-style - a friend among friends. You know, we have some regulations, we have been taught some classroom rules in our culture -Anyway, so that's way. The relationship is friendly, but I'm not a friend. I'm not their friend, but the relationship, of course, friendly. The reason for that is I love my students. [05:05]

Q: So you like them?

A: I don't like them. I love them one by one. They are like my children. I have always loved my students so much. I've been teaching for fourteen years - thirteen years - a professional for twelve years and now students mean a lot to me. So that's why I always try to understand them. I was a student. I was not just a - I have not always been a teacher since I was born. So I understand them. I know how they feel in specific cases, and I watch my face, my gesture - you know, the emotions of students are very important to me. I can just damage the emotions by very simple action in class. I'm careful about my gestures, what I say, what I do - everything - posture - whatever. So I'm friendly, but not a friend, and I try to understand them. To put it short ((laughs)) [05:59]

Q: Do you think, for example, if the students have negative emotions in their face - does this affect you also in a negative way?

A: Well, used to. Not now. Not anymore. When I just started teaching it did affect me. It's still - I care about it. I care a lot. What's wrong? What's her problem? What's his problem? Is it something because of me or is it a personal problem? - whatever. I try to understand the student. I try, while they're doing activities - I try to approach the student and have a very short chat with him or her so I understand what's going on, but of course it affects teachers. It doesn't affect me now, but I care about it. [06:45]

Q: Even, for example, if you're trying your best but the students don't want to participate, they are still very passive - does this also make you, like, I don't like teaching anymore?

A: No, no. Come on.

Q: Does this affect your...

A: ...No, I'm too old to say this ((laughs))

Q: Do you mean the experience give you...

A: Of course.

Q: Even if it is not with these students?

A: Experience gives you more patience, more understanding, more perseverance in your teaching career - maybe once years ago when I just started teaching I said, okay, I'm not going to teach again. I don't like it, but now no, of course. I love teaching. [07:27]

Q: The beginning of your teaching career was, like...

A: ...Of course. More emotional at first. **Q:** Same for me. So I just want to ask you something - this is about the questionnaire.

How do think the teacher can care about the problems of the students? Inside the classroom, I mean.

A: What do you mean by problems? I mean, course-related problems or problems in personal life - private life?

Q: No, in the course. For example, when I ask the students, they said I want the teacher to understand when I am sick, when I want to leave early - these are the things.

A: Well, if you ask my students I have had - not just Omani students, because they don't know me much - if you ask my students who are teachers now, they will say that I'm a very strict one, but being strict doesn't mean that you just rule the roost - I mean, you do everything in the classroom and you don't care about the students. First of all, you have to distinguish between personal problems and the problems related to the course, but what I have tried - you know, I cannot be a good example for you to answer this question because I also care about their personal problems.

Q: You also care?

A: Yeah. If they have a problem in their family, usually they come and talk to me about all this.

Q: So, they trust you?

A: Of course. When my students get sick, I go mad. I become very sad. That upsets me a lot.[09:27]

Q: So this also affect you?

A: Of course it does. And the students - you know, the students are very clever. All of them. No matter how naive you think they are, and they sometimes might be, they're very clever, and they understand you. They test you and they evaluate you at the very beginning time you put your step in the classroom. You know? And there are two or three sessions. You may not know the students because there are many of them, but they have just one teacher. There is just one person all they need to care about. So they know their teachers - what their teacher likes, what he dislikes - you know? They know everything about their teacher, so they know that you're a caring one, actually. [10:11]

Q: Do you find your engagement with the students - the beginning of the course was more difficult and in the middle it is, like, easier.

A: Of course. As a person from a different country, as a foreigner, expat - whatever you may call it - it is difficult, although I knew the culture, although I knew the students' personal traits, whatever, blah, blah, blah - still, I think that it takes time for you to know the students. It has nothing to do with culture for me, because I know the culture. It has to do with their personal attitudes, personal traits. So, you have to know your students one by one. Now we are midway through, we just passed the mid-term, and now I feel that 100 per cent know the students. So, no. At first it seems difficult. [11:05]

Q: But now...

A: Now it's - yeah, yeah, yeah - we're on the way.

Q: Very good. You said you are patient with the students and you trust the students?

A: Sure.

Q: Even in their homework?

A: This is what they want their teachers to do. We were all students. So, did you like the picture of a teacher who was, like, an iron bar or a robot. No. We didn't like that. We would like a teacher who understands us, so I rely on these students on different things, and I trust the students. They like me to trust them. [11:45]

Q: When I ask, most of the students they say "We feel shy" - their fear is from other students in the class, not from the teacher that they would laugh at them. How do you think we can overcome this problem for the students?

A: That's a very - how would I put it?

Q: Even the male students they are shy from the female.

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I would say that's the gusto of teaching. That's a very delicate - that's a very narrow point of teaching. The atmosphere that the teacher creates is very important. A novice teacher who just teach the book - and the word teaching is so obvious is so obvious in novice teacher's classes. The students in

an experienced teacher's class should not notice that they're learning something, and the teacher should create a family class - even sometimes in class I laugh at myself. I make fun of myself, but not the students.

Q: Because they are sensitive.

A: Yeah. They know that I'm very sensitive about making fun of one another. They can't do it. I never directly say don't laugh, don't make fun of one another - no, they know this. I always make fun of myself in the classroom so that we all laugh together, and we have other reasons to laugh. Okay? The situation you create is very important. The atmosphere and, at least in my classes, it hardly ever happens. I try to encourage shy students to get more out of shy students than those who just tend to speak all the time - and that's good. I let them speak, because if you stop those who speak a lot - this is worse. The story is gonna to turn upside down, but I always try to ask more from those who are, well, shy. You understand shy students.

Q: Yes, because most of the students say "We are shy" and "Most of the students are speaking" and they are worried that they cannot reach that level, so they are worried about other students.

A: Yeah. And no student should be left ignored. You know, when you ignore some students and you address them once in a blue moon, once a week, once a month, they will get embarrassed, but when every session just you have a short fun with everyone, you have a short chat with everyone in class, you call the names - this is very important - I don't know if maybe - I don't think it's just my personal feeling that I always liked my teachers to call me by my first name.

Q: Okay. Do you think the students like traditional teacher role and don't like classroom discussion a lot? Do you agree with this?

A: That's a difficult question to answer, because, for one thing, students like differences. What I mean by this is students like to be surprised every session they come to class, so it will be very boring for the students - and it was boring for us as the students, and we are

still - I also consider myself as a student more than a teacher - we like to be surprised. It's so boring for them - they don't like to know what they are going to do every session. Oh, and the teacher will come, open the book, close the book, page this, do this, do that - so they don't like this kind of teacher. They like to be surprised. They like to see new things. Specifically, in the case of our students, my students, because this is just the first time they have gained entry to a new stage of life that's university. So they like to see something different. [16:14]

Q: This is their first semester.

A: Exactly. So I personally believe they like to see more of a modern teacher with a modern role, activities, blah, blah, blah, than a traditional one, although some traditional aspects of teaching need to be kept. Some aspects like teacher's dominance - that's what I talked about just minutes ago. So they like to see all this. But more modern, I think. [16:46]

Q: So they like classroom discussion, but it depends, maybe, in the way - in the situation.

A: Yeah. Yeah.

Q: Do they like an answer model? Do feel they want an answer model for every question?

A: Could you say that again?

Q: A model for their answers.

A: What do you mean model for answers?

Q: An answer model. For example, if you want them to write a paragraph, they want this - a model.

A: Yes. Hopefully I have never had problems with instructions. Okay? Maybe that originates in something else. Native speakers speak their language and they expect others to understand that. Okay. That's what we do in our native tongue..... when we speak, we don't notice that the person who is listening to us is not a native speaker. He has problems with everything - pronunciation - everything. So I usually illustrate a lot and give them

examples. I feel that, yes, they like to see examples. Because the instruction is already in the book. There is no point to repeat the same thing. You have to do something more. Okay? Even I try to illustrate it - not just this is the example, look at the example - I do it on the board. I explain it, and then students know what to do. Because the worst thing that may ever happen to a student is when a student doesn't know what to do in class. [18:15]

Q: So they need this examples and these models.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. Do you think, the students here, they are independent or they want the teacher to encourage them to be independent student in their learning?

A: All of us do. All of us need someone to motivate us, to inspire us. Even that's funny - you know I told you I've been teaching for almost twelve years professionallyokay, I'm a teacher now, but when I start learning something and when I hear a sweet comment, a praise - I feel, yeah, yeah, yeah, that's it. I'm on the way. I want to do more. So we all need - no matter how old we are, no matter what our careers are - we all need motivation, and the students are no exception. So they also need to be motivated and inspired. [19:21]

Q: Okay. So do you think they depend on you for everything or they can do some things themselves?

A: A good teacher should bring up independent students. That doesn't happen in a jiffy - very fast - in a session. It takes time, so bit by bit they learn that they need to be independent. At first, it's like a little kid - like a toddler - you take their hand, you just show them the way and put them on their way, but bit by bit they know that they should do things by themselves on their own.

Q: How can we teach them? What are your advices to the student to be independent?

A: Well, we don't do any explicit or any direct advice. Again, by designing tasks - tasks are very important - we

show them that, okay, at first, you're doing twenty per cent and I'm doing eighty per cent and, at the end, you're doing ninety per cent and I'm just there for you, to help. Okay? That's what I do. For example, suppose we have a specific reading activity - whatever - then they do their reading activity first each session. You just give them the text, help them with a word, you will go and check one by one, but, at the end, you say okay, this is the text, these are the questions, and they know what to do. [20:34]

Q: And gradually they will learn it.

A: They'll grow up.

Q: Maybe because this is their first level. In level two and three, they will be more independent.

A: Yeah, of course.

Q: Okay. What are your advices or your suggestions to help more the students and the teachers to be more engaged inside the classroom - for other classrooms, for example.

A: I can't make any suggestions. Teaching is very personal, you know? It depends on teacher's characteristics, personality, beliefs, ideas. It's not my personal idea. It's what the new - the latest teaching trends, the latest methodology - whatever - says that it depends on you students - on any specific - you may observe me teaching different students, and you may see different teachers within me. I'm a teacher in a different way; Mr X in a very different way. So I base my teaching on students' needs, students' objectives, their purpose and their personality trait, so I don't think I can give any advice for teachers in general. [21:43]

Q: For the students?

A: If they have the right knowledge, if they love teaching, if they lover their students, if they have theoretical knowledge and practical experience, they can do it.

Q: What about the students who are shy and who still don't want to speak?

A: Students should understand that they're spending their time here, they're paying money, and they should use the class. If they understand the value of time, they will get benefit from every second of their life, not just in class - anywhere, I mean. So they should understand that - this is my sentence: I tell them - the very first session I teach a class - this is your class, not mine. This is not my name X's classes. This is your class, so you should use it. You should not let me speak. You should just stop me and ask your questions, discuss, even disagree with me - so use it. Use every minute of your life. That's what I tell them. [22:42]

Q: But, the students, they say still - even time management. A lot of them they said the timetable is difficult and they have late classes.

A: And it depends a great deal on the teacher, because if the teacher makes attitude, then the teacher will be reluctant to act in class freely because - even teacher's face is very important. I myself used to have a very, maybe, unfriendly face, I would say. It was just my face. A problem with my face. ((laughter)) It always scared. But now I'm trying to change it. I don't know how much I've been able to change, but I have changed a bit. [23:26]

Q: Do you mean to make it in this way?

A: Yeah. Of course. I care about my gesture, my posture - I told you. Yeah.

Q: Okay. Thank you very much for your time. Do you want to add anything or to say anything else?

A: Yes, actually. It may not have anything to do with your research or whatever, but you have to love teaching. Unfortunately, nowadays - specifically I'm talking about English language teaching, not other kinds of teaching - when you're not good in other majors, when you find yourself desperate, without any job, you just try teaching English. That's a very bad thing that's happening everywhere in the world. It's not specific to

any specific country, any particular country - it happens in my country, in your country, in the world. What else can I do - it's a good idea to teach English. They do just one-month course - whatever - TOEFL, CELTA, DELTA - whatever - but that's not the way. You have to love teaching. I personally was a very good student in high school. We had, like, experimental science: biology, chemistry - we do this. I was a very good student, but I suddenly felt that I just love teaching. I can't do anything else besides this. This is something I enjoy, and every day get up - you can't believe after thirteen years of teaching - every day I get up in the morning and I want to go to class. I have this sweet - nice anxiety feeling as if it's the first time I'm going. I never say, oh, I'm going to class again, nooo. Never. Because I love my teaching. As if I'm going to do something very exciting, which is exciting for me. I really believe that teachers should love what they do. [25:13]

Q: Can we teach the teachers to love - these personal things - to love teaching, to be friendly with the students - do you think that we can teach - can we change the personality of the teachers?

A: To love teaching?

Q: Yes, and to be friendly with the students.

A: Not if it was the last choice of their life. You know what I mean? If they didn't have any other choices, if they couldn't do any other jobs, couldn't take up any other profession and they do teaching, you can't do anything because it wasn't at the top of their list. Okay? But if they really meant to be a teacher, okay. You can work on them.

Q: It depends on the teacher if they can change or not?

A: Of course. Yes.

Q: Okay. Thank you very much.

A: Thank you. I enjoyed it.

END OF RECORDING

Key:

- indicates addition/interruption of thought or repetition

... indicates interrupted, incomplete utterance

(()) additional description

[00:00] indicates time

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