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Challenges of Teaching/Learning English and Management

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Abstract - Teaching of English as a Second/Foreign language is always a challenging task. When it comes to the places where English serves a very limited purpose, it becomes more crucial and painstaking to teach and learn. Teaching of English in the Gulf region in general and Saudi Arabia in particular catches attention of many researchers and scholars especially when the issue is particularly related to the classroom situations. The study especially focuses on the case of Jeddah Community College (JCC). Teaching of English at Jeddah Community college serves two purposes: first, it strengthens the foundation of English and later lays the basis for Specific English which will be used in the years of the students' specialties. English in the Kingdom is taught at school levels also, but it does not enjoy as important place in the curriculum as in most developing countries. Despite good planning, curriculum, textbooks, qualified teachers and effective administration, the teaching-learning process sometimes seems to be futile when the actual skill development is not up to the mark. However, there could have been greater change had a systematic analysis been made in the past by exploring the factors responsible for such a low level performance. Both the teachers and learners face challenges due to many reasons. The teachers face challenges due to the following: their qualification, training as an EFL teacher, experience as a bilingual teacher (in Arabic context), perception of Arab culture, psychology of the learners, language policy, status of English, methods and strategies, assessment etc. The learners face challenges mainly due to the following: the difference between the past and present style, technique of teaching, workload, more focus on EFL, and focused teaching, stricter evaluation system, hard work, lack of proper motivation and attitude etc. Management of such pedagogic challenges is inevitable. Therefore, the role of Management becomes more crucial. Management of human resource (including HR development) and e-resource may be proved be quite helpful in coping the challenges of the EFL classroom situations.

Keywords : *Pedagogues, Culture, psychology, Human resource, e-resource, language policy, Language status.*

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The study especially focuses on the case of Jeddah Community College (JCC). Teaching of English at Jeddah Community college serves two purposes: first, it strengthens the foundation of English and later lays the basis for Specific English which will be used in the years of the students' specialties. English in the Kingdom is taught at school levels also, but it does not enjoy as important place in the curriculum as in most developing countries. Despite good planning, curriculum, textbooks, qualified teachers and effective administration, the teaching-learning process sometimes seems to be futile when the actual skill development is not up to the mark. However, there could have been greater change had a systematic analysis been made in the past by exploring the factors responsible for such a low level performance. Both the teachers and learners face challenges due to many reasons. The teachers face challenges due to the following: their qualification, training as an EFL teacher, experience as a bilingual teacher (in Arabic context), perception of Arab culture, psychology of the learners, language policy, status of English, methods and strategies, assessment etc. The learners face challenges mainly due to the following: the difference between the past and present style, technique of teaching, workload, more focus on EFL, and focused teaching, stricter evaluation system, hard work, lack of proper motivation and attitude etc. Management of such pedagogic challenges is inevitable. Therefore, the role of Management becomes more crucial. Management of human resource (including HR development) and e-resource may be proved to be quite helpful in coping the challenges of the EFL classroom situations.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching of English as Foreign language in the place like Saudi Arabia always demands expertise in the pedagogy for many reasons: socio-cultural, economic, psychological, philosophical, educational and pedagogic. Learning of English serves a very limited purpose, and the target learners have less opportunity to practice the target language outside the classrooms.

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Sometimes, it becomes difficult for the subject teacher to encourage some enthusiastic learners to use the target language due to those students who are not very good in English, or at least hesitant to use English in and outside the classroom. Therefore, teaching of English in the Gulf region in general and Saudi Arabia in particular catches attention of many researchers and scholars especially when the issue is particularly related to the classroom situations.

Teaching of English at Jeddah Community college serves two purposes: first, it strengthens the foundation of English and later lays the basis for Specific English which will be used in the years of the students' specialties. As already mentioned, teaching of English starts from the middle school (6th standard onwards), but it does not enjoy as important place in the curriculum as in most developing countries. In spite of a good planning, curriculum, textbooks, qualified teachers and effective administration, the teaching-learning process sometimes seems to be futile when the actual skill development is not up to the mark. However, there could have been greater change had a systematic analysis been made in the past by exploring the factors responsible for such a low level performance. In this connection, an investigation may be proved to be quite helpful towards the finding out the actual causes, and evolution of some fruitful and compatible strategies of teaching English as a Foreign language in a second language environment.

Language teachers being the followers of different learning theories of Psychology, have chosen few objectives, and suggested various approaches/methods/strategies such as oral approach, situational teaching, audio-lingual method, communicative approach, bilingual approach, the Neutral approach etc for the achievement of language objectives. Most modern teachers support the idea of situational approach while there are still a few who teach following grammar-translation method. But, at times, all these popular methods/approaches/techniques fail in certain specific situation as in Saudi Arabia, the teaching of English is different in nature from India, Pakistan, Thailand, China and other such countries where English is taught as EFL/ESL

a) English vs. Arabic

Arabic is the language of Qur'an and religion, and it is quite widely used in Saudi Arabia. While English

enjoys the status of the foreign language. Arabic is learnt from the beginning while English starts from middle school (6th standard onwards). English has an entirely a different writing style. This poses challenges as the teaching of even the alphabets alphabet becomes problematic to even senior students. While teaching vocabulary/words/sounds, Visuals and videos can play an effective role in teaching English in general, but the textbook writes and the users can't depend on modern images/videos that go against the religious standards. Religion and traditions are prime focus and that has genuine basis. Therefore, there are committees that check on such issues.

b) Challenges of teaching English

My experience of teaching English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia is more than enough as I have been serving different institutions for about a decade and a half. During this time, I have come across many challenging situations especially in EFL classroom that affected the learning as well as teaching. Based on the teaching experience, research paper contribution, and administrative experience as HOD (English) and coordinator, I am ready to share some fruitful experiences.

c) Expectations from the English teacher in Saudi Arabia

Teaching is an art as well as a science. Without a proper development of teaching skills a teacher can't prove himself to be an effective instructor in his classes. He has to justify his position by showing different traits and skills while teaching the target learners. Apart from some well known qualities of a teacher in general such as qualification, training and experiences, a teacher is always expected to display some modest but significant behavior patterns and characteristics in his day to day interaction with the learners. If a teacher lacks the following characteristics he is supposed to attend teacher development programs in order to modify his teaching potential, attitude and readiness to deliver in the best possible manner.

i. Background of English teachers in Saudi Arabia:

Teaching English in Saudi is quite thought provoking and knowledge oriented. There are many factors that contribute to the existing situation. Saudi Arabian educational context is different from many developing countries for two important reasons: controlled population, and government's specific policies and implementations. The Saudi government is able to invest the amount of money whatever is required. And, the Saudi population is not that much like India or China that the government can't focus on each and every student. On the other hand, in the over populated and economically stressed countries, education is usually neglected for its own locally adverse situation.

At the higher education level, ESL/EFL teachers in particular are more responsible for imparting

education in general and the target language in particular to those students who don't have favorable conditions for learning. In this case, the concerned teacher, apart from being well educated and sophisticatedly trained, should be well motivated, have clear vision, know teaching strategies, motivating techniques so that his teaching can be more interesting, and the learning yields results and outcomes.

In Saudi Arabia, in most technical/professional colleges, there are basically three kinds of English teachers: native speakers, bilinguals, and the teachers from India, Pakistan and other similar countries. Each type has specific characteristics, and faces specific teaching problems. The background and training doesn't contribute a lot, however, a suitably equipped teacher may successfully minimise the learning difficulties. The training like CELTA, DELTA, TESOL, EFL, ESL, ESP, B.Ed., M. Ed etc are generally found less effective because these do not meet the need of the local teachers and specific classroom situations. Therefore, in order to abridge the gap between education/training and actual practice, there is an urgent need to develop the existing academic staff through professional programs so that the teachers may not face too many problems due to a substantial change in the educational set up and technology based teaching scenario.

ii. Need and Importance of Professional Development

Professional development is a broad term, encompassing a range of people, interests and approaches. Education is getting global and competitive day by day. Both the parents and the nation want a creative mind in children. The background of the target students in English in both the countries is supposed to be humble, and the learners are unable to practice the target language at homes, in the markets or society to the extent they should. So the teacher's role becomes greater. The teacher needs an effective teacher-training so as to be able to assimilate the educational values and ideas of one's own culture and of modern needs. The nation needs the services of millions of teachers who have trained minds and not stuffed brains so that the ultimate development of human resource can be targeted. The actual training requires the following aspects to be fulfilled: teacher's attitude, philosophical change, technology oriented attitude, skill oriented teaching /learning, human resource development etc. It is good to have such a combination of native speakers, bilingual and unilingual teachers to have them as facilitators. But CPD (Continuous Professional Development) must go on in order to avoid waste of human resource. Training and professional development is always essential in this fast changing society. Thus, in order to be update, modern and sophisticated, one should attend in-service training or professional development programs. It is always appreciated if the teachers of English are research oriented, but ironically

speaking, most teachers of Saudi are disinterested in any such program. They think that this is an academic embarrassment to take part in any training program. They innocently forget that every teacher is not a born teacher rather some are made.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature pertaining to English language teaching in general is available in bulk, but studies discussing the present research objectives are quite rare. However, studies that are directly or indirectly related to the proposed project have been reviewed in order to arrive at a place to conceive research hypotheses and design of the studies. The present review is a summary of some of the studies that frame the basis for the research and its various aspects.

a) The learners' Perspective

Arab learners of English encounter problems in both speaking and writing. This fact has been clearly stated by many researchers, e.g. Abdul Haq (1982), Harrison, Prator and Tucker (1975). The students in Jordan, for example, learn English in their native country, where the native language is Arabic.

While reviewing the related studies/literature, it has been noticed that some work, mostly dissertation, have dealt with the Saudi acquisition of specific linguistic features of L2, such as Morpheme acquisition Order (Al-Afaleg, 1991), Temporal Conjunctions (Noor, 1993), English Derivational Morphology (Al-Qadi 1992) Tense and Aspect (Farraj, 1995) and Second language Relative Clauses (Maghrabi, 1997), and Studies on the psycho-linguistic theories of language acquisition, specifically in relation to the Saudi learner of English do not seem to exist.

There are a lot of problems that confront Arab students in their course of studying the English language. In Saudi Arabia, since Saudis speak their native language at home and during their interaction with their friends, peers, and classmates, there is a bleak chance to learn English through day-to-day interaction. In one study conducted by Haq (1982, p.1), it was concluded that most Arab students usually fumble in their writing skills.

In his study, Haq (1982, p.1) also revealed that most English instructors and University officials complained about the continuous deterioration of the mastery in the English language among the students. Another study conducted by Zughoul (1984, p.4) confirmed the findings of Haq, and revealed that most Jordanian students enrolled in EFL classes have poor oral communication skills, as they usually commit gross lexical errors.

Similar problems were also reported in Sudan, as most students enrolled in English classes usually commit serious syntactic errors in the composition of English passages. Kambal (1980) noted that most students were weak in the following areas: tenses, verb

structure, and subject-verb agreement. Several problems were also observed in the students' use of tenses, like tense substitution, tense sequence, tense marker, and uncertainty of perfect tenses (Kambal 1980).

In an wide-scale study about the problems being faced by Arab students, Mukattash (1983) observed that these problems are categorized into two: First, most errors committed concerned with the gracious pronunciation, morphology, knowledge of the use of syntax, and spelling; Second, most Arab students have difficulty expressing themselves contentedly and competently either when faced with scholarly subjects or usual everyday issues.

Most studies conducted by Mukattash (1983), Suleiman (1983), Zughoul (1983; 1987), and Ibrahim (1983) noted that Arab students' problems in learning English usually spring from the following reasons: a) school graduates have lack of information regarding the university or college they enrolled in; b) there is deficiency in the English language curricula offered by some schools and universities; c) dreadful teaching methodology; d) problems with proper language environments; and e) lack of personal impetus on the part of the students.

Because of the general problems encountered mostly by Arab students in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, among others, Suleiman (1983) contended that the pervading displeasure with the overall output of Arab learners in English subjects was to due poor essential principles in curriculum conception and design, insufficient in-classroom approaches, slow development in the students' communication skills, among many others.

The teacher usually gives instructions in written make instead of directly conveying them to their students (Al-Hazmi and Scholfield 2007, p.238). In assigning topics to students, the teacher demands that they be completed either inside their classroom or at home. As part of the teaching method in most Arab schools, teachers do not really necessitate their students to revise or modify their works.

The students are usually left alone in revising or making drafts of their own works without any guidelines (Al-Hazmi and Scholfield 2007, p.238). This confirms most observations of researchers that teachers usually count on the personal interests of their students to learn. In some cases this practice might work as this could inculcate in the minds of the students the value of independence or self-reliance, but in most cases it would hamper the academic development of the students.

One of the observations is that teachers do not usually follow up the works of their students, to check whether they have improved or not. There is also a common understanding or practice that giving remarks or comments on students' works are best reserved for pupils in lower ESL levels but not to those in higher

levels (Asiri 1996). Remarks are mostly limited to mechanics, grammar, and vocabulary.

As worthy as possible, teachers who may be invited to teach in Saudi Arabia should be native English speakers or L1. But being a native English speaker is not always a guarantee that one is qualified to teach in the oil-rich kingdom. Most academicians voiced out their worries regarding the unsystematic techniques being applied by most schools and universities in looking at the qualifications of applicants (Alosaimi 2007). They warned that there are teachers who may be fluent in English but they lack the qualifications to teach ESL students.

It has been noticed that most English Language learners often commit linguistic mistakes of syntax and pronunciation as an effect of the interference of their L1. This is popularly known as L1 transfer or 'interlingual error' (Dulay:1982). In this connection, Robert Lado (1957) observed, "...those elements that are similar to his native language will be simpler for him and those elements that are different will be difficult." Weinreich (1953) after an extensive study concluded about the mechanism of bilingual interference, "... are those instances of deviation from the norms of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language."

The following studies support the idea of mother-tongue interferences in different language aspects and skills: Sharan (1971), Ali (1987), Nair (1966), Singh and Srivastava (1986), Alam (1983), Joshi (1986), Chanchi (1972), Dulay and Burt (1982), Ervin-Trip (1974), Hansen-Bede (1975), Lee (1981), Wilkins (1972), New Mark (1970), Kachru (1980), Bernstein (1974), Gardener (1960), Golding (1965), Khan (1995a, 1995b, 1997a, 1997b, 1999, 2003a, 2003b, 2005a, 2005b, 2009).

To shed light on the problems of Arab learners of English, the following are examples taken from different countries. In Jordan, for example, many studies have been conducted to investigate lexical, syntactical and phonological errors committed by Jordanian school learners of English (Abdul Haq, 1982; Zughoul and Taminian, 1984). Abdul Haq (1982, 1) states that "One of the linguistic areas in which students in the secondary cycle commit errors is in the writing skill". He adds "There are general outcries about the continuous deterioration of the standards of English proficiency of students among school teachers, university instructors and all who are concerned with English language teaching". In support of Abdul Haq's view, Zughoul (1984:4) found that "Jordanian EFL students commit serious lexical errors while communicating in English". Kambal (1980) reported on three main types of error in the verb phrase: verb formation, tense, and subject-verb agreement. He discussed errors in tense under five categories: tense sequence, tense substitution, tense marker, deletion, and confusion of perfect tenses. With

regard to subject-verb agreement, three types of error were identified. These involved the third-person singular marker used redundantly, and the incorrect form of the verb to be.

Egyptian learners of English also face problems. Some of these problems are summarised by Wahba (1998). Egyptian students face certain problems related to pronunciation. Some of these problems are related to stress, others are related to intonation. However, most of these problems can be attributed to the differences in pronunciation between English and Arabic.

The weakness of English language learners in general has been attributed to various factors: lack of knowledge on the part of school graduates when they join the university, school and English language department curricula, teaching methodology, lack of the target language environment and the learners' motivation (Suleiman, 1983; Mukattash, 1983; Zughoul, 1983, 1987; Ibrahim, 1983).

Motivation also plays an important part in improving and developing the learners' communicative ability. Attitudinal studies conducted on Arab students, such as those of Zughoul and Taminian, 1984, Salih, 1980 and Harrison et al., 1975, have consistently shown that Arab students are instrumentally motivated to learn English and that they are well aware of the utility of knowing English (Zughoul, 1987: 225). This means that the main stimulus for learning English is instrumental, i.e. to achieve a goal, e.g. a career.

b) Research context of professional development

It is the teacher's responsibility to refresh his knowledge, update his potential and equip himself with the advancement of the society and use of technology in general and educational environment in particular. (Khan, 2005). Recently many studies have been carried out in the area of professional development. However, the trend of investigations started long ago. In this connection, the studies that created the very base of professional development in education include: Griffin, 1983; Guskey, 1986; Joyce & Showers, 1988; Lieberman & Miller, 1979; Orlich, 1989; Wood & Thompson, 1980, 1993 etc. However, people are still found having doubts regarding the practical relevance of such researches. Since the goal of most modern professional development efforts is the ultimate improvement in the institutions, and the improvement is usually measured by the gradual performance of the academic staff, institutions that ultimately lead to the uplift of the target learners. Some researchers suggest that professional development efforts designed to facilitate change must be beneficial for those who are very much in the field of practice: (McLaughlin, 1990;

Weatherley & Lipsky, 1977; Jin, Y., & Yang, H. Z., 2006). Others indicate that an emphasis on individuals is detrimental to progress and more systemic or organizational approaches are necessary (Tye & Tye,

1984; Waugh & Punch, 1987). Many experts stress that reforms in professional development must be initiated and carried out by individual teachers and schoolbased personnel (Joyce, McNair, Diaz, & McKibbin, 1976; Lambert, 1988; Lawrence, 1974; Massarella, 1980). Others emphasize the most successful programs are those which are guided by a clear vision that sees beyond the walls of individual classrooms and schools, since teachers and school-based individuals generally lack the capacity to conceive and implement worthwhile improvements on their own (Barth, 1991; Clune, 1991; Mann, 1986; Wade, 1984). Some reviewers argue the most effective professional development efforts approach change in a gradual and incremental fashion, not expecting too much at one time (Doyle & Ponder, 1977; Fullan, 1985; Mann, 1978; Sparks, 1983). Others insist on broadening the scope of professional development programs that are expected to yield better results if implemented well (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978).

The case of educational institutions in Saudi isn't much different. The attempt to develop the teachers professionally has been emphasised for a long time. Many Saudi educational institutions utilized the opportunities of having academic exchanges with the institutions of US A, Canada, UK etc. Yet, it is felt that a lot more can be achieved in near future in the area of teacher/professional development especially when we relate the two concepts: teacher development and pedagogy.

c) Teacher development and Quality English Language Education

The teacher is the most important element in any educational programme. It is the teacher who is mainly responsible for implementation of the educational process at any stage. No amount of investment in education can improve quality of education unless there are well qualified English teachers to impart quality language education. In order to target quality education, the teacher should have quality training and expertise. It is expected that most trained and professional teachers should have the following traits in order to be effective and efficient.

Despite the availability of resources and increased emphasis on the use of technology, many teachers, whether pre service: Doering, A., Hughes, J. E., & Huffman, D. (2003), Zhao, Y., Pugh, K., & Sheldon, S. (2002), or experienced, currently feel ill prepared to use technological tools and resources for teaching of contents. The factors may be contributing to pre service, novice, and veteran teachers' struggles with integrating technology into their teaching in innovative and effective ways. First, school leaders call for technology integration without actually defining their vision for integration (Perry & Aregaldo, 2001). Teacher factor is the most important of all in the educational setting. It is the teacher's responsibility to afresh his knowledge

update his potential and equip himself with the advancement of the society and use of technology in general and educational environment in particular (Khan: 2005, p.197). There are many ways in which the teachers can develop themselves in their respective fields. In this connection, the teachers should be directly involved in defining priorities about what are their real problems and able to select appropriate solutions (Tobin,1988, Hewson and Hewson,1988). CPD (Continuous professional development is one of those means that has been suggested by almost all the modern pedagogues in this situation when the world has become a global village, and the education of all types can be pursued from anywhere and anyway.

d) E - learning and EFL

When it comes it ICT and e-learning, English is usually the official language. This is because the computer language, including books, manuals, literatures, and academic reported regarding computer and IT is written in English. For this reason, Saudi students need to learn English in order to better comprehend some of their technical subjects. Aside from the proliferation of private schools and international academic institution in Saudi Arabia that caused the spread of ESL programs, computer schools were also established to get a share of the country's learning population.

There are a lot of problems that confront Arab students in their course of studying the English language. In Saudi Arabia, since Saudis speak their native language at home and during their interaction with their friends, peers, and classmates, there is a little chance to learn English through day-to-day interface. However, most studies regarding ESL students in the Arab world were carried out in Jordan. Since Saudi Arabia is close to Jordan, and that both countries have the same religion and almost identical culture, the researcher deemed it fit to look at the Jordanian experience in ESL. In one study conducted by Haq (1982, p.1), it was concluded that most Arab students usually fumble in their writing skills.

In his study, Haq (1982, p.1) also revealed that most English instructors and University officials complained about the continuous deterioration of the mastery in the English language among the students. Another study conducted by Zughoul (1984, p.4) confirmed the findings of Haq, and revealed that most Jordanian students enrolled in EFL classes have poor oral communication skills, as they usually commit gross lexical errors.

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problems were also observed in the students' use of tenses, like tense substitution, tense sequence, deletion of tenses, tense marker, and uncertainty of perfect tenses (Kambal 1980).

i. *Blended learning*

It is a concept which is of quite recent origin. It is nice amalgam of formal teaching/learning mode with distance/elearning strategies in order to facilitate the target learner. Some particular examples of blended learning benefits include an increase in the number of students feeling and an increase in student support and consequently improved student retention rates (Hughes, 2007).

ii. *Self learning*

The novel idea of 'self-learning' received due attention recently. In a place like the UK, such educational concepts are very much in use. Both the teachers/guides and the students usually interact via mail. Classroom teaching has become little passive, however its importance can never be minimised for many genuine reasons. With the further research on it and the building of learning objects repository, the knowledge frame based learning strategy has been implemented in GSL. (Hao, 2004).

iii. *Personalized learning*

It is a personalized-based unique learning mode reflecting differences in learners. Personalized learning has always been the burning research issues in the area of E-learning throughout the recent past. In E-learning, the following issues are emphasized: individual differences such as capacities, learning background, learning styles, learning objectives, and the changing states of individual knowledge in learning process. So E-learning in these trends attempt to provide a personalized learning which includes personalised material, personalized objectives and personalised process (Hongchi Shi et.al, 2002).

iv. *Pedagogical considerations*

There are many Pedagogical considerations that a teacher/mentor has to keep in his mind while using e-learning devices/tools. For example, e-learning could be used as a lesson, an assignment, a multiple choice question, a quiz, a discussion group or a case study. Although it may be in any of the following methods, pedagogical structures would not include a textbook, a web page, or a video conference. When beginning to create E-Learning content, the pedagogical approaches need to be evaluated. Simple pedagogical approaches make it easy to create content, but lack flexibility, richness and downstream functionality. On the other hand, complex pedagogical approaches can be difficult to set up and slow to develop, though they have the potential to provide more engaging learning experiences for students. Somewhere between these extremes is an ideal pedagogy that allows a particular

educator to effectively create educational materials suitable for the target students.

v. *Theoretical perspectives and e-learning scenario*

It is possible to use various pedagogical approaches for e-Learning which include: social-constructivist – this pedagogy is particularly well afforded by the use of discussion forums, blogs, wiki and on-line collaborative activities. It is a collaborative approach that opens educational content creation to a wider group including the students themselves. The One Laptop Per Child Foundation described the use of a constructivist approach. E-moderating: Cognitive perspective focuses on the processes involved in learning as well as how the brain works. (Bloom and Krathwohl, 1956). The field of CSCL is fruitful, with many prototypes and application systems having been developed. From the perspective of a distributed computing environment, four different architectures of CSCL were proposed which include: centralized architecture, replicated architecture, distributed architecture and hybrid architecture (D. Suthers, 2001).

vi. *Causes of Poor Ability to Learn English*

Most studies conducted by Mukattash (1983), Suleiman (1983), Zughoul (1983; 1987), and Ibrahim (1983) noted that Arab students' problems in learning English usually spring from the following reasons: a) school graduates have lack of information regarding the university or college they enrolled in; b) there is deficiency in the English language curricula offered by some schools and universities; c) poor teaching methodology; d) problems with proper language environments; and e) lack of personal impetus on the part of the students.

vii. *Problem in ESL Staffing*

While the Saudi government regularly send more than 5,000 scholars to study in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, among many others, there is a problem posed by the increasing number of ESL enrollees at home. If last year it was estimated that there were about 18,000 Saudis enrolled in foreign colleges and universities, demand for ESL teachers at home also rapidly escalated.

Al-Jarf (2004, reemasado.tripod.com) said there was a significant increase in the number of Saudi students who wanted to enroll in ESL classes. This trend led to staffing problem because the number of enrollees or students who wanted to study ESL was incongruent to the country's staffing status. There were two staffing challenges posed by the in demand ESL programs in the oil-rich country. One is the difficulty to maintain native-speaking English teachers and the other is the problem in hiring new qualified English tutors, who most probably foreigners.

Based on Al-Jarf's (2004) study, there were more male teachers than female, as a result of which, the women's department are often lacking of qualified

staff than that of men's department. However, Al-jarf asserted that this understaffing was due to open admission implemented by the Ministry of Higher education. She also pointed out several factors for this scenario, like lack of communication and collaboration between department heads and policy-makers, and lack of communication lines between English departments and job candidates. Apart from this, there was also minimal use of information technology and the Internet in the information dissemination and recruitment processes.

Al-jarf further observed that whenever there was job vacancies, schools and universities do not even exert efforts to publicize them on the Internet and that there is no website or online channel that could make it possible for job applicants to know about any job vacancies. Furthermore, she also found the following problems that caused understaffing in Saudi Arabia's ESL programs: lack of online channels to accommodate interested job applicants and for job interview, lack of financial support, no clear-cut employment guidelines and instructions, ineffective human resources scheduling and forecast, competition, and unstable political situation in the Gulf region due to September 11 issue.

viii. *Teacher-students interaction*

In Saudi Arabia, English teachers are usually Arabs, perhaps this is an advantage since they may be able to convey better their techniques in teaching since they can communicate with their students in their native Arabic language. The teacher usually gives instructions in written form instead of directly conveying them to their students (Al-Hazmi and Scholfield 2007, p.238). In assigning topics to students, the teacher demands that they be completed either inside their classroom or at home. Writing assignments are usually determined at the beginning of classes through class participation in brainstorming and discussion (Al-Hazmi and Scholfield 2007, p.238). However, this setup is not always done religiously with the full attention and supervision of the teacher since most of the time the students are given the liberty to perform the planning or not.

As part of the teaching method in most Arab schools, teachers do not really necessitate their students to revise or modify their works. This is in contrast to what is being practiced in western universities wherein the teacher or professor requires his students to make one or more drafts of their works, whereas in most Arab universities this technique is not usually practiced. Large classes in Arab classes are usually comprised of at least 35 students. The size of class has huge impact on the students' learning process, particularly in group works. Since group works or assignments require at least five or more students to work on a particular topic or project, problems sometimes arise owing to low proficiency in English. The students are usually left alone in revising or making

drafts of their own works without any guidelines (Al-Hazmi and Scholfield 2007, p.238). This confirms most observations of researchers that teachers usually count on the personal interests of their students to learn. In some cases this practice might work as this could inculcate in the minds of the students the value of independence or self-reliance, but in most cases it would hamper the academic development of the students. "Those institutions that are successful in establishing administrative and academic frameworks within which rapid technological change and adaptation can occur will survive and those who stubbornly adhere to archaic styles of management and decision-making will not" (Huff, 2000:635)

The idea that there is a need to engage with new learning technologies in higher education has become clear in the views of many educators. Some educators think that embracing technology in teaching has become a must. Tearle et al., for example, state "it is no longer possible to opt out" (1999:14). Furthermore, DiPiro (1999) contends that "With these technological developments it may no longer be reasonable that a professional school can expect to remain competitive even within a well defined, isolated geographic area by providing instruction traditional methods" (171). More particularly, computers have been used as viable alternatives for delivery of instruction in different educational settings. Rapidly developing computer industry helped establish computers as an instructional medium. Increased computer speed and memory, the introduction of multimedia functions, and the development of graphical user interfaces helped teachers plan and achieve many educational goals (Milheim, 1993).

e) *Technology in education*

Teaching with technology helped emphasizing the skills-based model of teaching and minimizing the lecture model of teaching. "By shifting faculty time and energy to technology and by reducing the labor-intensive nature of the traditional model of instruction, academic institutions can transfer the focus of learning to students who will be able to engage in a self-paced and self-directed learning activities" (Bartscherer, 1999:6). Various types of technology made education more active and learner-centered which "enable the students to take greater responsibility for their own learning, and give them the power to fulfill that responsibility" (Sosabowski et al., 1998:2). Computer-mediated discussions tend to be more diverse (multiple topics are discussed) and more inclusive (more students are involved) than face-to-face interactions (Harasim, et al., 1997). Computer-mediated discussions offered more opportunities for interactive and collaborative activities among members of the learning community (Poling, 1994). Students have constant access to course materials published on the World Wide Web (Kilian, C. 1996). Various technology-enhanced tools

can motivate students and stimulate their interest in the learning process (Mereba,2003).

- Technology-based instruction can change the type of relationship between students and professors in which students appreciate the role of their instructors as coaches not as gatekeepers (Sliwa,1994).

Many previous studies found that such implementation can create new horizons for students to learn and for teachers to deliver the subject matter. In this sense, technology has been used to play a potentially rich role in teaching and learning that "defined variously by what the teacher has available, has had time to learn, or can find an appropriate use for, and by what students have access to, are familiar with, and are willing to use" (Stahlke & Nyce,1996:47).A prominent trend in learning theory that has gained increasing significance recently contends that the use of a variety of pedagogical strategies encourages reflective practice which means more interaction between students and their teachers and students themselves (Newby et al.,2000). Elearning has been found a good tool for engaging students in different activities and making them interested in receiving the information. Interactive learning is effective because it involves the learner in constructing ideas as a result of experiences (Von Glaserfeld,1995). Teaching students with technology facilitated their interaction with the course subject matter and helped them to develop process skills and attitudes alongside knowledge and understanding. (Coyle,2004). Previous studies indicated that introducing technology in education even in developed countries encountered many problems because "many academics have had no training and little experience in the use of communications and information technology as an educational tool" (Dearing,1997:36). Faculty members engaged in web-based instruction have complained that the process of developing web-based course materials is time consuming and demanding of high levels of technical support and in most of the cases lead to the increasing of their workload (Cravener, 1999).Different work obligations may force faculty, in many cases, to stick to traditional methods of teaching. "For academics already struggling to keep up with increased administrative demands, teaching loads and research pressures, learning technology can be a formidable, time-consuming area to further sap their limited energies" (Littlejohn,& Sclater, 1998;1).

Sosabowski et al.(1998) observed that faculty members who are not good at using tech in teaching tend to make some effort to develop some technology-related skills to meet some administrative needs. More particularly, one of the critically encouraging or discouraging factors in the implementation of technology in teaching college students is whether or not the college policy considers teaching with technology an activity for which faculty should receive credit. Professors who work with technology have the

problem of obtaining institutional recognition for their work.

III. THE CASE OF JEDDAH COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Jeddah community college is one of the pioneer colleges of Saudi Arabia which got accredited by COE, USA. Recently, it accomplished the implementation of Electronic Management Education System (EMES)- the preferred Electronic system of the King Abdul Aziz University Jeddah. The college successfully arranged training sessions for the concerned staff of the Jeddah community college. Later, the courses (approximately 120 as a whole) were put online to facilitate the enrolled students as well as the future distance learning students. The college has been ready for such sophisticated changed the time accreditation process started some 2 years ago. To mention about the infrastructural facilities, the following are the main achievements:

- Computer based classroom teaching,
- Internet facility in each classroom, offices etc
- Modern language labs,
- Expansion of computer labs,
- Computers installation for the students,
- Provision of an e-learning supervisor to look after the Development etc.

Regarding the online material related o English curriculum, the entire material was put on the website. The focus was on the learning/assessment activities such as CYU (Check Your Understanding), Crossword puzzle, power points etc. The assignment are put online through university website with a deadline. A separate 'forum' has been created to discuss issues. In addition, online chatting facility has also been created to catch the attention of the e-learners of the Jeddah community college, and restore their motivation level which is really a crucial issue. It is expected that such web based material, mass media and high tech programs of education are going to exert some major impact on the attitude and motivation of the formal as well as non-formal students (learning through distance mode). The most important features of the e-learning are:

- 1- Easy and load free,
- 2- Interesting,
- 3- Open access: any time-anywhere,
- 4- Varied information,
- 5- Self- learning mode,
- 6- Self motivating,

The idea of incorporating e-learning in the classrooms in general and English classrooms in particular was basically derived from the following hypotheses:

- 1-E-learning is very important in the learning in general and learning of English in particular,

- 2-The available e- resource is compatible and up to date,
 3-The EMES as a tool is very useful,
 4-There is a need to evolve learning strategies in general,

a) Factors of challenges for the teachers

- Differences in the alphabet and the script:
- Word structure,
- How words are written in Arabic
- Punctuation,
- Verbs and sentences,
- Noun cases in Arabic,
- Preposition,
- Conjunction,
- Position of adjectives,
- Use of subject,
- Tense; indefinite and continuous,
- Pronunciation neglected,
- stress and intonation,
- Use of article,
- Use of has/have,
- There is/there are 'beginning',
- The case of verb 'be',
- Verb placement,
- Confusion on number,
- Transliteration
- Socio-cultural factors:
- relaxing personality,
- No pressure from the society or family,
- Education is not thought of income source,
- Less opportunity to practice English outside classroom,
- Home environment for homework or self study,

b) Why do learners face challenges?

Apart from the academic reasons mentioned above related to the teachers, the learners also face challenges due the following socio-cultural and psycholinguistic reasons:

- The difference between the past and present style,
- Technique of teaching,
- Workload,
- More focus on EFL, and focused teaching,
- Stricter evaluation system,
- Hard work,
- lack of proper motivation and attitude etc

IV. MANAGEMENT

Management can be operationally defined as the maximum utilization of the minimum resource available. If the institution does not achieve the expected level, teachers don't develop the students and the students are not able to prove their worth the management is supposed to be blamed the most. It is the management (group of people) which strive together to realize commonly conceived goals of an institution. Management has certain specific areas to work on: resources-physical, human and e-resources.

a) Magement of human resource

Management of human resource focus on the utilization and development of the human resource-basically teachers. It is needed in this fast changing society as well as institutions to meet the demand of education for the future. Utilisation of human resource is not the only issue that the modern institutions are trying to achieve. In addition, development of human resource as per the need is also equally important

b) E-resource development and management

Gone are the days when traditional methods/approaches were useful. Nowadays teaching has become highly sophisticated and technology based.

E-Learning has emerged as a worldwide phenomenon in the field of pedagogy. Therefore, the teachers are supposed to be able to use and utilize the e-resources available in an institution. The provision of latest e-resources, tools and training of those who would utilize the e-resources are important tasks of management.

V. CONCLUSIONS

There are many challenges that the teachers and the learners face in the learning of English in Saudi Arabia. There are many factors that contribute to such learning challenges. In this case, the role of teachers as well as management can play very important role. The teachers can try to develop themselves, and the management can provide the opportunities for the teachers to develop and utilize the e-resources for the betterment of teaching/learning. Jeddah Community College is a good example of the case.

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