TASK-BASED AND GRAMMAR-BASED ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY IN SAUDI ARABIA

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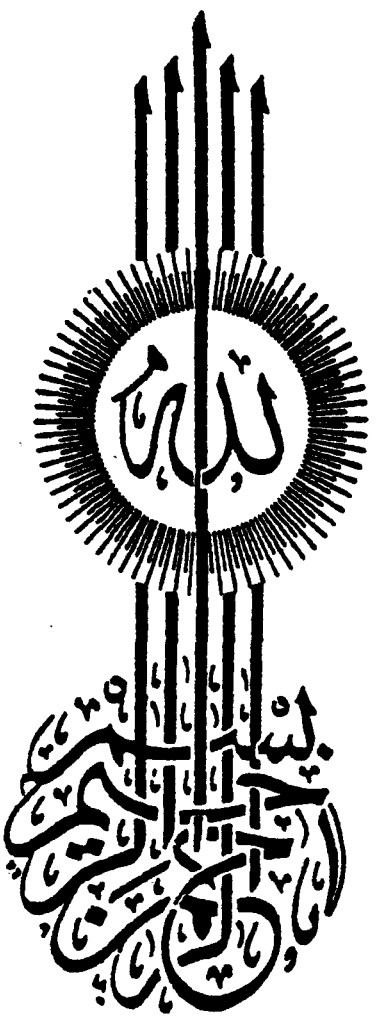
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Abstract

In recent decades there have been many expressions of dissatisfaction with the traditional method of teaching foreign languages. This method tends to concentrate on grammar and vocabulary and produce students who are strong in this type of knowledge but weak in using the language communicatively. Consequently, attempts have been made to devise teaching methods that give students stronger communication skills and address students' questionnaire feedback.

This study examines attempts to prove the efficacy of the communicative approach and, in particular, experiments to prove its superiority to the grammatical approach. Particular attention is paid to Task-Based Learning (TBL) as one of the most promising examples of the communicative teaching approach. The study finds that, although previous comparative studies supply mounting evidence of the value of the newer methods, none provides clear proof of the superiority of one method over the other, because the experiment was poorly designed, the sample was too small or the recorded data deficient.

A students' feedback questionnaire carried out as a preliminary study also established clear dissatisfaction with the grammar courses run by the University of Umm al-Qura in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, this study aimed to carry out a thoroughgoing experiment based on the question: do learners who are taught an English course using the TBL method reach a better level of proficiency and oral improvement at the end of the course than their counterparts who are taught with the grammar-based or traditional method? The experiment was conducted over a twelve-week term with second-year science students following a compulsory English for Science course at the University of Umm al-Qura. A total of 283 students took part, divided into eight classes, of which four were taught with the grammar-based learning (GBL) method and four were taught with the TBL method. The students were allocated to classes so that the GBL and TBL groups had a similar standard of English at the start of the experiment. All the teaching was done by the researcher.

Four measures were used to answer the research question. Oral tests before and after the experiment measured fluency, the course final examination measured accuracy,

recorded classroom observations provided material for analysing the content and conduct of lessons and classroom behaviour, and a course evaluation questionnaire sought to assess students' attitudes. The results clearly show that the TBL method improves the fluency and accuracy of university students more than the GBL method, and that the TBL learners were more active in the lessons, used the target language more and took more responsibility than the GBL learners. The TBL students also enjoyed the course more than their GBL counterparts and were more motivated to continue their English studies.

Dedication

To my parents, who have always supported me since I started primary school, who are waiting for me and who do not stop praying for me.

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Praise be to Allah, Whose help and guidance we ever beseech and on whom we ever rely

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List of abbreviations

BP	Bangalore Project
CA	Conversation Analysis
CAT	Contrastive Analysis and Translation
CBL	Content-Based learning
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
COLT	Communication Orientation of Language Teaching
CTP	Communicational Teaching Project
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
EFL	English for Foreign Language
EGP	English for General Purposes
ELC	English Language Centre
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English for Second Language
ESOL	English for Second and Other Languages
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
EST	English for Science and Technology
FFI	Form Focused Instruction
FoF	Focus on Form
GBL	Grammar-Based Learning
GSL	General Service List
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
MFI	Meaning Focused Instruction
PET	Primary English Tests (Cambridge oral tests)
SA	Saudi Arabia
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TBL	Task-Based Learning
TBLT	Task-Based Learning and Teaching
UAU	Umm Al-Qura University
UAUELC	Umm Al-Qura University English Language Centre
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Over the last thirty years dissatisfaction with traditional methods of teaching second languages (L2s) has led to an increased awareness of the central role of the learner and a belief in the importance of language as an instrument of communication rather than as a formal system (see e.g. Bygate et al. 2001; Ellis 1993, 2003; Halliday 1973, 1975; Hymes 1972; Lewis 1996; Littlewood 1981, 1984, 2004; Munby 1978; Skehan 1996a, 1996b, 1998; Widdowson 1978; Wilkins 1976; Willis 1996; Yalden 1983). This has resulted in more emphasis on the needs of learners and the development of learner-centred, communicative methods, and teaching materials (Clark 1987; Dudley-Evans and St John 1998; Howatt 1984; Hutchinson and Waters 1987; Nunan 1988, 2004).

Edwards and Willis (2005) argue that learners have an aptitude to use L2 naturally - which means that if learners are exposed to the language, they may succeed in developing L2 skills to communicate fluently and effectively. But they may need help in this and the second-language classroom is the obvious place to provide such help. Thus, Nunan (1999: 10) advocates that 'If the aim of language teaching is to help learners develop skills for expressing different communicative meanings, then surely these ought to be reflected in classroom tasks and activities'. One classroom methodology based on such convictions is task-based learning, which has come to occupy a central place in current communicative language teaching. As Mitchell (1994: 36) pointed out over a decade ago, 'task-based syllabus models are currently popular for adult learners'. This popularity has not abated. As a result, there are a large number of recent publications relating to task-based learning and teaching (for example, Bygate et al. 2001; Edwards and Willis 2005; Ellis 2003; Nunan 1999, 2004; Seedhouse 2005; Willis and Willis 2007).

Questions remain, however, about the effectiveness of the newer communicative teaching methods, such as task-based learning (TBL), in areas such as fluency,

attitudes, and grammatical accuracy. Moreover, we have very little information about the actual behaviour and strategies of students and teachers in a classroom where communicative tasks are used instead of traditional methods. Answers to these questions can best be obtained by an experimental comparison of traditional and communicative approaches and that is what this thesis will aim to do.

1.2 The traditional 'Grammar-Based Learning' (GBL) approach

Traditional language teaching focuses on linguistic (grammatical) competence. This GBL language teaching method has characteristics, described in Sheikh (1993: 157-8), as follows:

- It starts from the abstract study of grammar, moving from the simple to the more complex structures.
- It is detached from the practical mastery of the language and pays relatively little attention to listening and speaking.
- The teacher's role is authoritative. He/she is the knowledge provider.
- The role of the learners is passive. It is to master the rules through memorisation.
- It is mainly concerned with linguistic competence and no attention is given to communicative competence.

GBL as a methodology comprises the following elements:

- The teacher presents a new aspect of the language in a clear context to get across its meaning. This can be done through a text, a short conversation, etc.
- Students practise using this in a controlled way through drills and completing sentences and phrases.
- There is a free practice period when students try to use their newly acquired knowledge in different contexts, often through role play.

This traditional GBL approach is probably still the most well-known and popular method of second-language teaching around the world. This is because of its clarity and the tangibility of its objectives, and its definitive syllabus, which can be easily evaluated by the teacher (Gatbonton and Segalowitz 2005; Scrivener 1996). In addition, as Skehan (1998) points out, there is no alternative pedagogy that is as

practical as this method as regards classroom organisation, teacher training, accountability and assessment. Research also shows that form-orientated GBL teaching can produce better results, especially in terms of grammatical accuracy, than the function-orientated communicative approach (Richards and Rodgers 2001).

Nevertheless, there has also been widespread criticism of the traditional approach and the GBL methodology. In particular, it has been argued that GBL makes false assumptions about how people learn. For example, Wilkins (1972) and Widdowson (1972) argue that the grammatical syllabus is unable to provide for the learner the necessary conditions for the development of communicative skills. Wilkins (1972) sees the following weaknesses in GBL teaching:

- The grammatical syllabus reduces the motivation of students.
- The method is to teach the entire system regardless of the fact that not all parts of the system will be equally beneficial to all learners.
- It emphasises grammatical form, making meaning subordinate.
- It emphasises the grammatical relationships between sentences, which makes language highly artificial since, in real-life communication, it is meaning that puts sentences together.

Yet according to Willis (1990: 4-5), GBL gives too much priority to form over meaning, emphasising grammar at the expense of fluency: 'It is difficult to see how activities can be regarded as truly communicative if the learner's main objective is not to achieve some outcome through the use of language, but to demonstrate to the teacher their control of the target form'. Ellis (1993: 4-5) criticises 'a commitment to trying to control not only the input but actually what is learned'. Willis (1996) also criticises the method for being based on the principle of repetition, which restricts the language produced by learners to the demands of the teacher. Although a GBL lesson may appear to have successfully covered a certain element in the second language (L2), the next time the occasion arises to put the form to communicative use students fail to do naturally what they have learned (Willis 1996). Moreover, in a teacher-centred GBL class, students can only speak one at a time and the majority cannot really participate. Skehan (1996b: 18) sums up the situation as follows:

> The underlying theory for an [GBL] approach has now been discredited. The belief that a precise focus on a particular form leads to learning and automatisation (that learners will learn what is taught in the order in which it is taught) no longer carries much credibility in linguistics or psychology.

Criticisms of the traditional GBL approach, including some of those just mentioned, led to the emergence of the communicative approach (Wilkins 1976).

1.3 Communicative Language Teaching

As pointed out earlier, traditional second-language teaching focuses on the mastery of language structure rather than on language use. This means that students are assessed on their handling and management of structural properties of the language with little attention to meaning. In the 1960s, this methodology was thought to receive support from the theory of language developed by Chomsky (1957, 1965), which was very much focused on structure and the knowledge of structure.

In the 1970s, however, these views came under attack. Thus, Hymes (1972) pointed out that there were limitations to Chomsky's ideas and to the notion of grammatical competence. According to Hymes (1972), speakers not only have linguistic competence but also communicative competence, i.e. the ability to use language in social interaction. This implies that effective communication requires more than the linguistic competence predominant in Chomsky's views. The communicative approach focuses primarily on the main function of language – communication. Its characteristics, cited by Richards and Rodgers (2001), are as follows:

- Language is a system for the expression of meaning.
- The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses.
- The primary function of language is interaction and communication.
- The primary units of language are not merely grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning.

When these views were applied to language teaching, they led to very different ideas about what was needed in the classroom. The emphasis came to lie not with

grammatical rules but with their use to produce meaning (Brumfit 1984; Candlin 1987). Nunan (1991) lists the following five features of the communicative approach to teaching:

- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction, where the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form.
- Using natural language and authentic texts.
- Enabling learners to focus not only on language, but also on learning.
- Using learners' experiences to enhance classroom learning.
- Linking classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom. That is, properties of communicative English (the target language) when it is used in the home, street and workplace should be reflected in educational practices.

Advocates of the communicative approach maintain that, unlike the traditional approach, communicative activities are meaningful and also motivating because the learner is an active participant rather than a passive recipient (Nunan 1989). The communicative teacher is not the source of all knowledge but an initiator of situations that engage learners in language production, a facilitator of the process of communication (Larsen-Freeman 1986; Littlewood 1984; Richards and Rodgers 1986).

Linguists such as Halliday (1973, 1975), Munby (1978), Widdowson (1978), and Wilkins (1976), who were concerned with language teaching, expanded this field to include communicative function as a basis for communicative second-language teaching. This permeates language teaching and is exemplified by the importance accorded to it in the Common European Framework, an attempt by the European Union to define levels of L2 proficiency. The main concern is learner performance in a communicative situation. In the introduction to the Council of Europe document (2001: 1), firm support is given to the performance-based approach. The author suggests that the framework as a whole:

> ... provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe. It describes in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn to do in order to use language for communication and what knowledge and

skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively. The description also covers the cultural context in which the language is set. The framework also defines levels of proficiency which allow learners' progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a lifelong basis.

The Common European Framework defines three broad levels of language use: those of the basic user, independent user and proficient user, each of which is broken down into two further levels. They are given in Table 1.1:

Table 1.1 General levels of language use, as defined in Council of Europe (2001: 24)

Proficient User (C2)	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken or written sources, reconstructing argument and account in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
Proficient User (C1)	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User (B2)	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussion in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with the degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
Independent User (B1)	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User (A2)	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
Basic User (A1)	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

This attempt to define levels of competency is a useful guide for teaching institutions, enabling them to set standards for the courses they offer. Moreover, because they identify particular skills, the competency levels can be related to classroom tasks. These levels try to describe the language needed by beginner adult learners for vocational and social purposes, in terms of situations and language functions. At the same time, methods developed that took more account of the actual needs of the learner. As White (1983: 80) asserted, 'We are now all more sensitive to the characteristics of the learner, his needs, his wants, and the wider society in which we work'.

1.4 Task-based learning (TBL)

TBL is a communicative method that provides oral communication practice through which language may be developed in the context of language use. Originally developed in the 1970s by Prabhu in India, TBL stems from the assumption that students learn more effectively when their minds are focused on meaning in a task, rather than on form in the language they are using (Prabhu 1987). TBL also emphasises the importance of meaning in classroom interaction (Crookes and Gass 1993). Of course, most teachers use some interactive tasks as part of their teaching but TBL treats them as central to the learning process. Samuda (2001: 120) insists that:

> This use of tasks has long been recognised as a central feature of communicative language teaching, and as such is widely addressed in teacher education, and in the development of instructional materials; so much so that, for many teachers primed to deal with tasks for activating language and stretching fluency, TBL has become synonymous (albeit misguidedly) with unscripted oral activity.

It may appear from the above that TBL and communicative language teaching (CLT) are synonymous. Nunan (2004: 10), writing about the relationship between TBL and CLT, indeed asks, 'Are the terms synonymous? If so, why have two terms for the same notion? If not, wherein lies the difference?' Nuan's answer is that:

> CLT is a broad, philosophical approach to the language curriculum that draws on theory and research in linguistics, anthropology, psychology and sociology [...] Task-based language teaching represents a realization of this philosophy at the levels of syllabus design and methodology.

That is, TBL according to Nunan (2004) is a socially constrained pedagogical activity that is measured in terms of a communicative outcome. Therefore the implementation of the activity focuses students' attention on meaning first, but allows for the incidental shift of attention to the manipulation of linguistic form as and when needed. This description stresses a notion central to TBL, which is that it is not enough for tasks to be merely communicative. They must also have an outcome - one that the learners themselves have some part in determining. The teaching should provide meaning besides form. It should focus on the communicative characteristics of language without loss of interest in grammar and lexis. Nunan (2004: 4) defines a task within TBL as:

> A piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than manipulate form. The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right with a beginning, a middle and an end.

The emphasis is on communicative language use, and the importance of form. This is particularly important for teaching methods that recognise the role of form-focused instruction. The TBL approach is therefore very important from the perspective of applied linguists who take this compromise into consideration (e.g. Edwards and Willis 2005; Ellis 2003; Nunan 2004).

The main principle of TBL that distinguishes it from GBL is its focus on enabling the learner to use the language meaningfully. TBL can be regarded as a holistic, learner-centred approach to learning that emphasises meaning over form. As Willis (1996: 25) has written: 'Language [...] is the vehicle for attaining task goals, but the emphasis is on meaning and communication, not on producing language forms correctly'. In other words, TBL seeks to approximate the way language is used in 'real-world' interactions, where meaning almost always takes precedence over form.

1.5 Contradictory and inadequate evidence

When TBL has been empirically examined, we find a range of studies in which highly optimistic claims are made. For example, Savignon (1983) argues that any method that encourages a co-operative learning environment where teachers and learners support each other and work together is the best way of teaching. Students exposed to TBL are alleged to have no fear of failure and to feel free to communicate. Edwards and Willis (2005) further assert, on the basis of different studies, that TBL increases the motivation of learners of different levels to learn the target language. They also claim that TBL makes learning enjoyable and report that most learners become more fluent and that teachers seem to find the experience rewarding and worthwhile.

Such sanguinity is not, however, universal. Seedhouse (1997, 1999, 2005) points out that TBL's effectiveness is unproven, and that learners often respond negatively to TBL's classroom communicative activities by working separately or not participating at all. It has also been argued that TBL's more relaxed approach to grammatical errors - as compared with the traditional GBL approach - may actually encourage students to make more of them. Moreover, Sheikh (1993: 200) argues that it is difficult to assess students' communicative competence, as it would involve the use of an oral test, and tests are usually written. Many students and teachers worry that a TBL approach means a reduced chance of success in examinations. Mitchell (1994: 41) points out that 'the "communicative approach" has been interpreted to date, at least in British schools, as very largely an oral approach. The skills of reading and writing have so far been marginalised, rather than re-thought, as components of the overall approach'. Brinton and Holten (2001: 243) report that despite the success of their task-based programme in almost every other area, the problem of incorporating grammar instruction remained 'intractable'. They note an 'avoidance phenomenon' whereby language instructors devoted an average of only 15 per cent of class time to vocabulary and grammar instruction (2001: 246). That is, the teacher whom they assessed did not balance form and meaning.

The superiority of the communicative approach in general and TBL methodology in particular over traditional teaching and GBL thus remains to be clearly demonstrated

(Seedhouse 1998). Loumpourdi (2005) carried out a study of TBL in a classroom setting. She found that the TBL syllabus was more motivating for students than the GBL syllabus, although the TBL method was integrated in the second part of the class-time with the same group and most results were purely impressions and therefore possibly biased and uncertain. Beglar and Hunt (2002) and many others (see Edwards and Willis 2005) have used task-based learning to provide motivation and fluency and to allow learners to take responsibility for their own learning (autonomy). The recent book *Doing task-based teaching* by Willis and Willis (2007) draws on the classroom experience of over thirty teachers in twelve different countries and cites examples of tasks they have designed and used successfully in their lessons. Different measures of success were positive, but most experiments do not tell us to what extent TBL was superior to the traditional method. Ellis (2003) asks whether learners really learn something from TBL teaching. Clearly, there is a need for more comparative research into the effectiveness of the TBL and GBL methods. As Ellis (1994: 569) points out, 'The aim of comparative method studies is to establish which of two or more methods or general approaches to language teaching is most effective in terms of the actual learning (the "product") that is achieved after a given period of time'. That is exactly what this thesis will undertake with reference to the GBL and TBL approaches to teaching. It will attempt to establish the usefulness of a communicative approach which recognises the role of form-focused instruction, as represented by the method of task-based learning, and compare this with the more exclusively form-based traditional approach found in GBL and teaching.

A specific worry shared by teachers and students about the TBL approach is that it will minimise the importance of grammar and accuracy. That is, because it focuses on meaning, it is viewed as being all about communicative performance. 'If their exams do not test oral communication, students wonder about the relevance of taking part in oral tasks' (Willis 1996:142). Students may feel examinations are a waste of time if they are not directly correlated with the measurement of skills and understanding of grammar. The most common criticism of TBL, voiced by many scholars (Ellis 2003; Seedhouse 2005; Sheen 1994; Skehan 1998), is indeed that TBL is based on theoretical arguments, rather than on empirical evidence of effectiveness. Ellis (2003), for example, argues that there is no guarantee that TBL is compatible with task-based assessment. That is, tasks require students to act as language users not as language

learners and to treat language as a tool rather than as an object. There is as yet no firm evidence that TBL leads to greater success on assessment, even if it is task-based. Kumaravadivelu (1994) makes a similar point about learning-centered methods (e.g., "the natural approach"). Seedhouse (2005: 130) also notes that "When researchers do examine what actually happens in the classroom, they often discover mismatches between TBL/SLA theory and practice". That is, the task-as-workplan is not matched with the task-in-process as it is carried out by learners, or even carried out by the same group of learners on two different occurrences. Sheen (1994) noted that there is no empirical evidence that TBL teaching works with oral tests (see also Skehan 1998), and that Long and Crooke's (1992) claims are based entirely on theoretical arguments.

Therefore, it is essential to study the TBL approach experimentally in order to find out whether what has been claimed has indeed been achieved, and this is central to this research.

The research, then, will assess TBL's usefulness in bridging the gap between the reality of the need for communication and the artificiality unavoidably imposed by classroom conditions. It will be compared with GBL to judge its effectiveness. Comparison of the two methods will be effected by measuring changes in learners' oral proficiency through speaking tests as well as by measuring their general improvement through standard final examination results. Data were collected from two groups of English language learners at Umm Al-Qura University (UAU) in Saudi Arabia, where the researcher worked as a member of the teaching staff. The control group of students was taught with the traditional GBL method while the experimental group was taught communicatively with Willis's (1996) TBL model.

1.6 The research question

The study aimed to answer the following question:

Do learners taught with the TBL method reach a higher level of proficiency at the end of the course than their counterparts who were taught with the GBL method?

If the learners using the TBL method reach higher levels of communicative and linguistic competence, and have more positive attitudes and motivation than those using the GBL method and syllabus, it would indicate a serious problem with the GBL approach. If, however, the TBL learners are equally or less successful in learning and have lower levels of motivation than the GBL learners, it would indicate the lack of potential of the TBL model.

1.7 The research hypotheses

The research question led to the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis A (H0): There is no significant difference between the learners taught by the two different methods.

Hypothesis B (H1): There is a significant difference between the learners taught by the two different methods

1.8 Organisation of the thesis

The thesis is organised as follows. *Chapter 2* presents a critical review of literature about CLT in general and about TBL methodology in particular. I argue that the effectiveness of the CLT approach still needs to be convincingly demonstrated through empirical research. The chapter starts by describing the paradigm shift in syllabus design in English language teaching from GBL to CLT in the 1960s and 1970s. This includes a discussion of traditional methodology and its problems. The chapter continues with discussion of CLT and the rationale for task-based instruction. I will argue that it is best to use Willis's model (1996) in my research because it embraces both meaning and form.

Chapter 3 covers the methodology used in this study. It starts with a preliminary investigation which takes the form of a feedback questionnaire. This will be followed by an analysis of the data yielded. Next is a description of the other research tools used: pre-treatment and post-treatment oral tests, standard final examination questions, an attitude questionnaire, and class observation for both the control and the experimental groups of the study (which involves COLT analysis and Focused Description methodology). It describes the treatment given to the two groups of

subjects, and discusses the purposes, population, design and content of the GBL and TBL syllabi. It explains the reasons for selecting my sample of students and provides some background information about English language teaching/learning at their place of study, Umm Al-Qura University in Saudi Arabia.

Chapter 4 gives the results of the experimental study of TBL vs. GBL and the attitude questions and classroom observation analyses. The overall results show that the TBL group were more positive about English and more confident in using it. While both the TBL and GBL groups showed improvements, the control group using the GBL method clearly lagged behind the TBL group. This suggests that the TBL method is more effective than the GBL method for an English language course in a university setting.

Chapter 5 draws conclusions, identifying caveats and limitations and providing recommendations for future studies. It is hoped that the findings from this study will offer useful insights to those who are involved in developing and contributing to English language teaching.

CHAPTER TWO

COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING AND TASK-BASED LEARNING

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined two key teaching methods that involved traditional and task-based learning delivery, a comparison of which forms the focus of this research. This chapter will provide more detail about both of these methods. It will begin by discussing some background on second language acquisition (SLA) and then on issues related to both GBL and TBL teaching methods and review their criticisms in previous studies. This will provide a platform from which to discuss communicative language teaching and present the rationale for its application worldwide. This will be done with particular reference to task-based learning (TBL) and teaching. After this, the TBL communicative approach will be compared with the traditional GBL, form-focused learning approach and the question of which of these approaches to language teaching has been shown in empirical studies to be more successful will be addressed.

A number of previous studies on the effectiveness of TBL will be reviewed and used to come to an interim overall assessment of the different methods. The conclusion will be that, owing to different outcomes and interpretations of the empirical work carried out so far, we cannot yet be sure that the TBL communicative approach is more successful than the GBL traditional approach. This finding will then serve as the launching pad for a new empirical study, described in the next two chapters, which aims to answer the central research question of this thesis:

Do learners taught with the TBL method reach a higher level of proficiency at the end of the course than their counterparts who were taught with a traditional method?

This next section will outline some of the traditional language teaching methods in order to provide the context of TBL and how it might compare with different forms of teaching. Traditional methods are associated with a focus on form, not on meaning, with teacher-directed instruction as the basis of the course.

2.2 Second language acquisition

Since the late sixties, SLA researchers' concerns have centred on describing how learners acquire an L2. An acquisition of grammar and its order (Dulay and Burt 1973; Hakuta 1976) and the types of oral interactions in which language learners participate (Hatch 1978; Wagner-Gough 1975) have been the main concerns (Ellis 2003:21). From this early research emerged the idea of creative construction (Krashen 1982) and an interactionist view (Long 1985). Krashen considers that language acquisition takes place when learners understand language containing structures that are little beyond their linguistic competence. Prabhu (1987) shares Krashen's assumption, stating that:

> ...while the conscious mind is working out some of the meaning-content, a subconscious part of the mind perceives, abstracts, or acquires those entities, as a step in the development of an internal system of rules. The intensive exposure caused by an effort to work out meaning-content is thus a condition which is favourable to the subconscious abstraction-or cognitive formation-of language structure.

Both Krashen and Prabhu favour implicit learning, that is, by being exposed to comprehensible input, learners can incidentally acquire second language structures, but they suggested that not all L2 structures are acquired as a result of comprehending language or 'going for meaning'.

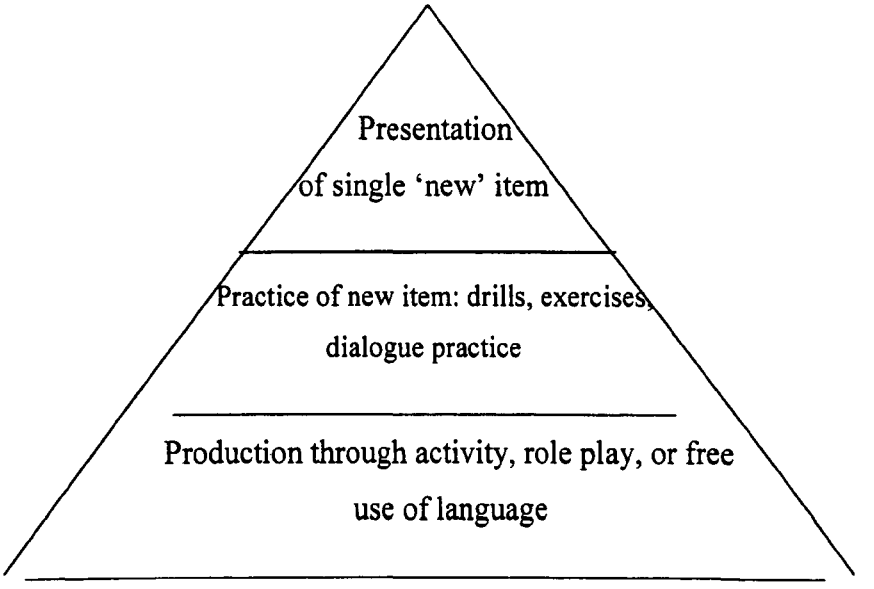
This is, however, claimed not to be sufficient, by e.g. Schmidt (1990), who stresses the importance of focusing on the grammatical feature that is to be learned, while other researchers have also emphasised the role of both instruction and/or interaction (Long 1985). Different views have been expressed about the value of instruction. For example, Fathman (1976) found that when a comparison was made between a group of instructed learners and a group of uninstructed learners they did not differ in level of achievement. Long (1983) claimed, however, that instruction does have an effect.

2.3 Grammar-Based Learning (GBL) teaching

Let us now consider traditional foreign language grammar-based learning (GBL). This teaching method relies heavily on form-focused instruction. As observed by

Byrne (1986), it focuses on form, but not on meaning. Figure 2.1 (Willis 1996:135) represents the stages of a typical language lesson taught in accordance with such grammar-based learning (GBL). This section will explore the characteristics of GBL and its relationship with other teaching methods.

Figure 2.1: Structure of a typical lesson of the GBL method



(Source: Willis 1996: 135)

The first stage of a traditional GBL lesson is when the teacher presents a new piece of language (grammar) that is to be learned. The teacher usually begins by introducing the item in a context or situation which helps to clarify its meaning and to maximise the chances of its being fully understood. This part of the lesson typically consists of listening to a model piece of language, frequently in the form of a recorded dialogue, although at times the teacher herself may act out or read from a textbook the pattern sentences or short dialogues illustrating particular items. In other words, the presentation stage aims to focus learners' attention on a particular form.

Nowadays this stage might be followed by controlled practice of the relevant item(s) of language, designed to help learners grasp the rule involved. This may be achieved by having learners chant language drills in class or by making them repeat parts of the dialogue, so that they have to produce language in which the content as well as the language is appropriate. This controlled practice stage is intended to develop accuracy

skills. Clearly, the teacher absolutely controls and guides the language output. The emphasis here is on getting the new form/rule right and the practice stage is usually seen as a transition phase from presentation to production. If there is a production stage, learners would be given the chance to combine the pieces of language that they have practised. Here they engage in activities where they produce language, use free expression and develop fluency skills. This free production stage usually consists of activities like role play, simulation games, etc.

Skehan (1996b: 17) provides a neat summary of the entire procedure that is currently recommended:

> The traditional [grammar-based] approach to language teaching is followed by practice activities. These practice activities are designed to enable learners to produce rapidly and easily the material that has been presented. In the production stage opportunities are provided to use language freely and flexibly in the expectation that this will consolidate what is being learned and extend its range of applicability.

As pointed out, the traditional grammar-based learning (GBL) approach is the most common teaching approach worldwide. The reason for this, according to Scrivener (1996), is that it offers a simple, clear and workable lesson model. As Skehan (1996b: 17) points out, the GBL approach is compatible with the kind of learning theory that most language learners themselves would probably regard as plausible, which is the idea that learning means focusing on rules that are then automatised as a set of habits. Skehan (1996b: 17) also comments that the GBL model is popular because of its clarity, the tangibility of its objectives, its clear and easy-to-evaluate syllabus, and its excellent links with teacher training and teachers' feelings of professionalism. He says that there is no alternative pedagogy that is as practical as GBL in its classroom organisation, teacher training, accountability and methods of assessment. Swan (2002) comments that 'there are many reasons for teaching grammar [...] it is tidy, it can be taught, it is testable and it is reassuring and comforting because it gives students the feeling they can understand and control what is going on' (Swan 2002: 149-150). In addition, Swan (2002: 151) says that learning grammatical structures makes it possible to communicate, since '... without these structures, it is difficult to make comprehensible sentences'.

In spite of its practicality and popularity, however, there have been many criticisms of the traditional way of teaching and learning using the explicit, form-focused method. Skehan (1996b: 18), for instance, criticises the traditional method for being based on the assumption that students will learn what they are taught in the order in which it is taught, while actually there is no evidence that this occurs. He points out that, in spite of what many learners may think, there is evidence that a focus on form only does not lead to learning and automatisation, and that the traditional approach has therefore lost much of its credibility (Brumfit and Johnson 1979; Ellis 1985; Long and Crookes 1992). Furthermore, the traditional approach in some studies was shown to be less effective in developing L2 grammatical and communicative competence, since it gives the teacher full control in shaping discourse and does not allow all students to engage in meaningful language use (Lee 2000; Nunan 1987). Lee (2000: 33) observes that traditional teaching often 'degenerates into a conversation between the instructor and the two best learners in class'.

It is also claimed that specific L2 structures can be quite useful to the communicative act being performed (Fotos 2002; Loschky and Bley-Vronman 1993). If there are opportunities for learners to produce the target language form-focused instruction may force them to pay more attention to form in the process of focusing on meaning (Mohamad 1998).

2.4 Communicative language teaching (CLT): motivations and implementations

An alternative to the traditional or linguistic approach to language teaching is the communicative approach that, as Stern (1983: 111) observed, became the 'central focus for new thought and fresh approaches in language pedagogy in the early eighties'. Richards (2002: 153) describes the change as follows:

> Grammatical syllabuses were superseded by communicative ones based on functions or tasks; grammar-based methodologies such as the Presentation-Practice-Production (P-P-P) lesson format underlying the Situational Approach gave way to function- and skill-based teaching; and accuracy activities such as drills and grammar practice were replaced by fluency activities based on interactive small-group work.

This newer approach made crucial use of the notion of communicative competence, a concept introduced by Hymes (1972). It refers to the meaning and structure of social contexts as an interaction of different factors -- psychological, grammatical, and sociocultural -- that competent speakers of a language are able to draw on in producing language appropriate to the communicative situation. As Hymes argued, effective communication requires more than grammatical competence: it has to be complemented by an awareness of what pieces of language (grammatical items, lexis, pronunciations) should be selected for use in any given situation. The link with language teaching was quickly made. Specifically, Wilkins (1972) and Widdowson (1972) argued that the grammatical syllabus was unable to provide for the learner the necessary conditions for the acquisition of communicative competence. Wilkins (1972) listed the following weaknesses of GBL, which are a succinct summary of the problems discussed in the previous section:

- The grammatical syllabus reduces the motivation of the students.
- This method is to teach the entire system regardless of the fact that not all parts of the system will be equally beneficial to all learners.
- It emphasises grammatical form, and meaning is subordinate to it.
- It emphasises the grammatical relationship between sentences, which makes language highly artificial since in real-life communication it is meaning that puts sentences together.

Wilkins (1976) argued that in CLT learners are encouraged to be creative by being given the opportunity to construct their own sentences and expressions in order to get their meanings across rather than trying to use memorised expressions from the textbook. This, he claimed, prepares them to interact and respond in real-life situations. Wilkins also pointed out that teachers should follow learning techniques which allow L2 learners to think of their responses and give them freedom in responding to the teacher's questions and in participating in classroom discussions. Wilkins argued that there are factors that can hinder the communicative use of the language in the classroom. He listed these factors as materials, writers, textbooks, cultural context, the teachers and other classroom constraints. Like Allen and Widdowson (1974), Wilkins said that the teacher is the biggest influence on the

communicativeness of language use. Qualified teachers should be able to understand and successfully implement the communicative approach in their classrooms.

Littlewood (1981) adopted the idea of CLT and developed different classroom activities and techniques for a 'more realistic use of L2 in the classroom' (Spada and Frohlich 1995: 3). He said that CLT should not only encourage learners to handle the structures of the foreign language but also to use them to carry out communicative functions in real situations and real time. In other words, learners must be able to understand the forms of the language as well as the purpose that the forms serve in communication. His argument that L2 learners need to be familiar with L2 use is similar to that of Allen and Widdowson (1974).

To enable the learner to use L2 for communicative purposes in the classroom, Littlewood (1981) suggested various classroom learning activities, which he divided into pre-communicative and communicative activities. The former occur in a phase in which learners practise 'isolated elements' of the language such as verb forms or affirmative or negative sentences, in order to familiarise themselves with the structure of L2. The latter, on the other hand, take place in a phase in which learners use what they already know, plus the language practised in the pre-communicative activity, in order to get their message across, express their ideas or solve a problem suggested by the teacher. As the communicative activity is based on interaction and discussion, it is always done in pairs or groups to give all the learners the chance of using L2. Bygate (1987:61) stated that, in the communicative activity, the learner 'integrates his pre-communicative knowledge and skills into the full activity of communicating meaning'.

Littlewood (1981) further divided communicative activities into functional communicational activities and social interaction activities. The functional communication activities require learners to interact with other learners using L2 to get their meaning across or to give or ask for information. It can be done through activities such as information gap or problem- solving activities. Information gap activities, possibly carried out as role-play, require learners to interact, usually in pairs, in order to complete a table or to fill in the gaps. Interaction is essential in this activity, since each learner has part of the information and he needs to ask his partner

about the missing parts in order to complete the activity. Problem-solving activities require learners to reach a conclusion by discussing the possibilities with other learners using L2. Social interaction communicative activity, the second type of communicative activity cited by Littlewood (1981), involves role-playing and simulation. The tasks may be similar to functional communication activities but, in addition, there is a defined social context, for example, playing the roles of doctor and patient or waiter and customer in a restaurant.

From Littlewood's (1981) point of view, the advantages of the communicative activities are that they motivate the learners and provide a situation in which they are able to learn naturally. He argued that the activities he outlined reflect real-life situations that arise outside the classroom. He claimed that, having practised such activities in the classroom, learners would be more able to solve communication problems they encounter in real-life situations.

Another scholar concerned with CLT is Rivers. Rivers (1983) argued that the difficulties that L2 learners face in real-life communication are because of the way they are taught in the classroom. She stated that learners usually have a set of memorised conversations, which they are unable to apply outside the classroom. These memorised conversations are useless, as the learners may not experience similar circumstances or situations in real life. She therefore suggested that there is a need for a language teaching model which allows learners to communicate effectively without hesitation. Rivers's argument seems to be similar to that of Wilkins (1976), as she suggested that L2 teaching activities need to be 'learner centered' and give learners the opportunity and the freedom to communicate using L2 during the learning process. The learners are assumed to be active and to be thinking, practising and discussing issues using L2.

Rivers (1983) proposed a process of two divisions in L2 learning, namely, skill-getting and skill-using. The process of skill-getting involves the learners in producing certain sequences of language elements. Articulating the language sounds is also learned via the 'skill getting activity'. An example of a traditional skill-getting activity is learning drills, which are widely used but which have been criticised. The traditional learning drills tend to make the learner repeat sentences after the teacher or

a recording of a native speaker. The following is an example of sentences the learner may be required to repeat in the traditional methods of teaching:

'Yesterday I went to the movies, Last night I went to the game, or Last week I went to the game' (Rivers, 1983: 44).

Rivers (1983) pointed out that these learning drills are not related to real-life situations and are controlled by the teacher. Hence learners are dependent on the teacher's instructions, they are not actively participating in 'anything that is of real import to them', and they are not receiving any genuine message (Rivers 1983: 43).

Rivers (1983) further suggested that was a false belief amongst scholars and teachers that, if L2 learners are doing well in the skill-getting activities, they will be able to communicate effectively. There is an erroneous assumption, she said, that the skills acquired via the skill-getting activity will be automatically transferred when the L2 learner uses the language for interaction.

The example cited above also shows that the traditional skill-getting learning drills do not stimulate thinking about the meaning of the words. Like Wilkins (1976), Rivers (1983) suggested that innovation and thinking about the meaning of the utterances that the learners are producing are two important elements, and both should be integrated in the skill-getting activities. She stated that one way to get learners to think about the meaning while they are practising the language is to get them to respond to the teacher's questions. In terms of innovation, she suggested that language drills need not be directly from textbooks; learners can be given the opportunity to come up with their own expressions. An example of language learning drills in which learners are given the freedom to express and to convey linguistically acceptable information is 'communicative practice' (CP) drills. Here the teacher chooses situations relevant and related to the learners' own lives. Rivers (1983) argued that this gives learners the freedom and the encouragement to think about the meaning as well as the structure of the language that they are producing. The following is an example of CP drills in which the teacher creates a situation to elicit certain responses:

' I would tell him to turn on the light.
her to turn on the light.
them to turn on the light ' (Rivers 1983: 46).

The drill requires the learners to give the responses that the teacher has in mind.

Teacher: Karen, if you and Susan came to class at 8 a.m. and it was winter and the room was dark, what would you tell Susan?

Karen: (with any luck at all) I would tell her to turn on the light.

Teacher: And how about you, Paul, if you were with Mary and you wanted to read, what would you do?

Paul: I would tell her to turn on the light.

Teacher: (in student's native language) You as a boy would tell a girl to do that for you?

Teacher: (continuing in the target language) Paul, if you came alone, and if I was in the room, what would you do?

Paul: I would tell you to turn on the light.

Teacher: Then I would throw you out of class (Rivers 1983: 46).

From the above discussion, it is obvious that Rivers (1983) stressed skill-getting activities whilst Littlewood (1981) focused on skill-using, which he called communicative activities. Rivers (1983) argued that, in the skill-getting process, the concepts of thinking, innovation and freedom of responses are involved as the learner is not given pre-constructed responses but has the freedom to think and come up with the response that he/she deems appropriate.

While the drill outlined above does involve thinking, the learner is not entirely free because the teacher is expecting certain language forms from the learner and the learner is trying to find the response that satisfies the teacher. Although Rivers (1983) gives the skill-getting activity some communicative features, the activity is still a kind of learning drill rather than a true communicative activity.

We now turn to Rivers's skill-using activity. This involves a situation in which the learners are not supported or directed by the teacher. They are given freedom to express themselves and allowed to convey meaning by using whatever command of

the language they have and, when they are unable to convey the message, to use gestures, acting or drawings. This type of interaction in the classroom is assumed to reflect real situations in which learners many find themselves. In such situations they have to put whatever they know to maximum use.

In the skill-using activities outlined by Rivers, she attempted to provide the learners with real situations in the classroom by leaving them unsupported. My view is that the teacher's support is important. The teacher should not interrupt the learners to correct every single error but rather offer help when it is needed. Harmer (2001) supports this view in suggesting that the teacher's intervention sometimes prevents the learners from feeling frustrated when they reach a point where they cannot carry on the activity without some help.

A further point which needs to be stressed is that the learner is most likely to use everything he knows to convey the message only if the teacher encourages him to do so. This suggests that the role of the teacher in encouraging the learner to use the language communicatively is crucial.

Xiaoju (1984), another advocate of CLT, also emphasised the value of simulating real-life situations in the classroom. He argued that generally when people speak, whether they use their mother tongue or L2, they tend to 'react mentally as well as verbally in communicative situations' (Xiaoju 1984: 3). People tend to think before they utter any verbal response. This is the basis for the verbal reactions in speech. Xiaoju (1984) argued that learners should be stimulated to 'react mentally' by involving them in real situations in the classroom.

Xiaoju (1984) pointed out that, when people use their native language, they have freedom in answering questions put to them and their responses are unpredictable. In the classroom, however, and especially with teachers who follow traditional methods, learners do not have the freedom to react to the questions in the way they want to. Rather they practise and recite pre-determined language.

He argued that this is not communication because 'communication involves freedom and unpredictability'. He also argued against the idea that 'learning a language comes

to mean only the mastery of form'. He further suggested that 'mimicry and memorization' cannot help the learner when he/she has the opportunity to use the language for communication. He added that 'some research shows that things learnt by "mim-mem" are stored in a certain part of our brains and are retrievable when we are reciting, but very often not when we are actually communicating' (Xiaoju 1984: 5).

Xiaoju also said that learning the form is also needed. He described it as a step to language use. Therefore this primary step of learning cannot be ignored. According to Xiaoju (1984), the teacher in a traditional lesson focuses on those language elements that he wants his students to acquire. Then the teacher spends the lesson time 'explaining, analyzing, paraphrasing, asking questions, practicing patterns, reading aloud, retelling, etc., until the students very nearly, if not literally, learn every word by heart' (Xiaoju 1984: 8).

An example of a lesson suggested by Xiaoju (1984), in which the learners use L2 rather than practise and memorise the language form, could be one in which the learners do role-play, make some evaluation on a subject or are involved in a conversation or a debate.

Another scholar interested in CLT is Harmer (see e.g. 2001), who agreed that CLT focuses on language function rather than on grammar and vocabulary and that L2 learners will acquire L2 when they are given 'plenty of opportunities' to use L2 in classroom situations that mirror real life. Like Littlewood (1981) and Xiaoju (1984), Harmer argues that this can be achieved through role-play or simulation activities in the classroom since these establish real communication among the learners. In these activities, learners may be involved in solving a puzzle, sharing information or participating in a discussion or a debate. He further suggests that in order to carry out these activities successfully learners 'should have a desire to communicate something. They should have a purpose for communicating' (Harmer 2001:85).

An example of an activity that can combine desire and purpose for communication is the information gap activity, as suggested by Littlewood (1981). Learners have to communicate with others in order to acquire the missing information. The purpose is

to close the information gap. In such activity the learners are assumed to be motivated and to want to communicate using L2 because they are anxious to get the missing information. Harmer argues that one of the advantages of communicative activities is that they 'develop habits of rapid language processing in English' (Harmer 2001: 271). In other words, learners who are given opportunities to participate in interesting and meaningful communication can improve their communicative skills to the point where they become able to process the information they are hearing and able to give a suitable answer quickly, using the right words and phrases. Harmer (2001) argues that when learners are role-playing they are usually involved in debates and discussions, putting forward their opinions. As the role-play progresses the learners are motivated to interact as they have the freedom to put forward opinions when required. When the learners are motivated, the shy and hesitant learners may participate because they think or feel that the opinions they are giving are not theirs but rather belong to the character in the role-play. Another advantage of these activities is that they allow the outside world to be brought into the classroom, adding variety to classroom situations.

In addition to the processing of linguistics items, Rivers (1983) and Harmer (2001) highlight the importance of acquiring 'expressive devices' namely; pitch, stress, varied volume of speech and non-verbal expressions which show feelings. These devices help learners to convey their message and get their meaning across as people do in real-life situations.

Applied linguists who were concerned with language teaching – in particular, Wilkins (1976), Munby (1978), and Widdowson (1978) – built their ideas on communicative functions in the form of Task-Based Learning (TBL).

We now turn to empirical studies on this method. One of the earliest relevant TBL studies was that of Savignon (1972), who compared two groups, an experimental and a control one, in order to evaluate the success of an attempt to develop communicative competence. Both groups were French beginners at Illinois University in the USA. The groups met for four 50-minute periods a week for the same basic course using the same textbook (*Basic Conversational French*). The experimental group was divided into two sub-groups 'E1', and 'E2', each consisting of seven students. Both sub-

groups were taught by the same instructor and were exposed to a variety of communication tasks before the course started, by means of an audio-lingual method. E1 was given training in performing specific communicative acts, while E2 was exposed to cultural orientation sessions conducted in English. The control group 'C' consisted of 28 students who attended a language laboratory in order to practise the basic material presented in the course. It was taught by a different instructor but he was similar in terms of experience to the instructor for groups E1 and E2. The control group pursued the same basic audio-lingual programme but the learners in this group were not exposed to any teaching before the course. The two assessments included in this study were communicative competence measures (i.e. each student was tested individually in a variety of communicative settings, including discussions, interviews, reports, and descriptions) and traditional measures of linguistic knowledge administered to all subjects at the end of the semester.

A first finding was that there was no significant difference between the three groups in their level of linguistic competence. In the communicative tests, however, there were differences: E1 scored highest, followed by E2 and then C, though the difference between E2 and C was not significant. The findings thus showed that there is a need to distinguish between grammatical competence (grasp and accurate usage of grammar) and communicative competence. At the same time, Savignon implied that the development of grammatical competence is necessary for the development of communicative competence. By and large, the study concluded that the group that had received some communicative teaching did best in the communicative tests.

Savignon's study (1972) cannot, however, be considered a model of the experimental method because the three groups pursued the same basic audio-lingual method and differed only in the nature of the additional teaching that they received. Another methodological flaw was that the learners in the communicative groups were exposed to communicative tasks before the regular course started, but for how long, and in what form, Savignon does not make clear.

Another attempt at comparing the communicative language teaching method (though not TBL specifically) with conventional methods was made by Palmer (1976, 1979, 1981). The study was carried out in Thailand with 54 second-year Thai university

students of English who were assigned to control and experimental groups. The control group was taught with the standard university course using the traditional method of reading followed by comprehension, structure, and vocabulary exercises. The same passages were used in the experimental group's material but this group was given communication activities requiring them to use the language and information in the passage to conduct short conversations. Palmer found that the communicative language group was more interested in the material and more motivated to learn English, but he did not find any significant differences in accuracy and fluency tests.

If the fluency tests are a true test of communicative skills, Palmer's results contradict those of Savignon (1972), who found that communicative teaching was associated with higher scores on communicative tests. A reason for the difference may be that the tasks that the students in Palmer's experimental group carried out were only modestly communicative, since all that the students were asked to do was to complete conversations. While this may have been a relevant factor, it does not change the fact that the studies by both Savignon and Palmer failed to provide a clear answer to the question whether communicative language teaching yields better results than traditional methods.

In a subsequent large-scale study, Fathman (1976) studied 331 students learning English as a second language in several elementary and secondary schools in the USA. She compared six classes using traditional methods with two concentrating on oral communication, in order to find out which method led to more successful learning of English as a second language. Oral production tests were administered at the beginning and at the end of the school year to assess each student's progress in learning to speak English. The tests were an oral interview and the Second Language Oral Production English (SLOPE) test. In the oral interview, students were asked general questions such as, 'What do you do after school?' and 'What is your favourite TV programme and why?' In the SLOPE test, the students were asked to describe a picture showing a sequence of three scenes of a person carrying books, falling, and dropping the books. The students were given ratings from 1 to 5 based on the extent to which they understood the questions and the grammatical correctness of their responses. The SLOPE Test was designed to assess the ability of students to produce

grammatical structures. The test consisted of 20 subtests with three items per subtest. Each item was scored 'correct' or 'incorrect'.

The findings were that, despite differences between schools and the level of the classes, all groups made good progress and achieved higher scores at the end of the year than at the beginning of the year. Fathman (1976), however, showed that the progress of some groups in both the elementary and secondary grades was greater than that of others. Both groups generally received low scores on the pre-tests but made large gains in the post-tests. Thus, in the oral interview, the learners in the primary grades made a gain of 64%, compared with the secondary students' gain of 53%. This difference might, according to Fathman (1976: 436), be because of age or the type of instruction to which the students were exposed. The primary students received more oral instruction, while the older students concentrated more on reading and writing skills. The classes where oral communication was emphasised increased their scores by 68% on the oral interview and by 56% on the SLOPE test.

Although Fathman (1976) concluded that the groups that improved most were the students who were exposed to oral communicative teaching, her study was flawed in many respects. First, the scoring appears to have been subjective rather than objective, as it was not supported by written tests. As Ellis (2003) has pointed out, if there is no pencil-and-paper test, the results cannot be confirmed. Second, there were several variables that were not controlled: the students came from different levels, different schools and different nationalities, and had different amounts of prior exposure to English. Most importantly, for our purposes, this study investigated the effects of communicative teaching but this teaching was not task-based.

Another important study was conducted by Spada (1987), who evaluated the communicative teaching of 48 adult intermediate level learners following an intensive ESL programme at a Canadian university. Spada's study attempted to investigate whether there were differences in the proficiency of learners as a result of differences in the kind of instruction that they received. One group (Class C) spent three times longer on activities that were focused on grammar than the other two groups (Classes A and B). On the other hand, Classes B and C spent more time on activities that were focused on function and engaged in many more authentic activities than did Class A.

Spada (1987) spent 60 hours observing classroom interaction. To collect the data, she used the COLT (communicative orientation of language teaching) observation scheme, designed to describe what teachers and learners actually do in the classroom. Spada compared the pre-test and post-test scores of learners using seven measures to investigate whether the instructional differences correlated with differences in improvement. These tests were four language skill tests (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and three further tests which included the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency, a multiple-choice discourse test and a multiple-choice sociolinguistic test.

The test findings revealed that there were no significant differences between the three classes. Classes B and C improved more in listening and speaking tests than did Class A. Class B improved more in the speaking test than did Class C, though this may be attributable to differences in the teachers and in instructional techniques. None of these differences, however, were statistically significant so, in general, the outcome indicated that Class A (the grammar group) did not do any better or worse than Classes B and C (the functional groups).

Spada's study, however, was on too small a scale to provide definitive conclusions, because of the small number of subjects and the limitation of time (the teaching lasted only four weeks). Spada (1987: 153) herself pointed out that further studies are needed to arrive at more precise results about the effectiveness of the communicative approach compared with the grammar teaching approach.

At about the same time, Allen, Swain, Harley and Cummins (1990) compared differences in methods of instruction within a core French programme for eleven classes of Grade 8 students from a metropolitan area of Canada. Two classes were experiential (i.e. they received meaning-focused teaching), while the other classes were analytical (i.e. they received form-focused teaching). Classes were selected to represent a range of L2 teaching practices. The COLT scheme was again used to 'measure features of communication typical of classroom discourse, as well as categories to measure how closely these interaction patterns resemble the way language is used in non-instructional settings' (Allen et al. 1990: 59).

The students were given several pre-tests:

(a) a multiple-choice grammar test;
(b) two written production tasks (a formal request letter and an informal note);
(c) a multiple-choice listening comprehension test;
(d) an individual oral interview of a sample of students from each class, scored for proficiency in grammar, discourse, and sociolinguistics.

The study was carried out during the school year. Each class was visited four times for observation by means of the COLT scheme. At the end of the course, the classes were post-tested with the same tests, and the students who had been interviewed at the beginning of the course were interviewed again. The COLT features allowed Allen and colleagues (1990: 61) to group classes into two categories: a high communicative group and a low communicative group. When they compared pre-test scores for the two types of classes, they found that both groups showed evidence of improvement during the year on written/oral grammar and listening comprehension measures in the post-test. No group, however, showed much improvement in written/oral discourse or sociolinguistic measures. The result of the COLT observation study of both groups was that teachers were in control of the topic being discussed for 82% of the time, 54% of the time was spent focusing on form and less than 1% was assigned to activities focusing on functional, discourse, or sociolinguistic aspects of language. That is, the teaching was heavily biased toward the analytical type of instruction since the curriculum was designed for this type of teaching (teacher-directed activities). The authors therefore supported the move towards more experiential learning, though this 'does not mean they [French teachers] should abandon the grammar-oriented, transmission mode of instruction' (Allen et al. 1990: 72). Calculating the total gain in the proficiency of all groups, they found that the two experiential groups made gains in overall proficiency but that one of them made greater gains than the other. According to Allen and colleagues, a possible explanation may be the quality, not the quantity, of interaction. It was noted from the qualitative analysis that the teaching of the class that registered greater gains had involved feedback and negotiation of meaning in communicative interaction, while the other class received less feedback and spent more time on stereotyped routines, which the researchers considered lacked

quality in spontaneous discourse. Allen and colleagues cited as an example the fact that the more successful class spent 66%, compared with the other class's 24%, of observed time on activities that involved a focus on form, though the latter did so in the context of meaningful tasks, such as whole class discussion of errors in students' compositions.

Allen and colleagues (1990) concluded that traditional analytic and communicative experiential types of instruction might provide support for each other in the L2 classroom and that the quality of instruction is crucially important in both analytic and experiential teaching. There are, however, methodological problems in their study. First, there was no fixed or specific method with which to make precise comparisons. Second, as Allen and colleagues (1990: 77) confessed, the study should have included 'research to determine what combinations of analytic and experiential activities are most effective for different types of students'.

Nunan (1999: 50) presented a useful summary of other studies that investigated the effectiveness of the traditional and communicative approaches in language teaching. He provided us with overall findings of these studies and drew attention to the relationship between the teaching methods and the outcomes of the programme. So, they are worth some consideration. Nunan's list is shown in Table 2.1:

Table 2.1 The relationship between teaching method and learning outcome

Study	Outcomes
Krashen (1982)	Instruction does not lead to acquisition. Comprehensible input is necessary and sufficient for acquisition.
Ellis (1984)	Formal instruction on question forms has little effect on the acquisition of question forms.
Swain (1985)	Comprehensible input does not lead to acquisition.
Montgomery and Eisenstein (1985)	Grammar and opportunities to communicate lead to greater improvement in fluency and grammatical accuracy than grammar only.
Schmidt and Frota (1986)	Instruction and opportunities to communicate out of class are both necessary. Improvement occurs when subjects consciously 'notice the gap'.
Doughty (1988)	Learners receiving instruction (both meaning and form focused) outperform those receiving only instruction
Pienemann (1989)	Grammatical forms will only be acquired when instruction matches the learner's developmental stage.
Spada (1990)	'Communicative' classrooms with instruction plus opportunities for instruction are superior to 'traditional' instruction and also to immersion programmes.
Zhou (1991)	Formal instruction results in acquisition of some structures (passives) but not others (tense and aspect). Explicit (declarative) knowledge can be converted into implicit (procedural) knowledge through practice.
Lim (1992)	Frequency / quality of learner participation relates significantly to qualitative aspects of learner participation, e.g. range of speech acts and control of conversational management techniques. Learner participation in class relates significantly to improvements in language proficiency.
Fotos (1993)	Small group tasks are as effective as formal teacher-fronted instruction.
Möllering and Nunan (1994)	Instruction makes a difference in the acquisition of German modal particles, although acquisition is relativistic, complex, and organic.
Wudong (1994)	Declarative knowledge (ability to identify errors and state rule violations) does not lead to procedural knowledge (ability to use grammar to communicate) without opportunities to activate knowledge through output activities.

(Source: Nunan 1999: 50)

Nunan (1999:49) comments that:

> It may seem that this research is confusing and confused [...]. However, it also seems from the studies reviewed in this section that there is another important variable at play here: interaction in the target language. It seems that, in order to maximize the effects of instruction, learners need more

> opportunities to use the structures they are learning in communicative interaction.

Nunan's comment strongly suggests that encouraging functional and authentic communicative interaction within form-focused instructional language programmes will be more effective in promoting second language learning than programmes which focus only on either grammar or fluency. This echoes the findings of some of the research described above in more detail (Spada 1987; Allen et al. 1990). Thus, there is a need for learners to study grammar as well as to practise communication. Following this idea, the present study explores the extent to which the use of communicative approaches promotes language learning in a programme that concentrates mainly on teaching, learning, and testing the grammar forms.

Nevertheless, in practice, CLT often involves procedures where learners work in pairs or groups, and are engaged in carrying out tasks (Richards and Rodgers 2001). In fact, the standard pedagogic practice in communicative teaching is task-based, i.e. it involves the provision of oral communication practice through which language processing may be developed in the context of language use. The usual name for this teaching method or procedure is task-based learning (TBL).

We see from the above that there have been almost no studies comparing TBL with GBL, but before we consider what such a study should involve, let us consider in more detail several additional issues that relate to TBL (form-focused instruction) and TBL itself, along with its relation to teaching, learning and syllabus design.

2.5 Task-Based Learning and teaching approaches

As noted above, as early as 1985, Long made a cogent case for the use of tasks in second language learning. Long claimed that a task can be successfully used as the basic unit that makes up a course syllabus for classroom teaching. For that purpose, Long classified syllabuses into two main categories which Wilkins (1976) called a synthetic syllabus and an analytic syllabus. In the synthetic syllabus, the parts of a whole are gradually accumulated; Wilkins (1976:2) states that in the synthetic approach:

> Different parts of the language are taught separately and step by step so that acquisition is a process of gradual accumulation of parts until the whole structure of language has been built up.

Such a syllabus assumes that learners can resynthesise these separate parts of the language teaching into a coherent whole that can then be used effectively in communicative situations. The learners in this approach, according to Ellis (1994), seemed 'unlearned', as they learned numerous items imperfectly and often at the same time. This results in unstable learning (Nunan 2004).

The alternative, analytical approach (Beglar and Hunt 2002) offer a syllabus in which the target language is looked at and learned in holistic 'chunks'; Wilkins (1976: 13) stated that:

> Prior analysis of the total language system into a set of discrete pieces of language that is a necessary precondition for the adoption of a synthetic approach is largely superfluous ... [such approaches] are organised in terms of the purposes for which people are learning language and the kinds of language that are necessary to meet these purposes.

White (1988) listed five characteristics of analytic syllabuses:

(a) they are primarily concerned with how materials are learned (process-oriented);

(b) some degree of negotiation between learners and the teacher occurs;

(c) the content is fundamentally defined as what the subject means to the learner and what the learner brings to the subject in terms of knowledge and interests;

(d) assessment is based on the learner's criteria of success;

(e) the instructional situation is far more cooperative than in the traditional syllabus (teacher-fronted classroom).

Moreover, according to Beglar and Hunt (2002), they provide the formal aspect of the target language and also focus on materials for meaningful language use. The opportunities for producing communicative language are considered the most valuable means of promoting language acquisition (Swain 1995).

One analytic syllabus, according to Long and Crookes (1992), is the task-based syllabus which is drawn from previous ideas and practices. Long and Crookes (1992)

proposed that the instruction of the task enables the process of acquisition to operate by allowing meaning to be negotiated and, while meaning is in progress, the form of the target language is constructed. Beglar and Hunt (2002) commented that opportunities for learners to produce the target language may force them to pay more attention to form and to the relationship between form and meaning. Such a combination of contextualised, meaningful input and output will activate the learners' cognitive processes, which means that the natural cognitive processes will be used both consciously and subconsciously for developing comprehension (linguistic rules and structures) and production (communicative competence). Form-function relationships should be also taken into an account in the development of target language learners because they take care of the contextualised and communicative nature of the tasks provided by a task-based syllabus (Beglar and Hunt 2002).

Different researchers have adopted task-based syllabuses or what Breen (1987a) calls a 'process plan'. He defines a task as one of a set of problem-solving activities which lets both teachers and learners, in joint communication, reach the goals within social needs (for more definitions of tasks by Breen, 1989, Long, 1985, Nunan, 1989, Lee, 2000, Bygate, Skehan, and Swain, 2001 and others, see Ellis 2003:4-5). Long and Crookes (1992) categorised three task-based syllabus types: the procedural syllabus, the process syllabus, and the task syllabus. The procedural syllabus is represented by the Communicational Teaching Project (CTP) (Prabhu 1982, 1984, 1987), mentioned above. Regarding the process syllabus, Breen (1984:56) claims that language cannot be learned except in a climate of negotiation:

> A process syllabus addresses the overall question: 'Who does what with whom, on what subject-matter, with what resources, when, how, and for what learning purpose(s)?

The process syllabus, then, is a representation of how communication and learning come together in the language classroom. The crucial point of such methodology is the importance of the social activity in classroom teaching and learning (Breen 1987b).

The third syllabus that considers the task as a unit of analysis is known as task-based language teaching (Long and Crookes 1992). The rationale behind task-based

language teaching was generated by SLA researchers in that they describe tasks in terms of their usefulness for collecting data for research purposes. Long and Crookes (1992) adopted the task as a unit of organisation in an attempt to provide an integrated, internally coherent approach. As such, the syllabus gives priority to the learners' social requirements and experience and awareness of language learning. This syllabus is distinguished by its compatibility with research findings on language learning (Long and Crookes 1992): its achievement of a range of tasks, its representation of communicative competence, and its direct reference to the contributions of learners and emphasis on the learning process. Richards and Rodgers (2001:228) claim that 'tasks are believed to foster processes of negotiation, modification, rephrasing, and experimentation that are at the heart of second language learning'. Then, the basic assumptions of TBLT are summarised by Feez (1998: 17) as follows:

- The focus of instruction is on process rather than product.
- Basic elements are purposeful activities and tasks that emphasise communication and meaning.
- Learners learn language by interacting communicatively and purposefully while engaged in meaningful activities and tasks.
- Activities and tasks can be either:
  - . those that learners might need to achieve in real life.
  - . those that might have a pedagogical purpose specific to the classroom.
- Activities and tasks of a task-based syllabus can be sequenced according to difficulty.
- The difficulty of a task depends on a range of factors including the previous experience of the learner, the complexity of the task, and the degree of support available.

Another relevant distinction is Long's (1991), between focus on form (FoF) and focus on forms (FoFs). FoFs, according to Long (1991, 2000), is found in traditional structural approaches (i.e. GBL) to language teaching (see Wilkins 1976), in which language is segmented into discrete items which are then presented to the learners as isolated units. FoF instruction, on the other hand, involves drawing the learner's attention to linguistic forms 'as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding

focus is on meaning or communication' (Long 1991: 46). Long (2000) believes that FoF is better than FoFs instruction because FoF is learner-centred, is tuned to the learner's internal syllabus, and occurs when needed. By contrast, FoFs does not match the learning processes, is not needs-based, and often results in boring lessons. (See also Williams 1995, 2005; Doughty and Williams 1998; Lightbown 1998; Long and Robinson 1998; Nassaji 1999; Doughty 2001; Nassaji and Fotos 2004.)

The construct of FoF has, however, been interpreted and used differently by different researchers. For example, while, as we have seen above, Long (1991) considered FoF mainly as a reactive response to communication problems, occurring after the event, Doughty and Williams (1998) suggested that the teacher can also plan in advance to introduce FoF. Lightbown (1998) noted that FoF could be either integrated into a communicative context or distributed in the form of mini-lessons. Within this form-focused instruction (FFI) framework, advanced planning to teach a particular grammar point is considered to match the notion of FoF as long as the focus is 'triggered by an analysis of learner need rather than being imposed externally by a linguistic syllabus' (Doughty and Williams 1998: 5).

According to Doughty and Williams (1998: 4), a central feature of FoF is that 'meaning and use must already be evident to the learner at the time that attention is drawn to the linguistic apparatus needed to get the meaning across'. Some researchers have reacted to this assumption by arguing that focus on form should not be limited to situations in which form is the focus during communicative activities or only when learners are engaged with meaningful activities (Sheen 2002; Swain 2005). Ellis (2001a), for example, argued that the reactive/proactive distinction is useful as both constitute occasions where learners are invited to FoF. Though their primary attention is on meaning, the proactive perspective does not meet the incidental characteristic of FoF as outlined in Long's (1991) repeated opportunities for attention to a pre-selected language form or *intensive* instruction. On the other hand, incidental FoF (see below) results in *extensive* instruction in that a range of linguistic forms including grammatical, lexical, phonological, pragmatic forms may compete for learner attention. This then, according to Long (1991: 16),

> raises the question as to whether language learning benefits most from focusing on a few problematic linguistic forms intensively or from a scatter-gun approach where multitudinous problematic forms are treated randomly and cursorily and where the treatment may or may not be repeated.

To address some of these problems, Ellis (2001a) has distinguished three types of FFI, which constitute any instructional activity that is used to draw the learner's attention to language form (see Spada 1997): FoFs, planned FoF, and incidental FoF. FoFs is characterised as instruction that involves pre-selected forms presented to the learners either explicitly through teaching rules or implicitly through exercises allowing the learners to infer the rules (for example, structured input or production practice) (Ellis 2001a). Thus FFI ranges from structure-based instruction to communicative lessons containing the target form. Planned FoF is described as instruction that involves treatment of pre-selected forms with the difference that the treatment occurs while the learner's primary focus is on processing meaning (for example, communicative input containing the form, textual enhancement, or communicative tasks using the form). In incidental FoF, the form occurs incidentally while the learner's primary focus is on meaning (for example, recasts and negotiation of meaning during communicative interaction).

The incidental FoF construct is very similar to Long's (1991) notion of FoF but Ellis (2001a) differentiated incidental FoF from FoF in that FoF involves explicit attention to form. Thus, in addition to the reactive/proactive distinction, Ellis (2001a) also made a distinction between reactive and pre-emptive FoF. As mentioned before, reactive FoF involves the teacher's reaction to an actual or perceived problem in the course of communication (Lyster and Ranta 1997; Doughty and Varela 1998). Pre-emptive FoF, on the other hand, involves time spent in a communicative activity, either by the teacher or by the student, to respond to a form that is anticipated to be problematic although no actual error has taken place (for example, Ellis, Basturkmen, and Loewen 2001). Similarly, Nassaji (1999) suggested that focus on form can be seen in language classrooms through both *process* and *design*. The process refers to FoF created incidentally when both the teacher and the learners' attention is on processing meaning whereas the design occurs intentionally through designing communicative grammar tasks in which attention to form becomes an essential component of carrying out the task (for example, Loschky and Bley-

Vroman 1993, Fotos 1993). In this case, the learner needs to attend to the target form while attempting either to comprehend (Ellis 1995) or produce it (Swain 1998).

With regard to this typology, Williams (2005) observed that if a reaction to an actual or perceived problem or error is considered to be a criterion for FoF, it may be difficult to regard pre-emptive treatment as FFI (Williams 2005). She also discussed the concept of obtrusiveness, or whether reactive/pre-emptive FFI could impact negatively on learning processing of the meaningful activity (2005: 676). Lightbown (1998, 2000) suggested, however, that when the form is significant for the comprehension of meaning, a focus on both the form and the meaning is advantageous. In additional research, Lyster and Mori (2006) suggested that learners performing meaning-focused activities can actually benefit by shifting their attention towards form, and that such a shift can promote L2 learning.

For focusing on target structures, Ellis (2003) has particularly recommended task-based FFI. Here form-focused tasks may be purely communicative yet the input has been made to contain the target form and its use is required to complete the task (Loschky and Bley-Vroman 1993). Other tasks incorporate the target form more explicitly, such as the grammar consciousness raising task where the learners' task objective is to solve a grammar problem using the target structure (Fotos and Ellis 1991). In addition, planning before or during the task is also seen as important (Ellis 2003). Swain (2005) emphasised the importance of output (production) to develop learner awareness of the gap between current target language production ability and the target language. Collaborative output tasks (Swain and Lapkin 1998, 2001) require learners to produce the target language cooperatively. Nick Ellis (2002) suggested that both input and output containing target forms can affect acquisition of a second language (SLA).

Johnson (1996) analysed several alternatives for the sequencing of grammatical structures, and a modified version of his paradigm results in three types of possible syllabus. The following figure presents a schematic view of the sequential focus of attention on various aspects of the target language. As I understand it, Johnson equates the focus on a particular linguistic structure to a part of the whole linguistic system.

A. part-1 → whole → part-2 → whole → part-3 → whole → ...

B. whole → part-1 → whole → part-2 → whole → part-3 →

C. whole → part-3 → part-2 → whole → part-3 →whole → whole[1]

Figure 2.2: A schematic view of the sequential focus on various aspects of the target language

The first sequencing, type A, is representative of a focus on the forms approach: target items (part-1, part-2, etc.) are selected, isolated and sequenced in a pre-established manner. That is, these target language forms are presented, analysed, and practised before they are functionally needed in a contextualised communicative situation. One of the principal tenets of this approach to sequencing is that learners supposedly will be able to master and control specific items of the target language before their use in context is required. Hence, errors may, in principle, be avoided.[2] The sequences represented in B and C constitute possible models of TBL instruction (according to the definition given above). Both models are based on the use of language as a means to an end (accomplishment of a communicative task). The second type (B) is representative of an approach that first focuses on meaning as a whole. The focus on the grammatical items comes afterwards, but the selection of the specific grammatical components may be arbitrary as in the case of the sequence described above in A. The last type of syllabus (C) differs from B in that the focus on form may happen at any time during the learning process. In principle, this entails that either the learner or the instructor decides when to focus on form and what items to focus on. Table 2.2 presents a summary of the main features of each pedagogical sequence.

Table 2.2 Features of each pedagogical sequence

Sequence	Syllabus content	Syllabus type	focus on
A	Grammatical (GBL)	pre-planned	forms
B	Whole (TBL)	pre-planned	form(S)
C	Whole (TBL)	interactive	form

1 Notice that part -1 is not listed, given that it is a possibility because there is no sequentiality in the process of focusing on grammatical target items.

2 It is questionable, however, that learners will be able to avoid natural developmental errors as soon as the constraints on language production are removed and students try to use the language as a whole. This is a common phenomenon represented in teachers' frustrations when students seem to control one form as soon as it is presented but forget (how) to use it immediately afterwards.

As we can see, the main difference between the second and third sequence is that the former can be equated with a (pre-) planned syllabus and the latter with an interactive one based on learners' needs and demands. It could be argued that type C is more conducive to a focus on form, although this may be a matter of degree. In essence, these two sequences underline the importance of two crucial components of a complete pedagogical approach to second language teaching (Richards and Lockart 1996). In more concrete terms, we can say that sequence B is represented in textbooks where we find a pre-determined order (by nature of the constraints that textbook authors face), whereas sequence C is represented by the locally-based decisions based on the interactions between instructor and students on a day-to-day basis.

Now we return to the notion of task, where it is important to mention a relevant caveat about the concept of a focus on form: the term 'task', defined as a meaningful activity, may be ambiguous. Skehan (1998: 96) argued that '... the two underlying characteristics of tasks, avoidance of specific structures and engagement of worthwhile meanings, are matters of degree, rather than being categorical'. One reason for this is obvious: learners and teachers may not be interested in or focused on the same features of the target language. Moreover, it is fair to say that not all students would be traversing the same developmental stage at the same time. Long and Robinson (1998:24) pointed out that '... [the] teachers' intended pedagogical focus and students' actual attentional focus often differ substantially'. To make matters more complex, Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994:468) argued that pedagogical 'help should ... be offered only when it is needed, and withdrawn as soon as the novice shows signs of control and ability to function independently'. The latter proposal embodies a learner-centred approach to language learning with the obvious corollary, as I understand it, that the analysis of language form itself may be established as the goal of any specific pedagogical task. That is to say, we may reverse the order of analysis normally attributed to the canonical definition of a task: a focus on meaning first, followed by a focus on form, may become a sequence in which the focus on form appears first. In other words, three major components define the focus on form of a TBL approach: (a) it can be generated by the teacher or the learner(s), (b) it is generally incidental (occasional shift of attention), and (c) it is contingent on learners' needs (triggered by perceived problems, see Long 1991).

The task-based approach, therefore, is not solely and exclusively based on meaning but it also recognises other ways of promoting language learning, which are based on form. In general, task-based language learning and teaching are intended to help students acquire the communication skills as well as the grammatical skills they need in the target language. The approach aims to lead students to think for themselves and improve through communicative techniques such as work group, dialogue, role-play, general discussion, simulation, etc. Consequently, the implementation of the activity focuses students' attention on meaning first and then allows for the incidental shift of attention to the manipulation of linguistic form as needed. Nunan (2004) emphasised that a task-based approach is closely related to the use of pair/group work. A survey of research studies on pair/group work indicated that learners produce more and longer grammatical sentences in pair/group work than they do in traditional teacher-fronted methods (Fotos and Ellis 1991).

It should also be said that one of the purposes of using tasks is to draw learners' attention to form-meaning interrelationships (Samuda 2001). Proponents of TBL recognise that the ultimate aim is not the achievement of certain tasks but the acquisition of the linguistic items and rules that make the carrying out of tasks possible. Shehadeh (2005: 13) advocated that,

> We need to recognize that learners are also striving to mean. In the process of these strivings they are prompted to develop a lexico-grammar that will enable them to realize the meanings they want. Without this incentive they are much less likely to develop a usable language system.

That is, the task is important to promote language use in general performance, such as fluency or some aspect of communicative competence and accuracy or some aspect of linguistic competence, 'because a task is a more motivating activity than (say) a substitution exercise. In this case, the purpose of the task will be to catalyse general learning' (Bygate et al. 2001: 6).

Given this evident importance of tasks in CLT, it is necessary to pay some closer attention to attempts to define tasks from the perspective of research on language pedagogy. It should be noted, though, that there is no complete agreement on task constitution, which makes definition problematic (Crookes 1986).

Long (1985: 89) simply defined a task as use of language, for example, in making an airline reservation. Long suggested that a task is:

> ... a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or for some reward. Thus, examples of tasks include painting a fence, dressing a child, filling out a form, buying a pair of shoes, making an airline reservation, borrowing a library book, taking a driving test, typing a letter, weighing a patient, sorting letters, taking a hotel reservation, writing a cheque, finding a street destination and helping someone across a road. In other words, by 'task' is meant the hundred and one things people do everyday life, at work, at play, and in between.

Nunan (1989) distinguished between pedagogical tasks and real-world or target tasks. The tasks Long sets out above are target tasks which are the sorts of things that people do outside the classroom. The pedagogical tasks that this study focuses on, however, are what learners do in class, such as listening to a tape and repeating phrases or sentences, doing a jigsaw reading task or solving a problem in small groups. These kinds of tasks are assumed to facilitate and develop learners' general language proficiency and thus have a pedagogical rationale. Richards, Platt and Weber (1986: 289) had such a rationale in view when they defined a task as:

> an activity or action which is carried out as the result of processing or understanding language (i.e., a response). For example, drawing a map while listening to a tape, listening to instruction and performing a command, may be referred to as tasks. Tasks may or may not involve the production of language. A task usually requires the teacher to specify what will be regarded as successful completion of the task. The use of a variety of different kinds of tasks in language teaching is said to make language teaching more communicative.

This definition and many others have a common characteristic: they suggest that tasks are concerned with communicative language.

Swales (1990: 76) pointed out that tasks need to be viewed as '...sequenceable goal-directed activities...relatable to the acquisition of pre-genre and genre skills appropriate to a foreseen or emerging socio-rhetorical situation'. Skehan (1996a) restricted the word 'task' to activities where meaning is primary. Skehan (1998: 95) indicated the importance of the implementation phase of a task. He pointed out that there should be a clear set of criteria to assess the outcomes of task requirements in a

classroom: '...task completion has some priority; the assessment of the task is in terms of outcome'. He argued that tasks have the following core features:

1. there is a goal to be worked towards;
2. the activity is outcome-evaluated;
3. meaning is primary;
4. and there is a real-world relationship.

Given these many different aspects of tasks, it is useful to isolate their most important recurrent features. Shavelson and Stern (1981: 478) suggest that there are six:

- The content: the subject matter to be taught
- The materials: the things that learners can work on/manipulate
- The activities: the things that learners and teachers are doing during a lesson
- The goals: the teachers' general aims for the task
- The needs: interests of students
- The social community: the class as a whole and its sense of groupness.

Candlin (1987) produced a similar list, suggesting that tasks can be thoughtfully considered by distinguishing the following:

- Input, which refers to the data presented in class for students to work on
- Roles, which means that students and the teacher are participants
- Setting, which is interpreted in the place - usually the classroom
- Action, which refers to the procedures to be performed by the students
- Monitoring, which means the supervision of the task by the teacher
- Outcomes, which are the goals of the task
- Feedback, which refers to the evaluation of the task.

Also related to definitions of task is the issue of the history of TBL. Prabhu's (1987) ideas and his *Bangalore Project* form the basis of a syllabus which had no specific linguistic reference, but simply involved tasks that would focus on different subjects and the cognitive processes that the students adopted in order to carry out these tasks.

He also provided a comprehensive grading for these tasks so that those which were appropriate for each learning area could be selected. Although highly revered, this research was criticised for its lack of syllabus content and its failure to address any issues around second language acquisition. It was the start of a series of interesting discussions and viewpoints surrounding the teaching of foreign languages. The TBL model that Long and Crookes (1992) devised included an amalgamation of classroom-centred research and the application of some traditional principles of syllabus and course design. Unlike the traditional approach, however, their approach encouraged a focus on meaning instead of form. Whereas Prabhu (1987) and Breen and Candlin (1980) were able to test the validity of their ideas through classroom practice, Long and Crookes (1992) did not have that opportunity, and the empirical effectiveness of their methods therefore remained unproven.

When Stephen Krashen (1982) argued that the language instruction of young English language learners should focus on meaning, rather than on form, this pointed to use of tasks. When the teacher communicates to the class at a level that exceeds its current ability, this should be accompanied by specific actions (including mime and gesticulation) rather than by mere verbal explanation. Krashen's theories favouring meaning over form have come under considerable criticism, but many researchers now accept that a teaching method that incorporates more actual use of the target language may enable the learner to develop proficiency in real-life situations. The underlying idea is that learning a language in an everyday setting (such as a supermarket, an office or at home) is more effective than learning in a classroom setting where there is no authentic exposure to the target language, and that TBL more closely mimics these more authentic interactions. Consequently, this motivates students and enables them to use the language to engage in various tasks and actions. Allwright (1984), Breen (1987a) and Nunan (1989) all said that the 'task'-based learning approach came into being as a specific teaching method by confirming that learners need to use the second language being learned outside the classroom.

In the literature, there is much evidence to support the idea that combining FFI and MFI rather than using either alone can be more effective in terms of proficiency, as they are based on different perspectives. There is sometimes, however, a contrast between form-focused instruction and meaning-focused instruction. It is clear, as

described earlier in this chapter, that FFI is instruction-based, drawing learners' attention to the linguistic forms, while MFI describes instruction which asks learners only to understand the content of what they want to communicate (Stern 1990). In the same context, a number of studies highlight these differences. The following section will discuss whether or not these differences are substantial. Subsequently, the idea of using either type of instruction on its own will be treated and related studies will be reviewed.

Ellis (2000) argues that the basic difference between form-focused and meaning-focused instruction lies in the way language is regarded (as an object rather than a means) and the role the learner is invited to play (learner rather than user). This implies that form does not only mean grammar but also has some kind of meaning, e.g. meaning which arises when form changes.

The distinction between these concepts is open to debate. For example, Widdowson (1998) criticises the distinction and argues that form-focused instruction always requires learners to attend to meaning as well as to form (e.g. the semantic meanings realised when the verb forms are changed), whereas meaning-focused activities still require learners to process forms for decoding and encoding messages. For Widdowson, the difference lies in the kind of meaning learners attend to, e.g. a semantic meaning, as in the case of language drills, or a pragmatic one, as in the case of communicative tasks. This, however, is still a description of both kinds rather than a statement of interference. SLA researchers have always used the term 'form' to refer not only to form (e.g. the ***-ed*** in the simple past tense in English) but also to the semantic meaning(s) a form gives in use (e.g. a completed action which happened in the past).

Littlewood (2004) gives a different view, which is based on an interactive, holistic notion. This notion sees both kinds of instruction on a continuum, the starting-point of which is form and the end meaning. Littlewood (2004:.321) states that

> This is not a dichotomy, however, but a continuum along which students may operate with differing degrees of focus on form and meaning. In the diagram below, this dimension is divided into five sections. The labels across the top describe the

categories with reference to how they relate to the goal of language teaching, namely, communication.

He claims that teaching meaning is dependent on teaching form. When it comes to actual activities in the classroom, Ellis (1982) and Widdowson (1998) distinguish between **tasks** as activities concentrating on meaning-focused language use ('pragmatic meaning', i.e. the use of language in context) and **exercises** as activities concentrating on form-focused language use ('semantic meaning', i.e. systematic meanings). This difference is further explained in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: The continuum from focus on form to focus on meaning

Focus on form ←			→ **Focus on meaning**	
Non-communicative learning communication	**Pre-communicative language practice**	**Communicative language practice**	**Structured**	**Authentic communicative**
Focusing on the structures of language, how they are formed and what they mean, e.g. substitution exercises, 'discovery' and awareness-raising activities	Practising language with some attention to meaning but not communicating new messages to others e.g. 'question-and-answer practice	Practising pre-taught language in context where it communicates new information – gap activities or 'personalized' questions	Using language to communicate in situations which elicit pre-learnt language, but with some unpredictability e.g. structured role-play and simple problem-solving	Using language to communicate in situations where the meanings are unpredictable e.g. creative role-play, more complex problem-solving and discussion
'Exercise' ←				→ **'Task'**

(Source: Littlewood 2004: 322)

At the left of Table 2.3, non-communicative learning is shown to have the strongest focus on forms, which include, for example, uncontextualised grammar exercises, substitution drills and pronunciation drills. As we move to the right, the next column, pre-communicative language practice, still has a focus on form with little attention to meaning (i.e. it consists of question-and-answer practice: *Who is sitting there?* and so on). This means that, as pointed out by Littlewood (2004), the students cannot answer without knowing the meaning of the relevant words. The third column, communicative language practice, covers activities of learners concentrating on predictable language to convey information, for example, when learners use recently taught language in order to complete a table or picture. Structured communication has its main focus on meaning but here the teacher structures the situation to make sure

that the learners understand what they are doing, for example, in role-playing tasks. The extreme right of the continuum, authentic communication, has the strongest focus on meaning (communication of message); the forms are unpredictable, as is the case in using language for discussion, problem-solving, and content-based tasks. The five categories of Table 2.3 thus correspond to a progression from exercises (form-focus; non-communicative learning) to tasks (meaning-focus; authentic communicative learning). Since a task is a means of communication and self-expression whereby the meaning and the rules of language use play a central part in the process of human interaction, there are many types of task. Nunan (2004: 59-61), drawing on other work, summarised them in five main categories, given in Table 2.4:

Table 2.4 Different Task Types

Cognitive	
Classifying	Putting things that are similar together in groups Example: Study a list of names and classify them into male and female
Predicting	Predicting what is to come in the learning process Example: Look at the unit title and objectives and predict what will be learned
Inducing	Looking for patterns and regularities Example: Study a conversation and discover the rule for forming the simple past tense
Taking notes	Writing down the important information in a text in your own words
Concept mapping	Showing the main ideas in a text in the form of a map
Inferencing	Using what you know to learn something new
Discriminating	Distinguishing between the main idea and supporting information
Diagramming	Using information from a text to label a diagram
Interpersonal	
Co-operating	Sharing ideas and learning with other students Example: Work in small groups to read a text and complete a table
Role playing	Pretending to be somebody else and using the language for the situation you are in Example: You are a reporter. Use the information from the reading to interview the writer
Linguistic	
Conversational patterns	Using expressions to start conversations and keep them going Example: Match formulaic expressions to situations
Practising	Doing controlled exercises to improve knowledge and skills Example: Listen to a conversation, and practise it with a partner
Using context	Using the surrounding context to guess the meaning of an unknown word, phrase or concept
Summarising	Picking out and presenting the major points in a text in a summary form
Selective listening	Listening for key information without trying to understand every word. Example: Listen to a conversation and identify the number of speakers
Skimming	Reading quickly to get a general ideas of a text Example: Decide if a text is a newspaper article, a letter or an advertisement
Affective	
Personalising	Learners share their own opinions, feelings and ideas about a subject Example: Read a letter from a friend in need and give advice
Self-evaluation	Thinking about how well you did on a learning task, and rating yourself on a scale
Reflecting	Thinking about ways you learn best
Creative	
Brainstorming	Thinking of as many new words and ideas as you can Example: Work in group and think of as many occupations as you can.

According to Nunan (2004), the above types of task provide opportunities for the kinds of interaction that promote language acquisition. Long (1989) proposes four general points relating to the effectiveness of such task types as follows:

. Two-way tasks produce more negotiation of meaning than one-way tasks.
. Planned tasks where learners prepare their spoken or written discourse beforehand encourage more negotiation than unplanned tasks.
. Closed tasks where there is an ending produce more negotiation than open tasks.
. Convergent tasks where there is a general agreement promote more negotiation than divergent tasks.

TBL is often specified as advocating the use of language as needed by students. It should provide students with authentic language, which means that it would serve the genuine (real world) communicative needs of the learner in realistic foreign language situations, both in teaching and testing. It can therefore be said that the objective of the TBL approach is to provide learners with the information, practice and experience to meet their communicative needs in their own situation. There are principles that the Task-Based Learning approach depends on in order to match the tenets adopted in English language teaching. These principles, which were cited by Sheikh (1993), are as follows.

1. Language is essentially a means of communication. Therefore, any approach that does not make such a contribution should be rejected.
2. Language is an individual process. Therefore, students should be enabled to express their individual needs rather than just be members of one group.
3. Language is a social process. That is, it is a form of interaction. So, the course should provide appropriate situations for social interaction to take place.
4. Language use is something people like to enjoy or engage in. English language courses should, therefore, exploit this by presenting situations where students can enjoy the language.

'With *communicative language practice* we come to activities in which learners still work with a predictable range of language but use it to convey information' (Littlewood 2004:322). This, for example, includes language which has been taught to

facilitate a survey amongst classmates or to ask a classmate for information in order to complete something missing in a table or a picture. For Littlewood, this is a step towards mastering communication. For *structured communication,* he claims that

> the main focus moves to the communication of meanings, but the teacher has carefully structured the situation to ensure that the learners can cope with it with their existing resources, including perhaps what they have recently used in more form-focused work. This category includes more complex information-exchange activities or structured role-playing tasks.

For Littlewood (2004), it is clear that the target should be to achieve communication/ meaningful utterances which are used correctly in various situations. Willis (1996: 23), following the same line of thought, sees that the main goal is that the learner achieves a communicative purpose through a set of activities, which is believed to be a representation of 'a broad consensus among researchers and educators' (Ellis 2000: 195).

It appears, then, that FFI is necessary to achieve the communicative purpose. Ellis (2002) conducted a study investigating eleven other pieces of research in this respect. Unlike Krashen and Terrell's (1993) claims, the study supports FFI as contributing to and facilitating the learner's acquisition or their implicit knowledge. Ellis claims that this was confirmed in the study and that the teaching of FFI containing simple structures used intensively is more likely to have a better result. The study also reveals that the instruction of complex structures not intensively used can be just as successful once they are used in non-instructional situations.

A study conducted by Takamoto (2008) on the relative effectiveness of three types of input-based trends for teaching English polite request forms was investigated. The three types were structured input tasks with explicit information, problem-solving tasks and structured input tasks without explicit information. The sample consisted of sixty Japanese learners of English. The performance of the treatment groups was compared with that of the control group in pre-, post-, and follow-up tests.

It was found that the three treatment groups performed significantly better than the control group. The group that had the structured input tasks with explicit information did not proceed with the positive effects of the treatment on a follow-up listening test

component. It is therefore asserted that even teaching input which is based on form instruction cannot be as lasting as the other two types. In short, Takamoto's study reached the conclusion that learners whose teaching partly focuses on forms forget some of these forms over time when tested in a listening test.

The previous conclusion can be seen as damaging to the continuity of forms as time passes. Forms are important to various structures of sentences, but the only concern is when they are not used communicatively, allowing students' memories to forget what they have already learnt.

From a different perspective, Fotos (1993) found that learner observation of target structures in subsequent communicative input enhanced by two types of grammar consciousness-raising treatments (e.g. teacher-fronted grammar lessons and interactive, grammar problem-solving tasks) does not make students more proficient than when they are exposed only to formal instruction. In other words, the impact of both types was the same. The experimental group's observation frequencies and those of a control group which was not exposed to any grammar consciousness-raising activity were compared. According to Fotos (1993), a number of learners who had the experimental treatment continued to observe the same structures in communicative contexts after their grammar-consciousness was raised. This is definitely a finding which shows a certain working mechanism of FFI.

On the other hand, there is evidence that the view that teaching which combines FFI and MFI structurally appears to be convincing. It is claimed that both types should be looked on interactively, not contrastively. Swan (2005: 376) supports this idea:

> The polarization of meaning-based and form-based instruction is unconstructive, and reflects a recurrent pattern of damaging ideological swings in language teaching theory and practice

In another study conducted by Laufer and Girsai (2008), the effects of both FFI and MFI are superseded by another type: contrastive analysis and translation (CAT).

The study investigated the impact of explicit contrastive analysis and translation activities on the incidental acquisition of single words and collocations. A comparison was made of three high school groups of learners of the same L1 and comparable L2 (English) proficiency. The study stated that each group followed one instructional condition: MFI, non-contrastive FFI, or CAT. The target items were ten new words and ten collocations in L2 - English. It is reported that the MFI group performed content-based activities which did not require a focus on the target items. The FFI group performed text-based vocabulary activities which focused on the target items. The CAT group was asked to do text-based translation tasks: from L2 into L1, and from L1 into L2. During the teaching stage for the third group, the teacher provided a contrastive analysis for the target items and their possible L1 translation meanings. The time was kept constant in the three groups. Students were tested on the retention of the items by two tests: active recall and passive recall. For reliability purposes, according to Laufer and Girsai (2008), the students received the same two tests after a week. They state that the CAT group significantly outperformed the other two groups in both tests. In brief, the CAT proved more effective.

Although this result appears very interesting, it ignores a number of points. First, when the third group mentioned above received contrastive analysis, it received a type of FFI and, likewise, when it received translation, it received a type of MFI.

Nonetheless, the study did not make this note clear. By contrast, it declares that the result was 'superior'. Second, when one is teaching an L2, translation is not always a reliable option. Third, in the light of the first and second points, a fair comparison among the three previously-mentioned treatments cannot stand. In short, Laufer and Girsai's study (2008) comes to a conclusion that could easily be reached in any case.

It can be concluded that there is much evidence supporting the claim that FFI facilitates communication/ meaningful use of language in various situations. There is equal evidence stating the differences between both types. The previous studies are not straightforwardly in favour of using only one type, but rather support the idea of a combination. It can be deduced therefore that MFI alone results in higher student proficiency than that resulting from the use of FFI (or any other type). Additionally, it has been implied that it is by no means the case that FFI has little effect on MFI or

that it should be seen as contradictory to MFI, as both perform a certain function in perfecting instruction because each alone is inadequate.

We have seen that there is considerable empirical work on FFI vs. MFI leading to promising conclusions. However, when it comes to the study of TBL, there has been less empirical investigation despite its use in American and British education (Sheikh 1993). Ellis (2003) stresses that although TBL is theoretically valid, it is not empirically clear-cut. As mentioned below, even fairly recent TBL studies (e.g. Edwards and Willis 2005) do not show higher learner achievement and performance. The TBL approach deserves more empirical attention in order to establish its effectiveness.

If it is accepted that students differ in their learning abilities, their backgrounds and their natural abilities, then this is of significance when we interpret the results of educational studies, including TBL. Sheikh (1993: 197) produced the following list of learning/teaching differences between students:

1. Students learn through different media (textbooks, films, programmed texts, games, physical activities, etc.).
2. Students learn through different styles of content/process (deductive, inductive, discovery, learning by doing, etc.).
3. Students have different preferences of reporting their learning (paper and pencil tests, written reports, oral reports, two-person conversations, etc.)
4. Student response is different towards input, reinforcement and reward (teacher praise, peer recognition, competitive games, money, written certificate, etc.)
5. Students perform differently in different group arrangements (working alone, peer-tutoring, small group activities, whole class instruction, theatre presentation, etc.).

Candlin (1987) also views language learning as being dominated by sociolinguistic, ethnographic, and social-psychological influences, and recognises that all language learners are individuals with their own set of criteria for learning and understanding, all entering the classroom with their own pre-conceived ideas and cultural, social and

even economic differences which can influence the way they respond to being taught. Therefore he argues that students of English courses need to be exposed to varied types of learning/teaching techniques in order to benefit as much as possible from the course as well as to prevent them feeling bored and misled.

The Task-Based Learning approach within the framework of an English language course would have the following tenets:

1. The approach would feed the communicative, knowledge, and linguistic attainments of the student. The syllabus should facilitate the acquisition of those aspects by the student. The students' communicative and linguistic information needs should be related to communicative appropriateness and grammatical accuracy.
2. A TBL approach should provide students with authentic language which would match the communicative needs of the learner in realistic foreign language situations, both in teaching and testing. Therefore, the objectives of TBL in an English language programme are to provide the learners with information, practice and experience.
3. This approach would address the sociolinguistic needs of the learners. That is, it should integrate knowledge of the target language, knowledge of the culture of the target language and the culture of the learners.
4. Group work techniques, cassettes, wall-charts, multi-media, etc. should be employed as much as the needs of the students demand.

In other words, TBL is a means to communication and self-expression whereby the meaning and the rules of language use play a central part in the process of human interaction. Shehadeh (2005:14) found that, with task-based instruction and authentic materials, learners made more rapid progress and were able to use their new foreign language in real-world circumstances with a reasonable level of efficiency after quite short courses.

Note here that Krashen's (1985) claim is that learners should be surrounded by language that is comprehensible, interesting and relevant, but not necessarily grammatically sequenced. Learners should receive sufficient exposure, which is

mainly dependent on meaning. Foreign language and L2 teaching methods like audio-lingualism, and the more recent natural and communicative approaches, are all based on the belief that adult language learning is, like L1 acquisition, implicit, and they downplay form-focused instruction. For them, language skills are very different from knowledge about language and, consequently, explicit grammar-based instruction is not the best way to learn a foreign language. According to Krashen (1982), this overall model of acquisition is supported by empirical studies. He argued that adult L2 grammar-translation methods leave students with totally inadequate conversation skills because they focus on conscious learning, not on subconscious acquisition of the language. Krashen's Input Hypothesis contended that: (1) subconscious acquisition dominates in L2 performance; (2) learning cannot be converted into acquisition; and (3) conscious learning can be used only as a monitor, i.e. as an editor to correct output after it has been initiated by the acquired system. In Krashen's theory, SLA, just like L1 acquisition, should occur naturally as a result of implicit processes occurring while the learner is receiving comprehensible L2 input. This input hypothesis was the theoretical basis of the development of natural and communicative approaches to foreign language instruction. It places an emphasis on the role of input, as does Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1981, 1996). In Long's view, however, when learners have an opportunity to negotiate meaning with each other, an initial communication problem occurs and is then solved, leading to acquisition, as in the following example of interaction between two learners (Gass and Varonis 1989: 81):

Hiroko	A man is uh drinking c-coffee or tea with uh saucer of the uh coffee set is uh in his uh knee
Izumi	In him knee
Hiroko	uh on his knee
Izumi	Yeah
Hiroko	on his knee
Izumi	So sorry, on his knee

Long (1996) claims that meaning negotiation contributes to acquisition through the negative feedback that learners receive by means of recasts, i.e. through negotiation a learner reformulates and corrects her/his own errors in a more native-like way. The

feedback received can thus prompt the language learner to notice certain features that might otherwise have gone unnoticed. TBL represents teacher-planned interactions and discussions in class that lead to language learning; as a result of the feedback they get, students become aware of their grammatical errors that cause communication problems. It is this awareness that leads to noticing and the possibility of subsequent improvement in language proficiency. This implies that the input the learner receives can be enriched through production. Here Swain's (1985) Output Hypothesis (which can be considered a complement to Krashen's Input Hypothesis), claims that production puts learners in a position to engage in syntactic processing, which in turn promotes acquisition. A similar view is apparent in Long's (1985) Iinteractional Hypothesis, which argues that language is acquired as learners actively engage in attempting to communicate in the target language. Long advanced the following argument for this:

Step 1: (a) Linguistic/conversational adjustments promote (b) comprehensible input.

Step 2: (b) Comprehensible input promotes (c) acquisition.

Step 3: (a) Linguistic/ conversational adjustments promote (c) acquisition.

Satisfactory evidence of the a > b > c relationships would allow the linguistic environment to be posited as an indirect casual variable in SLA. (The relationship is indirect because of the intervening process of comprehension).

Nunn (2004) supports the notion that Communicative Learning means teaching in a learner-centred environment and thus being responsive to the needs and interests of the learner. Nunn defined the principles that influence his methodological approach as follows:

- The target language is acquired through interactive communicative use that encourages the negotiation of meaning.
- The formal properties of language are never treated in isolation from use; language forms are always addressed within a communicative context.

- Learners are encouraged to discover the forms and structures of language for themselves. There is a language approach in which the four traditional language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) are integrated.

Marlowe and Page (2005) have written on how to implement such constructivist theories directly in the classroom. They have achieved this by engaging with teachers, acquiring their transcribed first-hand experiences in the classroom and then relaying these for the benefit of the wider teaching and academic community, with the emphasis on providing expert guidance to create student-led classroom learning. Their opinions adhere strongly to the notion that independent thinking and classroom autonomy have a profound impact on the confidence and consequent ability of the student to learn more effectively. Their second edition of *Creating and Sustaining the Constructivist Classroom* purports to provide the following benefits for all teaching practitioners:

- Active learning examples that can be customized for any grade or classroom
- Checklists to help you evaluate your starting point, progress, and goals
- Expanded coverage of state and national content standards
- Practical assistance with issues surrounding student assessment, differentiation, and the inclusive classroom
- Ideas for involving parents and community members
- Ways to implement technology into the mix
- Strategies to help even beginning teachers implement constructivist principles.

Do we know whether these techniques work? Let us now look at some empirical studies. Doughty and Varela (1998) examined the use of TBL with recasts in ESL, science and maths classes for grades 6-8. Within the context of students reporting on their results to the class, there were many opportunities for the teacher to use recasts to guide the students into correct usage of the past tense. The study indicated that recasts were effective in improving use of the past tense both in writing and speaking. There was some doubt, however, about whether these results would produce long-term language gains. Therefore, Doughty (2001) recommended a re-examination of

how recasts are used in the class, since this type of subtle error correction can be a valuable element in guiding the student to improved language proficiency.

Lyster (2004) also looked at the use of prompts and recasts with fifth-grade language learners. His results indicated that FFI was more effective when combined with prompts in learning the targeted grammar form (noun gender). Ammar and Spada (2006) tested the use of prompts and recasts with sixth-grade language learners, targeting the use of the possessive determiners (*his* and *her*) in written and oral tasks. They found that high proficiency language learners benefited equally from both while low-proficiency language learners benefited more from prompts. The high/low proficiency categories were based upon pretests of the targeted grammar form.

Ellis (2006) conducted a survey of the research on recasts. He found that recasts tend to be used in a variety of ways by teachers and researchers, ranging from very implicit to very explicit. They can be used to provide positive evidence (correct examples of language use) or negative evidence (drawing attention to the grammatical mistake). Further, he found that focusing on form with prompts was most effective in improving grammar during writing tasks.

Mackey (2006) investigated the connection between focusing on form and simply noticing form, and the extent to which noticing can improve language acquisition. She found that there was a correlation between student reports of noticing the forms and second language development, although this correlation was stronger for certain forms (questions and plural forms) than others (past tense). Mackey warned, however, that because of a small sample size and the complexity of what was being measured, it was difficult to draw definitive conclusions.

A meta-analysis of 49 studies by Norris and Ortega (2000-2001) produced evidence that explicit types of instruction are more effective than implicit types, and that the effectiveness of L2 instruction can be lasting. The authors raised two negative issues, however. First, in most of these studies, the assessment instruments were biased towards more explicit instruction. Second, rule-based explicit instruction in either form-focused or forms-focused instruction did not result in strong learning effects. According to Norris and Ortega, there was a lack of consistency across the studies on

rule presentation. In some, rules were provided in different forms and functions of a linguistic subsystem were presented together, while in other studies the rules were presented in stages and explained in small steps.

DeKeyser (1998) also expressed his concerns about the type of explicit instruction. He pointed out that none of the studies mentioned in his research gave attention to techniques that promoted the proceduralisation of explicit knowledge. In addition, Ellis (2004: 214) argues that primary focus must be on building implicit knowledge, which is best developed through involving learners in communicative activities. He suggested that explicit instruction may best promote acquisition 'when it is linked with opportunities for natural communication' (Ellis 2002b: 20). He stated that explicit instruction may be most successful when its focus is on 'simple grammatical rules' such as the English plural. He also proposed that explicit grammatical knowledge is best developed through discovery learning, which is more motivating and which prepares learners to analyse data for themselves.

Research on use of tasks has revealed that when they appeal to the preferences and interests of the students in order to engage them and hold their attention, the outcome is promising. For example, when Harley (1998) examined second-grade language learners, using high-interest tasks to raise consciousness about the correct use of a specific grammar form, she found that student attention was selective and limited, with high-interest and meaningful activities tending to generate the best results. Furthermore, when students were given activities involving a large amount of new vocabulary, they tended to focus on grammatical forms much less.

As discussed above, a good amount of research has been conducted on CLT and on classroom behaviour that relates to aspects of TBL. Much of it, however, has been narrowly focused and involved the use of artificially-created learning situations. For example, Pica (2005) analysed the research conducted up to that date and examined ways in which TBL could be taught through information-gap tasks in the classroom. She asked how these tasks could assist second language learning, retain classroom authenticity, and adhere to the high standards of research. Another important concern was to be able to look at longer-term applications of TBL in the classroom. She

concluded that the information-gap task was very useful as an authentic class activity for teachers and as a research tool for academics.

Swan (2005) takes a more critical look at TBL. He raises methodological concerns regarding the studies that support the use of TBL in the classroom. Furthermore, he observes that there is no research to support the contention that traditional grammar-based approaches have failed, as had been alleged by supporters of TBL. He also points out that there is very little evidence to legitimise the theory of TBL. He also suggested that although the principles of TBL assist students with improving overall command of their existing language knowledge, it is ineffective for novice learners. Finally, Swan criticised TBL as a much slower form of learning, arguing that precise, structured learning techniques are more quickly adopted by any student. He concludes that although TBL should not be used as an exclusive guide for constructing the syllabus for language learners, it can certainly be another resource used by language teachers to respond to the diverse needs of the language learners. In fact, empirical analyses of learners in communicative, natural, or immersion L2 and foreign language programmes which reject grammar instruction have demonstrated significant shortcomings in the language accuracy of the learners (Lightbown et al. 1993).

TBL began to gain in popularity and be consistently recommended as a technique to be incorporated into ELT. Prabhu's main contribution, as outlined above, was to raise awareness of the role of TBL in ELT. Nunan (1989) used the word 'task' instead of 'activity'. He suggested that in all definitions of tasks, one can see communicative language use where the learner focuses on meaning instead of traditionally employed methods of linguistic structure. Willis (1996) also contributed to our understanding of the use of tasks in the language classroom. According to Willis (1996: 23) 'tasks are always activities where the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose in order to achieve an outcome'. Another key writers on language learning is Rod Ellis, who used the notion of task-based learning prior to the work by Willis. There have indeed been different approaches to TBL over the years, which include the strong version of TBL developed by Prabhu in the 1980s where the focus is placed on a pre-activity, followed by the activity itself. Prabhu's procedural syllabus was a first attempt to develop a syllabus that consisted of a set of activities, sequenced according to difficulty. These levels provided a basis for what Prabhu calls 'meaning-focused

activity', such as for example finding, naming, and describing specific locations on a map. It was Prabhu's conviction that such activities will lead students to understand, convey, and extend meaning, while attention to language forms is only incidental. Prabhu made several claims regarding the great effectiveness of his approach when compared to conventional method of language teaching. Unfortunately, in the Prabhu study neither objectives nor evaluation was integrated into the programme design. Richards (1997: 44) comments that

> In order to determine the effectiveness of the approach, pre- and post-testing would be required to determine if students had indeed made gains during the period of instruction. Until the objectives for the programme are specified, it is impossible to decide what criteria would be needed to judge the programme's success or failure.

As will be argued in the subsequent discussion of the study carried out for this thesis, gains measured by a post-test can not in themselves enable us to determine if the method itself, rather than some factor extrinsic to the method, is responsible for the gains. The version of TBL adopted in this study was Willis's, which provided a rich linguistic environment for the experimental students and proposes specific techniques and tasks.

Levels of 'difficulty' lay not only in the complexity of the text but also in the nature of the task. Such tasks included writing summaries of lecture extracts which the students had heard and then shared in class. This was a weekly group activity and even the weakest students derived benefit from listening to a classmate's presentation or dialogue between students and describing what they had learned, bouncing ideas off each other. Such features were similar to those of Prabhu's Bangalore project and. essential for comprehension. Long emphasises the need for learners to attend to form intentionally while they are communicating – what he calls 'focus on form'. In this study, the TBL activities were designed in ways that would insure a focus on meaning with additional attention to form. However, Willis's version adopts an approach that prepares for the task, followed by planning and the final report.

2.6 Comparative studies

For some time now attempts have been made to test the effectiveness of one method vs. another. One of these was the Pennsylvania Language Project (Clark 1969), which found no significant differences between the results of audio-lingual and traditional (GBL) methods in the areas of listening, reading, and writing comprehension. Another attempt was Palmer's (1976, 1979, 1981) comparisons of communicative language teaching with conventional methods as a controlled experiment. These found that the communicative language method was more interesting and motivating, as measured by a questionnaire, but Palmer did not find significant differences in subsequent accuracy or fluency tests.

The *Bangalore Project* (BP) mentioned above (Prabhu, 1982, 1984, 1987), was the first published report of a communicative approach of classroom task-based methodology being used in preference to structural teaching. The project started with a set of hypotheses on language learning, which had been taken from the earlier works of ELT practitioners, e.g. Widdowson (1968) and Krashen (1981). As discussed above, these hypotheses signalled a new approach to the development of an alternative syllabus, which was initially influenced by the communicative syllabus:

> Communicative teaching in most Western thinking has been training for communication, which I claim involves one in some way or other in preselection; it is a kind of matching of notion and form, whereas the Bangalore Project is teaching through communication; and therefore the very notion of communication is different (Prabhu 1980: 164).

The Communicational Teaching Project (CTP) syllabus did not focus on individual linguistic elements but a series of tasks in the form of problem-solving activities. Therefore the focus of CTP was on meaning, through which, it claimed, the language form is best learnt:

> Grammar-construction by the learner is an unconscious process which is best facilitated by bringing about in the learner a preoccupation with meaning, saying or doing (Prabhu 1982: 2).

This sort of activity led to Prabhu's (1987:24) definition of a task as:

> An activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process, was regarded as a 'task'.

Prabhu devised a series of meaning-focused activities consisting of pre-tasks, which the teacher completed with the whole class, followed by tasks where the students worked on similar activities on their own. These tasks were primarily cognitive and the attention to language forms is incidental, (e.g. one of the tasks required the students to find, name, and describe specific locations on a map). The BP project made the following important points about its view of tasks:

- Tasks in the BP project focus on target language learners' use and development of their own cognitive abilities through the solution of problems.
- Tasks focus on classroom activities but not on selected language for learning.
- The syllabus of the BP project was not pre-planned but evolved during the teaching and learning by a process of trial and error.

The results of the CTP study showed the effectiveness of task-based teaching though there were some problems with its evaluation. (For further detailed evaluation of task-based teaching through this project, see Beretta and Davies 1985.)

Swain's (1988) study of immersion classes for English-speaking children in French-speaking schools in Canada discovered that their ability to use the L2 would develop automatically. It was found, however, that learners needed to be encouraged to focus on different aspects of grammar in order to reach the required level of accuracy. Swain and Lapkin (1995) showed that, in reconstructing a paragraph, learners not only focused on meaning but also on the form of the sentences, leading to good results. Day and Shapson (2000) combined form and meaning in the curriculum by form-focusing for promoting mastery of language forms before and after the communication component, but not inside it, as is the case in TBL.

As previously discussed, there is a shortage of experimental studies on TBL, and Long and Crookes's method has never even been tried in the classroom. The aim of comparative method studies, according to Ellis (1994: 569), is that they should assist

in establishing which of two or more methods or general approaches to language teaching is the most effective in terms of the actual learning (the 'product').

We now turn to several more recent studies that have looked at the effectiveness of the traditional and communicative approaches in language teaching. The first such study is that of Mohamad (1998), who compared the effectiveness of the two methods at a university in Malaysia, using Willis's (1996) task-based learning model. It was a formal experiment, but the data were collected in a regular classroom. It tested the relationship between instructional practices and outcomes for learners. Mohamad's subjects were 92 (36 male and 56 female) university learners in an advanced spoken English course. They were divided randomly into two groups, the control and the experimental. The course consisted of a three-hour weekly session for each group. The control group received traditional, form-focused instruction with the GBL method (presentation-practice-production) method, whereas the experimental group was exposed to the TBL method, using materials designed by the researcher. Both groups were pre-tested and post-tested by means of a questionnaire in order to elicit the attitudes of the learners towards these methods.

The course, based on the existing syllabus, consisted of eight teaching units for both groups. The GBL control group, which used the printed units of the standard textbook, started each class with a presentation, in which the topic, speech features and samples of the appropriate language structures were given. For practice, the students were asked to do drills and to work in pairs, practising the speech features and language structures that had been presented earlier. For production, the students were asked to do group work, an activity, a role-play or a task that enabled them to use the speech features and language structures learned during the practice stage.

The TBL experimental group came to the class without any material. The teacher would begin with a discussion session in which he expressed and asked for opinions, gave and asked for reasons, agreed with and supported students' opinions, so that learners felt that they were involved in the discussions. The next stage was the task itself. This was what Willis (1996) described as a closed task, that is, it was highly structured and had specific goals. This task was explored through role-play in groups. Here the teacher just monitored the class and told the learners to prepare and present

their decisions and reasons to the class. Learners were asked to compare their answers with those of the other group. The next stage had a language focus. The teacher asked learners to listen to a tape of a dialogue and fill out a worksheet. All eight units of the course were presented and structured in basically the same way.

At the end of the course, the learners were asked to respond to a set of statements about their attitude towards learning English. There was no significant difference between the scores of the respondents in the control group and the experimental group as regards the questions related to the students' attitude towards English language in general. With regard to the questions related to the learners' attitude toward the lessons and methods used, however, the scores of respondents in the experimental group were significantly higher than those in the control group. Students in the experimental group agreed much more with statements to the effect that the method, syllabus and lessons were enjoyable, interactive and different. Clearly, at the end of the course, learners who were taught with the TBL method had a more positive attitude to their English classes, if not towards the English language, than those taught with the traditional method. Mohamad's research, however, did not employ a language proficiency test to measure the effect on proficiency or fluency of the two different teaching methods. Nor did it employ an observation scheme, as did some of the studies discussed above, to show what occurred in the classroom. It merely measured the changes in learners' attitudes towards the TBL method before and after the course.

A similar study was that of Makarchuk (2000), who tested the form-focused and the TBL methods in teaching English in an EFL context in a Korean university classroom. The focus of this study was on lexical chunks (i.e. expressions such as *what on earth* ..? and *my point is* ....). The TBL subjects were divided into two subgroups: TBL-1 employed a teacher-facilitated form of highlighting (i.e. the teacher played no role beyond being a facilitator and monitoring from a distance) while TBL-2 used a teacher-presented form (i.e. the teacher played an active role in giving instructions). Each group was taught for two hours a week over a period of five weeks. The number of students was initially 26 but had reduced to 22, through natural wastage, by the end of the course.

Pre-tests and post-tests comprised problem-solution tasks that were recorded. To perform the task, learners worked in pairs. One watched a portion of a video, which described a problem of some sort, in the absence of his partner. Then the absent learner returned and was told about the problem shown in the video clip and encouraged to ask any questions needed to clarify her understanding of it. The next stage of the task was for the two to discuss a solution to the problem observed in the video clip.

The results were, first, that the TBL-1 method led to greater use of the target lexical phrases, but with a high level of inaccurate usage. Second, the traditional method had a positive effect on accuracy, but did not increase the use of lexical chunks as much as the TBL-1 method did. Finally, the TBL-2 method did not increase the use of lexical chunks as much as the TBL-1 method and it had a negative impact on accuracy. Makarchuk concluded that both the traditional method and TBL-1 have advantages and disadvantages while TBL-2 was the least successful method of learning. Makarchuk (2000: 67) proposed that it would be beneficial to combine TBL-1 and a form-focused approach for 'producing a lesson plan format superior to either of the two alone'.

This study was restricted to examination of the use of lexical phrases and these were presented to both traditional and TBL learners in a very direct manner. Therefore, it seems there was no real difference in methodology between the traditional, TBL1, and TBL2 treatments with respect to the items learners had to memorise. Consequently, it can be said that the study was not clearly comparative in nature.

In another recent study, Loumpourdi (2005) experimented with task-based learning on twelve intermediate level students studying English at a private language institute in Greece. The study focused on conditional clauses. The students followed a weekly six-hour course during an entire academic year, dedicating three hours to the course book, two hours to grammar and one hour to composition each week. Loumpourdi used one of the grammar hours for task-based teaching, using Willis's (1996) framework, and kept the other hour as it was - teaching in the GBL mode. In using the TBL method, Loumpourdi divided the class into two groups, each consisting of six

students. The task they were given took the form of a personality quiz with the title 'How courageous are you?' Loumpourdi asked both groups to create questions for the quiz by using *if*-phrases. She helped them by providing phrases such as 'If I saw a spider ...', and 'If I was alone in a dark house ...'. Then she asked each group to exchange their questions, and create multiple-choice answers for the questions they had received, using *would* phrases. During this stage Loumpourdi encouraged students to come up with ideas of their own and her role was to monitor the students' progress.

Loumpourdi's findings were that casual conversation, e.g. asking the learners whether they liked the task and observing their reactions and occasional comments, showed that the learners worked hard with sentences they were given and that they had fun doing the quiz and comparing their scores. Students' attention, according to Loumpourdi, was held for longer if she asked for some feedback from them. For example, one of the students suggested trying to guess beforehand which category they would fall into. The students, when discussing their own views and making their own choices, seemed to have their self-esteem raised and their confidence boosted. Finally, , she reported, they appeared to feel more valued and perhaps more willing to express themselves.

These results again support the idea that TBL teaching increases students' enjoyment and motivation. Since, however, Loumpourdi did not have a control group, it cannot be legitimately concluded that these positive attitudes are entirely owed to the use of TBL. Other variables may have played a role. Moreover, Loumpourdi did not pre-test and post-test learners' proficiency and communicative skills.

As is clear from the studies reviewed above, it is generally agreed that communicative teaching focusing on form gives learners the opportunity to take part in spontaneous interactions and thereby show some improvement in the target language. Many of the studies discussed above focus predominantly on the effect of various communicative language teaching methods, including TBL, on motivation and attitude. When it comes to TBL, the findings of studies such as those of Prabhu (1987), Mohamad (1998) and Loumpourdi (2005) suggest that there is indeed such an effect and that it is a positive one: students generally enjoy TBL and they have favourable attitudes to

language classes employing it. The studies reviewed in this section, although they address issues in existing traditional methods and TBL teaching, fail, however, to provide clear evidence that one method is superior to the other with regard to grammatical/lexical proficiency or communicative skills. Again, therefore, we must conclude that the central research question addressed in the present study, i.e. whether traditional teaching or TBL leads to better results, remains unanswered.

My aim is to investigate the validity of TBL on fluency and general language proficiency on our large group of English language learners. Traditional methods that focus solely on form leave a hole or gap in the students' target language (Edwards and Willis, 2005). On the other hand, TBL, according to Willis (1996), is intended to draw students' attention to relationships of L2 form, meaning, and function. If TBL is to be studied in the classroom, we need to look closely at what is currently recommended for its implementation.

2.7 Recommendations and issues in implementing TBL

Task-based learning, according to Willis (1996; see also Songhori 2006), from a purely classroom interaction perspective is 'a goal-oriented activity in which learners use language to achieve a real outcome' (Willis 1996: 53). Tasks are distinguished from other conventional language activities in that they not only focus on meaning but also on structure (form). Task-based learning has a clear pedagogic relationship to real-world language needs and it is therefore essential to conduct empirical research to identify the target uses of the language. As we have seen earlier in this chapter, traditional approaches to language teaching focus on grammar. It is, however, important to reconsider grammar teaching in this context. Ellis (2002: 229) lists the features and negative aspects of grammar instruction as a tool in the classroom.

- Grammar instruction results in greater accuracy in test-like performance.
- However, it is much less likely to lead to improved accuracy in spontaneous oral language use.

- Grammar instruction does not enable learners to beat the natural route, but it is effective in helping them to progress more rapidly along it.
- It may not be necessary to fine-tune grammar instruction to the learner's developmental stage.
- Grammar instruction can contribute to learners' metalingual understanding of L2 grammar rules, but doubts exist as to the utility of this kind of knowledge.
- When grammar instruction does have an effect, this effect is durable.

Ellis notes that although the principles of grammar are clearly important they may still detract from the overall learning experience. A focus on grammatical detail can dominate classroom time and reduce the opportunities for learners to practise communication because the teacher is talking and teaching most of the time.

In contrast, TBL, as mentioned above, is based on authentic dialogue, and use of the grammar occurs in a natural way by workgroup interaction in a class. Richards (2002: 154) identifies the following differences between GBL and TBL:

Traditional Grammar-Focused activities:

- reflect typical classroom use of language
- focus on formation of correct examples of language
- produce language display (as evidence of learning)
- call on explicit knowledge
- elicit a careful (monitored) speech style
- reflect controlled performance
- practise language out of context
- practise small samples of language
- do not require authentic communication.

Task-based learning activities:

- reflect natural language use
- call on implicit knowledge

- elicit a vernacular speech style
- reflect automatic performance
- require the use of improvising, paraphrasing, repair and reorganisation
- produce language that is not always predictable
- allow students to select the language they use
- require real communication.

The task-based approach, according to Richards (2002: 155), should be seen as part of a process for developing linguistic forms and communicative meanings. Skehan (1996a, 2001) distinguished between a strong and a weak version of a task-based approach. A strong version looks at tasks as the basic unit of teaching while a weak version sees tasks as part of language instruction.

1. The strong version does not lead to pre-selection of structures (i.e. learners are given communicative things to do, using whatever language they feel appropriate). The question here is: '*How are learners supported so that they don't forget forms?*'
2. The weak version enables pre-selection of structures, and tries to find appropriate tasks in order not to maintain a communicative orientation, but the question here is: '*How much is going to be focused on structure?*'

The latter focuses on structure, while the former seems ineffective, as it does not allow the acquisition of form to proceed. In other words, non-pre-selection of structure suggests meaning dominance and pre-selection of structure suggests form dominance.

As discussed above, Candlin and Murphy (1987:5) argued that '*tasks* serve as compelling and appropriate means for realising certain characteristic principles of communicative language teaching and learning'. Dam (1985:1) characterised language learning tasks within a communication framework and found that 'the central aim in my teaching could be described as "autonomy", which is building on the pupils' own planning of the teaching/learning process and the development/unfolding of their awareness of aims and responsibility to the process'.

In consideration of the learner-centred approach, task-based language learning is not only a means to enhancing classroom communication and acquisition but also the means to the development of classroom syllabuses (Candlin 1987). Stern (1983) said that although pure grammar lessons are usually based on skills, most students taught through conventional approaches leave school unable to communicate effectively.

This situation has prompted holistic approaches where meaning is central. The framework of Willis's Task-based Learning is one such approach and many teachers and researchers, as seen above, have moved from traditional methods to TBL as the ideal way to accomplish a focus on form within meaningful communication (Van den Branden 2006).

2.8 Current ideas on reconciling form and meaning

One of the main criticisms directed against the task-based learning approach is that it risks over-emphasising meaning at the expense of accuracy. Brinton and Holten (2001: 243) reported that, despite the success of their task-based English for Academic Purposes (EAP) programme in almost every other area, the problem of incorporating grammar instruction – repeatedly remarked upon by learners and teachers alike – remained 'intractable''. They also noted an 'avoidance phenomenon', whereby language instructors devoted an average of only 15% of class time to vocabulary and grammar instruction. This avoidance, combined with the fact that, as observed by Doughty and Varela (1998: 119), subject-area teachers often reject explicit grammar teaching, indicates a need to look for ways in which form and function can be reconciled in task-based learning.

One of the strengths of TBL is, as we have seen, that it provides a framework for language to be practised in a natural manner. Brinton and Holten's (2001) comments are based on observation of the ESL Service Courses at the University of California in Los Angeles. The emphasis on learners doing things in pairs or small groups is also another strength of TBL. Its group speaking activities can also provide quasi-natural situations and give valuable practice to those students who may be required to take external examinations involving a TBL oral test, such as many of the Cambridge University Exams (Underhill 1987).

The problem of integrating forms, however, persists. Naturalness means that it is difficult to predict precisely which language forms will actually be used in tasks – particularly more open-ended tasks – since spontaneous, natural language is unpredictable and rarely adheres to set patterns (Willis 1996: 34). Likewise, it has been argued that, while TBL has the advantage of contextualising grammatical items, the fact remains that only a limited number of structures occur naturally in content-based texts. In other words, grammar cannot be expected just to 'take care of itself' in a task-based approach: some explicit attention to form is clearly necessary (Fotos 2002: 135-137).

As regards their ability to foster learners' acquisition of grammar, not all tasks are equally good. Loschky and Bley-Vroman (1993) examined in some detail the characteristics of a successful grammatical task. In sum, they believe that the target structure should not merely be 'task-natural' but must rather be 'task-essential': that is to say, the task should be designed so as to make it impossible to complete it without using (or attending to) the target structure. Since it is nearly impossible (and probably undesirable) to control the language used by learners in group work, Loschky and Bley-Vroman also argued that not only should structure-based tasks be closed- rather than open-ended, but that comprehension-based tasks are preferable to production tasks for the purposes of grammar focus. While it is almost always possible for learners to avoid using a given structure in their own output, the task designer can manipulate the input in a manner that obliges the learner to focus on the structure in question. Given the considerable body of evidence which indicates that noticing is an important part of the language acquisition process (Rutherford 1987; Schmidt 1990), tasks which focus attention on form may play a vital role in developing learners' hypotheses. Loschky and Bley-Vroman (1993) give examples of successful grammar tasks, such as presenting learners with two pictures and asking them to say which one corresponds to a written or spoken description containing the target structure (Loschky and Bley-Vroman 1993: 151-154). For Loschky and Bley-Vroman, however, positive input alone is not sufficient. In order for hypothesis testing to take place, some form of feedback is essential (Loschky and Bley-Vroman 1993: 143-148). Willis (1996: 141) suggested holding a 'language clinic' after the report stage, where corrected versions of common errors are displayed on wall posters, in which

feedback can be incorporated into the task cycle in a supportive and non-disruptive manner.

Two proposals for a pedagogic framework come from Willis (1996) and Samuda (2001). Samuda proposed class-oriented sequences with the following stages: 1. Input data, 2. Operations on input data, 3. Consolidation, (pre-task, task and post-task). She also produced knowledge-construction tasks, (i.e. tasks that are intended to urge learners to produce and develop new forms by completing the task with a report made by the learners). In contrast, Willis's (1996: 38) framework comprises the following, previously mentioned, elements:

- ***Pre-task*** 1. introduction to the topic 2. exposure to real language 3. use of texts
- ***Task cycle*** 1. task 2. planning 3. drafting and rehearsal 4. teacher assistance with language 5. report
- ***Language focus***

The main difference between Willis and Samuda is that the methodology for using tasks does not imply any pre-selection of form. Another difference is that Willis's methodology concentrates on planning rather than predicting the task.

Skehan (2007: 61) contrasted interpretations of task phases with Willis's framework and other task proponents in the following table:

Table 2.5 Contrasting interpretations of task phases

	Other task proponents	Willis
Pre-task phase	e.g. Planning	e.g. Planning activation activities
Task phase	Task selection Time conditions Surprise elements Task completion	Task selection Task completion Task preparation Task development Repetition/extension
Post-task phase	Public performance Transcription of own performance Repetition of task	Analysis and FoF(s) Consolidation

Willis broadens the planning phase by including activation activities (such as developing splash diagrams), consciousness-raising activities (such as encouraging learners to notice forms), and also explicit planning. The most important aspect of Willis's pre-task phase is that it leaves room for many beneficial outcomes to occur aside from simple planning. According to Willis, this phase enriches the forthcoming task and offers an opportunity for learners to think about relevant forms before focusing more intently on meaning while carrying out the task.

Willis's task phase is also more complex, according to Skehan (2007). The phase begins with a task which arises from the pre-task phase. Then, learners in this phase gather relevant material and input, and use the teacher as a resource. In the final phase of the task, learners engage with the development of the original task which gives the new activity some degree of communicative authenticity. It also gives the learners the opportunity to reuse the language. In fact, this final task phase is close to the post-phase used by task researchers, where typical activities might be task repetition, transcription, and public performance (Skehan 2007 :63). In this stage, the teacher has to decide what to emphasise during the post-work stage on the basis of his knowledge of developmental sequences. In any case, Willis's framework gives the opportunity 'for the learner to integrate what is new with material that is already established, to some degree, within interlanguage' (Skehan 2007:64).

Willis's (1996) framework for task-based learning, which is adopted in this study, stresses the following characteristics:

1. More emphasis on meaning; less on form.
2. More emphasis on communicating; less on correctness.
3. More emphasis on problem-solving, less on modelling.
4. More emphasis on creating utterances; less on using set situations.
5. More emphasis on student-student interaction; less on teacher-student interaction.
6. More emphasis on pedagogical and paralinguistic (gesture); less on linguistic content.
7. More attention to positive first language transfer; less on first language interference.

The most important aspects of Willis's approach, according to Skehan (2007), are as follows:

- A focus on form is important
- Input materials push learners in principal areas
- Learners are given considerable support by the teacher if there is a need to fill any gap they may have to confront
- Language analysis (systemisation and consolidation) takes place in some inter-language restructuring.

Now we turn to content-based learning, which is an essential component of TBL on English for Academic Purposes programmes such as the one in which the current study took place.

2.9 Content-Based Learning

In recent years, the trend in tertiary education has been towards a more content-based approach to EAP, because of its ability to motivate and engage learners on a variety of levels (Larsen-Freeman 2000: 142). In all its forms – sheltered, adjunct, or theme-based – (for more details see Flowerdew and Peacock 2001: 180-181), content-based learning (CBL) seeks to overcome the artificial divide between 'language' and 'content' (Mohan 1986) by basing EAP lessons on materials and/or tasks which are relevant to learners' current or future academic

and professional needs. CBL thus helps to get around the all too common problem of poor learner motivation by providing what Nunan (1988: 49) has termed a 'non-linguistic rationale' for language study. Nunan emphasised that a well-designed CBL course favours a holistic approach to language learning, helping to engage learners' intrinsic motivation. Consequently, according to Nunan, it not only helps learners to 'see the point'- of EAP – thereby promoting immediate, instrumental motivation – but also, by situating the study of language in a highly relevant 'real-world' context, it serves to bridge the gap between learners' 'linguistic' needs and their wider needs as members of a particular community: in this case, the academic community, both local and international.

The advantages of CBL go beyond the purely motivational, however, particularly with regard to EAP. When combined with a TBL and EAP framework, CBL helps learners to develop key study skills such as note-taking, summarising, and reading for information. Similarly, by encouraging learners to evaluate and synthesise information from a variety of sources, a content-based approach can help learners to develop thinking skills which will prove invaluable in their future academic and professional lives (Ridley 1997).

Given the particular difficulties faced by target language students in these areas, any approach to learning which can help develop these skills would be of great benefit. We will now look in some detail at the practical issues involved in implementing a task- and content-based syllabus approach.

2.10 Implementing a Task- and Content-Based Syllabus

In a learner-centred task- and content-based EAP programme, the main aim of which is to prepare students for English-medium academic courses, a strong case can be made for using authentic materials from the start, or soon after the start (White 1988: 151). Given the generally weak reading ability of a learner group, and the fact that many authentic texts are undeniably difficult (Little 1997: 227), this may sound surprising. The 'difficulty' of any reading or listening activity, however, is multi-faceted in nature, depending not only on the various linguistic features of the text

concerned – such as the number of unknown words, the use of metaphor, and syntactic complexity (Willis 1996: 71) – but also on the amount of background knowledge which learners bring to the text. For this reason, texts which are chosen for their relevance to learners' interests and/or fields of expertise can exploit the fact that, although beginners' linguistic knowledge may be negligible, the 'real-world' knowledge they bring to the text should not be disregarded. Little and Singleton (1991: 126) emphasised that:

> language processing and language learning always involve interaction between what we already know and what is new to us, and [...] world knowledge and discourse knowledge can compensate for deficiencies in linguistic knowledge

Moreover, focusing on text – to the exclusion of task – is psycholinguistically unrealistic, and does not reflect real language use. According to Willis (1996: 71):

> Grading a text by attempting to assess its level makes no pedagogic sense [...] unless one knows the purpose for which the information is to be used. Text comprehensibility and task purpose are inseparable. The task defines the purpose for which the text needs to be understood. Thus, a complex text can be rendered accessible to beginners by setting a simple task– such as a word search – while an easy text can be made more challenging by, for example, having learners analyse its syntactic or rhetorical features.

Not only do specific materials help to bridge the gap between the classroom and the 'real world', they also provide a context in which students can acquire the strategies so essential for successful academic skills. These skills include planning and editing, as well as the ability to infer meaning without understanding every word (Willis 1996: 231). As McGarry (1995: 4-5) has written, when texts are chosen – by the teacher or the learners, or both – which activate learners' prior knowledge and interest, this may mean that they are free to devote more cognitive resources to inferencing and other comprehension strategies. Moreover, as Lee (1996: 167) has written,

> Whether learners can maintain their interest in learning depends very much on whether they find the materials they use interesting and useful. This is especially true in the context of the development of self- directed/autonomous learning.

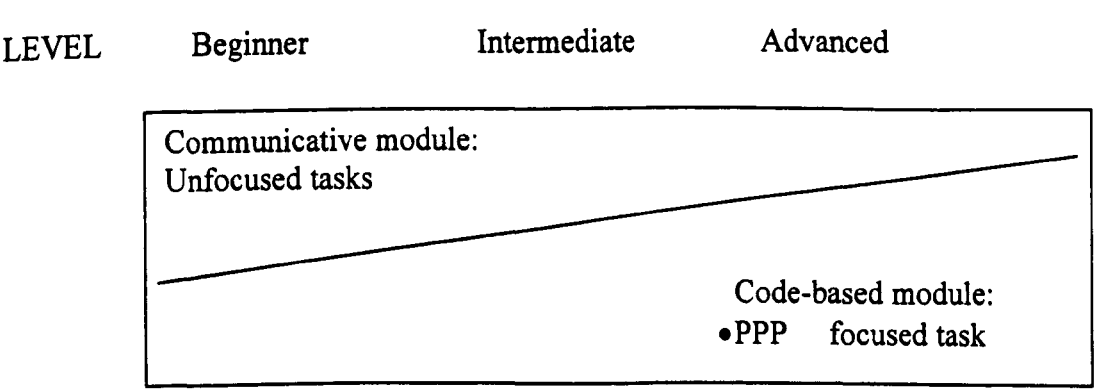
The use of selected texts based on appropriate subject matter is a cornerstone of both autonomous learning and of CBL. Particularly in an adjunct model – where subject

courses are supported by content-based EAP lessons (Webber 1995) – learners' developing subject knowledge is complemented and enhanced by their growing linguistic competence. The same process, of course, also operates in reverse: as learners become more and more familiar with their academic field, it becomes easier for them to cope with selected texts which might at first glance appear impossibly difficult (Little 1997). Therefore, not only is a relevant selected text likely to be highly motivating, but it will also inspire confidence in a manner which no purpose-designed pedagogical text could ever emulate. This is especially true when, as in our case, we are dealing with groups of learners who, more often than not, share similar backgrounds and goals (Dubin and Olshtain 1986).

Finally, just because we are dealing with EAP, this does not mean that materials have to consist of 'dry' technical documents. Particularly in fields such as science, medicine or economics, which concern the everyday lives of ordinary people, materials can be found which are both 'general' enough not to confuse the language teacher, and yet relevant enough to motivate learners (Webber 1995: 65). Met (1994: 163) explains how this can be achieved:

> By selecting content from the school's curriculum that is compatible with ESL objectives teachers can use the content as a communicative and cognitively engaging means of developing language and also help to promote mastery of content material.

Such an integrated approach reflects the importance of teaching form and meaning conjointly. Another approach is called, according to Ellis (2003:236), a modular approach. Figure 2.3 below outlines one possible method.



(cited in Ellis, 2003: 237)

The initial stages of the course will be devoted to a communicative module. The code-based module will be introduced from the intermediate stage onwards. It contrasts with the traditional language approach, where form is taught first and opportunities for communication come later. Such an approach makes use of an approach the kind of task-based syllabus proposed by Prabhu but also provides focus on form as previously mentioned in Willis's framework, which will be adapted in the empirical research study described in the following chapter.

The TBL approach adopted in this study takes the form of explicit grammatical instruction in conjunction with communicative activities. Fotos (1998: 303) reports that this type of instruction has the advantage that because consciousness of grammatical structures has been developed by formal instruction or some type of implicit focus-on-form content, many learners are able to notice the relevant structures in subsequent communicative exercises. Such frequent acts of noticing promote the learners' comparison of the correct forms with their own interlanguage forms, triggering the cognitive processes involved in reorganising the learners' internal linguistic scheme, and thus facilitating acquisition.

Since English is a foreign language in Saudi Arabia, students have few opportunities for communicative use of English outside the classroom. It is therefore nearly impossible for them to get implicit exposure through communicative input. As a result, explicit grammar-based instruction is dominant in language teaching. Relevant to such a context is Fotos' (1998: 304) suggestion that "if focus-on-form approaches are modified to permit formal instruction before the communicative activity and feedback afterwards, they offer considerable promise". One of the aims of the present study is to examine whether that promise can be turned into reality. For this, it is important to reflect on how grammatical rules can be explicitly taught in conjunction with communicative activities. However, it is clear that to focus on accuracy and fluency, and on form and meaning, simultaneously is a big challenge.

2.11 Summary

The present chapter has discussed traditional and communicative methods of second-language teaching and compared the two. It was noted that in the 1970s and 1980s the

time-honoured GBL approach came under heavy attack from those advocating the importance of communicative competence, not only as a concept in the theory of language acquisition but also as a concrete aim of practical language teaching. This was followed by a discussion of the communicative framework of SLA. As became clear, the most usual implementation of the communicative model involves the use of tasks that learners are asked to carry out. Most teachers and institutions think of themselves as modern and up-to-date if they adopt a combination of traditional and task-based learning methods.

Several of the recent empirical investigations into TBL make use of Willis's (1996) framework for task-based learning. Since this framework is detailed and well-known, one advantage of using it in an experimental study is that precise information is available about the type of task employed, the way it is embedded in the lesson plan, the role that the teacher plays, and so on. This is a definite improvement on studies such as Savignon's (1972), which stated that some communicative activity took place, but left unclear the nature of this activity. Another advantage is that this framework is currently being used in many second-language classrooms. Any study testing it is, therefore, working with an authentic and popular method, which means that the results obtained have a direct bearing on how second languages are actually taught in the classroom.

In conclusion, it has become clear that, in spite of many claims to the contrary, as yet there is no conclusive evidence that the communicative approach to language teaching, as embodied in TBL, produces more proficient learners than the traditional approach. Consequently, a controlled empirical investigation of this question is called for and this is what the following chapters of the present study will present.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed the literature relevant to comparisons of the effectiveness of grammar-based learning (GBL) and task-based learning (TBL) methods of foreign language teaching and learning. Largely because of their methodological failings, previous studies have not provided clear evidence of the superiority of either method. There is, however, a good deal of evidence that opportunities for learners to use their knowledge in communicative contexts enhance the learning experience, and there is some support for the hypothesis that, used in conjunction with GBL methods, such opportunities also increase foreign language proficiency.

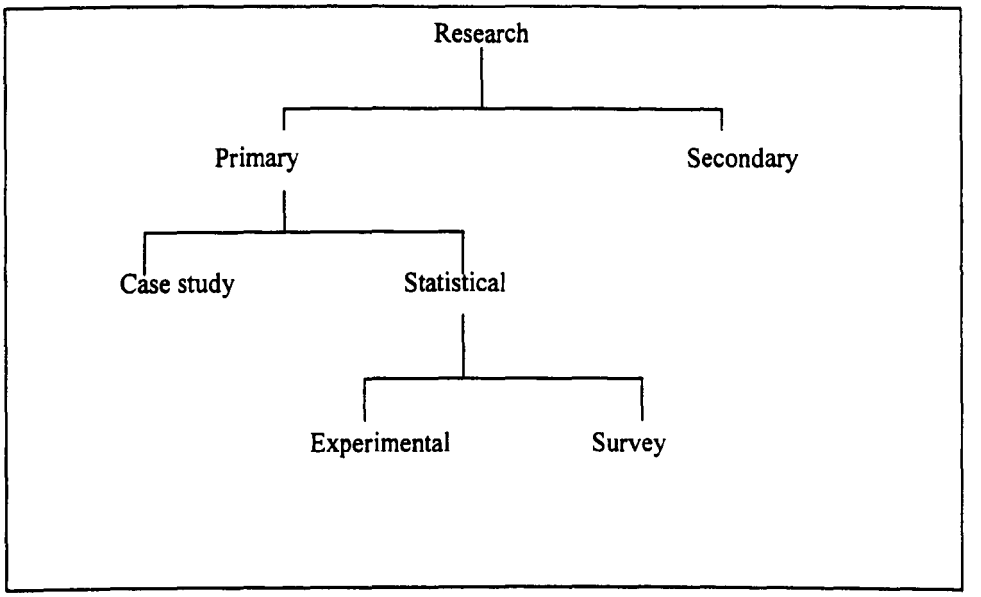
It was therefore decided to test the hypothesis that by intervening in the official English language programme of a Saudi Arabian university, using the sort of communicative activities advocated by TBL practitioners, the effectiveness of the English language programme would be increased. The overall objective of this experimental study is to find out whether communicative activities help to improve the proficiency of students in using the target language, compared with activities associated with the more traditional GBL methodology.

Although this study compares the outcomes of one group taught by traditional GBL methods with those of another group taught by TBL, it should be made clear that the students in both groups had previously been taught English only by GBL. The TBL group therefore came to this alternative method with knowledge of English gained from their GBL experience. Consequently, this study does not compare the results of students only ever taught by GBL with those of another group with only TBL experience and is therefore a quasi-experimental study. Nonetheless, assuming that both groups approached the experiment with roughly equal proficiency in English, the study was able to measure the differences between them at the end of one semester of different ways of teaching and learning.

This chapter outlines the methodology used in the empirical investigation. It has four main sections. Section 3.2 describes the characteristics of the group of learners used for this study and outlines the type of English teaching to which they had so far been exposed. Section 3.3 describes a preliminary study in the form of a feedback questionnaire. The importance of the feedback questionnaire and the reason for its inclusion in this study will be described. This will be followed by an analysis of the data yielded. Section 3.4 describes the methodology used for the core of the empirical research, i.e. the comparison of two groups of learners (GBL and TBL), with the aim of determining possible differences between them after one semester. In section 3.5, a description is provided of the tools used to determine the effect of these two different treatments on the subjects' proficiency, attitudes, and motivation, the results of which are presented in Chapter 4. The measurement tools in this study consisted of pre- and post-tests, a post-treatment questionnaire and classroom observation. It was decided to use several methods of assessment in order to reduce bias and enhance the validity and reliability of the research instruments. A brief summary of the structure of the empirical investigation is provided in section 3.6.

As the above description makes clear, the methods employed in the current study are of two types. Here Brown's (1988) model of research types, illustrated in Figure 3.1 below, is useful.

Figure 3.1: Types of research



(Brown 1988, cited in Nunan 1992: 9)

The current study started with a critical review of the results of existing research results (see Chapter 2). In terms of Figure 3.1, this is secondary research. Previous research, however, yielded no satisfactory answer to the central question addressed in this thesis: *Do learners taught by the TBL method reach a higher level of proficiency at the end of the course than their peers who were taught by the GBL method?* To answer this question, the approach taken in this study involves primary research. It is statistical, inasmuch as it is based not on analysis of a single subject (and is not a case study) but on collating and analysing results gathered from a relatively large sample of students over a period of time. The research has a survey part (preliminary study, as well as the post-intervention questionnaire) and an experimental part (the intervention). The former part employed a questionnaire to collect data to ascertain the views of the subjects and their teachers on their own language needs. The latter, experimental, part took the form of a 'treatment' group exposed to TBL methods and a 'control' group exposed to traditional GBL methods.

3.2 Subjects

The subjects for the present study were male English language learners at Umm Al-Qura University in Saudi Arabia. To give an understanding of the context, I present here a brief overview of the position of the English language in Saudi Arabia and the

nature and organisation of the English teaching provided at Umm Al-Qura's English Language Centre.

English is used in Saudi Arabia as a common language of communication in international sectors such as medicine, commerce, technology, industry (particularly the oil industry), transportation and tourism, as well as in all international meetings and conferences. In everyday life, however, English is little used and it is to all intents and purposes a foreign, which has to be acquired through explicit teaching (though – as in other countries across the world – this process is greatly reinforced and facilitated by the use of English in many of the modern media).

English is taught in all Saudi secondary schools. All students admitted to university should therefore have at least basic English language skills, but there are very few teachers who are native English speakers and consequently proficiency levels can be disappointing. Nevertheless, the importance of English in all Saudi universities is indicated by the compulsory English language element of all degrees. For instance, all Applied Science students have to take eight credit hours of English (out of a total of 144 for any BA/BSc degree) and students of Medicine and Engineering are required to do twelve credit hours.

Umm Al-Qura University, where the subjects of the present study were enrolled, was established in 1981. The teaching of English takes place at its Centre of English Language. This was created in 1982, with two teachers who only taught English language students. The Centre soon began teaching students on other degrees, especially Engineering, Science and Medicine, as well as academic and library staff. From 1991, evening courses were organised for government employees and other interested individuals and, more recently, there have been special courses for army and police officers, Mecca guest palace employees and workers in companies such as Saudi Telecommunications. The Centre has also expanded beyond the university and now provides English language courses for the College of Social Needs and Continuing Learning, the Technical College of Labour and the Applied Science College. To provide all this teaching, the Centre currently employs about fifteen staff. The history of the Centre well reflects the growing importance placed on English language skills by many sections of Saudi Arabian society, as well as by the staff and

students of all the university departments. It also goes some way towards explaining the University's interest in the present study in terms of the help it offered in carrying out the experimental component.

Although the Centre offers courses at different levels, they are mostly in general English. Over the years, there were proposals by some of the Centre's teachers for specialising the English courses but these were not adopted. Recently, however, the University asked the Centre to liaise with Faculty leaders to design courses to suit the specific needs of students of, for instance, engineering, science and medicine. Though such English courses are now in place, they are still largely unrelated to the students and their needs, according to the results of the preliminary study reported in section 3.3, and should probably be re-evaluated to focus on the sort of learner-centred approach advocated in section 3.3.1 to increase learner motivation and thereby improve teaching and learning.

3.3 General considerations

3.3.1 Feedback questionnaire

For some three decades now, a central concern in language teaching has been the needs of the learner. Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 54-55) make a distinction between the student's target needs and learning needs, that is, between what the learner needs to do in the target situation and what he or she needs to do in order to learn. They look at the target needs in terms of *necessities, lacks* and *wants*. 'Necessities', refers to 'the type of need determined of the target situation, that is, what the learner has to know in order to function effectively in the target situation'; 'lacks', refers to the gap between the learner's existing proficiency and his/her required target proficiency, which must be identified; 'wants', refers to the learner's own view of his/her needs, which could be different from the view of course designers, teachers and sponsors.

Taking a slightly broader view, Munby (1978) argues that information relating to the learner's identity, language, age, sex, nationality and place of residence is of great significance in identifying situations in which the learner would need to use the target language. Therefore, the learner is a crucial component in linguistic and pedagogic

terms and satisfaction of the learner's requirements helps to establish effective second-language programmes. Particularly in English courses, the focus should be on specific communicative achievements because the learner's goals depend on the communicative needs of his or her career in that specialisation. This implies that being aware of learners' needs and trying to address them should be an important part of the planning of an English course and should guide the course objectives. Mackay and Mountford (1978: 3) state that:

> When needs are clear, learning aims can be defined in terms of these specific purposes to which the language will be put. [...] teaching can be seen to be effective in that the learner begins to demonstrate communicative ability in the required area.

According to Finney (2002) too, students' feedback is a logical starting-point for the development of a language programme. Feedback and needs of student populations comparable to the one investigated in this study reveal that there can be quite large discrepancies between the teaching that is provided and the teaching that students actually need. Qotbah (1990) carried out a survey among a group of students at the University of Qatar, analysing their responses in order to come up with recommendations for the teaching programme. The main objective of his study was to evaluate ESP courses and teaching methods, both in secondary schools and at university, using questionnaires and interviews. The study tried to put the results into practice, concentrating on the communicative language needs of the students so they could become competent and successful users of English. He arrived at the conclusion that there should be a focus on communicative language teaching in order to promote motivation and develop the teaching and learning process of the target language. This is what the students needed, but it was not what they received.

In another study, Al-Busairi (1992) investigated the role of attitude and motivation in learning English for specific purposes in a university in Kuwait. He found that the best method for increasing learner motivation was to concentrate on functions and communicative competence.

Langroudi (1999) evaluated the English language programmes in universities in Iran. The findings revealed a generally positive attitude towards English as a foreign language but they also showed that students were critical of the current teaching

programme, with many suggesting new methods of communicative language teaching. Data were collected through a multi-method approach using questionnaires, interviews, observations, and document analysis. The study showed that the teaching materials used did not meet the specific needs of the students' academic subject areas. Furthermore, this study found that the traditionally oriented teaching methodology failed to provide a good basis for the use of English in higher education and that classroom management had a negative effect on student motivation.

In a recent study, Kavaliauskiene (2003) investigated learners' preferences with respect to the methodology of learning a foreign language at the Law University of Lithuania. Using a questionnaire, she found that more than half of the learners favoured a communicative approach to improving their language skills by working in pairs or small groups. She comments (2003: 6):

> The implications of this research for language teachers is [sic] to find the ways of motivating learners to lifelong learning, to negotiate with learners on their priorities for various activities in class, and to incorporate activities that learners prefer.

In all these case studies, investigation showed the importance attached by students to the communicative approach. In view of these findings, and given the nature of the present study, it was a natural decision to start this thesis's empirical investigation with an analysis of the feedback from its subjects at Umm Al-Qura University.

The subjects were male students from both the first and second years of the English course. Their ages ranged from 20 to 25. Technically speaking, the English language programme at Umm Al-Qura is based on what Hutchinson and Waters (1984: 108) term, 'the sponsor's needs: ... on what the parent university, the company, or the agency thinks the needs of the students are'. Kennedy (1980: 120) also believes that:

> [Feedback] should of course include all points of view – the learner, the language teacher and the subject specialist should all be consulted so that some consensus can be arrived at. The learner and his needs as he sees them should not be neglected.

As will become evident, the students investigated in the present study, when asked for their feedback, expressed a strong desire for a more communicatively oriented type of teaching than they were receiving. This means that the main empirical research of this

study – a comparison of the effectiveness of GBL and TBL – is not just an academic project for which the subjects were chosen purely to provide data. The issue addressed is directly relevant to the learners themselves. They were routinely exposed to GBL, but they felt less than happy with this and said that they would prefer something more akin to working in sub-groups (i.e. TBL, although they did not know the term). Therefore the question as to which of these two methods proves more effective was of immediate concern to them and to their teachers, and the answers obtained will have direct implications for the type of teaching that may be offered to them in the future. In this way, the present study can be said to make a modest contribution to the process of making academic research responsive and useful to the needs of members of the communities where data are collected.

3.3.2 The instrument used

To obtain information on the feedback of the subjects of this study, the researcher used a feedback questionnaire. The choice of this particular instrument was motivated by the following considerations. To begin with, questionnaires are commonly used to collect data in social science research (De Vaus 1996). As Gay and Airasian (2001) point out, questionnaires are a convenient tool for collecting information from all members of a population – which is exactly the type of information sought in this study.

As a data-gathering technique, use of a questionnaire has several practical advantages. Cohen and colleagues (2001) observe that questionnaires are easy to distribute and complete, they can be given to a large sample of respondents at the same time, they can reach distant areas, they have easy response gathering, and they avoid possible embarrassment (as it is not necessary to know the names of respondents).

When it comes to the construction of the actual questions contained in a questionnaire, considerable care needs to be taken to ensure that they elicit the information that is being sought. McKernan (1991) suggests several general guidelines:

- Be as clear and simple as possible
- Avoid questions that are too long
- Avoid questions with two parts
- Ask only important questions that respondents can answer
- Follow a natural logic and order.

Robson (1996) also points out that one of the most important issues in designing a questionnaire is taking care with the wording of the questions, because this can affect the subject's responses. He adds that a questionnaire should be attractive and should encourage, invite and help respondents to answer comfortably.

Questions in a questionnaire can be classified as closed or open-ended. Oppenheim (2001:112) distinguishes between the two by saying that a closed question is 'one in which the respondents are offered a choice of alternative replies'. An open-ended question is 'not followed by any kind of choice'. The aim of the open-ended question is basically to seek a more in-depth response and allow the respondents to offer reasons for their opinions.

Both types have advantages and disadvantages. Closed questions have two main advantages. They are easy to score and they are quick to answer. The disadvantages, according to Oppenheim (2001:114), are that:

- They do not give respondents the opportunity to write their opinions in detail
- Questions are quite difficult to construct
- They may cue respondents with respect to possible answers.

The advantages of open-ended questions are that they allow respondents freedom to write as they wish, there is less likelihood of the answer being influenced by the question and questions are generally easier to construct. Their disadvantages are that they are time-consuming to administer and to analyse. They can also make it more likely that respondents who have poor writing skills will fail to complete the questionnaire (Oppenheim 2001).

As shown below, in the present study, subjects were given five, short, easy-to-

understand questions in an order that moved from the general to the particular, from the present to the future and from the facts, as students perceived them, to their ideas for improvements. It was decided to use open-ended questions because all the participants were educated and thus able to answer such questions and because of the potential of such questions to yield more and richer information than closed questions, including responses which the researcher might not have included in a finite list of alternatives. To cope with the difficulty of analysing the variety of such responses, the researcher developed the scaling system described at the end of this section.

With regard to the way questionnaires are administered, Oppenheim (2001) distinguishes three types of questionnaire: self-administered (or self-completed), group-administered and postal. Each is appropriate for use in different situations and for different goals. As Oppenheim (2001) makes clear, a self-administered questionnaire is where the researcher personally contacts the respondents and asks them to complete the questionnaire; for a group-administered questionnaire, a group from the sample concerned is gathered in one place to complete it; the postal questionnaire is mailed to the respondents for them to answer in their own surroundings and return in their own time before a preferred deadline. Each type has advantages and disadvantages.

A self-administered questionnaire, according to Oppenheim (2001), has two advantages. It elicits a high response rate and it is characterised by accurate sampling. The disadvantage, however, is that respondents' responses could be affected by the explanation they receive from the researcher or the person in charge of distributing the questionnaire.

Oppenheim's (2001) views on the advantages of a group-administered questionnaire are that all respondents answer the questions in the same order and all have the same amount of time to complete the questionnaire; checks can be made at the questionnaire site to ensure completion of all the questions; and the researcher or other administrator is able to assist respondents who have difficulty in understanding the questions. It is also usually cheap to administer. He points out that the disadvantages are a danger of contamination, that is, respondents consulting each

other about their responses or even copying answers, especially when the group is large, and, if the researcher clarifies the meaning of questions for respondents, he may inadvertently lead them to provide answers that reflect the researcher's own ideas or opinions.

The use of a postal questionnaire, according to Oppenheim (2001) has the two advantages of low cost in processing and data collection, and the researcher's ability to reach respondents at widely dispersed addresses or other countries. The disadvantages are high costs, low response rates and the fact that they are unsuitable for respondents with poor literacy skills or impaired vision, the very old and children below the age of about ten. As Oppenheim (2001) also points out, there is no opportunity to correct misunderstandings or to offer explanation or help; it is not possible to check on incomplete answers or uncompleted questionnaires; and there is no control over the passing on of the questionnaire to others.

In this preliminary study, a group-administered questionnaire was used with students. This choice was made because of the advantages listed above, and because the researcher was able to avoid its potential disadvantages. He was able to make seating arrangements that would prevent students consulting each other or copying answers. Also, since the researcher was a member of staff of Umm Al-Qura University English Language Centre (UAUELC), it was easy for him to gain access to a large group of students and to ensure that each administrator handled the questionnaire sessions in a similar way.

The questions in the questionnaire were as follows:

1. What do you think of your command of English in general?
2. What do you think of your command of English in relation to your subject of study?
3. Are you motivated to learn and use English?
4. What is the main cause of your English language weakness?
5. What might help you to improve your English?

The first question is a very general one. Its aim was to determine each student's own perception of his/her English language proficiency in general. The second question sought to determine each student's perception of their level of English in their specific field of study. It was included because of the hypothesis that perceived general English proficiency may differ from perceived proficiency in the English applicable to the student's academic subject, such as technical terminology, standard subject-specific phrases and descriptions of routine procedures.

The third question is an evaluative one. It aims to identify respondents' interests and motivation towards the English language. It was expected that answers to this question would provide valuable information about motivation (learning readiness), one of the primary conditions for language learning.

The fourth question concerns possible reasons for weaknesses in English proficiency, while the fifth question is about the respondents' view of the best way to remedy such weaknesses. Together, these two questions form the heart of the feedback questionnaire, since they allow subjects to identify what is wrong and how it should be put right.

Students were given the above questions in their mother tongue, Arabic, in order to make sure that they fully understood them, felt at ease while answering them and were able to express their opinions freely. They completed the questionnaires in groups in the presence of teachers. Three hundred questionnaires were distributed but 24 were not suitable for analysis because some or all of the questions had not been answered.

To obtain data from a different perspective, a set of five corresponding questions was given to a sample of the teachers at the university where the study was carried out. They were asked to evaluate the students' level of English proficiency in general, students' English proficiency in their own academic subject and students' motivation. Then they were asked to suggest possible causes of and remedies for student weakness in English. Since English is the medium of instruction in academic subject teaching at this university, teachers have much experience of listening to and reading their students' English. It was hoped that the teachers' views would shed further light

on possible problems in the current situation, the needs of their students and possible methods of satisfying these needs. The five questions given to the teachers were in Arabic.

In Oppenheim's (2001) terms, this teacher questionnaire was administered rather like a postal questionnaire in that it was distributed to teachers to fill in at their own convenience. This was the only option available since it was not possible for the researcher to contact each teacher individually or to organise group sessions. Questionnaires were distributed to 100 teachers comprising the staff of the English Language Centre and lecturers in biology, physics and chemistry at the Applied Science College. Forty-three completed and usable questionnaires (eleven from ELC teachers and 32 from subject teachers) were returned.

The main reasons for using the feedback questionnaire in the preliminary part of this study were to investigate the opinions of the two principal stakeholders, students and teachers, in order to carry out a limited course evaluation, and to provide some background to the subsequent experimental research. Although the answers to five simple questions could not be expected to identify the strengths and weaknesses of all aspects of teaching and learning in these particular English language courses, they should facilitate a preliminary assessment of the teaching and learning environment, and the effectiveness of the current courses.

In analysis of the answers that were given by students and teachers, use has been made of rating scales in order to measure their opinions. Owing to their greater accuracy and the multi-faceted nature of measuring (as well as their greater convenience for the researcher in coding and statistical analysis), the use of such scales raises the reliability of measurement and reduces bias in respondents' choice of answer (Oppenheim 2001). Scales are very commonly used in questionnaires. This study used a four-point scale that ranged, for instance, from 'very good' to 'very weak', or from 'very motivated' to 'not very motivated'. Use of these rating scales enabled the researcher to classify the widely differing answers into a small set of categories, making it possible to extract quantitative information from them but if they were open questions they would be confusing. For example, in reply to question 1 ('What is your command of English?'), one student might reply, 'My command of

English is perfect', while another might say, 'My command of English is not bad' The answers of the three sets of respondents (students, subject teachers, and English teachers) to each question will be discussed in the following subsection.

3.3.3 Analysis of questionnaire data

The results of the questionnaire are discussed below in general terms. The exact scores for each question can be found in Appendix B for figures of questionnaire results.

- **Students' general English proficiency (Q. 1)**

A total of 71% of the students answered that their general command of English was weak, and 18% said it was very weak. This indicates that the overwhelming majority were dissatisfied with their standard of English. Only 7% claimed to have a good standard of English, and only 2% registered it as 'very good'. The views of both the English and the subject teachers largely reflected this pattern, in that most answers indicated that students' general command of English was weak. This suggests that the teaching of English in this institution is not very effective.

- **Students' subject-specific English proficiency (Q. 2)**

In answering this question, 36% of students identified themselves as weak or worse (34% 'weak' and 2% 'very weak') while 61% identified themselves as good, or very good (21% 'very good' and 40% 'good'). Thus, many students think that their subject-specific English (understanding technical terminology, writing reports in English, etc.) is rather better than their English in general.

Teachers of English and specialist subjects, however, thought that most of their students were weak or very weak in English applied to their subjects (37% English teachers and 72% subject teachers). Teachers seem to be unhappy about their students' standard of English language, not only in general but also in subject-specific

use of the language.

- **Students' motivation for learning English (Q. 3)**

The students' answers to Question 3 show that they are interested and aware of the importance of English. A total of 71% were categorised as 'very motivated' and 20% as 'motivated' to learn English.

Typical (translated) responses were:

'I'm very motivated, as English is an international language';
'I like to learn it, as English language is used for the Internet and the media';
'I'm motivated to learn English because it will help me in my present and future graduate and postgraduate studies';
'I'm motivated to learn English to help me get a good job after graduation'.

- **Causes of students' weakness (Q. 4)**

Only 1% of students attributed their weak English to a lack of motivation; 4% blamed the shortage of English courses; and 7% mentioned that their English course materials did not relate to and match their field of specialisation. Interestingly, some students used the questionnaire margins to write individual reasons for their English language weakness, such as lack of qualifications of the teaching staff and the lack of preparation for examinations, but the main problem identified was that they feel a need for greater use of English communication skills both in and outside the class (62%). A late start to teaching English also appeared, from the survey, to be very important, as it was mentioned in 26% of the students' answers.

Teachers of English and teachers of specialist subjects held different opinions from students, and from each other, concerning the weakness of their students. A total of 36% of English teachers attributed students' weaknesses to their late start in learning English but the biggest factor for subject teachers (43%) was students' lack of motivation. The second main reason (27%), in the opinion of the English teachers,

was the lack of use of English, especially outside the class. For example, one teacher commented, 'Because English language is not used outside the classroom, it is neglected'.

- **Possible methods for improving students' English (Q. 5):**

As might be expected from the results of the previous question, many students (37%) recommended greater communicative use of English as a method of improving their proficiency: 22% saw a need for English language teaching to start at primary school and 16% simply wanted more English courses, and 6% wanted more native speaker teachers of English. Some students revealed that some subject teachers do not use English at all in their classes.

Most teachers (36% of English teachers and 34% of subject teachers) believe that an early start to English language learning and teaching is extremely important. The highest percentage (40%) registered by the subject teachers is for better provision of English courses. The English teachers' second highest response (27%) is the need for English to be used more.

From these results, it is clear that the main need of the students is to be able to communicate in English effectively. A point highlighted in the answers from both students and teachers about the shortcomings of English language teaching is the lack of English use. The results of the preliminary study therefore showed that the students wanted classes where they spent more time using English and less time learning about it. The feedback questionnaire thus leads naturally to the main part of the research study, which compared a communicative language teaching method, using Task-Based Learning, with a traditional method. The remaining sections of this chapter will outline the methodology adopted by the researcher in carrying out this comparison.

3.4 The experimental study

The main study was quasi-experimental, using quantitative data and statistical analysis. A distinctive feature is that the data were collected during a full semester of actual English-language lessons. The classes were not designed solely for the purpose of collecting data, but primarily for real language learning as part of a university course. This means that the teaching was more authentic, and the results obtained may be expected to be more realistic than they would be with short-term and/or artificial experiments. At the end of the semester, which was also the end of the research period, the two methods of GBL and TBL were assessed to determine which had proved to be the most effective.

3.4.1 The issue of validity

Marshall and Rossman (1995: 99) stated that the advantage of using different techniques of data collection is that 'limitations in one method can be compensated for by the strengths of a complementary one'. Reichardt and Cook (1979: 21) made a similar point, adding that using a combination of qualitative and quantitative research techniques allows cross-checking, which contributes to increased validity and reliability of the research instruments. Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991:14) emphasised that using more than one method of data collection will not only improve accuracy in measuring a single phenomenon but also yield additional categories of data, and allow the formulation of generalisable findings.

Taking this advice into account, a number of research procedures, some quantitative and some qualitative, were adopted for the present study, all in order to allow cross-validation and complementary support between the research techniques and tests. The actual procedures used were:

1. Teaching treatment (the experiment proper)
2. Testing, using the following data collection instruments:
    A. Oral pre- and post-treatment tests (both involving the task of describing a picture)
    B. Final course results (i.e. the final examination mark)

C. Post-course evaluation (data obtained through a learner attitude questionnaire)

D. Classroom observation

3.4.2 The teaching method

The intervention (the experiment proper) focused on a group of English language learners with the aim of investigating whether task-based learning (TBL) which focuses on meaning was more effective than the traditional grammar-based learning (GBL) which focuses on form in developing English language skills. As stated in section 1.5, the research question was the following:

Do learners taught by the TBL method reach a higher level of proficiency at the end of the course than their counterparts who were taught by the GBL method?

The experimental group was taught by the TBL method and the control group by the GBL method. The research hypotheses tested in this study, as formulated in section 1.5, were:

Hypothesis A (H0): There is no significant difference in the learners taught by the two different methods.

Hypothesis B (H1): There is a significant difference in the learners taught by the two different methods.

The null hypothesis A (H0) – which says that there is no difference between the mean levels of proficiency of the two populations – is tested statistically. If it is correct, any difference between the two samples must either be ascribed to chance or be because they were not drawn randomly from their respective populations. If the null hypothesis is rejected, then it can be concluded that the differences in the results are statistically significant, which means that they are likely to have been caused by the different treatment of the two groups, i.e. GBL and TBL.

Both groups – the one receiving the GBL treatment as well as the one exposed to the TBL treatment – were taught by the researcher. The treatment was undertaken for two hours per group per week, for a twelve-week period in the second semester of the academic year 2004-2005 (see Appendix E for the fieldwork plan). The subjects did not receive any other English lessons during this period.

The fact that both the control and the experimental classes were taught by the same teacher – the researcher – may be thought to pose some problems for the validity of the outcomes of the experiment. The main problems, obviously, are those of bias and subjectivity. From my previous studies and experience, I, the teacher/researcher, had a favourable attitude towards the TBL method and I hoped and expected that my experimental results would provide support for extending the use of the TBL method, both at Umm Al-Qura University and more widely. Hence, it could be argued that I was likely to put more effort into teaching the TBL class, even if I were not conscious of doing so.

I would argue that I was well aware of this potential problem and took all the steps to ensure that all classes received equal treatment within the constraints of the two different teaching methods. In fact, under the terms of my employment at the university and current staffing levels there, I had no choice but to teach both the control and experimental groups, eight classes in all. I was, however, able to choose to allocate all four GBL classes to Sunday teaching slots and all four TBL classes to Tuesday slots. This, I believed, would make it easier for me to concentrate on delivering good classes in one method on Sundays and good classes in the other method on Tuesdays. This concentration, as well as lesson preparation, would have been more difficult if the scheduling had been less organised.

There is a further point to be made on this matter. As the next section makes clear, every effort was made to reduce the number of variables in the experiment. Classes were arranged so as to be identical in size and to contain the same spread of ability. All classes had lessons of identical duration and frequency. The fact that both the control and experimental classes had the same teacher could be seen as a methodological advantage because it removed yet one more possible variable, thus leaving the teaching method – the focus of the experiment – as the independent

variable. It is certainly true that if the control and experimental groups had had different teachers, differing or surprising results would have raised speculation about the influence of factors such as the relative experience, expertise and enthusiasm of the two teachers.

Perhaps the main issues here are that I was aware of the potential problem, that I took steps to minimise unconscious bias and that I was professionally interested in the outcomes of a genuine experiment.

3.4.3 The grouping of subjects

The population of interest to the current study consisted of university students for whom English is not the primary language. The sample employed in this study is a non-random sample of 283 students who were enrolled in the academic year 2005 on an English course – specifically, the 102 English course, level 2 – at the University of Umm Al-Qura Applied Science College in Saudi Arabia. They were divided into experimental and control groups consisting of 145 and 138 subjects. Eight classes were involved, four of which formed the control group, which received the GBL treatment, and the other four classes formed the experimental group, receiving TBL treatment.

For the classroom observation part of this study, two classes of 63 subjects (30 of the control and 33 of the experimental group) were chosen as the sample to be observed. All groups followed exactly the same programme; only the teaching method differed, with the control group being taught by the GBL method while the experimental group was taught by the TBL method. None of the students who took part in the experimental groups were aware that they were taking part in a research-based study.

The institution at which the research took place offers classes at three proficiency levels: 101 (elementary), 102 (lower intermediate) and 103 (intermediate). The students selected for the present study were all at level 102. This decision was based on the consideration that level 101 students, being beginners, might make few classroom contributions, and hence provide little data for classroom observation. Level 103 students, on the other hand, might be expected to have relatively good

levels of English language proficiency, which would mean that differences in progress (if any) between a control group and an experimental group over just one semester might be smaller and more difficult to measure. Therefore, students at level 102 were deemed the most appropriate subjects for this study.

As is wisely recognised, a standard requirement for experimental studies like the present one is that control and experimental groups should be as similar to each other as possible. The two sets of English language course subjects tested in this study were certainly identical in their prior experience of learning English in terms of the length of their exposure to English teaching in the Saudi educational system (usually six years, commencing in intermediate school and ending in high school). They were also all in the age group 20 to 25 and, as mentioned above, they were all males. To prevent a grouping of the subjects that might have resulted in the best students being assembled in one group, the experimental and control groups were evenly composed of more and less proficient students, on the basis of their 101 English course grades. The number of subjects with different grades in each group is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Distribution of GBL and TBL students according to their 101 course results

Group	Students gaining Grade A	Students gaining Grade B	Students gaining Grade C	Students gaining Grade D	Total
GBL	32	38	42	33	145
TBL	36	34	37	31	138

Similarly, when it came to dividing each of the two groups (control and experimental) into classes, the students were distributed according to their 101 English course grades. Again, this was done in order to achieve balance and to avoid a skewed distribution, which might have led to the best students being assembled in one class. Table 3.2 shows this distribution.

Table 3.2: Number of students per class in the GBL and TBL sub-groups

101 Grade Population		Control group					Experimental group				
		Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Total	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Total
A	73	11	9	8	8	36	9	11	8	9	37
B	73	10	10	7	11	38	8	9	10	8	35
C	71	10	8	7	10	35	12	7	8	9	36
D	66	9	9	8	10	36	8	8	7	7	30
Total	283	40	36	30	39		37	35	33	33	

Thus, all the classes, both in the control group and the experimental group, were similar to each other, with no significant differences between them in their 101 course results or in their age and the time previously spent learning English at school and in the university.

The researcher had no control over the timetable for level 102 classes but did choose to allocate all four GBL control classes to Sunday teaching slots, each for two hours, starting at 8.0 a.m., 10.0 a.m., 4.0 p.m. and 6.0 p.m., and all four TBL classes to Tuesday periods, at the same times. This was simply because it was thought to be easier for the teacher to prepare for and teach all lessons using one method (GBL) on one day and all lessons using the other method (TBL) on another day. The class schedule and student numbers are shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Timetable for the GBL and TBL classes

Group	Class I 8-10 a.m.	Class II 10-12 a.m.	Class III 4-6 p.m.	Class IV 6-8 p.m.	Total
GBL Sundays	40	36	30	39	145
TBL Tuesdays	37	35	33	33	138

3.4.4 Materials and overall teaching context

The materials used were ready-made printed course books (*Learn English for Science,* see Appendix F) levels 1, 2, and 3, which are suitable for GBL methodology. Both the control and experimental groups worked through ten units of the ordinary English 102 module. All learners taking part in the study were learners taking a genuine course, meaning that they received a grade that was going to be recorded in the transcripts of their results for the degree for which they were studying. Therefore, the objectives of the students in the control group were the same as those of the learners in the experimental group, and the same language forms and functions were employed as the targets forms for each unit for both groups. The ten units that the learners worked through had the following content:

Table 3.4: Units in the 102 English course book (*Learn English For Science*)

Unit Number	Topic
1	How do scientists work?
2	Classification
3	The power of water
4	Water power
5	Two vital elements
6	Water pollution
7	Jet propulsion
8	Our neighbours in space
9	The uses of mathematics
10	The weather

The control group was taught these units by the GBL method that is standard practice in the language centre where they were taking the course. In teaching them, the researcher used the existing materials, which are all based on the GBL syllabus, as explained in section 3.4.2. The experimental group followed Willis's (1996) framework for the TBL teaching method. The experimental group used the same units

of the same standard textbook as the GBL group, though the TBL students did not see the units in advance. All the other conditions, such as identity of the teacher, class size, class duration and frequency, were the same for both groups. The only difference was in the manipulation of the independent variable, i.e. the teaching method. Therefore any differences that emerged at the end of the course could reasonably be attributed to the use of the TBL versus GBL methods.

3.4.5 The control (GBL) group

The comparison (control) group was taught by the GBL method. In the presentation stage of this model, the teacher introduces a new aspect of the language (e.g. some vocabulary items or a grammatical structure) in a clear context to demonstrate its meaning. This can be done through a text, a short conversation, etc. In the practice stage, students practise using these vocabulary or grammatical items in a controlled way through drills and phrase or sentence completion exercises. The production stage is a free practice period when students try to use the newly-acquired material in different contexts, often through role-play.

The materials used for the control group consisted of the GBL textbook for the regular syllabus, *Learn English for Science*. Each unit includes exercises for all the main language skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. Most units, however, emphasise reading more than the other skills. This means that a lot of class time is devoted to students taking turns to read aloud, with the teacher trying to give as many students as possible the chance to read. After this, the teacher and students move on to exercises of various types. Some examples can be seen in Appendix F, which contains a sample of the first lesson of the textbook. The first exercise of each lesson usually contains comprehension questions asked by the teacher; the students answer them individually when invited to do so by the teacher The aim of this GBL methodology is to provide knowledge but the application of that knowledge beyond the classroom is largely left to the students.

The teacher dominates the GBL language classroom for almost the entire lesson. Therefore, in the presentation stage, the teacher is the informant. In the practice stage,

the teacher retains a large degree of dominance by conducting the drills and exercises and selecting respondents from among the learners who are ready to answer. The teacher's responsibility is mainly focused on teaching the forms and vocabulary mentioned in the textbook in order to make as much progress as possible with the prescribed programme. In the production stage, the teacher tries to engage two learners in freer practice activities that are intended to draw out the relevant piece of the target language. For example, for the present perfect tense, the teacher asks the learners if one of them can interview another one on the subject of past travel destinations. Two volunteers then come in front of the class and conduct a mini-interview, featuring utterance pairs like:

A: Where have you travelled to?
B: I have been to Spain and the US.

In these GBL lessons, the learners' role was merely to respond to the teacher's directions. The teacher occupied most of the time talking and explaining. The rest of the time was used by the teacher to select individual students to provide answers to his questions and complete relevant drills. In accordance with normal GBL practice, learners in the GBL class were directed towards getting the form and the function of the target language right without paying too much attention to meaning.

3.4.6 The experimental (TBL) group

Since the TBL methodology used in the experimental groups is generally less familiar than the traditional GBL methodology used in the control groups, this subsection will provide a somewhat more detailed description of this TBL method. The basis of the teaching units developed for the experimental group in this study was the TBL model devised by Willis (1996). It consists of three stages, namely the pre-task, the task cycle and the language focus. In this model, planning time and report stages are included in the teaching to promote a focus on accuracy and to balance the overall focus on fluency that is commonly attributed to meaning-focused types of learning.

The TBL framework emphasises both texts and tasks, giving students a chance to develop knowledge (skills and grammar focusing on form) and to practise language

use (communicative approach focusing on meaning), 'to attain both the knowledge and the skills required in most kinds of exams' (Willis 1996: 143).

The planning and report stage of the cycle stage helps students with the production of accuracy by training them in editing and self-correction skills.

In the language focus phase there is a direct attempt to increase students' understanding of grammar. The activities of this stage are simply grammar exercises and patterns from texts that they have already used in class. Students benefit from instruction focused on language form, and it helps them to recognise these aspects of grammar when they come across them again, either in or outside class. It also helps them to understand meanings and phrase uses better and may also help them to pronounce and memorise useful phrases and common patterns; moreover it gives them confidence to try out new combinations and to generate some of their own, (Willis 1996).

In this respect, the TBL approach faces two major theoretical and practical challenges: the sequencing of task difficulty and the sequencing of target linguistic structures within the context of a communicative syllabus. Several recent TBL proposals comment extensively on the sequencing of tasks according to methodological considerations related to task implementation: degrees of negotiation of meaning, difficulty, planning, etc. (e.g. Johnson 1996; Skehan 1998; Willis 1996). On the other hand, the incorporation of developmental sequences of the language system has been addressed in a more circuitous way. For instance, to avoid the explicit identification and sequencing of linguistic factors, Skehan (1998) advocated two principles of task design: target a range of structures instead of a single one and use the criterion of utility of use of the target structures instead of the criterion of necessity (but see Pienemann (1985) for problems with the former and Loschky & Bley-Vroman (1993) for problems with the latter).

In this research study, however, the researcher will adapt Willis's framework of TBL. It describes the pedagogical implementation of tasks that focus on grammatical features to be compared with the traditional method as a case study which is useful because the implementation incorporates a wide range of levels of linguistic analysis

(i.e. communication, grammar, and vocabulary).

Given the nature of the TBL cycle and its emphasis on learning through communication, it would have been counter-productive to have given the students materials to study at home prior to a TBL lesson. Therefore, the TBL method students in the present study were not given a course book but came to class without any preparation. Instead, during each lesson, they were given copies of the unit (reading passage and exercises) of the textbook to be covered in that lesson. In this way, the students were encouraged to engage in natural conversation and communication.

In each lesson, the teacher explained the task and its goals before telling the students how to begin, exactly what they should do, how much time they had and what would happen once they had finished. The teacher then distributed a copy of the unit of the textbook to be used for that lesson. For the first stage of the TBL model, the pre-task stage, he asked the students to contribute by saying, in English, what they already knew about that topic in order to warm them up. During this and his own introduction to the topic, the teacher listed the main vocabulary items of the topic.

Small work groups, each of about six students, were then formed and asked to read and discuss the topic and its vocabulary and to complete the accompanying exercise. They were asked to help each other to understand the meanings of difficult items. In this task stage, the teacher's role was to monitor the class from a distance and help students formulate what they wanted to say. This was done by waiting for them to ask questions instead of interrupting them while they discussed things such as problem-solving tasks, matching exercises and question and answer difficulties. Nor did the teacher correct their pronunciation or grammar errors or suggest better ways of doing the task. When students used their mother tongue too often or got stuck, the teacher helped but then withdrew again.

With regard to the planning stage, the students in each work group were given a worksheet of a class report which included five questions. The first one asked them to write a 'summary' of the unit topic which had already been studied. Then each group was asked to share its summary with the rest of the class, each group leader reading the summary in front of the class. A different group leader was chosen each week.

At the end of each class, the students were asked to answer the remaining four questions about what they had learned from that day's lesson and, specifically, what vocabulary and grammatical structures they had learned (see Appendix E), as well as homework. This, together with the written summary described above, formed the 'language focus' of the TBL methodology.

Willis (1996: 11) says, as mentioned above, that the three conditions of learning are exposure, use and motivation. In the TBL lessons, the teacher in this study tried to expose the students to the target language and make them use it themselves in each phase of the lesson. Through these activities, learners hear, read and observe how others express themselves meaningfully and acquire the discourse skills they need to manage their own conversations. Willis (1996: 13-14) identifies these discourse skills as follows:

- opening and closing a conversation, i.e. introducing a topic and saying how it is relevant and 'winding down' a topic to prepare for saying good-bye and leaving
- interacting and turn-taking, i.e. recognising possible pause points and ensuring that people will listen; even interrupting politely, to clarify or challenge what someone has said
- organising the discourse in advance in order to sustain a longer speaking turn
- reaching agreement co-operatively and shifting the topic.

In this study the teacher encouraged motivation, Willis's third essential factor for learning, by creating a positive, low-stress atmosphere and by encouraging creativity, authenticity and risk-taking. This was especially important for less confident learners. Learners observe, hear and, consciously or unconsciously, try to imitate how other students express the meanings they want to convey. In the task stage, in particular, students had a good chance of recalling and using the target language they already knew and, as Willis (1996) says, if it goes well, the task stage motivates the learners because of their feelings of success and satisfaction in completing the task by taking part in the communication activities. Another element of motivation is that learners

themselves can create situations that have a positive, low-stress atmosphere, for instance, a coffee shop for meeting, chatting and exchanging ideas. Mitchell (1994) claims that motivation is enhanced by the usefulness of the target language for practical purposes and this was certainly applicable to the 'English for Scientists' course.

3.5 Testing and assessment

How should the researcher comparing two methods test or assess learners' performance? As we shall see, the answer to this question is not completely straightforward. It will be necessary to consider some general issues in testing and assessment, then turn to assessment in TBL and finally to what was actually used in this study.

According to Ellis (2003), there are three different test types in language assessment that distinguish Task-Based Assessment (TBA) from other types of language testing: (1) testing in the psychometric tradition in testing, (2) integrative language testing, and (3) communicative language testing. However, there are some problems in applying this to task-based assessments. For example, to what extent should TBL tests seek to obtain a best performance from students? To what extent should the interviewer try to scaffold the students' productions? Therefore, the following forms of evaluation were adopted in this research. The first was a student-based evaluation, which aims to identify the students' attitudes towards and opinions of the method being investigated. It is very important, as Ellis (2003: 324) points out, that " Such an evaluation is necessary because, arguably, a task can only be said to have worked if students found it enjoyable and/or useful. Student-based evaluations conducted by means of questionnaires or short interviews are the easiest to carry out". The second was a response-based evaluation to test the actual outcomes of the task to see whether they match the predicted outcomes. This is time consuming because it requires recordings of the task performance to be made, transcribed, and analysed. Ellis (ibid: 324) comments that response-based evaluations "provide valuable information about whether a task is achieving what it was intended to achieve". The third was a learning-based evaluation which involved pre- and post tests to establish whether the

task resulted in language learning. This, as Ellis (2003) says, is the most difficult type of evaluation.

3.5.1 Psychometric tests

Psychological tests are those which are characterised by questions of the closed type (e.g. multiple choice). They are objective in nature. Test scores are amenable to statistical procedures, i.e. analysis, reliability and validity. Language is tested by counting on phonology (e.g. phonemes), lexis (e.g. vocabulary items), and grammar (e.g. grammatical patterns and morphemes). Knowledge of such elements is tested in terms of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is a good example of the psychometric tradition in testing.

This type of testing was roundly criticised by Gipps (1994:14):

> The impact of psychometrics goes beyond the specifics of item design and test construction to a broader range of implications: the emphasis on relative ranking rather than actual accomplishment; the privileging of easily quantifiable displays of skills and knowledge; the assumption that individual performances, rather than collaborative forms of cognition, are the most powerful indicators of educational progress; the notion that evaluating educational progress is a matter of scientific measurement.

3.5.2 Integrative language tests

Integrative language tests are similar to psychometric tests but they differ in having a unitary view rather than the multidimensional view of psychometric tests. Oller (1979) claimed that language proficiency is unitary in nature. This view is supported by statistical analysis when, for example, in separate tests of grammar and vocabulary, scores were shown to be so highly correlated that they were, in fact, measuring the same factor. Oller argued that, in order to avoid this, it is necessary to devise tests that are plugged into the unitary language of the learner in a holistic way. Oller suggested two tests, closed tests and dictations. It was notable, however, that the absence of an oral element in such integrative tests prevented a solution (Ellis 2003).

3.5.3 Communicative language testing

According to Fulcher (2000), there are three aspects of communicative tests. First, performance communicative tests, in which the test tasks and the target language use tasks, should be similar or there should be an attempt to match them. Second, authentic communicative tests in which the testee should understand the purpose of the communicative tasks so that he or she can respond accordingly and so that the test really is testing the ability of the testee to cope with real situations. Third, real-life outcomes communicative tests, which should be concerned with the real criterion of success, namely a testee's achievement of a satisfactory output.

From Fulcher's perspective, Task-Based Assessment (Ellis 2003) could certainly be classified as communicative testing. Fulcher's three aspects, however, have some problems such as the lack of correspondence between a task in a test and a real-world task (i.e. they are insufficient for content validity).

Baker (1989, in Ellis, 2003) distinguished between two methods: system-referenced tests and performance-referenced tests. The former is concerned with knowledge of language as a system without reference to any particular use or situation to which the psychometric and integrative paradigms discussed above belong. In contrast, performance-referenced tests have the ability to use the language in certain situations; for example, they are exactly the same as the ability of a trainee pilot to respond to and understand the message from the control tower when landing an aircraft (Ellis 2003.).

System-referenced tests are therefore more construct-oriented while performance-referenced tests are more content-oriented. Both, according to Baker (1989, in Ellis 2003) can be direct and indirect. The following table (3.5) illustrates this in more detail:

Table 3.5: Types of language assessment (based on Baker 1989, in: Ellis 2003)

	Direct (holistic)	Indirect (analytic)
System-referenced	Traditional tests or general language ability: – free composition – oral interview Information-transfer tests: – information-gap – opinion-gap – reasoning-gap	Direct-item tests of linguistic knowledge: – multiple-choice grammar or vocabulary tests – elicited imitation of specific linguistic features – error-identification tests Integrative tests – close – dictation
Performance-referenced	Specific purpose tests: – tests based on observing real-world tasks – simulations of real-world tasks	Tests that seek to measure specific aspects of communicative proficiency discretely: – tests specific academic sub-skills, e.g. the ability to cite from a published work – tests the ability to perform specific functions or strategies, e.g. the ability to write a definition of a technical term

One of the most popular alternative methods of performance-referenced tests in English for Academic Purpose (EAP) is the portfolio approach whereby, over the course of a semester or academic year, students build up a collection of samples of their work, produced individually and/or collaboratively. Such an approach to assessment forms a natural partner for a task-based syllabus, even if learners will also have to pass more 'traditional' external or institutional exams, as is often the case in EAP. Although portfolios are primarily associated with the evaluation of written work, there is no reason why they cannot include such items as audiotapes of spoken language, comments from peers or teachers, logs describing work on particular tasks, personal glossaries, or samples of homework and class quizzes (Hancock 1994).

In this way, a portfolio (or a collection of portfolios) can provide a comprehensive record of a learner's holistic language development over the course of a given period.

One advantage of integrated project work is that it helps break down the artificial distinction between "language" and "content", thereby motivating learners and promoting autonomy, Ellis (2003). Similarly, according to Hancock (1994):

> Perhaps the greatest overall benefit of using a portfolio assessment is that the students are taught by example to become independent thinkers, and the development of their autonomy as learners is facilitated.

Portfolio or project-based assessment is not, however, without its disadvantages. From a practical point of view, one of the major difficulties faced by teachers is the sheer amount of time and resources involved in supervising and marking a large number of projects (Brindley and Ross 2001:153). Ferris (2001), while extolling the benefits of portfolio work, acknowledged that 'portfolio grading can be extremely cumbersome to administer and very labour-intensive for teachers'. In their paper on EAP assessment in Gulf universities, Barlow and Coombe (2003) cited this practical difficulty as one of the reasons why the percentage of the final EAP score allocated to alternative assessment in Saudi Arabia at the University of Umm Al-Qura was downgraded from 20% to 10% of the overall grade. They also point out, however, that collaboration with content area teachers in the implementation of integrated projects led to a more manageable workload for both teachers and students. Another way of reducing the burden on markers is to stagger project assessment, with only one or two groups being assessed at any one time (McGarry 1995:51).

Even if only a relatively small proportion of students' final grades is allocated to alternative assessment, the ongoing use of learner journals, portfolios and projects can still be a valuable instrument of formative assessment (Little 1999) which can help measure learners' progress towards autonomy. According to McGarry (1995:52-53), involving learners in the assessment process has another advantage which is represented in the discussion involved in the negotiation of criteria and helps the students to understand the basis on which they will be assessed and the rationale behind it – in other words, to understand what is required of them and why.

If learners are encouraged to reflect on the criteria according to which language tasks are graded, they will be provided with practical insights which could prove valuable to them in their preparation for the formal, high-stakes English exams which many of

them will have to take. In other words, a learner-centred approach to EAP assessment has benefits which go well beyond the merely 'linguistic', helping to foster the kind of critical thinking and autonomous learning skills which are among the stated aims of so many Foundation Programmes.

When it comes to assessment under TBL, this is very difficult to carry out for two reasons. First, in teaching and testing, the test should reflect what has been taught. The problem is that tasks are based on the communicative approach and language ability cannot be assessed separately from subject content. As McNamara (1996) has pointed out, this can lead to an ambiguity about the choice of criteria for assessment. Therefore, following a course book (subject content) in a TBL class is necessary because it provides information that is explicit and systematic, which means Task-Based Assessment is not used alone but rather in combination with other forms of assessment. This is not only for comparison with the GBL method or for reliability but because, as Brown and Hudson (1998: 657) point out, 'virtually all of the various test types are useful for some purpose, somewhere, sometime'.

Moreover, teachers and students often worry that the TBL approach will minimise the importance of grammar and accuracy, since task-based learning focuses on meaning, and assessment is likely to be based on the communicative performance of learners. 'If their exams do not test oral communication, students wonder about the relevance of taking part in oral tasks' (Willis 1996:142). That is, students feel exams are a waste of time if they are not directly related to measurement of skills and grammar understanding (Willis 1996).

Exam technique is important in most tests, so releasing previous exam questions from both grammar and vocabulary tests and from oral communicative tests can be useful for TBL classes. Willis (1996:143) pointed out that 'traditional styles of exam practice can be adapted to workgroup, with students making up more testing items along the same lines as those in the exam'. She continues, 'since such exams reflect the practices commonly used in the TBL classroom, students will require much less in the way of exam technique training'.

3.5.4 Pre-test and post-test of oral production

There are currently no oral proficiency tests based on a multi-construct model. Comparing the effectiveness of the two syllabuses was therefore established by measuring changes in the learners' oral production. The assessment used in this empirical study of the TBL besides oral PET-based (see below) speaking pre- and post-tests is the traditional paper written (final exam) tests. This was because the teaching was not only for the purpose of the research study but was genuine and formal. Furthermore, the traditional written exam assessments help in making decisions regarding students' progress, i.e. they are more biased to the GBL group but the PET-based speaking oral tests are more biased to the TBL group, which puts the assessments on a level footing for judging students' performance. Brown and colleagues (2002: 10-11) stated that:

> ... a variety of approaches to performance assessment may simply utilize particular "tasks" as methods for eliciting language performance, which is then evaluated according to criteria that may not be directly related to the tasks themselves (e.g., criteria found in global language proficiency rating scales, second language developmental sequences, language production characteristics like accuracy, complexity, or fluency etc.).

They continue:

> Task-based language assessment thus focused on the elicitation of performances of relevant tasks under conditions that approximate the real world as much as possible as well as on the evaluation of task performances according to real-world criteria.

Therefore, the language (final exam) test was a formal instrument that enabled a comparison to be made of the language proficiency of the two groups. The oral PET-based pre- and post-tests compare the two groups' communicative developmental performance. Willis (1996: 142-3) commented:

> Language exams set out to test students' knowledge of the language, and ability to perform in it. So how can TBL help students to do well? The TBL framework, together with a balanced selection of texts and tasks, aims to give students enough breadth of language experience and practice in language use to attain both the knowledge and the skills required in most kinds of exams.

The primary concern of this thesis was to compare fluency in English developed by traditional GBL and the experimental TBL methods of teaching. To determine the effects of the two different methods on learners' fluency, accuracy, and use of complex language, a pre-test and a post-test were employed (see Appendices I, J, K, and L), in accordance with Nunan's (1992: 41) recommendation that a well-designed research study should 'provide subjects with carefully selected pre- and post treatment tests'. In the present study, comparison of the effectiveness of the two syllabuses was achieved by measuring changes in the learners' oral proficiency through the use of speaking tests.

The two groups were pre-tested and post-tested orally by use of an adaptation of the Preliminary English Test (PET) of the second level Cambridge ESOL examination. The PET is an intermediate level examination, at Level B1 of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. It is regarded as a suitable test for everyday spoken communications. Since this corresponds well to the proficiency level of the subjects of the present study, it seemed appropriate to use PET for them. Because one had to be trained to use PET, it was only possible to use PET as a basis for developing my own test, adopting methods of analysis used by other researchers to quantify students' production. In such work, separate measurements are usually carried out for fluency, accuracy, and complexity (e.g. Skehan 1996a). Table 3.6, adapted from Ellis (2003: 117), classifies such types of separate measurements as used in this study.

Table 3.6 Methods of quantifying oral proficiency

Dimension	Measures
1. Fluency	number of words per minute; number of pauses of one/two seconds or longer
2. Accuracy	number of single verbs; number of multi-verbs
3. Complexity	number of independent clauses, or sub-clausal units with any subordinate clauses associated with either of both.

(Adapted from Ellis 2003: 117)

In both the pre-test and the post-test, all the measures were based on an audio recording of each student describing, in their own words, what they saw in a set of the two sequential pictures (reproduced in Appendix H). Although the test allowed each student to speak for three minutes, only a one-minute sample was used for the measurements. There were two reasons for this decision. First, the study covered a large group of subjects - 283 students – and, secondly, because the pictures were very simple, not all students used their allotted time.

As Table 3.6 shows, fluency was measured by determining the students' word per minute ration and pause length. For the latter, Lambert and Engler's (2007: 35) definition was used, that is, an interruption of flow 'in which participants seemed to be searching for language or which otherwise seemed due to a deficiency in L2 skills'. Accuracy was measured by determining how many verbs (e.g. 'sit') and multi-verbs (e.g. 'is opened') were used to compare the development of learners' one feature of linguistic competence. The measure employed for complexity was what Foster, Tonkyen and Wigglesworth (2000) called As-unit (Analysis of speech unit): an utterance which consists of an independent clause or sub-clausal unit with any subordinate clauses associated with either of both. One As-unit would be, for example, 'Here is a man who is reading a newspaper'. Ellis (2003: 116) comments that "To a large extent, such measures of production have been intuitively chosen or data driven rather than theory-based".

3.5.5 The course and examination results

Since the present study was conducted during the 102 English course, all the students were also tested officially at its conclusion by a formal written examination that focused primarily on grammatical knowledge. The researcher used the results of these tests to make a comparison between the mean performances of the GBL control group and the TBL experimental group. This examination formed an important part of the overall assessment because, as mentioned above, it counted for 60% of the total score for the course.

The standard final examination in the 102 English course at Umm Al-Qura University is divided into three sections. The purpose of the first section is to test the student's

comprehension of a reading passage. The second section tests written production. There are two types of question in this section; one type entails writing a summary of a given passage and the other entails writing 8 to 10 sentences on one of three subjects that have been covered during the course. The third section aims to measure the learner's grammatical accuracy and vocabulary. It asks the student to make up questions for given answers, to change tenses in given sentences, to make sentences using given information and to choose appropriate words from a vocabulary list to fill in gaps in given sentences. Marking pays attention to the accuracy and appropriateness of the student's use of language. The students' papers were corrected by the teacher (the researcher). His marking was then checked by two colleagues to verify the reliability of the assessment.

3.5.6 Post-course evaluation (questionnaire)

At the end of the course, all the students in both groups (GBL and TBL) were asked to evaluate the English 102 course by completing an attitude questionnaire. Its purpose was to obtain data on the students' initial expectations and opinions about the course and the changes that might have occurred in their perceptions and attitudes towards learning English during the course. The results were then used to determine differences in attitudes between the GBL group and the TBL group owing to the different teaching methods to which they had been exposed.

The questionnaire was distributed to the students after the final examination before they left the room and they were told that their answers would not affect their marks for the course. It should be noted that, to encourage them to say what they really thought, they were asked not to put their names on the questionnaire. Otherwise they might have tried just to please the teacher/researcher. The questions were given, and answered, in the students' mother tongue so that they would have no problem expressing their opinions freely. The questions were as follows:

1. What were you hoping to learn from this course?
2. Did this course meet your hopes?

3. Overall, how do you rate this course in terms of improvement in your English proficiency?

   □ 1-20% □ 21-40% □ 41-60% □ 61-80% □ 81-100%

4. How did you feel at the end of the course?
5. Any good points?
6. Areas for improvement?
7. Generally, what do you do outside class to improve your English?
8. Any further comments?

The construction of the questionnaire was based on and benefited from the researcher's background as a trainee teacher in general schools and subsequently as a lecturer in the English Language Centre at the University of Umm Al-Qura, as well as consultation with the thesis supervisor and colleagues in the field.

3.5.7 In-class observation

A final tool used in this study was in-class observation. The advantages of the observation technique are (Cohen et al. 2001: 314):

- It provides researchers with high ecological validity (helping to gain knowledge of the way people behave in natural settings)
- It provides researchers with complementary data not obtained by other techniques
- It is easy to collect data using a tape-recorder and allows subjects to talk more freely about issues related to the core study.

There are, however, some disadvantages to observation (Cohen et al 2001:314):

- The participants being observed may be aware of the presence of the observer or observational device and this may influence the pattern of their behaviour
- Observations may take a long time to interpret, particularly when recordings are used, as these are time-consuming to transcribe and analyse in order to extract the data.

In the present study, observation was seen as a very desirable additional measure because one of its aims was to investigate the effects of instructional variables of GBL and TBL teaching methods on learning outcomes. In particular, the researcher was interested in obtaining data about the differences between the GBL classroom and the TBL classroom in the extent to which the teacher determined what happened and whether the students helped to determine this; how much time was spent in corrective feedback to students; the extent to which Arabic (L1) and English (L2) were used by the teacher and students; and the production of L2 authentic language. Only classroom observation could reveal these data.

Ideally, in order to get a complete view of classroom behaviour and interaction, the observation should have been done by video recording (Larsen-Freeman 1991) but the regulations of Umm Al-Qura University do not allow this. Consequently, an audio tape recorder was used. This has the advantage over a video camera in that it is less intrusive and students tend to forget about its presence more quickly; this means that they are likely to behave more naturally. To this end, the tape recorder was placed unobtrusively in a corner of the classroom. Unfortunately, some of the classroom interaction, especially when the TBL class was working in small groups, was not recorded very clearly. The time constraint with regard to analysis of the recordings was accepted but to minimise the problem, while still obtaining the measurements required, it was decided to observe only one of the four GBL classes and one of the TBL classes, and each of these on only four occasions spread over the ten-week course.

In deciding to include classroom observation in this study, and in its conduct, the researcher took into account the findings of previous studies. First, Cohen and colleagues (2001) note that there are two principal observation techniques: participant observation and non-participant observation. In participant observation, the observer is an actor in the situation under observation (Gay and Airasian 2001), though the subjects may be either unaware of the research or they know the participant-as-observer and are aware of the research and its objectives (Cohen et al. 2001). In non-participant observation, 'the observer is on the outside looking in and does not intentionally interact with, or affect, the object of the observation' (Gay and Airasian 2001: 234).

McKernan (1991) distinguishes between structured and non-structured approaches to observation. In the former, he says, the observer knows in advance the interaction analysis protocols to look for during the observation period or has pre-determined hypotheses and will use the observation to accept or refute them. Non-structured observation involves recording as many data as possible since the observer does not know in advance what to look for in terms of activities, interactions, problems, etc. A pre-determined structure takes time to construct but the analysis of its data is fast whereas non-structured observation can be constructed quickly, but the data analysis is complicated and time-consuming (Morrison 1993).

Since the researcher/observer was also the teacher, this study was a type of participant observation, though the students were unaware that they were research subjects. A mainly structured approach was used in that the observer decided in advance to look at a limited number of specified variables while not ignoring unexpected problems and events. For listening to the recorded data, two types of analysis were used in this study, namely the 'COLT observation scheme' and 'focused description' analyses.

3.5.7.1 COLT observation scheme

The COLT (Communication Orientation of Language Teaching) observation scheme by Spada and Froehlich (1995) was developed within the context of a project investigating the nature of L2 language proficiency and its development in classrooms, referred to as the Development of Bilingual Proficiency (DBP). One of the research components in this project was to investigate the effects of instructional variables on learning outcomes, which required an observation scheme that could systematically describe instructional practices and procedures in different L2 classrooms. In addition, one of the main questions was whether instruction that is more or less communicatively oriented contributed differently to L2 development. The observation scheme was therefore needed to describe the exact features of instruction. The significance is that each activity and episode in the class is timed so that the percentage of total time spent on each of the COLT features can be calculated.

The COLT is divided into two parts; part A describes classroom events at the level of episode and activity and part B focuses on the communicative features of verbal

exchange by teachers and students. This study used only part A since it helped to focus on and analyse data that are relevant to the differences between the GBL and TBL methods of teaching. This was to get a closer insight into the exact nature of classroom interaction, which enabled the researcher to describe and classify patterns of student-teacher interaction in teacher-led and student-led whole-class activities (see Table 3.7 below). Part B was not used in this research because the subject matter of the research was the testing of a foreign language of English learners. All the analysis is related to the teaching of English and the analysis of the events that occurred in using English. Therefore it was decided not to use any event that happened other than from using English language in the analysis, because it would be beyond the remit of the subject taught and would introduce another set of issues stemming from the use of another language. In other words, if any student expressed a particular issue in Arabic (his mother tongue), this would not be reflected in the categories through which the class was observed, as it was not the subject of the teaching taking place in the class. Consequently, anything that was not directly related to the content of the teaching was not analysed in the COLT scheme. Moreover, the use of any L1 language, not only Arabic expressions, used by students outside the classroom and in social life, such as entering the class late with conversation taking place or excuses to go to the lavatory, or answering/ interacting, was not measured (below is a focused descriptive analysis of teacher and students' frequent use of Arabic language in both GBL and TBL groups which investigates whether the use of Arabic (L1) and other issues affected the process of pedagogy of the two teaching methods). Since the subjects, particularly of GBL, could not speak or even express themselves, they turned to Arabic if they needed to be excused from the classroom or give definitions of meanings and even then, on most occasions, most of them kept silent. Some features of part B, however, namely 'use of the target language' and 'use of the mother tongue', were included in the 'focused description', described in section 3.5.7.2 of this chapter.

The five main part A categories are participant organisation, content, content control, student modality and materials. They are explained in Table 3.7 below. To avoid the limitations of using a fixed set of predetermined categories and then fitting the data into them, as strict observance of the COLT scheme would have entailed, it was decided, as suggested by Tsui (1995), to use the categories as a kind of general

framework which could be modified and extended to enable the analysis to proceed as smoothly as possible.

Table 3.7 The COLT categories

Colt category	Meaning	Detail and examples
participant organisation	how the class is organised	as a whole class; in groups; as individuals.
content	includes classroom management	 procedural directives (e.g. 'Open your books ...'); disciplinary statements (e.g. 'I'm getting more frustrated with the noise in this class')
	instruction	concerned with language and focus on form (including grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation)
	function	communicative acts (e.g. requesting, apologising and explaining); discourse i.e. the way in which sentences combine into cohesive and coherent sequences; sociolinguistics i.e. forms or styles (spoken or written) appropriate to particular context (e.g. the difference in the use of *vous* and *tu* in French in formal/informal context); other topics, which refers to meaning-oriented subjects.
content control	who controls or selects the topic	teacher and the text; student(s) alone; collaborative effort involving the teacher, the text and the student(s).
student modality	individual listening, speaking, reading or writing	indicative of analytical teaching
	pair or group listening, speaking, reading or writing	indicative of a more authentic, more experiential use of language
materials	minimal text	isolated sentences, word lists, fill-in-the-blank activities, etc.
	extended text	paragraphs, dialogues and whole stories.

The COLT data were derived from the tape recordings that, as mentioned above, were made during four of the weekly classes in a GBL classroom and in a TBL classroom.

This delivered a total of 480 minutes of observation for each of the two groups. Samples from other classes suggested that these data were representative. COLT raw data consist of coding sheets, which indicate the occurrence of specific features with check marks in the appropriate categories; analysis of the data involves the calculation of the percentage of total time devoted to each feature. It is the relative overall occurrence and non-occurrence of features that allows the characterisation of a particular learning environment as being more communicative/experiential or more analytic in its orientation. The outcome of the method comparison studies of the 1960s, which emphasised learning outcomes and global descriptions of methods as indicators of instructional differences, is often referred to as *product oriented.* In reaction to this tendency, researchers shifted their attention away from learning outcomes to detailed descriptions of classroom behaviours, and we entered a period in which the challenge and focus were to develop adequate and reliable systems for observing and describing classroom behaviours. This type of research is referred to as *process oriented.* If the interaction analysis approach (or any other approach to classroom observation) is to be of value to the field of ESL education, however, it is simply not enough for researchers to describe what goes on in classrooms.

3.5.7.2 Focused Description

The second method of class observation used in this study is called 'focused description'. Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991: 16-17) describe 'focused description' in the following terms:

> Usually, this sort of approach has no specific hypothesis in mind; rather they take copious notes on whatever they observe and experience. These studies are similar to the observational studies just considered since they, too, are descriptive in nature. The difference between them, however, is that researchers who use a focused descriptive methodology do so because they wish to narrow the scope of their study to a particular set of variables.

They continue:

> Examples of focused descriptive studies in an SLA context that seek to classify data are those that use interaction analysis. In interaction analysis studies, researchers observe a language class using a data-collection device or instrument to focus and record their observations. The instruments contain pre-established categories of behaviour (e.g. teacher

addresses a question to particular students; teacher addresses a question to group as a whole, etc.).

This focused descriptive methodology was intended to explore particular issues and sets of variables by analysing the frequency of their occurrence in order to discern differences between the GBL and TBL methods of teaching that may be connected with the outcomes of the two methods. The categories used were:

- use of the mother tongue by both teacher and subjects
- authenticity, i.e. the use of patterns of speech found in everyday interactions outside the classroom
- teacher's referential checks
- disruptive or troublesome behaviour
- corrective errors (feedback); and
- instructions given by the teacher.

The advantage of computing the frequency of such variables, according to Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005), is that it captures the dynamic nature of inter-language development and allows the developmental route that learners follow to be described. These measurements were taken from the same tape recordings as those used for the COLT analysis.

3.6 Data Analysis

3.6.1 Validity

In the present study, every attempt was made to ensure content validity of the oral pre-test and post-test, the final examination, the student course evaluation questionnaire and the classroom observations. This was done by consulting experts in second language acquisition, modern English research, and English language teaching at UAUELC. They were almost all in agreement regarding the content of the research instruments employed in this study but made some suggestions for clarification of some questions before they were presented to the students.

3.6.2 Software tools

The qualitative data in this study were analysed ethnographically. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to process the quantitative data, including indications of whether any difference between two results of any single measure (e.g. between the pre-test and post-test scores of the TBL group for 'word count' or between the post-test scores of the GBL group and the TBL group for 'word count') was statistically significant or not. The appropriate statistical test was a t-test.

All inferential analyses were two-tailed and employed an α level of 0.05. Separate analyses were performed on the final examination scores and the PET speaking test scores. In order to determine if the final course scores differed between the GBL and TBL groups, an independent sample t-test was performed that compared the subjects in the GBL group with those in the TBL group. For the pre- and post-treatment PET-based speaking test scores and for the final course grades, a paired-sample t-test was performed with one repeated-measures factor (pre-test versus post-test), and one between-groups factor analysis (GBL control group versus TBL experimental group).

The paired-sample t-test allowed for an examination of the three research questions:

(a) Do the pre-test scores differ from the post-test scores?
(b) Do the scores of the GBL group differ from those of the TBL group?
(c) Does the change in scores from the pre-test to the post-test differ between the GBL and TBL groups?

The most important of these questions is the third one, which addresses the issue of whether or not the TBL group improved more than the GBL group between the pre-test and the post-test. In addition to the inferential analyses of the examination scores and the speaking task, the data obtained through the post-course questionnaire and classroom observation components were also analysed. Percentages of subjects who made similar claims were calculated in order to uncover attitudes towards the TBL and GBL models of teaching.

3.7 Summary

This chapter has discussed in some detail the methodology of the study. After the introductory section 3.1, section 3.2 described the educational environment of the learners used for this study, and outlined their previous experience of English teaching. Section 3.3 described a preliminary study, in the form of a feedback questionnaire, carried out on 300 subjects and some of their teachers before the start of the experiment. An analysis of the data it yielded on the respondents' priorities in English language learning was also included here. Next the chapter described the methodology used for the core of the empirical research, which involved the comparison of two groups of learners, providing a rationale for their selection as subjects for the experiment and explaining their distribution into a control group and an experimental group. After that, a description was provided of the tools used to determine the effect of these two different treatments on the subjects' proficiency, attitudes, and motivation. It covered the oral test used both at the start and at the end of the experiment, the 102 English course final (examination) results, the post-treatment student evaluation questionnaire and the classroom observations. A brief summary of methods of data analysis was also included in that section. The results of using the tools described in this chapter will be presented in Chapter 4, which follows.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the methodology of this research study, including the instruments and procedures used in the experiment. The aim was to investigate the validity of TBL, using Willis's (1996) model, in order to answer the following research question:

Do learners taught using with TBL method reach a higher level of proficiency at the end of the course than their counterparts taught with the GBL method?

This chapter discusses the results of the experiment, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Data will be presented from the main instruments of this study, namely the final course grades, oral pre-tests and post-tests, classroom observations, and the students' attitude questionnaire completed at the end of the course. Descriptive statistics are used to show the findings in manageable form.

Section 4.2 presents and compares the final course results. Section 4.3 compares the oral pre-test and post-test results. Section 4.4 will show and analyse classroom observation data, using the COLT scheme, followed by a description of classroom activity in both classes and a frequency analysis of teacher and student behaviour in both groups. Finally, section 4.5 will present and analyse the answers given in the open-ended post-course questionnaire completed by both GBL and TBL students in order to reveal their evaluation of their course and their attitudes to the teaching method they experienced in the previous semester.

4.2 Final (examination) results

The results of the final examination are the most important measure used in this study. It is more comprehensive than the other tests because it covered the whole syllabus (see Appendix M). Therefore, the outcomes for the control and the experimental

groups and the differences, if any, between them were taken to reflect the effectiveness of the entire intervention.

Table 4.1 presents the mean percentage score standard deviations, t-values, and p-values achieved in the final examination by the students, in that two-paired, independent and related sample t-tests were used to compare among the two groups, the control and the experimental.

Table 4.1. Final examination results

Group	*Mean of exam mark*	*SD of exam mark*	*t value of exam mark*	*p value of exam mark*
(1) Control (GBL)	**64.8276**	**10.820**	**- 2.667**	**.008**
(2) Experimental (TBL)	**68.4493**	**12.016**		

Table 4.1 shows that, in the final course examination, the TBL learners obtained a higher average mark (68.45%) than the GBL learners (64.83%). There is a significant difference between the two groups ($t = -2.667$ and $p < .01$). On the basis of these results, it can be claimed that the experimental group made better progress than the control group and had more success in achieving the course objectives.

Figure 4.1 shows the final course grades awarded to the students in the GBL and TBL groups. These are not the examination results, but they reflect them since the final examination accounts for 60% of the course grade and, on most of the other elements of assessment, attendance [10%], homework [5%] and participation & class work [5%], almost all the students in both groups got more or less the same marks. There were some differences within each group in individual grades in the mid-term examination, which constitutes 20% of the course grade, but these were not significant. Therefore, the course grades, at least for this group of students, can be taken to represent the examination results.

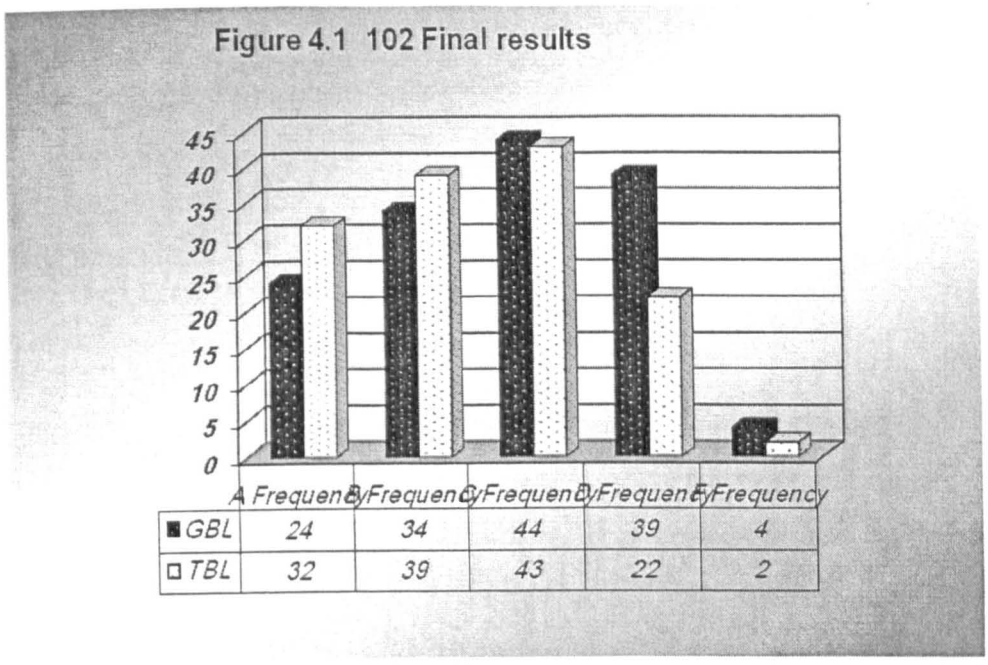


Figure 4.1 shows that the GBL group got fewer 'A' grades than the TBL group: 24 (16.5%) students of the GBL method achieved the top grade compared with 32 (25%) TBL students. The GBL group also got fewer 'B' grades: 34 (23.5%) GBL students against 39 (30.5%) GBL students. Only 40% of GBL students were rated 'Very Good' or better (Grades 'A' and 'B') compared with 55% of TBL students. Thirty-nine (27%) GBL students compared with 22 (16%) TBL students were given one of the two lowest grades. The failure rate – four GBL students and two TBL students – shows the same pattern. These data show even more clearly than the mean percentage scores given in Table 4.1 that the TBL method was more successful than the traditional GBL method.

One of the main reasons why the TBL students may have been, in general, more successful than the GBL students on the institutional exam was probably because of the final or post-task phase of each lesson. Here the students were encouraged, as a group, to reflect on what they had done in the previous communicative activity, to recall the language forms they had used and to think about how the forms they had learned added to their current language knowledge. At this stage, language was made the focus of activity, and specific forms came into focus. The major difference between this and the focus on form in the traditional GBL classroom is that, in the TBL classroom, students' focus was on the forms which they themselves had selected in the earlier task. Thus the students of the TBL group obtained feedback on features

of the language that they had brought into prominence, which they had chosen to use and which, presumably, held more significance for them than textbook exercises only might do.

4.3 Oral Pre-tests and Post-tests

As described in Chapter 3, the learners in both GBL and TBL groups were tested for their oral use of the English language both before the English course started (pre-test) and after its conclusion (post-test). Components of the Cambridge PET speaking test were adapted to produce the test instrument. It should be noted, as mentioned previously, that because it was only possible to use PET as a basis for developing my own test, I took ideas from methods of analysis used by other researchers to quantify students' production. The measures, as explained in Chapter 3, were based on an audio recording of each student describing, in his own words, what he saw in a picture he was given (reproduced in Appendix H). This analysis measures fluency, accuracy and complexity (see Table 3.6). Each student was given one minute for this task, as explained in section 3.5.4. The analysis for this study was based on a transcription of the recording. Two paired, independent and related sample t-tests were also used to compare means, standard deviations, t-values, and p-values between the control and experimental groups.

The first measure was a word count, that is, the number of words used in a one-minute period. It can be used as a measure of fluency and the results are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Word count per minute in pre-tests and post-tests

Groups	*Mean of word count in pre-tests*	*SD of word count in pre-tests*	*t.value word count in pre-tests*	*p.value of word count in pre-tests*
(1) Control (GBL)	**20.3241**	**9.5807**	**- .512**	**.146**
(2) Experimental (TBL)	**20.9270**	**10.1833**		
Groups	*Mean of word count in post-tests*	*SD word of count in post-tests*	*t.value of word count in post-tests*	*p.value of word count in post-tests*
(1) Control (GBL)	**22.9856**	**8.787**	**- 4.455**	**.000**
(2) Experimental (TBL)	**27.8832**	**9.469**		

As shown in Table 4.2, the pre-test scores of the students in the control group and those in the experimental group are almost identical, with average word counts of 20.3 and 20.9, respectively ($p = .146$). Moreover, the alpha value is (.8412), reflecting a good level of reliability. This homogeneous level in the standard of fluency in English in both groups provided a good base from which to assess differences that might emerge in the post-test. (See appendices I and K)

In the post-test, the GBL control group produced an average word count of 22.9 compared with an average of 27.8 for the TBL experimental group. This reveals that, though the scores of both groups increased, there was a difference between the control group and the experimental group ($t = - 4.455$ and $p<.01$), with the experimental group achieving a significantly higher score.

Table 4.3 shows the results of tests for unrepeated word counts, which is the number of words used by a student in a one-minute period but excluding repeated words (see section 3.5.4). This is another measure of fluency.

Table 4.3 Unrepeated word count in pre-tests and post-tests

Groups	*Mean of unrepeated words in pre-tests*	*SD of unrepeated words in pre-tests*	*t.value of unrepeated words in pre-tests*	*p.value of unrepeated words in pre-tests*
(1) Control	**16.5724**	**7.85436**	**- .133**	**.894**
() Experimental	**16.7007**	**8.33346**		
Groups	*Mean of unrepeated words in post-tests*	*SD of unrepeated words in post-tests*	*t.value of unrepeated words in post-tests*	*p.value of unrepeated words in post-tests*
(1) Control	**17.7122**	**7.54143**	**- 5.595**	**.000**
(2) Experimental	**23.3431**	**9.11482**		

Table 4.3 demonstrates that the GBL group and the TBL group recorded almost identical performances on this criterion in the pre-test, with a control group average count of 16.5 against an experimental group average of 16.7 (p = .894). It can be seen from the bottom row of the table, however, that there is a significant difference between the two groups in the post-test, with average counts of 17.7 and 23.3, respectively (t = - 5.595 and p< .01). There was a very small increase in the GBL group score and a large increase in the TBL group score (see appendices I and K).

Table 4.4 shows the pre-test and post-test results for the number of pauses in the speech of each student of the GBL and the TBL groups. It is a measure of language fluency (see appendices I and K).

Table 4.4 Number of pauses in the pre-tests and post-tests

Groups	*Mean of pauses in the pre-test*	*SD of pauses in the pre-test*	*t-value of pauses in the pre-test*	*p.value of pauses in the pre-test*
(1) Control	**3.3793**	**1.62476**	**- .602**	**.548**
(2) Experimental	**3.4891**	**1.42518**		
Groups	*Mean of pauses in the post-test*	*SD of pauses in the post-test*	*t-value of pauses in the post-test*	*p.value of pauses in the post-test*
(1) Control	**3.6259**	**1.36877**	**- 2.764**	**006**
(2) Experimental	**4.0949**	**1.44956**		

For pause counts in the pre-test in table 4.4, there is no significant difference between the control groups and experimental groups (3.371 vs. 3.481). The next row shows that there is a significant difference between the control groups and experimental groups in the post-treatment test ($t = -2.764$ and $p < .006$). As shown, the experimental groups used significantly more pauses than the control groups (4.094 pauses vs. 3.625 pauses). If the presence of fewer pauses indicates greater fluency, then the TBL group did worse than the GBL group on this measure. It might be the case, however, that the TBL students were more ambitious in the range of lexis and grammar that they used; this results in speech that is 'better' but it also means that, because they were trying to do something that is difficult, they sometimes needed more time to think. Also, the students of experimental groups used more words and clauses than the students of control groups so this might account for the greater number of pauses. It is also clear from the third row of the table that there is a significant difference between post-test and pre-test ($t = -3.338$ and $p < .01$). That is, the students of both groups used more pauses in the post-test than in the pre-test (3.8582 vs. 3.4582), and this supports the idea that the pause count can increase when students are trying to demonstrate greater proficiency. Hence, pause measure might not actually be a very revealing measure of fluency.

Table 4.5 shows the pre-test and post-test results for As-unit counts, which measure the number of dependent and independent clauses used by the students in a one-

minute period. These figures form a measure of language complexity (see appendices I & K).

Table 4.5 Number of As-Units in pre-test and post-test for counts

Groups	*Mean of As-Units in pre-tests*	*SD of As-Units in pre-tests*	*t.value of As-Units in pre-tests*	*p.value of As-Units in pre-tests*
(1) Control	**2.3448**	**1.38634**	**- .336**	**.737**
(2) Experimental	**2.42015**	**1.44232**		
Groups	*Mean of As-Units in post-tests*	*SD of As-Units in post-tests*	*t.value of As-Units in post-tests*	*p.value of As-Units in post-tests*
(1) Control	**2.5324**	**1.094**	**- 6.230**	**.000**
(2) Experimental	**3.5401**	**1.5578**		

It is clear from the results shown in table 4.5 that there was no significant difference in the output of As-Units by the two groups in the pre-test. The control group scored an average of 2.3 and the experimental group scored an average of 2.4 ($t = -0.336$ and $p<0.737$). Thus both groups were almost identical in their oral pre-test before the start of the course. There is, however, a significant difference in the post-test, where the GBL control group scored an average of 2.5 while the TBL experimental groups scored an average of 3.5 ($t = -6.230$ and $p< .01$). This indicates a significantly greater increase in the number of clauses and sub-clauses produced by students in the TBL experimental group compared with their counterparts in the control group.

Table 4.6 shows the pre-tests and post-tests results for counts for single verbs (auxiliary and main verbs) used by students over a one-minute period (see section 3.5.4). This is an additional measure of complexity.

Table 4.6 Single verb target-like counts in pre-tests and post-tests

Groups	*Mean of single verb counts in pre-tests*	*SD of single verb counts in pre-tests*	*t.value of single verb counts in pre-tests*	*p.value single verb counts in pre-tests*
(A) Pre-Test:				
(1) Control	**3.0483**	**1.73738**	**3.748**	**.000**
(2) Experimental	**2.3548**	**1.19751**		
Groups	*Mean of single verb counts in post-tests*	*SD of single verb counts in post-tests*	*t.value of single verb counts in post-tests*	*p.value single verb counts in post-tests*
(B) Post-Test:				
(1) Control	**3.1077**	**1.66704**	**- 3.481**	**.001**
(2) Experimental	**3.9535**	**2.20745**		

Table 4.6 (to measure the accuracy is to determine the counts of verbs as illustrated by Skehan's classification of production variables used in task-based research, see table 3.6 in section 3.5.4), shows a substantial difference between the GBL control and TBL experimental groups in the pre-test of the single verb counts, with a GBL group average of 3.04 against a TBL average of 2.35. This is the only measurement that shows a lack of homogeneity between the two groups at the start of the course. It could be a genuine difference resulting from chance or an error in the count. The general homogeneity on other counts and the post-test data lend some credence to the latter explanation. The data in Table 4.6 show an advance from pre-test to post-test from 3.05 to 3.11 for the control group but a startling advance from 2.35 to 3.95 for the experimental groups (t = -3.481). This result supports the possibility of a measurement error in the pre-test scores. Taken at face value, these results suggest that the TBL method is much more successful than the GBL method in helping students to use single verbs but, as indicated above, this conclusion needs to be treated with some caution (see appendices J and L). The figure for the TBL post-test was higher because the students of the experimental group used more words overall – and some of their extra words are verbs.

Table 4.7 shows the results of the count of complex verb forms (e.g. *has been drawing*) used by each student over a one-minute period (see section 3.5.4)

Table 4.7 Complex verb form counts in pre-tests and post-tests

Groups	*Mean of multi-verb counts in pre-tests*	*SD of multi-verb counts in pre-tests*	*t.value of multi-verb counts in pre-tests*	*p.value of multi-verb counts in pre-tests*
(A) Pre-Test:				
(1) Control	**1.6296**	**.48744**	**- .408**	**.684**
(2) Experimental	**1.6786**	**.74118**		
Groups	*Mean of multi-verb counts in post-tests*	*SD of multi-verb counts in post-tests*	*t.value of multi-verb counts in post-tests*	*p.value of multi-verb counts in post-tests*
(B) Post-Test:				
(1) Control	**1.7313**	**1.05288**	**- 1.309**	
(2) Experimental	**1.9778**	**1.24502**		**.193**

As can be seen from table 4.7, the count of multi-word verbs produced by students in the control and experimental groups is almost identical in the pre-tests, with an average output of 1.63 for the former and 1.68 for the latter (t. = -0.408 p .684). This confirms the students' similarity in their standard of English before the course started. Table 4.7 also shows, however, that in the post-tests, there is a significant difference between the control and experimental groups in the use of multi-word verbs, with the former recording an average of 1.731 against the latter's 1.978 (t = -1.309 vs. .408). This means that, although both groups advanced, the GBL control group made a smaller gain in the use of complex verb forms than did the TBL experimental group (see appendices J and L).

The broad conclusion we can draw from the oral pre- and post-tests is that learners are affected positively by the new communicative TBL approach in enhancing their accuracy (e.g. measuring numbers of single and more of verbs), complexity (e.g. measuring numbers of phrases), and fluency (e.g. measuring numbers of words and pauses), whereas the performance of control learners is lower in accuracy, complexity, and fluency. In terms of the potential usefulness of the TBL group, the

use of more phrases (complexity measurement) would be enough to predict that the TBL group would produce more words (fluency measurement) and single or more verbs (accuracy measurement). The results of the oral pre- and post-tests suggest that an interaction in the target language is an essential variable which plays a very important role in maximising the effects of instruction. It seems that the TBL groups were given more opportunities to use the structures they are learning in communicative interaction. Bygate (1999: 204) concluded that "tasks may be the ones that stretch the speakers more in terms of complexity of syntactic and lexical processing".

Nunan (1999) suggests very strongly that using and encouraging communicative interaction within form-focused instructional language programmes will be more effective in promoting second language learning than programmes which focus only on either grammar or fluency. This echoes the findings of Spada (1987) and Allen et al. (1990) which were described in detail in chapter 2. Thus, there is a need for learners to study grammar as well as to practise communication, and the present study confirmed that the use of communicative approaches promotes language learning in a programme that concentrates mainly on teaching and testing grammar forms. That involves procedures of the TBL method where the learners worked in pairs or groups, and were engaged in carrying out tasks.

The results of all these five components adapted from the Cambridge PET speaking test – word count, unrepeated word count, As-unit count, single verb count, and multi-word verb count – produce clear evidence that, although both groups improved their level of achievement during the course, the TBL treatment group achieved significantly higher average scores than the GBL control group. This is one of the most important findings of this research, and it supports the main hypothesis. Taken together, the results of the final examinations, the pre-tests and the post-tests show that the students in both the control group and the experimental group increased their English language skills over one semester of this English course. But all the evidence points to greater progress in English proficiency for students in the experimental group compared with students in the control group. In all the measures used, the TBL treatment was shown to increase the beneficial effect of the English course by a significant margin. From this, it can reasonably be argued that the TBL method is

more successful than the GBL method, at least for university-level students who already have a basic knowledge of the English language.

Although the oral tests discussed in this section and the results of the final examinations reported in section 4.2 are undoubtedly good measures of the outcomes of different teaching methods, there are other measures which can be used to support, or cast doubt on, the superiority of one method to another. Section 4.4 will discuss data based on classroom observation and section 4.5 will provide information about the students' own evaluation (attitudes) of their learning experience; both are additional measurement tools.

4.4 Analysis of class observation transcripts

As mentioned in Chapter 3, Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2001) have pointed out that one of the best ways to achieve accurate description and evaluation of the research situation is to observe it. Robson (1996: 190), too, states that it is useful 'to record ... describe, analyse and interpret what we have observed'. Observation is now widely regarded as a useful research instrument in social and functional research and classroom observation has become a recognised tool for collecting additional, useful data in research into teaching methods.

In both the GBL and TBL classrooms of this study, a variety of activities were undertaken involving communication and interaction between the teacher and students, and among students. So, as discussed in Chapter 3, classroom observation was used to complement other research measures and to overcome some of their limitations, thus enabling a more robust evaluation. Two types of class observation analysis were used, namely the 'Observation Scheme' and 'Focused Description' analyses. One GBL class and one TBL class were selected for observation. Observation sessions lasted two hours each week. Four weekly classes (week 2, week 4, week 6, and week 8) were chosen for statistical measurement. The results of the observation scheme, using COLT, as described in the previous chapter, are presented first, followed by the results of 'focused description'.

4.4.1 Observation scheme of classroom interaction (COLT)

Use of the COLT observation scheme produced a considerable amount of information about what actually went on in the two classrooms. The instrument enabled us to obtain an overall picture of the instructional behaviours in both classrooms and to see where and how the instruction differed.

Spada and Fröhlich (1995) specify that analysis of COLT data involves calculating the percentage of the total class time given to each of the categories and subcategories of the scheme. These quantitative results for each group are then displayed in chart form. The following discussion focuses on five elements of the observation, starting with 'participant organisation'.

The results of observations of 'participant organisation' are presented in table 4.8 below. Participant organisation, as mentioned in Chapter 3, means how the class is organized either as a whole class, in groups, or as individuals.

Table 4.8 Participant organisation (percentage of total time and average for GBL and TBL groups)

Participant organisation	*Control (GBL) class*					*Experimental (TBL) class*				
Class	W2	W4	W6	W8	AV.	W2	W4	W6	W8	AV.
Teacher-led	81	85	77	79	80	69	40	33	37	42
Student-led	2	3	5	5	4	10	18	19	16	18
Individual										
Same	13	10	14	10	13	-	-	-	-	-
Different	4	2	4	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
Group										
Same	-	-	-	-	-	21	42	48	45	43
Different	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1

N.B: W2 = teaching week 2; W4 = teaching week 4; W6 = teaching week 6; W8 = teaching week 8
Same/different = the students engaged on the same or different task activities

Table 4.8 shows that the GBL class spent an average of 84% of each class engaged in whole-class activities, of which 80% was teacher-led activity and only 4% was student-led. The remaining 16% of the time was devoted to individual work. No group work occurred during observations in any of the GBL classes. In the TBL class,

only 60% of the time was devoted to whole-class activities, including 18% in which the activity was student-led. The remainder of class time was devoted to group work. TBL students were not engaged in any individual work during the observations.

Table 4.9 below shows the percentage of time in each class committed to the different categories of 'content'. As explained in section 3.5.4, the content category, according to Spada and Fröhlich (1995), includes,

- classroom management, which is subcategorised into
  - procedural directives (e.g. 'Open your books ...');
  - disciplinary statements (e.g. 'I'm getting more and more frustrated with the noise in this class');
- language instruction which is concerned with focus on form (including grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation) and function and which includes
  - communicative acts (e.g. requesting, apologising and explaining);
  - discourse i.e. the way in which sentences combine into cohesive and coherent sequences;
  - sociolinguistics i.e. forms or styles (spoken or written) appropriate to particular context (e.g. the difference in the use of 'vous/tu' in French in formal/informal contexts);
- other topics, which refers to meaning-oriented subjects. (i.e. background of participants, e.g. if the topic is talking about water pollution, one of the students comments ,'I've seen a lot of dead fish on the shore').

Table 4.9 Content (percentage of total time and average for GBL & TBL groups)

Content	*Control (GBL) class*					*Experimental (TBL) class*				
Management	W2	W4	W6	W8	*AV.*	*W2*	*W4*	*W6*	*W8*	*AV.*
Procedure	14	12	13	12	13	14	14	13	11	13
Discipline	3	2	2	1	2	3	1	1	1	2
Language										
Form	80	81	77	84	81	64	54	53	57	57
Function	2	-	1	-	1	3	7	4	5	5
Discourse	-	-	-	-	-	12	15	17	13	14
Socialising	-	-	-	-	-	2	5	8	7	6
Other topics										
Narrow	2	4	5	2	3	2	3	2	2	2
Broad	-	-	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2

N.B: W2 = teaching week 2; W4 = teaching week 4; W6 = teaching week 6; W8 = teaching week 8

Table 4.9 shows that both groups spent 15% of the time on classroom management, including procedure and discipline, and 4% on 'other topics'. These topics are categorised as either 'narrow', for example, school routine, the students' own experience and family and community topics, or 'broad', which includes topics beyond the classroom such as international events and developments in their academic subjects. But major differences between the two groups emerged from observation of language-focused activities. While the proportion of the time spent on such activities was virtually the same for each group – just over 80% – the proportion of time spent on each type of activity, and the range of activities, differed markedly. In the control class, the focus was on language form for 81% of the time and on its function for only 1% of the time. By contrast, in the experimental class, 57% of the time was expended on language form, 5% on its function, 14% on discourse and 6% on interaction.

Next we turn to the category of content control. The observation looked at whether the lesson topic was determined by the teacher and/or the text used (teacher/text), by a combination of teacher/text and students (teacher/text/student), or by the students themselves (students). The results of the observations are shown in table 4.10.

Table 4.10 Content control (percentage of total time and average for GBL & TBL groups)

Content control	*Control (GBL) class*					*Experimental (TBL) class*				
	W2	*W4*	*W6*	*W8*	*AV.*	*W2*	*W4*	*W6*	*W8*	*AV.*
Teacher/text	89	92	93	92	92	84	81	83	81	82
Teacher/text/student	11	8	7	8	9	16	19	17	19	18
Students										

N.B: W2 = teaching week 2; W4 = teaching week 4; W6 = teaching week 6; W8 = teaching week 8

The data in figure 4.10 show that there were slight differences between the two groups, with the teacher and/or the text determining the content for 92% of the time in the GBL class compared with 82% of the time in the TBL class. In the GBL class, students joined in content control, along with the teacher and text, for 9% of the time while in the TBL class, this proportion was 18%.

Table 4.11 below shows the results of the observation of 'student modality'. This looks at the proportion of the total class time that students spent in listening, speaking, reading, writing or other activities such as drawing, acting, arranging classroom displays, workgroup discussions and assessing other groups' activities. .

Table 4.11 Student modality (% total time and average for GBL & TBL groups)

Student modality	*Control (GBL) class*					*Experimental (TBL) class*				
	W2	*W4*	*W6*	*W8*	*AV.*	*W2*	*W4*	*W6*	*W8*	*AV.*
Listening	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Speaking	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reading	73	70	74	75	73	58	60	66	59	61
Writing	-	4	3	1	2	15	10	14	12	13
other	27	26	23	24	25	27	30	20	29	26

N.B: W2 = teaching week 2; W4 = teaching week 4; W6 = teaching week 6; W8 = teaching week 8

Table 4.11 shows that there were significant differences between the GBL and TBL groups. Both groups spent the majority of their time in reading, but for the GBL group this accounted for 73% of the time, compared with 61% for the TBL group. The converse applies to writing activity, which took up only 2% of the time in GBL lessons compared with 13% in TBL lessons. Other activities accounted for much the same proportion of the time in both groups: 25% for GBL and 26% for TBL. Unfortunately, it was not possible to measure the proportion of the time spent in listening and speaking because the cassette recorder could not always pick up the

voices of the GBL students as they read and answered exercises from the course book or those of the TBL students engaged in small-group task activities. This was, however, included in the data for 'other activities'.

Table 4.12 gives the results of observations about the 'materials' used in the classes, which could be, as mentioned in Chapter 3, subcategorised either as minimal text in isolated sentences, word lists, fill-in-the-blank activities, etc., or as extended text in paragraphs, dialogues and whole stories.

Table 4.12 Materials type (% total time and average for GBL & TBL groups)

Material	*Control (GBL) class*					*Experimental (TBL) class*				
	W2	*W4*	*W6*	*W8*	*AV.*	*W2*	*W4*	*W6*	*W8*	*AV.*
Minimal	74	72	79	76	75	67	73	71	72	71
Extended	26	28	21	24	25	33	27	29	28	29
Audio	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Visual	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

N.B: W2 = teaching week 2; W4 = teaching week 4; W6 = teaching week 6; W8 = teaching week 8

Table 4.12 reveals that the GBL class used minimal text for 75% of the time and extended text for only 25% of the time; the proportions for the TBL group were 71% and 29% respectively. There were no codes included in the observational analysis for the time spent using audio and visual materials in either classroom, so no data on this are available.

Although it is not shown in the recorded data, it is worth noting here that, though the 'source of material' for both groups comes under the category of 'L2 – non-native speaker' (L2 NNS), they were different. The GBL classes used the standard course book; in the TBL classes, the materials consisted of three elements: material created by the students ('student-made') at the beginning of every second week when they talked about their own backgrounds and experience, handouts on the scheduled topic and, third, reports by that week's sub-group leaders on the work of their group.

When we look at all the classroom observation carried out in this experiment, as reflected in the data shown in tables 4.8 to 4.12, distinct differences emerge between

the GBL and TBL methods of teaching. Students of the GBL class were organised primarily into whole-class activities, with some individual work (16%) but no group work. In contrast, the TBL students engaged in whole-class activities for 60% of the time, in-group work activities for 40% of the time and no individual work took place. This gives an indication of (interaction) language use. The lesson content in the GBL group was determined almost exclusively by the teacher and/or text, and it focused almost exclusively on language form, ignoring function, while in the experimental TBL class, students had a greater role in determining lesson content. Though form was still prominent (57%) in the TBL class, functional communicative language activity occupied 25% of the time. Obviously, both classes provided opportunities for students to practise the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing but there was more reading and less writing in the GBL class than in the TBL class. The GBL group was shown to spend slightly more time on minimal text and slightly less time on extended text than the TBL group, though the difference was not large.

As indicated above, the two methods were similar in focusing on form because of curriculum control (i.e. the grammar exercises had the same content in both classrooms). This COLT comparison was intended to illustrate that, even when the content focus was identical, the overall orientations were different. In the GBL class, rules were explained and then students completed fill-in-the-blank exercises individually whereas, in the TBL class, students worked in small groups to discuss and complete the exercises and then to create their own illustrative examples. In the TBL class, therefore, discussion about language, some creativity, and even some student-initiated discourse, tended to replace the teacher-led drill observed in the GBL class.

The COLT results confirmed the differences between the GBL and TBL methods of teaching. In the former, the teacher dominated and did most of the talking and the role of learners was to listen and repeat what their teacher said; in the latter, the teacher mainly monitored and directed the class to move on to the next stage of the lesson. Owing to these contrasting instructional approaches in the two language classrooms, TBL students were more likely than GBL students to use the target language naturally and did so more intensively (note that this was reflected in the TBL students' better results in both the final examination and in the oral post-tests). Working in groups

probably gave the TBL students more opportunities for authentic L2 exposure in the classroom compared with their GBL counterparts (even though not every TBL learner used L2 equally).

These observations are in line with those of Cummins (2000), who argues that students will benefit from, and be empowered by, pedagogical intervention with an interactive/experiential orientation. Classrooms characterised by transmission models of pedagogy such as the GBL class in this study tend to 'disable' students. If Stern's (1990, 1992) view is correct that GBL classrooms are less propitious for L2 learning than classrooms where there is some interactive orientation, then the GBL students in this study were in classroom environments that were less conducive to L2 learning than the classroom environment of the TBL students.

Possible limitations in what COLT is able to show, however, should be borne in mind here. Because COLT consists of a set of predetermined categories, I have argued that this tends to restrict the observer's perceptions; the observer sees only those behaviours that correspond to the COLT categories. This restriction, it is claimed, may result in a failure to observe other behaviours that may be equally, or perhaps even more, important features of the teaching and learning environment, for example, what is going on in work groups. Another and most important criticism of COLT is that insufficient effort has been devoted to demonstrating that its categories are valid predictors of learning outcomes. Long (1980: 10) observed that, 'Observational instruments are, in fact, no more (or less) than theoretical claims about second language learning and teaching. Their authors hypothesize that the behaviors recorded by the categories are variables affecting the success of classroom language learning, [yet] very little has been done to test these hypotheses'.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the aim of researchers and practitioners must be to discover what features of instruction are most beneficial for learning. A focused description instrument was used in this study to complement the COLT results, and this is discussed in the next section.

4.4.2 Focused description

As explained in Chapter 3, focused description (Larsen-Freeman and Long 1991) is intended to describe particular sets of variables by analysing the frequency of their occurrence. They have been used in this study in order to display differences between the GBL and TBL methods of teaching as represented by the COLT data. Data for the teacher's behaviour will be presented and discussed before we turn our attention to student behaviour.

4.4.2.1 The teacher's behaviour in the GBL and TBL classes

It is important to look at the behaviour and role of the teacher in both the GBL and TBL classes because obviously this has an effect on the performance of students. Four aspects of the teacher's classroom behaviour – feedback, referential checks, improvisation and his use of the students' mother tongue – were analysed from the recorded observations, and these are illustrated and discussed here.

4.4.2.1.1 Corrective feedback

Figure 4.2 shows the number of occasions, within a two-hour class, that the teacher gave verbal corrective feedback to students in the GBL class and in the TBL class.

Figure 4.2 Teacher Feedback

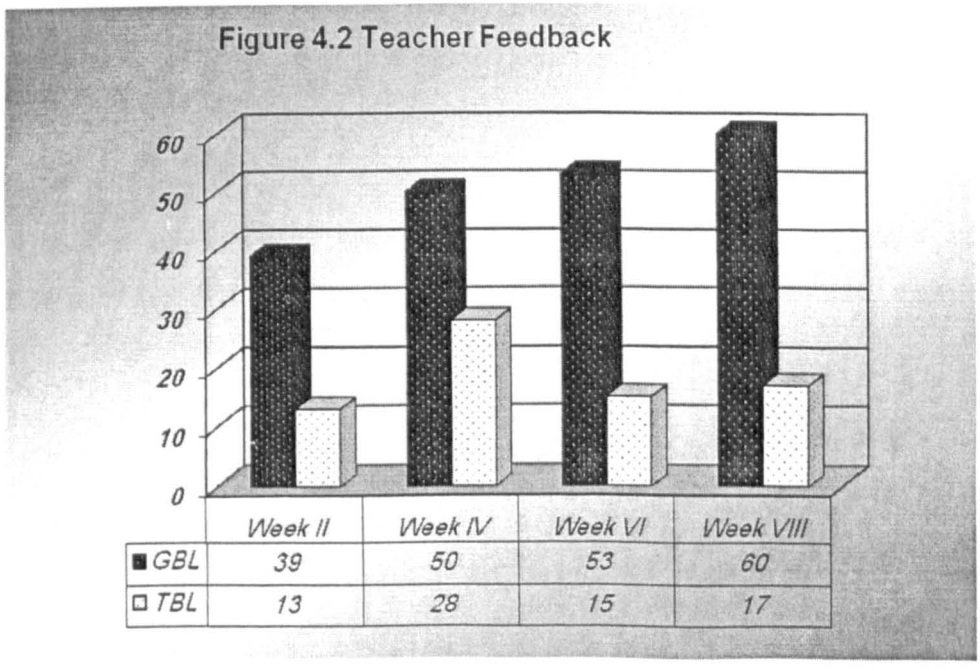


Figure 4.2 indicates that the teacher corrected students in the GBL classes far more often than in the TBL classes. The average number of interventions per class over the four weekly classes was 50.5 in the GBL control group compared with 18.25 in the TBL experimental group. The significance of such data, and whether or not corrective feedback helps learning and language fluency, is open to question. This debate centres on the issues of type and frequency (see Chapter 5).

Verbal correction by the teacher can be *explicit* or *implicit*. Explicit corrections are direct and focus on particular errors, with repetition of the correct production. Implicit corrections are indirect and usually consist of recasting phrases or sentences in a better way. Though not illustrated in Figure 4.2, it should be noted that explicit corrections were mostly used in the GBL classes because these students depended greatly on the printed textbook and much class time was spent in working through its text and exercises. Implicit corrections were mostly used by the teacher in the TBL classes, where the focus was on authenticity. The recorded observation showed that most of the teacher's implicit error corrections in both the GBL and TBL classes were made by repeating the student's words with rising intonation (as described by Chaudron 1988). The researcher (teacher) found this to be effective because it largely avoided providing explicitly negative feedback. Students usually took this as an invitation to reflect and provide the correction themselves. This, in the researcher's opinion, results in more powerful learning for the student than having the correct answer supplied by someone else.

The teacher in the present study, in view of the debate about the frequency of corrective feedback (see Chapter 5), tried to strike a balance between accuracy and fluency. Observation revealed that, when the teacher was focusing on form, he usually interrupted with corrective feedback when an error occurred, sometimes even before the sentence was finished.

(1) Examples of feedback corrections in the GBL class:

Student: A snake it is a reptile

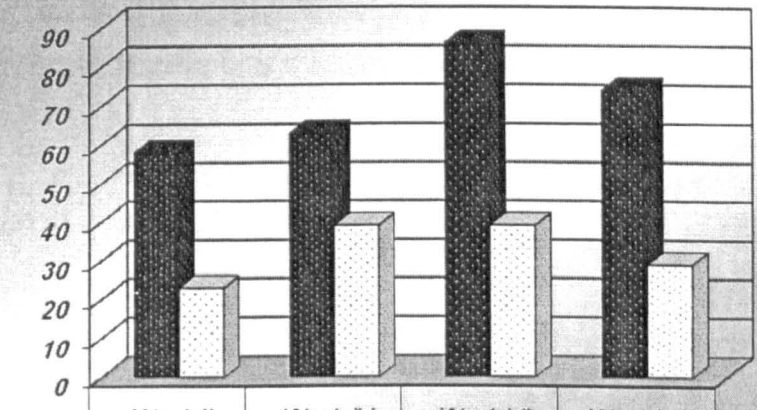
Teacher: A snake is a reptile, there is no need to say 'it' here, all right?

When the class was focusing on meaning, he rarely interrupted the flow of interaction. This accounts for the greater number of interventions in the GBL classes, where greater attention was paid to form, than in the TBL classes, where the emphasis was on communication and meaning. It can be noted from Figure 4.2, however, that the correction count in the TBL week IV class was as high as 28. Whether or not this greater frequency of corrective feedback favoured the GBL group will be discussed in Chapter 5.

4.4.2.1.2 Referential checks

Figure 4.3 shows the results of observations of referential checks, the second category of teacher behaviour discussed in this section. It involves instances of the teacher repeating words or phrases used by students (e.g. for feedback, as described above) and questions such as 'Do you understand?', 'Is that clear?' and 'Have you any questions?' Also included are instances of the teacher answering questions by individual students.

Figure 4.3 Referential Checks



	Week II	Week IV	Week VI	Week VIII
GBL	58	63	86	74
TBL	23	39	39	29

It can be seen from Figure 4.3 that there is a large difference in the referential checks count between the GBL control and the TBL experimental groups. The average number per weekly class in the control class was 70, compared with an average of 33 in the experimental class. Observation showed that most of the comprehension checks

in the GBL class were of the type 'Who can remind us what the meaning of this word is?' or 'Who can give me another adverb?' In the TBL class, the fact that there was less attention to language form and a greater amount of student participation reduced the need for such checks. Use of a large number of referential checks seems to irritate many students and they take up time that could otherwise be used for progress with the lesson unit. This sacrifice may not be worth the gains for the teacher and students. This echoes the finding of Long and Sato (1983) that the much greater use of referential checks in the English course class compared with classrooms means that there is less communication going on in these classes.

4.4.2.1.3 Improvisations

Figure 4.4 presents the observation results for improvisations, the third element of teacher behaviour examined here. The term 'improvisation' is defined by Van Lier (1991, 1996) as the actual behaviours that occur, even though they are not planned for, during the process of teaching a lesson.

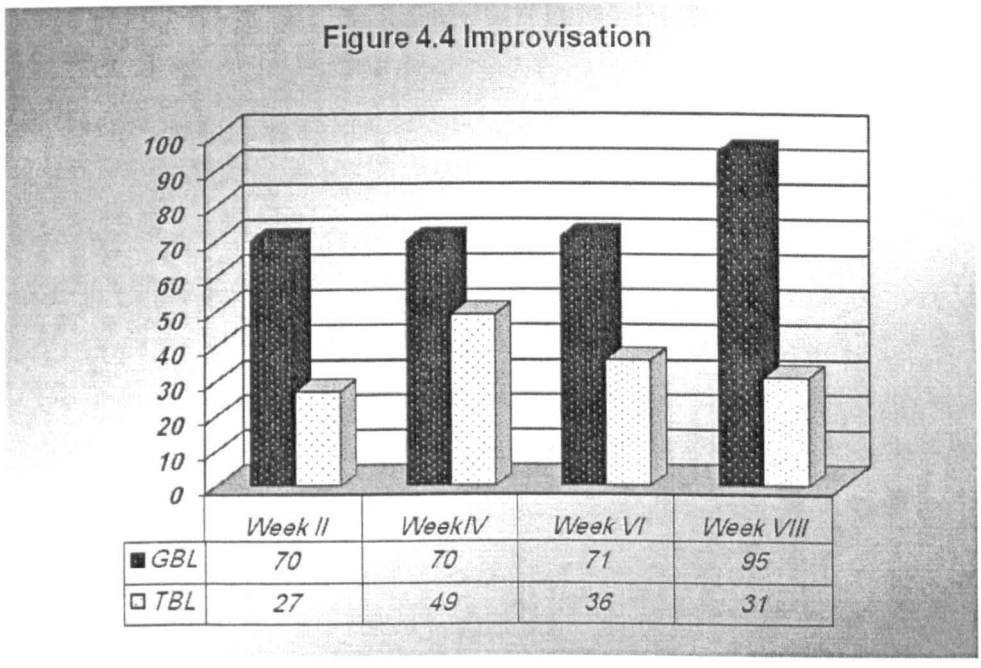


Figure 4.4 indicates that the teacher used improvisation in the GBL groups on many more occasions than he did in the TBL groups. Over four weekly classes, the control group averaged 76.5 instances of improvisation in each lesson compared with an average of 36 in the experimental group. This indicates that GBL students had more

difficulty than did TBL students in understanding some issues and that more time than planned needed to be spent in the GBL classroom than in the TBL classroom on detailed explanations and giving examples in order for students to cope with the material. Obviously, this left more time for making progress with the lesson plan in the TBL classes. Two examples of the sort of detailed explanation required in the GBL classes are provided in (3) and (4), both of them examples of improvisation to promote students' understanding of grammar.

(2) Use of the third person singular

Teacher: use the third person singular in three cases. Who can tell me? [actually, the teacher seems here to be explaining/exemplifying the use of the SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE – that the examples are third person singular is incidental]

Student A: In a case of fact when we say 'the sun rises from the east';

Teacher: Brilliant! What else?

Student B: In a case of habit, for example 'Ahmad goes to school everyday';

Teacher: Thank you. What else?

Student C: And in a case of future.

Teacher: That's right, can you give me an example? .. Any one? No, OK When we say 'His father travels tomorrow'.

(3) Encouraging students to use words in sentences

Teacher: Who can tell me the meaning of the word 'balance'?

Student D: An object to weigh things

Teacher: Thank you! What part of speech is it?

Student E: It is a noun.

Teacher: Yes, but it's also a verb and we say 'to balance' ... The noun and the verb are spelled exactly the same. OK? Can anyone put the verb 'balance' into a sentence?

Student F: Will I use a balance?

Teacher: No. You've used it as a noun again. Can anyone give an example of 'balance' as a verb?

Student G: I was asked to balance two elements in a chemistry lab yesterday'.

Teacher: Yes, that's correct.

4.4.2.1.4 Use of L1 (Arabic)

Many research studies share the view that the more the second language (L2) is used in the classroom, the higher the resultant proficiency in that language is likely to be and this was therefore also considered in the present study. Figure 4.5 presents data on the use by the teacher of the students' mother tongue (L1) in the GBL control and the TBL experimental classes.

Figure 4.5 The use of L1 by the teacher

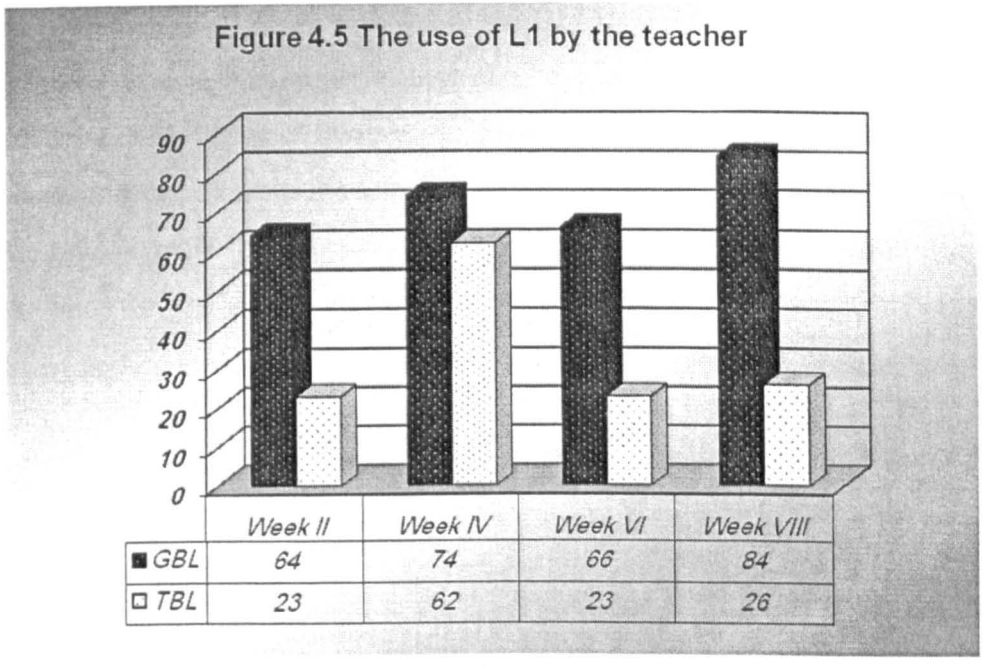


Figure 4.5 shows that the teacher used the L1 many more times in the GBL classes than in the TBL classes. Over the four weekly class observations, the weekly average in the GBL class was 72 instances compared with a weekly average of 33 instances in the TBL class. It should be noted, however, that, in TBL Week IV class, the frequency of Arabic use by the teacher (62) was much higher than in the other weeks. No reason for this could be identified.

Although eventual proficiency may be higher when the target language is more frequently used in teaching monolingual classes, a case can nonetheless be made for careful, limited use of L1 to help students get the maximum benefit from activities that, in other respects, will be carried out in the target language. Brooks and Donato (1994) suggested that L1 use is a normal psycholinguistic process that facilitates L2 production. Anton and DiCamilla (1999: 238) have emphasised the importance of the L1 as an essential instrument, especially between students sharing the same L1 and with low proficiency in the L2. Swain and Lapkin (2000) found that when students used L1 in L2 class, there was a greater achievement. As Carless (2002: 5) argued, 'The mother tongue seems to serve a number of functions, such as an opportunity for pupils to clarify the meaning of what the teacher has said; discussion of the requirements of a task, and how it might be tackled; and a social function, in terms of creating a sense of group cohesion, or reducing student anxiety.'

In the present study, the teacher attempted to use English whenever possible in both the GBL and TBL classes. However, in the GBL classes, he was often forced to use Arabic when some students asked him what his English instruction meant or when he did not get a response from a student when he spoke to him in English. This happened mostly when the teacher was giving instructions or dealing with disciplinary issues.

(4) Examples of use of L1 are: 'Would you mind keeping quiet?'; 'Please, come in'; 'Can you read?'; 'Where is your book?' 'Do that at home'; and 'Prepare the next lesson'.

In contrast, there was less need to use English in the TBL class. Here, the teacher normally gave instructions in English and the students either understood and responded directly to what the teacher asked them to do or they explained any difficulty they had to each other either in English or, much more often, in Arabic, without reference to the teacher.

The consequence of the observation that L1 was used significantly more often in the GBL classroom than in the TBL classroom is that the TBL classes used English (L2) as a medium of communication to a greater extent than did GBL classes. If the findings of studies such as Carroll's (1975) are valid in suggesting that a greater use of L2 produces greater L2 proficiency gains, then, in this regard, the TBL method

used in this study could be said to have been more successful than the GBL method used.

Altogether, the analysis of four aspects of the teacher's classroom behaviour - feedback, referential checks, improvisation and use of L1 – showed, on average, higher frequency of occurrence in the GBL class than in the TBL group. From this, it can reasonably be argued that the TBL method is more successful than the GBL method, in that TBL gives students more opportunities to engage with the target language. The next section will discuss whether analysis of aspects of the students' behaviour also supports this conclusion.

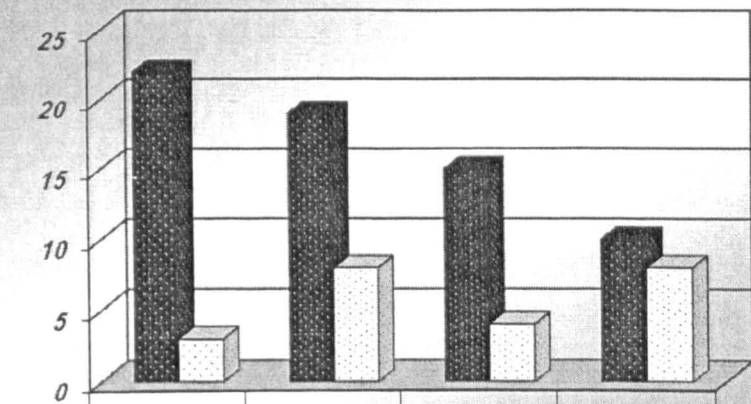
4.4.2.2 Students' behaviours in the GBL and TBL classes

Investigating the types of behaviour of the students in both the GBL control group and the TBL experimental group is important to this study, especially in terms of which of the two teaching methods had a more positive effect on their performance in class. The researcher decided to study four elements of that behaviour, which have been given the following labels: L1, authenticity, disruptive behaviour, and involvement. The first label, 'L1', refers to students' use of their mother tongue, i.e. Arabic. The label 'authenticity' refers to the degree to which the L2 that is used in the classroom would also be natural in real situations in the world outside the classroom (McDonough and Shaw 1993). 'Disruptive behaviour' refers to student behaviour showing that they are at that moment not engaging with the material and potentially keeping other students from proper engagement as well. 'Involvement' stands for participation by individual students in questioning or answering the teacher. The data for these four elements of behaviour were obtained through recorded observations.

4.4.2.2.1 Use of L1 (Arabic)

Figure 4.6 presents the data for observation of students' use of L1 for student-teacher and student-student dialogue in both the GBL control group and the TBL experimental group. The figures represent the total number of times Arabic was used in each of the four classes observed.

Figure 4. 6 The use of L1 by students



	Week II	Week IV	Week VI	Week VIII
GBL	22	19	15	10
TBL	3	8	4	8

The results indicate that students in the GBL control group used L1 when speaking to the teacher or to each other an average of sixteen times in each class whereas, in the TBL experimental group, this average was six. Hence, if it is true – as many researchers claim – that students benefit most from classes in which the target language (L2) is used as much as possible, the TBL method could be said to have been more successful than the GBL method in this experiment. There is a problem with the data presented in Figure 4.6, however, in that student-student interactions in the TBL classrooms were not always picked up by the tape recorder, especially when they were working in sub-groups at some distance from the recording machine. Nevertheless, the teacher, as he walked around the workgroups in the TBL class, heard many student interactions in L1 and he had to encourage them to speak in English.

Moreover, as in 4.4.2.1.4, it should be pointed out here, too, that some researchers take a positive view of the use of L1, considering it an essential form of support for students trying to produce L2. Thus, Brooks and Donato (1994: 268) observe that L1 use is 'a normal psycholinguistic process that facilitates L2 production and allows the learners both to initiate and sustain verbal interaction with one another'. Behan and colleagues (1997: 41) conclude that 'L1 use can both support and enhance L2 development, functioning simultaneously as an effective tool for dealing with cognitively demanding content'; Villamil and de Guerrero (1996: 60) comment that

'the L1 can be an essential tool for making meaning of text, retrieving language from memory, exploring and expanding content, guiding their action through the task, and maintaining dialogue'; while Anton and DiCamilla (1999: 234) advocate the use of the L1 as a semiotic instrument, particularly between students of the same L1 and with low proficiency in L2.

More detailed analysis of the observations in this study supports Swain and Lapkin's (2000) finding that students use L1 for three main purposes. These are listed below, together with actual examples from the recorded observations.

(5) Moving the class along i.e. showing understanding of pieces of information.
Example:
Teacher: Yes, what's the meaning of 'using'?
Student: *Istikhdam. ('use')*

(6) Concentrating: searching for vocabulary or focusing on form when retrieving grammatical information.
Example:
Student: *Aish manat yamtahin* ('what is the verb of the noun exam?')
Teacher: It is 'examine' or simply 'to test'.

(7) Interacting, especially when the student is not able to express his ideas in English, is making an excuse, or in disagreements.
Example:
Students: *La La, Maakhthnah* ('No, No, we have not come across such a thing')

The analysis of observations in this study further explored differences between and within the two methods of teaching (GBL and TBL) in order to answer two main questions:

1. Do the two teaching methods differ in the amount of L1 use they engender?
2. To what extent do differences in L1 use relate to differences in the students' learning as shown in their final course grades and oral post-tests?

In terms of the category of 'moving the class along, or understanding', students in both groups made use of L1 but they differed in the extent of L1 use for this purpose. Observation revealed an average of 13.6% of the total number of L1 uses in the GBL classes compared with an average of 4.8 % in the TBL classes.

With respect to L1 use for purposes of 'concentrating', the second reason for L1 use, the GBL students were observed to display this also more often than the TBL students. This finding makes sense given the nature of the different tasks performed by the two groups. The reliance of the GBL class on the units of the standard textbook necessitated questions about vocabulary items that had not been understood. L1 use connected with vocabulary was increased by the teacher replacing bilingual dictionaries with English monolingual ones in order to encourage students to think in English. When an English word needed to be defined, students who knew its meaning usually defined it in Arabic rather than in English. Therefore, the teacher always encouraged the students by asking who could define it in English. In the TBL classes, the teaching aid was usually a series of pictures without an accompanying text, so vocabulary difficulties were not so frequent. When they did occur, the teacher asked the students to use L1 when necessary and to use L2 as much as they could and they tended to negotiate vocabulary meanings in their work-groups accordingly.

Both groups used Arabic to focus on form but the observation results were clearer for the GBL classes, where students had to make themselves heard by the whole class, than in the TBL classes, where interactions within work-groups were not always clear in the tape recording. In so far as there was much use of L1 in TBL pair and group work, it ran against the rationale for pair/group work of the TBL model and one of the main TBL goals, namely for learners to use L2 in student-student communications.

Finally, in the interactional category, both classes engaged in off-task behaviour, as in these examples:

(8)

a. Student: *Fi imkananya nghayer waqt almuhadera.* ('We would like to change the time of the lecture');

b. Student: *Mumkin arooh alhammam?* ('Can I go to the toilet?').

There was also some use of English for disagreements, more in the GBL class than in the TBL class, as in (9):

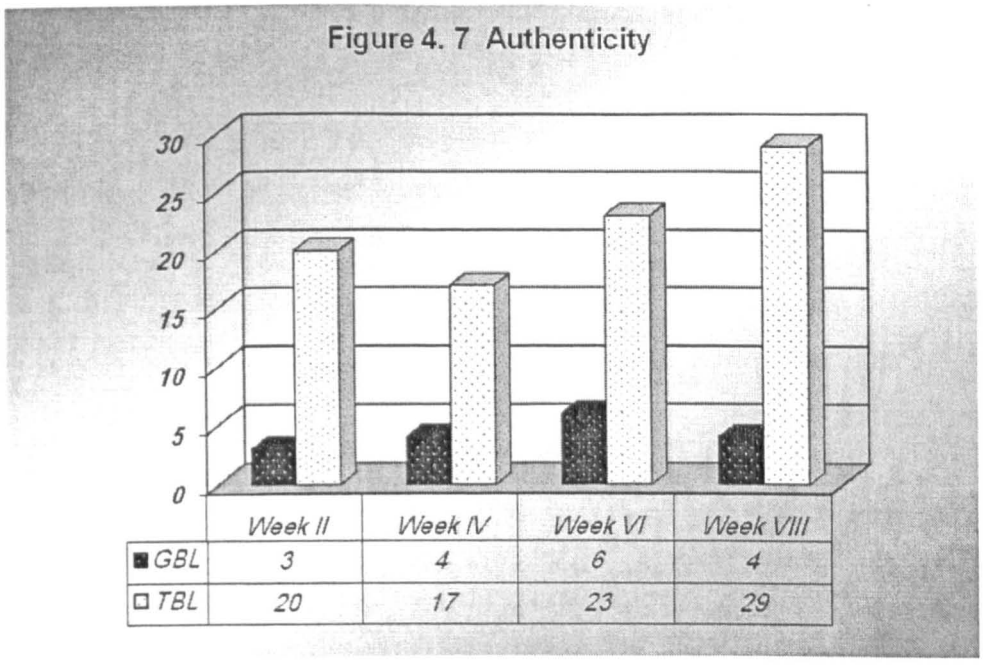
(9)
a. I don't know;
b. I did not do the homework.

Since there are clear differences between the two groups with regard to the amount of L1 used, the question arises to what extent these differences correlate with differences in student performance. The final (examination) marks and oral proficiency results, presented in sections 4.2 and 4.3, showed that as a group, the GBL students, who used Arabic more than the TBL students as a group, achieved lower scores. It is also important that the use of L1 appeared to relate to two aspects. First, the use of L1 increased with the complexity of the linguistic task. For example, in GBL lessons, the teacher's questions about the definition of a vocabulary item were usually answered in Arabic. In the TBL classes, the students used L1 most when they were in pair work tasks discussing issues about authentic language. Second, it was noticed that the more L2 proficient students in both groups used L1 the least. The converse is also true.

4.4.2.2.2 Authenticity

Another aspect of student behaviour that was analysed was 'authenticity', which in this context means that the type of L2 used in the classroom is as natural as that used in real situations in the world outside the classroom (McDonough and Shaw 1993). Ellis (2003: 339) describes this by saying that 'a pedagogic task is situationally authentic if it matches a situation found in the real world'. Figure 4.7 presents the results of students' 'authenticity' from observations of both the GBL control group and the TBL experimental group. It shows the number of times natural language was used.

Figure 4. 7 Authenticity



The results indicate that the GBL group used very much less communicatively 'authentic' language than did the TBL group students. On average, the GBL group registered four occurrences of authentic statements, compared with 22 occurrences in the TBL group. This indicates that the TBL method was more successful than the GBL method in triggering authentic interaction in English and that TBL students created more sentences themselves. These results are not unexpected since the TBL teaching materials, oral and printed, used real-life situations, including the students' own experiences, and the students were encouraged to create and use authentic language. The following is an example of this, taken from the unit on water pollution.

(10) Use of authentic language (six different students are involved):

Teacher: We all know the importance of water in our daily lives. We and all other creatures can't live without water. We all use water for drinking. Who can give us another example of what water is used for? Yes?

Student: *Fi alshurb waif alakl.* ('In drinking and cooking').

Teacher: In English, please.

Student: We use water for drinking and for cooking.

Teacher: Thank you. What else?

Student: Water used for factories.

Teacher: Thank you. Yes it is used in industries and products for making life easier and more comfortable. Yes, what else?

Student: Water is important for plants and animals.

Teacher: Thank you. Yes, it is very important for the life of plants and animals because we get our food, like vegetables, fruits and meat from them. That's enough. OK, now you all know that water can be polluted by different sources. For example, the waste from factories when it is poured into rivers and seas. It is very dangerous for our drinking water because it contains some poisons. Who can give me an example?

Student: Like Mercury?

Teacher: Yes, thank you. Mercury is very, very dangerous if it is drunk. What are other reasons for water pollution?

Student: Oil is dangerous for clean water.

Teacher: Yes, that's true. You'll see how it is dangerous when you are reading the passage. What are the results of water pollution?

Student: We are going to die.

Teacher: That's right! We are killed because we are poisoned.

4.4.2.2.3 Disruptions

In order to see how much time spent on disruptions,figure 4.8 shows the incidences of disruption in the classes of both the GBL control group and the TBL group. Disruption can be described as troublesome behaviour by students.

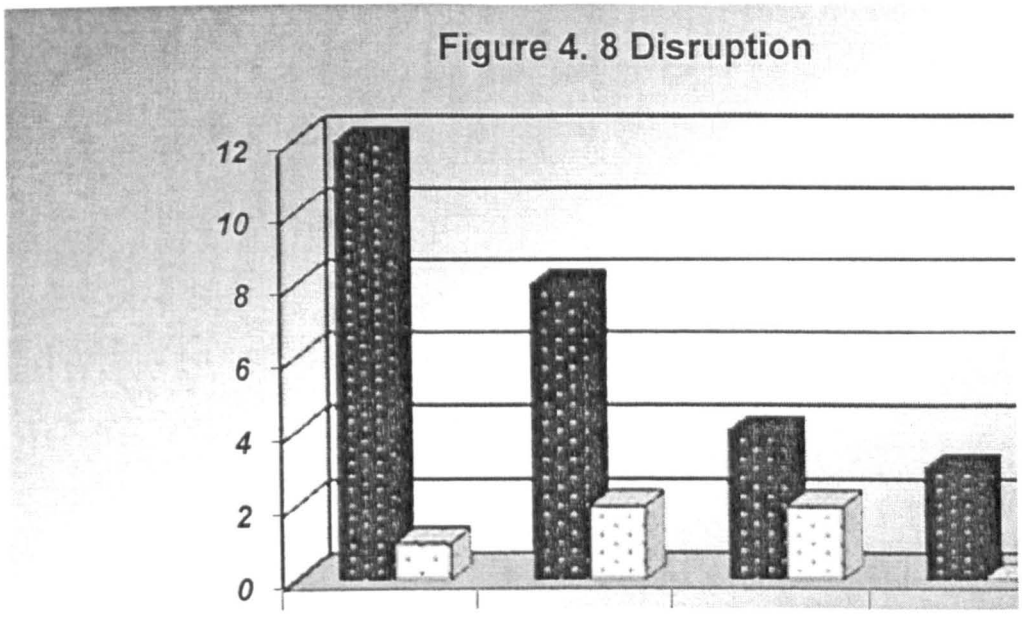


Figure 4.8 shows that the TBL groups, generally, registered more incidences of troublesome behaviour than the TBL groups. On average, the TBL group registered seven incidences of disruptive behaviour in comparison with just one for the TBL group. This indicates that the GBL method was more successful than the TBL method in avoiding time spent unproductively on classroom discipline issues. Two examples of disruption observed in this study are given in (11).

(11) a. Students' talkings during reading time and the teacher having to stop them by saying, 'Stop talking, please! Would you mind following your classmates!'

b. the teacher asking a student to read and the student replying, 'I did not bring my book', causing the teacher to advise him to bring it next time.

The TBL model requires that most activities should be communicative and interactive yet there must be good discipline. This is a difficult combination to achieve since group work tends to be noisy and it provides students with more opportunities to be undisciplined than a normal class does. The teacher in this study certainly had to keep reminding students to keep down noise levels when they were working in groups. Appointing new group leaders each week and making each responsible for the noise level in his group helped in this respect.

It is relevant to point out here that noise and lack of discipline are very sensitive issues in the Saudi context, where some principals and senior colleagues equate good teachers and good teaching with quiet and orderly classrooms. Traditionally, English courses focus on attentively carrying out reading or writing exercises, with most of the speaking done by the teacher. Such classes, if handled well, generate little or no discernible noise. By its very nature, interactive communication, as encouraged in the TBL classroom, fails on this criterion. So, given the evidence shown in Figure 4.8, there was much more troublesome behaviour, and thus more class time expended on dealing with it, in the TBL classrooms than in the GBL classrooms.

Carless (2002) observes that noise and lack of discipline seem to occur in relation to three specific circumstances:

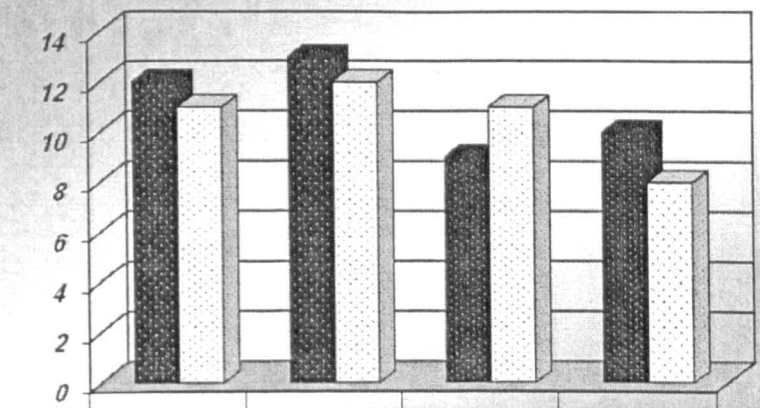
(i) when students are not clear about what to do,
(ii) when the task is too easy or too difficult and
(iii) when the task itself provokes excessive noise, as when students are invited to make sounds of aeroplanes or birds, etc.

Obviously, the first two apply to all methods of teaching. Because the TBL method is more interactive and in some ways less formal, however, it provides more opportunities for negotiating clarity and degree of difficulty; it is therefore less likely to incur these problems. Noisy animations are probably best avoided, at least in university classrooms.

4.4.2.2.4 Involvement

The fourth feature of student behaviour investigated in the study was the degree of involvement or participation by individual students in questioning or answering their teacher (i.e. whether they used English to a noticeable extent). Figure 4.9 shows the number of students in each class who made some contribution – in English – to the classroom activities.

Figure 4.9 Number of involved students



	Week II	Week IV	Week VI	Week VIII
GBL	12	13	9	10
TBL	11	12	11	8

As shown in Figure 4.9, there was little difference between the GBL control group and the TBL experimental group in respect of individual student involvement and participation. Observation classified 40% of GBL students and 37% of TBL students as having made notable individual contributions in the classroom. The rest of the students had limited roles or even no role other than their attendance. Observation data revealed that, in both GBL and TBL classes, English language production tended to be restricted to certain individuals.

(12) For example, when the teacher asked a GBL class, 'Who can summarise the topic we have just covered?', only two students raised their hands.

In a TBL class, however, the teacher put five questions on the blackboard and asked each work-group leader to select the question that his group would like to answer. Leaders often answered but if any leader could not produce the answer he had to ask another student in the group to answer on his behalf.

Since one of the aims of TBL is to promote students' production of English, it is disappointing to record that less than one-third of the TBL students had much involvement in the class. One of Seedhouse's (1999) criticisms of task-based instruction is that students often focus on completing the task with the most minimal display of linguistic output necessary to achieve this. In the present study, the problem

of group leaders whose spoken English was poor was mitigated by getting them to write their group reports with help from their group members and then to read the report in front of the class.

Carless (2002) makes three tentative suggestions to maximise the involvement of students during group work. First, teachers might develop more inclusivity in the classroom to encourage all students to contribute during lessons. To do this, teachers should look at each student and gently discourage the more domineering while encouraging the more reticent ones. Second, if there are group leaders, it may be desirable to circulate this role amongst the students, rather than assign it to one student for an extended period. The researcher adopted the suggestion in this study. Third, there could be flexibility in timing and grouping, with alternative roles assigned to students at different times and in different groups. This, according to Carless (2002), gives more opportunities for students to enact different roles.

In summary, the focused description of classroom observation in terms of the analysis of the four aspects of the students' classroom behaviour – use of L1, authenticity, disruptive behaviour and involvement – shows that in most respects the TBL students were more active and more responsible owing to the fact that this model encouraged learners to cooperate with each other to use the target language.

4.5 Attitudes and evaluation (post-course questionnaire) analyses

This section reports on and discusses the students' evaluation of their 102 English course. The data were gathered from a semi-structured questionnaire, discussed in Chapter 3, completed by all 145 GBL control group students and all 138 TBL experimental group students at the end of the course in which they sat the final examination. The eight questions were asked and answered in Arabic in order to facilitate easier and fuller student responses but both questions and answers have been translated into English in this report (see appendix R – questionnaire of (attitudes) class evaluation). These questions, together with an analysis of students' answers, are presented, in turn, below.

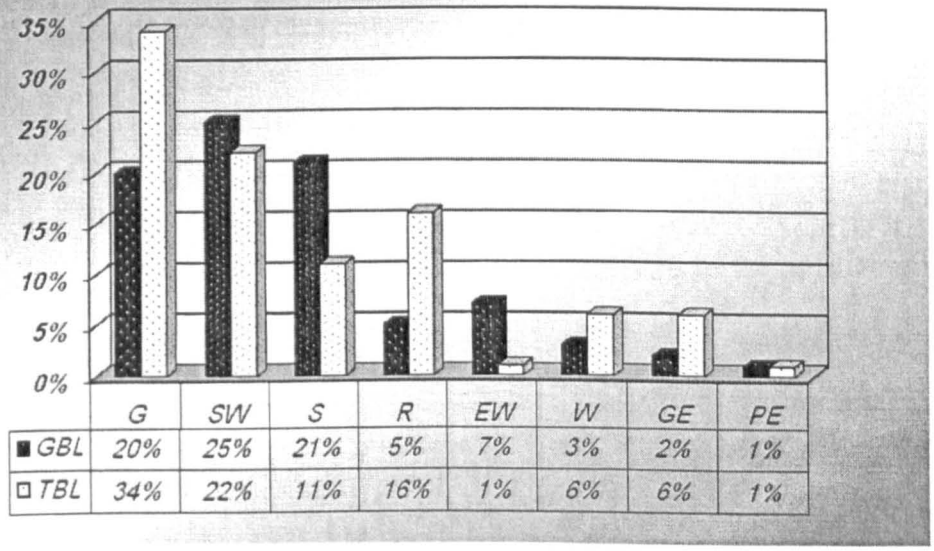
Open-ended, rather than multiple-choice, questions were chosen for the reasons outlined in Chapter 2. Though some answers proved difficult to allocate to one of the limited number of categories used by the researcher, most presented no problems. For example, in response to the question, 'What were you hoping to learn from this course?', the answers, 'My hope from this course was to learn speaking', 'My hope from this course was to learn conversation' and 'My hope from this course was to communicate' were all categorised as 'speaking'. Since most answers to the questions were similar in content, their analysis was relatively straightforward.

4.5.1 Question No. 1

What were you hoping to learn from this course?

Figure 4.10 shows an analysis of the answers to this question and compares the results for the GBL control group and the TBL experimental group. The eight answer categories used in the analysis were: grammar, terminology of the academic subject ('words in subject'), speaking, reading, words, writing, general, and passing the examination.

Figure 4.10 Answers to question 1



	G	SW	S	R	EW	W	GE	PE
GBL	20%	25%	21%	5%	7%	3%	2%	1%
TBL	34%	22%	11%	16%	1%	6%	6%	1%

N.B: G = Grammar; SW = words in student subject; S = speaking skills; R = reading skills; EW = English words; W = writing skills; GE = General English; PE = pass exam

From Figure 4.10, it can be seen that the GBL students and TBL students had rather different aims that they reflected on at the end of the course. The highest score 25% among GBL students was for a better technical vocabulary for their academic subject

('words in subject'). This category came in second place 22% for TBL students. The highest score 34% among TBL students was for a better knowledge of grammar ('grammar') while this category attracted 20% of GBL students. Taken together, these two categories accounted for the answers of 45% of the GBL students and 56% of the TBL students, leaving only 55% and 44%, respectively, for the other five categories (excluding 'general'). Two other categories are worthy of special note. A surprisingly large proportion 21% of GBL students had primarily wanted to improve their ability to speak in English whereas only 11% of TBL students wanted this. For improved reading skills, only 5% of GBL students had this as a main aim, compared with 16% of TBL students.

These results suggest the possibility that some students misinterpreted the question. Its aim was to ask students about their hopes for the course when they enrolled, that is, at the start of the course. But it is possible that some students in fact answered a different question, namely, 'What was your hope for the course, or your needs, that was not fulfilled?' This would explain the fact that many more TBL students 34% than GBL students 20% said 'grammar', a skill that is deliberately given less attention in the TBL method than in the GBL method. Similarly, 21% of GBL students compared with 11% of TBL students said 'speaking', a skill that the GBL method did not emphasise, and 16% of TBL students but only 5% of GBL students wanted better reading skills, which the TBL course stresses less than the GBL course. It could be that some GBL and TBL students had compared notes on their courses and were identifying, in their answers, the perceived weaknesses of the courses they had followed. If this tentative conclusion is true, it shows up a fault in the questionnaire design.

4.5.2 Question No. 2

Is this course meeting your hopes and expectations?

Yes □ **No** □

Question 2, about whether the students' expectations of the course were being fulfilled, offered a simple yes/no answer. The results for the GBL control group and the TBL experimental group are shown in Figure 4.11.

Figure 4.11 Answers to question 2

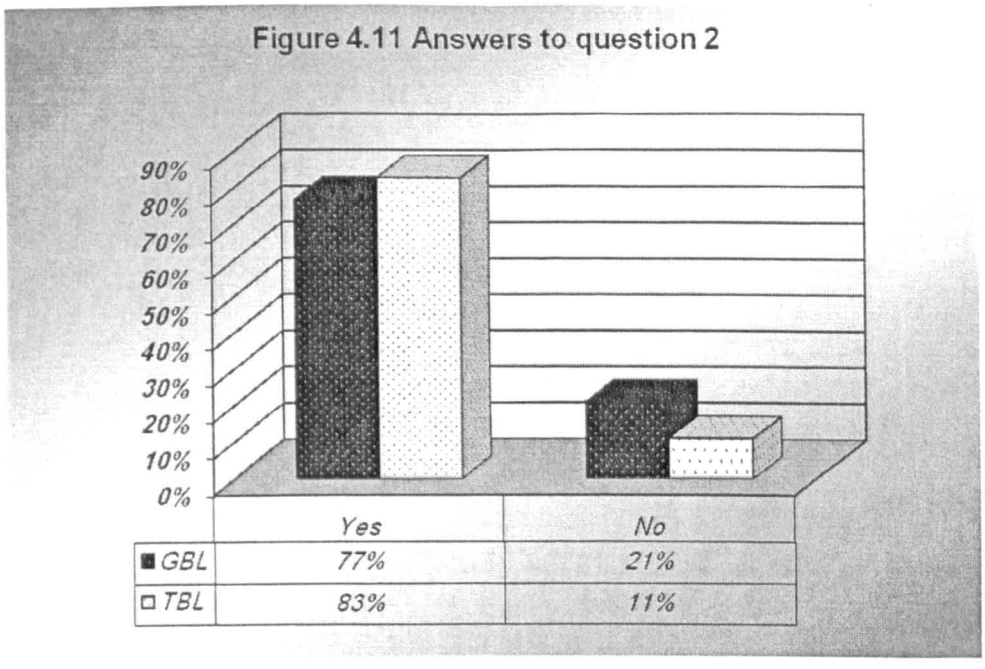


Figure 4.11 shows that a large majority of the GBL students 77% and TBL students 83% said the course met their expectations. It is possible, of course, that students had low expectations of the course and they were therefore not disappointed. It is also possible that the results may be skewed by students wanting to give a favourable assessment to the teacher who had worked hard with them during the previous semester or even hoping that a favourable answer would raise their course grades. It would not have been possible to check for these latter two effects without using an independent interviewer.

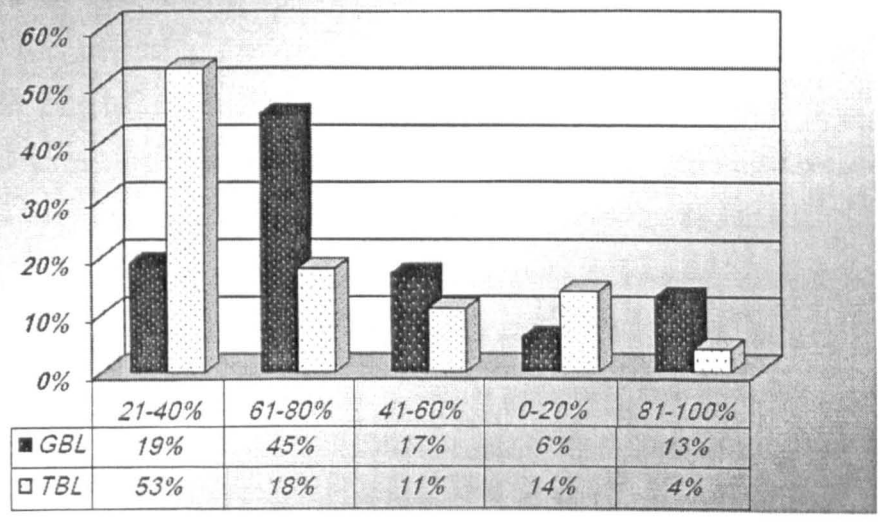
4.5.3 Question No. 3

How do you rate this course in terms of your improvement in English proficiency?

a. 0-20% □ b. 21-40% □ c. 41-60% □ d. 61-80% □ e. 81-100% □

Question 3 asked students in both the GBL control group and the TBL experimental group to rate the course's effectiveness using a score between 0% (nil usefulness) and 100% (maximum usefulness). The results are shown in Figure 4.12.

Figure 4.12 Answers to question 3



	21-40%	61-80%	41-60%	0-20%	81-100%
■ GBL	19%	45%	17%	6%	13%
□ TBL	53%	18%	11%	14%	4%

Figure 4.12 shows that few students rated the course above 80%; 13% of GBL students and 4% of TBL students did so. More students rated the course between 61% and 80% but many more GBL students 45% used this category compared with 18% of TBL students. Again, few students – 6% of the GBL group and 14% of the TBL group – rated the course in the lowest category. But a large proportion – 19% of GBL students and 53% of TBL students – used a figure within the next lowest category of 21-40%. If a score above 60% can be taken as an indication that a student was satisfied or very satisfied with the course, 58% of GBL students came into this category but only 22% of TBL students did so. Similarly, if a score of 40% or below indicates dissatisfaction, 25% of GBL students and 67% of TBL students were dissatisfied.

The results for this question are not consistent with those for Question 2. It seems unlikely that a lot of students could legitimately give the course a low rating in Question 3 yet say, in answering Question 2, that it had met their hopes and expectations. But this is what happened and it necessitates a search for a possible explanation. Part of the reason may be that the results for Question 2 were skewed, as discussed in section 4.5.2. The dissatisfaction of some TBL students might also relate to their unfamiliarity with this method of teaching. The only previous experience of the TBL students in studying English language courses had been the GBL method, where grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing skills were emphasised. The TBL

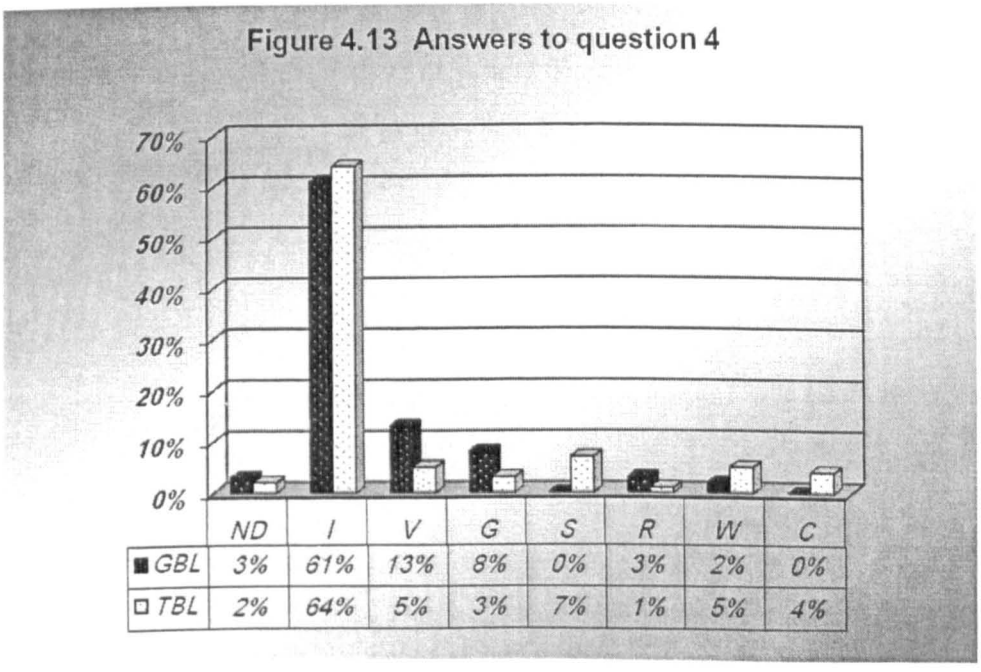
method's promotion of communicative skills over traditional skills may well have led students to feel that they were falling behind on the latter compared with their friends in GBL method classes. Moreover, since the main purpose of the English course they were taking was to enable them to follow their Physics, Chemistry and Biology courses in English and to produce better written work in English, rather than to be better oral communicators, the skill drills of the GBL method might well have seemed more appropriate to these tasks. One possible inference from the answers to Question 3 may therefore be that the GBL method is actually more appropriate for English-for-Science courses. On the other hand, it may simply be the case that it takes more than one semester of learning by the TBL method to appreciate that it is not aiming to downgrade the traditional GBL skills for, as Nunan (1999: 72) comments, new views on the nature of language teaching (as embodied in TBL) make it difficult to sustain the separation between knowing a language and using it.

4.5.4 Question No. 4

How do you feel at the end of this course?

Figure 4.13 shows the responses from both GBL control group students and TBL experimental group students to Question 3, which asked about their feelings of accomplishment as a result of the course.

Figure 4.13 Answers to question 4



	ND	I	V	G	S	R	W	C
GBL	3%	61%	13%	8%	0%	3%	2%	0%
TBL	2%	64%	5%	3%	7%	1%	5%	4%

ND = no difference; I = Improvement; V = vocabulary; G = grammar; S = speaking; R = reading; W = writing; C = confidence.

Figure 4.13 demonstrates that most students in both the GBL group (61%) and in the TBL group (64%) felt they had made some improvement but said little more than this. About 2.5% said the course had made no difference to their proficiency. That means that only about one-third of students mentioned particular ways in which they had improved. This sample is probably too small to draw firm conclusions from, though we may note that in the GBL group, 13% (that is, 40% of those who gave more detailed answers) mentioned improved vocabulary and 8% mentioned grammar improvement. Among the TBL students, an improvement in speaking was registered by 7%.

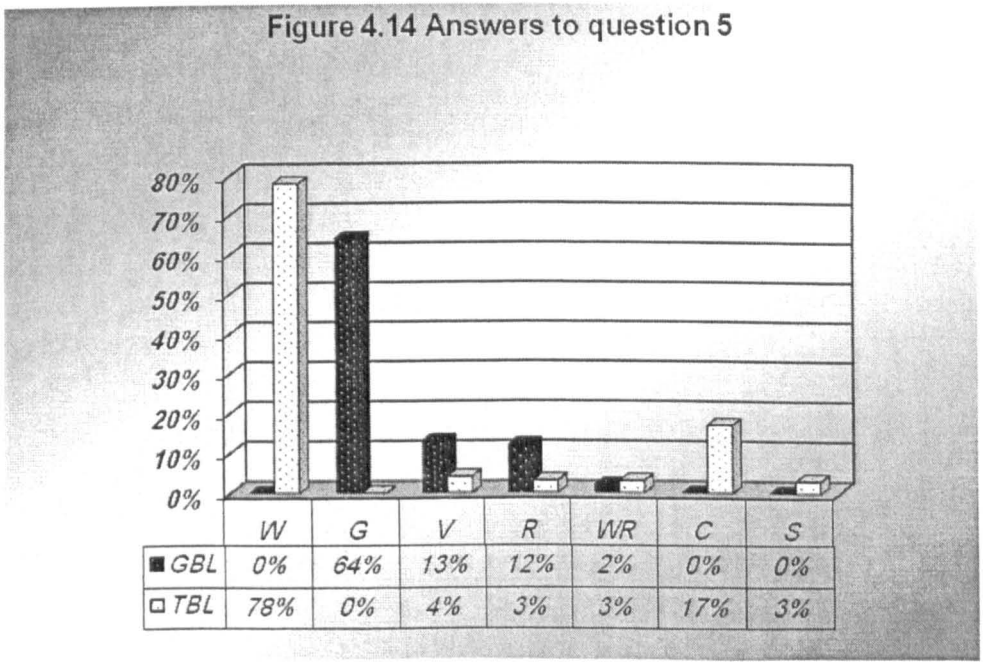
Obviously, this question was not well designed for its intended purpose. It might have been better to have included two questions, or one two-part question, asking students about their general feeling of improvement and about their improvement in particular skills. This failing was, to some extent, remedied by Question 6, below.

4.5.5 Question No. 5

What are the good points of this course?

Figure 4.14 shows the responses of students in both the GBL control group and the TBL group to the invitation to name the good points of the course they had taken.

Figure 4.14 Answers to question 5



	W	G	V	R	WR	C	S
GBL	0%	64%	13%	12%	2%	0%	0%
TBL	78%	0%	4%	3%	3%	17%	3%

N.B: W = workgroup; G = grammar; V = vocabulary; R = Reading; WR = writing skills; C = conversation; S = summary

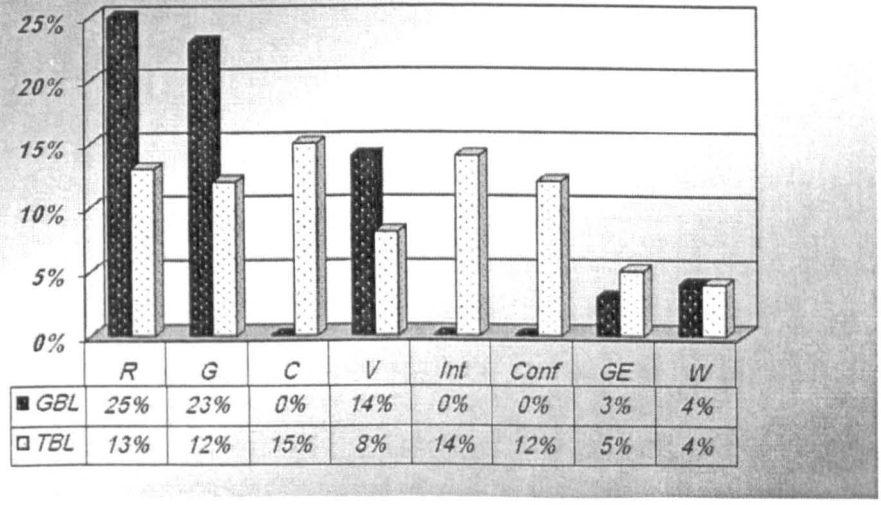
Figure 4.14 shows that the majority (64%) of GBL students thought they had benefited most from the concentration on grammar while most TBL students (78%) registered group work as a good point. Typical answers from GBL students were, 'The good point of this course is learning grammar', 'I learned how to construct a sentence', and 'The good point in this course is sentence building'. Typical answers from TBL students were, 'Group work is a very good idea.', 'The good point in this course is that the group members are helping each other' and 'The beauty of this course is in sharing with others for giving answers'. As in answers to previous questions, vocabulary (13%) and reading (12%) scored quite well among GBL students, and conversation (17%) scored well with TBL students, though the last group could reasonably have been included in the 'Work-group' category, since that is where conversation took place.

4.5.6 Question No. 6

What skills or areas do you think have improved?

Question 6 asked students of both the GBL control group and the TBL experimental group how the course had led to improvement of particular skills or other areas of their English proficiency. The question was open-ended but the answers were categorised by the researcher into eight categories – reading, grammar, conversation, vocabulary, interest, confidence, general understanding and writing. The results are shown in Figure 4.15.

Figure 4.15 Answers to question 6



	R	G	C	V	Int	Conf	GE	W
GBL	25%	23%	0%	14%	0%	0%	3%	4%
TBL	13%	12%	15%	8%	14%	12%	5%	4%

N.B: R = Reading skills; G = Grammar; C = Conversation; V = Vocabulary; Int = Interest; Conf = confidence; GE = General English; W = Writing skills

Figure 4.15 shows an interesting spread of answers and the results are more meaningful than those obtained from Question 4 (see Figure 4.13). In the GBL group, 25% of students recorded a perceived improvement in reading, and scores for grammar and vocabulary were 23% and 14%, respectively. The TBL group registered 13% (reading), 12% (grammar) and 8% (vocabulary) and 15% of TBL students thought that their conversation skills had improved, 14% said their interest in the English language had increased and 12% noted increased confidence in using the language. No GBL students gave answers that could be recorded in any of these three categories.

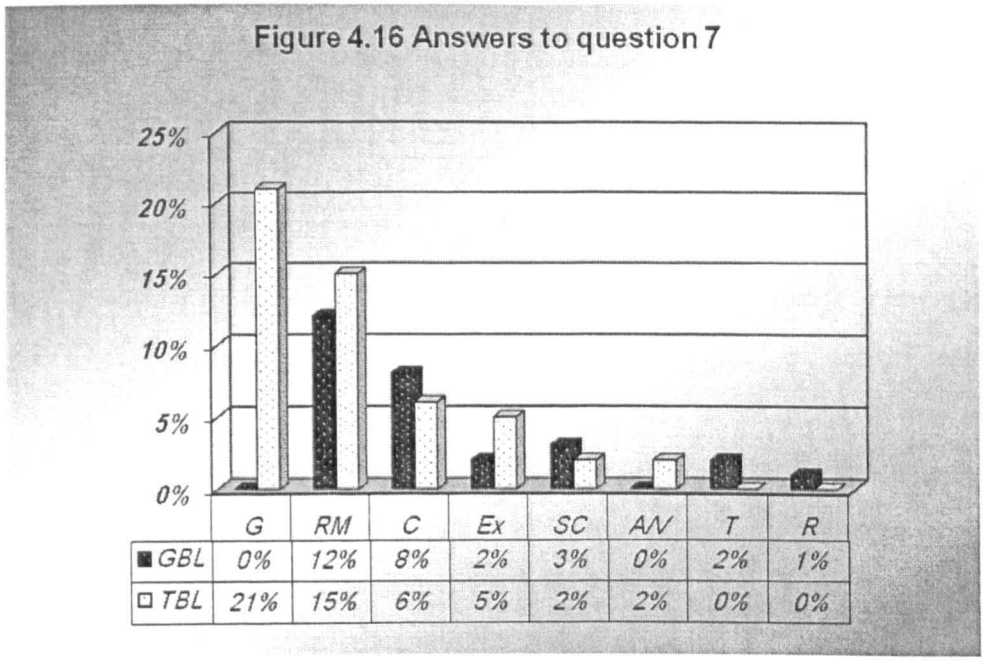
The results of Question 6 are within the range that one would expect. The GBL method concentrates on reading, grammar and vocabulary while the TBL method favours communicative skills through the use of dialogue dealing with real-life situations. Alleged advantages of the latter, as discussed in Chapter 2, are an increased interest in the foreign language and increased confidence in using it; these claims are well supported by the results of answers to this question.

Again, this question could have been better designed. Recording the most pertinent point in a student's answer was sometimes difficult when more than one point was mentioned. Asking students to nominate the single biggest area of improvement would have made answers easier to score. Asking them to nominate, and perhaps rank, the two or three main areas of improvement might have produced a more comprehensive measure of student attitudes.

4.5.7 Question No. 7

Do you have any further comments?

Question 7 asked the students of both the GBL control group and the TBL experimental group to record thoughts and feelings about the English course not covered by other questions. Only 28% of the GBL students and 51% of the TBL students produced answers to this question. They were categorised into eight fields decided by the researcher: group work, relevance, more emphasis on conversation, more time for the ESL course ('extensive'), less time for ESL ('shortening'), audio-visual materials, translation and research. The results are shown in Figure 4.16.



N.B: G = Workgroup; RM = Relevant Material; C = Conversation; Ex = Extensive courses; SC = shortening curriculum; A/V =Audio/Video; T = transition; R = research

Figure 4.16 shows that the single biggest category was relevance, with 12% of GBL students and 15% of TBL students asking for the curriculum to include more topics of direct relevance to their academic subjects. It should be noted in this respect that, at present, Physics, Chemistry and Biology students are all taught in the same English course classes and use the same textbook. Fulfilling this request would require separate classes and different teaching materials. The second biggest category (21%, and all TBL students) suggested the TBL teaching model be applied in all university classes, not only in English courses. One student wrote, 'I would like this excellent way of teaching to be emphasised and generalised in our education system', while another said 'Group work is very good because it is a sort of teaching development'. A total of 8% of GBL students and 6% of TBL students said they required more emphasis on conversation because, as one of them claimed, 'The language means sending and receiving information so we need to focus more on conversation'. In addition, 2% of GBL students and 5% of TBL students claimed that one class a week is not enough to learn English, though 3% of GBL students and 2% of TBL students complained that the course was too long. Sundry other comments included recommendations for the use of video and audio recordings in order to learn

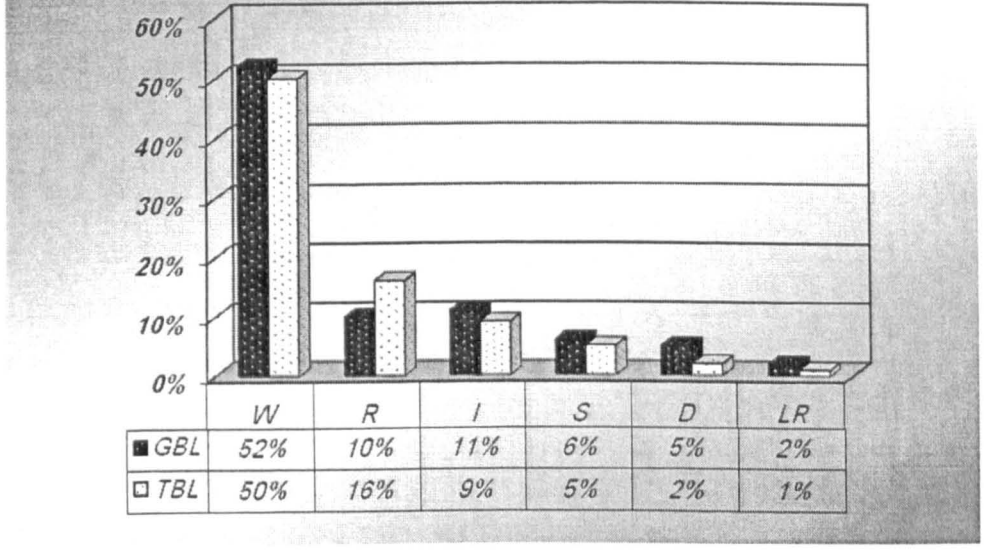
pronunciation from native speakers of English; translation practice related to one's academic subject; and training in writing research projects.

4.5.8 Question No. 8

What do you do outside class to improve your English language?

Question 8 was a simple open-ended request to both the GBL control group students and the TBL experimental group students for information about their use of English in out-of-class or real-world situations. This question was asked because one of the claims made for the TBL method is that it gives students greater proficiency and confidence in real-life situations where they have to use English. Answers were received from 86% of the GBL students and 83% of the TBL students. The results were categorised by the researcher into six types: watching TV and films, reading, using the Internet, speaking with others, using dictionaries and listening to the radio; they are shown in Figure 4.17

Figure 4.17 Answers to question 8



	W	R	I	S	D	LR
GBL	52%	10%	11%	6%	5%	2%
TBL	50%	16%	9%	5%	2%	1%

N.B: W = watching TV; R = reading newspapers; I = surfing internet; S = speaking with others; D = using dictionary; LR = listening to radio.

Figure 4.17 reveals that watching English language TV and films is the biggest single English language activity among both the GBL students (52%) and the TBL students (50%). Around 10% of GBL students and 16% of TBL students claim to read

newspapers, books, and magazines to improve their English. This is the only category where there was a real difference between the GBL and TBL students and it is possible that the TBL method might encourage its students to read more English in their leisure time. Around 11% of the GBL and 9% of the TBL classes surf the internet while 6% of GBL students and 5% of TBL students said they speak English with others outside the classroom to improve their command of the language.

Overall, where the questionnaire provided useful data, they confirmed the expectations that had motivated the course design. The GBL students felt that their reading, grammar and vocabulary skills had been strengthened while the TBL students felt they had progressed most in speaking, conversation and writing. There are also some indications that the TBL students gained more interest in learning English and more confidence in using it compared with the GBL students.

The results of the students' evaluation questionnaire, however, were not entirely clear-cut. First, some of the questions elicited contradictory answers. For instance, when answering Question 2, a large majority of both the GBL students and the TBL students said the course met their needs, yet, when they came to Question 3, both groups, including 53% of TBL students, said they did not rate their course highly. Despite their poor rating of their course, however, on reaching Question 7, some TBL students volunteered the opinion that the group work method, TBL's most obvious feature, was a good way of learning and should be applied not only to their English courses but also to their science classes. Second, probably because of poor wording, some questions seem to have been misunderstood. For instance, Question 1 asked, 'What were you hoping to learn from this course?' but the results suggest that many students identified here the skills on which their course – be it GBL or TBL – did not concentrate, rather than their expectations at the start of the course Third, Question 4 seemed to have been worded too vaguely to elicit useful responses from many students. For example, the majority of students in both groups said they felt their English had improved but they did not specify in what way.

4.6 Strengths and weaknesses

The outcome of the experimental study shows that the experimental group achieved considerably better overall results, and this was particularly noticeable during the second half of the course when the students had become more familiar with the new method. This method of integrating communicative teaching into the official syllabus made the process of implementation more meaningful for students. It seems that, as a result of this, the experimental group made better progress than the control group in developing their language skills as well as in using the grammar of the target language. One of the most interesting findings was that the control group was unable to produce better results than the experimental group (64.8 vs. 68.4) in the final test, despite the fact that its course had focused principally on the study of grammar.

Furthermore, the control group was unable to produce significantly higher scores in the post-test with respect to the number of words, verbs and clauses used than the experimental group. This is also clear from the results of the COLT scheme and the focused description behaviours in that the GBL group spent slightly more time on minimal text and slightly less time on extended text than did the TBL group. That is, concentration on the formal printed book was a main feature of the control group while the focus in the TBL class was on natural, authentic, discussion. There were also some indications from the post-treatment questionnaire that the TBL students had enjoyed learning English more, and that they had more confidence in using it than the GBL students.

The results indicate that focusing on teaching grammar explicitly does not help learners to improve their proficiency in the target language very much. McCarthy (1991: 51) observed that:

> Most learners, when learning the grammar of a foreign language, spend time assimilating the structure of clauses in that language, i.e. where subjects, objects and adverbials are placed in relation to the verb, and what options are available for rearranging the most typical sequences.

This describes well the way the control group was taught grammar throughout the course whereas the experimental group was kept away from direct grammar teaching as much as possible. The grammar presented in the TBL syllabus was mainly presented and integrated in communicative task-based learning. Students were engaged in language contexts that required them to discover the meaning of the new structures on their own.

In the literature on communicative language teaching, group work is considered to be essential in the development of communicative competence. In group work, learners are encouraged to 'negotiate meaning', to use a greater variety of linguistic forms and functions and to develop overall fluency skills. This contrasts with teacher-centred instruction which may restrict learners in their use of language and their opportunities to engage in more than a few words. In teacher-centred classes, learners tend to spend more time responding to the teacher's questions and they rarely initiate discourse. Since group work is more likely to focus on the expression and negotiation of meaning and less likely to focus on the accuracy of utterances, classes which engage learners in more group work are often described as being more communicatively oriented. For these reasons, the feature 'participant organisation' of COLT was developed to describe distinctions between teacher-centred and group-work interactions in L2 classrooms (Spada & Fröhlich 1995).

In this study, however, no usable recordings could be made of the TBL students in their work groups and thus no measurements are possible. Obviously, this is an empirical limitation of this study and future work is recommended to find out what really happens in such groups. It seems that there are problems with TBL work groups in that there is a tendency for students to go off-task, including speaking in the L1. Seedhouse (1996) found this to be the case in his study of the application of TBL in groups. In the following extract, recorded in one of those groups, it can be seen that learners went off-task, produced many grammatical errors in the L2 and used the L1. The task-as-work-plan was to discuss painting, but the task-in-process has no connection with this:

(12)

L1: *skal vi synge en sang? Vi synger den derre Fader Jakob!* (translation: Shall we sing a song? Let's sing *Frere Jacques*!))

L2: *hae?* (translation: what?)

L1: *Fader Jakob* (translation: *Frere Jacques*)

L3: NO!

L2: on English, I can't sing that song in English,

L1: yes,

L2: no.

L1: you can!

L3: how it starts?

L1: are sleeping, are you sleeping, brother John, brother John. (sing)

L2: we are supposed to work not (.) not to sing.

L1: e:rm (1.0) > morning bells are ringing morning bells are ringing < ding dang dong ding dang dong.

L2: we are supposed to work not (1.0) not sing

L1: yes, I just got to show how good I am to sing

L3: you are not good in singing

L1: I know

L3: you are *elendig* (translation: awful)

(Seedhouse, 1996: 454)

The problem with the TBL approach, according to Ellis (2003: 9), is that a TBL model is a work-plan which takes the form of teaching materials or plans for activities but what happens in the classroom may be different, as seen in the above extract. Seedhouse (2005: 130) commented that 'When researchers do examine what actually happens in the classroom, they often discover mismatches between TBL/SLA theory and practice'. The following remarks by Foster (1998: 21) are relevant here:

> Some current claims in SLA research are of academic rather than practical interest because researchers have lost sight of the world inhabited by language teachers and learners. If language acquisition research wants to feed into teaching methodology, the research environment has to be willing to move out of the laboratory and into the classroom.

Coughlan and Duff (1994) demonstrated that the task-as-workplan is not matched by the task-in-process when performed by several learners, or even when performed by the same learner on two different occasions. It is quite true that a problem with the

present study is that it was not always clear whether the structured input activities were tasks in the TBL sense, even if performed in a group. Consider, for example, the following activity in one of the TBL classes:

(13) In this exercise, use one of the following words in the sentences below:

colourful, picks up, surface, automatically, break, diagrams
a. There is no water on the ... of the moon
b. An astronomer ... the stars through a telescope.
c. Some butterflies are very plain but the most beautiful ones are very .....
d. There is no need to stop that machine. It is controlled ..... .
e. Scientists often use ..... to illustrate experiments.

Teacher: you will have five minutes to do that .. . (After five minutes) Now, the first sentence, Ahmad (leader of group A).

Student: A scientist usually bases theories on his observation and then tests these.

Such an activity does not meet the essential criteria of a task. It does not really involve real-world processes of language use. Thus, this activity is more exercise-like than task-like. In reply it can be said, however, that, even though the design of the task was influenced by the course textbook, the TBL learners were required to give their primary attention to meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources. The TBL approach used in the experimental group can thus be said to have contributed to its learners becoming more confident and proficient in speaking, as well as in the other skills, as evidenced by their higher final exam marks and post-test results and their attitude questionnaire answers as presented above. For example, by integrating 'language learning' with 'language use', and by using a textbook, a task-based and content-based approach to reading is likely to foster learner autonomy and help to develop strategic reading skills. Even reading tasks which do not focus explicitly on strategy can help. This is because, as we have seen, a well-designed task always has an outcome – thereby giving learners a specific purpose for reading, rather than just leaving them to wade aimlessly through a sea of words (Willis 1996: 72). Setting tasks which give learners a clear – and attainable – goal implicitly helps them to develop reading strategies which will set them on the road to becoming autonomous university students. It can be suggested that we should emphasise the training of strategic readers rather than the teaching of discrete strategies.

Of importance is that writing skill is integrated with the other skills in the TBL method – particularly reading – and is both a process-oriented and a product-oriented activity (Willis 1996: 61-63). In the planning stage of the task cycle, learners collaborated to plan, edit and draft a written text. This preparatory work was important, since successful academic writing requires the use of a number of strategies and sub-skills. Indeed, there is evidence that less proficient writers tend not to devote much attention to advance planning (Campbell 1990: 212), and since L2 writing, like reading, often draws on strategies transferred from the L1 (Friedlander 1990: 109), it was essential that the experimental group became more familiar with appropriate writing strategies than their counterparts in the control group (see samples of the composition section of final exam in appendix O). Also, collaborative writing tasks develop learners' thinking skills in a manner which transcends the activity in hand:

> Good writing [...] requires directed thinking, and it also provides a means for thinking. When two or more learners each contribute their ideas of how the text might be constructed, and when they verbalize their thoughts and propositions, they are explicitly turning the writing process into a platform for learning (Ridley 1997: 77).

Moreover, as Willis (1996: 62) noted, only a few of the many stages which both L1 and L2 writers go through in producing a written text actually involve putting pen to paper, with most of the time being spent in reflection and/or discussion. Thus, in content-based TBL, an English 'writing' lesson can in fact function as a collaborative exercise in holistic language learning, with all four macro-skills being practised in a natural and unobtrusive fashion. Not only that, but if writing tasks are chosen so as to maximise opportunities for learners to incorporate new vocabulary items in their written work, such tasks can also serve as useful vocabulary recycling activities (Coxhead and Nation 2001: 259). My observation in the TBL class was that students were keen to apply new vocabulary in their written work, teaching each other rather than asking the teacher.

In the English language context, of course, attention must be paid not only to process, but also to product. What happened in the TBL classes in this study was that when the teacher asked the learners to collaborate in producing the final written text, learners

grew in confidence – and that was shown by students' performance in the final exam and by the oral tests.

As noted above with regard to reading, levels of 'difficulty' lie not only in the complexity of the text but also in the nature of the task. The same is equally true of listening (see Brown and Yule 1983: 83-85). Such tasks included writing summaries of lecture extracts which the students had heard and then shared in class. This was a weekly group activity and even the weakest students derived benefit from listening to a classmate's presentation or dialogue between students and describing what they had learned, bouncing ideas off each other. Such features were essential to lecture comprehension. As TBL learners grow more familiar with academic listening, steps can be taken to make listening replicate 'real-life' situations more closely. Although the research concerning the effects of teaching particular listening strategies is inconclusive, sensitising learners to the strengths and weaknesses of their own listening abilities will implicitly encourage them to exploit those comprehension strategies which work best for them. A research study which focused on the types of classroom tasks that facilitate listening comprehension is Spada's (1990). She investigated the effectiveness of structuring learners' listening by providing a set of predictive exercises to complete during listening. The results showed that this led to greater gains in listening. Another listening research is Nunan's (1997) study. He reported that the use of a concept mapping technique also proved effective. Students who were asked to listen to an interview with a television journalist were divided into three different groups. The first group was required to listen to the tape, make notes and complete a comprehension test. The second group listened, checked off key words/phrases, and complete the test. The third one listened and complete a concept map. The result was that the third group showed superior comprehension.

Some listening strategies were taught to the TBL experimental group in the present study, and these included predicting, progressive structuring, inferencing and personalizing. These were not separated from the content teaching and while they could have contributed to the development of effective learning, they were not measured as such in the present study.

Speaking is a natural and, indeed, essential part of almost every stage of most TBL cycles. During the pre-task, task, and planning stages discussed earlier, learners in this research study worked together to discuss the task. The emphasis at each of these stages was on fluency rather than accuracy, emphasising exploratory talk in a supportive environment (Fotos 2002: 148-150). Group activities of this nature also allowed discourse and communication skills such as turn-taking, paraphrasing and backtracking to be practised through genuine small group interactions, perhaps the only way in which such skills can really be acquired, as Willis (1996: 35-36) claims.

Right from the start, the report stage (see above) introduced TBL students to planning. Students read individually. Then they gathered in small groups so that they could discuss what they had read and contribute to writing a report on the reading exercise. Tasks of this nature are valuable not only because they provide opportunities for planned, content-related speech, but also because they integrate the language skills in a manner which reflects real-world academic practice.

Richards (2002: 46-48) has looked at the various features of task implementation which are likely to lead to enhanced fluency, among them the use of visual aids and careful task structuring. Similarly, tasks which were designed in such a way as to demand a solution exclusively in the target language can minimise the chances of learners reverting to the L1 (Fotos 2002: 150). Group discussions can combine productive and receptive skills in a natural manner beneficial to integrated language acquisition (Willis 1996: 86-99). The problem with using a textbook in a TBL class, however, is that learners realise that its texts do not reflect natural language beyond the classroom. Nunan (1999: 79) pointed out that 'learners who only encounter texts such as this frequently have difficulty understanding the language and the texts that are used by speakers and writers authentically in the real world'.

Although the results of this study are encouraging for the use of TBL, there are several factors that limit the validity of the results reported above. With regard to the context of the study, there are problems due to constraints imposed by the educational setting of the experiment. Due to the requirement to use the traditional course materials, there could be no guarantee that the use of TBL in the experimental group promoted real communication. These course materials themselves did not provide

opportunities for the experimental group to achieve interactional authenticity. As has been seen, these materials with their distinctive patterns and rules tended to dominate classroom activities and made it difficult to provide communicative contexts which related to contexts, for example those outside the classroom. Thus, the classroom tasks did not always successfully simulate the kinds of communicative acts that learners would experience in real life contexts.

A related problem is that, for some of the structured input activities used in teaching the experimental group, it was not clear whether they were in fact 'tasks' in the sense this term is used in the TBL literature. Consider for example, the following activity used in the TBL class:

> *In the following exercise, you will need to put the right word in blanks. (students work in groups to deal with the exercise).*

Ellis (2003) considers that such an activity does not meet the essential criteria of a task as it does not really involve a crucial focus on meaning. This is because, according to Ellis, the activity requires attention to semantic meaning, not pragmatic meaning. Also, it does not involve real-world processes of language use. Thus, such an activity is more exercise-like than task—like. It must therefore be said that parts pf the task-based teaching in this study were more traditional in character than they ideally should have been.

Other factors limiting this study's validity are due to the research methodology adopted. Firstly, the students receiving the TBL treatment may have realised that they were being exposed to a novel method of teaching and this simple fact may have increased their levels of attentiveness and dedication, leading to superior test results. This effect is well-known in social science research (where it goes by the name of the Hawthorne effect (see Mackey 2006, McGarry 1995, Nassaji and Fotos 2004, Pica 2005) and it bedevils much second language research as well, including this study.

Another problem in the TBL class was the lack of teacher supervison, and unfortunately, the small groups working on tasks could not all be recorded simultaneously. There was, however, observational evidence from the researcher of

learners going more off-task, including the strong suspicion that students began to speak in the L1 as he teacher began to move out of earshot.

A further problem is due to the fact that in this study the researcher was also the teacher. Despite the best intentions, the possibility cannot be ruled out that some of the results obtained were due to the teacher/researcher being biased towards the TBL method, either for inherent personal reasons or because the very point of this study was to find out whether a difference between TBL and traditional methods of teaching could be established.

A third aspect of this study that is problematic has to do with the testing procedures. For example, there was a problem with analysing the oral tests because the recorded voices were sometimes unclear. Thus, the oral test results were perhaps not as accurate as they should have been.

In spite of these limitations – inevitable given the scope of this study – there are nevertheless grounds for cautious optimism concerning the effectiveness of TBL. The results obtained show that, when taught by a teacher that believes in it to students that are not familiar with it, TBL can result in language lessons that students find on the whole enjoyable and sometimes even stimulating and in test results that are clearly improved in comparison with more traditional teaching. What's more, this study has demonstrated these effects in a realistic setting, where students were exposed to TBL methodology for a prolonged period of time, as part of their ordinary English-language curriculum, as opposed to the short-term and somewhat artificial TBL experiments that have been reported in the literature so far (see e.g. Loumpourdi 2005, Mohamad 1998).

4.7 Summary

This chapter has reported and discussed the results of the four measures used in the present study to evaluate differences between students in a control group taught by the traditional GBL method and students in an experimental group taught by the TBL method. The four measures were the final examination scores, oral tests administered

at the beginning and at the end of the course, recorded classroom observations and an evaluation questionnaire completed by all students at the end of the course.

Section 4.1 was the introduction, starting with the research question and then discussing the aim of the chapter. In section 4.2, it was seen that, in the final examination, there was a statistically significant difference in the grades of the control and experimental groups. Around 40% of GBL students were given one of the top two grades, A and B, compared with 55% of TBL students, and 27% of the GBL students were awarded the lowest pass grade (D), compared with only 16% of TBL students. Since this study made every effort to ensure that the GBL control group and the TBL experimental group had a similar level of English proficiency at the start of the course, and since both groups were taught by the same teacher, the evidence of the final examination is that the TBL method was very much more successful than the GBL method in teaching the level 102 English for Scientists course at the Umm Al-Qura University in Saudi Arabia.

Section 4.3 provided the results of the oral tests given to all the subjects of this study before the start of the course (pre-test) and at the end of the course (post-test). These results showed that both the GBL control group and the TBL group improved their level of oral proficiency in English during the course. On all six elements of the test – word count, unrepeated word count, pause count, T-unit sentence count, single verb count, and multi-word verb count – the TBL group achieved significantly higher average scores than the control group. Again, this is clear evidence that the TBL method was more successful than the GBL method.

In section 4.4, classroom observation audio recordings were analysed for three main groups of data, namely the use of class time according to the COLT scheme, teacher behaviour and student behaviour. The latter two categories were discussed with the aid of a 'focused description' analysis. The COLT analysis revealed broadly what might have been expected from the differences between the GBL and TBL teaching methods. The GBL classes depended largely on whole-class activities, which were almost wholly teacher-led with no group work. In contrast, nearly half of the time in TBL classes was devoted to group work. The content of GBL classes was determined much more by the teacher and textbook than it was in the TBL classes, where the

students had a certain measure of control over content. The GBL students did more reading and less writing than the TBL students. These COLT analysis results might be said merely to reflect the obvious differences between the two teaching methods. The fact that this is so, however, shows that the TBL teaching that was provided in the classes was indeed of the type that had been planned. In other words, this study achieved a close match between experiment design and experiment reality.

In the focused description, very significant differences between the two groups were observed in both teacher and student behaviour. The GBL teacher gave much more corrective feedback, made many more referential checks, improvised more and used L1 more than the TBL teacher. The order of magnitude of the difference is at least double in each of these activities. This suggests that because the GBL method, in contrast with the TBL method, is much more concerned with correct items of grammar and vocabulary than with oral fluency and confidence, it requires the teacher to make frequent checks about understanding, to give many explanations and examples to aid understanding and to use L1 frequently for the same reason. The main conclusions from this data are that a greater proportion of the time in the TBL class, compared with the GBL class, was used to progress the lesson because fewer difficulties arose for students, and that more English was used in the TBL than in the GBL classroom. On both of these counts, the TBL method could be said to be more successful than the GBL method.

With one exception, the differences between the behaviour of GBL students and TBL students were even greater. GBL students used L1 much more, made many fewer statements in authentic L2 language though exhibited less disruptive behaviour than TBL students. Only in the students' lack of involvement in lessons were there similarities: in both the GBL and TBL groups, relatively few students actively participated by volunteering to answer questions or lead work groups. Despite this reservation, the evidence of student behaviour suggests that TBL is a more successful method of teaching than the GBL method.

As was made clear in section 4.5, the student post-course questionnaire, the fourth measure used to evaluate the teaching experiment in this study, produced few meaningful or useful results, probably because of certain problems in questionnaire

design. Ideally, perhaps, the questions should have been piloted with a small sample of students to check that they were easily understood and lacked ambiguity. This would, however, have been difficult to do since most of the questions required students to reflect on the course they had just completed, and the questionnaire had to be administered at the conclusion of the course. Some problems might have been foreseen by administering it to a pilot group at the end of their previous (entirely GBL) course but this could not have revealed the thoughts and feelings of students (the TBL group) who had been taught in a novel way and of other students (the GBL group) who, no doubt, were aware that some other 101 English course students had had different treatment.

Section 4.6 looked at the strengths and weaknesses of the TBL approach and it was argued that the approach used in this research contributed to some extent to making some students more confident and proficient in the four skills of speaking, reading, listening, and writing, as evidenced by their higher final (standard) exam and post-test results as well as by their attitude questionnaire answers. The weakness was, as Seedhouse (1996) observed, that it was not always clear whether the structured input activities were tasks in the TBL sense or formal exercises; the TBL task has to be realistic, but because a textbook had to be used in this research in the interests of valid comparison, these activities could be said to be more like exercises than real-world processes of language use.

The main results of the English teaching experiment conducted at Umm Al-Qura University, and especially the results of the final examinations and the pre-course and post-course oral tests, provide strong evidence, however, that the TBL method gave students greater proficiency in English language than did the GBL method. There is also some evidence that the TBL method produced more interested and more confident students.

The next and final chapter will relate these results to the main research question and hypotheses. It will also discuss the limitations of this study and make recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This research study set out to compare the effectiveness of the TBL (task-based learning) method of teaching, which emphasises the ability to communicate in a foreign language, with the traditional GBL (grammar-based learning) teaching method, which is based on learning the grammar and vocabulary of the target language. The aim of the study was to answer the following question:

Do learners taught with the TBL method reach a higher level of proficiency at the end of the course than their counterparts who were taught with the GBL method?

The research question produced the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis A (H0): There is no significant difference in the learners taught with the two different methods.

Hypothesis B (H1): There is a significant difference in the learners taught with the two different methods

Chapter 2 presented a critical review of the literature about communicative language teaching (CLT) in general and about the TBL methodology in particular. It concluded that, though many studies of the CLT approach have produced interesting and useful findings, and though some studies have shown CLT to be more effective than GBL in certain aspects of foreign language learning, no study has yet convincingly demonstrated the general superiority of the CLT approach over the GBL approach in all the basic language skills. Often this was because of methodological shortcomings or the limited scope of the research. Consequently, if CLT is indeed superior to GBL, this still needs to be shown through well-designed empirical research involving a sufficiently large group of students over a reasonable period of time. A discussion of the problems of traditional (GBL) foreign language teaching, which tends to ignore communication skills and fluency, and the problems of some of the CLT approaches

that ignore language structure led to the decision to adopt a TBL methodology based on Willis's (1996) model for the experimental part of this study. I argued that use of this model avoids the criticisms levelled at some CLT methods, because it pays attention to both meaning and form. It is also relatively easy to compare its effectiveness with that of the GBL method.

Chapter 3 covered the research methodology of the study. Reasons were given for selecting a particular sample of students along with some information about their previous experience within the English language teaching/learning systems in Saudi Arabia and the English language programmes at Umm Al-Qura University. It described how students were divided into control and experimental groups so that both groups started the experiment with a similar level of English language proficiency. It gave the rationale for the student feedback questionnaire used as a preliminary study and analysed its results. The main part of Chapter 3 dealt with the design and content of the experiment. There was a detailed description of the main measures to be used to evaluate the experiment, namely the final course (examination) results, oral tests administered before and after the experiment, recorded observations of lessons and a course evaluation questionnaire completed by the students.

The experimental research was carried out during an entire semester (January to May) in the academic year 2004-2005 and was based on an intervention in the university's English language course. Of eight classes of second-year Applied Science undergraduates taking the 102 English course, four were taught with the GBL teaching method already in use at the university and four were taught with the TBL method, which none of the students had experienced previously. Thus the GBL classes formed the control group and the TBL classes formed the experimental group.

Chapter 4 gave the results of all the measures discussed in Chapter 3. In both the University-administered final examination and in the researcher-administered oral language tests, the GBL control group as well as the TBL experimental group were shown to have made progress in English language proficiency. The results for the TBL group were, however, significantly better than those for the GBL group in both of these measures. The analysis, based on COLT, of classroom observation recordings also showed that the TBL group developed more advanced language skills than the

GBL group. The same observation recordings were also examined to analyse student and teacher behaviour. This analysis produced results that reflected expectations, with regard to classroom organisation and activity, of the two different teaching methods, and showed that the outcomes of this experimental study were in keeping with its design. Moreover, the analysis also provided evidence that the TBL students were more confident about using English and had a more positive attitude to learning English. The course evaluation questionnaire completed by the students of both groups produced some equivocal results, including high scores for perceived improvement in language skills and low ratings for the course. There was, however, strong support for making future English courses more relevant to student needs and even for applying the TBL method more widely to academic teaching. Taken as a whole, these results suggest that the TBL method is more effective than the GBL method in an English language course in a university setting.

This chapter reviews these results in the light of previous studies. In 5.2.1, the focus is on the issue of linguistic accuracy in terms of the final examination and course results. In 5.2.2, the discussion is about fluency in the light of the oral pre-test and post-test results. In 5.2.3, it covers students' attitudes revealed by the feedback questionnaire and course evaluation questionnaires, while 5.2.4 discusses the classroom observation. Implications are included in section 5.3. Section 5.4 infers conclusions. Finally, the chapter discusses, in section 5.5, the limitations of this study and gives recommendations and suggestions for further work in 5.6.1 and for English language teaching and learning in 5.6.2.

5.2 Review of the current study's findings in the light of related literature

In the literature review in Chapter 2, I looked at various studies approximating the Saudi situation where university students studying other subjects were taking English. I began this empirical research with the knowledge that, despite many claims to the contrary, there was as yet no real conclusive evidence that the communicative approach to language teaching, as embodied in TBL, in fact produces more proficient learners than the traditional approach. Recent empirical investigations into TBL have made use of Willis's (1996) framework, because the advantage of using it in an

experimental study is that it conveys precise information about the type of task employed and its integration in the lesson plan, the role of the teacher and so on. It is currently also used in many second-language classrooms worldwide, so that any study which applies it is working with an authentic and popular method, and the results obtained have a direct and valid bearing on how second languages are actually taught in the classroom. Savignon (1972) was aware that some communicative activity took place, but could not discover its nature, not a satisfactory outcome by any definition. This is what I particularly wanted to investigate, and in adopting Willis's framework, I had this very much in mind.

Nunan (1987) suggested that encouraging functional and authentic communicative interaction within form-focused instructional language programmes is more effective in promoting second language learning than programmes which focus only on either grammar or fluency. Spada (1987) and Allen and colleagues (1990) voiced their full agreement that learners need to study grammar as well as to practise communication. Following this line, my study explored the extent to which the use of communicative approaches promotes language learning in a programme that concentrates mainly on the teaching, learning and testing of grammar forms.

Krashen (1982) remarked that form-focused instruction does not lead to acquisition, claiming that comprehensible input is necessary and sufficient for acquisition. Swain (1985), on the other hand, denied that comprehensible input alone is sufficient for high levels of proficiency. My own experience was that the use of the communicative approach supports language learning that focuses solely on teaching the grammar forms.

According to Fotos (1993), small group tasks are as effective as formal teacher-fronted instruction. Certainly, when I compared the two styles, I found that the communicative TBL groups scored much better than the other traditional GBL groups in post-oral tests and even in the final exam, which was a more grammatical test. In the current study, it was expected that the control groups, which focused on studying grammar, would perform at least the same or better than the experimental groups in the final exam which was considered as a grammar test. Studying grammar, however,

particularly with communicative activities, helped the experimental groups to improve their knowledge of grammar more than the control groups.

Ellis (2003) thought TBL was not empirically clear-cut. My research has led me to believe that it is, because according to the outcomes of the pre-tests and post-tests, the final exam and the post-treatment attitude test, the experimental students achieved significantly higher results than the control group at the end of the EFL/EAP course.

Even fairly recent TBL studies (Edwards and Willis 2005) do not show higher learner achievement and performance. The TBL approach deserves more empirical attention in order to establish its effectiveness, and my controlled study has been able to demonstrate that the outcomes of the statistical analysis reveal that the experimental TBL groups achieved significantly different and better results even in the final grammatical exam in comparison with the control GBL groups which were totally dependent on the grammar-based official syllabus.

Richards and Rodgers's (2001) list of learning/teaching differences between students was supported by my study, which was amply able to demonstrate that students indeed learn through different styles and different media. Similarly, Candlin's argument (1987) that students of English courses need to be exposed to various learning/teaching techniques is borne out by my experience when I asked both groups, the control and the experimental groups, for information about their use of English in out-of-class or real-world situations. This question was asked because, as mentioned above, one of the claims made for the TBL method is that it gives students greater proficiency and confidence in real-life situations where they have to use English. Answers were received from 86% of the GBL students and 83% of the TBL students. The results were categorised by the researcher into six types: watching TV and films, reading, using the Internet, speaking with others, using dictionaries and listening to the radio; this contradicts what has been claimed, but it should be mentioned that there is almost no use of English outside the classroom and as mentioned earlier the results of the students' evaluation questionnaire were not entirely clear-cut. This was because some of the questions elicited contradictory answers (see section 4.5.8).

Sheikh's four principles (1993) on which the Task-Based Learning approach depends for English language teaching were fully tested in my empirical study. The TBL students communicated very clearly, had confidence in expressing their individual needs and evidently enjoyed the language. Social interaction was almost a given, as demonstrated earlier in Chapter 4. When Harley (1998) examined second-grade language learners, she found that student attention was selective and limited, with high-interest and meaningful activities tending to generate the best results. Similarly, it has been found in this study that 14% of TBL students were more interested in learning English language and 12% of them were more confident in using the English language whereas no GBL students gave answers that could be recorded in such categories.

Mackey's study (2006) investigated the connection between focusing on form and merely noticing form, and how it can improve language acquisition. She found a correlation between student reports of noticing the forms and second language development but because of the small sample size and the complexity of what was being measured, it was difficult to draw definitive conclusions. My research would tend to agree with her theory but was also limited by a small sample.

The four measures I used to evaluate differences between students in a control group taught by the traditional GBL method and students in an experimental group taught by the TBL method were: the final examination scores, oral tests administered at the beginning and at the end of the course, recorded classroom observations and an evaluation questionnaire completed by all students at the end of the course.

The final examination revealed a statistically significant difference in the grades of the control and experimental groups. Since this study made every effort to ensure that the GBL control group and the TBL experimental group had a similar level of English proficiency at the start of the course, and both groups were taught by the same teacher, the conclusion must be that the TBL method was very much more successful than the GBL method in teaching the level 102 English for Scientists course.

Similarly, the results of the oral tests given to all the subjects of this study before the start of the course (pre-test) and at the end of the course (post-test) showed that both

the GBL control group and the TBL group improved their level of oral proficiency in English during the course. Section 4.4 described analysis of classroom observation audio recordings for three groups of data: the use of class time according to the COLT scheme, teacher behaviour and student behaviour. The latter two categories were discussed with the aid of a 'focused description' analysis. The COLT analysis revealed broadly what might have been expected about the differences between the GBL and TBL teaching methods. The GBL classes depended largely on whole-class activities, which were almost wholly teacher-led with no group work. In contrast, nearly half of the time in TBL classes was devoted to group work. The content of GBL classes was determined much more by the teacher and textbook than it was in the TBL classes, where the students had a certain measure of control over content. The GBL students did more reading and less writing than the TBL students. These COLT analysis results might be said merely to reflect the obvious differences between the two teaching methods. The fact that this is so, however, shows that the TBL teaching that was provided in the classes was indeed of the type that had been planned. In other words, this study achieved a close match between experiment design and experiment reality.

In the focused description, very significant differences between the two groups were observed in both teacher and student behaviour. The main conclusions to be inferred are that a greater proportion of the time in the TBL class, compared with the GBL class, was used to progress the lesson because fewer difficulties arose for students, and that more English was used in the TBL than in the GBL classroom. On both counts, the TBL method could be said to be more successful than the GBL method. The evidence of general student behaviour also suggests that TBL is a more successful method of teaching than the GBL method. The approach used in this research helped some students to become more confident and proficient in the four skills of speaking, reading, listening, and writing, as evidenced by their results and attitude.

The results suggest that there were strong and positive relationships between the four measures, motivation, and the learners' higher scores. The results of this study are in agreement with what is suggested in the literature, that a relationship exists between achievement (higher scores) and motivation (Savignon 1972; Skehan 1998; Williams

and Burden 1997; Willis 1996). It is probable that because the learners of TBL found the tasks to be relevant to their wants, their motivation was affected positively. Keller (1983) has mentioned that learners who feel that tasks are relevant to their needs are highly motivated.

The data showed that the learners of TBL held very positive attitudes toward 'discussion in work group' by registering 78% (see section 4.5.5). This disposition may be owing to the novelty of being engaged in this type of activity and the opportunities it gave them to be involved in a friendly environment where they could talk with each other freely, correct each other and play different roles. These results reflect what has been suggested in the literature (Nunan, 1989, 2004; Willis 1996), that that sort of engaging in TBL classes may affect learners' motivation if they participate actively in a friendly environment where they take responsibility for their own learning.

The results support arguments found in the literature that attention should be paid to tasks which are likely to engage learners to provide better learning opportunities (Brown and Yule 1983; Skehan 1998; Ellis 1999; among others). The higher scores of TBL showed that learners might prefer working in groups of learner-learner interaction, and perceive it as better for their learning than teacher-fronted classes. It is likely that this preference was because of the nature of collaborative work, where peers help each other without embarrassment. The results are consistent with what has been suggested in the literature, that group work reduces anxiety and increases confidence (Doughty and Pica 1986; Edward and Willis 2005; Murphy 2003, Mayo 2007; Willis and Willis 2007). Students often seem very nervous when asked to speak in front of the whole class, whereas in a small group or in pair work they may be less anxious. Therefore, learners' self-confidence is likely to be developed as a result of this low anxiety level and the encouragement received from the group members.

As was made clear in section 4.5, the student post-course questionnaire, the fourth measure used to evaluate the teaching experiment in this study, produced few meaningful or useful results, probably because of certain problems in questionnaire design, and this is an obvious research deficiency. I had hoped to be able to comment more authoritatively on structured input activities but, as Seedhouse (1996)

convincingly argued, it was not always clear whether the structured input activities were tasks in the TBL sense or formal exercises. The textbook use necessary in the interests of valid comparison did not help in this respect.

A precise comparison was impossible between the examples in the literature and my own research for several reasons. Age cohorts in the literature and my empirical study differ quite markedly. The Saudi students were aged between twenty and twenty-five, and the dynamics of the various age groups are interesting in themselves and worthy of further study. Their motivation, for example, was quite different. The older students were aware that their degree course depended on successful completion of the English course and were generally inclined to treat the subject more seriously. Many of the studies in the literature treated girls as well as boys, and there is no doubt that co-education has a different dynamic from that of single-sex education. This research perforce dealt with single-sex classes. It is widely acknowledged that boys and girls learn at different rates, as their mental and physical abilities do not develop in parallel. It would be interesting to compare Saudi female students with their male counterparts, but that is beyond the scope of the present study.

5.2.1 Accuracy in terms of final examination and course results

The main tests of accuracy in this experiment were the course final examination taken by all the students and the published course grades. The results of these two measures, reported in section 4.2, enable the main research question to be answered by 'yes': the students in the experimental group scored significantly better than those in the control group. In this experiment, the TBL method was more successful for teaching the English language in general and language structure in particular than the GBL method.

It should be stressed that teaching grammar was not ignored in the TBL experimental group. That is, while most of the time in TBL lessons was devoted to the sort of communicative activities that are central to TBL objectives, it was also necessary to pay attention to structure. This was mainly because of the teacher's belief that communication and the negotiation of meaning cannot take place without structure and grammar but also the main teaching material was the GBL-oriented course book

and some questions in the final examination required this to have been studied. Thus, this study focused on form through the use of communication rather than focusing on form alone, which is what happened with the GBL group. For example, the teacher in the TBL class used sentences from the course book like: 'Snakes are reptiles' and 'Horses are not insects' to teach yes/no questions. He asked, 'Are snakes reptiles?' and got the reply, 'Yes, snakes are reptiles'. He asked, 'Are horses insects?' and students replied, 'No, horses are not insects, they are animals'. Then, going into group work, the teacher asked each group to compile a list of yes/no questions and subsequently these were reported to the whole class.

The final (grammar) examination results and course results of the present study support previous studies, reviewed in Chapter 2, showing the effectiveness of the communicative approach and, in some respects, showing it more clearly. This is particularly true of Savignon's (1972) study. Recall that in that experiment, both a control group that followed a traditional course and an experimental group that was taught through communicative activities performed at the same level in the grammar tests at the end of the course, but the experimental group scored better in communicative tests. In the current study, not only did the experimental TBL group do better than the control GBL group in the oral proficiency test, they also did better in the final examination, which was a test of grammar and vocabulary. It could reasonably have been expected that the GBL group, which had followed a grammar- and vocabulary-based course, would perform better, or at least at no worse, than the TBL group, but this was not the case. It appears that studying grammar and vocabulary within a framework of communicative activities helped the experimental group to improve accuracy and knowledge of grammar, as well as oral communication skills, more than the control group. This finding bears out Nunan's (1999: 71) claim that 'Language as communication involves the active use of grammar and vocabulary to listen and read effectively and to speak with and write to other people'. Nunan and Savignon are supported by a number of other authors (see; Allen et al. 1990; Beglar and Hunt 2002; Day and Shapson 2000; Fathman 1976; Spada 1990; Swain 1988; Swain and Lapkin 1995, inter alia).

This debate on the balance between accuracy and fluency will be taken up again in section 5.6, in relation to corrective feedback to students by the teacher.

5.2.2 Fluency in terms of oral pre- and post-tests

The measure of fluency in this experiment was the focus of the oral test, the results of which were reported in section 4.3. These showed that, during the course, the oral proficiency of the TBL experimental group improved significantly more than that of the GBL control group. This finding mirrors that of Fathman's (1976) study, in which pre- and post oral tests were administered at the beginning and at the end of the school year to assess each student's progress in learning to speak English, has some similarities with the present study. In Fathman's study, both groups generally received low scores on the pre-tests but made large gains in the post-tests. The classes where oral communication was emphasised increased their scores by 68% on the oral interview tests. Fathman (1976) concluded that the groups that improved most were the students who were exposed to oral communicative teaching. Spada (1987), who also used similar pre-tests and post-tests with students on an ESL programme where the control group focused on grammatical activities and the experimental group concentrated on communicative skills, students who studied the ESL programme on a communicative basis did better than students who focused on the structural activities as happened in the present study.

The question that this result raises is why the TBL students showed such an improvement in proficiency. Speaking is a natural and, indeed, essential part of almost every stage of TBL lessons. During what Willis (1996) calls the pre-task, task and planning stages, learners co-operate to discuss the task and work towards the specified outcome. The emphasis is on fluency, on simply speaking, rather than accuracy, and the teacher promotes exploratory talk in a supportive environment (Fotos 2002: 148-150). As Williams and Burden (1997: 102) say: 'Successful learning will occur in classrooms where confidence is built up, where mistakes can be made without fear, where learners can use the language without embarrassment, where all contributions are valued, and where activities lead to feelings of success, not failure'

During the final report stage of a task, however, learners presented and/or summarised their progress to the rest of the group (see appendix E). According to Willis (1996), this requirement to 'go public' compels learners to 'upgrade' their 'private' language, which naturally shifts the emphasis towards accuracy. As can be seen from the report

questions (in appendix E) of the language focus stage, some of the experimental group students in the present study naturally tried to use their best language skills (as mentioned in the chapter in their development by the TBL group) to avoid making errors that others might notice. The students in the present study felt the need to organise clearly what they wanted to say, to use appropriate language and to check that it was correct. As Willis (1996: 55) notes, learners might want to find new wording to express their meaning more accurately. This is one way in which a balance between form and meaning is realised. By this means both accuracy and fluency can be achieved in TBL method classes.

Right from the start of the course, the report stage introduced students in the present study to preparing a public speech. In the early stages, reports consisted of something as short and simple as reading aloud a list of words contained in the task materials. As learners' language knowledge developed, the tasks were made more challenging and more explicitly related to students' academic needs. This was reflected in the greater complexity of the language some students used in their reports. The students helped each other to understand content-related text while reading in groups, an activity recommended by Webber (1995). Webber suggests that this task be followed by a written report but in the present study it was followed by an oral presentation. This was more valuable because it provided both a writing task for each group as it planned its report and the use of oral skills in its presentation, thus integrating language skills in a manner that reflects real-world academic practice.

Richards (2002: 46-48), looking at features of task implementation which are likely to lead to enhanced fluency, recommends this type of careful task structuring. Also, tasks which demand a solution exclusively in the target language can minimise the chances of learners reverting to the L1, which, as Fotos (2002: 150) notes, is a significant risk for relatively low-level, monolingual groups like the students in the present study. As Willis (1996: 86-99) observes, group discussions can combine productive and receptive skills in a natural manner beneficial to integrated language acquisition.

5.2.3 Attitudes in terms of feedback and post-treatment questionnaires

In the present study, there were two measures of students' attitudes: a feedback questionnaire administered before the start of the experiment and a course evaluation questionnaire completed by students at the end of the experiment.

As we saw in section 3.3, the importance of using a feedback questionnaire as a basis for EFL courses was first put forward in the 1980s. We also saw that it offered the opportunity to look at the causes behind failings in learning and teaching and to build courses that offer the particular skills that students feel they need. Analysis of the feedback questionnaire data collected confirmed that most participants in this study believed that the English teaching that they were typically exposed to was not as effective as it should be and that it should be revised. They also believed that an earlier start to English language learning would have given them greater proficiency and fluency. The most important finding of the survey was that most of the participants believed that the use of the English language and interaction in and outside class (a communicative approach) is very important in improving students' proficiency and fluency. This finding reflected that of several studies reviewed in section 3.3.1, such as (Al-Busairi 1992; Finney 2002; Kavaliauskiene 2003; Kennedy 1980; Langroudi 1999; Munby 1978; Qotbah 1990), who also conclude that there should be a focus on communicative language teaching in order, for example, to promote motivation. With this in mind, the main study then introduced one of the two groups of students to the TBL method.

Student attitudes to this TBL method were then reflected in the answers to the post-treatment questionnaire. Group work appeared to have made the students in the experimental group more motivated and more confident about using English. Some of the TBL students said they enjoyed the class more than the traditional English courses they had taken. In group work in the TBL class, students worked together to create a harmonious atmosphere. These findings confirm the conclusions of Al-Hor (1996) who carried out a cooperative learning study in primary schools in Qatar. He found that even at the primary level, students working in groups were able to share ideas and materials and helped other students to learn. They also enjoyed working in groups.

Here we note that Mohamad (1998) found similar results in terms of favourable attitudes as did Loumpourdi (2005) and Prabhu (1987).

5.2.4 Classroom observation in terms of COLT scheme and focused description

Section 3.5.4 explained how classroom observation was carried out in the present study and section 4.4 described its results in terms of both the COLT scheme and focused description. It was shown that the TBL learners were more active in the lessons and took more responsibility than the GBL learners. This was to be expected because the TBL method gives learners practice in co-operating with each other and with their teacher, and in making creative use of the language. Nunan (1999: 77) comments, 'In this way, classrooms themselves act as a bridge to the outside world rather than as a linguistic quarantine station where learners are protected from the risks involved in having to engage in genuine communication'. This factor was also demonstrated in the COLT analysis of observation, which found that the TBL students played a much greater role than the GBL students in determining lesson content and spent nearly half the class time in group interactive activity, which was totally absent in the GBL classes. In the GBL classes, whatever time was not spent on whole-class activities was devoted to individual tasks.

The second most notable finding from classroom observation focus description was the much higher incidence of corrective feedback in the GBL control classes than in the TBL experimental classes. In providing corrective feedback to students, the teacher's obvious concern is with accuracy, but such feedback interrupts the language flow and is likely to impede fluency. This brings us back to the issue of the balance between accuracy and fluency discussed in section 5.2 in relation to the final examination.

There is vigorous ongoing debate, to which the present data can make an important contribution, about the desirable amount of corrective feedback and the best kind of feedback. The basic question in this debate is as follows: should the teacher aim for accuracy by correcting all linguistic errors or aim for fluency by allowing the speech-stream to keep going without correction? (Seedhouse 1998: 118.) Wajnryb (1992) makes the point that, if teachers tried to correct every error that occurred in class,

there would be very little time to do anything else. If, however, language teachers were asked whether errors should be corrected, the answer would probably be 'yes'. It can be argued that corrections provide the learner with valuable information on the target language which would be lost if they continued to use ungrammatical forms. This is an important debate for all language teachers, but especially the TBL practitioner. Too-frequent correctional feedback reduces the interactional space that the TBL method gives to learners and risks negatively affecting students' motivation, as well as being time-consuming.

The amount of error correction in the classroom is likely to depend not only on the teaching method, but also on whether that particular teacher favours accuracy or fluency and interaction. In this research study, observations revealed that, when the teacher was focusing on form, he usually interrupted with corrective feedback when an error occurred, sometimes even before the sentence was finished. When the class was focusing on meaning, he rarely interrupted the flow of interaction. This accounts for the greater number of interventions in the GBL classes, where greater attention was paid to form, than in the TBL classes, where the emphasis was on communicative learning.

The other part of the debate about verbal correction by the teacher concerns the type of feedback, which can be explicit or implicit. Explicit correction focuses on a particular error, usually with repetition of the correct form. Implicit corrections are less direct and usually consist of recasting phrases or sentences in a better way. There is widespread opinion that implicit feedback does not have much value. Allwright and Bailey (1991), Chaudron (1977), Doughty and Varela (1998), Fanselow (1977), Havraneke (1999), Lochtman (2000), Lyster (1998a, 1998b), Lyster and Ranta (1997), Mackey, Gass and McDonough (2000), Netten (1991), Panova (1999), and Seedhouse (1997) all found that it was difficult for learners to recognise implicit corrective feedback and that it tended to produce less accurate performance by students than did explicit feedback.

The recorded observation in the present study shows that most of the teacher's error corrections in both the GBL and TBL classes were made by repeating the student's words with rising intonation, this being an invitation to the student to provide the

correction themselves. This obviously falls into the category of implicit correction. Although this approach had the disadvantage of being time-consuming, providing corrections in a positive way was meant to convey the belief that errors are an important part of the learning process rather than evidence of failure. The observation data show that explicit corrections were used more in the GBL classes, where the printed textbook was the main teaching material and the focus was on correct form and vocabulary. Few corrections of either type were made in the TBL classes, where the focus was on authenticity. Contrary to the views of the authors listed in the previous paragraph, observation showed that students recognised the teacher's repetitions with rising intonation as corrective feedback and mostly responded positively to it. It is not possible to say if this led to greater accuracy than more explicit feedback would have done.

The research findings discussed in this section suggest that, because the GBL groups in this study received more explicit feedback than the TBL groups, they ought to have developed greater language accuracy than the TBL groups. The only measure of language form skills used in this study, however, was the final examination results, and there the TBL students performed significantly better than the GBL students. It is not possible to determine the extent, if any, to which the amount and type of feedback affected the results of this study since corrective feedback was not treated as an isolated factor and the type of feedback was not measured. A possible explanation for the greater accuracy of the TBL students is that they learned much grammar and vocabulary from each other as a by-product of their projects in their small discussion groups.

These findings echo those of several studies reviewed in Chapter 2. Thus Spada and Frohlich (1995: 15) comment that:

> In group work, learners are encouraged to 'negotiate meaning', to use a greater variety of linguistic forms and functions and to develop overall fluency skills. This contrasts with teacher-centred instruction that may restrict learners in their use of language and their opportunities to engage in more than a few words. In teacher-centred classes, learners tend to spend more time responding to the teacher's questions and rarely initiate discourse.

Similarly, Long and colleagues (1976) found that students engaged in group work tasks produce more utterances than those in teacher-fronted activities. At a more general level, Brown and colleagues (2001) emphasise that group work generates interactive language and offers an embracing affective climate, as well as promoting learner responsibility and autonomy.

5.3 Implications

The starting-point for the present study was the researcher's awareness of a general dissatisfaction among science, medical and engineering students at the University of Umm Al-Qura in Saudi Arabia with the compulsory English language courses offered by the university. In addition, he was aware of a feeling of dissatisfaction among the lecturers in these academic subjects with the English language proficiency of their students. Since the researcher was also an English language teacher at that university, he was in a good position to know of the discontent. The decision to conduct a preliminary study through a feedback questionnaire was an attempt to identify its causes. This analysis revealed a demand for English language courses geared to relevance and confidence in using the language. This confirmed the value of carrying out an experimental study using a learner-centred, communicative, task-based learning approach and comparing its results with those obtained by similar students following a traditional (GBL) course.

It is worth remembering that this experiment was the first opportunity for students in this study to participate in a more learner-centred educational environment. It was, therefore, of great importance that learners were encouraged – even obliged – from the outset to reflect on, and to take responsibility for, their own learning in a manner which was meaningful to them, thereby encouraging patterns of behaviour which would continue to serve them well throughout their academic and professional careers. It is assumed that the University of Umm Al-Qura fosters such an approach to learning because lasting achievement is likely to be ensured if students are able to reflect critically on their life experiences, and on social and civic life around them, and have an abiding commitment to learn, to behave responsibly and ethically, and to influence others to do the same.

Looked at in this light, a learner-centred TBL approach to an English course, placed firmly within the context of learners' real-world needs, be they social, academic, or professional, can benefit the students in ways which go well beyond helping them to achieve their purely linguistic objectives, important though those undoubtedly are.

The results of the experiment show that the experimental group performed better than the control group in all the four measures used and were, therefore, more likely to be able to carry their skills and confidence into normal life, including speaking in English in places like hospitals, banks and hotels. Through the TBL course, they learned to discuss problems, difficulties, solutions and ways of thinking with their peers in order to help each other. This was much more useful than following the traditional GBL course.

In the present study, more learners in the experimental group than in the control group actively participated in lessons and felt that they were acquiring an ability to speak English. This might have been because of the absence of a course textbook, which meant that they had to be more responsible and attentive in the lesson, as well as to the fact that there was no preparation to do in advance of the lesson, which might have allowed the learners to think more freely and openly. The absence of a textbook also meant that they could feel excited when they received the lesson text each week. It could be, however, that it was all the elements of the TBL treatment that contributed to its success.

The experimental group learners, on average, achieved much better results in the oral post-treatment test and in the final examination than the control group. This might be because the learners in the experimental group were more motivated by the TBL lessons to work harder; it might be due to the efforts they had to make to achieve the goals of accuracy, complexity and fluency demanded by the TBL method by which they were taught; and it might also be because of the shortcomings of the teaching materials used by the GBL group. The TBL approach certainly pushes learners to integrate language structure into effective communication much more than does the GBL approach.

It is normally assumed that TBL teaching requires the use of materials specifically designed for the TBL method. It could be argued, however, that the TBL group students in the present study were more successful partly because many of their TBL activities were based on the GBL course book material, which focused on form. This contention supports the argument put forward by Nassaji and Fotos (2007: 15) that

> If the goal of L2 classroom activities is to develop both accuracy and fluency, it is clear that meaningful activities must be integrated with form-focused activities, particularly those requiring output.

As we have seen, the traditional method of classroom organisation is teacher-fronted, with learners sitting in rows facing the teacher. The control group learners in the present study spent most of their time repeating and manipulating types and models provided by the teacher, using the course book text all the time. As Nunan (1999: 83-84) points out, 'Students in such classrooms do not learn how to express their own ideas and to share these ideas by communicating in small groups'. In contrast, the TBL students were encouraged to co-operate with each other and to express their own opinions to solve linguistic problems. They learned that, through their own individual efforts and through co-operation, they could achieve something worthwhile, and this built their confidence. Importantly, it should also be noted that the TBL group enjoyed the course much more than their GBL counterparts. The measurements of this study matched with results obtained by Sorcinelli (1991), who suggests that methods such as group work help to develop relationships among students, encourage them to pay attention during class, and promote a feeling of responsibility for their own learning, all of which makes them positive learners. Lee (1979: 1) obviously agrees that this is important, because his first paragraph begins, 'It is now very generally accepted that language teaching not merely can be but should be enjoyable ...'

Jacobs (1998, cited in Ellis 2003: 266-7) provides a list, shown in Table 5.1, of ten advantages of group work compared with the traditional teacher-centred instruction.

Table 5.1 Ten potential advantages of group activities in language teaching

	Advantages	Comment
1.	The quantity of learner speech can increase.	In teacher-fronted classrooms, the teacher typically speaks 80% of the time; in group work more students talk for more of the time.
2.	The variety of speech acts can increase.	In teacher-fronted classrooms, students are cast in a responsive role, but in group work they can perform a wide range of roles, including those involved in the negotiation of meaning.
3.	There can be more individualisation of instruction.	In teacher-fronted lessons, teachers shape their instruction to the needs of the average student but in group work the needs of individual students can be attended to.
4.	Anxiety can be reduced.	Students feel less nervous speaking in an L2 in front of their peers than in front of the whole class.
5.	Motivation can increase.	Students will be less competitive when working in groups and are more likely to encourage each other.
6.	Enjoyment can increase.	Students are 'social animals' and thus enjoy interacting with others in groups; in teacher-fronted classrooms student-student interaction is often proscribed.
7.	Independence can increase.	Group activities help students to become independent learners.
8.	Social integration can increase.	Group activities enable students to get to know each other.
9.	Students can learn how to work together with others.	In typical teacher-fronted classrooms, students are discouraged from helping each other; group work helps students to learn collaborative skills.
10.	Learning can increase.	Learning is enhanced by group work because students are willing to take risks and can scaffold each other's efforts.

(based on Jacobs 1998)

As reported in section 4.5, however, not all the experimental group students liked working in a small group. Almost certainly, this is because they were required to converse in English and this is difficult for participants with limited oral proficiency.

Another problem that was noticed in group working was that students did not all contribute equally to allotted tasks. Some students tried to dominate the group and others were happy to allow their peers to do most of the work for them. Perhaps the worst feature of group work in the present study was the overuse of L1 in off-task talk, which the teacher found difficult to control, given that the class was monolingual.

Nevertheless, TBL did offer more opportunities for students to interact and to analyse their language use. TBL also encouraged learners to use the language they had learnt from previous lessons or from other resources. The value of the TBL framework offering more opportunities for free language use can be seen in the better results for TBL students in the oral post-test.

Once we consider in more detail the three phases of the TBL framework, the differences between the TBL and GBL methods stand out. Classes based on the TBL framework started with the pre-task phase, which includes input-based activities and consciousness-raising activities. The input-based activities, such as the course book material mentioned above, helped to increase the salience of the ways in which language is used and to stimulate ideas relevant to the task (i.e. a form of planning). Consciousness-raising activities aimed to encourage the students to think about relevant form and not to think only about meaning. During the task phase, the learners engaged in answering questions on the material, using the teacher as a helper and as a resource of further information. In other words, the sequence of activities conformed to Schmidt's (2001) ideas on noticing (e.g. learners may notice features of their sub-group leader's speech which they realise may be useful). The importance of this stage was that the pre-task communicative activities prepared the ground for the learners to reflect upon what they had done, and engage in analysis, reorganisation of their language system, and consolidation of the progress they had made. The post-task phase then made language the focus of activity, allowing certain forms to come into focus.

The GBL method is still used, however, in most English language courses in Saudi universities and institutions. The results of the present study show that it is to a certain extent effective, because the students in the GBL group obtained reasonably good

results in the final examination and also improved, if only slightly, in oral proficiency, as shown by the oral post-tests (see section 4.3). One of the most interesting findings obtained was that the mean difference in the scores of the GBL group between the pre-test (20.3) and post-test (22.9), while significant, was not as large as the mean difference in the scores between the pre (20.9) and post-test (27.8) for the TBL group. It should be noted that attention was paid to form and grammar in both comparison groups of this study but the GBL group focused mainly on grammar, which does not help to improve oral proficiency very much, while the experimental group focused mainly on communicative activities by letting students engage in language contexts that made them discover for themselves the meaning of new structures. Direct grammar teaching was used in order to accelerate the teaching process. Savignon (2002: 7) suggests that:

> Communication cannot take place in the absence of structure, or grammar, a set of shared assumptions about how language works, along with a willingness of participants to cooperate in the negotiation of meaning.

In this study, the main concern was to intensify students' linguistic awareness through the use of communicative activities rather than focusing on discrete forms of grammar. It was believed that following such a strategy would improve both the communicative and linguistic skills of the learners.

To sum up, since the TBL experimental group had more fun, more encouragement to interact, and better course results, it is likely that the learners learned the target language more effectively. It can be seen from the results of the post-tests and the final examination results that, in this study, the learners in the control group using the GBL method were less successful than the learners of the experimental group using the TBL method.

The main value of this study is that it adds to the research on the systematic details of task design, to which little attention has been paid in the published literature. A main conclusion from this study is that a balance must be struck between form-focused instruction and giving students the opportunity to use the target language in meaningful interaction. Lightbown and Spada (1993: 105), in their review of second language learning, said:

> Classroom data from a number of studies offer support for the view that form-focused instruction and corrective feedback provided within the context of a communicative program are more effective in promoting second language learning than programs which are limited to an exclusive emphasis on accuracy on the one hand or an exclusive emphasis on fluency on the other.

The findings of the present study fully support that view. Focusing on form alone does not push learners to advance their interlanguage, but engaging learners in communication which also focuses on form, as happened with the experimental group in the present study, does help learners to develop communicative competence, including the oral linguistic competence that the present study measured (Ellis 2003: 334).

Lightbown (2000) suggested that when the form is essential for comprehension of meaning, a focus on both is advantageous. Additional research (Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen 2001; Lyster and Mori 2006) argued that learners who participate in meaning-focused activities can benefit by shifting their attention from time to time towards form and this can promote interlanguage restructuring. This research has addressed various issues related to the role of formal instruction including communicative and instructional activities, as represented in TBL. It has produced convincing evidence that communicative language teaching using TBL is more effective than instruction that focuses only on form and accuracy.

5.4 Conclusion

The feedback questionnaire used in this study investigated the opinions of the relevant stakeholders in order to discover the causes behind students' failure to learn good English, especially good speaking skills. The answers of the Applied Science students and their teachers confirmed that there is a clear need for a communicative approach to language teaching. A task-based learning approach was selected, with the experiment intended to compare the effect of the course syllabus and teaching techniques used in the traditional GBL English course at Umm Al-Qura University English Language Centre with those of the TBL method. Students following the former course were a control group and students following the latter course were an experimental group. The results show that the TBL students, who studied language

forms in realistic communicative contexts in support of the official syllabus, made more progress in their grammatical and communicative language abilities than those who only focused on studying grammatical aspects of the target language. It can safely be said that the TBL method was more effective in improving the oral proficiency of the learners in this experiment.

The results may claim to contribute to the literature in this field, particularly since there is very little empirical evidence concerning the effectiveness of introducing communicative elements into a traditional context.

In conclusion, there is much evidence supporting the claim that FFI facilitates communication/meaningful use of language in various situations. There is equal evidence showing the differences between both types. The literature investigated is not straightforwardly in favour of using only one type, but rather supports the idea of a combination (Laufer and Girsai 2008; Takamoto 2008).

As discussed in Chapter 2, MFI alone can result in higher student proficiency than use of FFI . It has, however, been argued that it is by no means the case that FFI has little effect on MFI or that it should be seen as contradictory to MFI, as both perform a certain function in perfecting instruction because each alone is inadequate. It is evident therefore that all the previous claims are in line with the conclusion of the present study, that MFI alone as a communicative approach does not create more proficient learners.

This study also agrees with Seedhouse (1996), and Coughlan and Duff (1994,) who demonstrated that the task-as-workplan is not matched by the task-in-process when performed by several learners, or even when performed by the same learner on two different occasions. It is quite true that a problem with the present study is that it was not always clear whether the structured input activities were tasks in the TBL sense, even if performed in a group. The particular problem in this research was the use of a textbook, which is not a natural way of communication. It was necessary because the study was a comparison of two classes, one of which (GBL) used a textbook. The strengths of TBL, however are that students are more confident (who registered

better results) and get like group work and feel more at home in this kind of setting.

5.5 Limitations of the study

As described in section 3.4.2, which considered the validity of the findings, I attempted to reduce bias by making classes identical, as far as possible, in terms of size and ability, and ensuring that all classes received equal treatment within the constraints of the two different teaching methods and the administrative arrangements of the University.

There are, however, many limitations regarding the scope of this study and therefore also its findings. As previously mentioned, the research was conducted only on male students. Owing to the nature of gender-segregated teaching in Saudi Arabia, the male researcher was unable to gain access to female students. No similar research has been done with Saudi female students with which the researcher can compare the results of this study.

The framework of the TBL method suggests that students should not have prior sight of the teaching materials to be used in the lesson. There is no guarantee that this was the case for the TBL students in this experiment. Though the teacher stressed that the teaching materials would be handed out at the beginning of each of the ten lessons, these materials were, in fact, units from the standard course book used by the GBL students. This was necessary because both the GBL and TBL students would take the same final examination which would be based on familiarity with the units of the standard course book. It is certainly possible that some of the TBL students had sight of the course book used by their friends in the GBL group.

Because of some confusion at the beginning of the semester, the experiment covered only ten of the scheduled twelve weeks. Consequently, not all the lessons of the TBL group in that semester were TBL lessons. Though it can reasonably be claimed that the results of the experiment showed sufficient significant differences between the GBL and TBL groups to withstand this contamination, they might have been even more convincing if the experiment had been conducted over the whole semester, as

originally planned. Moreover, second language acquisition is a complex process that typically spans many years, but the study took place over a period of only two and a half months; therefore it was difficult to extrapolate second language acquisition from such a short timeframe.

As reported in Chapter 4, there were problems with the audio recordings used to transcribe and analyse the classroom observations. Only one tape recorder was available in each observed lesson and when it was placed in an unobtrusive position, the voices of the students were sometimes unclear. This was particularly the case with group work in the TBL lessons and it proved almost impossible to analyse the use of L1 and L2 in group work. Thus, as mentioned above, the results of these observations were not able to add very much to existing knowledge concerning the efficacy of TBL. There were occasional similar problems with the recordings of the oral tests. This was partly compensated by the fact that the transcriber was present at all the recorded sessions, either as the teacher in the class or as examiner in the oral tests, and was able, from memory, to place some unclear excerpts in their true context. The transcription analysis results, however, were not as accurate as they should have been.

Ideally, classroom observations should be video taped but this was not permitted by the regulations of UAU. Not only are combined visual and sound recordings a richer source of material, especially for classroom behaviour, but they might also have avoided some of the problems noted in the previous paragraph.

Another problem is to do with the use of a picture description test in the oral pre-test and post-test. Such a test is representative of informal real-world language use but neither the TBL nor the GBL groups had any familiarity with such a test in their lessons. In relation to this issue, Douglas (2001: 48) comments that 'a target situation in the test is not sufficient to guarantee communicative language use'. On the other hand, Wigglesworth (1997) makes it clear that tests should strive to ensure the same implementational conditions that learners will experience in the target language use situation. Since, however, both groups experienced the same conditions while taking the same tests, we can still meaningfully compare their results.

The presence, as assessor, of their teacher at the oral pre-tests and post-tests may also have affected the reliability of the results. Some students may have felt uncomfortable and remained silent because they might not have wanted to make errors in front of their teacher. Such problems are potential sources of unreliability. Therefore, the oral tests of this study were combined with other methods of assessment to increase reliability (Brown and Hudson 1998).

Although the questionnaire designed to elicit feedback (section 3.3) generally provided the information the researcher was seeking, and the analysis of students' and teachers' answers was relatively easy to carry out, some students misunderstood certain questions or gave answers that were impossible to categorise with the researcher's coding system. Perhaps this is inevitable but it is possible that the results might have improved if there had been time to pilot several versions of the questionnaire with small groups of students who were not taking part in the experiment. The weaknesses of the results of the questionnaire administered to teachers were the relatively poor return of completed questionnaires and the freedom they had, if they wished, to collude in their answers.

The course evaluation questionnaire encountered similar but more serious problems. As pointed out in section 4.5.6, a significant proportion of students misunderstood some of the questions, with the consequence that the analysis produced some seemingly contradictory results. In short, both GBL and TBL students said the course had met their needs and many TBL students said that the TBL method should also be applied to their science courses, yet neither group, and especially the TBL students, gave the course a high rating. Many answers, especially to Question 4, were so general that the researcher could not code them. The most reasonable explanation for this is that some of the questions were too general and did not provide sufficient clues about the kind of information sought. Here again, some piloting of the questions might have proved useful. Furthermore, despite the attractiveness, discussed in section 3.5.3, of open-ended questions, it could be argued that multiple-choice questions, or questions which asked students to rank their answers, would have produced more meaningful results. This is especially true of the question that sought to identify which particular language skills had or had not been enhanced by the course.

There were problems with attendance and punctuality in both the GBL and TBL groups. Some students were absent for more than two or three weeks and some of them were always late for class. Data were not collected for this but there was no noticeable difference between the GBL and TBL groups in these respects. Consequently, these factors are unlikely to have affected the comparison between the two groups in the results for the oral tests and the final examinations but they made the analysis of the class observations more difficult and possibly less accurate.

The low proficiency of students at the 102 stage combined with the code complexity required for COLT analysis proved to be a problem for the researcher, especially in analysing observations of the pre-task phase in the TBL lessons.

The generally poor English language skills, and especially the poor oral skills, of level 102 students also made some of the TBL guidelines very difficult to apply. For instance, despite the desirability of having different group work leaders each week and explicit instructions that this should happen, two of the five groups kept the same group leader throughout the course. This was because they were the only student in their group who was able to speak in English with any fluency. Some group members could not produce a single sentence in English. This raises questions about the appropriate level of the students' starting proficiency in the target language for the TBL method guidelines to be applied.

Finally, the researcher was a teacher without TBL teaching experience and despite his aiming for objectivity in this study, there is an issue with regard to researcher bias. This issue has attracted a great deal of discussion, for example, Mehra (2002: npn) writes that 'a researcher's personal beliefs and values are reflected not only in the choice of methodology and interpretation of findings, but also in the choice of a research topic. In other words, what we believe in determines what we want to study'. He continues, 'the researcher can't separate himself or herself from the topic/people he or she is studying, it is in the interaction between the researcher and researched that the knowledge is created. So the researcher bias enters into the picture even if the researcher tries to stay out of it'. This is a problem that cannot easily be overcome in any study.

I would argue, as previously mentioned, that I was well aware of this potential problem and took all the steps to ensure that all classes received equal treatment within the constraints of the two different teaching methods. In fact, under the terms of my employment at the university and current staffing levels there, I had no choice but to teach both the control and experimental groups, eight classes in all. I was, however, able to choose to allocate all four GBL classes to Sunday teaching slots and all four TBL classes to Tuesday slots. This, I believed, would make it easier for me to concentrate on delivering good classes in one method on Sundays and good classes in the other method on Tuesdays. This concentration, as well as lesson preparation, would have been more difficult if the scheduling had been less organised.

As mentioned also that every effort was made to reduce the number of variables in the experiment. Classes were arranged so as to be identical in size and to contain the same spread of ability. All classes had lessons of identical duration and frequency. The fact that both the control and experimental classes had the same teacher could be seen as a methodological advantage because it removed yet one more possible variable, thus leaving the teaching method – the focus of the experiment – as the independent variable. It is certainly true that if the control and experimental groups had had different teachers, differing or surprising results would have raised speculation about the influence of factors such as the relative experience, expertise and enthusiasm of the two teachers.

Perhaps the main issues here are that I was aware of the potential problem, that I took steps to minimise unconscious bias and that I was professionally interested in the outcomes of a genuine experiment.

Although this study has shown that the TBL group had better learning outcomes than the GBL group, it clearly should not to be taken as evidence that TBL constitutes a better classroom option than GBL in all cases. It remains for future research to determine whether a replication of this study will reach similar results and whether similar results can be obtained with other social, cultural, and age groups.

5.6 Recommendations

5.6.1 Further research

Some of the limitations discussed in section 5.7 of this chapter and issues that arose in the course of the present study suggest several recommendations for further research. First, this study was based on previous findings that neither English language courses that concentrate entirely on language form and vocabulary nor English language courses based purely on developing communicative language skills are likely to be very successful.

It attempted to combine these two aims and its conclusions support other studies that show that this is the most promising route for English language courses. The best balance between promoting accuracy and developing fluency, however, has still to be worked out. Consequently, more work needs to be done to give teachers clearer ideas about the proportion of lesson time to devote to each aim in order to achieve the best balance.

Following on from the above recommendation, teachers would greatly welcome the development of teaching materials and methods which seek to combine the two aims. Classroom activities which seek to improve both accuracy and fluency could also be developed through more flexible and imaginative L2 teacher education programmes. It may also be that the balance is different for students of different ages or it may depend on the students' starting level of proficiency. As far as I am aware, there have been no comparative studies on this possibility.

Another approach would be to take the TBL method as the basic framework for teaching but to adapt it to acknowledge the importance of accuracy, which entails focus on form as well as fluency. The TBL method is now quite widely known so this would have the advantage of modifying a familiar method to take account of its known shortcomings. In the English for Science context of the present study, this would mean devising TBL activities which integrate scientific vocabulary, accurate English usage and realistic scientific activities such as explaining a scientific theory or writing a report on an experiment from given data.

Although they were not available for the present study, video and audio materials should be used in these English language courses, especially where the teacher is not a native speaker of the target language. As well as adding interest through a variety of source materials, they would help to develop listening skills, which tend to have a low priority in most EFL courses, and provide authentic language forms for students to follow. On English language courses, videos could show, for instance, a scientific experiment, a medical case or a business meeting. It would be interesting to test hypotheses about such benefits through experimental studies.

Most studies of communicative learning have been conducted on general English language courses. While these are important, more work needs to be done in the area of English for Specific Purposes. Following the present study on an English language course for applied science students, research to investigate the potential advantages of communicative teaching should be undertaken in English language courses for other disciplines such as Engineering, Medicine and Business Studies, where English has become the main language of instruction in many countries. Given the economic importance of these disciplines, it is likely that research funding could be available. It is recommended that Willis's (1996) framework be used for such studies because it provides a detailed and easy-to-understand model for lesson structure and because the results would be comparable with other studies using the same framework.

The present study was constrained by the facts that both the control and experimental groups had to take the same university final examination and that this examination was based on the standard course book that had been written for the GBL method. Clearly, the TBL method needs teaching materials designed for TBL teaching. Such materials are available and the range grows year by year. The value of such materials could be shown by replication of the present study with the experimental group using appropriate TBL materials. It would still be very important that both groups of students (control and experimental) took the same final examination because its results provide the clearest proof of the superiority of one method over the other, but obviously this examination should not be based on either group's lesson materials.

Although many researchers stress the importance in foreign language learning of student motivation, more work needs to be done on this specific issue and on ways of

increasing it. Is motivation mainly a function of personality, of the students' goals in taking the course or the extent to which the students' perceived needs are met by the course? To what extent, if any, is it influenced by the teacher, the teaching method or the teaching materials? If motivation is so important, and most teachers would agree that it is, it would be very useful to have more definitive answers to these questions.

Finally, broader generalisations could be made if the research were replicated in other courses in other tertiary institutions. This is because this experiment was conducted only on one course in one tertiary institution. The most important issue here is that further research should look at similar learners and courses.

5.6.2 English language teaching

The results of the present study engender seven recommendations for English language course designers and teachers. First, this study supports the argument of Skehan (2007: 68-9) that, though much research is still needed on TBL teaching methods, current findings prove that TBL is a meaningful framework and that it can contribute to effective instruction. Where it has not been tried, it should be introduced to English language courses, perhaps initially on a limited scale, after appropriate in-service training courses for teachers. It would be helpful if teachers, having used TBL for the first time, could report on their experience in professional journals or on the Internet.

Second, English language teaching should begin at primary schools within the Saudi Arabian education system and the quality of EFL/EAP teaching should be improved in secondary schools and universities. Incorporating TBL activities into syllabi could help to do this and increase the appeal of English language learning for students.

In terms of techniques, there are many advantages of group/pair work for language pedagogy. Ellis (2003: 267) listed many of them, such as an increase of enjoyment, an increase of motivation, and an increase of production. The results of the present study support this conclusion. Realistic communicative interaction in the target language should be encouraged among learners on English courses, not only in the classroom

but also in their leisure time. English clubs where English language books, music and film could be discussed might be one way of encouraging this.

In the Ministry of Education and in each university, there should be a professional educator who is responsible for reviewing new language teaching materials and bringing suitable publications to the attention of teachers. Short in-service training courses are likely to be a good means of disseminating such knowledge. Linked with this could be a student 'feedback questionnaire' undertaken before every English course and repeated at least annually. This analysis should inform the content of the course. English courses should also take particular care that the specific purpose (e.g. for science, for business, etc.) is fully reflected in the course design, lesson planning, teaching materials and classroom activities. Evaluation of courses by students through anonymous questionnaires would also provide information to the professional. These can be very useful to teachers for assessing and developing their teaching methods and materials. They should become common practice. Although some questions might be open-ended in order to elicit unexpected responses and ideas for improvement, the most useful feedback from students is likely to come from asking them to rate, on a given scale, the benefit and enjoyment gained from particular lessons and activities.

Despite its limitations, this research study represents at least a small step forward in the development of second language teaching by confirming the value of adding a communicative element, such as TBL, to traditional GBL courses. It is hoped, then, that the findings and recommendations of this study will contribute towards mproving English language courses at Saudi Arabian universities and that they will persuade similar institutions in other countries to reassess their traditional English language courses and teaching method.

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Appendix A
Feedback questionnaire

Students' Questionnaire

أخي الطالب:

هدف هذا الإستبيان هو استطلاع رأيك كطالب غير متخصص في مادة اللغة الإنجليزية وذلك عن مستواك في اللغة الإنجليزية ومقتراحتك في تطوير تعليم وتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية التي سوف تؤخذ في الإعتبار وذلك بوضعك علامة (√) في المربع الذي يوضح رأيك فإن أراك الصريحة سيكون لها مردود في تطوير مناهج وطرق تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية.

تأكد تماماً بأن الإجابات ستستخدم فقط لأغراض البحث وليست لأغراض أخرى.

أشكرك مقدماً على حسن تعاونك.

Dear student,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to have your opinion as a student of non-specialist in English language. It is about your level of English language, your suggestions of development of English language learning and teaching. Therefore, I wonder if you can help me by ticking (√) the option you believe to be appropriate response. Your suggestions are very important for developing the methodology of English language learning and teaching.

Be certain that your opinions will be treated as entirely confidential and will be used for the purpose of this research and not for other things.

أجب على الأسئلة التلية بوضع علامة (√) في المربع الذي يوضح رأيك:

١. ماهو مستواك في اللغة الإنجليزية؟

□ جيد جداً □ جيد □ لاأدري □ ضعيف □ ضعيف جداً

٢. ماهو مستواك في اللغة الإنجليزية بالنسبة لتخصصك العلمي؟

□ جيد جداً □ جيد □ لاأدري □ ضعيف □ ضعيف جداً

٣. مامدى تحمسك لتعلم واستخدام اللغة الإنجليزية؟

□ متحمس جداً □ متحمس قليلاً □ لاأدري □ غير متحمس □ لاأريد التعلم باللغة الإنجليزية

٤. ماهو في إعتقادك سبب ضعفك في اللغة الإنجليزية في الإختيارات التالية:

□ عدم الممارسة □ تأخر تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية للمتوسط □ ضعف البرامج □ عدم الرغبة □ المنهج

٥. ماهو في إعتقادك السبب الرئيسي الذي يساعدك في تحسنك للغة الإنجليزية حسب الإختيارات التالية:

□ تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية من الإبتدائية □ الممارسة □ البرامج الجيدة □ المعلم الإنجليزي □ المنهج

٦. هل لديك أي تعليقات أخرى؟

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Tick (√) the option you believe to be appropriate response:

1. **What do you think of your command of English in general?**

   □ very good □ good □ I don't know □ weak □ very weak

2. **What do you think of your command of English in the subject of your study?**

   □ very good □ good □ I don't know □ weak □ very weak

3. **Are you motivated to learn and use English?**

   □ very motivated □ motivated □ I don't know □ not motivated □ I don't like English

4. **Which option do you think is the main cause of your weakness in English language?**

   □ no use □ late start □ poor provision of courses □ no motivation □ irrelevant material

5. **Which option do you think might help you to improve in English?**

   □ early start □ use □ good provision of courses □ native speaker □ relevant materials

6. **Do you have any further suggestions?**

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Teachers' Questionnaire

عزيزي الزميل،

أنا أبحث في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية للأغراض الخاصة (لغير المتخصصين في اللغة الإنجليزية). هذا البحث يتعلق بتحليل إحتياجات الطلاب من تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية.

مرفق إستبيان مصمم لهذا الغرض لذلك أرجو مساعدتك لي لو تكرمت بإعطاء رايك الهام عن مستوى طلبتك وإقتراحاتك القيمة وذلك بوضعك علامة (√) في المربع الذي يوضح رأيك. إن أراك الصريحة سيكون لها مردود في تطوير مناهج وطرق تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية.

تأكد تماماً بأن الإجابات ستستخدم فقط لأغراض البحث وليست لأغراض أخرى.

أشكرك مقدماً على حسن تعاونك

Dear colleague,

I am presently researching in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). This research involves an analysis of students' relevant needs.

Attached is a questionnaire designed to investigate these aspects. Therefore, I wonder if you can help me by ticking (√) the option you believe to be appropriate response. Your views and opinions will be treated as entirely confidential.

All my thanks

أجب على الأسئلة التلية بوضع علامة (√) في المربع الذي يوضح رأيك:

١. ماهو مستوى طلابك في اللغة الإنجليزية؟

□ جيد جداً □ جيد □ لاأدري □ ضعيف □ ضعيف جداً

٢. ماهو مستواهم في اللغة الإنجليزية بالنسبة للتخصص العلمي؟

□ جيد جداً □ جيد □ لاأدري □ ضعيف □ ضعيف جداً

٣. مامدى تحمسهم لتعلم واستخدام اللغة الإنجليزية؟

□ متحمس جداً □ متحمس قليلاً □ لاأدري □ غير متحمس □ لاأريد التعلم باللغة الإنجليزية

٤. ماهو في إعتقادك سبب ضعف الطلاب في اللغة الإنجليزية في الإختيارات التالية:

□ عدم الممارسة □ تأخر تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية للمتوسط □ ضعف البرامج □ عدم الرغبة □ المنهج

٥. ماهو في إعتقادك السبب الرئيسي الذي يساعدهم في تحسنهم للغة الإنجليزية حسب الإختيارات التالية:

□ تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية من الإبتدائية □ الممارسة □ البرامج الجيدة □ المعلم الإنجليزي □ المنهج

٦. هل لديك أي تعليقات أخرى؟

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Tick (√) the option you believe to be appropriate response:

1. **What do you think of your students' command of English in general?**

□ very good □ good □ I don't know □ weak □ very weak

2. **What do you think of your students' command of English in the subject of your study?**

□ very good □ good □ I don't know □ weak □ very weak

3. **Are your students motivated to learn and use English?**

□ very motivated □ motivated □ I don't know □ not motivated □ I don't like English

4. **Which option do you think is the main cause of your students' English language weakness?**

□ no use □ late start □ poor provision of courses □ no motivation □ irrelevant material

5. **Which option do you think might help to improve their English?**

□ early start □ use □ good provision of courses □ native speaker □ relevant materials

6. **Do you have any further suggestions?**

_____

_____

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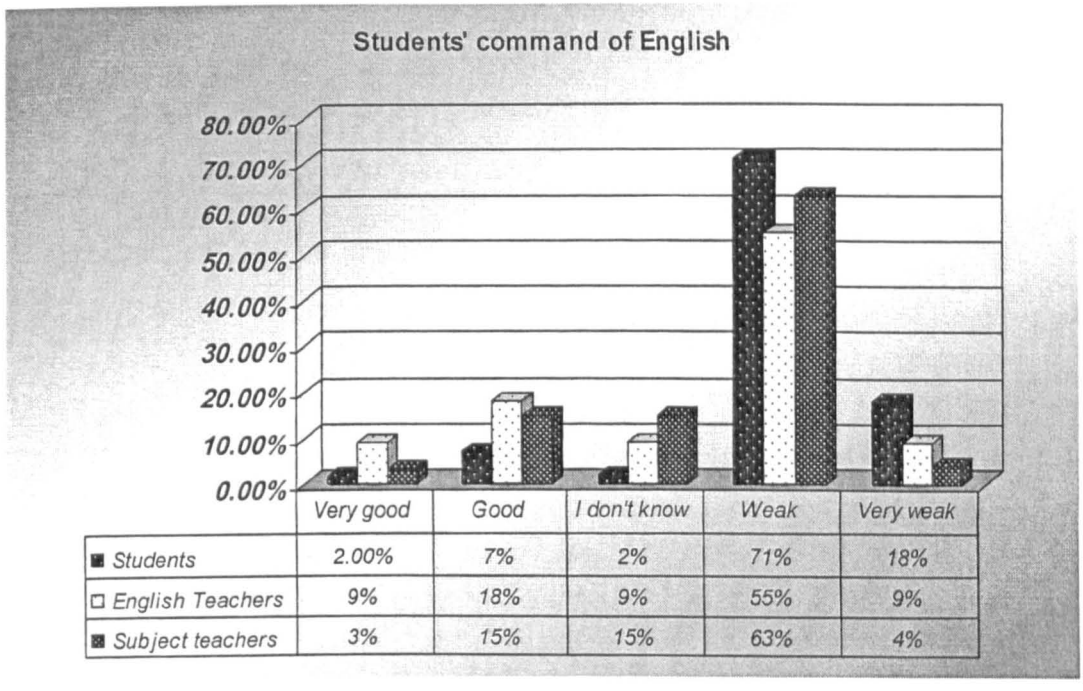
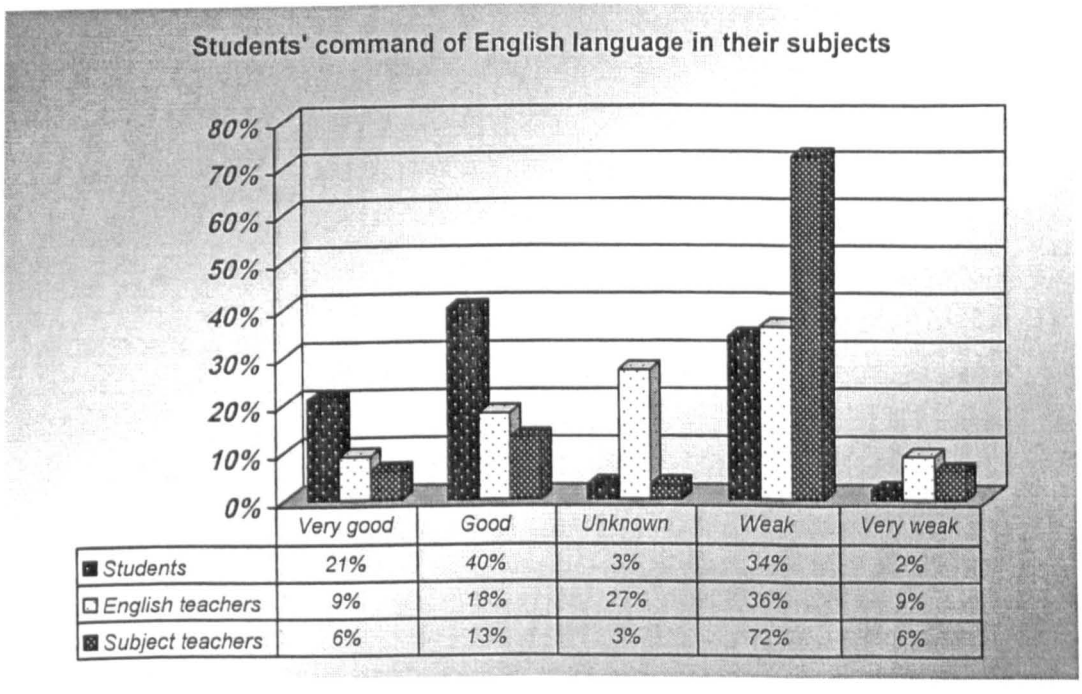
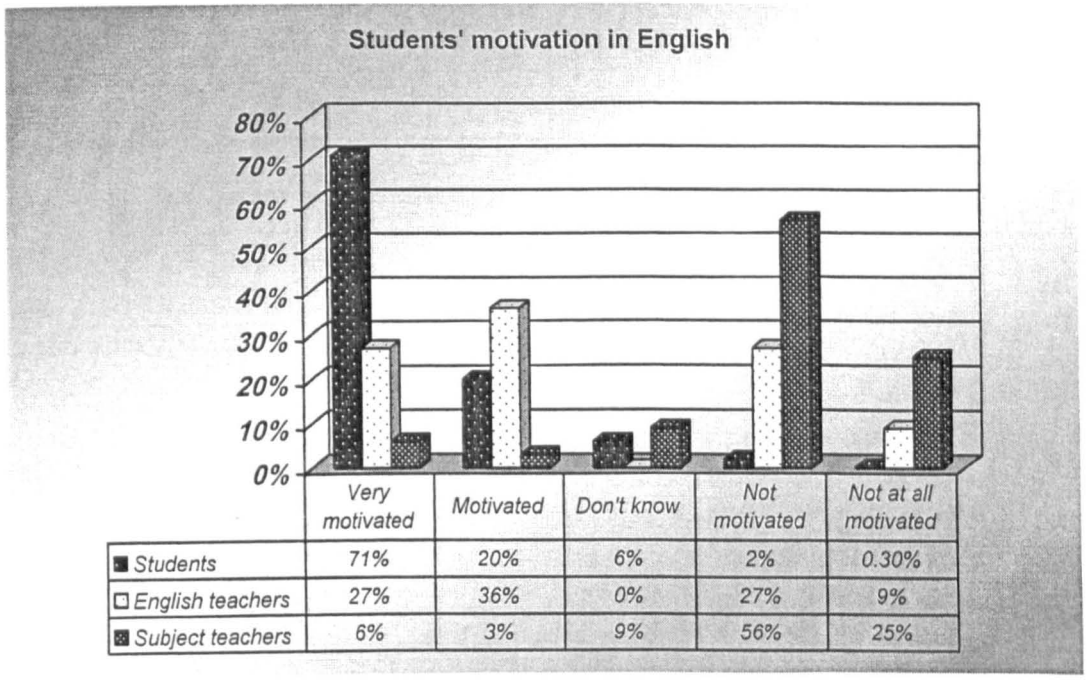
Appendix B
Figures of questionnaire results



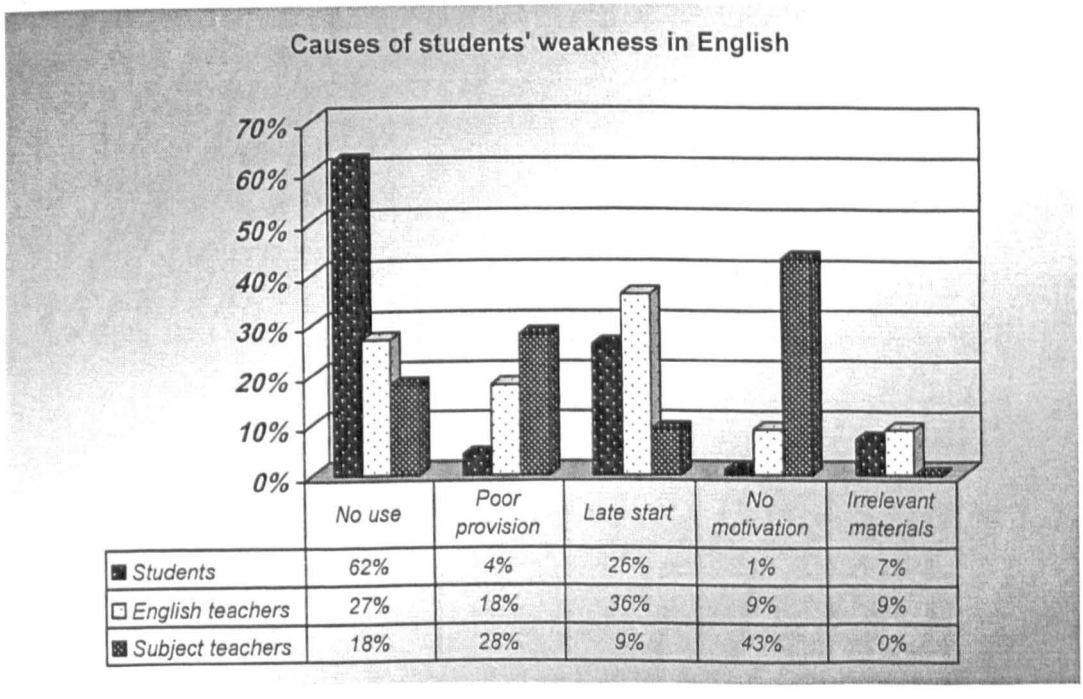
	Very good	Good	I don't know	Weak	Very weak
Students	2.00%	7%	2%	71%	18%
English Teachers	9%	18%	9%	55%	9%
Subject teachers	3%	15%	15%	63%	4%



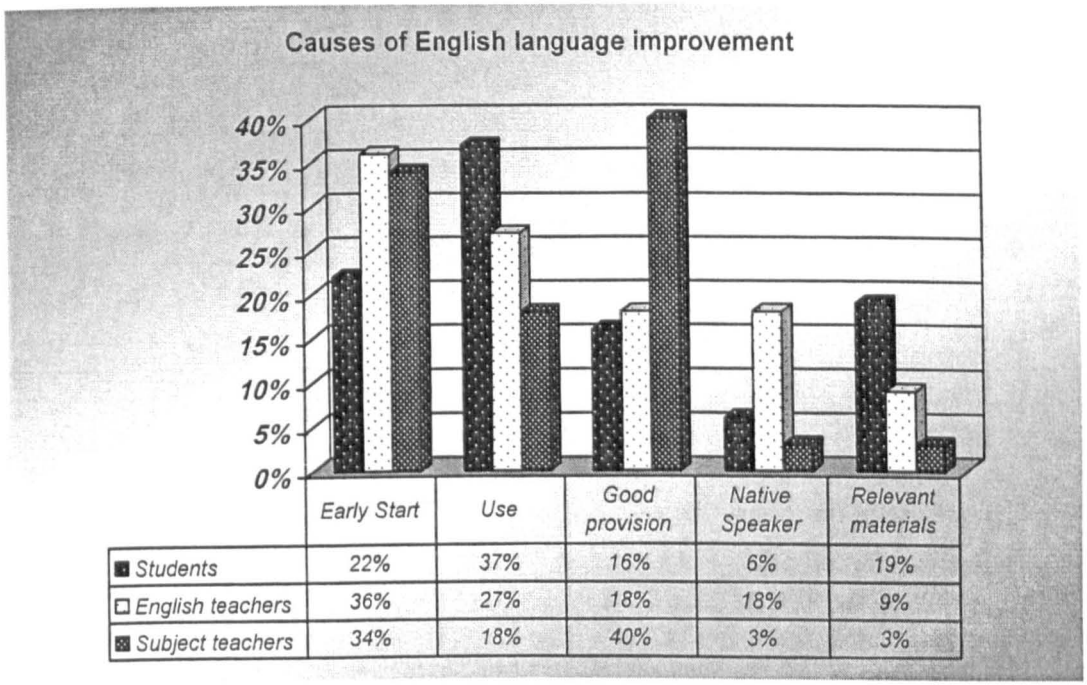
	Very good	Good	Unknown	Weak	Very weak
Students	21%	40%	3%	34%	2%
English teachers	9%	18%	27%	36%	9%
Subject teachers	6%	13%	3%	72%	6%



	Very motivated	Motivated	Don't know	Not motivated	Not at all motivated
Students	71%	20%	6%	2%	0.30%
English teachers	27%	36%	0%	27%	9%
Subject teachers	6%	3%	9%	56%	25%

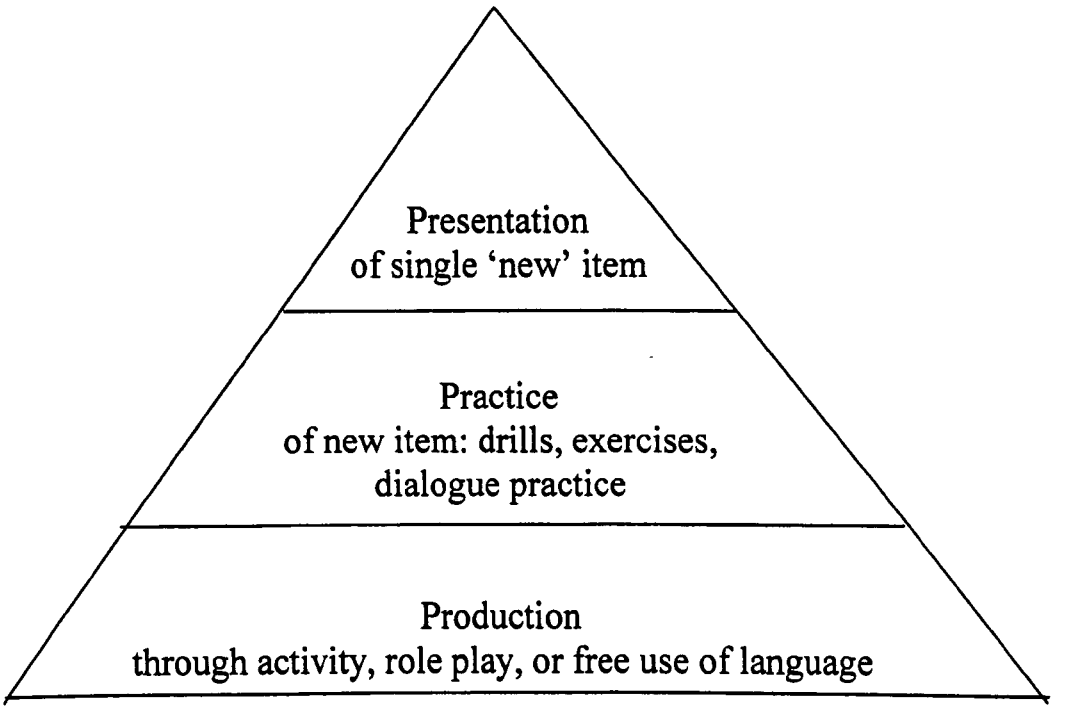


	No use	Poor provision	Late start	No motivation	Irrelevant materials
Students	62%	4%	26%	1%	7%
English teachers	27%	18%	36%	9%	9%
Subject teachers	18%	28%	9%	43%	0%



	Early Start	Use	Good provision	Native Speaker	Relevant materials
Students	22%	37%	16%	6%	19%
English teachers	36%	27%	18%	18%	9%
Subject teachers	34%	18%	40%	3%	3%

Appendix C
Typical GBL model



Appendix D
Components of the TBL framework

Pre-task
Introduction to topic and task

Teachers explore the topic with the class, mention useful words, phrases, help students understand task instructions and prepare.

Task cycle

Task
Students do the task, in pairs or small groups. Teacher monitor from A distance.

Planning
Students prepare to report to the whole class (orally or in writing) how they did the task, what they decided or discovered.

Report
Some groups present their reports to the class, exchange written reports, Compare results

Language focus

Analysis
Students examine and discuss Specific features of the text or Transcript of the recording.

Practice
Teachers conduct practice of new words, phrases & patterns occurring in the data, either during or after the analysis.

Appendix E
Class worksheet

١. What is a summary of the passage?

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٢. What have you got from this unit?

١. .....
٢. .....
٣. .....
٤. .....
٥. .....

٣. What grammatical structures have you learned from this unit?

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٤. What new words (part of speech) have you learned from this unit?

١. .....
٢. .....
٣. .....
٤. .....
٥. .....

٥. Would you like to add any information/suggestion/comment?

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Appendix F
A field-work plan

WEEK (0) 5th FEB 05	WEEK (4---12/13) 12 March 05-14 May 05	WEEK(14 May 05) collecting data
week (0) (5th to 26 Feb 05): 1.Get 101 exam scores for the two groups of 102 for parallel distribution of the two classes (TBL & PPP) 2.Test fluency 102 both groups (Pre-test) (NOTE: two students at a time; each describes his own picture to the other in one minute for each **N.B. the course starts on Week 4 due to reschedules**	week (4) (12 March 05): 1. Start teaching of 102 (sessions TBL group 1a and PPP group 1b How do scientists work?) 2. Observe by recording the two groups including yourself; For TBL class, put a recorder in the middle of each work-group week (5) (19 March 05): 1. Continue teaching the two classes of 102 (unit 2: Classification) 2. Observe the two classes as the same as previous method week (5) (26 March 05): Do the same procedures as abovementioned until the end of week 12. >>	week (13) (14 May 05): 1.Final exam to both groups 2.Test fluency 102 both groups (Post-test) (NOTE: It is a repeated speaking test with same pictures used in the pre-test and same amount of time [1minute each one]). 3. Let them complete the questionnaire

Appendix G

102 English for Science: English course book units
(a copy of the first lesson)

LEARN ENGLISH FOR SCIENCE

A. R. Bolitho and P. L. Sandler

Contents

UNIT 1 How do scientists work?

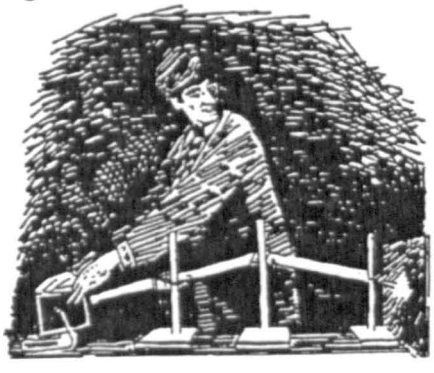
1 We can all observe simple scientific facts about the colour of the sky, the temperature, or the depth of a river at different times of the year. The scientist's task is to ask questions about these observed facts and to find answers to these questions. He usually bases theories on his observations and then tests his theories by practical experiment. He often uses special apparatus to help him to make observations and to carry out his experiments.

Look at these pictures of scientists at work in their laboratories:

2

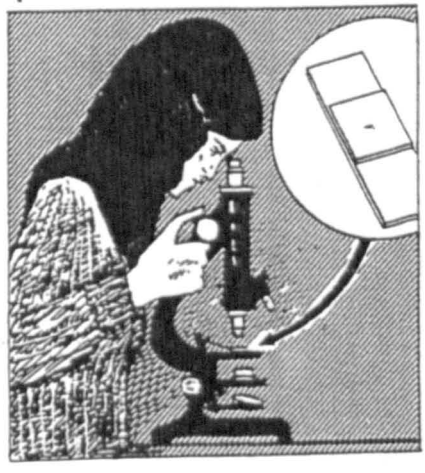
This man is a chemist. He is using a balance to weigh some copper sulphate crystals. Beside him is the apparatus which is used to make the crystals. Copper sulphate ($CuSO_4$) is composed of three elements – copper, sulphur and oxygen. It is a compound. Compounds are substances which consist of two or more elements. Chemists not only analyse compounds but also combine elements to form compounds.

3



This man is a physicist. He wants to find out something about the colours in the spectrum. He is using lenses and a prism to produce these colours from a beam of white light. Physicists study not only light but also sound, heat and electricity.

4



This woman is a biologist. She is using a microscope to examine a blood sample. She wants to find out the number of red blood cells in the sample. She can only see these cells through a microscope because they are so small. A microscope is an instrument which magnifies very small objects. A biologist studies all forms of life and often needs the help of a microscope. Some living things consist of only one cell.

WORDS

WORD STUDY

observe (1): When we observe the moon through a telescope, we look at it closely and try to find things out about it.
depth (1): The depth of a river is greater in the middle than near the sides. A bad swimmer should never go out of his depth.
bases on (1): builds on. Darwin's Theory of Evolution was based on observations of animals in many parts of the world.
theories (1): ideas which explain, or try to explain, facts or events.
apparatus (1): Remember that this word is uncountable and has no plural. Lenses and prisms are pieces of apparatus.
consist of (2): are made up of. Water consists of hydrogen and oxygen.
analyse (2): If a chemist analyses a compound, he breaks it down; he finds out which elements it consists of.
spectrum (3): the different colours which light consists of.
examine (4): look at very closely and carefully.
sample (4): a small amount of a substance, usually taken for testing.
cells (4): the smallest living units. All living things consist of cells. The smallest living things consist of only one cell. They are single-celled.
magnifies (4): Microscopes and telescopes are instruments which magnify. They make things seem bigger.

WORDS IN COMBINATION

Look at these examples

These cells are found in blood. They are *blood cells*.

These crystals consist of copper sulphate. They are *copper sulphate crystals*.

1. *Now complete these sentences in the same way*

a) 

This assistant works in a laboratory. He is . . .

b) 

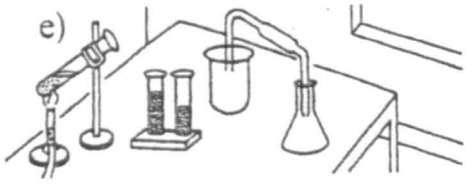
Joe studies physics.
He is . . .

c) 

Mrs Evans teaches biology.
She is . . .

d) 

This is a sample of rock.
It is . . .

e) 

This laboratory is used for chemistry.
It is . . .

WORD BUILDING

2. *Fill in the missing word in each pair. The first one has been done for you.*

The scientist	*His science*
a) a biologist	biology
b) a physicist	. . .
c) . . .	chemistry
d) a mathematician	. . .
e) a geologist	. . .
f) a technologist	. . .
g) . . .	botany
h) . . .	zoology

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. *Answer these questions*

a) What does a scientist usually base his theories on?

b) How does a scientist test his theories?
c) What does a scientist often use instruments for?
d) What does a scientist often use apparatus for?
e) What does copper sulphate consist of?
f) What sort of substance is copper sulphate?
g) How many elements does water consist of?
h) What do physicists study?

2. *Here are some answers. Make a question for each one, using the words in brackets.*

a) To weigh some copper sulphate crystals. (What . . . for?)
b) To make the crystals. (What . . . for?)
c) To produce the colours in the spectrum. (What . . . for?)
d) To examine a blood sample. (What . . . for?)
e) There are copper sulphate crystals on the balance. (What sort of . . .?)
f) Water is a compound. (What sort of . . . ?)
g) Oxygen is an element. (What sort of . . . ?)
h) She is looking at blood cells. (What sort of . . . ?)

SENTENCES

PRESENT TENSES

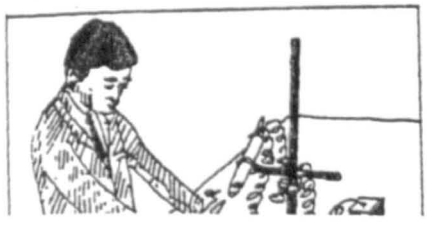
Look at this example

Peter/biologist/laboratory → Peter is a biologist. He *works* in a laboratory.

1. *Now make similar pairs of sentences from each group of words below*

a) Marie/chemist/chemistry laboratory
b) Frank/geologist/university
c) Tom/mathematician/with numbers
d) Mr Clark/technologist/with computers
e) Mrs Evans/biology teacher/school
f) John and Ann/laboratory assistants/with apparatus
g) Rita and David/botany students/with plants

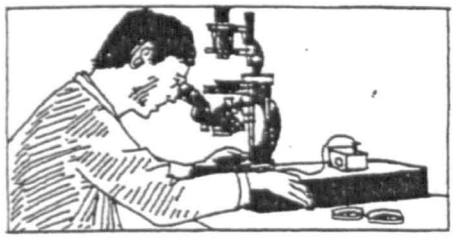
Look at the picture and the example



chemist/do/experiment →
This man is a chemist. He *is doing* an experiment.

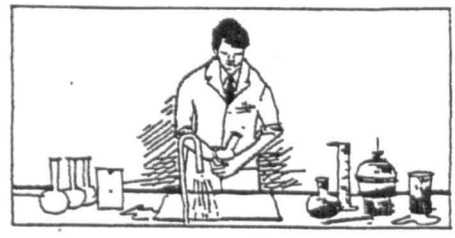
2. *Now make similar pairs of sentences for each picture*

a)



biologist/look through/ microscope

b)



laboratory assistant/wash/ apparatus

c)

biologist/test/blood sample

d)

geologist/analyse/rock sample

e)

students/observe/experiment

f)

mathematician/use/computer

3. *Now answer these questions*

a) What does Tom work with?
b) Where does Mrs Evans work?
c) Where does Frank work?
d) What is the laboratory assistant in the picture doing?
e) What is the geologist in the picture doing?
f) What is the biologist in picture (c) doing?

THE PASSIVE

Look at the verb in this example

Copper sulphate *is composed* of three elements.

4. *Use verbs in the same passive form to complete these sentences*

a) Water (compose) of hydrogen and oxygen.

b) Microscopes (use) to see very small things.
c) Chemical substances (weigh) on a balance.
d) Theories (often test) by experiment.
e) A spectrum of light (produce) by using a prism.
f) Apparatus (usually wash) by laboratory assistants.

CONNECTIVES

Look at this example

Physicists study both light and sound.
→Physicists study *not only* light *but also* sound.

5. *Now rewrite these sentences in the same way*

a) Biologists study both plants and animals.
b) Chemists study both elements and compounds.
c) Scientists work both in laboratories and outside.

Look at this example

Chemists analyse compounds. They also combine elements to form compounds.
→Chemists *not only* analyse compounds *but also* combine elements to form compounds.

6. *Now rewrite these sentences in the same way*

a) Scientists form theories. They also test them by experiment.
b) Laboratory assistants look after apparatus. They also help with experiments.
c) Students observe experiments. They also do them.
d) Geologists collect rock samples. They also analyse them.
e) Botanists collect plants. They also study them.
f) Zoologists observe animals. They also try to find out more about them.

GUIDED WRITING

Look at this example

Biologist/microscope/see/very small objects.
→A biologist *uses* a microscope *to see* very small objects.

7. *Now build more sentences with* use *in the same way*

a) Chemist/balance/weigh/substances
b) Physicist/prism and lenses/produce/spectrum

c) Mathematician/computer/make/difficult calculations
d) Chemist/special apparatus/produce/hydrogen
e) Scientists/special instruments/make/observations
f) We/ruler/measure/straight lines
g) We/thermometer/measure/temperature
h) Scientists/grammes and kilogrammes/measure/weight
i) We/telescopes/observe/moon and stars

NUMBERS AND MEASUREMENTS

SIMPLE ARITHMETIC

Look at the way we say these examples

$4+4=8$		four and four is eight
$9-2=7$		nine minus two is seven
$5\times5=25$		five times five is twenty-five
	or	five multiplied by five is twenty-five
$8\div4=2$		eight divided by four is two

1. *Now read these aloud*

a) $12+7=19$ b) $15\div3=5$ c) $6\times2=12$ d) $23-6=17$
e) $9-3=6$ f) $6+3=9$ g) $28\div4=7$ h) $8\times9=72$
i) $3\times8=24$ j) $12-4=8$

WEIGHTS

Scientists all over the world use a decimal system of weights.

1,000 milligrammes (mg)	= 1 gramme (g)
1,000 g	= 1 kilogramme (kg)
1,000 kg	= 1 tonne

Scientists use a balance to weigh things. Look back at the picture of the chemist in the laboratory. What is he weighing? How much do the crystals weigh?

They weigh 85 grammes.

How much do you weigh? How much does a loaf of bread weigh? How much does your English book weigh? Ask some of your classmates how much they weigh.

Appendix H

Pre- & Post- speaking (oral) tests' photographs

Appendix I

A control group's Pre- & Post-tests of word, pause and clause counts

Student Name	Pre-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count	Post-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count
Ali	He is a man he is a man – read a newspaper and sit down – a chair and a table – one of the table in class this man in a restaurant	30	18	3	2	The man in a restaurant this man sit on a chair and reading a newspaper – on a table, glass water, coffee shop – and – that's all	26	20	3	2
Hathal	This man write – writing – the – also – center room -	7	6	5	1	This man read - m - he - m -	4	4	4	1
Abdelilah	This man sit down chair, table – news – or in restaurant –	10	10	3	1	I want describe the picture the man is the writing the chair – room – the room – m – m instrument – m – the man is writing chair instrument	22	11	4	2
Yaser	The man write – writing the – is write –	7	4	3	2	He is man reading a newspaper – in a restaurant – in on table juice – because this man finish reading drink juice – sit down chair, table –	24	18	5	2
Ahmad	This man is writing – he sit – sit down – in a chair the man he stays in the – room on the right the man s – small car and in the picture the door is open – m –	33	21	6	4	This man sit down on the earth – he is writing the book – he sit down – in the room the door is open –	22	15	4	4
Hussain	This man is – writing a newspaper reading a newspaper and he sit down – Table he is drink –	17	13	3	3	A man is it here you are reading a newspaper – is drink coffee – and – behind glass – it is coffee table –	20	15	5	2
Nasser	There is a boy writing his homework on the floor he sit down in his room he does not write his homework on the floor and – there is in the room the chair and opened door he – he his clothes – a black thoub-	43	24	4	4	There is a boy holding a pen and write may he is writing a note or a homework on paper. There is a chair and the boy sit on the floor on the floor and he – white may be – a black tthoub and there is an open door – that's that	51	27	4	5

Student Name	Pre-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count	Post-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count
Raid	The man the read – magazine and coffee and – the plant – not clear – the – cafeteria – the –	**15**	**10**	**7**	**0**	A – boy or aman read this – is a – read a magazine there is a coffee – and want there –m	**19**	**13**	**5**	**1**
Salman	This is a boy is doing his homework and side here a chair and he study in the got room or something like this the door is opened and the – there is some somewhat some book and ketchup – just	**39**	**30**	**2**	**5**					
Mohammad	He is a man read a book he is in coffee and just some drink desk – there is a coat –	**20**	**15**	**2**	**2**	He is the man he stayed – and drink – in a hat a book – let's say a book the coffee –	**20**	**15**	**4**	**1**
Saad	In this picture he is a man writing the book – writing a book this a chair and – the door – OK –	**20**	**14**	**4**	**1**	This man this man is writing there are chair and close and and piece and book and pen –m (speak in Arabic)	**18**	**12**	**2**	**2**
Mohammad	This a man reading – he is reading journal. He is opening cup of water - cappuccino he sit down on a chair behind him - OK	**24**	**19**	**3**	**3**	This man is reading they are table, coffee and tree this man is on the chair – this man is I think in – in a university I finished	**27**	**19**	**3**	**4**
Rakan	The man write the paragraph – the man sleep – sleep – the room, the book and the – the table the door open the door -	**22**	**11**	**5**	**3**	The man is writing – autograph the man sleep in room –m	**10**	**8**	**2**	**2**
AbdulAziz	The man is read in the magazine is the table. He is in the table cup and spoon he is in – the hotel he is a plant he is change a and them	**32**	**17**	**2**	**3**	The man read magazine in the hotel. He is he is the table and glasses – playground he is – he is – he is on the table -	**25**	**13**	**4**	**3**

Student Name	Pre-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count	Post-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count
Ahmad	A man sit on the ground and – he write – a teach some paper – on the ground the man – write the door is open and some chair – and the cup	**29**	**17**	**7**	**4**	The man sit on the floor and he he have a pen and some paper and some paper – in him in room – and – he have – some tea – in the cup -	**30**	**17**	**9**	**3**
Salih	The man reading the man reading the book the table on – the – the beaker – on – the plant -	**17**	**8**	**5**	**1**	This man writing in the in the book – they are – they – and – a – door – a –	**13**	**10**	**5**	**1**
Bassam	The picture the man or – a – write – a –	**6**	**5**	**2**	**0**	I see a picture a man – writing – a – chair – the door – a book -	**13**	**10**	**6**	**1**
AbdulAziz	In the picture is reading the newspaper and a – chair on table and juice -	**14**	**12**	**2**	**0**	I see you in the picture a man or a businessman in a hotel a – reading he is reading newspaper in the table coffee and juice – a – and table -	**27**	**19**	**3**	**1**
Mohammad	The boy he is a boy – read – write on book class a – boy student he is student the coffee take coffee drink coffee – m	**24**	**14**	**4**	**2**	The school boy study or homework on the land a – these in a chair door open the door – the boy – the boy drinked the coffee -	**25**	**16**	**4**	**2**
AbdulAziz	I see man the office the man in office reading – reading paper – the man drank coffee the man drank coffee the – in the table book and the plus – no office no window	**32**	**17**	**5**	**2**	The man in – office the man in office read in a in a – read in a magnews the table – the table on a – glass coffee or – book and note- in office window	**32**	**17**	**6**	**2**
Abdullah	The door is open the man is look full coffee that is – window mosque -	**14**	**11**	**2**	**1**	The man – sit down – in the house the door open – on the side door on the right book and coffee the right – (In Arabic)	**22**	**14**	**4**	**2**

Student Name	Pre-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count	Post-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count
Khalil	This a man read a book – the table look full coffee that is – window mosque –	**15**	**14**	**3**	**2**	The a man – the a man – read a magazine and looking carefully on chair there door glass coffee or to – to their plant I looking window most window looking -	**29**	**21**	**3**	**1**
Sultan	This man study – he – the book – the door open	**9**	**8**	**3**	**2**	The open the door the picture the school boy reading a – the man reading – the book open	**17**	**10**	**2**	**2**
Osama	I see a man in the coffee shop reading a newspaper drinking – a coffee and there is a candle on the table and three chairs and three very small trees in the corner all that	**35**	**25**	**2**	**3**	I see a boy do his homework on the floor and the door of the room is opened there is a chair close to him and there is opened book near to him also and – I think the floor made of wood and – that's	**45**	**29**	**2**	**5**
Hisham	There is wight chair door is open the boy do his-homework sit on the floor there is a sofa there is a book on the floor and he wear pygama black-pygama and there a boat – I cant see clearly wall Wight color paint	**45**	**32**	**4**	**6**					
Tahir	I see in the picture business man relax in the coffee and the drink drink some coffee he is read a paper he – he – sit down on the chair he have nice clothes-	**33**	**24**	**3**	**4**	I see the – a this is a man who stay in a hotel drink coffee he read a paper and relax in a hotel a – he stay in a coffee coffee of a hotel a – he – ping there just like that	**41**	**25**	**4**	**4**

Student Name	Pre-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count	Post-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count
Majid	A man study student drink coffee open the door study in the room –	**13**	**11**	**2**	**1**	The man sit down writing coffee drink coffee – the open door – sitdown in the	**14**	**10**	**3**	**1**
Abdullah	I see a man reading the books and reading on the table – roun plants –	**14**	**12**	**2**	**1**	I see the page the man reading in the book sit down – in the land – open the book between – glass coffee	**21**	**15**	**4**	**1**
Amer	I see a man sit down and writing or paint in the [illegible]	**19**	**15**	**2**	**2**	I see a man he is – read- he is stand up in a rest –	**14**	**11**	**2**	**2**
Yasser	The man is writing he is sit down he is next to chair – m	**13**	**10**	**2**	**3**	The picture –m this a man he is reading a book – he looking look in front of table – on the table glass he is – the house –m finish	**26**	**18**	**5**	**3**

Appendix J

Control groups' Pre- and post-tests of verb counts

Name of students (PPP)	Pre-Test single verb	two or more verbs	Post-Test single verb	two or more verbs
Raid	Read		Read ×2 Is ×2	
Mohammad	Is ×3 Read		Is Stayed Drink	Let's say
Saad	Is Writing ×2		Are	Is writing
Mohammad D.	Is ×2 Reading sit	Is reading Is opening	Are Is ×2 Think finished	Is reading
Rakan	Write Sleep ×2 Open		Sleep	Is writing
Abdulaziz	Is ×5	Is read	Reads Is ×6	
Salman	Is ×2 Doing Studying Like	Is opened		
Ali	Is ×2 Read sitdown		Sit Reading Is	
Hathal	Write		Read	
Abdulilah	Sitdown			Want describe Is writing ×2
Yasser	Write	Is write	Is Reading Drink Sitdown	Finish reading
Ahmad	Sitdown Stays	Is writing Is open	Sitdown ×2	Is writing Is open
Hussain	Reading Sitdown	Is writing Is drink	Is ×2	Are reading Is drink
Nasser	Is ×2 Writing Sitdown Does Opened		Is ×3 Holding Write Sit	May be ×2 Is writing
Ahmad B.	Sit Write ×2	Is open	Sit Have ×2	
Salih	Reading ×2		Writing Are	
Bassam	Write		See	

			Writing	
Abdulaziz H.	Reading	Is reading	See	Is reading
Abdullah	Write	Is opened	Sitdown	
Khalil	Read Is		Read Looking ×3	
Mohammad Z.	Is ×2 Read Take Drink		Study Is Open Drink	
Abdulaziz T.	Reading Drank ×2		Read ×2	
Sultan	Study Open		Open Reading ×2	
Osama	See Reading Drinking Is		See Do Is Close Think	Is opened ×2 Is made Is set
Hisham	Is ×4 Do Sit Wear	Is opened Can't see		
Tahir	See Relax Drink Read Sitdown Have		See Is Stay Drink Read Relax	
Majid	Study ×2 Drink Open		Sitdown Drink Open	Sitdown writing
Abdullah M.	See Reading ×2		See Reading Sitdown Open	
Amir	See Sitdown Writing Open		See	Is read Is stand up
Yassir	Is	Is writing Is sitdown	Looking Is Finish	Is reading
Ahmad B.	Is Read		Is ×2 Drink	
Khalid	Drink Is ×2		Is Read	Is looking
Sati	Open Read Sit		Is ×2 Drink Write	

Issam	Is Write		Is Write	Is reading
Mishal	Is		Read Is	
Adnan J.	Read		Read Is ×2	
Mohammad S.	Is ×2 Read		Is Drink	Is doing
Sulaiman	Is×2		Is	Is writing
Mahmood A.	Is ×2 Reading	Can see Is opening	Is ×3 Think	Is reading
Abdullah N.	Write Open	Is sit	Open	Is writing
Jafar K.	Is ×2 Study	Is read	Reading Is ×2 Study	
Asaad F.	Is ×2 Reading Study			
Abdulaziz Z.	Is Reading	Is sitdown	Reading Is	
Mohammad E.	Write Is ×2		Reading	
Jaman	Read	Sitting	Reading	Is looking
Jamal	Reading	Is reading	Is Reading Drink Eat	
Muhand	Sitdown Drink	Is writing		Is writing Is drinking
Abdullah G.	Reading		Is	Is waiting Is drink
Salih A.	Is ×2 Writing Doing Opened		Is ×3 Writing	Is Sitdown
Abdussalam	Is Read	Is live	read	
Ali L.	Reading is		Writing Are	
Mahmood	read		See Reading	
Khalid	Reading	Is reading	See	
Hashim	Is ×2	Sit	Sitdown	
Nidal	Read Is		Read	
Najeeb	Is ×2 Read Drink		Study Is	

Ahmad D.	Reading Is		Read ×2	
Hassen	Study Open		Open Reading ×2	
Jameel	Reading Is ×2	Can see	Doing Is	Is sit Is read
Saeed	Is ×4 Do Sit Wear	Is read		
Zamil A.	Drink Read Sitdown	Is looking	Is Stay Drink Read	
Tawfeeq	Study		Is ×2Open	Is Sitdown writing
Salim A.	Reading ×2 Is	Can see	Reading Sit Is	
Abdulaziz S.	Is Writing		See	Is read Is standing up
Ahmad Z.	Are	Is reading	Is ×2	Is reading
Yousif	Is		doing Is ×2	
Adel	Is Read write		Is Stayed Drink	Is reading
Mohammed	Is Writing		Is ×2	Is writing
Mazin	Is sit	Is reading	Are Is ×2 Think	Is reading
Mishal	Write		play	Is writing
Ghasi		Is reading	Reads	
Ali E.	Is	Is doing		
Abdullah M.	Is ×2 Read		Sit Reading	
Saad	Write		Read	
Ibraheem	relax		Is	Want describe Is writing
Amr	Write	Is writing	Is Drink	Is reading
Fayis	Stays	Is writing Is closing		Is writing Is closing
Ismail	Reading	Is drink	Is	Are reading
Yazeed	Writing Sitdown Does		Is Write Sit	Is looking

Ahmad K.	Sit Write	Is opening	Sit	
Firas	Reading Is	Is drink	Writing Are	
Salih M.	Write		See Writing	
Mohammad H.	Reading	Is reading	See	Is reading
Faisal A.	Write		Sit	
Basim	Read Is		Read Looking ×3	
Jabir	Is Read Take Drink		Study Is ×2 Drink	Is read
Mansoor	Reading Drank		Read	
Mohammad Y.	Study		Open Reading ×2	
Saif	Reading Drinking Is		Do Is	Is sitting
Dawood S.	Is ×2 Reading	Can see		
Majid D.	Is Read Sitdown	Is relax	Is Drink Read	
Abdulhameed	Study Read	Is open	Is ×2	Is writing
Saad	Reading		See Reading	
Khalid S.	Is ×2 Writing		Is ×3	Is read
Nadir	Is	Is sitting	Is ×2	Is reading
Maroof K.	Is Write		Is ×2	Is writing
Abdulaziz	Read Is ×2		Is Drink	Is reading
Salih	Is Sit	Is have	Is ×2 Write	
Rida	Is Read		Drink	Is reading
Hatim H.	Is		Read Is ×2	
Mansoor W.	Read		Read Is	
Mastoor	Is Write	Is wear	Is Write	Is sitting
Osama T.	Is Write		Are	Is talking

Sameer F.	Is Reading Sit ×2	Is reading	Are Is ×2	Is reading
Hassan H.	Write Open	Is sleeping	Drink	Is writing
Adel F.	Is	Is reading	Read Is ×2	
Majid	Is ×2 Read	Is studying		
Jawad	Is ×2 Read	Is stay	Sit relax Is	
Ahmad D.	Write Is			
Abdlumalik	Read			Want describe Is writing ×2
Jihad	Read	Is drink	Drink Sitdown	Is reading
Farooq.	sitdown	Is writing Is enjoy	Is ×2	Is writing Is enjoy
Abdullah A.	Reading	Is drinking	Is	Are reading Is drink
Hamid Z.	Is Writing	Is open	Is Sit	Is writing
Samir	IS Write	Is drinks	Sit	Is drink
Awad	Reading Is		Is Are	
Mohammad T.	Write Is		Is ×2	
Adnan S.	Reading	Is reading	See	Is reading
Khalid L.	Write	Is sitting	Sitdown	
Abdulaziz	Read Is		Read Drinking	
Abbas M.	Is ×2 Read	Is drinking	Study Drink	Is opening
Sultan H.	write	Is reading	Read drink	
Zakariah	Read		Reading Is	
Abdulrahman F.	Reading Drinking Is		Do	Is reading Is drink Is think
Fahad D.	Is Do	Is asking Is sitting	Is ×2	Is sitting
Yahya A.	Have		See Is Have	
Ahmad R.	Drink Read		Sitdown Drink	Is writing

Jabir	Is ×2 Reading		See Open	
Waleed T.	Reading			Is reading
Talal	Is	Is reading	Reading Is	
Abdulqadir		Is reading	Reads	
Sufian	Is	Is doing		
Saud	Is ×2 Read		Sit Reading	
Fuad	Write		Read	
Sadiq.	Relax Read		Is	Can see Is reading
Ibraheem R.	Write Is ×2	Is reading	Is Drink	Is reading
Wisam	Stays	Is writing Is drinking		Is writing Is drinking
Tariq	Reading	Is sit	Is	Are reading
Hamdan	Writing Is ×2		Is Write	Is sit
Hamad	Sit	Is reading	Sit reading	
Omar A.	Reading Is ×2	Is drinking	Sit Is	Is drinking
Musaid	Write	Is sitting	Sit Writing	
Anas	Reading		Is	Is reading
Eid A.	Write	Is sitting	Sit write	
Ayman	Read Is		Read Has	
Mahmood B.	Is Read		Study Is ×2	Is read
Ali M.	Reading Drank		Read	
Hamzah	Study		Reading	
Fareed	Drinking Is	Is writing	Do Is	Is sitting
Husam	Is ×2 Sit		Is ×2	
Turky	Drink	Is reading	Is Stay Drink	Is reading
Kamal	Drink watch	Is writing	Is	Is writing
Mohammad D.	Writing		See writing	
Ayman K.	Writing		See	Is read Is sit
Mousa	Is read	Is sitting	Looking Is	Is reading

Appendix K

An experimental group's Pre- & Post-tests of word, pause, and clause counts

Student	Pre-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count	Post-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count
Mohammad	The man is writing – the man is writing a news he is in a coffee he is – he – he is drink ing coffee in –m	**23**	**10**	**4**	**4**	It is reading in a coffee he is drinking coffee –m on a table is –m a coffee and –m cup and –m food –m –m	**20**	**13**	**5**	**2**
Ayoob	Sit down the sit down –m he is writing –m a book near the -man –m of –m he is a - classroom is a big –m	**21**	**14**	**6**	**2**	This man –m this man in a room –m this man in the room road a big – a big –m in the room as the chair in the room man is sit down –m reading homework –m the man –m man is sit down –m reading homework the man is student	**44**	**15**	**8**	**4**
Salih	The man –m read –m the read –m book –m and the table and coffee –m coffee –m he – m	**13**	**8**	**7**	**1**	The man –m the man is sit down on chair –m the man is –m businessman –m on the table coffee –m the man in a hotel	**22**	**14**	**5**	**3**
Abduh	The man is coffee book he is –m it is the coffee –m not clear is touch he is blackboard he is a book	**22**	**13**	**3**	**1**	The –m the people is riding –m the homework –m it is coffee the board the chair –m the pen – m	**16**	**11**	**5**	**1**
Bandar	The picture it is aman and table –m and he is a man –m on poster it is wand –m it's window it is drink (continued in Arabic)	**23**	**14**	**3**	**2**	There is a man read –m news opened is a glass is a train –m is a table –m it –m it is sit down – m	**21**	**13**	**5**	**1**

Student Name	Pre-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count	Post-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count
Ghaith	I want describe picture this picture on the floor writing –m writing –m there is a chair –m like and door which	**19**	**17**	**3**	**5**	I want describe this picture there is man on the –m on the floor he is –m I think his homework –m and –m and the room behind him a glass the door is opening there is –m some book on the chair -	**38**	**26**	**4**	**5**
Mohammad	The man study the boy watching –m in the book on the table –m the boy – cup on the table –m all books	**20**	**11**	**4**	**2**	This man –m this man reading in book this man reading in book –m around – this – coffee cup on the table and this – this a tree -	**24**	**14**	**5**	**3**
Mansur	The man write writing homework – and – the man – the man - picture –	**11**	**6**	**4**	**1**	A boy reading – the boy write – and – and – the boy - – the boy on chair – window – the window has been closed -	**20**	**12**	**7**	**3**
Abdulrahman	I see in the picture some furniture and man reading magazine and – some tree and window just that!	**18**	**15**	**2**	**2**	I can see in this picture aman he is wearing a – black suite and he – is reading – magazine and he is drinking a cup of tea or coffee and I think he is in a restaurant – because there is a tree and table and – light and – he is thinking about	**54**	**49**	**4**	**6**
Hammad	Writing homework in the house – m – the glass –	**7**	**6**	**2**	**0**	There are students sit down writing the homework there are door open – there are short on the glass – there are door -	**21**	**13**	**3**	**4**
Anas	I can see a man – read a - ewspaper or magazine I can see table trees I can see - man in a coffee shop, chair -	**24**	**15**	**4**	**3**	I can see a man he is – reading a newspaper in the coffee shop and I can see some trees and – glasses on the table – I like – many tables around him	**31**	**24**	**5**	**4**
Ammar	I see some – room man reading a paper or book – there are some chair- and -	**15**	**14**	**3**	**2**	I see in this picture young guy he sit down in the – the room and may be he is a student he does homework	**24**	**20**	**2**	**4**

Student Name	Pre-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count	Post-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count
AbdulAziz	The man –m –	2	2	1	0	He is a student he is reading a – he is the man drinking he is – drink coffee – he is reading the picture in a hotel -	25	12	4	3
Faris	He is a man reading in a hotel a man drink coffee – the student - student in classroom he is working a homework –	22	14	3	2	This is student is writing homework – there is a wholechair there is foun a board there is found sofa there is found a cup of tea –	26	14	2	5
Mishari	I see a man reading a newspaper and there is a lot of windows – he is sitting in a coffee shop there is a tree may be – he sitting in a chair and there is a table and he drinking a coffee and may some people around him and there is a small picture -	54	29	3	7	I see a man in a restaurant he reading a newspaper there is there are a lot of windows he – drinking a coffee he sitting on a chair – may be he waiting for a friend there are a lot of table surround him the – there are people I see – small tree and there is a picture – I can see –	61	54	8	11
Yahya	The man reading a homework and – class there and – book – there is book	13	10	3	2	The man do his homework – in the chair chair – open door – sleep the door the man sleep the door the table coffee and juice – a – and table –	27	17	6	2
Ahmad	He is drink a coffee – he is reading his book – he is – m - dent he is student the coffee take coffee drink coffee – m	22	12	4	2	The door is open he is writing his homework he is – he is – m – the book are around him –	18	13	4	3
Ahmad	I can see man tsitting on – a ground writing – there are around him some chairs and open door (continued in Arabic by saying the rest is unclear)	18	18	3	2	This man is writing – may be he is a student or or journal journalist he is sitting on the ground – near him there is a chair and the door – a lot of paper next to him	36	26	4	5
Mohammad	He is writing a paper – paper a – it is the coffee – there the – he is homework – he is writing homework -	20	10	6	3	This – this man is – this man homework the man writing homework – and – this is sit sit down on the gr- gr ground on the ground – and – condition this air condition and glass and the door -	33	15	6	4

Student Name	Pre-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count	Post-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count
Salman	Here is a man he is reading a newspaper he is near coffee and glass and trees – and table-	**19**	**13**	**2**	**3**	This – this is a man I think a – this is a man or – I think he is this is man or – anything reading a newspaper – there is a glass and tea – and table-	**33**	**16**	**7**	**4**
Ayman	Here is boy this boy reading paper coffee – condition reading book glass this boy on the floor it is was up	**21**	**17**	**2**	**2**	There is student writing – writing book – glas coffee and tea – there are door – door chair pen this man – on the floor – there are heater – m – and there are television -OK	**29**	**22**	**8**	**4**
Fahad	This picture man is reading news and on the table two glass and – cd in the room – lets and office and -	**21**	**17**	**3**	**2**	There is a man – he is reading the menu waiting a – waiting waiting meat he is man may be – businessman or or – normally man – there is glass and – and paper on the – palm tree – on the table -	**36**	**21**	**8**	**4**
Mohammad	The student working homework and – drink the coffee -	**8**	**7**	**2**	**1**	He is study work a homework – drink coffee – hamburger -	**9**	**9**	**3**	**1**
Yahya	I can see a man spread writing – at his radical coffee and – table -	**13**	**13**	**3**	**1**	I see a man – m – homework there are chair – there are door – there are an open – there are alarm – the man reading a book -	**23**	**15**	**7**	**6**

Student Name	Pre-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count	Post-Test Performance	Word Count	Unrepeated Word Count	Pause Count	Clause Count
Waleed	The man read – write write -	**5**	**4**	**2**	**1**	Door bathroom in – the woman trade write write sit down – chair – the table – m -	**13**	**11**	**5**	**0**
Ahmad	The man of – the write the write the pen the book – the coffee -	**13**	**7**	**3**	**0**					
Muhannad	I can see a man in a blacksuite in a restaurant reading magazine and he is drinking coffee there is tree and some cups	**24**	**19**	**2**	**3**	I can see a man in – wearing a black suite – he is reading a newspaper and he is sitting in a restaurant he is drinking coffee and there is some trees and – I think – he is smoking because there is a smoke!	**42**	**24**	**5**	**7**
Atti	This is man sit down here and a writer and the juice near and chair and the room on the room and near him chicken (chair) – and the read -	**29**	**19**	**4**	**1**	This is a man reading homework writing-homework they are a chair - and door and condition and book and glass and – page -	**22**	**15**	**3**	**2**
Murad						I can see a man read a paper and sit down and drink – m – a tea and see the plants and water in the restaurant -	**24**	**17**	**3**	**1**

Appendix L

Experimental groups' Pre & post-tests of verb counts

Name of students (TBL)	Pre-Test single verb	two or more verbs	Post-Test single verb	two or more verbs
Abdulrahman B.	See Read		Think Is ×2	
Hammad	Writing		Are ×4 Sit Writing Open	
Ati	Is sit		Is Writing Reading Are	
Ahmad Q.	Siting Writing Are	Can see	Is ×2	Is writing Is sitting
Ahmad A.	Is	Is drinking Is reading	Is ×2 Are	Is open Is writing
Mohammad Q.	Is ×2	Is writing	Is Writing	Is sit
Salman	Is ×2	Is reading	Is ×5 Think ×2 Reading	
Ayman	Is ×2 Reading ×2		writing are ×4	
Fahad D.		Is reading Let's	Is ×3 Waiting ×3	Is reading
Mohammad F.	Working Drink		Work Drink	Is study
Yahya Z.	Writing	Can see	See Are ×4 Open Reading	
Waleed H.	Read Write		Is Write sitdown	
Ahmad T.	Write			
Muhand Y.	Reading Is	Can see Is drinking	Is ×2 Think	Can see Is reading Is sitting Is drinking Is smoking
Murad M.			Read Sitdown Drink See	Can see

Anas K.	Read	Can see ×3	Like	Can see Is reading
Ammar B.	See Reading are		See Sitdown Is	May be Is does
Abdulaziz G.			Is ×2	Is writing Is drink Is reading
Faris A.	Is Reading Drink	Is working	Is ×5	Is writing
Mishari	See Reading Is ×2 sitting		See ×2 Reading Is ×2 Are ×3 Drinking Sitting Waiting	May be Can see
Yahya J.	Reading Is		Do Open Sleep ×2	
Mohammad H.	Is ×2	Is writing ×2 Is drinking	Is	Is reading ×2 Is drinking
Ayoob H.	Sitdown ×2 Is ×2	Is writing	Is ×2 Reading	Is sitdown ×2
Salih Q.	Read ×2		Is ×2	Is sitdown
Abdu K.	Is ×5 Do Sit Wear		Is ×3 read	Is writing
Bandar G.	Is ×4 Drink		Is ×3 Read	Is sitdown
Ghaith S.	Writing Is	Want describe	Is ×2 Think	Want describe Is opening
Mohammad K.	Study watching		Reading ×2	
Monsoor Q.	Write Open		Reading write	Has been closed
Rajih	See Write		See Think Is ×2	
Ahmad E.	Read		Sit Writing	
Khalid Y.	doing Sit Read		Enjoy Reading Are	

Omar I	Is ×2	Can describe	Is ×2 sitting	Is writing
Issam Q.	Drink	Is sit Is read	Sit is	Is writing Is drink
Waleed	Is ×2	That's set	Is Writing	Is sit Is drinking
Azzam F.	Is ×2	Is reading	Is ×3	Is reading
Abdulghani	Is ×2 Reading		writing	
Mustafa		Is reading	Is ×3	Is reading
Abdulkareem	Is ×2			Is writing
Abdullah N.	Drink	Has been	Is Drink Reading	Has been
Ashraf	Read is		Is	Sitdown reading
Anmar T.	Write Is ×2		Open	Is writing
Abdulaziz Z.	Reading Is	Is drinking	Is ×2 Think	Can see Is reading Is drinking
Mohammad E.			Read Sitdown	Can see
Hani N.	Is ×2	Is drink	Is	Is drinking Is reading
Faisal Z.	See Reading Is		See Sitdown Is	Is drinking
Muhanad	Is ×2	Can looking	Is	Is writing Is drink
Abdullah G.	Sit Reading Relax	Is open	Is ×3	Is reading
Salih S.	Reading Is ×3 Drink		Reading Drinking	Is looking
Hassan F.	Write Is ×2		Is ×2 reading	
Ali L.	Is Sitdown	Can look Is drinking	Is	Can look Is drinking
Mahmood	Is	Is writing	Reading	Is sitdown
Sami	Read Is		Is ×2	Is reading
Turkey	Is ×2		sit	Is writing
Eid S.	Is ×2 Drink		Is ×3 Read	Is sitdown
Naeem H.	Writing	Can wash	Is ×3	Can see

	Is			Is opening
Ahmad D.	See		Reading ×2	Can see
Hassen	Write read		Reading write	
Jameel	Is ×2 Read		Think Is ×2	
Ryiadh	Writing		Are Sit	Is writing
Abdulraheem A.	Is Reading		Is Reading	
Salih	Is ×2 Writing	Can see	Relaxing	Can see Is writing
Nizar	Is	Has drink Is reading	Is ×2	Is drinking Has writing
	Is ×2	Is writing	Is Writing	Is sit
Ahmad Z.	Is ×2	Is reading	Is ×2 Drink Reading	
Yousif H.	Is ×2 Reading		Reading Is ×2 Enjoy Are	
Hammad H.		Is reading	Is ×3	Is reading
Khalaf	Drink Write		Drink Read	Is doing
Mahdi	Reading	Can see	Is ×2 Reading Are ×2	
Emad	Read Drink	Is writing	Is Read Drink	
Ghasi	Write, reading			
Ali E.	See Is	Is drinking	See Think Is	Is reading Is sitting Is drinking
Abdullah M.	Is ×2	Can see Is reading	Drink See	Is reading
Saad	Read	Is drinking	Drink	Can see Is reading
Ibraheem	Reading are		Sitdown Is	Is reading
Ammar	Is ×2 look		Is ×2	Is reading
Hattan	Is Drink	Is working	Is	Is writing
Murtada	Reading Is ×2		Is ×2 Sitting	Think reading Can see

	Sitting			
Yazeed	Reading Is		Reading Is ×2	
Ahmad K.	Is ×2	Is writing	Is	Is reading
Firas	Is ×2	Is reading	Is ×2 Reading	Is drink
Salih M.	Read	Is found	Is ×2	Is sitdown
Mohammad H.	Is Sit		Is ×2 read	Is writing
Faisal A.	Is reading Drink		Is ×3 Read	Is sitdown
Basim	Reading Is	Is sitting	Is Think	Want describe Is opening Is reading
Salah	Read Is ×2		Reading ×2	Can see
Suroor	Sitdown Reading		Reading Sitting	Will describe
Mohammad Y.	Is Read		Read Is ×2	
Saif	Writing		Writing Open	
Dawood S.	Is ×2 Reading		Is Reading Are	
Majid D.	Siting Writing Are	Can describe	Is ×2 Drinking	Is writing
Abdulhameed	Is	Is sitting Is reading	Is ×2 Are	Is open Is writing
Sharaf	Is ×2	Is read	Is Read	Is sit
Khalid S.	Is sitting	Is reading	Is Reading	Can't see
Nasser R.	Is ×3 Reading		Drink Are Is	
Rashid	Is	May be	Is Drinking	Is reading
Hytham	Reading Is		Is Read	Drink
Turad	reading	Can see	Is Reading	Can see
Rida	Read	Is writing	Is sitdown	Is writing
Hatim H.	Write			
Mansoor W.	Reading	Can see	Is ×2	Can see

	Is ×2	Is reading		Is reading
Mutlaq T.	Is ×2 Sitdown		Read Sitdown Drink	Can see
Osama T.	Read Is		Is ×2	Can see Is reading
Sameer F.	Reading Is		Is ×2	Can read
Hassan H.	Drink	Is reading	Is ×2	Is drink Is reading
Adel F.	Is Reading Drink	Is working	Is	Is writing
Murad	See Reading Is ×3 sitting	Can see	Reading	Can see Is sitting
Jawad	Reading Is ×2	May be	Open Reading	May be
Ahmad D.		Is writing Is drinking	look	Is reading Is drinking
Abdlumalik	Is Writing	Can't see	Is ×2 Reading	Is sitdown ×2 Can't see
Jihad	Read		Is ×2	Is sitdown
Othman K.	Is Study	Is sitdown	Is Read Study	Is going Is sitdown
Abdullah A.	Is ×2 Drink		Is ×2 Read	Is sitdown
Hamid Z.	Writing Is	Can describe	Is Think	Want describe Is opening
Musab	Reading		Reading	Can see
Shakir	reading Open		Is ×2	Is reading
Talal	Reading Is	Can see Is drinking	Is ×2	Can see Is reading
Abdullateef	Drink Read		Read Sitdown Drink	Can see
Saeed S.	Read	Can see	Like	Can see Is reading
Abdullah	Reading Is	Am not see	Sitdown Is	Is seeing Am not see
Fadl				Is writing Is sitting Is drink Is reading

Rami U.	Is ×2 Reading		Is Reading	
Abdullah R.	Is ×2	Is read	Reading Is Are ×3	Can see
Waheed	Reading Is	Do not see	Is ×2	Do not see
Salim	Is Reading	Is drinking	Is Reading	Is drinking Am not finish
Saud	Is ×2 Read	Is writing	Is ×2 Reading	Is sitdown
Ahmad J.	See Sit	Is reading	Is ×2 Sitting	Is reading
Mohammad A.	Is Sit	Is writing	Is read	Is writing
Bilal	Is Drink	Is reading	Is ×2 Read	Is sitdown Is drinking
Humood	Writing Is ×2	Is writing	Is ×3 Write	Can't see Is openning
Mamdooh	Reading Is	Is open	Reading Is	Is open
Khidr	Is Sitdown	Is writing	Sitting Is	Is writing
Abdulhadi	Writing Is	Can see	Is Think	Can see Is reading
Eidah M.	Reading Drank	Is studying	Read	Is studying
Hussain	reading	Is waiting	Is Reading	Can see

Appendix M
Final examination

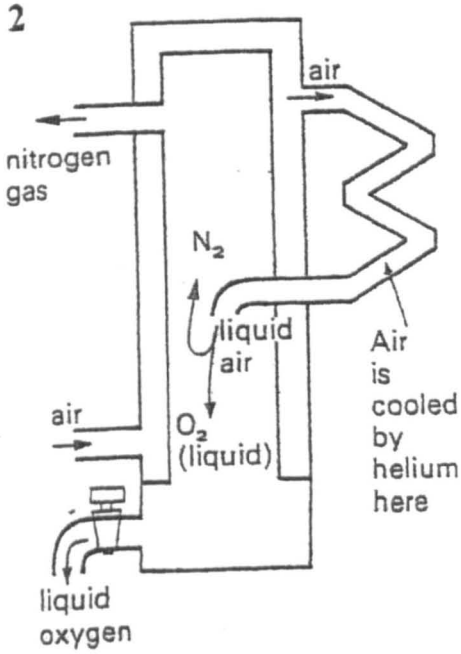
Two vital elements

What is the most common element on earth? How can it be produced? What have wood, alcohol and plastics in common? This unit answers these questions.

1

In the late 18th century, a scientist called Joseph Priestley prepared oxygen by concentrating the sun's rays through a lens on mercuric oxide. Oxygen had probably been produced many times before but Priestley was the first to recognise it. There is, in fact, more oxygen on earth than any other single element. About 20% of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen; nine tenths of the weight of water is oxygen; 65% of the weight of the human body is oxygen.

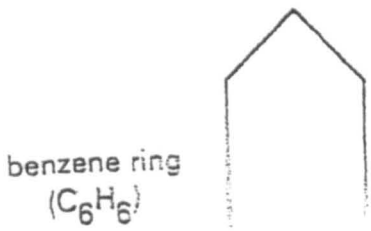
2



Oxygen is vital to life; it is needed by the body cells of all animals. It is also very useful in industry. The method Priestley used produces only small quantities. The large amounts needed for industry are produced in a different way. Air is put into containers under great pressure. This turns it into liquid and makes it very cold. It is then gradually warmed up and each substance evaporates at a different temperature. The boiling point of oxygen is −183°C. It is caught and stored in strong steel cylinders at a pressure of 136 atmospheres. The process is known as fractional distillation.

Now cover up the text and describe how oxygen is produced in industry.

3



Carbon appears in many forms and, like oxygen, it is a very important element. Carbon dioxide is needed by plants to make sugars. The energy which is stored in plants by this process is the basis of all

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1. **Answer the following questions**
   a. At what temperature does liquid oxygen evaporates?
   b. How did Priseley make oxygen?
   c. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen?
   d. What is the hardest known natural substance?

2. **Make questions for the following answers:**
   a. About 18% (How much ...?)
   b. At 100 C (At what ...?)
   c. Because carbon atoms have special properties (Why ...?)

3. **Make a relative clauses shorter in the following sentences:**
   a. A scientist who was called Priestley prepared Oxygen.
   b. The measurements which are used in Britain and the USA are different from those which are used in the rest of the world.

4. **Use the following words in sentences from your own**

   Vital evaporate energy gradually

5. **Summarize the passage and put another title in the following spaces:**

_____
_____
_____
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_____
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_____.

6. Answer 2 of the following comprehension questions:

a. What do physicists study?
b. What has a horse in common with a bear?
c. At what temperature does water freeze?
d. What is a dam?
e. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is Oxygen?

7. Make 3 questions for these answers:

a. It is a jet plane (What sort of...?)
b. In 1959 (When ...?)
c. Only a meter or two (How far above....?)
d. A jet plane is faster (Which is faster ... ?)
e. Because it contains sulphur, (Why ... ?)

8. Use the following words in sentences below:

Colorful pick up surface automatically break diagrams

a. There is no water on the ... of the moon
b. An astronomer ... the stars through a telescope.
c. Some butterflies are very plain but the most beautiful ones are very .....
d. There is no need to stop that machine. It is controlled ..... .
e. Scientists often use ..... to illustrate experiments.

9. Make sentences from the information given below:

a. A laboratory assistant / a man / look after / chemicals and apparatus
b. A computer / an instrument / make / calculations
c. A biologist / living things / study / a scientist
d. A turbine / a wheel / drive/ generator
e. A mammal / an animal / give / milk to its young

10. Talk about one of the following topics not exceeded 5 lines:

1. The power of water
2. Water pollution
3. Jet propulsion

Best of luck

Appendix N

Samples of students' answers of the control (GBL) groups

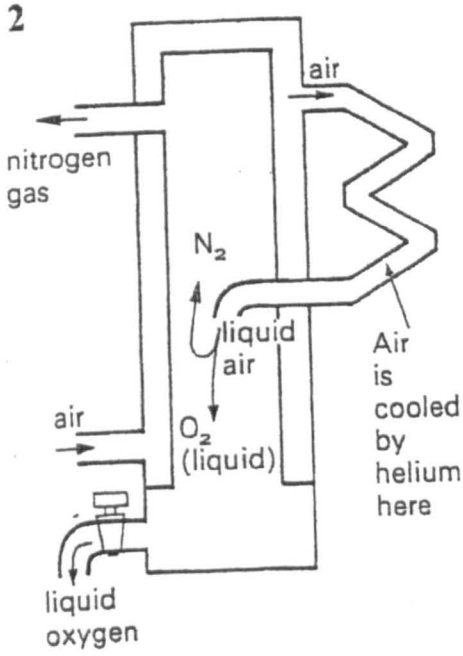
Two vital elements

What is the most common element on earth? How can it be produced? What have wood, alcohol and plastics in common? This unit answers these questions.

1

In the late 18th century, a scientist called Joseph Priestley prepared oxygen by concentrating the sun's rays through a lens on mercuric oxide. Oxygen had probably been produced many times before but Priestley was the first to recognise it. There is, in fact, more oxygen on earth than any other single element. About 20% of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen; nine tenths of the weight of water is oxygen; 65% of the weight of the human body is oxygen.

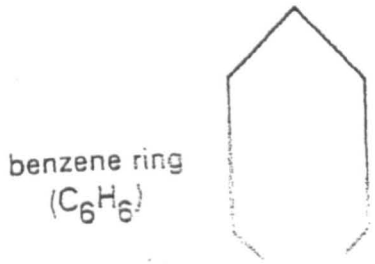
2



Oxygen is vital to life; it is needed by the body cells of all animals. It is also very useful in industry. The method Priestley used produces only small quantities. The large amounts needed for industry are produced in a different way. Air is put into containers under great pressure. This turns it into liquid and makes it very cold. It is then gradually warmed up and each substance evaporates at a different temperature. The boiling point of oxygen is −183°C. It is caught and stored in strong steel cylinders at a pressure of 136 atmospheres. The process is known as fractional distillation.

Now cover up the text and describe how oxygen is produced in industry.

3



Carbon appears in many forms and, like oxygen, it is a very important element. Carbon dioxide is needed by plants to make sugars. The energy which is stored in plants by this process is the basis of all forms of life. There are more carbon com-

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1. **Answer the following questions**

a. At what temperature does liquid oxygen evaporate?
At -183°C

b. How did Priseley make oxygen?
Priseley make oxygen by concentrating the Sun's rays through a lens on mercuric oxide.

c. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen?
The volume of the atmosphere is oxygen about 20%.

~~d. What is the hardest known natural substance?~~

2. **Make questions for the following answers:**

a. About 18% (How much ...?)
How much of the volume of the atmosphere is ~~oxygen~~ Carbon?

b. At 100 C (At what ...?)
At what temprature water is boiling?

c. Because carbon atoms have special properties (Why ...?)
Why the carbon appears in many forms?

3. **Make a relative clauses shorter in the following sentences:**

a. A scientist who was called Priestley prepared Oxygen.
A scientist called priestly prepared oxygen.

b. The measurements which are used in Britain and the USA are different from those which are used in the rest of the world.
The measurements used in Britain and the USA are different from those

4. **Use the following words in sentences from your own**

Vital ..F. Water is vital for life.
Evaporate .Substance evaporates at different temprature.
Energy ...~~Energy is important for people for many things.~~
Gradually .Air is gradually warmed up.

Water is important to produce energy.

5. **Summarize the passage and put another title in the following spaces:**

Oxygen is vital to life

In the late 18th century, a scientist called Joseph priestley prepared oxygen by concentrating the Sun's rays through a lens on mercuric oxide. Oxygen is needed by the body cells of all animals. It is very useful in industry. So oxygen is vital to life.

26/30

6. Answer 2 of the following comprehension questions:

a. What do physicists study?

.....

b. What has a horse in common with a bear?

They are both mammals.

c. At what temperature does water freeze?

Water freezes at 0C°

d. What is a dam?

.....

4

e. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is Oxygen?

.....

7. Make 3 questions for these answers:

a. It is a dry area with few plants or animals (What ...?)

What is a desert?

b. Because it is very important resource (Why ...?)

~~Why is the sea~~ why is the ~~Oxygen~~ water is vital?

c. By irrigation (How ....?)

.....

4

d. A jet plane is faster (Which is faster ... ?)

Which is faster a jet plane or ~~a bicycle~~ a cat?

e. Because it contains Sulphur, (Why ... ?)

.....

8. Use the following words in sentences below:

Colorful ~~pick up~~ surface automatically break diagrams

a. There is no water on the Surface of the moon

b. An astronomer is ~~picked up~~ the stars through a telescope.

c. Some butterflies are very plain but the most beautiful ones are very colorful.

d. There is no need to stop that machine. It is controlled automatically.

e. Scientists often use diagrams to illustrate experiments.

9. Make sentences from the information given below:

a. A laboratory assistant / a man / look after / chemicals and apparatus

A laboratory assistant is a man who look after the chemicals and appara

b. A computer / an instrument / make / calculations

A computer is used as an instrument to make calculations.

c. A biologist / living things / study / a scientist

~~A biologist~~ A scientist is who studied living things are called a biologist.

10

d. A turbine / a wheel / drive/ generator

A turbine uses as a wheel that we can drive generator.

e. A mammal / an animal / give / milk to its young

A mammal is an animal which give milk to its young.

16. **Talk about one of the following topics not exceeded 5 lines:**

1. The power of water
2. Water pollution
3. How do scientists work?

How do Scientists work

A Scientist is not only work in a laboratory but also work in outside. The biologist is a person who studies animals and plants. A Chemist is a person who works in a labratory and studys elements and compounds. The phsicist not only study sound but also light. The geologist study a rock sample. A botany is a person who study the plant. Scientists usually make exprIment in a labratory and make therois and this therois base on the exprIments.

10/10

Best of luck

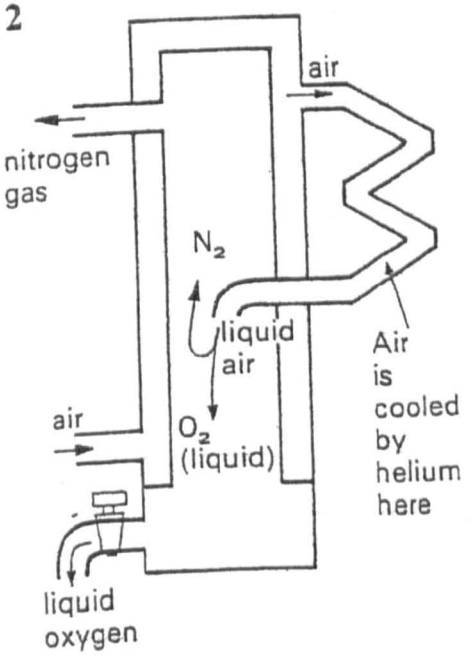
Two vital elements

What is the most common element on earth? How can it be produced? What have wood, alcohol and plastics in common? This unit answers these questions.

1

In the late 18th century, a scientist called Joseph Priestley prepared oxygen by concentrating the sun's rays through a lens on mercuric oxide. Oxygen had probably been produced many times before but Priestley was the first to recognise it. There is, in fact, more oxygen on earth than any other single element. About 20% of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen; nine tenths of the weight of water is oxygen; 65% of the weight of the human body is oxygen.

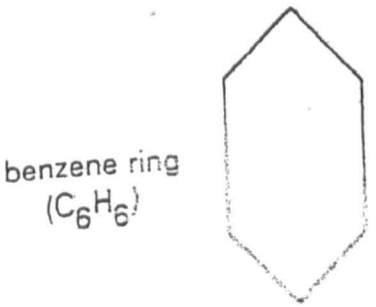
2



Oxygen is vital to life; it is needed by the body cells of all animals. It is also very useful in industry. The method Priestley used produces only small quantities. The large amounts needed for industry are produced in a different way. Air is put into containers under great pressure. This turns it into liquid and makes it very cold. It is then gradually warmed up and each substance evaporates at a different temperature. The boiling point of oxygen is −183°C. It is caught and stored in strong steel cylinders at a pressure of 136 atmospheres. The process is known as fractional distillation.

Now cover up the text and describe how oxygen is produced in industry.

3



Carbon appears in many forms and, like oxygen, it is a very important element. Carbon dioxide is needed by plants to make sugars. The energy which is stored in plants by this process is the basis of all forms of life. There are more carbon compounds than all other chemical compounds

17/20

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1. **Answer the following questions**
   a. At what temperature does liquid oxygen evaporate?
   At -183°C.
   b. How did Priseley make oxygen?
   by con-centrating the sun's rays through a lens.
   c. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen?
   About 20%.
   ~~d. What is the hardest known natural substance?~~

8

2. **Make questions for the following answers:**
   a. About 18% (How much ...?)
   How much of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen?
   b. At 100 C (At what ...?)
   At what temperature does liquid oxygen evaporate?
   c. Because carbon atoms have special properties (Why ...?)

2

3. **Make a relative clauses shorter in the following sentences:**
   a. A scientist who was called Priestley prepared Oxygen.
   A Scientist called priestley prepared oxygen.
   b. The measurements which are used in Britain and the USA are different from those which are used in the rest of the world.
   The measurement used in Britain and the USA are different from those used in the of the world

2

4. **Use the following words in sentences from your own**
   Vital ..carbon and oxygen are vitals.
   Evaporate ...a substance evaporate at a different temperature.
   Energy .....Energy and Power are Physicists' Study.
   Gradually ..It is then gradually warmed up?
   liquid

2

5. **Summarize the passage and put another title in the following spaces:**
   * two strong elements * * The strong elements *

The Oxygen ~~is~~ had probably been Produced many times before but Priestley was the first to recognise it. The oxygen on earth than more elements, ~~is vital to life.~~ it is vital to life and All Organisms ~~is~~ is needed by the body cells. 65% of the weight of the human body is oxygen. Carbon and oxygen are a very importants elements. carbon dioxide is needed by plants to ~~make sugars~~ Produce Sugars.

3

12/30

6. Answer 2 of the following comprehension questions:

a. What do physicists study?
They study sound, heat, and light.

b. What has a horse in common with a bear?
They are both a mammals.

c. At what temperature does water freeze?
It freeze at 0°c.

d. What is a dam?
It is a man-made lake.

e. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is Oxygen?

4

7. Make 3 questions for these answers:

a. It is a dry area with few plants or animals (What …?)

b. Because it is very important resource (Why …?)

c. By irrigation (How ….?)

d. A jet plane is faster (Which is faster … ?)

e. Because it contains Sulphur, (Why … ?)

8. Use the following words in sentences below:

c a d e b

Colorful pick up surface automatically break diagrams

a. There is no water on the surface of the moon
b. An astronomer diagrams the stars through a telescope.
c. Some butterflies are very plain but the most beautiful ones are very colorful
d. There is no need to stop that machine. It is controlled automatically
e. Scientists often use break to illustrate experiments.

6

9. Make sentences from the information given below:

a. A laboratory assistant / a man / look after / chemicals and apparatus
A laboratory assitant is a man who looks after chemicals and apparati

b. A computer / an instrument / make / calculations

c. A biologist / living things / study / a scientist

d. A turbine / a wheel / drive/ generator

e. A mammal / an animal / give / milk to its young

2

\6. **Talk about one of the following topics not exceeded 5 lines:**

1. The power of water
2. Water pollution
3. How do scientists work?

~~These~~ ~~Thy~~ They scientists physicists study a light, heat, sound and electrical, and scientist chemical study is compound element.

Best of luck

Two vital elements

What is the most common element on earth? How can it be produced? What have wood, alcohol and plastics in common? This unit answers these questions.

1

In the late 18th century, a scientist called Joseph Priestley prepared oxygen by concentrating the sun's rays through a lens on mercuric oxide. Oxygen had probably been produced many times before but Priestley was the first to recognise it. There is, in fact, more oxygen on earth than any other single element. About 20% of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen; nine tenths of the weight of water is oxygen; 65% of the weight of the human body is oxygen.

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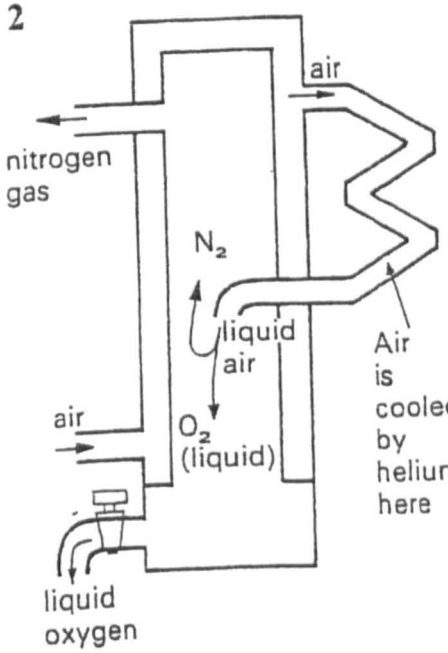
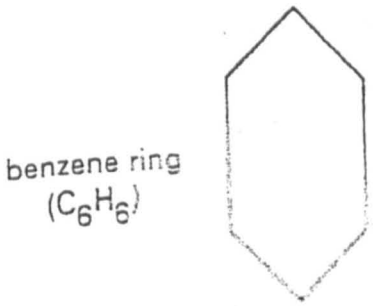


Oxygen is vital to life; it is needed by the body cells of all animals. It is also very useful in industry. The method Priestley used produces only small quantities. The large amounts needed for industry are produced in a different way. Air is put into containers under great pressure. This turns it into liquid and makes it very cold. It is then gradually warmed up and each substance evaporates at a different temperature. The boiling point of oxygen is −183°C. It is caught and stored in strong steel cylinders at a pressure of 136 atmospheres. The process is known as fractional distillation.

Now cover up the text and describe how oxygen is produced in industry.

3



Carbon appears in many forms and, like oxygen, it is a very important element. Carbon dioxide is needed by plants to make sugars. The energy which is stored in plants by this process is the basis of all forms of life. There are more carbon compounds than all other chemical compounds

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1. **Answer the following questions**
   a. At what temperature does liquid oxygen evaporate?
This turns it into liquid and makes it very cold.
   b. How did Priseley make oxygen?
oxygen had probably been produced many times before but Priestly was the
   c. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen? first to recognise.
About 20%.
   d. What is the hardest known natural substance?

2. **Make questions for the following answers:**
   a. About 18% (How much …?)
How much of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen?
   b. At 100 C (At what …?)
At what temperature does Liquid water evaporate?
   c. Because carbon atoms have special properties (Why …?)
Why did priestley make carbon?

3. **Make a relative clauses shorter in the following sentences:**
   a. A scientist who was called Priestley prepared Oxygen.
oxygen by concentrating the suns rays through a lens on mercuric ~~mercured~~ oxide.
   b. The measurements which are used in Britain and the USA are different from those which are used in the rest of the world.

4. **Use the following words in sentences from your own**

   Vital .....
   Evaporate .....
   Energy .....
   Gradually .....

5. **Summarize the passage and put another title in the following spaces:**
(Life and oxygen) ~~Life~~ and ~~oxygen~~ (oxygen is vital to Life)
Water At 100 c Liquid/ water evaporate At 100c.
oxygen had probaly been many times
Carbon appears/many forms.
a water vital or oxygen. Water used and life
~~a water and oxygen~~ is energy.

12/30

6. Answer 2 of the following comprehension questions:

a. What do physicists study?

.....

b. What has a horse in common with a bear?

.....

c. At what temperature does water freeze?

At 0°C.....

d. What is a dam?

.....

e. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is Oxygen?

By nine tenths of the weight of water is oxygen 65%.....

7. Make 3 questions for these answers:

a. It is a dry area with few plants or animals (What ...?)

What is a dry area ~~plants or animals~~ ?.....

b. Because it is very important resource (Why ...?)

Why it is important resource?.....

c. By irrigation (How ...?)

How does / How is the ?.....

d. A jet plane is faster (Which is faster ... ?)

.....

e. Because it contains Sulphur, (Why ... ?)

.....

8. Use the following words in sentences below:

Colorful pick up surface automatically break diagrams

a. There is no water on the colorful of the moon
b. An astronomer surface the stars through a telescope.
c. Some butterflies are very plain but the most beautiful ones are very break
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e. Scientists often use pick up... to illustrate experiments.

9. Make sentences from the information given below:

a. A laboratory assistant / a man / look after / chemicals and apparatus

A laboratory assistant is a man looking after chemicals and apparatus.

b. A computer / an instrument / make / calculations

A computer is an instrument to make calculations.....

c. A biologist / living things / study / a scientist

A biologist is a living things to study a scientist.....

d. A turbine / a wheel / drive/ generator

A turbine is a wheel to drive generator.....

e. A mammal / an animal / give / milk to its young

A mammal is an animal to give milk to its young.....

6. **Talk about one of the following topics not exceeded 5 lines:**

1. *The power of water*
2. Water pollution
3. How do scientists work?

Best of luck

Two vital elements

What is the most common element on earth? How can it be produced? What have wood, alcohol and plastics in common? This unit answers these questions.

1

In the late 18th century, a scientist called Joseph Priestley prepared oxygen by concentrating the sun's rays through a lens on mercuric oxide. Oxygen had probably been produced many times before but Priestley was the first to recognise it. There is, in fact, more oxygen on earth than any other single element. About 20% of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen; nine tenths of the weight of water is oxygen; 65% of the weight of the human body is oxygen.

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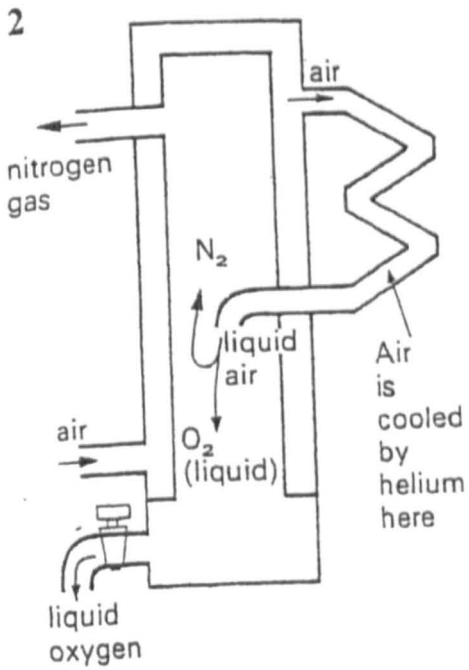

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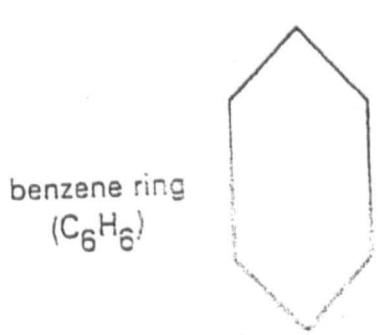
Now cover up the text and describe how oxygen is produced in industry.

3



Carbon appears in many forms and, like oxygen, it is a very important element. Carbon dioxide is needed by plants to make sugars. The energy which is stored in plants by this process is the basis of all forms of life. There are more carbon compounds than all other chemical compounds

25/20

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and by concentrating the sun's rays through lenses on mercuric oxide.

1. **Answer the following questions**
   a. At what temperature does liquid oxygen evaporate?
   It evaporates at -183C°
   b. How did Priseley make oxygen?
   ~~Oxygen~~ Oxygen had probably been produced many times befor
   c. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen?
   About 20% of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen
   d. What is the hardest known natural substance?
   ~~It is then gradually warmed up and each substance evaporates at a different temperature.~~

7

2. **Make questions for the following answers:**
   a. About 28% (How much ...?)
   How much of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen?
   b. At 100 C (At what ...?) At what temperature does water boil?
   c. Because carbon atoms have special properties (Why ...?)
   Why is the carbon important elements?

3

3. **Make a relative clauses shorter in the following sentences:**
   a. A scientist who was called Priestley prepared Oxygen.
   A scientist called Priestley prepared oxygen
   b. The measurements which are used in Britain and the USA are different from those which are used in the rest of the world.
   ~~A scientist called Priestley Prepared Oxygen~~ the measurements used in Britain and the USA are different from those used in the rest of the world.

2

4. **Use the following words in sentences from your own**

   Vital (Oxygen is vital to life.)
   Evaporate (It is substance evaporate at a different temperature.
   Energy (~~The radiant energy emitted~~ Energy is important to light.
   Gradually (It is then gradually warmed up.)

4

5. **Summarize the passage and put another title in the following spaces:**

   Two important elements
   ~~Oxygen~~ oxygen is very important to life. It is readily ~~Oxygen~~ useful in industry. Carbon appears in many forms. Carbon is every important element.

3

1. **Answer 2 of the following comprehension questions:**

a. What do physicists study?

They study light, sound etc.

b. What has a horse in common with a bear?

They are both mammals

c. At what temperature does water freeze?

It freezes at 0°C

d. What is a dam?

e. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is Oxygen?

2. **Make 3 questions for these answers:**

a. It is a dry area with few plants or animals (What …?)

What is a desert?

b. Because it is very important resource (Why …?)

Why is carbon important?

c. By irrigation (How ….?)

d. A jet plane is faster (Which is faster … ?)

e. Because it contains Sulphur, (Why … ?)

Why does sulfur important?

3. **Use the following words in sentences below:**

Colorful pick up surface automatically break diagrams

a. There is no water on the surface of the moon
b. An astronomer picks the stars through a telescope.
c. Some butterflies are very plain but the most beautiful ones are very colorful.
d. There is no need to stop that machine. It is controlled automatically.
e. Scientists often use diagrams to illustrate experiments.

4. **Make sentences from the information given below:**

a. A laboratory assistant / a man / look after / chemicals and apparatus

this man is A laboratory assistant is he look after to chemicals and apparatus

b. A computer / an instrument / make / calculations

A computer is an instrument make calculations

c. A biologist / living things / study / a scientist

A scientist who is study living things

d. A turbine / a wheel / drive/ generator

A turbine is wheel by drive generator

e. A mammal / an animal / give / milk to its young

A mammal is an animal give milk to its young

16. **Talk about one of the following topics not exceeded 5 lines:**

1. The power of water
2. Water pollution
3. How do scientists work?

How do scientists work?

They study any things. They are discovered all things. They have ~~[illegible]~~ absapxe special.

Best of luck

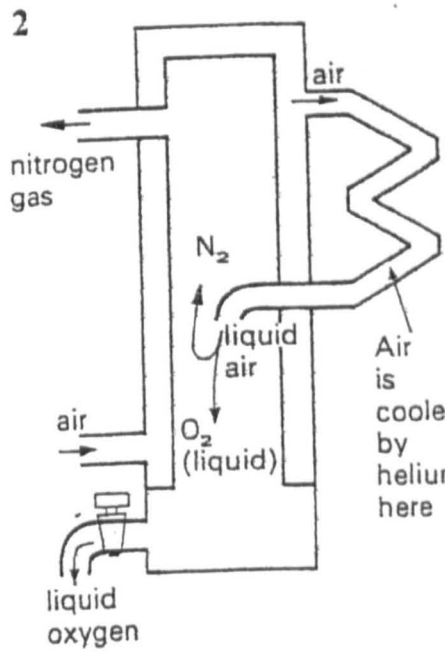
Two vital elements

What is the most common element on earth? How can it be produced? What have wood, alcohol and plastics in common? This unit answers these questions.

1

In the late 18th century, a scientist called Joseph Priestley prepared oxygen by concentrating the sun's rays through a lens on mercuric oxide. Oxygen had probably been produced many times before but Priestley was the first to recognise it. There is, in fact, more oxygen on earth than any other single element. About 20% of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen; nine tenths of the weight of water is oxygen; 65% of the weight of the human body is oxygen.

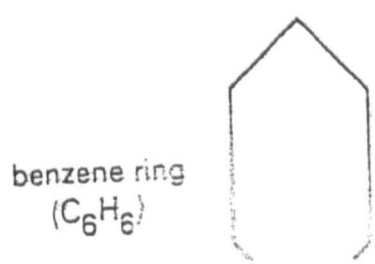
2



Oxygen is vital to life; it is needed by the body cells of all animals. It is also very useful in industry. The method Priestley used produces only small quantities. The large amounts needed for industry are produced in a different way. Air is put into containers under great pressure. This turns it into liquid and makes it very cold. It is then gradually warmed up and each substance evaporates at a different temperature. The boiling point of oxygen is −183°C. It is caught and stored in strong steel cylinders at a pressure of 136 atmospheres. The process is known as fractional distillation.

Now cover up the text and describe how oxygen is produced in industry.

3



Carbon appears in many forms and, like oxygen, it is a very important element. Carbon dioxide is needed by plants to make sugars. The energy which is stored in plants by this process is the basis of all forms of life. There are more carbon com-

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1. **Answer the following questions**
   a. At what temperature does liquid oxygen evaporate?
   It ~~evaporates~~ evaporates at ~~-183°C~~ -183°C.
   b. How did Priseley make oxygen?
   Priestly made oxygen by concentrating the ~~sun~~ sun's rays through a lens on mercuric oxi
   c. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen?
   About 20% of the valume of the atmosphere is oxygen.
   d. What is the hardest known natural substance?

8

2. **Make questions for the following answers:**
   a. About 18% (How much ...?) How much of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen?
   ~~How much of the weight of the human body is carbon?~~
   b. At 100 C (At what ...?)
   At what temperature does water evaporate?
   c. Because carbon atoms have special properties (Why ...?)
   Why has carbon special properities?

✓

3. **Make a relative clauses shorter in the following sentences:**
   a. A scientist who was called Priestley prepared Oxygen.
   A scientist called priestly prepare oxygen.
   b. The measurements which are used in Britain and the USA are different from those which are used in the rest of the world.
   The measurments used in Britain an USA are different from those used in the rest of the world

2

4. **Use the following words in sentences from your own**

   Vital ....Water...is..vital..resawrce.:.....
   Evaporate ..Water....evaporates..at..100°.....
   Energy ..Children..usually..have....a..lot..of..energy.
   Gradually ..We..learn....English..gradually.....

4

5. **Summarize the passage and put another title in the following spaces:**

   ~~The most important~~ The most important elements
   Oxygen can be produced by different ways.
   It is very important to life and in industry.
   Carbon is found in many shapes.
   It is vital element.
   Carbon dioxide is wanted by plants to form sugar.

3

27/30

1. Answer 2 of the following comprehension questions:

a. What do physicists study?

They study light, heat, sound and electricity.

b. What has a horse in common with a bear?

They are both mammals.

4

c. At what temperature does water freeze?

.....

d. What is a dam?

.....

e. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is Oxygen?

.....

2. Make 3 questions for these answers:

a. It is a dry area with few plants or animals (What ...?)

What is a desert?

b. Because it is very important resource (Why ...?)

Why should we keep water clean?

c. By irrigation (How ....?)

.....

d. A jet plane is faster (Which is faster ... ?)

.....

6

e. Because it contains Sulphur, (Why ... ?)

Why is an oil dangerous?

3. Use the following words in sentences below:

Colorful pick up surface automatically break diagrams

a. There is no water on the surface of the moon

b. An astronomer ~~pick~~ the stars through a telescope.

c. Some butterflies are very plain but the most beautiful ones are very colorful.

d. There is no need to stop that machine. It is controlled automatically.

e. Scientists often use diagrams to illustrate experiments.

8

4. Make sentences from the information given below:

a. A laboratory assistant / a man / look after / chemicals and apparatus

A laboratory assistant is a man who looks after chemicals and apparatus.

b. A computer / an instrument / make / calculations

A computer is an instrument which makes calculations.

c. A biologist / living things / study / a scientist

A biologist is a scientist who studies living things.

d. A turbine / a wheel / drive/ generator

A turbine is a wheel which drives the generator.

e. A mammal / an animal / give / milk to its young

A mammal is an animal which gives milk to its young.

10

6. **Talk about one of the following topics not exceeded 5 lines:**

1. The power of water
2. Water pollution
3. How do scientists work?

How do scientists work ?

~~The scientist's task is to ask questions and to find answers~~

The scientist's task is to ask questions about the observed facts and to find answers to these questions. He usually bases his theories on his observations and tests them by practical experiments.

A physicist wants to find out something about the colours in spectrum. He is using a prism and lenses to produce these colours from a beam of white light.

Physicists study not only light but also heat, sound and electricity.

Thank you

Ahmad Ali

16

Best of luck

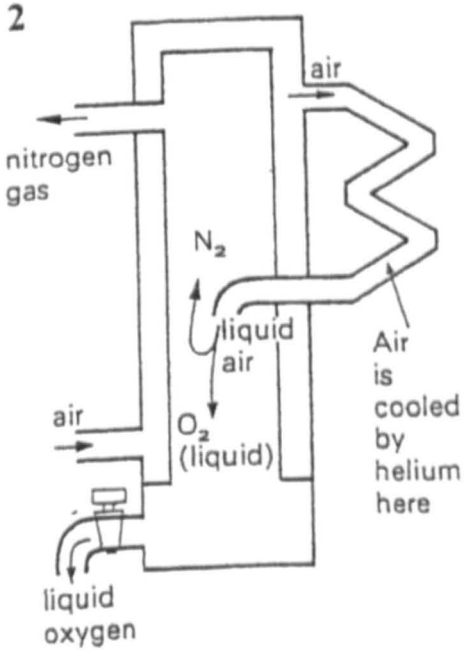
Two vital elements

What is the most common element on earth? How can it be produced? What have wood, alcohol and plastics in common? This unit answers these questions.

1

In the late 18th century, a scientist called Joseph Priestley prepared oxygen by concentrating the sun's rays through a lens on mercuric oxide. Oxygen had probably been produced many times before but Priestley was the first to recognise it. There is, in fact, more oxygen on earth than any other single element. About 20% of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen; nine tenths of the weight of water is oxygen; 65% of the weight of the human body is oxygen.

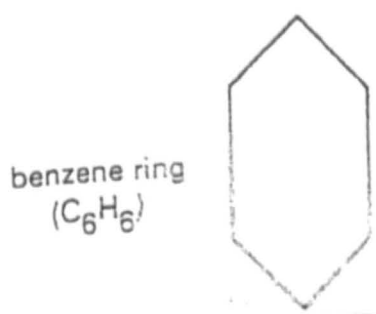
2



Oxygen is vital to life; it is needed by the body cells of all animals. It is also very useful in industry. The method Priestley used produces only small quantities. The large amounts needed for industry are produced in a different way. Air is put into containers under great pressure. This turns it into liquid and makes it very cold. It is then gradually warmed up and each substance evaporates at a different temperature. The boiling point of oxygen is $-183°C$. It is caught and stored in strong steel cylinders at a pressure of 136 atmospheres. The process is known as fractional distillation.

Now cover up the text and describe how oxygen is produced in industry.

3



Carbon appears in many forms and, like oxygen, it is a very important element. Carbon dioxide is needed by plants to make sugars. The energy which is stored in plants by this process is the basis of all forms of life. There are more carbon compounds than all other chemical compounds

مشاري حميد العتيبي ٤٢٤٠١٩٤٥ مجموعة (٣)

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1. **Answer the following questions**
   a. At what temperature does liquid oxygen evaporate?
   a. Liquid oxygen evaporate at -183°C.
   b. How did Priseley make oxygen?
   b. By concentrating the sun's rays through a lens on mercuric oxide.
   c. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen?
   c. About 20% of the volume of the atmosphere.
   ✗ d. What is the hardest known natural substance?
   d. The hardest known natural substance is dimend.

8

2. **Make questions for the following answers:**
   a. About 18% (How much …?)
   a. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen?
   b. At 100 C (At what …?)
   b. At what temperature does water boile?
   c. Because carbon atoms have special properties (Why …?)
   c. Why carbon atoms are very important?

3

3. **Make a relative clauses shorter in the following sentences:**
   a. A scientist who was called Priestley prepared Oxygen.
   a. A scientist called Priestley prepared Oxygen.
   b. The measurements which are used in Britain and the USA are different from those which are used in the rest of the world.
   b. The measurments used in Britain and the USA are different from those used in the rest of the world

2

4. **Use the following words in sentences from your own**

Vital Water is very vital to human life.
Evaporate Water evaporate at 100°C.
Energy We use petrol energy to make cars move.
Gradually Boys gradually grown up to become men.

4

5. **Summarize the passage and put another title in the following spaces:**

The title — Oxygen is vital to life

Oxygen is very vital to ~~our~~ life, it is used in many things; we use it in industry and the body cells need it. Now we can produce oxygen by process called fracsional distillation. ~~The first scientis~~ Joseph Priestley was the first who produced oxygen

3

مشاري حمد العجمي ٤٤٤٠١٩٤٠ مجموعة (ه)

1. **Answer 2 of the following comprehension questions:**

a. What do physicists study?

a. They study light, sound, heat and electricity.

b. What has a horse in common with a bear?

c. At what temperature does water freeze?

c. Water freezes at 0°C.

d. What is a dam?

e. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is Oxygen?

2. **Make 3 questions for these answers:**

a. It is a dry area with few plants or animals (What …?)

a. What is a desert?

b. Because it is very important resource (Why …?)

b. Why water is very important?

c. By irrigation (How ….?)

d. A jet plane is faster (Which is faster … ?)

d. Which is faster a jet plane or normal plane?

e. Because it contains Sulphur, (Why … ?)

3. **Use the following words in sentences below:**

Colorful pick up surface automatically break diagrams

a. There is no water on the …surface. of the moon

b. An astronomer ..pick up. the stars through a telescope.

c. Some butterflies are very plain but the most beautiful ones are very .colorful.

d. There is no need to stop that machine. It is controlled .automatically

e. Scientists often use …break… to illustrate experiments.

4. **Make sentences from the information given below:**

a. A laboratory assistant / a man / look after / chemicals and apparatus

a. A man who looks after chemicals and apparatus is called a laboratory assistant.

b. A computer / an instrument / make / calculations

b. A computer is an instrument which makes calculations.

c. A biologist / living things / study / a scientist

c. A biologist is a scientist who studys living things.

d. A turbine / a wheel / drive/ generator

d. A turbine is a wheel which drive generator.

e. A mammal / an animal / give / milk to its young

e. A mammal is an animal which give milk to its young.

مشاري حمد العصيمي ٤٢٤٠١٩٤٥ مجموعة (٢)

6. **Talk about one of the following topics not exceeded 5 lines:**

1. The power of water
2. Water pollution
3. How do scientists work?

Water pollution

How can i talk about water pollution? let me think, It is awful dangerous problem there are alot of things which make water pollute like mercury, and oil and sewage.

oil is very pollute to water when oil comes out frome the tanks and flew in the water it because alot of damegi to the living things in water like fish.

The sewage water is carry alot of thing and it does not important so when we throw the sewage in the sea water our allso we actulle pollute it.

Finally, water is very vital to our life, so we shaulde take carry of it.

Best of luck

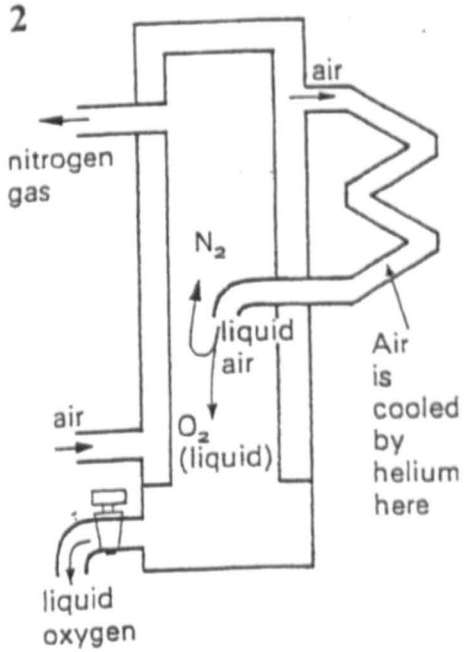
Two vital elements

What is the most common element on earth? How can it be produced? What have wood, alcohol and plastics in common? This unit answers these questions.

1

In the late 18th century, a scientist called Joseph Priestley prepared oxygen by concentrating the sun's rays through a lens on mercuric oxide. Oxygen had probably been produced many times before but Priestley was the first to recognise it. There is, in fact, more oxygen on earth than any other single element. About 20% of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen; nine tenths of the weight of water is oxygen; 65% of the weight of the human body is oxygen.

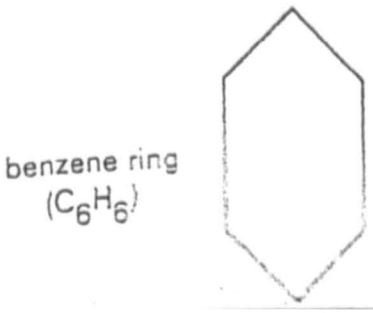
2



Oxygen is vital to life; it is needed by the body cells of all animals. It is also very useful in industry. The method Priestley used produces only small quantities. The large amounts needed for industry are produced in a different way. Air is put into containers under great pressure. This turns it into liquid and makes it very cold. It is then gradually warmed up and each substance evaporates at a different temperature. The boiling point of oxygen is $-183°C$. It is caught and stored in strong steel cylinders at a pressure of 136 atmospheres. The process is known as fractional distillation.

Now cover up the text and describe how oxygen is produced in industry.

3



Carbon appears in many forms and, like oxygen, it is a very important element. Carbon dioxide is needed by plants to make sugars. The energy which is stored in plants by this process is the basis of all forms of life. There are more carbon compounds than all other chemical compounds

13/20

حامد علي عطية بن الزهراني

University of Umm Al-Qura
College of Social Science
English Language Center
Final Exam
102 English Course
Applied Science

1. **Answer the following questions**
   a. At what temperature does liquid oxygen evaporate?
   Evaporate at different temperature.
   b. How did Priseley make oxygen?
   This turns it into liquid and makes it very cold.
   c. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen?
   about 20% the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen nine tenths
   d. What is the hardest known natural substance?

2. **Make questions for the following answers:**
   a. About 28% (How much …?)
   How much of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen
   b. At 100 C (At what …?)
   At what temperature does liquid water?
   c. Because carbon atoms have special properties (Why …?)
   Why were more carbon compounds

3. **Make a relative clauses shorter in the following sentences:**
   a. A scientist who was called Priestley prepared Oxygen.
   A scientist had been called priestley
   b. The measurements which are used in Britain and the USA are different from those which are used in the rest of the world.
   The measurements used in Britain and the USA are different from those used in the rest of the world.

4. **Use the following words in sentences from your own**
   Vital Oxygen is vital to life.
   Evaporate it is then gradually warmed up and each substance evaporates at different temperature
   Energy The energy which is stored in plants.
   Gradually
   It is then gradually warmed up and each substance evaporate

5. **Summarize the passage and put another title in the following spaces:**

Oxygen and Carbon

Oxygen is vital to life we can not live without it because it is needed by the body cells. Carbon appears in many from and like Oxygen it is vary important element.

4/30

1. Answer 2 of the following comprehension questions:

a. What do physicists study?

They study heat and light

b. What has a horse in common with a bear?

c. At what temperature does water freeze?

2

d. What is a dam?

e. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is Oxygen?

the atmosphere oxygen in [illegible]

2. Make 3 questions for these answers:

a. It is a dry area with few plants or animals (What …?)

1 what is the group area and group fell ?

b. Because it is very important resource (Why …?)

c. By irrigation (How ….?)

How does the man uses the power of water ?

d. A jet plane is faster (Which is faster … ?)

e. Because it contains Sulphur, (Why … ?)

Why the was elements ?

3. Use the following words in sentences below:

Colorful pick up surface automatically break diagrams

a. There is no water on the pickup of the moon

Surface

b. An astronomer ~~diagrams~~ break the stars through a telescope.

c. Some butterflies are very plain but the most beautiful ones are very antomaticly.

d. There is no need to stop that machine. It is controlled ~~Colorful~~ automatically

e. Scientists often use ~~surface~~ to illustrate experiments. break diagrams.

Colorful

4. Make sentences from the information given below:

a. A laboratory assistant / a man / look after / chemicals and apparatus

A Laboratory assistant the a man to look after chemicals

b. A computer / an instrument / make / calculations

The A computer use an instrument to make the calculation.

c. A biologist / living things / study / a scientist

The Aiologist are used living things to styty a scientist.

d. A turbine / a wheel / drive/ generator

The A turbine which are a wheel the drie to generator

e. A mammal / an animal / give / milk to its young

A mammal used and an animal to give milk to its young.

6. **Talk about one of the following topics not exceeded 5 lines:**

1. The power of water
2. Water pollution
3. How do scientists work?

How do Scientists work ?

The Scientists task is to ask aquestians about these observed facts and to find answer for it. They improve What that said by 7 works in their laboratores. They stydy Physics - Chmeistry and biology.

Best of luck

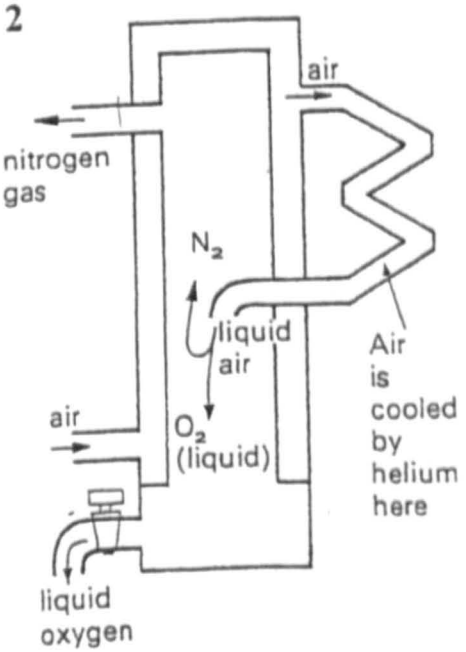
Two vital elements

What is the most common element on earth? How can it be produced? What have wood, alcohol and plastics in common? This unit answers these questions.

1

In the late 18th century, a scientist called Joseph Priestley prepared oxygen by concentrating the sun's rays through a lens on mercuric oxide. Oxygen had probably been produced many times before but Priestley was the first to recognise it. There is, in fact, more oxygen on earth than any other single element. About 20% of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen; nine tenths of the weight of water is oxygen; 65% of the weight of the human body is oxygen.

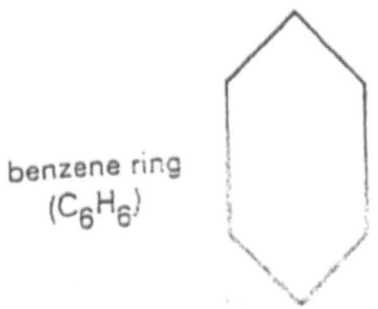
2



Oxygen is vital to life; it is needed by the body cells of all animals. It is also very useful in industry. The method Priestley used produces only small quantities. The large amounts needed for industry are produced in a different way. Air is put into containers under great pressure. This turns it into liquid and makes it very cold. It is then gradually warmed up and each substance evaporates at a different temperature. The boiling point of oxygen is $-183°C$. It is caught and stored in strong steel cylinders at a pressure of 136 atmospheres. The process is known as fractional distillation.

Now cover up the text and describe how oxygen is produced in industry.

3



Carbon appears in many forms and, like oxygen, it is a very important element. Carbon dioxide is needed by plants to make sugars. The energy which is stored in plants by this process is the basis of all forms of life. There are more carbon compounds than all other chemical compounds

16/20

University of Umm Al-Qura
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1. **Answer the following questions**
   a. At what temperature does liquid oxygen evaporate?
The liquid oxygen evaporate at 183° c.
   b. How did Priseley make oxygen?
He make oxygen by concentrating sun's rays through lenses on mercuri oxide
   c. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen?
It is about 20% of the volume of the atmosphere.
   d. What is the hardest known natural substance?

2. **Make questions for the following answers:**
   a. About 18% (How much …?)
How much oxygen of the volume of the atmosphere is oxygen.
   b. At 100 C (At what …?)
At what temperature does water boiling.
   c. Because carbon atoms have special properties (Why …?)
Why is carbon appear in many forms?

3. **Make a relative clauses shorter in the following sentences:**
   a. A scientist who was called Priestley prepared Oxygen.
Oxygen prepared by scientist.
   b. The measurements which are used in Britain and the USA are different from those which are used in the rest of the world.
The measurements are used in the rest of the world.

4. **Use the following words in sentences from your own**

Vital oxygen and carbon are two vital elements.
Evaporate Water evaporate at 100°c.
Energy The energy which is stored in plants is the basis of all forms of life
Gradually

5. **Summarize the passage and put another title in the following spaces:**

Oxygen and Carbon

Oxygen and carbon are two vital element.
Oxygen is very important to all forms of life to breath. Carbon appear in many forms and like oxygen.

13/30

1. Answer 2 of the following comprehension questions:

a. What do physicists study?

They are study ~~matter,~~ and light and heat

b. What has a horse in common with a bear?

.....

c. At what temperature does water freeze?

Water freeze at 0°c

d. What is a dam?

.....

e. How much of the volume of the atmosphere is Oxygen?

.....

4

2. Make 3 questions for these answers:

a. It is a dry area with few plants or animals (What …?)

What is the desert?

b. Because it is very important resource (Why …?)

Why is the resort important?

c. By irrigation (How ….?)

.....

d. A jet plane is faster (Which is faster … ?)

Which is faster A jet plane or a car?

e. Because it contains Sulphur, (Why … ?)

.....

4

3. Use the following words in sentences below:

Colorful pick up surface automatically break diagrams

a. There is no water on the surface of the moon

b. An astronomer diagrams the stars through a telescope.

c. Some butterflies are very plain but the most beautiful ones are very colorful

d. There is no need to stop that machine. It is controlled automatically

e. Scientists often use ~~diagrams~~ break to illustrate experiments.

6

4. Make sentences from the information given below:

a. A laboratory assistant / a man / look after / chemicals and apparatus

A laboratory assistant is a man ~~who~~ how is ~~look~~ clean chemicals and apparatus

b. A computer / an instrument / make / calculations

A computer is an instrument ~~which~~ that is calculations more.

c. A biologist / living things / study / a scientist

A biology is ~~a man~~ scientist who study living things.

d. A turbine / a wheel / drive/ generator

A turbine ~~which~~ is a generator which drive by a wheel.

e. A mammal / an animal / give / milk to its young

A mammal is an animal which give milk to its young.

4

6. **Talk about one of the following topics not exceeded 5 lines:**

1. The power of water
2. Water pollution
3. How do scientists work?

Water Pollution

~~Do you know~~ Water is very important to our lives. Water can be polluted in different way. Oil float on water with and artificial net. If a tanker lose some oil in the sea, sea animal and fish are killed and the beach is polluted. And there are other things can pollution the water is the sewage.

4/10

Best of luck

Appendix P

Every other week class observation transcription & description of a GBL group

WEEK I

Teacher: I am Abdulrahman; I am your teacher for this course. I would like each one of you to write down his name and his subject as well as his 101 final results, OK! Also, it is very important for each one of you to know procedures and distributions of our course. First of all, I would like you to get this book "Learn English For Science" and the class work is going to be as follows:

1. reading a passage (of each unit)
2. understanding and explaining difficult words
3. answering the comprehensive questions and doing exercises
4. doing a homework

Therefore, I would like each one of you to prepare before hand, such as reading the passage in advance, trying to answer and doing exercises of the coming units or lessons that you expect that we are going to cover during class works of each week. The most important bit of all is doing the homework. Second, the division of marks is going to be as follows: 60% is going to be for the final exam as you all know from the previous course, 10% is for a presence and an absence, (if you absent more than 25% lectures, you are automatically withdrawn from the course), 10% is for a homework, and 20% is for participation and other authentic activities. All right! Any question..? (I repeated in Arabic what I have said what has been abovementioned!).

Student: Yes sir, from where is to get the course book (in Arabic)

Teacher: Oh yeah! thank you. You can get the course book either from the Top Office in the corner, eastern part the university campus or from any book shops (e.g. Jarir, or Tihama) (In Arabic).

Student: What sort of note-book to get? (in Arabic).

Teacher: Anything! (in Arabic). Any more questions yes.. OK, I will see you next week but don't forget your course books, please thank you, good bye!

(WEEK II)

Teacher: Good morning
Student: Good morning Sir!
Teacher: I would like to call your names one by one from the list I have been supplied by the dean office and any name won't be mentioned please go back to the dean office to reregister in order not to get in trouble, OK .. Now, would you mind to open your course books on page 1 please! Shall we start reading from right to left of class until last student at that corner! All right! Can you read by starting with a title and the first line or sentence of paragraph one, yes you please!
Student: "How do scientists work? We .." (the student is reading ..).
Teacher: (correcting pronunciation and meaning of familiar words), Next one please ..,
Student: "The scientists' task ..." (student is reading ..).
Teacher: Have you prepared? I am sure you haven't prepared. Please, I would like you all to prepare from next week as I said to you participation has a benefaction. Moreover, I help any participants whose hand were raised a long the course and I will appreciate all their circumstances if there is any because they were working hard ... (in Arabic).
Now, we can all observe scientist and scientific bits in color of sky , the temperatures, the depth of rivers .. etc. What is the main idea of this paragraph?, who can tell us .. , yes it is in a ... question .. yes this paragraph is answering the question of the passage how do scientists work? It talks about scientists' task by asking questions and try to find answers to those questions, right! (in Arabic) if I say "is sky blue?" OK I have to prove by searching in order to convince people that the sky is blue because of such and such. The same for temperatures in that when we say temperature in Makkah is 50°; how do we know that until we get a thermometer to show others that degree of temperature; so we have to test the theory to get the answer, answer the questions is the job of science and scientists. You can find that in line three and four; "The scientist's task is to ask questions about these observed facts and to find answers to these questions". This is the main idea of this paragraph! OK Who's next? Yes.. please!
Student: xxxxxxx (the student is reading the beginning sentence of the new paragraph)
Teacher: Can you read the above line of a picture? Can you see it?
Student: Yes, "Look at ...".
Teacher: work! (the teach is correcting pronunciation of the student). Next!
Student: "This man .." xxxxx
Teacher: a chemist! /k/ sound when /c/ and /h/ are preceded by a vowel/e/ the word is pronounced /k/ sound (correcting a student's pronunciation), thank you, next..!
Student: "He is using ..." xxxxx
Teacher: raise your voice please, "he is using a balance.." , what is a balance?! (another student answers in Arabic!) yes thank you, yes continue, please! (the student is carrying on reading his sentence), next please!
Student: "beside him .." xxxxx
Teacher: (interruption by one of students in class!) keep silent, please! Follow your

classmate. Yes ..apparatus! (correcting a pronunciation of the student) Next..!

Student: "Copper sulphate.."

Teacher: composed! (correcting the pronunciation of the student!) next! Student: "

Student: "Compounds are substances .."

Teacher: compound are substances ..! (correcting the pronunciation of the student!) next! Please guys raise your voice!

Student: xxx

Teacher: Thanks you next please!

Student: xxx

Teacher: Spell the word yes ..

Student: xxx

Teacher: continue please!

Student: xxx

Teacher: Who's a chemist guys? He is a man who deals with formula like some of you!

Student: xxx

Teacher: compound (correcting pronunciation), what is a compound? It is very important word especially for students of Chemistry! It is two elements or more. What is a verb? It is .. to combine, the noun is .. a .. combination!

Student: xxx

Teacher: All right! Any question or difficult words of this paragraph? You know all words. OK..!

Student: Sulphate xxx

Teacher: Raise your hand please! Sulphate is a substance which is called the same in Arabic Sulphate.

Student: xxx

Teacher: Who else guys? .. yes!

Student: using ...xxx

Teacher: OK! What is the meaning of using? It is .. when you are .. doing something with it for a purpose .. !

Student: xxx

Teacher: OK what else?

Student: Apparatus?

Teacher: Apparatus! Thank you What does it mean who can tell me?

Student: a set of tools or equipment for doing scientific activities.

Teacher: Thank you very much. We can't say to tools of building apparatus, apparatus is different. Who can give me an example of pieces of apparatus yes ..!

Student: test tube!

Teacher: test tube, what else,

Student: a funnel

Teacher: Thank you a funnel, yes..!

Student: a flask

Teacher: a flask thank you and many laboratory tools, you see the difference between apparatus and other tools .. OK!

Student: a balance?

Teacher: Yes, thank you who can tell me what is a balance any one..?

Student: a scale!

Teacher: Thank you yes it is an instrument used for weighing things. It is a noun but I

use it as a verb it means to put two things in a steady position means that the same word you can use it as a verb or as a noun, according to context ..OK

Student: xxx

Teacher: Sorry, what ..?!

Student: Where is the word in the passage? (in Arabic)

Teacher: Third line of paragraph two, all right! Who can give the main idea of this paragraph or what does it mean of this paragraph?

Student: A chemist is xxx

Teacher: This paragraph is talking about a chemist OK but Yes ..

Student: It is talking about the chemist who use a balance, for weighing things (in Arabic).

Teacher: OK that's set it is all about a chemist who use a balance to weigh some elements (copper sulphate) in order to combine between two elements or more to get a new compound. I need all chemistry students to memorize this paragraph essentially. Now! Paragraph 3 ..yes who .. yes you? OK

Student: xxx (reading the first line of paragraph 3)

Teacher: Physicist ..(correcting pronunciation of student!) What is a physicist?

Student: A scientist who works in Physics (In Arabic)

Teacher: Yes thank you ..

Student: xxx (reading the second sentence of paragraph 3)

Teacher: xxx (correcting the pronunciation of the student)

Student: xxx

Teacher: Find out .. it has to be one word what does it mean who can tell me? Yes..

Student: discover!

Teacher: OK discover or to get ..

Student: xxx (reading the third sentence or line of paragraph three)

Teacher: Spectrum..! What is spectrum? .. it is the seven colors, next please!

Student: xxx (reading the fourth line)

Teacher: a beam is .. a light beam .. who can tell us what is a light beam?

Student: it is a line of light ..

Teacher: That is correct thank you next please..

Student: xxx (reading the last line of the paragraph)

Teacher: You know of course the meaning of electricity .., heat .., sound .., light?

Students: yes.. yes!

Teacher: Any difficult word? .. You know Laser is one of the product of Physicists.

Student: What is a prism?

Teacher: Yes any body .. can tell me what is a prism? ..

Student: It is a solid .. geometric shape with ends that are equal and parallel

Teacher: Thank you very much. Physicists use white light in order to get the light they want and study it/them ..

Student: Lenses

Teacher: It is very clear ..! who can tell him what is lenses?

Student: It is a piece of glass (in Arabic)

Teacher: That's good and it is usually transparent for example lenses of eyeglasses

Student: Explore ..!

Teacher: Explore .. any one yes .. it means discover, find out ..etc.

Student: wants?

Teacher: It is a .. verb which means needs or something like that ..(explained in Arabic).

What is an 's' at the end of the verb "want"

Student: this is a plural!
Teacher: No.. no ! .. OK it is called a third person singular 's'; it is usually used in three cases. First, in a case of facts when we say the sun rises from the .. east isn't true? It is a fact! Second, in a case with habits when we say 'Ali goes to school everyday'. And in a case of future tense when we say 'He wants to go with his family to London', clear ..! OK what is the main idea of this paragraph? What do physicists do? We have similar questions in the comprehensive questions later on. What do the study?
Student: They study heat, sounds, lights, and electricity ..
Teacher: OK, brilliant!, What a chemist study
Student: A chemist study elements and compounds
Teacher: Studies not study but in case plural you can say study OK What does it mean of elements and compound who can tell us again?
Student: elements like Oxygen, Nitrogen, ...
Teacher: Thank you and compounds
Student: Compounds like water (H2O) ..
Teacher: Thanks and what else who can give another example ..?
Student: Copper Sulphate ..!
Teacher: Thank you that's what I mean ..! You have already read this compound in the second paragraph They are called compounds ..
Student: substances?
Teacher: Say What does substances mean?
Student: What does substances mean?
Teacher: What does it mean guys?
Student: In Arabic?
Teacher: In English! .. yes no one! It is matters with more or less uniform properties And then explained in Arabic!
Student: xxx
Teacher: Examine! What is an exam?
Student: In Arabic a Test!
Teacher: Yes that's true but this word 'examine is a verb 'I examine you, = 'I test you!' but a noun is .. examination
Student: What is find out?
Teacher: We have to say What does find out mean?, OK its meaning is very important and it is not accepted if you say 'find' without 'out' it is .. to .. discover!
Student: Microscope!
Teacher: What is a microscope?! ..
Student: It is a tool or an instrument to examine things !
Teacher: It is very clear even it is the same pronunciation in Arabic! Yes ..it is to magnify thins which means .. microscopes make things bigger, all right ..Any more questions .. OK shall we move to the last paragraph .. yes .. OK !
Student: This woman is a biologist ...(reading the first line of the last paragraph)
Teacher: Thanks, who's next ..?
Student: xxx
Teacher: simple! (correcting pronunciation) who's next?
Student: xxx
Teacher: Instrument ..(correcting the pronunciation) what does it mean of instrument?
Student: It is a tool ..! (In Arabic).
Teacher: By the way guys you should give the meaning in English OK! So you

should keep or purchase (buy) a monolingual dictionary, is that clear ..? That is all right but every word is used differently, OK!

Student: xxx

Teacher: objects, what is the meaning of objects guys? .. means things! OK Any questions any difficult words yes

Student: Magnify ..!

Teacher: You haven't with us when we already explained it OK it to enlarge (said also in Arabic). Any more questions

Student: Amoeba?

Teacher: What is an amoeba? It is exactly the same as in Arabic Amoeba!! OK, Any more questions ? .. all right, what is the main idea of this paragraph?

Student: It is talking about the biologist and biologist job!

Teacher: Great! Yes it is about a biologist's work and what does she do with a microscope. Thank you. Who can tell me the difference between a biologist and a botanist ..? .. anyone.. OK the biologist is a person who studies animals and a botanist is a person who studies plants, clear! Who can summarize this passage for us in one sentence or so?

Student: xxx (In Arabic)

Teacher: No, good try, please when you would like to answer raise your hands thank you OK Yes you ..?

Student: The summary is how do scientists work ..?!

Teacher: That's fine, you give the title of the passage ..! Moreover the passage is talking about three examples of applied sciences, namely a chemistry, a physics, and a biology and it tells about their scientists' natural jobs and they are doing inside their labs and so forth .. isn't true? Now there are some important words have mentioned in the passage, we would like all to read and note them in order to emphasise on them as they are very important to recognize and you know some of these words are going to be asked to put them in sentences or defining them in the final exam, OK! The first one is Observe, what is the meaning of observe? Can you read ..?

Student: Observe: when we look at something closely.

Teacher: Yes .. observe is to watch something closely and this word is a verb the noun is ..'observation', OK! 'depth?'

Student: The depth of a river is greater in the middle than near the sides.

Teacher: That's correct but what part of speech is the word 'depth'

Student: It is adjective!

Teacher: It is a.. noun, deep is an adjective and if you would like to compare between two things you have to use an adjective with an addition to a suffix –er in order to say 'deeper' or 'the deepest' for the superlative. So, you should be very careful in the exam if I ask for example to put the 'depth' in a sentence and you use as an adjective, the sentence is going to be completely wrong; it is a noun, be careful next please..?

Student: bases on: builds on ..

Teacher: depends on, is it clear ..yeah?! please guys raise your voice in order your classmates hear you!

Student: theories: ideas which explain, or try to explain ..

Teacher: What is a singular of the plural theories is .. a theory. A theory is an idea and it is tried to be explained by scholars and researchers, such as Darwin's theory in

his claim that a human is an ape and developed by time! OK! Next please..

Student: Apparatus: Lenses and prisms are pieces of apparatus
Teacher: OK! Remember that this word is uncountable and has no plural. What can we do? We use pieces of apparatus, pieces of information...etc.
Student: What is the meaning of no plural?
Teacher: Means that can not be counted, (explained in Arabic!). Next one ..
Student: Consists of: are made up of. Water consists of Hydrogen and Oxygen.
Teacher: That's fine, it means contains but consists of are two words, clear! Next ..
Student: I have different course book it is different from others ..!
Teacher: Oh! It must be 103 course book, please make sure to a right one ..OK! next..!
Student: Analyse: if a chemist analyses a compound, he beaks it down to find out what it consists of
Teacher: That is correct! OK! It means examine all right! Next one
Student: Spectrum: the different colors which light consists of.
Teacher: All right! All colors come originally from the seven colors, OK!
Student: Examine: Look at closely
Teacher: Yes! To test something means you examine it, next !
Student: Sample: a small amount of a substance.
Teacher: Yes ! when we take a sample of blood to examine under the microscope (then explained in Arabic) Is it clear! next
Student: Cells: the smallest living things.
Teacher: It is very important word to know, I think you all know it! Next ..!
Student: Magnifies: Microscopes are used to magnify things
Teacher: That's right! Something looks bigger OK! Any questions...? All right, now we go to the first exercise: Word completion, would you mind to read the example first and then do the first one.. thank you.
Student: These cells are found in blood. They are blood cells.
Teacher: OK! Can you do the first one please?
Student: Yes! This assistant works in a laboratory. He is .. a laboratory assistant.
Teacher: Thank you Who can tell the different between the two sentences? Is there any difference? They are both the same but one was done in one way and the other was done in another way! next please!
Student: Joe studies physics. He is .. a physicist
Teacher: Thank you, next!
Student: Mrs Evans teaches biology. She is a teacher.
Teacher: Thank you, next please!
Student: This is a sample of a rock. It is a rock sample.
Teacher: Thank you, what is a rock? What part of speech is a rock?
Student: It is a noun and it is a small piece of a mountain
Teacher: Yes that's good, next..!
Student: This laboratory is used for chemistry. It is a chemistry laboratory.
Teacher: Thank you, shall we move to word building, the first one is done for, can you do the next one, please?
Student: A biologist, his science is biology.
Teacher: Thank you, next.!
Student: A physicist and his science is physics
Teacher: Thank you, next please!
Student: Chemistry and the scientist is a chemist.
Teacher: Thank you, yes please!
Student: A geologist and the science is a geology

Teacher: Thank you, next please!
Student: A technologist and the science is technology
Teacher: That is brilliant! Before the last one !
Student: Botany and the scientist is botanist.
Teacher: Thank you, the last one!
Student: Zoology and the science is zoologist.
Teacher: Thank you. We'll stop here and I'll see you next week but please don't forget to prepare for what is coming and I did not give any homework for this week. Please try to answer the rest of exercises and read the next passage for next week, any question ..? OK! Thank you see you next week, goodbye!
Students: Good bye

Appendix Q

Every other week class observation transcription & description of a TBL group

WEEK I

Teacher: I would like, first of all, to introduce myself to you. My name is Abdulrahman and I am your teacher for this course until the end of the term. I am quite happy to teach you differently this time. Therefore, I would like to explain to you how our course is going to be as a new method in teaching English for Specific Purposes and I hope we all benefit from that. Before going any further, do you understand what I am saying? (I explained that in Arabic). OK! I'll talk to you in English and then I'll repeat In Arabic to make sure that every one understand what is really needed from him from the beginning to know the distribution of marks and strategies and techniques of such model, OK! First thing I'll tell you about division of marks which as follow: You already know that 60% is for a final exam. 20% is going for a participatation and other activities in class. 10% is for a presence and absence and 10% is for a homework.

For the sake of our new model (method), what I would like you to do is the following procedures. First, after the first 5-10 minutes I would like you to be gathered in small work-groups and it is not allowed for any one to change from one work-group to another which means that each one is going to be with his own work-group until the end of the course. Every week there will be a new leader and he is going to be responsible and a spokesman as well as a report writer in class for his work-group. The leader is going to discuss with his work-group and is going to share every one of his group with his ideas and everything that is needed to be discussed.. OK! Is that clear? Any questions? (All abovementioned has been explained in Arabic!)

Student: How about a course book, from where can we buy it? (In Arabic)

Teacher: Please, I would like you to speak in English! You know this course is English course not Arabic, OK! Concerning the course book, there will be no course book, all right! What is instead is that I will give you in each class until the end of the course handouts including passages with glossaries explained underneath every passage which we are going to cover and these handouts contain different exercises to drill. By the end of each class, I expect each leader fill a report sheet I will give him every week which will contain five questions are needed to be filled by that week's leader in 5 minutes time. They are the following:

1. What is a summary of the passage?
2. What have you got from today's class?
3. What grammatical structures have you already learned today?
4. What new words have already learned today?
5. Any further comments or suggestions?

All right! Any further questions..? OK! Thank you. I'll see you next week, good bye!

Students: Good bye!

WEEK II

Teacher: (After checking an absence, the teacher asked students to have their copies of a handout which includes Unit 1 passage, glossary, and exercises that were found in GBL groups' course book! The students of this model are going to be gathered in work-groups after their teacher's permission. Before the teacher asks the whole class the big question which is the title of this week's passage: OK!) Can we discuss altogether the following question which is the title of the passage today: How do scientists work? Yes any suggestion ..? (Translated in Arabic, just for pushing students to talk!) Yes Ahmad!

Student: Yes, scientists study theories and test these theories ..!

Teacher: That's true, I think theories are questions and these questions need answers and I think this is a job of scientists which is to answer or try to answer these questions don't they any body else has any ideas or so!

Student: Yes, the scientists have laboratories to carry out their experiments and try to find out some things new things useful for people!

Teacher: You right! All technologies around us started from these kinds of theories or questions, what do you think?

Student: Yes, I think any thing beginning with questions!

Teacher: Ah, I think so and one by one the scientists will get the truth or facts!

Student: What are facts?

Teacher: Means people will find new and useful things. Any thing would like to say Guys?. Now, I would like to write some useful words as keys for understanding our passage today! and you have some other in your handout; please look at them before reading the passage in a few minutes time in order to understand what is the passage is talking about . Now, would you mind to look at the words on the board; science, scientists, experiment, chemistry (balance, elements, compounds), physics (lenses, prism, light, sound, heat, electricity), biology (microscope, organisms). I'm sure you are familiar with these words, yeah? OK now would you mind to gather and don't forget that you can not change to another work-group, OK! (they were grouped in 6 sub-groups with 5 persons in each sub-group. Now, who are going to represent their work-groups for today? .. (students raised their hands and the teacher selected some of them!) OK Ahamad you are going to be the leader for your group this week, let's say (**group A**) and you Ayoob you're going to be the leader for your group let's say group (**group B**), OK! Anas! You are the leader for your group (**group C**) today, OK! Mishary you are the leader for your group (**group D**) and Muhanad you are the leader for your group (**group E**) this week, OK! Well, ..while I write some words on the board, I would like each work-group leader and his members to read the first paragraph of our passage of unit 1. I'll give you 3 minutes to finish reading it and try to find out the main idea of the paragraph, all right? If any one does not know the meaning of any word please ask his work-group and if the whole group does not know the meaning of that word the leader of the group can ask me!

(After 3 minutes) OK guys! Yes (group A) Ahmad, Any difficult words?

Student: Observations?

Teacher: Who can tell him what is an observation?

Student: (Said in Arabic the meaning of that word!).

Teacher: Please, speak in English ..? it is to see or watch very closely and the teacher gave an example of the sky's color! What else, guys? (leader of group C raised his hand!) Yes Anas?

Student: Carry out?

Teacher: I think it is very important word, especially, to you as applied science students.

It means put something into practice. OK! Any one else? No difficult words..

all right, Now, group A Ahmad! can you tell us what is the main idea of this paragraph? (he was asked as he is the leader for group A!).

Student: Yes! Scientists try to answer questions they asked.

Teacher: All right! What sort of questions do scientists try to answer?

Student: they try to answer questions like color of the sky, the temperature ...! like this..

Teacher: OK! Group B, what you've got?

Student: (leader of the group reads from what the group decided) we can all observe simple scientific facts ..!

Teacher: Yes! So what?! What else you can say here?

Student: This facts are examining by scientists..!

Teacher: That's fine. What about group C?

Student: Scientists find answers to questions when doing experiments.

Teacher: Great! Like what?

Student: Like ..erm.. look at microscope..!

Teacher: Fine! How about group D?

Student: The scientist's task is to ask questions about observed facts and to find answers

to these questions.

Teacher: OK! you are reading from the passage!

Student: Yes line three..!

Teacher: All right! Group E, what is the main idea, please?

Student: How do scientists work?

Teacher: Oh, you give the title of the passage! I like that! It seems to me very general but the first paragraph is general too. By the way, first paragraphs are always introductions for any passages! Please can you write this up in order to refer to them later! OK, who is the closest to the good one? I myself can say all of you are good, but I think group D is the closest!

Student: But other answers from understanding!

Teacher: I agree with you and I like that too but I prefer the grammatical sentence! By the Way, you should be careful for punctuation, grammar, and spelling! All right! Shall we move to the next paragraph? It is talking about the picture, what do you think it is about?

Student: It is about chemist!

Teacher: Yes! you right! What is a chemist guys?

Student: (says in Arabic the meaning of chemist!)

Teacher: He is a person who studies chemistry like most of you! All right, Ill give you 2 minutes to read this simple paragraph and as we dealt that leaders of groups write down the main idea of the paragraph and if there is any word that the whole group doesn't understand please ask me. I need you to help each other!

(After 2 minutes) Any difficult word?

Student: (leader of group D raised his hand!) Substance?
Teacher: It is a matter (and also explained in Arabic) with its own properties! What else?
Student: (leader of group E) What is composed?
Teacher: which line?
Student: line 5!
Teacher: OK! Composed of is exactly the same meaning of made of , OK! Any one else! Now, group A, what is the main idea of this paragraph?
Student: Well, Chemist is usually using a balance to weigh some elements and Compounds!
Teacher: You all agree!
Students: (of group A) Yes!
Teacher: All right, next group, what is the main idea?
Student: The main idea is the last sentence.
Teacher: Can you read it, please?
Student: Chemists not only analyze compounds but also combine elements to form compounds!
Teacher: OK! How about group C, what you've got?
Student: The same!
Teacher: The same of what?
Student: The last sentence of paragraph!
Teacher: Can you read it?
Student: Chemist not only analyze compounds but also combine elements to form compounds!
Teacher: OK! But from now on guys I need each group to have its words. I don't you read from the passage to give me the main idea I want it from your understanding, Deal?
Student: (leader of group D explained in Arabic that he and his group agreed on the same sentence)
Teacher: I'll accept it just for this paragraph, OK! Next group, please
Student: Chemists study elements and compounds!
Teacher: That's excellent! I like that! Indeed a chemist usually is based on elements and compounds for analyzing. Thank you all guys! Now shall we go to the last paragraph! I'll give 2 minutes OK!
(After two minutes!). All right, Do you have any difficult word? Yes
Student: (leader of group C) instrument?
Teacher: Thank you, it is a tool to use it like a microscope, OK! Any one else? .. OK, Now, what is the main idea of this paragraph, yes Ahmad? Not from the Passage.
Student: OK! Biology is studying living things!
Teacher: That's sounds OK! Next group, please?
Student: (Leader of group B) A biologist studies all kinds of life like animals!
Teacher: Thank you! Next group?
Student: (Leader of group C) Biology using microscope to see small things.
Teacher: You mean biologists are using microscope for their research. OK! What about D
Student: Biologists study cells.
Teacher: That's fine, and they also study other living things, don't they? OK! How about the last group (group E)?
Student: (leader of group E) Biologists study all lives!

Teacher: You mean they study all living things like animals, plants ...etc. don't they? OK! You are all brilliant! Now I need from each group discuss with its leader to summarize the passage, I'll give you 1 minutes to do that. Please, leaders write down the summary in order to fill the class report I've given you! (After 1 minutes) Yes, group D (as the leader raised his hand)!

Student: Scientists try to find answers to questions. Scientists test theories! They do experiments!

Teacher: OK! What else? Yes .. group B

Student: (leader of group B) Scientists try to explain scientific things around us

Teacher: Well, you know guys summary means that you try to cover the whole passage in few sentences by using phrases like the passage is talking about..etc.
OK! Yes group A, what've you got?!

Student: (leader of group A) The passage is talking about how scientists work and give some examples of scientists, chemist, physicist, and biologist and .. er

Teacher: Thank you very much, I like that it is a good summary but if you either pluralize those three example that the passage have by saying chemists, physicists, and biologists or by using "a" in the case of singular, OK! How bout group C!

Student: (leader of group C) Scientists try to find out ..

Teacher: Yes .. to find out what?!

Student: to find out answers for questions and facts .. erm ..the scientists discover new things .. and find out new answers ..

Teacher: It is like what Newton found out, he found a new fact of gravity! OK! Group D!

Student: (leader of group D) Scientist test his theories by practical experiment. Chemist use balance to weigh some copper sulphate crystals and physicist use lenses to produce colors and biologist use microscope to see cells!

Teacher: Thank you, it is interesting I like that too but either pluralize chemist by saying chemists use or singularize chemist, physicist and biologist by using the third person singular 's' by saying a chemist uses, a physicist uses, etc. as habits or facts OK? Thank you all guys but please don't forget to fill the class report by the leaders of today in which the summary is one of the question to answer, Excuse me not now! At the end of class, all right? Be careful of spelling, punctuation, and grammar! Now, we'll come to the questions and we'll takesome exercises next week OK! Could each group leader write down the answers in a separate paper and pass them to next group for correction, OK?

Student: write answers from passage?

Teacher: Yes! Is it clear! I'll give 5 minutes to do that .. . (After 5 minutes!) Now the first question, Ahmad (leader of group A).

Student: A scientist usually bases theories on his observation and then tests these theories by practical experiment.

Teacher: OK! Do you all agree of this answer?

Students: Yes!

Teacher: Every body listen to me guys please I want a complete answer you sir not to say one word or a phrase and say this is the answer and usually sentences begin with capital letters (translated in Arabic) OK? Next question! What does a scientist often use instruments for? Ayoob (leader of group B)!

Student: xxx

Teacher: Thank you. You all agree?! .. OK, question 3, what does a scientist often use apparatus for? Yes Anas!(leader of group C)

Student: xxx

Teacher: We should start with subjects, a scientist usually uses apparatus for ...OK? Next, group D, Mishari! (leader of group D)

Student: What does copper sulphate consist of ? Copper sulphate consists of copper, sulphur, and oxygen.

Teacher: Do you all agree on that? .. Thank you next group, Muhannad! What sort of substance is copper sulphate?

Student: The copper sulphate is a combined!

Teacher: You mean compound! Yes thank you, agreed? .. OK! Next, Ahmad your role now! How much elements does water consist of?

Student: (leader of group A) Water consists of oxygen and hydrogen.

Teacher: Two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen which is called a compound, isn't it? Did you all agree? .. All right "h" is a homework for next week! Exercise 2 is the opposite of exercise 1, answers are there but you generate or get the questions 'to weigh some copper sulphate crystals. What is the question? Now, I want each group to make questions from answers given to you and then pass your questions to your next group for correction and the we'll do that together, OK! The same strategy as previous exercise, I'll give 3 minutes to do that, OK!.. (After 3 minutes), yes Group A, Ahmad, your question please, 'What ... for?'

Student: What does a chemist often use a balance for?

Teacher: That's right! All of you agree? OK! Next, Ayoob?

Student: What does a chemist often use an apparatus for?

Teacher: OK! Next question for the given answer 'to produce the colours in the Spectrum.' Yes Anas, 'What ...for?'

Student: What does a physicist often use lenses and prisms for?

Teacher: Good, you all agree? .. .All right! Now, Mishari can you make a question of the answer 'to examine a blood sample', 'What ..for?'

Student: (leader of group D) What does a biologist often use a microscope for?

Teacher: To examine a blood sample, brilliant! You are all agree, aren't you? .. . 'There are copper sulphate crystals on the balance'. What is the question Muhannad, 'What sort of ..?'

Student: (leader of group E) What sort of substance are there on the balance?

Teacher: What sort of substance is there on the balance? But the answer is going to be are because of crystals if you say what sorts you can say are? All agree? Next please? Ahmad! 'Water is a compound, what sort of ..?'

Student: (leader of group A) What sort of substance is water?

Teacher: Thank you, it is a compound. Are you all agree? .. OK! Next, Ayoob! 'Oxygen is an element, what sort of ..?'

Student: (leader of group B) What sort of a substance is an Oxygen?

Teacher: Thank you, are you all agree? ..OK! 'h' and the following exercise are homework for next week! Now, we'll move to the passive. 'look at the verb in this example': 'Copper sulphate is composed of three elements' you see the verb 'composed' it is a past participle of the present verb compose before the main verb we have to use a helping verb for passives and put the main verb in the past participle (translated in Arabic!) Now, I'll give 2 minutes to complete the rest of
the following exercise and the as usual each group leader gives his group's

answers to next group for correction! (After 2 minutes!) Yes please, Ahmad!

Student: (leader of group A) Water is composed of hydrogen and oxygen.

Teacher: Thank you, that's correct. Are you all agree? .. OK! Next, Ayoob, Microscopes!

Student: Microscopes is used to see very small things.

Teacher: Microscopes 'are' or 'is' O'Ayoob? .. the word 'microscopes' is plural, OK! Next, Anas! Chemical ..

Student: (leader of group C) Chemical substance ..

Teacher: substances, plural! (correcting student)

Student: Chemical substances are ..we ..

Teacher: Chemical substances are weight on a balance. We use the third past participle of the verb weigh, , OK! Next, 'Theories .." Mishari?

Student: Theories are often tested by experiment.

Teacher: That's fine. Are you all agree? .. OK, Muhannad .. 'A spectrum ..'?

Student: A spectrum of light is produced by using a prism.

Teacher: OK! Are you all agree? .. All right, 'f' is a homework for next week in order not to forget the usage of passive voice, guys! We'll stop here and please read at home the numbers and measurements in the hand out, they are given to you in numbers as well as in letters and words. Now it's time for writing up the report, I'll give each leader now a report sheet to fill. (teacher is delivering the sheets of reports to leaders of today) I put questions to help you to organize and fill the report easily. I'll give you 5 minutes to do that and then I'll ask you to give your report answers to the next (neighbor) leader for correction with different color if there is any mistake, OK! (after 5 minutes!) Stop writing please! Now, give your report sheet to your neighbor's leader for correction. I'll give you more 5 minutes to correct the other group's report sheet by different color and then give it to me and I'll see you next week, Clear! (translated in Arabic) (after 5 minutes!). Please stop now can you give me the reports, please! Thank you, see you next week guys .. good bye!

Appendix R

A questionnaire of (attitudes) class evaluation

Date: **Group:**

What were you hoping to learn from this course?

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..... .

How much is this course meeting your hopes?

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.....
..... .

Overall, how do you rate this course?

□ %81-100 □ %61-80 □ %41-60 □ %21-40 □ % 0-20

How did you feel at the end of the course?

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..... .

Any good points?

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..... .

Areas of improvement?

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..... .

Further comments?

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..... .

What did you do outside of class to improve your English?

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..... .

Thank you