

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 introduction

This research study was initially aimed at identifying the perceptions of teachers and administrators and how they implement the classroom observation process. Based on the findings, the researcher designed a training programme to provide administrators with the necessary skills and competencies to conduct classroom observation more effectively. The data collected before and after the intervention were compared to identify any significant effects and changes that occurred as a result of the intervention.

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

**RQ1: What are the perceptions of teachers and administrators of classroom observations?**

**RQ2: What is the extent of implementation of the intervention to enhance the competencies of administrators in the practice of classroom observation in the ELC?**

**RQ3: What are the significant changes after the intervention?**

Based on the mixed-method research design, the quantitative data collected from the questionnaires and the qualitative results derived from the semi-structured interviews and pre-post-observation conferences were analysed and classified into themes according to their relevance to the research questions.

The overall responses were merged, and an interpretation was made as to the key findings. These findings are highlighted and discussed about the ADDIE Conceptual Framework and the theories, namely: Constructive Learning Theory, Cognitive Theory, and Design-Based Theory. In addition, theories are developed based on the key findings. Most significantly, a framework on effective implementation of the Classroom Observation Process is developed serving as the major contribution of this study to the knowledge of the administration and teachers of the Ibra College of Technology.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the findings from Chapter 4 which are compared and contrasted with previous research and related to the Conceptual Framework called ADDIE and the theories such as Constructivism Learning Theory, Cognitive Theory, and Design-Based Theory. Based on these findings, principles or new theories have been derived. Then, the limitations of the study are listed, and the contributions are diagrammed. These are followed by implications, recommendations, reflections, and finally the conclusion.

### **Discussion of The Findings - Perceptions**

#### **5.2 Perceived Effectiveness of the Classroom Observation Process**

##### **5.2.1 Purpose of Classroom Observation**

The perceptions and the interview outcomes with the teachers and the administrators before the intervention showed that the classroom observation process was conducted in different situations and for different reasons. As a domain of the Constructive Learning Theory and a feature of what 'A' or Analysis

is in the conceptual framework, the researcher was able to collect data from the participants on the reason for conducting classroom observation. One such situation is when students complain about teachers. This fact was also confirmed during the teachers' interviews that they were visited because some students complained about them. Accordingly, the teachers felt that the observation was aimed primarily at their evaluation rather than professional development. By comparing these findings with the findings after the intervention, this practice did not change, as the observers continued to visit teachers when they received complaints from students, although there was a noticeable change in the perceptions and implementation of many other aspects of the classroom observation process. The reason why observers continue to practice this type of visit to teachers after the intervention may be due to several reasons. One of these reasons is the college system, which requires administrators to visit teachers and verify students' claims in case of any complaints by students. Carrying out this type of classroom visit allows administrators to verify the sincerity of student complaints and observe the quality of teachers' performance. But on the other hand, the visit of the observers to the teachers in this way and for this reason may undermine the trust between the teachers and the administrators. As soon as an inspection visit is held for teachers due to student complaints, the teachers will feel that the observers do not trust them. They will also feel that they are under accusation and must defend themselves. This finding is in line with some aspects of observation (Al-Mutairi, 2016). For example, concerning the purpose of the classroom observation process, the results of the study showed that the classroom observation process in Kuwait schools is not only done for the professional development of teachers but is mostly conducted to evaluate and classify teachers.

Likewise, about comments and feedback, the results of the study indicated that the comments and the feedback teachers receive from principals and inspectors are not as important as the feedback and comments they receive from their colleagues. Therefore, they believe that the current system of the classroom observation process does not support them in developing their performance. The study also found that the adoption of the alternative system would improve the credibility and reliability of teacher evaluation.

On the other hand, some of the results reached by Al-Mutairi (2016) in his study contradict the results of the current study in some other aspects. The study found it important to link teachers' performance with promotions and rewards while imposing penalties on teachers with poor performance, as this has a role in facilitating and enhancing teachers' professional development.

In contrast to this result, this study theorises that professional development and change could stem from the teachers themselves and their internal desire for improvement and development as an effect of classroom observation. This theory is a resounding concept that implies professional development out of observation to attain quality teaching. The reason to conduct classroom observation based on students' complaints is rejected by teachers and they consider it a form of interference in their affairs and a violation of their rights. On the part of the administrators or observers, this theory denotes that the attainment of change by the teachers will depend upon the knowledge of observers to conduct classroom observation effectively. Besides, such a visit has serious negative effects on teachers' prestige and credibility in front of their students. In addition, the occurrence of this would encourage students who are underperforming or whose desires do not align with what the teacher is doing to

file an abuse complaint against their teachers, knowing that it will eventually be taken seriously by the administration.

### **5.2.2 Validity of Evaluation Criteria**

The results indicated that the observers used a standard checklist during the implementation of the classroom observation process to evaluate the performance of teachers. This was criticised by many teachers in semi-structured interviews, as they stated that the checklists contained too many items and it is often difficult to fulfil them all in some lessons. In other words, this checklist contains some items that may not match the objectives of some lessons. With the conceptual framework, this practice covers the aspect referred to in D or Design of the framework and the Design-Based Theory. The quantitative and qualitative data derived from the participants on the criteria or checklist of classroom observation could be the basis of revising the tool this being a characteristic of Design and the Design-Based Theory. For example, one of these items is related to the teacher's use of technology in teaching, so we find that it is difficult for the teacher to fulfil this item if their lesson is related to reading. There is also a clause related to working in groups, and here also the teacher may face a problem in fulfilling this clause if he is teaching a grammar lesson. In short, there are some items on the checklist that are difficult for a teacher to meet, thus the redesigning of an effective tool must be done. Teachers' fear that they will get low grades because they failed to fulfil these items during their teaching could be avoided. On the other hand, concerning the observers, the use of the standard checklist restricts the observers to a specific framework, which may facilitate their task as observers, but on the other hand, shifts their focus to the teacher instead

of focusing on the learning process and thus does not help in improving and developing the performance of teachers. In addition, it does not provide accurate evidence of all the events that may occur during the lessons for the deficiencies that need to be addressed or the strengths that need to be strengthened. Thus, the Design-Based Theory and the “D” or Design in ADDIE could a better option. Jan (2002) believes that it is important to have concrete and specific evidence which of course varies in each lesson. Therefore, the best solution to this problem was to use the note-taking method, as this provides a better opportunity for observers to write and describe the details of events and the progress of the teaching and learning process based on the redesigned classroom observation tool or criteria.

After the intervention, the results showed that the observers started using the note-taking method they had trained in. This makes the observation process more specific and more relevant to the desired outcomes of the observation process. As an offshoot to this finding, the researcher has theorised that the use of the note-taking method allows the observer to write objectively and focus on the process of teaching and learning rather than the teacher. This was confirmed by an Admin 1 in semi-structured interviews when asked about the note-taking process he carries out;

“I did not care about the teacher what the teacher does, how the teacher behaves is what he used to do in the past, but now I focus mainly on teaching and learning by looking at the activities that look in the students how learning is happening”.

Admin 2 concurred and said:

“The use of this method satisfied teachers because they felt that the goal of the observation was professional development rather than a disciplinary measure motivated by student complaints.”

### 5.2.3 Frequency of Observations

The results before the intervention confirmed that teachers and observers alike believe that one visit to the teacher is insufficient. As for the teachers, some of them justified their desire to be visited more than once because they wanted to get another chance in case, they did not teach a good lesson. They believe that visiting them only once may undermine their chance of obtaining high grades and it may even affect them negatively, especially if the lesson offered is less than the level they aspire to. Therefore, the desire of the teachers to be visited more than once is stemming from their fear of the result of a single visit.

On the other hand, we find that there are a good number of teachers who do not want to be visited again, as they do not welcome class visits, which reflects their obvious fear of the process. This once again confirms that the situation in the English Language Centre, and the current practices of the classroom observation process, are incorrect and suffer from many flaws. Therefore, after conducting the intervention, this concept has changed among the teachers, as they confirmed their welcome for this new type of visit, as they see it as appropriate and most importantly, it is not threatening to them.

As for the observers' opinion about the frequency of visits, although the observers acknowledged that one visit is insufficient in any way and does not reflect the real level of the teacher, in reality, they carried out only one visit per

academic year for most teachers and sometimes in several years. This is due to two main reasons, the first is a large number of teachers, and the second is the responsibilities of administrators. Regarding the former, the number of administrators who perform this task is only 3, while the number of teachers in the centre reaches more than 82 teachers. Regarding the latter, many administrative tasks fall under the responsibility of the administrators and that they must perform for example exams, syllabuses, and much more.

Also, there is another point that we must mention here, which is the time of class visits. Given the system followed in technical colleges, there are many times when quarterly and monthly exams occur, which makes it very difficult to hold class visits because the number of suitable days for class visits is few and limited. Therefore, the best solution in such a situation is to release the people who perform this task (the classroom observation process) from other work and responsibilities so that they can devote themselves only to conducting the classroom observation process, and thus they can cover all teachers and visit them more than once. Also, there must be a specific and announced timetable in advance for the date of the class visits so that teachers can prepare for this day and perform well, thus achieving the desired goal of the classroom observation process, which is the professional development of teachers.

In the tenet of Constructivist Learning Theory, the frequency of classroom observation has an impact on the knowledge that could be constructed on the minds of both the teachers and Observers. The more teachers are visited, the better chance it would be for them to master the concepts of the criteria and an effective manner of teaching. Such knowledge could be gained through

classroom observation. Further the more cycle we go through with ADDIE, the more reliable the programme is.

These results are consistent with what Klinger (2008) et al. found indicating that a single visit does not reflect the true performance of the teacher. This vision is also consistent with what was stated by the Countside Institute (2013), which also focused on the importance of having 3-8 classroom visits per year, varying between formal and informal. This idea was also confirmed by Leon (2019), where he stressed that this task should be carried out by a specialised observer, as well as that the classroom visits should be held several times during the year to obtain constructive feedback in agreement with the research of Klinger et al. (2008), Daley and Kim (2010) and Danielson (2011).

#### **5.2.4 Observers' Perceived Competence**

About observers and competencies related to the classroom observation process, the results before the intervention indicated that teachers believe that the observers do not have sufficient skills to enable them to perform the classroom observation process properly. It seems that this belief arose as a result of previous practices and unsatisfactory experiences experienced by the teachers, which contributed in one way or another to the formation of their perceptions as defined in the Constructivist Learning Theory. In many of the post-observation conference sessions, the teachers found themselves in conversation with observers who were many years less experienced than them in the field of teaching, sometimes for even more than 10 years. This played a major role in making the process of discussions and persuasion more difficult for observers. As it is known, the more experienced teacher is usually the one who is most able

to justify and prove their point of view, given that the number of classroom situations he has gone through is more and his cumulative experience is greater, therefore the observer may find themselves in a dilemma that is difficult to overcome. We find that the observer, in such situations, may tend to focus on the mistakes of the teachers to prove his ability to perform the task. This was confirmed by the results of some of the conversations of the post-lesson conferences that were collected before the intervention. It was clear in these conversations that the observers sought to show the teachers' shortcomings, criticising and blaming them instead of creating the appropriate ground for them and urging them to think critically and find appropriate solutions.

As for the observers, the results of the research showed that the observers were aware of the presence of some deficiencies in the aspect related to the skills and competencies of classroom observation. They attributed this to a lack of training. For example, Admin 3 said: "It is my first experience. I have never been trained, so I have limited experience in this field. Admin 1 also said: I lack training". The observers' lack of skills and competencies to perform the classroom observation process hurts the quality of the observers' performance of the classroom observation process and the professional development of teachers, as well as in creating negative perceptions of teachers towards the observers. Knowledge is an important factor that may make a difference in the equation as defined in the Constructive Learning Theory. Despite the strong correlation between the classroom observation process and the teaching experience, the knowledge that the observer may possess in terms of skills and competencies in conducting the classroom observation process is sufficient to give the observer the strength that enables them to carry out the observation process effectively and

professionally. Therefore, we will find that teachers accept the observers' comments even if they have less experience in the field of teaching, simply because the observers have the knowledge. Indeed, who possesses knowledge possesses power in any field. This was confirmed by Krueger (2017) where he asserted that the observer must possess three qualities, the first of which is to be trained, prepared, and systematic so that he is aware of what to observe, when to observe and how to document the observations

This finding was consistent with the Reform Support Network (2015), which found that observers often lacked the skill to provide high-quality feedback to all of their teachers. They also lack proper training that develops their observational skills and enables them to perform their role as required. Also, the results are in line with those of Atieno (2011) who claims that although the majority of managers perform diligently, they do not use appropriate skills or lack knowledge on how to conduct effective instructional supervision. The results also showed that the lack of funding hindered the performance of school principals in promoting the professional development of teachers. Likewise, it was found in the current study that supervisors lack the necessary skills and urgent need for training so that they can perform their role effectively which is called Teacher Development and Professional Growth.

Through a thorough analysis of the findings above, the researcher has theorised two tenets. One is that observer's classroom observation competence is directly proportional to the kind of teachers an institution could have. This shows that the knowledge of observers has a strong effect on the attainment of quality teaching. The second tenet that was derived from the findings is that training courses are significant measures in improving the competencies of observers.

This theory has been proven in this study based on quantitative and qualitative data.

#### **5.2.5. Anxiety During and After the Observation**

There were clear feelings of tension and anxiety prevalent in the English Language Centre and teachers have stated in several semi-structured interviews that they are very concerned about the classroom observation process. However, their answers in the questionnaires contradict these facts. Most did not admit to being anxious about classroom visits, so survey results were surprisingly low on the anxiety component of the classroom observation process. The reason for these unexpected responses by teachers in questionnaires may be attributed to research bias where social desirability leads to more acceptable answers rather than the actual situation. Another explanation for the results is the teachers' fear of the consequences if the observers learned about it. In other words, the teachers were afraid that one of the administrative staff would see their answers and use them as written evidence against him. If this happens, the teacher will undoubtedly be in the crosshairs of the observers (administrators) and may be terminated at some point.

These results are consistent with Cromball's findings that there is a logical relationship between choosing to answer a question in a particular way and a subjective benefit theory that takes into account the risks, losses, and consequences associated with answering it. (Cromball, 2014).

On the other hand, the data collected from the post-observation conference talks indicate that there is a strong fear and tension among teachers due to the holding of the classroom observation process, especially in the post-

lesson conferences. The observers used the traditional top-down method while discussing the lessons with the teachers in the post-observation conferences, which negatively affected the teachers and their relationship with the observers.

After the intervention and after analysing the data related to the level of anxiety felt by teachers in its different stages, the results in the Kruskal Wallis test for the difference between the elements of the anxiety scale showed that there were statistically significant differences for each element ( $p \leq .003$ ) between the 3 groups. The statistics showed a lower level of anxiety for the post-experiment group that was observed by the officials after the intervention compared to both the pre-group and the post-control group.

To relate the scenarios above with the conceptual framework, the development of a training course must be scrutinised well. Thus, another letter “D” or “Develop” is included in the framework. It requires a modification of the intervention based on reliable sources. Such modification may come from the participants whose real feelings are discovered and reflected in the training course. In like rigid manner, the Design-Based Theory also demands the considerations of scientific methodologies and tools in the development of a training course. Subsequently, the researcher could theorise that drawing the real feelings of people is a relatively vital step in developing a programme. Unmatched responses to the participants’ feelings or thoughts could lead to the inappropriateness of the programme and thus a failure.

### **5.3 The Role of the Observee**

#### **5.3.1 Responding to Observer's Comments**

The results before the intervention showed that teachers were passive in their responses to the observers' comments during the post-lesson conferences, as they usually accepted all the observers' comments regardless of whether the observers were right or not, and regardless of whether they were satisfied with these comments or not. The findings show that teachers often go along with the observers even though they are often not satisfied with the observers' opinions and comments. The reason for this behaviour by teachers may be due to several causes, the most important of which is their fear of the consequences that may result if they refuse or reach a different opinion that contradicts the observer's point of view. Another reason teachers behave in this way is the teachers' desire to get a higher score in post-observation conferences, which may not happen if teachers reject the observers' comments or disobey their instructions.

Another important fact that we must bear in mind is the teachers' awareness of the fact that their rejection of the observers' comments will not change the reality of the matter. On the contrary, their refusal or disapproval may lead to a strained relationship with the observers. This is what most teachers have tried to avoid because of the negative consequences and effects associated with renewing and terminating their employment contracts. Therefore, teachers have always sought to win the approval of observers by accepting their comments and agreeing with most of what they say.

On the other hand, such approval may not necessarily mean that teachers are convinced that the observers' comments are correct or that they will implement them, but rather an indication of an unhealthy atmosphere of fear and

lack of transparency. This of course does not help in any way the professional development for teachers at the English Language Centre, but rather it encourages the observers to persist in the wrong practice regarding the classroom observation. On the other hand, this practice may lose teachers the ability to make decisions and change. They become mere implementers of the instructions and desires of the observers for fear of losing their jobs. This was confirmed by Teacher 14 when he said:

“No, not all points. But you know in order to keep my job and we don't want to make our observer angry you know, we want to keep our job [sometimes] so we simply say yes but in reality, we don't agree with what the observer says. I would say we don't agree with all the points mentioned in several [sayings], but sometimes we have to say yes just to protect ourselves and [our work]”.

After the intervention and after training the observers, there was a change in the observers' perceptions and practices of the classroom observation process. The role of the observer was limited to encouraging teachers to think deeply about their performance, discover their mistakes and encourage them to find and implement appropriate solutions. The role of teachers has also changed, they have become more positive and understanding. Although their answers after the intervention were similar to their answers before the intervention but, their rationale made more sense, as they stated that they accept the observers' feedback and consider it supportive because it contributes to helping them improve their performance and professional growth. This change in teachers' understanding may be attributed to a change in the way classroom observation is applied after the intervention. Observers have encouraged teachers to be more open about what has happened in their classes and what they want to achieve.

In other words, the observers' implementation of the non- directive approach during the post-observation conference led to a change in teachers' perceptions and the relationship with the observers.

The above manifestations are the product of the effectiveness of the Training Course which could have sprung from the description of the Design-Based Theory and the Develop and Implementation sections of ADDIE. In the context of the Design-Based Theory, the principle of applying scientific methodologies in developing programmes could have been applied. Further, the 'Develop' section in ADDIE could have been addressed well, thus this result.

### **5.3.2 Identifying Areas for Improvement**

The identification of the areas for improvement is well defined in the Constructivist Learning Theory and the Analysis part of ADDIE. Ideally, this theory seeks the perceptions of the administrators on the teacher's performance on the classroom observation, and to some extent, the administrators employed scientific methodologies in concluding such as the use of the criteria. As part of the perimeter of ADDIE, the data collected from the questionnaire and preliminary interviews were analysed based on "A" or "Analyse" as a basis of professional development for teachers and a training programme for the administrators. Since the programme was effective, the intervention allowed the observers to change by using a non-directive instead of a directive approach of post conferences.

The results of the interviews before the intervention indicated that the observers are the main player in the process of identifying deficiencies and areas of improvement for teachers. As it means that the observers are the giver of

knowledge and the provider of ideal solutions in the various cases that the teachers may direct. Although some teachers have stated in semi-structured interviews that they do not accept the observers' comments unless they are convinced of them and that they also argue with the observers if the comments are unsatisfactory for them, the data collected from the conversations after the lessons confirm the opposite of this matter, where it has dominated observers at most of these conferences. The observer is the one who discovers errors, and it is the one who presents the solutions to the teachers and suggests the way to implement these solutions. While teachers played a secondary role, it was limited to either approving the observers' comments or justifying their actions while teaching.

Perhaps this subservience of the teachers is the result of their fear and keenness on the reaction of the observers, as the process of classroom observation in the English Language Centre affects the administrators. These administrators have the power to renew teachers' contracts and terminate their services. Accordingly, it makes sense for teachers to do everything in their power to please the observers to obtain high marks at post-class conferences and escape the threat of termination.

On the other hand, after the intervention, the results indicated that the teachers' role became more active, as their participation in the post-observation conference increased, while the duration of the observers' speech decreased. Through these results, it becomes clear to us that teachers' perceptions and the roles of observers changed after the intervention, as teachers became aware of their important role in the classroom observation process. Likewise, the observers realised that their main role in the classroom observation process is not to evaluate and criticise teachers' performance, but rather to improve the teachers'

professional level by giving them an opportunity to reflect on their performance in order to identify their mistakes. In other words, the observers realised that their primary role was to discuss with the teachers and help them compare what happened in the classroom with what they wanted to achieve.

These positive findings are consistent with the findings of Henderson and Hawthorne (2000), p. 41 who believe that discussion and exchange of ideas among teachers, observers, and administrators about the teaching process from a reflective perspective helps deeply in understanding the essence of professional development. Their participation in post-class conferences was by discovering deficiencies in their performance and proposing appropriate solutions. The role of the observers is more focused on support and guidance.

Having all the facts above, a Teacher Empowerment Theory has been developed. This theory is inclusive of providing teachers the opportunity to dominate the post-conference observation and allow them to discover their limitations and its corresponding intervention. The employment of this theory would increase the motivation level of teachers to work hard in the succeeding classroom observation tasks.

#### **5.4 The Role of the Observer**

##### **5.4.1 Approachable Personality (Changes in the Observers' Attitude)**

Before the intervention, the observers denied that they were using their authority in their dealings with the teachers. On the other hand, the teachers confirmed that the observers used their authority, and the results of the conversations also confirmed the same thing. The observers may not be aware of

the reality of this matter, as they may think that what they are doing is normal, as this type of behaviour has become a daily routine that they do and is accepted by teachers. Such action is founded on the Constructivist Learning Theory where observers could do as much knowledge as they have. After the intervention, the observers stopped using their authority. The relationship between teachers and observers has changed, as has the language of communication in post-observation conferences. This change is likely due to the training factor and the acquisition of new skills and competencies by the observers, which had an impact on the change in the observers' understanding of the concept of classroom observation and its implementation, especially in the holding of post-class conferences. This could also be attributed to the effort of the researcher to modify the Training Course and use scientific methodologies to make the course highly representative as covered in the definition of the Design-Based Theory and the Develop section of ADDIE.

This result is consistent with the findings of Zaida (2017) regarding the importance and impact of training in changing teachers' perceptions. Based on the aforementioned narrative, the theory named Training Equal Better Performance and Teacher Relationship has been created out of this study. Such theory states that the preparation and training of classroom observers play a key role in reducing teachers' negative perceptions of the formal classroom observation process.

#### **5.4.2 Critical Evaluator**

The results of the data collected from the post-observation conferences confirmed that the observers often used negative language that included a lot of

criticism, blame, and sometimes threats to teachers. Although the observers knew that the use of pressure/threat was not appropriate, they still used it. The observers' use of this type of language with teachers may be the result of a misunderstanding of the concept of classroom observation, as observers believe that the concept of classroom observation is related to evaluating teachers' performance, identifying their weaknesses, and guiding them in what they should do and how. This misunderstanding of the concept of classroom observation was entrenched among the current observers because of the previous practices of their predecessors as administrators (observers) in the English Language Centre. Therefore, we find that both the observers as well as the teachers have become accustomed to the traditional system, which is based on the top-down evaluation method, where the observer controls all aspects of the post-observation conversation process, and the role of the teacher is limited to listening and accepting comments. Again, this narrative is a reflection of what the kind of learning observers have based on experience. Indeed, the definition of the Constructivist Learning Theory is exhibited in this construct. Further, if researchers will not thoroughly examine and 'Analyse' facts as required in ADDIE, the training programme would fail. Further, the "Implementation" section in ADDIE would solely depend on the type of programme "Analysed", "Designed", and "Developed". Further, several teachers mentioned in the questionnaire responses that the observers imposed their opinion on them. Some conference interviews also revealed that observers followed the traditional method, where the focus was on teachers rather than learning. So, we find that during post-observation conferences, observers spoke more than 80% of the time while only 20% were left for teachers. These results reflect the reality of the

authoritarian practice practiced by the observers in the English Language Centre in the after-class conferences. It also clarifies the perceptions of observers about their roles in the observation process. This method is traditional and has been criticised by many researchers in this field (Wanzare (2002: 220) and Painter (2001: 59). They criticised it because the basis of its essence is to focus on the teacher instead of focusing on the learning process. It does not help the teachers to grow and develop their performance, but on the contrary, it is an enslaving method that makes the teacher a mere tool to implement the instructions of the observers and unable to think or make decisions. It was very important to train observers to change this malpractice so that the professional development process for teachers could occur. This is what happened after the intervention, where the participation rate of teachers in the after-class conferences reached 83%, while the participation of observers decreased to 17%. This major change in the roles of the observers occurred because of their changing understanding of the concept of classroom observation and their practice of it. The observers provided a better opportunity for teachers to reflect on their performance. This result is consistent with the findings of Schoran (2000) on the importance of providing space for teachers to reflect on their performance. The results were conflicted before the intervention with Yasser Hamed, Sajid Mahmoud (2010) about the specifications and characteristics of the construction that must be available to achieve the necessary targets where they should include descriptive and non-evaluating language and there must be responses. The process must also prevail in an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual respect between the teacher and the observers until the basic objective is achieved.

By looking at the plot above, it can be theorised that reflections facilitate self-introspection, self-awareness, and self-improvement. It is believed that when teachers are given the chance to declare their weaknesses, the approach becomes too positive for both of them. The theory also avoids self-imposition of facts by the observation, rather a self-discovery and what resolution the teacher can do. While observers may have the chance to speak along the way, this can be done using a clinical method of supervision by using facilitative questions during the post-conference.

### **Discussion of The Findings implementation: Skills and Competences**

#### **5.5. Pre-Observation Conference**

##### **5.5.1 Reason for Class Observation**

Based on data collected before the intervention from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, as well as post-observation conferences as defined in the Constructivist Learning Theory and Cognitive Theory, the process of classroom observation in the English Language Centre takes place in only two stages. The actual visit phase, in which lessons are observed, and the post-lesson observation phase, in which teachers' performance of their lessons is usually discussed. This data reveals that the pre-lesson stage is missing. In other words, pre-observation conferences were not carried out at the English Language Centre. The reason for not implementing this stage may be attributed to several reasons, including a lack of knowledge, as the findings before the intervention showed that the administrators who are responsible for implementing the classroom observation process lack some important aspects of knowledge related to the

implementation of the classroom observation process, especially about the implementation of the pre-lessons stage.

It seems that the administrators of the English Language Centre inherited a system in which the process of classroom observation was carried out in only two stages, and they followed the same approach. Another reason, and perhaps the most important one, maybe the administrators' perceptions of the classroom observation process. The results of the surveys show that the administrators supported the idea of conducting unannounced visits to teachers because, as we mentioned earlier, they consider the sudden classroom visit of teachers an opportunity to check the teachers' readiness and evaluate their performance. These results show that the administrators' perceptions of the concept of the classroom observation process are fundamentally evaluative and judgmental. Therefore, it was important to include this aspect in the training programme and to change the concepts of the observers first, and then to train them to apply the new approach of the classroom observation process.

After the intervention, the effect of training on observers which is implied in the "I" or "Implementation" section and "E" or "Evaluation" in ADDIE and was evident in changing the observers' perceptions and implementation of the classroom observation process, through the application of the pre-lesson stage with teachers. The results indicated that the observers carried out this stage where they asked meaningful inquiry questions to which the teachers responded with explanatory answers that contributed to creating a collaborative environment that reflected mutual understanding and respect between the observers and teachers and achieved the goals of holding this stage, which lies in first changing the concept of the classroom observation process from being evaluated to be

developmental. Again, this practice is described in the Constructivist Learning Theory and Cognitive Theory where people ask questions, explore and assess what they know as a prerequisite of the Design-Based Theory of training programme development. Secondly, discuss the objectives of the lessons with the teachers and defuse the teachers' fear and panic from the classroom observation process.

These findings to some extents are consistent with what Susmita Pani (2015) found in her study about the usefulness of pre-observation in helping teachers make their lessons more effective. She concluded that the pre-lesson stage is worth the effort because it is one of the factors that contribute to making teachers' lessons more effective, however, it is not the only factor, as she believes that there are other factors related to the teacher which influence the effectiveness of the pre-observation stage, which must be taken into account when conducting the pre-observation stage. She also believes that implementing pre-class observation requires careful planning and a good understanding of teachers. Finally, she believes that teachers have to understand the purpose of pre-observation to get the most out of it.

In a nutshell, it can be derived that the principle of Needs Analysis is a requirement in developing an appropriate programme. The researcher was meticulous in designing and developing the programme as a basic tenet in this study.

### **5.5.2 Importance of Pre-observation Conferences**

The observers' answers before the intervention supported the idea of applying the pre-observation conference. However, their justifications differed,

as one of the observers considered the application of the pre-observation conference an opportunity for him as an observer to discuss with the teacher and review the aspects that the teacher failed to achieve in the previous observation. While another observer considered that the application of the pre-observation conference is useful to him as it will enable him to draw a mental picture of the lessons and what will happen. Another observer also considered the application of the pre-observation conference as one of the contributing factors in reducing teachers' anxiety. But despite the approval of the observers and their justifications, which seem logical to some extent, this stage was not implemented in the English Language Centre before the intervention. It is also worth noting here that the observers' answers showed the observers' lack of awareness of the important role that the pre-observation stage plays in the success or failure of the entire classroom observation process. For example, when one of the observers was asked what he should do in the pre-observation stage, his answer was far from correct, and he said that the observer meets with the teacher in advance to inform him of the observers' expectations and evaluation criteria. This confirms the observers' lack of awareness of this stage, let alone its application. The pre-observation conference may not be considered the most important stage in the classroom observation process, but it is certainly the key to the success of the next two phases of the classroom observation process, and therefore the success of the classroom observation process is linked in one way or another to the success of the pre-class observation phase. The application of this stage has many repercussions and positive effects on both teachers and observers alike. For example, a pre-conference meeting between observers and teachers, discussing the lessons and the objectives to be achieved from the lessons, will change the

type of relationship between teachers and observers from a top-down authoritative relationship to one of mutual respect and a common purpose for observers and observers. Implementation of this stage will provide the observers with a good opportunity to discuss and understand the objectives as well as the lesson procedures and will play an essential role in the next stage (the lesson observation stage). It will enable observers to focus on important aspects while conducting lesson observation. Moreover, the implementation of this stage will affect the performance of the observers in the third stage. (post-observation stage). It will enable observers to support teachers and provide them with constructive feedback at the post-observation conference. As for the teachers, the importance of applying the pre-observation conference lies first in changing their negative perceptions towards the process of observing and removing anxiety. Teachers will understand that the main objective of conducting class observation is to help them and enhance their performance. They will realise that the objective of observers is not to evaluate and criticise them. These findings are consistent with Pennington (1983) who argues that any kind of anxiety teachers feel before conducting a class observation session will be virtually eliminated when teachers discover that the goal of the classroom observation process is professional development rather than criticism and evaluation. These findings are also consistent with Tennant's (2006) view, in which he argues that the observer and teacher should meet before the lesson and discuss the purpose and criteria to be used as well as any other matters relating to the lesson to incorporate good practices before a model lesson.

The narrative above describes what the Constructivist Learning Theory defines. As defined in this theory, the behaviour of the observer is based on the

amount of his stock knowledge. The experience he has contributes this knowledge and could only understand based on this foundation. As a result of this finding, it can be hypothesised that the success of any task may start with planning. Planning includes what to do before doing any activity, who will do it, and how it will be done. In the context of ADDIE, planning constitutes the collection of data for Analysis which would lead to the Design, Development, and Implementation of the programme. Through thorough planning, one could infer that its result would most likely be successful.

### 5.5.3 Notification

Regarding the notification of teachers before class visits, the responses of the observers before the intervention were positive as they welcomed the idea of notifying the teachers but on the condition that the teachers were not notified of the actual time of the visit. The observers' answers explain their understanding of the classroom observation process, as the observers believe that it is possible to notify teachers that there will be classroom visits, but teachers should not be told exactly when or in which class they will be observed. They believe that a teacher should always be ready for any class visit. This reflects their actual current practice, where the head of the centre sends a general e-mail to all teachers announcing the beginning of the observation process for teachers, without clarifying any other details related to the time of visits or classes among others. This confirms that the main purpose of the classroom observation process in the English Language Centre, at least from the observers' point of view, is the evaluation of teachers. To infer such behaviour, it boils down to the so-called stock knowledge of the teacher as far as pre-classroom observation is concerned.

One cannot expect to do more if that is only what the person knows based on the Constructivist Learning Theory. As part of ADDIE, it will be reflected in the 'Evaluation' section if notification is implemented ("I" or Implement) as one of the components of the pre-observation steps.

Similarly, teachers were in favour of the idea of prior notification. They believed that prior notification would spare them many problems and difficulties, the most important of which was that it would give them enough time to prepare better, which means better performance, and thus they might obtain higher grades.

After the intervention, the results indicated that the observers believed that it would be better for the teachers to be notified in advance of the visits, and they provided different justifications from what they stated before the intervention. The justifications of both the observers as well as the teachers after the intervention indicate, beyond any doubt, that there is a significant change in the understanding and perceptions of the observers and teachers towards the purpose of implementing the classroom observation process. For example, the justification given by the observers that prior notification of teachers would reduce teachers' anxiety and improve their performance confirms the observers' awareness that the main objective of the classroom observation process is to improve teachers' performance and raise their efficiency. As for the justifications given by teachers after the intervention, they indicate a decrease in the level of anxiety among teachers and a change in their perceptions about the classroom observation process. This change in teachers' and observers' perceptions may be attributed to an intervention factor that developed their competencies and changed

their perceptions of classroom observation. The results also correlate with the third research question about changes that occurred after the intervention.

By and large, the theory that planning is a significant tool to achieve better implementation and good results describes the preceding narrative. It cannot be denied that when tasks start with proper planning, the implementation will be smooth, and the evaluation of such activity will be more likely positive.

#### **5.5.4 Briefing about the Criteria of Observation**

Before the intervention, most of the teachers agreed on the importance of informing them of the assessment criteria. They justified this by their desire to achieve the highest percentage of evaluation criteria and thus obtain the satisfaction of the observers. Notifying them of the criteria would help them meet the expectations of the observers and thus achieve a higher rate during the evaluation. As one teacher said, “this briefing was useful for preparation. They give me signs; you have to tell me where you are going to give me the signs so that I know where to focus on them”. These results confirmed the anxiety that controls teachers' thinking, making them their ultimate focus for getting a higher rating. In other words, the teachers wanted to be informed of the evaluation criteria only to adjust their performance to those criteria and thus avoid the risk of getting a low rating.

These results confirm to us once again the reality of teachers' fears and negative perceptions about the classroom observation process, as it is clear from their answers that their first concern is to obtain higher grades and avoid staying in the danger zone, because if this happens, it may lead to termination.

After the intervention, the teachers' answers did not change in terms of agreeing to the need to inform them of the evaluation criteria, but their justifications about the reasons for approval differed. This time the teachers said that they would like to be notified of the criteria because that would improve their performance.

We discover from the teachers' answers after the intervention that there is a change in the teachers' understanding and perceptions, as the teachers' goal has become to raise their level and improve their performance, and their goal is no longer to please the observers or/and to obtain higher grades as was the case before the intervention. Also, these answers indicate a clear decrease in the level of anxiety and fear among teachers from the classroom observation process. It is also evidence of the positive impact of training in changing the perceptions and performance of both teachers and observers in conducting the classroom observation process

#### **5.5.5 Gathering Information about the Lesson**

As mentioned earlier, the process of classroom observation in the English Language Centre before the intervention took place in only 2 stages, so it was normal that the step of collecting information about the lessons did not exist either although this step is an integral part of the pre-observation conference.

Not implementing this step for one reason or another has made classroom observation very difficult for teachers. Because teachers often do not know anything about the aims or reasons for the visits. They usually find themselves under the clemency of observers, required to do their best to convince the observers that they are good teachers.

Hence, because of this step, the teachers have a negative perception towards the observation process, where the teachers feel that they are being targeted and that the purpose of the class visits is to discover their mistakes and get terminated their employment.

Moreover, not implementing the data collection step about the lessons leads to misinterpretations of what's happening during the lessons and this leads to misunderstanding and wrong decisions. To be clear, at pre-observation conferences, observers ask teachers a variety of questions about the objectives of the lessons, the methods they will use to achieve those objectives, the materials they will use... etc. Such questions enable observers to gather very important information about the lessons they will observe to eventually come up with a clear mental image and a preconceived idea of the lessons they will observe; Thus, enhancing the credibility of their expectations as well as helping them to focus on the most important elements of the lessons. For teachers, gathering information will break the barrier of fear and allow them to participate and learn about the process. Therefore, teachers will undoubtedly perform the lessons better, and in a more organised and focused way because they know what is required of them and how they will implement it.

In the end, all this will be reflected in the performance of teachers and observers in the post-observation conference stage. At this stage, the observers determine to what extent the teachers have achieved the objectives of the lessons that were identified and discussed during the pre-observation conferences.

It should also be noted here that the conference discussion with teachers and the gathering of information in the pre-observation conference is closely and directly related to the following 2 phases: the phase of classroom

observation and the phase of post-class observation. Accordingly, the failure to implement the information gathering process will deprive teachers and observers of finding a common platform, which, in case of not being implemented, will greatly impede the success of the whole process.

These findings are supported by the study by Range, Holt, Scherz, and Young whose results confirmed that the pre-observation conference provides a frame for both the actual observation and the post-observation conference. It also noted that a pre-observation conference allows the teacher to define the goal of the lesson and allows the principal to focus on the elements that should be visible during the lesson. It also indicated that the entire observation cycle begins with defining the goal to be achieved during the pre-observation process (Range, Holt, Scherz, & Young, 2011).

It can be inferred that the foregoing details also imply the previous theories called Constructivist Learning Theory and Cognitive Theory which explores data gathering before implementing the task. In ADDIE, this section relates to the characteristics contained in the 'Analysis' section where the observer has to consider the ins and outs of the lesson before 'Implementing' the plan. It is also implicit in this area that the implementation and evaluation of the programme are directly related to whatever has been planned.

## **5.6 While-Observation Stage**

### **5.6.1 Number of Observers**

The results indicated that teachers are not satisfied with the classroom observation process applied in the English Language Centre, and some of them

even mentioned that they prefer not to be visited at all. The results of teachers' responses to questionnaires about the number of observers and the number and nature of class visits varied between supporters and opponents. In semi-structured interviews, some teachers expressed their concern about having more than one observer while conducting the lesson observations process while others welcomed the presence of more than one observer. It is worth noting here that some teachers said that they prefer to be observed in more than 1 class and at different levels. Moreover, some were asked to be observed by different observers. By analysing these results, it becomes obvious that there is an atmosphere of anxiety, confusion, and bewilderment among the teachers. Perhaps the reason for some teachers wanting to be observed by only 1 observer in the classroom is fear and confusion as some teachers lack self-confidence, they get confused and cannot perform normally in the presence of a stranger or more than 1 person. The situation may be worse if these people have come for the evaluation purpose. Similarly, for students, the presence of 2 strangers in the classroom may affect students' interaction and response to the teacher. On the other hand, for teachers who prefer to be visited by more than one observer, this may be attributed to these teachers' fear of the observer's bias. For this reason and due to the lack of confidence of the teachers in the observer, they prefer to have more than 1 observer at the same time. Because that would give them a kind of reassurance and self-confidence. As for the teachers who prefer to visit them only once, the reason may be their fear of the classroom observation process and the consequences that may be unsatisfactory. Therefore, they try to avoid class visits in general. On the other hand, for those teachers who prefer to be visited more than once, the reason may not be the teachers' admiration for the classroom observation process rather, the

reason may be that they want to get another chance in case they do not perform satisfactorily the first time. The same applies to teachers who want to be observed in different classes and at different levels. This may also be due to the teachers' need to have another chance in another class and with different students as this would enhance their chance to perform better and gain a higher grade. Teachers teaching different students at different levels would enhance the teachers' opportunity to perform better because of the different levels of students. For example, the teacher may perform unsatisfactorily in one class but may perform excellently in the other. This change in the teacher's performance is due to several factors, the most important of which is the change in the level of students and their interaction with the teacher.

These results are consistent with the findings of (Lei, 2017) who stated that there is a discrepancy in the evaluation due to several factors that must be taken into consideration when conducting the classroom observation process. The results of this thesis also indicated that teachers' multiple class visits should be taken into consideration when conducting classroom observations to evaluate teachers. In addition, other factors at the classroom level that could contribute to explaining the variance at the classroom level should be investigated.

With the theoretical background, the descriptions of the Constructivist Learning Theory and the Cognitive Theory such as the understanding of any task and usage of feedback could be best defined when people explore to draw a well-grounded result that will lead to the development of a programme or training course as applied to this study.

## **5.6.2 Interference in the Lesson**

The data from teachers indicated that observers did not interfere with their lessons. This implies the observers' perception that it is wrong to interfere with the teachers' lessons. The feedback was postponed to the post-observation conferences for a discussion of the things that were inappropriate or not meeting expectations. On rare occasions, the observers only intervened to examine the students' work, which was not considered as an interference by the teachers, but rather as one of the duties of the observers during the observation.

Considering the facts above, the principle of empowerment applies to the preceding narrative. This means that teachers should be given the space and opportunity to scaffold the teaching and learning process. Observers must not interfere during the observation proper because of the negative impact on the teachers and the students.

## **5.7 Post-Observation Stage**

### **5.7.1 Importance of the Post Observation Conference**

The results showed that most teachers consider post-observation conferences to be vital as they enable teachers to obtain feedback on their performance. Moreover, they are informed of their performance results, upon which the observers make decisions related to the termination or extension of teachers' contracts. Therefore, teachers were dominated by conflicting feelings of fear (of obtaining a low rate) and hope (for a high rate and to keep their jobs). This was confirmed by the teachers in semi-structured interviews when they mentioned that they were anxious because of these conferences as demonstrated

in the comments of a teacher: “Because, based on the discussion and results of the post-conference, I will be able to tell whether I am safe or not. Some teachers were dismissed after getting the results of the post-conference”. Thus, the post-observation conferences are considered as a source of great anxiety and fear for teachers if the observer follows the traditional way when observing the teachers (Williams, 1989). As for the observers, they considered the post-observation conferences an important stage because it provides an opportunity for them to evaluate the teachers' performance, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and provide them with feedback. It is an opportunity for them to guide teachers in the changes they must make in the teaching methods they follow, which the observers may see as feasible and effective. It is also an opportunity to classify teachers and give them grades for their performance

After the intervention, the vast majority of the teachers confirmed that post-observation conferences were very important to them for different reasons than before. They stated that these conferences were an opportunity for them to get appropriate feedback and hear a different point of view from another person. Similarly, the observers, after the intervention, mentioned that the post-observation conferences were an opportunity for teachers to think and reflect on their performance and benefit from it. In fact, after the intervention, the results indicated that the observers' understanding and their implementation of the post-observation conferences changed significantly. This consequently affected the understanding and performance of the teachers as well. It was clear that after the intervention, observers and teachers became fully aware of the importance of this stage and its effective role in the professional development of teachers and the teaching and learning process.

These results were in line with the findings of a study by Myung and Martinez (2013) in which they claimed that the comments that teachers receive while providing feedback at post-observation conferences can be a powerful source for improving their performance and professionalism. Also, it is similar to the findings by House (2010), in which it is stated that the application of reflective teaching increases the effectiveness of teachers' performance and improves their efficiency.

In the context of ADDIE, just like the classroom observation task, the programme, in general, is also evaluated as described in “E” or “Evaluate” in this conceptual framework. The evaluation of any programme is a requirement for developing a better programme. In this respect, evaluation in terms of the content of the programme was made in one of the “D” sections of ADDIE called “Develop”. From the first “Design” of the programme, the experts assisted the researcher in improving the training programme. Such assistance could mean a sort of evaluation. With the theoretical underpinnings, it is more related to the Cognitive Theory based on the term feedback. While feedback in this theory was conceived to be a prerequisite in developing a programme, such domain can also be considered as a means of evaluation. In conclusion, the foregoing narrative suggests a theory that post-observation is a major factor that contributes to the development of an effective programme that could lead to the attainment of quality education.

### **5.7.2 Conducting the Post-Observation Conference**

The findings before the intervention indicated that the observers held post-observation conferences for the observed teachers either on the same day or

a few days after the visit. The findings also showed that the observers followed the traditional method of procedures during their conduct of the class observation process. In this approach, observers usually begin the discussion with the teacher by asking the usual question about his impression and opinion of his performance of the lesson. The observers then praise the positive aspects and strengths they liked in that lesson. Then the observers move to discuss the negative aspects and weaknesses in the teacher's performance, which did not satisfy them. This step is followed by giving instructions to teachers about the required changes and how to implement them in future lessons. As the last step, the observers provide the teacher with a copy of the checklist including the awarded scores to see and sign.

After the intervention, the results showed a significant change in the procedures and the implementation of the post-observation conference process. The focus of the observers shifted from the teacher to the learning process. The observers stopped looking for the weaknesses of the teachers to criticise them. In a clearer sense, observers stopped using the Supervisory approach and switched to the non-directive approach. As a result, the language of discourse has changed, as well as some practices. For example, the observers stopped using the authoritative language of harsh criticism such as “You must...”, “You should not ..”, and “ You have to.....” The observers also stop playing the role of a source and giver of knowledge, in other words, they stopped identifying problems and providing solutions to teachers for implementation. Instead, they provided teachers with a full opportunity to reflect on their performance. Therefore, the results after the intervention showed that teachers dominated the post-observation conferences by more than 80%, while the observers' dominance decreased to less than 20%. The reason for this significant change in the roles of teachers and

observers is due to the change in observers' perceptions and application of post-observation conferences, which was one of the fundamental objectives to be achieved from conducting an intervention process. These findings are consistent with Freeman (1982) who advocated the application of the non-directive approach in post-observation conferences, in which the observer uses descriptive language rather than judgmental language. His role is mainly focused on helping the teacher link what he did during teaching with the lesson objectives to be achieved.

Based on the context of ADDIE particularly the "Evaluate" section, it can be inferred that observers had shifted to a non-directive approach of post-conference using respectful and empowering language that motivated the teachers. The change of the language to a better form could be attributed to the concept of Constructivist Learning where the researcher has scrutinised the relevance of current knowledge based on the developed training course. In effect, it could be theorised that judgmental language poses a negative impact on the teacher's personality, while non-authoritative ideas in any discourse highly motivate teachers to do better.

### **5.7.3 Providing Relevant and Constructive Feedback**

Before the intervention, the results of the post-observation conferences collected before the intervention showed that observers controlled every aspect of the conversations because they believed this was their role as observers. In other words, observers determine the type of problems and weaknesses of teachers as described in the Constructivist Learning Theory. However, the training course designed by the researcher encourages the observers to empower the teacher through self-reflection and self-improvement. On the contrary, they are also the

ones who suggest the appropriate solutions to these problems, and finally, they are the ones who direct the teachers to apply these solutions in the way they think is the most appropriate.

Moreover, the results showed that observers used threatening language in the post-conference while discussing the lessons with teachers. In many parts of the post-observation conferences, observers blamed and criticised teachers. The observers used an approach called the Supervisory Approach' which is traditional and does not support the professional development of teachers. It focuses on judging teachers' performance. This approach does not allow teachers to reflect on their performance and discover their areas of weakness.

After the intervention, the observers adopted the non-directive approach (Freeman, 1982) which relies mainly on the observers' support for teachers and helps them compare what happened during the lesson to the goals they want to achieve. This method adopts asking teachers reflective questions on their performance and encourages them to discover their areas for improvement and to suggest appropriate solutions for themselves. As a result, the observers became better listeners focusing on how learning took place and providing teachers with constructive feedback to help them with professional development. This is probably one of the main factors that contributed to the overall classroom observation satisfaction of the teachers.

Among previous research studies on teacher supervision, Azizpour et al. (2021) found that good observation skills, feedback skills, and teacher development were necessary for teacher supervisors working in a language school context. In another study, Carreiro (2020) identified post-observation conference as an opportunity for observers and observees to meet and discuss the lesson

performance through “positive conversations” (p. 101) that support mutual respect and trust. Therefore, it is crucial to preserve the positivity in the feedback and keep a two-way interaction between the observer and the observee. One of the most important recommendations based on Özdemir's (2020) research findings is that the Ministry of National Education should provide training and support to the observer on providing relevant feedback to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

#### **5.7.4 Writing the Observation Report**

The results before the intervention showed that most of the observers considered writing reports one of their responsibilities. This may be due to the observers' familiarity with a certain system in which observers write classroom observation reports practice. Therefore, the idea of teachers writing their respective reports was unfamiliar to them. The observers also believed that teachers would not be critical of themselves, and therefore writing their reports would reduce their validity. As for the teachers, their responses varied, but the majority considered it a responsibility of the observers.

After the intervention, the opinions of the observers changed as all 3 observers agreed to allow the teachers to write their reports or at least involve them in the process. The teachers also welcomed this idea after the intervention and expressed their willingness to handle the task. Although this has not been implemented during the research study, there are considerable benefits of involving teachers in the report writing process. One benefit is that there is a feeling of ownership of a certain work which can be experienced by the and another gain is discontentment by the teacher may be reduced, if not erased.

Finally, the teacher is empowered to devise his solutions since he knows what works with him well.

A common problem with reports written solely by the observers without any discussion is that teachers fail to implement what is written in the reports due to a lack of conviction with those suggestions. In most cases, teachers seem to agree with what observers say or suggest in post-observation conferences, only because they have no other option. Involving teachers in the report writing process may have positive outcomes, as it helps build trust between teachers and observers and reduces teachers' anxiety. In addition, it may increase ownership of the suggestions in the observation report and increase the successful implementation of those suggestions. Most importantly, they provide applicable suggestions and solutions as they are more aware of their real situation.

These results go in line with what Carreiro recommended. For him, the formative and summative evaluation of the teachers should not be based solely on the observer's opinion but should be shaped through the conversations and the teachers' self-reflection. This method called a self-directed study (Carreiro, 2020) (SDS; Carreiro, 2020, p. 102) supports the growth model which focuses mainly on the professional development aspect of observation rather than the evaluation.

### **5.8 Variation in Teachers' Responses**

When analysing results before the intervention, teachers' answers to some of the questionnaire questions were imprecise and sometimes contradictory. For example, when asked whether they were worried when being visited by

observers, a large number of teachers mentioned in the questionnaires that they were not concerned about the observers' visits, however, in semi-structured interviews, many of them revealed their fear of having observers present while they were teaching or in post-observation conferences when discussing their lessons with observers. Additionally, when asked about their reaction while receiving the observers' comments, many of them claimed that they would object to the observers' comments if they disagreed with them, but the results gathered from the recorded conferences indicated that they accepted the criticism and comments without any objection.

## **5.9 Implications**

The results of this study have implications for teachers and administrators in technical colleges. It also has implications for decision-makers in technical colleges to help improve the quality of the classroom observations process. The following are the implications for leadership practices.

### **5.9.1 Implication 1. Training Needs**

The results of this study showed that training administrators (observers) and equipping them with the essential competencies and skills of performing the classroom observation process has a major role not only in changing their perceptions and their implementation of the observation process but also in changing perceptions and performance of the teachers as well. The performance of administrators after the training changed significantly compared to their performance before the training. In this regard, decision-makers in the Colleges

of Technology need to provide training on effective observation skills. Due to the direct interaction of administrators with teachers via the classroom observation process, they undoubtedly have an important effect on raising the efficiency and development of teachers' performance. Therefore, they must receive quality training by specialists to allow some kind of change to occur in their perceptions as well as their implementation of the classroom observation process. These findings are consistent with John (2019) who believes that "principals and peer observers will likely need training in how to conduct observations, as well as how to link data to professional learning and/or collegial support structures."

#### **5.9.2 Implication 2. Note-taking Method**

The results indicated that the observers' method of taking notes to support the standard observation checklist received great acceptance from the teachers. It was also more accurate and more reliable for observers. Before the intervention, when observers used the checklist criteria many teachers were anxious during class visits as well as in post-observation conferences while discussing the lessons with observers because these lists contain some elements and aspects that are difficult for teachers to achieve in many classrooms' situations. It also obligates the observers to match these elements with the performance of the teachers, which reduces the chances of the teachers obtaining a score that reflects their true performance. In contrast, taking notes allows observers to record important facts in the lesson according to the teacher's performance. They are more context-relevant, thus more credible because observers do not have to focus on certain prescribed aspects but rather on the

teaching and learning process. Accordingly, observers should be encouraged to use the note-taking method while performing the classroom observation process. The study suggests adopting note-taking instead of using checklists as it has a significant impact on teachers' perceptions and their performance in the classroom.

### **5.9.3 Implication 3. Adopting a Non-directive Approach**

The adoption of a non-directive approach at post-observation conferences had a significant impact on teachers' interaction and improved their performance. This approach allowed teachers to dominate the conversation. It allows the teachers to think deeply, reflect on their performance and discover their strengths and weaknesses, and most importantly, it urges teachers to propose appropriate solutions to overcome their difficulties and their shortcomings. The adoption of this approach has a positive impact on changing the perceptions as well as the observers' role in the observation process. They help the teachers to compare what took place during the lesson to the goals they aimed to achieve. The implementation of this method efficiently and effectively requires training observers on competencies. It may also require some training for the teachers on reflection skills and action planning to identify areas of improvement and to act on them according to the context. With planning and training, the adoption of this method can have a great positive impact on teachers and the entire classroom observation process.

#### **5.9.4 Implication 4. Implementation of Pre-observation Conference Session**

The comparison of results before and after the intervention showed that the implementation of the pre-observation conference played a vital role in the implementation of the classroom observation process as well as in the perceptions of both teachers and observers towards the classroom observation. The implementation of the pre-observation conferences greatly contributed to reducing the anxiety of the teachers. It also had an important role in creating an atmosphere of mutual trust between the teachers and observers and providing observers with a clearer picture of the lessons in terms of the objectives, strategies, and materials. Accordingly, reviewing lessons with observers before the observation process was effective in increasing teachers' self-confidence, and in improving teachers' performance in the observed sessions.

#### **5.10 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this research study, and in the context of previous literature, there are several recommendations for the decision-makers, observers, and teachers as well as researchers who would like to work on this theme in the future:

##### **5.10.1 Recommendation 1**

Decision-makers usually take into account the qualifications, teaching experience, or the management position when they appoint classroom observers, however, it has been proven in the research findings in this study supported by previous literature that these observers should have an appropriate observation

training programme. Observers must be equipped with the skills and competencies to conduct classroom observation and provide constructive feedback that improves teachers' performance and professional development. Thus, the desired goals of the classroom observation process, that serve the teaching and learning process, are achieved.

#### **5.10.2 Recommendation 2**

Decision-makers should end using the classroom observation process as a threat and a means for dismissal. Observers should not focus only on mistakes to criticise teachers, but rather on the teaching and learning process, as this would greatly reduce teachers' anxiety. With a shift in the perceptions of the purpose of classroom observation, it becomes a highly effective professional development opportunity for teachers. As a consequence, this will improve teachers' performance which will be reflected in students' learning.

#### **5.10.3 Recommendation 3**

Informing teachers in advance has proven to have a significant impact on maintaining an atmosphere of trust and a good relationship between teachers and observers. Therefore, teachers should be notified in advance of the actual visit, and surprise visits should be avoided by the observers.

#### **5.10.4 Recommendation 4**

The pre-observation conference stage should be applied consistently because of its importance for observers and teachers alike. This step enables the observers to learn about the stages and objectives of the lessons that they observe

and thus enables them to accurately understand what will transpire in the classroom. Similarly, the application of this stage helps teachers a lot in retrieving what, why, and how they will teach.

#### **5.10.5 Recommendation 5**

Observers should hold post-observation conferences with a focus on the teaching and learning process. It is also recommended to adopt a non-directive approach during conversations with teachers. Observers should encourage teachers to compare what happened in the classroom with their goals through the use of reflective questions. Teachers should be able to identify their areas of improvement and how they will work on them. The session should give priority to teachers' comments in terms of talking time and should include teachers as active participants in a conversation. The feedback by the observers should be constructive and relevant.

#### **5.10.6 Recommendation 6**

Observation reports should be written jointly with significant contributions from the teachers. This may require training teachers and observers to use a specific language and negotiation on the content. This also ensures that all the important aspects have been discussed and agreed upon in the post-observation conferences. The use of authoritative language such as "You should", "You must...", and "You need..." must be avoided. Instead, the "I" or "We" pronoun must be used in writing the report as the case may be. Therefore, in the future, it is recommended that there be more focus on this aspect as an extension of the intervention in this study.

### 5.11 Framework on Effective Classroom Observation Process

The diagram below represents the framework of the study. This framework serves as the major contribution of this research which is classified as methodological and practical knowledge to effective implementation of the classroom observation process.

Figure 5.1 presents a cycle of effective conduct of the classroom observation process. Based on the findings, there must be three steps in doing classroom observation effectively. Each step constitutes sub-steps that must be adhered to by the observers. Following these descriptions would result in more effective conduct of classroom observation.

#### Theoretical contribution of the study



**Figure 5. 1** Cycle on Effective Conduct of Classroom Observation Process: A Major Contribution of Study

### 5.12 Model of the Study: Research Contribution

The model below is the most important contribution of the study utilising the key findings of the research questions. As a prerequisite of this contribution, the Training Course itself has provided a significant impact on this model, which the researcher considers as a contribution by itself.

Figure 5.2 presents an overall description of the entire study emphasizing the findings and contribution of this study. There are three main phases shown in the diagram, namely: The Before the Intervention, the Training Programme, and After the Intervention. Before the Intervention, the absence of the pre-conference was dominant and because of the intervention, pre-conferences were already conducted. In the while observation outcome, the classroom observation exemplified observers' lack of observational skills and competence, but after the intervention, they were already proficient to conduct the classroom observation process. Finally, the post-observation task which employed a Supervisory approach and the observers writing the reports themselves turned out to be a non-directive approach, and teachers and/or observers wrote the reports. The significant changes have provided a better atmosphere where teachers' anxiety and fear were lessened, observers manifesting observational skills and competencies and using a more facilitative approach of post-conference called a non-directive approach.

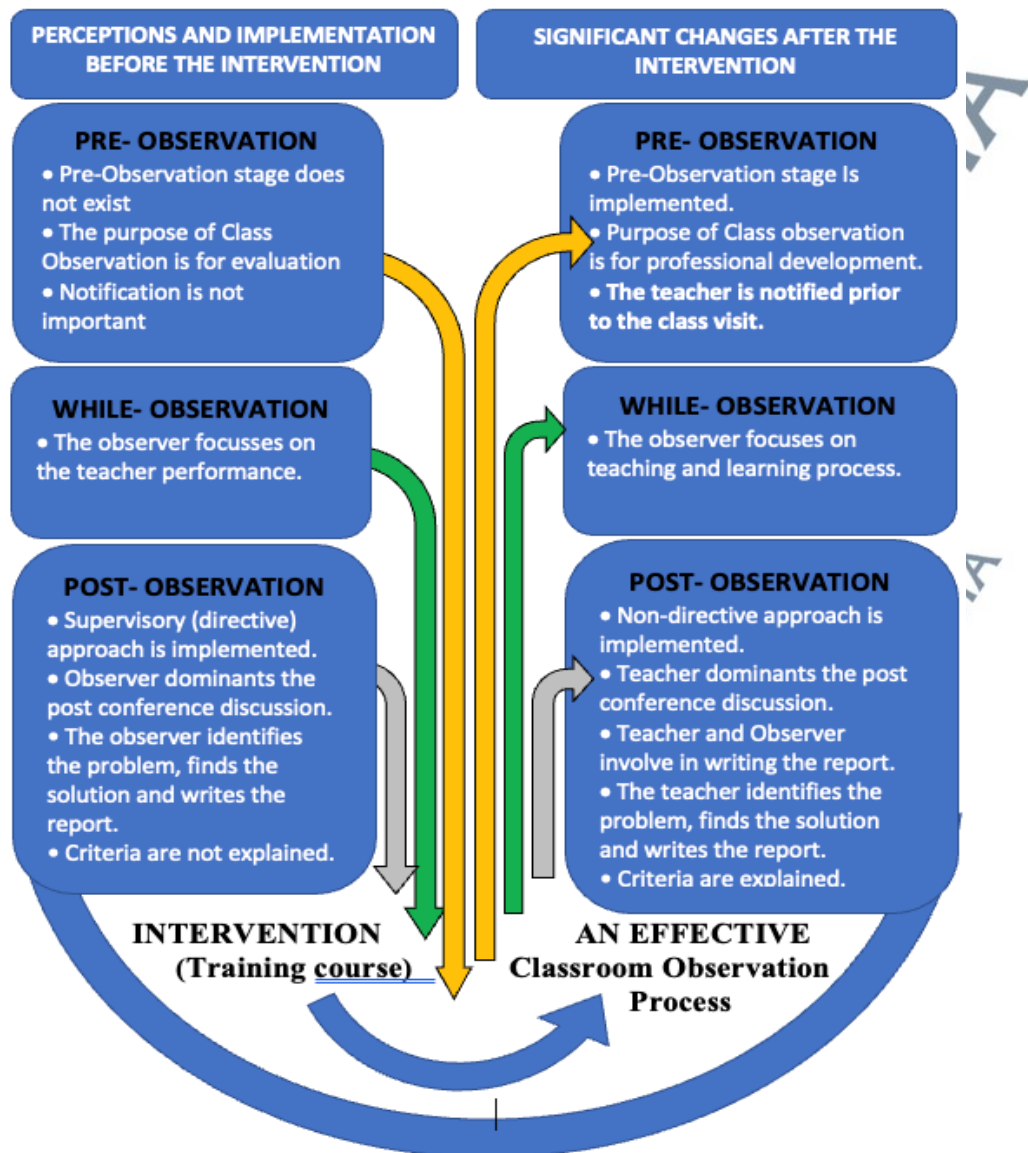


Figure 5.2 Model of Study Research Con

### 5.13 Reflection

Although the process was challenging, one may feel it was rewarding. Before starting this study and gathering information, the idea of completing a thesis seemed to the researcher an impossible mission, however, with the great encouragement and cooperation of friends at work, the support of my supervisor, and the immense inputs of the highly esteemed panel, I have managed to complete this gigantic task. I feel that I am lucky because I was able to conduct this study

in my workplace, as this allowed me to distribute the questionnaires and gain the respondents' varied experiences, reflections, and notions; conduct interviews with teachers and administrators that enabled me to record some post-observation conferences noting their fear, anxiety and unflinching behaviour. Subsequently, I was able to discover the flaws of implementing an effective classroom observation that lingered for at least a decade which enabled me to design and develop a programme that was arduous and extremely challenging. Further and most importantly, I was able to train observers where I work which I felt to be incorrigible in the beginning. I hope to see a sustained effective change due to this study regarding the classroom observation process; not only in the college where this study was conducted but also in other Colleges of Technology in the Sultanate of Oman. I hope to be able to help improve the existing situation and eventually solve this problem by publishing my research and sharing its suggestions with the competent authorities for policy redirection.

#### **5.14 Conclusion**

The results of the research indicated that the classroom observation process can be an opportunity for the observers to play a more significant and effective role in raising the level of teachers' performance. This can be achieved not only by providing teachers with constructive feedback but more importantly by guiding them to discover their mistakes and areas of weakness, suggest appropriate solutions, and implement them in the future.

This progressive step will not occur without changing the perceptions of both observers and teachers towards the concept of the classroom observation

process. In a clearer sense, the observers' awareness of the importance of the classroom observation process and its vital role in the professional development of teachers, as well as their understanding of the nature of their crucial role in this process as observers will undoubtedly make a huge difference in the way they implement the classroom observation process, its success and results.

In this study, after training the observers, there were noticeable changes in the performance of both the observers as well as the teachers. For example, observers' attention shifted from focusing on evaluating teachers to focusing on the learning process and raising the efficiency of teachers.

The language of the observers in the post-lesson conferences also changed. They use the non-directive approach which was offset by a change in the teachers' reaction. As a result, the relationship between teachers and observers changed to one of mutual respect rather than one of manager with subordinates. The process of changing started immediately when the observers began implementing the pre-observation conference phase and meeting with teachers. During this phase of the classroom observation process, teachers dominated most of the conference. They talked about their lessons and what will be done with confidence and comfort. Their feelings began to change and little by little their previous fears of classroom observation began to fade. The same applies to the observers. In the pre-conference stage of the classroom observation process, the observers began to ask the teachers various questions about the lessons to reach an agreement with the teachers on what will be done as well as to get a clear mental picture of the lessons that they will observe.

In the post-lesson conference stage, the roles also changed, and the observers became more focused on the learning process rather than the teacher.

The observers worked hard to help the teachers to link what happened in the lessons with the goals of the lessons that the teachers wanted to achieve. Giving teachers a more active role in pre-class conferences and providing them with the full opportunity in post-observation conferences to reflect on their performance has a major role in developing their performance and changing their negative perceptions about the classroom observation process.

Further, we must always remember that the classroom observation process is a dynamic and integrative process, the secret of its success depends mainly on the type of perceptions of both teachers and observers towards the classroom observation process as well as the efficiency of the observers in performing this task. Therefore, to achieve the desired learning outcomes from this process, we must always ensure that the classroom observation task is assigned to trained and qualified observers who can carry out the classroom observation process professionally.

### **5.15 Summary**

Finally, this study has enormously contributed to the theoretical, methodological, and practical knowledge on how to conduct an effective classroom observation process at the English Language Centre of Ibra College of Technology. To specifically clarify such contribution, the development of a Training Course that has eventually resolved the flaws of its implementation based on the findings. As a result of developing this programme, the researcher was able to train the observers for the latter to improve their observational skills and competencies as shown in the outcomes of the post quantitative and

qualitative data. Such training has significantly changed the perceptions of the administrators on how to properly conduct a pre-observation conference, while-observation, and post-observation conference which consequently changed the mindset of the teachers. With these outcomes, the researcher was able to design a conceptual framework as shown in Figure 5.2. To a certain extent, the implications and recommendations derived and put forward in this study shall hopefully serve as a basis in policy redirection believing that the college is transforming its current institution into a university.

