Pedagogical Issues in Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language in Libyan Schools' Various Settings

Edited Book

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UNIVERSITY OF BENGHAZI

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Preface

It is a fact that the younger is the better in learning foreign languages. Studies and research reveal that young children learn and acquire foreign languages faster and more effectively than old children and adults do. Hence, the focus of teaching foreign language has always been directed to teach children foreign languages in young ages. In Libya, in fact, this is not applicable in the past due to the negative attitude towards the West, represented in its language, more specifically English, which was considered as the language of colonialism. Though this attitude has changed, and Libyans have become more aware regarding learning and using English in the globalized world, less attention has been paid to teaching and learning English in Libyan schools. Studies and research show that Libyan students in Libyan schools encounter various challenges in learning and using of English. Some of the studies and research attribute such challenges to qualifications of teachers of English, methods of teaching used in teaching English, lack of motivation and facilities, and so on. No matter the reason of this failure is, there is an almost-complete agreement regarding dissatisfaction about teaching and learning English in Libyan schools. Though several remedies were set up to tackle such challenges, the situation is still getting unsatisfactory. Hence, the editor of this book has collected various papers regarding this issue from various authors for the sake of covering various Libyan schools' settings to highlight the situation of teaching and learning English in Libyan schools. The aim of this book is to provide some facts and information regarding the pedagogical situation of teaching and learning English in Libyan schools. The book might function effectively in the area of teaching and learning English in Libya. Researchers can use this book's diverse papers as credited resources in the area of teaching and learning English in Libya. It is a valuable resource in the field of teaching and Learning English as a foreign language in Outer Circle Countries, too.

Introduction

No single doubt might be raised regarding the importance of learning and using English in early stages. So, it is crucial that the focus of learning foreign languages be directed to children in school from the primary school. English has become the international language that accesses us to the era of globalization. English has become the key that opens the doors to the outside world. English is the language of knowledge and the key of success and getting god positions or jobs. Most international universities all over the world require English or passing international English exams as TOEFL or IELTS for admission. Thus, learning and using English has become a must and a key of success in this globalized world. As Libya is an integral part of this world, learning and using English is a must, too. In fact, there is less attention paid to the field of teaching and learning English in the Libyan settings in general and in schools in specific. Most teachers of English in Libyan schools, as studies and research reveal, are not well qualified, using traditional methods of teaching with the lack of facilities including the Internet in classrooms. In addition, Libyan students lack intrinsic motivation for learning and using English for communication. They know what I call 'English in Libyan version', in which they use grammar in Libyan accent and Arabic syntactic structures. They study English as a class subject just only to pass the exam. For teachers, they teach English because it is the only job that might be provided in Libya. So, teachers' and students' motivation is extrinsic. Hence, I am providing this book, which includes ten papers regarding teaching and learning English in Libyan schools' settings, to shed lights on the situation of the pedagogical situation of teaching and learning English in such settings. This book provides information and facts through theoretical and empirical studies regarding the situation under study in general. Researchers might benefit from this book as an authentic resource.

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Dedication

To my family with love and gratitude,

To my teachers and supporters,

To the soul of my late father, mother, my nieces, my friends,

To the authors of the papers in this book,

I humbly dedicate this work.

Challenging of Teaching Grammar at Libyan Schools: Case Study on English Language Teachers at Secondary Schools in Marij

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Abstract

Grammar is the tool by which we understand meaning. Yet some scholars see grammar as the least skill and is often taught through other skills. Studies find that there are main challenges in teaching grammar, including knowledge, facilities, negative perception on grammar teaching and preparation of English lessons. If there is any mention of grammar in class, students have the feeling of fear. To avoid this moment of fear, teachers have to do all educational means to make grammar teaching nonthreatening, imaginative, and useful activity within the English curriculum. Teaching grammar was traditionally dominated by Grammar Translation Method. In this study, ten teachers from different schools with different experiences and gender were selected to be the sample of the study. They received the questions in advance to help them prepare their answers according to their beliefs. The male teachers were interviewed and their answers recorded. The female teachers answered the questions in written. The data were collected and analyzed, showing that Libyan teachers of English ask students to learn grammar rules and vocabulary of the target language through enforcing them to memorize the rules given and apply them on other examples. The study, also, finds out that some teachers are not taught how to teach grammar, where they still have problems in applying the grammatical rules. The study recommends English teachers to apply grammar rules before learning to teach them.

Keywords*: Communicative situations; teaching; EFL.*

1. Introduction

In teaching English as a foreign language, grammar is considered as one of the most important skills to master, and more attention is paid to the language skills. Grammar is defined as the tool by which the message is understood. Some see grammar as the least skill and is often taught through other skills without any proper assessment to gauge students' understanding of it. Since grammar is an essential part in a language, the learners must master it to communicate effectively because as Omar (2019b) argues that grammar "is core in language in general and in language learning in specific … This indicates that teaching grammar plays a significant role in learning foreign languages" (pp. 513-514). Some scholars see that grammar is the most difficult item to teach. Others considered it the most boring to learn.

The development of learners presupposes the knowledge of grammar. Grammatical rules enable students to understand and apply sentence patterns according to the rules they were taught. Grammar for ordinary people may mean only wrong and right rules, in other words correct or incorrect of the language they speak, but for school students' grammar means analytical or terminological study of sentences. A student cannot learn a foreign language accurately only through the process of unconscious assimilation. Grammar creates the ground of reference when linguistic habits fail (Widodo, 2006). This study is an attempt to state the most difficulties that face teachers of grammar as well as learners of a foreign language.

2. Literature Review

To fulfil this study, the researcher uses secondary resources and primary resources. The secondary resources cover the literature that handles the topic of the study. This part covers the literature review.

2.1 Grammar

Grammar teaching was dominated by grammar translation method (GTM) in which the teacher translates the grammar of the target language using the native language. It was used to help the non-native students to be familiar with the grammar of their native language through the study of the grammar of the target language (Freeman, 2000). GTM is based on the purpose of grammatical competence and accuracy (Richard and Rodgers, 2001).

GTM is firstly used in Germany in the middle of nineteenth century to the beginning of the World War II, and it is still dominated in teaching grammar in some countries, Libya is an example. As Tetzner (2004) stated when learners are exposed to grammar, they are indirectly taught the use of language. Teachers and instructors were found to hold different views on grammar teaching; some of them believe that comprehending of grammar happens when it is taught incidentally (focus on form) while some of the teachers manage to assure the success of teaching grammar explicitly.

Based on Omar (2014), who states that "language is both a social and individual activity, and this activity enables people to communicate and share ideas and thoughts" (p. 44), language is used as a way of communication. To fulfill this function of language, three areas in language should be considered: grammar as rules, grammar as form, and grammar as resource. The best is to see grammar as one of many resources that is found in language which helps people communicate.

The challenges faced teachers when teaching grammar have existed as old as life, so any action faces some challenges which require researching in order to solve these difficulties to obtain the results desired. Teaching grammar in particular has faced many difficulties which are previously mentioned. These challenges can be summarized into five main factors which are:

2.1.1 Student

Subjected to the same situations. Teachers know this, but they have not treated it as it should be yet. Some students have low level of understanding. This may what works for one students may not work for another even if they are attributed to different factors such as: class order, school system, the syllabus, or the teacher capability. Some students do not know the basic rules of structural patterns which they are supposed to learn at earlier levels. For this reason, a teacher before starting his job in class must assess the background of the students he is going to teach. A teacher should give a constant practice to the students to enable them to create sentences and patterns based on grammatical rules the students have been taught previously. Students beliefs about learning grammar is very important to be realized by teachers.

2.1.2 Teacher's Perception

When teachers graduate and start teaching, they combine experience, knowledge, and ideas which later turned into beliefs. Teachers usually build their understanding about teaching upon practical theories composed of a range of interacting factors both inside and outside the classroom (Borg, 1999). Teachers graduate and start teaching personal experiences come into play. They draw conclusions based on experience and knowledge. Most of the teachers interviewed perceived direct grammar teaching which is deductive approach. They emphasized that they should explain the rules explicitly before they ask the students to produce sentences or patterns.

There are various factors which affect the perception of teaching English as a foreign language as in Libya. It is important to talk about these factors that shape the teachers' perceptions. Teacher's perception plays an important factor and can be a great challenge in teaching grammar as claimed by Wong and Marlys (2012), who claim that "having a negative perception on language

teaching may demotivate not only the English teachers but also the students have to bear the consequences of the teacher perception" (p. 73).

2.1.3 Lack of Knowledge

The important of subject knowledge for teachers is not only important but also essential, and there is a difference between the knowledge as input or competence and the knowledge to teach the subject as it is called output or performance as stated by Chomsky that performance presupposes competence and not vice versa. There is academic knowledge and the pedagogical content knowledge (knowing how to teach). In other words, teacher subject knowledge is not simply domain knowledge but involves knowing how to transform this knowledge.

Several studies focus on the importance of the knowledge the teachers have. Teacher knowledge is of course a complete of a teacher profession. Professional competence involves more than just knowledge. Skills, attitudes, and motivational variables also contribute to the mastery of teaching and learning. Blomeke and Delaney (2012) proposed a model that identifies cognitive ability and effective motivational characteristics as the two main components of teachers' professional competence; whereas, Omar (2019a) believes that "human speech requires two interrelated aspects: personal (thought) and social (sound) in addition to a system full of grammatical rules" (p. 505).

Weakness in teachers' grammatical content knowledge has been signaled by reports through studies concerning the topic in question. Vavra (1996) critiqued that students should analyze the structure of a sentence when teachers do not explain that. There was a survey done by the qualification and curriculum authority (QCA) concluded that teachers lacked confidence with syntactical knowledge.

2.1.4 Lessons

Preparing grammatical lessons is not as easy as some teachers believe. The lessons have to be balanced in meeting the students' needs and achieving the goals. In other hand, teaching of grammar is very challenging because the teacher needs to prepare a grammar lesson that can get the students' interest and at the same time is in accordance with the objectives set previously. To do this, new approaches and new activities depending on the students' level must be put in force, and teachers must adjust their methods of teaching and strategies according to the students' level of proficiency. Another point is that teaching grammar is time consuming and is not always easy to make students grasp the input in a lecture time. Teachers must be able to find good resources and materials to achieve the objectives (Al Mkhalafi and Nagaratnam, 2011).

The burning question is how teachers make grammar lesson more interesting. There are more suggestions given by teachers to achieve this objective; the internet is a skillful resource and blessing to many teachers, and repetition which often allows the words to stick in the students' minds easier. Song are also two edged weapon when used in teaching grammar. They should be selected deliberately because most of the students' misunderstanding of grammar might be attributed to listening to songs that break the grammatical rules.

To make this properly, a teacher must select certain songs which concentrate on some tenses for example. When students listen to the song the teacher writes on the board, he can get out some required grammatical points as time markers for example. All teachers both male and female complained of time allowed for each class telling that they are required to finish the syllabus within the allowed time regardless the How. They added the shortage of time prevent them from creating suitable environment for learning.

2.1.5 Facilities

Facilities have a great effect on teaching, academic performance of both students and teachers. Availability of Facilities save time and efforts for teachers and students alike. The unavailability of facilities, as it is common in our schools, hinders learning and increases the verbal load which in turn makes the lesson of grammar in particular boring and frightening. There is an adequate relationship between the availability of facilities and the academic performance.

Facilities in the Libyan school are either not available or neglected. In some schools, one may find very useful and expensive facilities which are completely neglected and in bad storage conditions. This may refer to the culture of the teachers, headmasters, or headmistress.

3. Methodology of the Study

In agreement with the normal procedure in most studies, this one is based on a theoretical part as well as an empirical one. The theoretical part presents a general background about the difficulties investigating books, websites, and previous studies about the topic in question. In the empirical part, the sample contains ten teachers. Five are male who are interviewed and five are female preferred to be given written questions to answer. This data will be collected and analyzed to examine the validity of the hypothesis which is the difficulties encounter the teachers of grammar.

3.1 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to determine the difficulties which face the teachers of grammar and to help them realize the points of difficulties and know how to overcome these obstacles.

3.2 Hypothesis of the Study

The difficulties in teaching grammar may be attributed to many factors which of them I concern in this study are knowledge, facilities, lessons, attitudes and students themselves.

3.3 Participants of the Study

The participants of this study are ten teachers of English in secondary schools in Marij, Libya. The participants are five males and five females. The participants have almost the same background as they are Libyans who learned English and have been teaching English in Libya for several years. The participants are volunteers and willing to conduct the interviews.

3.4 Data Collection and Data Analysis

The data consist of ten questions prepared in advance to be handed to randomly chosen ten teachers in secondary schools. They are five male teachers and five female teachers who preferred not be interviewed and their voices recorded consequently and to answer the question in written. The members of the sample were given alphabetical order from A to J. The questions focused on the hinders of teaching in general and grammar in specific.

Teachers A, D, F, G, H, and I claimed that they face a real difficulty arises from the students' negative perception towards grammar saying that students do not participate in class which does not enable them to predict whether they understand what they are teaching or not. The most difficult matter that the teacher said that some students say with open mouth "we don't like to learn grammar, because of numbers of rules and the little contribution to meaning". The teachers added that they met some students of very low level comparing with the class level they are in. They do not know the basics. Some students answered "we study to pass just the exam".

Teachers B, C, and E and J stated that students' perception does not play an essential role in teaching. They added that it is the instructor's role which modifies the perception of the students. This claim concerning the teacher role in reducing the pain some students feel when learning grammar is deserving more investigations, because some other factors play a crucial role in fining the degree of hatred towards grammar. One of these factors is the teacher charisma of acceptance. One of the female teachers who took part in this study said that when first time she introduced herself as a grammar teacher, some students cried with tears. They said, "You are going to teach us a very difficult subject we don't like though we got high marks in exams". This reflects the negative perception of the students.

The same teacher added she tried to stimulate those students proving that grammar is not an evil as they think, at the end of the semester the students confessed that grammar is no longer as they thought before. So the teacher personality and the methodology used play an important role in making students' perception positive. Grammar should not be threatening for learners, but an attractive means in learning a language. This leads to the other difficulty which is the lesson preparation of grammar.

The teachers who were asked about grammar lessons selected to be helper rather than hinder answered that they have nothing to do towards the What. In other words, the syllabus is chosen by the ministry of education, and the students are required to answer certain questions concerning the topics advised by the state. Teachers F and G said that they tried to make English grammar lesson encouraging and interesting rather than frightening by choosing certain songs or games practiced in class. They claimed that though the happiness they see in the eyes of their students, the officials, the headmaster, headmistress, and the inspectors blame them for not completing the pages of the book. In other words, they are only interested in quantity not quality.

In the third question in the interview: How much do you practice teaching when you were a student teacher or before your graduation? Four teachers C, D, F and H answered that they had not practiced teaching at all before graduation. They added that they graduated from the Faculty of Arts and Science. Practical teaching is not required in this faculty. Three of the interviewees (A, G, and I) answered that they practiced teaching in schools before graduation. They said that the practice helped them a lot when they joined teaching. Three of the participants (B, E, and J) claimed that the practice they did in the faculty or at schools before graduation was poor and did not help them much.

In the fourth question: Do you apply the strategy of errors and trial in teaching? seven out of ten their answers were shocking. They answered "YES". In other words, they are not taught the rules before they were asked to apply them. The researcher as a teacher for more than thirty years considered it as a disaster, because trial and error should not be applicable in teaching namely grammar.

All male teachers included in the sample said that there is nothing available but whiteboard in answering the fifth question "What facilities are available in your school and how they affect learning?" The female teachers answered that some facilities are available but only in the stores of schools. They added that they brought these facilities as computers, overhead projectors, opaque projector, and smartboard cleaned and tried to use them in teaching.

In answering the second part of the questions, F, G, and J said that their students are not accustomed to the use of AV aids and considered it as a fun, so they make a lot of noise and consequently waste time. This reflects the difficulty that teachers in schools face and consequently negatively affect the process of learning and teaching. Lack of facilities is a common feature in our

public schools in addition to the teachers' and students' perception towards the benefits of the use of facilities in teaching.

Participants A, B, C, D, E, H, and I agreed that using facilities in teaching is very beneficial and time and efforts saving. They said that they believe in the importance of the use of teaching aids in introducing new items, but they said they have not the least idea about how to make these facilities work. Technicians must be available to work these machines and do them the required maintenance.

In the sixth question: Do you like teaching grammar? Respondents A, D, G, I, and J answered they like it strongly, because they considered it the road of mastering any language. A and G added that in addition to the learner culture, teachers' competence is clearly showed in their writing or saying grammatical sentences. B, C, E, F, and H said they do not like teaching a subject the students do not like, but they try to smoothen the feeling of fear towards grammar. They said they frankly speaking they are obligated to teach grammar. This, I believe, strongly affect their performance in teaching, because one cannot perform well when teaching subjects he does not like.

As I believe if you do not know or do not like, do not teach. This conflicts the importance of knowledge and positive perception for both teaching and learning. The researcher is trying to get a complete view of the sample members of what makes teaching in general and teaching grammar more encouraging not threatening. So the last question is what are your recommendations concerning good performance in teaching. A, B, C, D, H, I, and J insist that annual session under the supervision of the English inspectors shall be done to facilitate the points of difficulty in teaching grammar to enable teachers to do well especially those who have joined the profession recently.

E, F, and G proposed that the inspector appoints the most skillful teacher in each school to be a permanent supervisor of the teachers in the school. This procedure is applicable in Egypt (the primer teacher). I think it is more beneficial, because the teachers are familiar with this primer teacher and have no problem in asking him/her any question. The member of the sample all wrote or said at the end of their answers that "practice makes perfect". This saying is generally accepted, but not in teaching namely grammar. This may mean the use of error and trial in teaching which I rejected. Since grammar is a set of rigid rules in mind, the use of this procedure does not work.

4. Findings

Through analyzing the data, some difficulties which hinder teaching are pointed out as follows; the lack of facilities is the most common feature. Teachers who graduated from the Faculties of Arts have more difficulties in teaching than those who graduated from the Faculties of Education. Lack of practice before graduation makes the teachers follow the procedure of trial and error.

5. Recommendations

Most of our students study to pass the exams rather than to learn, so refreshment course should be held for those who are going to join teaching. Students who graduated from the faculties of Arts should not be allowed to join teaching before they get at least one semester Educational Diploma.

6. Conclusion

All the participants prefer deduction approach in grammar teaching where rules are taught explicitly before the production stage and emphasized the necessity to learn grammar rules for effective use of the target language. They said they used explicit grammar exercises in their teaching which can also be

categorized under direct grammar instructions through repetition which allowed learners to use structures fluently as teachers who teach English as a foreign language EFL favor some elements of direct grammar teaching.

Teachers also indicate their tendency to support students to discover rules themselves without ignoring the need to use direct grammar elements. Most of the members of the sample perceived direct grammar teaching as an essential part of language instructions.

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Developing Spoken Skills through the ILS Model: Case Study on Garabulli Area First Year Secondary School Students

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Abstract

As we all know, oral skills of language are the most difficult skills in teaching or learning foreign languages. In this regard, Omar and Altaieb (2015) argue that "ELLs know about English, but they fail to use what they have learned in authentic situations" (p. 753) because of the weakness of oral skills, specifically speaking. This study is concerned with the lack of a teaching model which can develop spoken (listening comprehension and speaking) skills amongst the Garabulli area secondary school students. The study develops these skills through an Integrated Listening Comprehension and Speaking Model (ILS Model). In this study, the researcher has reviewed a study run by Gillon and Dodd (1995) to remediate the spoken skills deficits, and a study conducted by Gillon (2000) to integrate phonological awareness with spoken language. In addition, the researcher has consulted a teaching method developed by Scales (2008) to enhance the students' key skills and thinking skills, and a pedagogical model designed by Peregoy and Owen (2005) about using the integrate approach in teaching languages. Some theories related to language learning and language teaching were, also, considered: Vygotskian Socio-Cultural Theory, Schema Theory, Sensory Theory, and Humanistic Theory. Thus, based on the literature review, the ILS Model was designed to develop listening comprehension and speaking skills.

Keywords*: Communicative competence; oral skills; listening comprehension.*

1. Introduction

Foreign language teaching experts usually agree upon the fact that the communicative approach, integrated approach, and technology can improve listening and speaking skills. A model designed by Webster and DeFilippo (1999) for integrating speaking, listening, and pronunciation is used to encourage both communicative competency and fluency. Another model based on the socio-cultural theory designed by Debra Hoven is used in listening for preparing students to improve their ability to understand spoken Standard English with the aim of understanding the main idea, the relationship between the ideas, and making inferences.

ILS Model is used in speaking for improving students' oral communicative abilities in order to speak with the teacher and each other in the classroom. Therefore, in a classroom setting for TEFL lessons, students practice listening skills by listening to conversations, dialogues, stories and other script authentic materials. In speaking, students participate in various activities in the classroom. Thus, the ILS Model encourages students to listen carefully and speak clearly.

2. Literature Review

Libyan students speak Arabic as their first language, and it is absolutely different from English. The ILS Model incorporates several recommended elements: (a) listening comprehension and speaking skills; and (b) spoken skills (listening comprehension and speaking skills) and the language system (grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, pronunciation and fluency); (c) the teaching/learning of English and spoken skills; and (d) the communicative approach, integrated approach, and technology for teaching English in Libyan secondary school context.

The integration of listening comprehension and speaking skills, as the term suggests, is the integration of the spoken language skills (listening comprehension and speaking). The integration of foreign language and technology is used to learn foreign languages in situations as authentic as possible so as to enhance the skills of both language and communication.

2.1 Description of the ILS Model

In actual language use, any single skill such as listening is rarely employed in isolation from speaking. This is because communication, by definition, requires the integration of listening comprehension and speaking skills. In integrated-skill instruction, learners are exposed to authentic language and are involved in activities that are meaningful and interesting.

The ILS Model, also, capitalizes on the merits of the present curriculum and at the same time alleviating the concerns regarding the present curriculum, which could be considered to aggravate the issues encountered by the students in listening comprehension and speaking skills. Thus, developing the students' competence in listening comprehension and speaking skills is significant to enable them to speak clearly in the classroom.

The integration of teaching methods and technology is feasible and desirable. The educational technology can serve as the content of the course and that it can also provide the context in which other content, for example culture, takes place. The new model suggests the use of educational technology to hear and understand the language spoken by the native speaker in natural situations to enhance the interaction amongst the students and with the teacher

Regarding the spoken skills, I reviewed a study run by Gillon and Dodd (1995) in Australia to remediate the spoken skills deficits with specific reading disability. The study examines the effects of training spoken language on reading accuracy and reading comprehension ability. The program consisted of

two parts: one providing explicit instruction in phonological processing skills and the other providing training in semantic and syntactic skills.

Another study conducted by Webster and DeFilippo (1999) advocates an integrated speaking, listening, and pronunciation model designed to encourage communicative competency and fluency. The student-centered design of their integrated skills series, "So To Speak", encourages learners to be active participants in their learning and is designed to help English language learners understand spoken English, gain familiarity with everyday expressions and vocabulary, and become aware of selected pronunciation features of the English.

Also, a communicative approach considers language teaching in terms of structures and vocabulary (accuracy or form) as well as its communicative worth (function or fluency). Hence, in applying this method, more responsibility is placed on the learner through task-based activities, and the teacher's role is that of a facilitator providing learners with constructive learning environments. A study conducted and reviewed by Gillon and Dodd (1995) in New Zealand was also reviewed, investigating the efficacy of an integrated phonological awareness with spoken language (Bishop and Bishop, 2009).

Moreover, to develop an innovative instructional model, I reviewed the current curriculum and old related teaching models mentioned above at regular intervals. This was to know what is taught, what students learn, how the learning/ teaching process are organized, what resources and aids are implemented, and what methods are used. Thus, I could construct my own teaching model since Reece and Walker (2007) observe that "any changes resulting from these reviews can be called curriculum development" (p. 201)

The ILS Model, as mentioned, is based on an integrated approach. Therefore, the teaching of listening and speaking skills should be integrated because most of the listening we do is in dialogic and interactional sitting (Esther, 2006). In actual language use, any single skill such as listening comprehension is rarely used in isolation from speaking. This is because communication requires the integration of listening comprehension and speaking skills.

The ILS Model is grounded in a communicative approach (Rodgers and Richards, 2014) and use the technology (the tape recorder, computer and data show) to introduce English as a foreign language in situations as authentic as possible to enhance skills of both language and communication. It is set against using grammar-translation method which is used by the Libyan teachers of English, though the current curriculum is based on the communicative approach.

The segregated approach, in which the school English book is based, is avoided, and the use of technology in the teaching/learning process is necessary. The fundamental philosophy behind the model is to simultaneously raise both the students' language ability and their spoken communication performance, or rather, to integrate the teaching/learning of EFL with spoken skills. Therefore, foreign language teaching and learning should not be separated from oral communication practice.

In fact, the ILS Model is characterized by: (a) balancing between language-based accuracy and spoken-based fluency, interaction, and meaning; (b) encouraging the use of authentic language in meaningful contexts from real situations; (c) providing appropriate feedback and correction; (d) giving students opportunities to practice oral communication; and (e) teaching listening comprehension and speaking skills in situations as authentic as possible so as to enhance skills of spoken language and communication.

Also, in integrated-skills instruction, learners are exposed to authentic language and are involved in activities that are meaningful, effective, and interesting. The factors/reasons that cause students not to develop their target level in spoken skills are taken into account. Therefore, the ILS Model capitalizes on the merits of the current school curriculum and, at the same time, alleviates its concerns which may aggravate the problems faced by the students. Phan (2008) stresses that the EFL teacher should act as a facilitator.

Keith (1998) states that "in terms of foreign language teaching with communicative approach, student-student interaction is of utter importance" (p. 252). The role of the teacher will be a facilitator to encourage students to communicate and provide them with the required environment within the classroom. Loretta, Maria, and Donn, (2000) point out that "students need materials that allow them to develop English language proficiency in listening comprehension and speaking" (p. 135).

The materials used in ILS Model elevate critical thinking skills (Saragih, Mars, and, Gaol, 2014) such as questioning, solving problems, reasoning, remembering should be practiced. Lynne and Helen (2002) believe that "self-assessment that helps the students to understand their own strengthens and weaknesses and encourages them to see goals and take responsibility for their own learning" (p. 6) are employed in the model.

The ILS Model uses meaningful language input from audio or audio-visual material using the tape recorder, data show, and/or the computer to focus on and integrate the teaching of listening comprehension and speaking skills. Classroom task-based activities are strongly advised to encourage student-based activities such as pair and group work in addition to role play in order to enhance student-student interaction and collaboration. In which students participate in communicative activities that require comprehending, producing,

manipulating, or interacting in authentic language while attention is basically to pay balance meaning and form (Nunan, 1989).

2.2 Characteristics of the ILS Model

Based on the communicative approach and funded on the integrated-skill approach, the model is marked by aiming at making students attain communicative competence. That is, using the language accurately and appropriately, focusing mainly on the students; the teacher is just a facilitator, using authentic materials, and the activities set that are purposeful and meaningful; they can be judged by the learner.

The balance between the function of the language and the grammar rules is regarded. The activities' aim to make the students clear and accurate in their use of English. Students listen to authentic interaction which links the classroom with the real world. The students are systematically exposed to language system (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation). The skills of self-evaluation are developed. One activity builds on what went before; for example, listening leads to discussion. The activities give the students the opportunity to practice oral language. Finally, the students work in pairs or small groups to help each other and, thus, facilitate language learning.

2.3 Theoretical Framework of the ILS Model

The theory is a very up-to-the-minute emerged approach of viewing language learning and teaching as a whole to develop the learner socially, emotionally, and cognitively (Arnold, 1999). To this end, teaching and learning strategies that incorporate feelings, values, social skills with knowledge are integrated (Cooper, 2013). For the students to learn best, they need warm, trusting classroom environments, and they should be given choices and ample opportunities to express their creativity. It proposes that learning

only occurs if the person who delivers it acts as a facilitator (Soltis and Fenstermacher, 2004).

Moreover, the teacher, as a facilitator, needs to understand how students learn and what motivates them to learn. The approach based on this theory can be employed to promote the teaching and learning of the listening comprehension and speaking skills effectively if students communicate and participate interactively, taking responsibility during the learning process. They are given an opportunity for what they want to learn and how they will learn it. For example, learners should have a chance to discuss and agree about the topics they are interested in. The philosophy behind this view is that effective teaching and learning can be achieved when students themselves select the materials and activities for learning rather than their teacher (Rodgers and Richards, 2014).

In conclusion, because learners learn for themselves, they should learn in a way that suits them (Swarbrick, 2013). This means that the humanistic language teacher, as a facilitator, needs to understand how students learn and what motivates them to learn. According to humanistic approaches, education should be holistic to develop the learner socially, emotionally, and cognitively (Rothstein, 1990).

The implementation of educational technology in TEFL is adopted by Henderson and Clarke (2002). It is very important to exploit these technological aids to the full to harness them for the purpose of more successful learning. According to Henderson and Clarke (2002), the Internet which can encompass almost all other means of ICT such as email, telephone, voice mail, chat, audio and video, live radio, television, video, film, news and discussion forums plays a very important role in learning innovation.

Another factor to be taken into account in developing listening comprehension and speaking skills is the implementation of new technologies in language teaching and learning. Many of the studies have been based on the use of ICT. Troudi (2014) puts an emphasis on the importance of audio technology in facilitating recordings of the spoken language. Chapelle (2003) stresses that communication technologies have a significant power to facilitate the language learning. It is argued that using media technologies in language teaching has a considerable impact to aid language learning.

Tomlinson (1998) indicates that the application of ICT for learning will have a dramatic and a vital role to play in learning innovation. The use of e-learning supports both teaching and learning in a teaching room and via online learning. Carter and Nunan (2001) stress that computer–assisted language learning (CALL) "implies learning by using computer tools to explore simulated worlds, to build presentations and websites that reflect on personally engaging and significant topics, and to undertake authentic communication with other learners around the world" (pp. 107-108).

Davitt (2005) agrees that technologies assume a natural place in teaching language because language use is a multisensory experience, and some technologies give us opportunity to see and hear language in a cultural context. EFL teachers need many technologies to present language successfully in the context in which it occurs. The sensory theory strongly suggests the employment of human senses: sight, hearing, touch, smell, and test in learning. They enable learners to learn and remember what they have already learned.

2.4 Vygotskyan Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

This theory concerns with how learners do tasks, and interaction between learners can scaffold and assist in the L2 acquisition process (Ellis, 1999) where collaboration among learners build a collective Zone of Proximal

Development (ZPD) (Lee, Kamler and Aitchison, 2010). Vygotsky (Cited in Wertsch, 1985) states that the secret of effective learning lies in the nature of social interactions between people with different levels of skills and knowledge. The role of the parent, teacher, or peer with more knowledge is to find ways of helping the learner to move into and through the next layer of knowledge or understanding. Vygotsky claims that students do not merely copy teachers; rather, they transform what teachers offer them during the processes of appropriation.

2.5 Scaffolding, Cognitive Strategy, and the ILS Model

As Heritage (2010) states, scaffolding is the support given by teachers (or peers) to students to help them move from what they have already known for what they do next and, then, close the gap between the tasks that they can do and the learning goal. Scaffolding, as Gibbons (2006) observes, is also a significant challenge which can be in the form of models, cues, prompts, hints and incomplete solutions. Scaffolding has to be regulated according to the amount of help learners need, until eventually they no longer need such help.

Metacognitive scaffolding, which supports the underlying processes associated with individual learning management, provides guidance. According to Reigeluth (2013), this kind of scaffolding, can be (1) domain-specific in this case, the problem context is known and; therefore, scaffolding can determine specific ways to think about the problems or (2) generic scaffolding, which focuses on the processes of constructing models such as finding ways to relate the model to prior knowledge.

Thus, in the EFL context, teachers would be able to implement scaffolding instructions in order to provide students with support in their practice of listening comprehension and speaking skills. These instructions would be beneficial to students in that they would help them to develop metacognitive

knowledge and strategy. The scaffolding provides the ILS Model with an external model of knowledge monitoring behavior until it is internalized.

2.6 Schema Theory in Listening Comprehension and Speaking

For developing listening comprehension and speaking skills, the holistic approach to teaching these skills should depend on students' prior knowledge in relation to the oral passages (Flowerdew and Peocoack, 2001). The schema is very important for interactive conversational listening. A student engaging in conversation must build a massage that is responsive to the message he is listening to. In passive conversation, such as a lecture or narrative, the listener is required to concentrate only on the incoming message. Therefore, he may have a superficial processing capacity to construct schemata for practicing conversation.

Consequently, a rambling conversation is produced. Thus, schemata facilitate memory for conversation more than do with a message to which the listener is not expected to respond to (Prusak, 2012). The immediate goal in EFL listening comprehension and speaking skills can be achieved by the optimum balance between the information proposed by the oral texts the students listened to and the previous knowledge they process. Such balance should be achieved by manipulating the text or the listener variable. Classroom activities and techniques can be valid if they are applicable in real life situations. For example, when the teacher deals with specific cultural interferences, students are given an ample opportunity to build a new cultural schema that will be available to them beyond the classroom (Carrell and Wise, 1998).

In order to establish a framework for listening comprehension, much use of prior information should be used especially in pre-listening activities. Therefore, students are required to predict content from the title, comment on a

picture or paragraph. They also need to answer comprehension questions in advance and give their opinions on a topic (McDonough and Shaw, 2003). The role of previous knowledge in language comprehension can be discussed in terms of schema theory. Text (oral or written) equips both the teachers and students with directions to know how they should retrieve or construct meaning from their prior knowledge (Carrell and Wise,1998).

Language learning practice is an inductive process based on the connection between form and meaning. In terms of schema theory, this process involves development or adjustment real world knowledge structures. If access is provided to authentic interaction (written or spoken, both monological and dialogical) corpora can offer an ideal instrument for observing and acquiring socially-established form/meaning pairings (Sinclair, 2004). Hence, English language learners, who have an extensive base of background knowledge in their first language, and they have not developed their prior knowledge in English, they need special attention. Learners, in this direction, can only access their prior knowledge in their language in English if the two languages are similar; otherwise, they cannot.

2.7 Activation of Prior Knowledge

The activation of prior knowledge to a listening activity can be obtained by addressing questions about the topic at hand in order to know (Proctor, Hull, and Richards, 1997); for example, what the students already know about the topic, what information they can bring to bear on the topic to help their classmates in understanding, what predictions they can make regarding the topic they are likely to hear about, and what organization they expect them to talk to utilize.

Thus, by giving students' schemata with which, they associate the new information and know how to access the new ideas and to incorporate the new

ideas with the knowledge they have already stored. The activation existing-background information makes comprehension of new material more smother and ready for use. Similarly, providing pictures for students with low language proficiency can help them activate appropriate schemata (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2009).

2.8 Bottom-Up and Top-Down Processing

Top-down process allows listeners to recognize the difference between the instructional and transnational dimension of language use and know how this difference, to some extent, affects listening comprehension (Richards, 1999). The listener wisely employs bottom-up approach to attend to the data that are included in the incoming speech signals. The top-down approach is the process in which the listener uses to depend on the prior knowledge and expectation to guide the process of understanding (Nunan, 1998).

It is clear from the above that the listener would know how actively constructs definitive meaning purely based on the explanation, influences, and other prior information obtained from the data. Richards and Renandya (2002) have acknowledged that the top-down approach can be activated by the data that serve as cued. According to Nunan (1998), in order to effectively teach the bottom-up and top-down skills, the mechanism for the proper listening comprehension activities are to be designed through the use of spoken language, which should be widely encouraged.

Hinkel (2005) proposes that by assessing discourse-based approach, the teacher helps learners to sufficiently communicate the language through the integration of bottom-up and top-down strategies as they play a vital role in listening comprehension and recognition. Then, based on what was stated earlier and as Dash and Dash (2007) view, spoken English can be comprehended if bottom-up and top-down approaches are used effectively. The

incoming message is first placed together through the understanding of sounds and connecting those sounds to form words. The knowledge of words, then, helps learners understand phrases, sentences, and then the entire message.

The ILS Model aims to help students practice listening comprehension and speaking through practice, using related development activities. Thus, this would enable them to improve sub-listening skills and sub-speaking skills. The use of bottom-up process could be justified because although the students in the Garabulli area secondary schools learn EFL from the primary stage grade 5, their incidental vocabulary is lacking. The bottom-up approach stresses that the listener can understand what he hears by recognizing sounds, words, and sentences.

2.9 The Communicative Approach

Since the 1970s, researchers have agreed that the aim of learning language is to acquire the oral communicative competence of using the language, rather than the pure linguistic competence (Richards, 2008). Therefore, various teaching methods such as the communicative approach aim to achieve this goal. Communicative approach integrates language learning and communication practice, using teaching materials that encourage authentic oral communication (Jesa, 2010). Students are required to take part in various simulated oral communication. The communicative approach uses interaction to achieve interaction as both the means and goal and, thus, gaining communicative competency, as an ultimate goal of learning foreign languages. This approach views the language teaching in terms of its structures, vocabulary, and communicative functions (Nagaraj, 2005).

Therefore, communicative approach employs activities such as student-based, task-based, problem-solving as functional aspects of language in order to develop skills related to the ability of expressing and understanding personal

ideas, opinions, feelings and needs. It focuses on the student, considering the teacher as a facilitator working with the students in small groups and making use of selected authentic, real-life situation materials. With such a beneficial learning atmosphere in the class, the teacher provides learners with an ample opportunity to learn the target language through the target language itself (Candlin, 2014).

The communicative approach, also, puts test designing in consideration. It has changed the focus from language-oriented to oral communication-oriented. The communicative principles which are stated by Rogers (2014) and adopted in the ILS Model are encouraging real communication while learning the target language. It is used for providing opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know. In this model, the teacher is tolerant with learners' errors as they are still building their ability to communicative competence, providing opportunity to develop both accuracy and fluency and to integrate different macro language skills such as listening and speaking as they occur together in real-life situations, and students induce and discover grammar rules from context.

This model, also, abides with the communicative approach as view by Nagarji (2006), in which the teacher considers the language teaching in terms of structures, vocabulary, and communicative functions. More responsibility is taken by the learner, and the teacher's role is to provide learners with a beneficial learning environment within the classroom. Finally, it gives speaking and listening skills an equal status.

2.10 The Integrated Approach

The teaching of separate or segregated language skills is seen as the key to learning English. It is easy to teach the four skills separately and pay more attention to the sub-skills, but this approach may not prepare EFL students to

communicate their needs effectively (Peregoy and Owen, 2005). This is contrary to the use of language in everyday life, where people have to exercise and to integrate their language skills in order to communicate (Montgomery, 2002). We rarely use language skills in isolation and, therefore, for overall competence in foreign language, the four skills should be taught through the integrated approach (Gandner, 2013).

Then, the language skills are taught in terms of integration. For example, when the focus is on reading, writing is also to be included; and when the focus is on listening, speaking is also included (Show and McDonough, 2012). The integration has a functional importance on the teaching and the learning process (Peregoy and Owen, 2005). Therefore, the teaching of listening and speaking skills should be integrated because most of the listening we do is in dialogic and interactional sitting (Esther, 2006), and listening comprehension is necessary to develop speaking skills since listening comprehension, thinking, and rem/embering go together (Roman, 2004). The integration of listening comprehension and speaking skills, as the term suggests, is the integration of the spoken language skills (listening and speaking).

The integration of foreign language and technology is done through using audio-visual aids to learn foreign languages in situations as authentic as possible so as to enhance the skills of both language and communication. In actual language use, any single skill such as listening is rarely employed in isolation from speaking (Carrasquillo, 1994). This is because communication, by definition, requires the integration of listening comprehension and speaking skills. In integrated-skill instruction, learners do the tasks and exercises based on real world (Littlemore, Concher, and Chambers, 2004) such as experience, school, and individual's life. The critical thinking should be included while teaching the language skills (Miller and Folwerdew, 2005).

The tasks, activities, and exercises should involve collaboration and cultural context in order to enhance language learning. Based on the integrated-skill approach (McDonough and Show, 2003), the ILS Model is marked by employing authentic materials. It is used for conducting the activities that enable students to be clear and accurate in their use of English, giving them ample opportunities to listen to authentic interaction which links the classroom with the real word. It helps them concentrate on the activities that build on what went before, for example, listening leads to discussion, and encouraging them to work in pairs or small groups in order to help each other and, thus, facilitate language learning.

2.11 Integration of Listening Comprehension and Speaking Skills

Students should be able to express their opinions, attitudes, beliefs, hopes, and fears using the target language (Rosenthal, 2000). Listening comprehension and speaking are essential skills to achieve this purpose. Hence, they should be consciously and actively used (Berantley, Champerlin, Burman, and Boyles, 2001). Listening comprehension is also needed for classroom interaction, which is usually delivered orally (Harris and Turkington, 2000) and, therefore, the role of the teacher in developing pupils' speaking and listening is central.

Thus, listening comprehension is one of the most important skills because it has a fundamental role in improving the other language skills. Moreover, listening comprehension, which is central in second language learning, is a process that is characterized by activity and consciousness (Berantley et al., 2001). Listening comprehension as viewed by Harris and Turkington (2000) is crucial for the learner to succeed in school because most classroom interaction is delivered orally. Speaking is also an essential skill in language learning. Therefore, teachers should help learners develop their abilities to communicate

in the target language because speaking practice enhances learners' vocabulary, grammar, and writing (Baker and Westrup, 2003).

In daily life, we rarely use the language skills in isolation and, therefore, for overall competence in foreign language, the four skills should be taught through an integrated approach (McDonough and Shaw, 2003). Listening comprehension and speaking naturally go together; therefore, it is desirable to integrate these skills together in the classroom. Juan and Martinez (2006) also confirm that the language skills, especially listening comprehension and speaking, should be integrated.

Listening and speaking skills cannot be isolated because oral communication is a two-way process between a speaker and a listener. Moreover, speakers and listeners are constantly sharing roles, and consequently speaking involves responding to what is said. Integrating listening comprehension and speaking together is a powerful method to develop students' spoken communication. Incorporating these two interrelated skills also improves students' pronunciation and intonation. Students should be exposed to listening to the same text for more understanding and improving their listening skills.

3. Methodology of the Study

To conduct this preliminary study and in spite of my experience as an EFL teacher of listening comprehension and speaking, I reviewed some previous related empirical studies conducted by Libyan EFL teachers about undeveloped level of Libyan secondary education students in the spoken skills, as the first part. I, also, consulted the literature on the Integrated Approach, Communicative Approach, the instruments, and techniques used in assessing students orally.

The second part of the preliminary investigation was the critical evaluation of the current secondary school English language-curriculum for teaching spoken skills. The aim behind this evaluation was to be aware of the concerns which could aggravate the problems encountered by the students in listening and speaking skills, and to know the merits the curriculum has. Therefore, I have evaluated a textbook series *English for Libya* including *English for Libya: Secondary 1: English specialization: Language and Communication.* Skills Book (Tankard et al, 2007), *English for Libya: Secondary 1*: Course Book (Macfarlane and Harrison, 2007) which is taught for the disciplines in the first year except English major students and *English for Libya: Secondary 1*: subject Book (Tankard et al, 2007).

I have evaluated a course book series for other specializations as *English for Libya: Secondary 2 – Basic Science*: *Course Book* (Adrian-Vallance and Macfarlane, 1999), *English for Libya: Secondary 2 – Social Sciences; Course Book* (Schoenman and Adrian-Vallance, 2008), *English for Libya: Secondary 2 – Engineering; Course Book* (Jacques and Macfarlane,1999), *English for Libya: Secondary 2 – Life Sciences; Course Book* (Donna Adrian-Vallance, (2008).

3.1 Importance of the Study

The importance of the study lies in the use of ISL Model for improving Libyan English language learners listening and speaking skills. The model was structured and developed to meet urgent competing demands. Due to limited resources used in the TEFL context in Libya, the ILS Model was designed. Also, doubts were raised as to whether traditional courses like *English for Libya* can improve the oral communicative competence of students as effectively as expected since it segregates the four language skills and highlights just one skill at a time. Besides, the secondary school students should acquire the basic linguistic competence to pass the examinations only.

Therefore, many of the students are unable to take part in oral communication. Then, the implementation of integrated approach and communicative approach to TEFL for the secondary school students as substitutes to segregated-skills approach on which the current curriculum is based on (the preliminary investigation) and grammar-translation method used by teachers, based to Shtiwi (2007). This study tries to find ways to use ILS Model as a new teaching approach to improve Libyan students' oral communicative competence, through which listening comprehension and speaking skills are integrated.

3.2 Participants of the Study

During the academic year 2031/2014, I administered an oral assessment for a sample of ten students taken from the first year Garabulli secondary school with the aim of determining the extent to which the students' performance in listening comprehension and speaking skills. In assessing their performance, I made use of The Students Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM) by Peregoy and Owen (2005) to evaluate comprehension, pronunciation vocabulary, grammar, and fluency.

3.3 Problem of the Study

In this preamble, it is very interesting to note that the secondary school students in the Garabulli area in Libya are faced with a number of difficulties which are many and varied. But, according to my opinion, the most specific problems that deserve special attention relates to the teaching and learning of listening comprehension and speaking skills. Therefore, in spite of my awareness that the Garabulli area secondary school students do not develop their level in listening comprehension properly nor speak clearly from my experience, I have reviewed the related pervious empirical studies conducted by other Libyan EFL teachers and researchers. For example, Asghair (2006)

who conducted an empirical study on Libyan students' language skills, points out that the secondary school students in general feel quite uncomfortable when they have to express themselves in English, and they lack the confidence in understanding fluent English, as broadcast by BBC.

In another empirical study within the same context, Ehmuda (2007) observes that these students also struggle to understand spoken English, and they have to make a big effort to express their thoughts, views, and attitudes clearly. Moreover, I have undertaken a preliminary investigation to a number of domains in the area of the teaching of listening comprehension and speaking skills.

4. Data Analysis

After gathering the data of the study, I started analyzing them based to preliminary investigation into the students' oral performances. Table (1) shows listening comprehension.

Level	F	P	VP	CP
3-Understands most of what is said at slow speed	2	10.0	10.0	10.0
4-Has a great difficulty following what is said	12	60.0	60.0	60.0
5-Cannot understand even simple conversation.	6	30.0	30.0	30.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	100.0

F=Frequency P=Percent VP= Valid Percent CP=Cumulative Percent

As shown in the table (1), the students are distributed among three levels 5, 4 and 3. Six of students cannot understand a simple conversation (level 5) , 12 students have a great difficulty following what is said, and only two students

understand most of what is said at slow speed. This student spent three years with her family in UK.

Table (2) shows speaking fluency as

Level	F	P	VP	CP
4-Usually hesitant, often forced into silence.	10	50.0	50.0	50.0
5-Speeeh is full of hesitation that makes conversation impossible.	10	50.0	50.0	50.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	100.0

F=Frequency P=Percent VP= Valid Percent CP=Cumulative Percent

The students are divided into two levels 5 and 4. The first half of them hesitate, which makes conversation impossible. The other ten usually hesitate, which enforces them to keep silent.

Table (3) shows vocabulary as

Level	F	P	VP	CP
3-Students frequently uses strong word.	4	20.0	20.0	20.0
4-Misuse of words and very limited vocabulary	12	60.0	60.0	60.0
5-Vocabulary is limited as to make conversation impossible	4	20.0	20.0	20.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	100.0

F=Frequency P=Percent VP= Valid Percent CP=Cumulative Percent

As shown in this table, the students are found in three levels 5, 4 and 3. Four of them have limited vocabulary, which makes conversation impossible. Twelve misuse their limited vocabulary. Only four can participate in conversation but word by word.

Table (4) shows pronunciation as

Level	F	P	VP	CP
3-Pronunciation problems that occasionally cause misunderstanding	6	30.0	30.0	30.0
4-Very hard to understand because of pronunciation problems	12	60.0	60.0	70.0
5-Pronunciation problems are so severe as to make conversation impossible	2	10.0	10.0	10.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	100.0

F=Frequency P=Percent VP= Valid Percent CP=Cumulative Percent

From this table, 12 students feel very hard to understand because they have pronunciation problems. Six students have pronunciation problems that occasionally cause misunderstanding, and one student has a severe problem that makes him suffer in speaking and listening.

Table (5) shows grammar as

Level	F	P	VP	CP
4-Many errors are made and, therefore, phrases are used	6	30.0	30.0	30.0
5-Errors and word order so severe as to make speech virtually unintelligible.	14	70.0	70.0	70.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	100.0

F=Frequency P=Percent VP= Valid Percent CP=Cumulative Percent

In grammar, as shown in table (5), most of students (14) make errors and have word order problems that make their speech unintelligible.

5. Findings of the Study

From the data sowed in the above tables, the students have big problems in grammar. Their ability in grammatical structural is very low. I agree that it takes long time to develop as it tends to be consistent. These students have been studying English for four years. Then, the problem may due to the teaching method, lack of practice or the teachers themselves. This level may develop after the exposure the teaching of grammar within the context in the model course. These students, for most parts, do not understand what is said, and their speech is not understandable. They are also at the beginner fluency stage, and speech is bad. Their mistakes in grammar, fluency, and comprehension affect both what is said and what they say.

I would like to say that the students' scores are bad. This, in turn reflects a bad grasp of their lessons in the classroom. To conclude, most of students struggle with cohesion, grammar, and always could not find words they sought. Their pronunciation did not get in the way of their being understood. I would like to add that they are in their basic level and, as a result, they are unable to socially communicate in English as they have major problems in the five domains (comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar). After analyzing the data of the study, I have obtained the following findings:

- The analysis revealed that the students had big problems in grammar. Their ability in grammatical structure was very limited. The problem might be due to the teaching method, lack of practice, or the teachers themselves.
- The analysis of the preliminary study showed that these students did not understand what was said, and their speech was not understandable.
- The analysis, also, indicated that the participants were at the beginning level of fluency with low level in pronunciation. I would like to say that the

students' scores are bad. This, in turn, reflects their bad grasp of the lessons in the classroom.

- The analysis showed that the students struggled with cohesion and grammar, and they could not find words they sought.

- The analysis showed that students' pronunciation did not get in the way of being understood. It seemed that their problems are associated with tone, pitch, and intonation. I would like to add that they were in their basic level and, as a result, they were unable to socially communicate in English as they had major problems in the five domains (comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar).

- In that assessment, the students' oral performances in grammar, fluency, pronunciation, and comprehension were bad. Their mistakes in these language elements affected much what they understood and what they said.

- After discussion, a more realistic conclusion would be to say that after a period of four years of learning English, the Garabulli area secondary education students seemed to have been unable to make even a moderate progress in listening comprehension and speaking skills.

- The analysis reveal that grammar, which appears to be presented deductively (rules are given before examples) seems to encourage teachers to analyze and present it in Arabic.

- The curriculum could be said to be based on a segregated-skills approach.

- Students' self-assessment appears to be excluded from the curriculum.

- Students' thinking activities seem to be limited to problem-solving and the visual material contained in the course book.

- The critical evaluation of the curriculum reveals that the current curriculum introduces the macro language skills in a complete separation though it has some merits. Moreover, listening comprehension and speaking are delivered separately and each is taught by separate teachers.

- Though the textbook has a lot of listening and speaking activities based on the communicative approach, the teachers appear unable to employ this approach in their teaching, and they use grammar-translation method which seems that it has been deeply rooted in the minds of Libyan teachers.

- The findings are discouraging and the implementation of the ILS Model based on the integrated approach and communicative approach with the help of technology for teaching spoken (listening comprehension and speaking) skills can sensibly be effective in developing these spoken skills.

6. Recommendations

 Based on findings, I have reached the following recommendations:

1. It would appear that the curriculum should be applied through the communicative approach and considers group interaction.

2. Error correction seems to be corrected immediately before end of the class.

3. Teachers should use a variety of activities that use pair and group work in cooperative situations, such as class games, quizzes, and role plays.

4. The curriculum should focus mainly on meaning rather than form.

5. There should be a large amount of visual material in the course book to orient students and to get them thinking about the situation and activity.

6. The curriculum should comprise a variety of dialogues for students to practice the functional/social language, most of which can be done in pairs.

7. Teachers should make use of any of educational technology, such as cassette tapes, videos, Internet, movies, and the like.

8. Specific instructions should be provided for teachers to use the technological devices in teaching.

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Teaching Reading Comprehension at the Libyan Secondary Schools: Case Study on Alkufra Secondary Schools

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Abstract

This study investigated the way of teaching reading comprehension in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and the problems that encounter secondary school teachers in using reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, and predicting in the EFL classroom. To fulfil this study, the researchers used a qualitative method through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews in which three English language teachers were interviewed and three classes were observed at two Alkufra secondary schools in the southern part of Libya. The findings of this study show that there is no space for teaching reading strategies in order to read for comprehension. The findings also reveal that the way of teaching reading at Alkufra secondary schools is through reading aloud and imitating the teacher while pronouncing words in English without understanding their meanings. The study, hence, recommends that reading strategies should be used in EFL classroom to make students more active and to share their knowledge with the teacher rather than focusing on translating, reading and pronouncing words.

Keywords*: Reading strategies; language teaching; EFL teaching; secondary schools; Libyan context.*

1. Introduction

Teaching English as a foreign language in the Libyan educational secondary schools' system has become an essential subject because English language nowadays is the language of international commerce, science, and technology, with people from different linguistic backgrounds using English to communicate with each other (Abosnan, 2016). Furthermore, English courses in all disciplines at Libyan universities are core courses, because the world's knowledge is preserved in English and because of the importance of the English language. It follows that teaching and learning English is important, and we would argue that it requires well qualified teachers. By qualified teachers we mean that the teachers who have the knowledge of methods and strategies of teaching the four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening).

The focus of this study is on reading strategies and how these strategies were taught at the secondary schools, because usually research questions are guided by the researcher's particular interest in the field of study. Our personal experience as EFL teachers motivated us to conduct this study. For the reason that, the way we learned how to read EFL at the university level is completely different from the way we learned to read at secondary schools. At secondary schools, we learned to read English by reading aloud to the teacher, and the teacher task was to correct our pronunciation. While at the university level, we knew that there are strategies such as predicting, skimming, and scanning which we should know to be good readers.

2. Literature Review

This part of the study covers the literature review that is relevant to the topic of the study.

2.1 Reading Comprehension

Reading for comprehension is not just about drawing meaning from written pages, but it is considered mental, cognitive, and private process, which involves a reader in trying to follow and respond to message from the writer who is distant in space and time (Davies, 1995). As it restored meaning, understanding as well as background knowledge of the text from memory. Researchers such as Smith (1978) and Goodman (1988) defined reading as an active process in which it involves an interaction between the writer and the reader, for which its representation process begins with the writer and ends with meaning through which the reader comprehends from the written text that the author want to be realized. In any reading text, there is a message in it of which the writer wants the reader to recognize that message from the written context by using certain strategies.

Learning how to read depends on the teacher's way of teaching reading. As the teacher may have a bigger role to know how to make benefit from the text, by which students use to understand what the text is talking about, in order to use the information for special purposes not just filling task. Actually, reading is not an easy skill for both teachers and learners, and that depends on the way that teachers were trained to teach reading and how they can make reading easy for learner's comprehension. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the reading difficulties and to extend the knowledge of teaching reading at Alkufrah secondary schools through using the appropriate reading strategies such as predicting, skimming and scanning.

2.2 Strategies of Reading

There are several strategies teachers and students resort for reading comprehension. The most import of which are the following:

1. **Predicting:** Predicting in terms of Goodman (1988) is known as a top-down reading strategy in which the reader uses his background knowledge of the text. Thus, this strategy focuses on the interaction between the text and the reader's prior knowledge. Predicting before reading any text, means expecting what the reader is going to read on it. Predicting strategy is simple and powerful way to help the reader connect what he/she knows by asking questions such as what do the title means and what do you know about the topic.

2. **Skimming:** Dorn and Soffos (2005) introduce skimming as the process of rapid coverage of reading matter to determine its gist or main idea. This means that, skimming is a strategy of rapidly moving the eyes over the text with the purpose of getting the main ideas and a general overview of the content (Medjahdi, 2015). This might be done by reading the title, reading the first and last paragraphs, reading the first sentence of each paragraph, and looking for clue words as proper nouns and unusual words if included.

3. **Scanning:** According to Thomas and Farrell (2009, p.35) 'scanning is the ability to locate specific facts and details quickly'. Technically, scanning is the process of searching for key words, such as numbers, pronouns and names the reader might already know. It is deeper than skimming, because the searching technique happened inside the text not only headings and sub-headings. Scanning is a method of selective reading, because the reader is looking only for a fact or piece of information without reading everything.

3. Methodology of the Study

This part of the study presents the methodology used to reach findings and present recommendations.

3.1 Procedures of the Study

In this study, the researchers used a qualitative method. Data collection methods for this study involved two techniques: classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with English language teachers in the study area.

3.2 Problem of the Study

Many Libyan teachers have great interest in teaching EFL classroom, but they still use traditional methods. As such, the students face many difficulties in learning. However, modern teaching methods and reading strategies, such as skimming, scanning, and predicting in the EFL classroom might help improve students' performance if the teachers use these strategies.

The study investigated the kinds of the methods that EFL teachers used at teaching Libyan secondary schools. So that note was taken of the hindrances and work towards the use of the reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, and predicting in the EFL classroom. Our problem in this study was, thus, clear: How can students' performance improve at Libyan secondary schools through using reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, and predicting in the EFL classroom.

3.3 Questions of the Study

The main questions of this study are as follows:

-   What is the most common way of teaching reading at Libyan secondary schools?
-   Do English teachers at Libyan secondary schools use different strategies in teaching reading as a foreign language?
-   How does the teacher training affect the way of teaching reading at the Libyan secondary schools?

- How can we improve the way of teaching reading at the Libyan secondary schools?

- How do inadequate texts affect the development of the reading skills of student in high education?

3.4 Participants of the Study

The participants recruited in the present study were three teachers from two different secondary schools in Alkufra. The participants have almost similar backgrounds regarding learning and teaching English in Libya.

4. Data Analysis

This section introduces the data analysis of the research questions by getting the themes of interviews questions and coding them as well as giving a chance to our comments during analyzing. Then the data from classroom observation were presented to view how they were related to each other.

4.1 Interviews Data

1. Teaching Reading:

The data analysis of the data obtained shows that the way of teaching reading at Alkufrah secondary schools is based on reading the text and imitating what the majority of the teachers interviewed said, in which the repetition is taken place. By asking teachers about their way of teaching reading, they stated that they provide students with new words, and they taught them how to pronounce them. For instance, Teacher 1 stated that "*I give the new words of the text, their pronunciations, the correct pronunciation of the new words, read the text one time two times then choose three or four students to read the text and then give questions for the text*".

According to Abosnan (2016), teaching reading by translating the whole text might not help students understand the overall meaning of the text.

Whereas, Teacher 2 follows the instructions of the book, which are ordered into pre, while and post-reading phases. Teacher 2 says, *"I am very restricted by the instructions of the textbook, so these instructions depend on three stages of reading; the pre-reading and while reading and post-reading strategy which rely on tasks, so I just follow these tasks in the correct order"*.

However, Teacher 2 did not explain how she presents these procedures. Teacher 3 used the same way of giving the new words in the text, but the difference was that Teacher 3 skimmed the text to make a clear understanding for her in order to explain it to students. Teacher 3 said, *"The first thing write on whiteboard new words, new vocabulary, just. After that I want to skim or skimming the reading explain about new information about this lesson"*.

Ghuma (2011) in his study stated that reading skills could be taught either by using self-instruction or by using direct instruction. When using self-instruction, students are provided with the material to read, after which they receive feedback from the teacher. Using direct instruction, whose main concern is academic reading, students are presented with the aim of instruction and given time devoted to teaching.

2. Reading for comprehension:

The majority of the candidates interviewed agreed that their way of teaching is effective to make students read for comprehension. If students understand the text and the meaning of the words in the text, they could discuss with the teacher the text's main points as Teacher 1 stated, "*Yes, of course. If the students understand the meaning of the words and the content of the text, they will understand all the text and they can discuss the points in the text"*.

Teacher 2 stated that students should have the chance to read and think by themselves in order to understand the text. The way of Teacher 2 in teaching reading might be effective because from the teacher perspective, it develops

the student's thinking to interpret the text's main ideas, which might lead to understand the text. Teacher 2 says, *"I think yes they do. I think they are effective because they give a chance for the students to think creatively and they can have their own interpretations which enhance the understanding of the text"*. Teacher 2 highlighted an important point here, if students got the chance to read they will be effective readers.

Teacher 3 supports the way of teaching with skimming the text, saying *"Yes very important, because reading is improve students for comprehension, because all the reading is comprehension"*. Although, we noticed that Teacher 3 used the traditional way of teaching in addition to skimming as discussed in previous point.

3. Methods of Teaching Reading:

In terms of teaching methods used to teach reading at Alkufrah secondary schools, Teacher 1 did not have a name for his method, because he said he does not know and the only way that he uses relies on giving new words their meaning and pronunciation in which the focus is on vocabulary rather than improving students' comprehension. He explains *"I don't know; this is the only way I teach students. Just new words, the meanings, the correct pronunciation"*. This fits with the findings of Abosnan (2016) who stated that the way of teaching reading in the Libyan educational system is based on developing students' pronunciation rather than focusing on improving students' skills of reading for comprehension.

Although Teacher 2 stated that the most obvious method that teachers at Alkufrah secondary schools use is the GTM which is based on translating and focuses on the grammar structures of the texts. Teacher 2 emphasizes that *"the most obvious method as I can remember is the Grammar-Translation Method,*

which depends more on translating the text and concentrating on the grammar patterns and the grammatical structures".

The GMT method of teaching does not give the student the chance to improve their skills in reading because the method is teacher-centered and no role for the student. The teacher reads, translates, and explains for the students. In this regard, Omar (2019) emphasizes that "GTM does not help Libyan students use English communicatively in reality; rather, it helps them know about English as a class subject" (p. 512).

On the other hand, Teacher 3 claimed that teachers use skimming and scanning reading strategies as methods of teaching reading at Alkufrah secondary schools, saying "*Yes, we have the two method. The first is reading is skim scan".* This finding shows that, all of the three teachers interviewed use different ways in teaching reading. This might be because of the way they trained to teach reading.

4. Teacher Training:

By asking the candidates about the way they trained themselves to teach reading, none of the three teachers clearly understood the question. As a result, we tried to ask them about how they prepare their lessons before teaching them. We attempted to infer the way they trained to teach reading. Teacher 1 stated that "*I scan the text quickly, look for new words, their meaning, their pronunciation for the idioms, phrasal verbs like these things".* It seems to us that Teacher 1 uses scanning when he prepared his lesson, looking to new words, their meaning and pronunciation, and looking if there are idioms or phrasal verbs in the text. It seems that he liked skimming but he did not mention it.

Whereas, Teacher 2, as she stated, is trying to follow up the latest teaching updates, which means that this teacher is trying to improve her teaching skills.

She stated that *"I just tried to learn more about how to teach language skills and tried to apply those what I know in the classroom"*. Teacher 3 is already graduated from university and learn reading strategies from university. Although she did not use them in classroom, she emphasized that *"in university all the doctors' special students' groups say is reading improve like this reading, like the ways skimming or scan"*. This finding shows the importance of training the teacher's teaching skills. It seems to us that the participants of the study do not have the accurate terms to the strategies they used.

5.   The Benefits of Training Courses:

Based on the participants' views, they are enthusiastic to be trained to teach reading. Teacher 1 stated *"I think yes, like these courses will develop teachers and improve their skills and this of course affect or improve also the ability of students, Cause the more you read the more you train the more you give information and when one develops him/herself this of course will affect the ability of others"*. Teacher 1 stated that teacher training is important to improve the students' ability to understand the text and when teacher improves his way of teaching, it will improve students as well.

Teachers are not trained to use other teaching approaches as Teacher 2 said. They just use the method that they learned, as Teacher 2 emphasizes that *"teachers are not trained in the first place to practice or to try other approaches or other strategies of reading; they just keep practicing the old approach of grammar-translation"*.

Students in the first place do not get the information quickly, but by systematic accurse understanding and this is depending on teachers training to teach reading. Teacher 3 said, *"Yes, because training teacher affected students reading polity, because the first time don't understand what is the reading, step by step students understand reading, step by step understand how to*

comprehension". As researchers, we agree with Teacher 2 that the most common way of teaching reading is using the GTM because this is the method that we learned English with from our early stages.

6.   Reading Strategies:

By asking the teachers about the reading strategies that might fit with EFL secondary school students, Teacher 1 stated that he uses GTM. It seems that he does not have a background knowledge of reading strategies because GTM is an old way of teaching. It is based on translating the text, and reading strategies does not take place in such this method of teaching reading. Teacher 2 stated that *"I'm not sure but maybe text analysis"*. Teacher 2 said that text analysis may fits with secondary school students. Text analysis is "when we perform textual analysis on a text, we make an educated guess at some of the most likely interpretations that might be made of the text" (McKee, 2001, p. 3).

Teacher 3 stated that *"the first thing writing the new words after that me is reading the lesson after that stand up reading the two lines or three lines because is many students in the class, but I used strategy in reading, skimming"*. Teacher 3 may have confusion of how he could make the use of reading strategies because her speech was in contrast, and we could not identify the actual way that Teacher 3 used in classroom. Teacher 3 first wrote new words, read the text, and then asked to students to read it again. This is the same basic of GTM.

7.   Using Reading Strategies:

To indicate the teachers' answers in knowing reading strategies, and why they do not use them with secondary school students in classroom Teacher 1 said, *"Maybe because the number of the students, the time, this way maybe one needs to divide the class into groups four, five or six. Maybe the environment, the classroom environment did not allow us to do like these strategies"*.

Teacher 1 said that he did not know such strategies, and he could not use strategies in classroom according to several circumstances. Thus, Teacher 2 used text analysis but not always, which means that the teacher used another method in classroom, in which supposed to be GTM.

Whereas, Teacher 3 said, *"Yes uses this is, because is very easy"*. Teacher 3 in earlier questions stated that she wrote on whiteboard new words, read the text, and then asked students to repeat what she said, using skimming strategy. Therefore, her answer is not clear on what is the easy one: the traditional way or skimming strategy. Moreover, using strategies like skimming, scanning, and predicting are considered sub-skills in reading (Medjahdi, 2015).

8. Text Selection:

Teachers are not free to select texts; texts are already applied in the curriculum. Thus, it might be good if teachers are free to select students' texts because every teacher knows the ability of his students according to their levels and specialization. Teacher 1 stated

I'm not free to select texts, but the texts are in our curriculum on the books, if the choosing of texts for teachers is will be good, I'm going to find texts that are good for my students for their ages for their levels. Because I know the ability of my students and I will choose the texts that equal to their ability and their levels and their specializations.

Teacher 2 also stated that "*the texts I teach are pre-arranged in the curriculum, so I just have no choice to select them*". This shows that the ministry of education arranges texts at secondary school curriculum without returning to schools and teachers to take their opinions. Teacher 2 prefers social texts because as she said the words are familiar and easy to be understood: *"I prefer social texts, because they are more or the vocabulary are more familiar and they are easy to understand".*

Teachers have no choice to choose their students texts, but here Teacher 3 claimed that *"I selecting interesting thing like your, because is teenager, because I studies teenager, teenager not have maybe is not understand anything or not beautiful anything maybe"*. It is difficult to understand what Teacher 3 means, but we think that Teacher 3 means she selects interesting texts. But if teachers are not free to select them, there is a contrasting between teachers. Because as Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 said the texts are in the curriculum, whereas, Teacher 3 claimed that she chose interesting texts to her students. Teacher 3 might or might not understand the question, but Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 understood it, which means that Teacher 3 had a problem with connecting her ideas.

The majority of the teachers preferred choosing texts by teachers, as they know the ability as well as the level of their students. However, here, Teacher 1said *"Yes, of course',* which means that the texts in the curriculum are helpful to EFL secondary school students.

Although, Teacher 2 said that *"I don't believe that",* Teacher 2 agreed with her idea of social texts. We, as researchers, noticed that Teacher 2 did not believe that these texts were helpful to her students. Teacher 3 supported her answer of the texts that she chose, saying *"yes, because all the reading is comprehension without comprehension or not understand do not answer this question"*. It seems that the texts that Teacher 3 chose for her students were helpful to make them use their comprehension in the text. However, Teacher 3's answer is not clear because as teachers said the texts are already applied in the curriculum, so it does not make sense if Teacher 3 chose her own texts and rejected the curriculum's texts.

9.   Suggestions to Improve Reading Strategies:

To recover the way of teaching reading, teachers provided us with several suggestions. Teacher 1 suggested that to improve reading strategies we have to change the curriculum because lessons may not be good for the students. Teacher 1 stated that there is need to *"change the curriculum, because most of the lessons in Libyan curriculum are not good for our students".* Teacher 2 added that teachers have to follow up the development of the way of teaching then try it with students in classroom, emphasizing that *"teachers in the first place must be aware of the rapid development of teaching approaches and they should try several ways to work with in the classroom".*

The suggestion is about improving reading strategies, but Teacher 3 did not tell us anything on strategies, but rather her suggestions were considered like an advice to read more. Thus, reading more is not a strategy that can be improve. Teacher 3 said, *"I suggesting read morly and lesson morly because reading is comprehension".* We think that *"morly"* means to read more.

According to the teachers' suggestions, the way of improving teaching reading at Alkufrah secondary schools. Teacher 1 said, *"To change the curriculum, use texts that are equal to the ability and levels of our students".* Rather, Teacher 1 claimed that texts are useful to EFL students, and that is why he suggested changing the curriculum.

Whereas, Teacher 2 suggested that *"I think we should follow-up the latest updates concerning the teaching process and learning process of the EFL, and we should try to practice various approaches and try to find the best".* Following the latest updates and trying to find different approaches is suggested by Teacher 2. This means that teachers at secondary schools use traditional approaches to teach their students reading. Improving new words as Teacher 3 improves reading. We think that improving new words is not

actually improving reading because the way of memorizing words is an old way of teaching.

4.2 Classroom Observations Data

1. Teacher 1:

Teacher 1 has been teaching for 14 years, who has a BA in translation from Benghazi University. In the class, we observed on 13 Mar 2019, the lesson was about 'Wedding Customs' in first year secondary school. There were 15 students and all of them were girls.

The teacher began the lesson by reviewing the background knowledge of the text. He asked the students to close their books. Then, he started to brainstorm their ideas gradually; however, he did not mention using top-down strategies such as predicting in the interview. First, he asked about what are the days of the week in English, but they did not clearly understand the teacher because they did not get used to it in the classroom. Even though, he continued the same way.

As the teacher said in the interview, he used GTM and the Direct Method (DM) as the best way of teaching EFL. He did not use the first language (L1) of the students in the class, as the DM principles suggests, except in translating few words. Rather than translating unfamiliar words, he used sounds to explain their meaning. For example, while explaining the term 'fireworks', he did not translate the meaning in Arabic, but rather, he used the sounds of the fireworks to explain its meaning.

However, signs or even sounds might not present some words. Furthermore, he used the word 'ring finger' to refer to engagement. He translated its meaning by putting his finger to the intended finger. After that, he wrote the words 'Fiancé a Fiancée' on the board and tried to explain their meaning in English, but they did not understand, so he translated it in Arabic.

He mentioned in the interviews that he gives new words, their meaning, and pronunciation, but in the classroom, we observed he did not translate the unfamiliar words.

Teacher 1 also explained the meaning of the word 'bride' as 'the woman who is married, what we call her?', but they tried to guess the meaning. Then, he helped them by asking the question in Arabic. Although, the teacher wrote the word on the board and referred to woman also wrote 'groom' to refer to the man. In giving new words as Teacher 1 said in the interview, we think that he referred to these words. Then, he asked about what should be the topic? They knew the first name of the title, which was 'wedding', and then he wrote the title of the text on the board.

After writing the title, he asked the students to open their books. They discussed the picture's lesson and he asked *"what they are doing?"* He explained the words 'clapping and singing' by signs, and the word *'Zaghareet; زغاريت'* by moving his tongue. Then, he asked the students to read the first sentence of the first paragraph silently. He said, *"from this sentence what do you think the topic is about?"* Then he answered, *"from this sentence we can understand what the paragraph is about"*. Thus, he asked them to read it again and if they had difficult words. They said 'ceremonies' means 'celebrations', then, they moved to the workbook exercises.

In contrast with Teacher 1's views in the interviews, he stated that he did not use reading strategies for several reasons: one of them is the time of the class, but rather, in this classroom, he used predicting, skimming, and scanning.

2. Teacher 2:

On 26th Feb. 2019, we observed a classroom with Teacher 2 who has a BA from Al-kufrah University and had been teaching for eight years. In the

classroom, we observed that there were 29 students: 10 boys and 19 girls. According to the attendance list, there were 10 absent students.

The title of the lesson was 'Our Culture'. The teacher wrote the title on the board and started reading immediately. She focused on reading each sentence aloud. She read the text then asked the students to read it again with correcting their pronunciation. She stated in the interview (See above) that this way might help students interact with her.

The lesson consists of five texts, and every text has a topic. In each text, there was a factual mistake. Therefore, she asked the students to put a line under those mistakes. She asked most of the students to read sentence by sentence while she was correcting their pronunciation. She translated the whole text in Arabic. This method of teaching might be related to GTM because of the way of translating the whole text and the teacher centered. She was controlling the classroom activities; she was reading, translating, and correcting the students' pronunciation. However, she in the interviews stated that she learned new ways in teaching reading.

3. Teacher 3:

On 26 Dec 2018, we observed a classroom with Teacher 3 who has a B. A. from Al-Kufrah University and had been teaching for two years. In the classroom, we observed that there were 33 students: 6 boys and 26 girls.

The title of the lesson was 'Facts and Figures'. The teacher wrote the title on the board: two definitions and some new vocabulary. she started to explain what was on the board in Arabic. She defined scanning as "reading for specific information" and skimming as "reading for general meaning". While interviewing, she stated that she used skimming in addition to new words in reading lessons because as she thinks that learning new words improves students' reading for comprehension. In the classroom, we observed that she

did not use skimming as a way of teaching but rather, she asked students to read the text, and she corrected their pronunciation mistakes. After she translated what was on board, she asked the students to open page 31.

The language used in the lesson was Arabic. She tried to explain and spoke in English, but the students did not understand her. This might be because students were not trained to learn in English. Then, she asked some of the students to read some sentences. They read aloud, and the teacher corrected their pronunciation mistakes. This might be related to GMT, which is based on teaching through imitation and translating.

5. Discussion

To further understand the process of reading at the Libyan secondary schools, we will discuss the findings in which our study addressed our main research questions. In the following section, we summarized the research findings with the theoretical framework, and we shall explain what we call 'reading strategies' that we believe and that our data indicates can lead to read for comprehension.

What is the most common way of teaching reading in Libyan secondary schools?

The majority of teachers at Alkufrah secondary schools use the way of teaching reading in which they give the new words, their pronunciations, read the text then ask some students to read it again. This way of repeating what the teacher said is known as imitating the teacher because the teacher already read the text. Thus, it is the most common way of teaching reading at Alkufrah secondary schools, and most of the teachers use it because it is based on translation during reading the text.

Although, as stated in the interviews, Teacher 2 follows the instructions of the course book which depends on three stages pre-reading, while reading, and

post-reading strategies. In pre-reading stage, students could discuss with the teacher and each other the cultural background of the text, which is mainly known as predicting the text. Then, students may use their bottom-up type reading strategy to decode words and sentences. During the reading, the students can read the entire text alone, then discuss it in pairs, and finally discuss it as class to ask. Finally, in post-reading stage, activities could extend to answer questions or to read the text.

Do English teachers in Libyan secondary schools use different strategies in teaching reading as a foreign language?

The obvious answer is 'No'. Teachers at Alkufrah secondary schools do not have enough experience of using reading strategies with students. Because as Teacher 1 said "*the number of the students, the time, this way maybe one needs to divide the class into groups four, five or six. Maybe the environment, the classroom environment didn't allow us to do like these strategies*". Yet, these circumstances did not affect the use of reading strategies.

Referring to Teacher2, the use of text analysis is taken place in classroom lessons, but furthermore, not always. Text analysis from our understanding is describing the meaning of the text by using the reader's own words. Thus, Teacher 3 used skimming, but she did not mention how to use this strategy. As researchers, we understand that using reading strategies have no role at Alkufrah secondary school classrooms, but rather they give the new words, their pronunciations, and their meaning and these findings fits with Abosnan (2016) findings who stated that the way of teaching reading in Libya is a matter of teaching pronunciation.

How does the teacher training affect the way of teaching reading at the Libyan secondary schools?

We investigated that teachers have not trained themselves to teach reading in classroom, for a variety of reasons. One of the main reasons is that the situation in Libya has a negative effect on creating training teacher's institutes. This reason totally matches with what Teacher 1 said: *"In Libya there are no courses like this, cause of our situation in Libya now, even the companies who give or organizations give those courses cannot come to Libya cause of its security situations"*. Although, the absence of training teachers might affect the use of reading strategies for teachers, reading is still a developing skill. All of the three teachers agree that the way of training teachers affects the teachers to use another ways of teaching reading.

How do inadequate texts affect the development of the reading skills of student in high education?

Teachers are not free to select texts; the ministry of education already chooses the texts. Thus, teachers assumed that if the selection of reading texts are from teachers, it will be better to students because they know the ability of their students, and they will give them texts that are relevant as well as easy to be understood. Rather, choosing texts is not a problem that can face students. If students learn how to make benefit of the text, then there will not be a difficult issue to understand it.

How can we improve the way of teaching reading in the Libyan secondary schools?

By interviewing and observing the three teachers, we realized that teachers at Alkufrah secondary schools do not have the knowledge of using reading strategies. When we asked about their suggestion to improve the way of teaching reading, none of the three teachers mentioned the use of reading strategies. Although, changing the curriculum is not a solution to improve the way of teaching reading, but by taking a consideration of following up the

latest updates, it can be said it is new suggestion and it will lead to using reading strategies, like skimming, scanning, and predicting. However, the improving of new words is already a way of teaching reading, but actually it is not improving.

Through our investigation of the most common way of teaching reading, we realize that all of the three teacher use old way of GTM to teach reading, which is based on imitating teacher's reading and translating texts. Although, teachers mentioned skimming and scanning, but as researchers realized they used it for their own understanding not to students to make a clear understanding of the texts. However, predicting is applied in the curriculum in pre-reading stage, but actually, teachers did not know what it means these stages. Therefore, to improve the way of reading at the Libyan secondary schools, we need to improve the methods of teaching by training secondary school teachers.

6. Findings

The study comes out with the following findings:

- The teachers do not have enough experience of using reading strategies with students.
- The teachers do not use reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, and predicting in the EFL classroom.
- The way of teaching reading at Alkufra secondary schools is through reading aloud and imitating the teacher while pronouncing words. This might not be useful because the focus in this case is on improving pronunciation rather than to read for comprehension.
- The teachers do not use the methods of teaching properly, such as GTM and DM in order to select the effective parts of each method to fulfil his lesson aims.

- The teachers do not receive any training courses on teaching reading strategies either at national or international level.

7. Recommendations

From the research findings and conclusions, some recommendations are suggested for teachers as regards of all EFL learners at Alkufrah secondary schools as:

- Teachers should keep in mind the students' needs of been taught reading strategies that are easy to use and most likely remembered for future use until there is further research on what are the best reading strategies in which secondary school teachers could follow. Thus, schools should make certain decision to change the old way of GTM and by using reading strategies.

- There should be teacher training courses to follow-up the latest development of the way of teaching reading, taking in consideration the effective strategies that help students read for comprehension. However, teaching these strategies will help students to understand the text in addition to improving their textual understanding. Therefore, students will have better academic success at learning how to read for comprehension at secondary school classes.

- Teachers should motivate their students to read for comprehension by using reading strategies in classroom as well as practice them at home. Therefore, it is recommended that teachers of secondary school classes should teach these strategies in order to make students acknowledged of how to comprehend the texts by themselves.

8. Conclusion

This study attempted to examine the way of teaching reading EFL at Alkufrah secondary schools. The study findings indicate that teachers of

Alkufrah secondary schools are not trained to teach reading. The findings also show that teachers do not have enough knowledge of using reading strategies, although they were applied in the curriculum as pre-during and post-reading instructions. The use of the background knowledge of the text is absolutely dismissed in teaching reading. However, it should be taught to teach students how to use their prior knowledge of the text. Thus, it is similarly to predicting what the students are going to have in the text.

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The Effectiveness of Eclectic Approach in Teaching English Pronouns: Case Study on Elementary Schools in Benghazi

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Abstract

The present study was mainly concerned with a very vital area of grammar, which is *English Pronouns* in terms of teaching them effectively by testing different teaching methods and techniques. A number of studies in the literature showed different results regarding the effectiveness of teaching methods and techniques in teaching English grammar. This study was a contribution to these studies where it tested some teaching methods in order to figure out which one assists elementary students improving their learning of English pronouns. These methods were eclectic teaching and deductive teaching. The population of this study consisted of 20 elementary students from Vision Training Center in Benghazi. The samples were divided into two groups (control group and experimental group). There were ten students in each group. The data was obtained by using the statistical program SPSS. Before conducting the treatment, a pretest was distributed among the participants. The posttest was used after the treatment was finished. The analysis of the collected data revealed that the students in the experimental group obtained higher scores in the posttest and were better than the students in the control group in terms of both grammar and speaking.

Keywords**:** *Eclectic approach; direct method; structural-situational approach; deductive teaching.*

1. Introduction

Teaching English has become one of the most important and fundamental requirements in schools and universities around the world as it is a language used all over the world. A number of studies have examined several teaching methods and techniques to figure out their effectiveness in teaching and learning English. There were different results in the literature with regard to the influence of teaching methods. For instance, some studies (for instance, Abdul Bari and Hafiza, 2018; Farahani, 2018) were in favour of traditional teaching methods such as grammar translation method and deductive teaching. Whereas, Omar (2014) believes that "the result of using such methods is that Libyan students and teachers know about English, but they lack the use of English in communicative situations with native English speakers" (p. xiii).

Some others (for instance, Elwerfalli, Omar, and Alarefi 2019; Mohamed, 2015) showed the effectiveness of teaching methods such as inductive teaching and communicative teaching techniques. Consequently, this study was conducted to contribute to the literature and shows which teaching methods may affect and accelerate the process of learning English pronouns. The study tested some teaching methods; namely, eclectic teaching (direct method and structural-situational teaching) and deductive teaching.

2. Literature Review

This part of the study is dedicated to show the literature review that is relevant to the theme of the study. This part covers the theoretical part of the study.

2.1 Eclectic Teaching

Eclectic approach of teaching is a kind of teaching which allows adopting several teaching methods to teach language depending on lesson objectives as well as learners' abilities. It incorporates a variety of teaching skills in order to create the ideal learning program to meet the needs of learners (Mellow, 2002). It is named interchangeably as 'disciplined eclecticism' (Rodgers, 2001) and 'informed eclecticism' (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

In eclectic teaching, instructors are allowed, "to absorb the best techniques of all the well – known language – teaching methods into their classroom procedures, using them for the purposes for which they are most appropriate" (Jebiwot, 2016, p. 266). In addition, this approach is mostly preferred by teachers because every teaching/learning theory has strengths and limitations and this kind of teaching allows teachers to choose and combine the strength sides of some theories to assist students obtain better learning.

Eclectic teaching includes different methods and approaches such as Direct Method, Structural-situational Approach, Audio-lingual/Audio-visual Method, and Bilingual Method. For the purpose of this study, only two eclectic teaching methods are utilized. These are direct method and structural-situational teaching techniques.

2.2 Direct Method

It was originated in the 1900s. It is also known as 'natural method, reform method, and anti-grammatical method'. It is a teaching method in which language is not taught in a decontextualized manner. Instead, it is taught in context. It is named direct method because the meaning is directly connected with the target language without any translation into learners'

first language. The proponents of this method state that speaking a language is more vital than writing it. Hence, the focus is on pronunciation and oral skills. Moreover, in this method, language is taught naturally in the same way first language is acquired. This means that language is learned without the interference of any other languages.

The key objective of the direct method is to teach and show language learners how to use language for communication purposes. The main principles of this method are: (1) learners should be taught in the target language; (2) translation is not allowed; (3) teach grammar inductively; (4) oral and listening skills are the focus of instruction.

An instructor who adapts direct method of teaching does not follow analytical procedures in explaining grammatical rules in class. Instead, he/she encourages their students to use language in a natural and spontaneous manner so that students induce and infer grammatical rules by themselves. In other words, instructors should demonstrate not explain grammar (Cagri, 2013).

2.3 Structural-Situational Teaching

This method of teaching is not widely used recently. It was developed in the 1930s by some British linguists such as Harold Palmer and Hornby, Michael West (Hussain and Sajid, 2015). In this method, both speech and structures are the basis of language teaching. Structural-situational Teaching Method leads to improvement in performance rather than the acquisition of knowledge and skills. The belief in this method is that instructors begin teaching with the spoken language. That is, teachers teach language orally before they present it in a written form.

According to Hussain and Sajid (2015), in structural situational teaching method "speech was the basis of language and structure was considered as

the heart of speaking ability. Hence, it was an oral practice of situational structure" (p. 198). Similar to the direct method, in structural situational method, grammar is taught inductively, and meaning can be derived through situation and not through translation. Learners are expected to deduce the meaning of words and sentences from the situation in which they are presented. As a result, learners use what they practice in classrooms in situations outside their classes.

2.4 Deductive Teaching

Deductive teaching requires instructors to explain grammatical rules directly, provide examples, and then these rules are practiced (Akar, 2005). The flow of information in this kind of teaching is from general to specific. It is, also, called 'top down approach' because when applying deductive approach in classrooms, instructors work from the more general to the more specific. In other words, teachers explain grammatical rules first, students apply these rules and practice them afterwards.

This method is considered teacher-centered as teachers explain grammatical rules explicitly and then test their students by providing exercises in order for students to become familiar with linguistic patterns. Larsen-freeman (2000) stated that in deductive teaching, the instructor is the authority in the classroom and the students do what their instructor asks them to do in order to learn.

Generally, in the literature, there are numerous teaching methods and techniques. They were tested in order to show their effectiveness in teaching English as a second language. This study also aims to test the above-mentioned methods to find out which one may assist Libyan students in learning and acquiring English pronouns in elementary schools.

3. Methodology of the Study

This study was based on a quantitative research design. It took place in the spring term of the 2019 academic year in Vision Training Center in Benghazi. The participants of this study were 20 elementary school students. They were randomly chosen. Their ages varied from 12 to 14. They were divided into two groups: experimental and control. A pretest regarding English pronouns was provided before teaching in order to eliminate the effects of previous knowledge on pronouns and to figure out if their English level was close to one another before the treatment.

The control group was taught through deductive teaching method and the experimental group through eclectic method. The instruction lasted for two weeks. At the end of the two week-period, a post-test was administered to learners. Both pre-test and post-test included 40 questions: 20 *multiple-choice* questions and 20 *fill in the gaps* questions. In both tests, the same questions were used; though, the order of test items and the options were mixed in order for learners not to remember the choices.

3.1 Procedures and Data Collection Tools

The Control Group

As previously mentioned, this group was taught English pronouns deductively. For the first week, the main topics of instruction were personal pronouns and possessive pronouns. Both types of pronouns were explained by the teacher followed by examples, and then the students practiced them. Upon the completion of these lessons, learners were able to distinguish subject pronouns, object pronouns, and possessive pronouns as well as when and how to use them appropriately in a sentence. In the second week, indefinite pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, and reflexive pronouns were taught. The instructor ensured that her learners understood the differences

between demonstrative pronouns and demonstrative adjectives, the difference between the use of *who* and *whom*.

The Experimental Group

The teaching of this group was based on the eclectic approach in which an instructor can adopt more than one teaching method. Consequently, two teaching methods, namely, direct method and structural-situational teaching techniques were utilized in order for students to be aware of the uses and the correct pronunciations of the English pronouns. These techniques were chosen as they both follow an inductive approach to teach grammar.

First, the direct method was utilized where pictures and physical objects of famous places were selected to help the students understand the meaning of all kinds of English pronouns. The students were asked to name the items and cities they see in the pictures. They have to say what the pictures represent. Moreover, the structural situational teaching was applied by preparing planned lessons about English pronouns and visual aids such as flashcards and wall charts. With this group, the instructor focused mainly on pronunciation and oral practice. Because the instructor followed structural situational approach, pronouns were taught orally before they were presented in written forms.

4. Data Analysis

The data analysis process of this study was through the design of pre-test and post-test. A pre-test was administered to all participants in both groups. It was used to display the levels of the participants before the instruction. The post-test was administered immediately after the treatment is finished. Each test included 40 questions: 20 items were *multiple-choice* questions and the other 20 were *fill in the gaps* questions. After scoring the tests, they were analyzed using SPSS statistics program. The same test items

were used for both tests, but the order of the questions and choices were changed to confirm accurate findings.

5. Findings

Findings of the study are based on data analysis based on SPSS program.

5.1 Descriptive Statistics

The results of the data analysis showed that the level of the two groups was very close before conducting the treatment. However, the experimental group outperformed the control group in posttest.

Descriptive Statistics

Group		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experimental group	Pre	10	5	15	8.81	2.951
	Post	10	11	15	13.30	1.889
control group	Pre	10	4	14	8.80	3.120
	Post	10	5	13	8.88	2.201
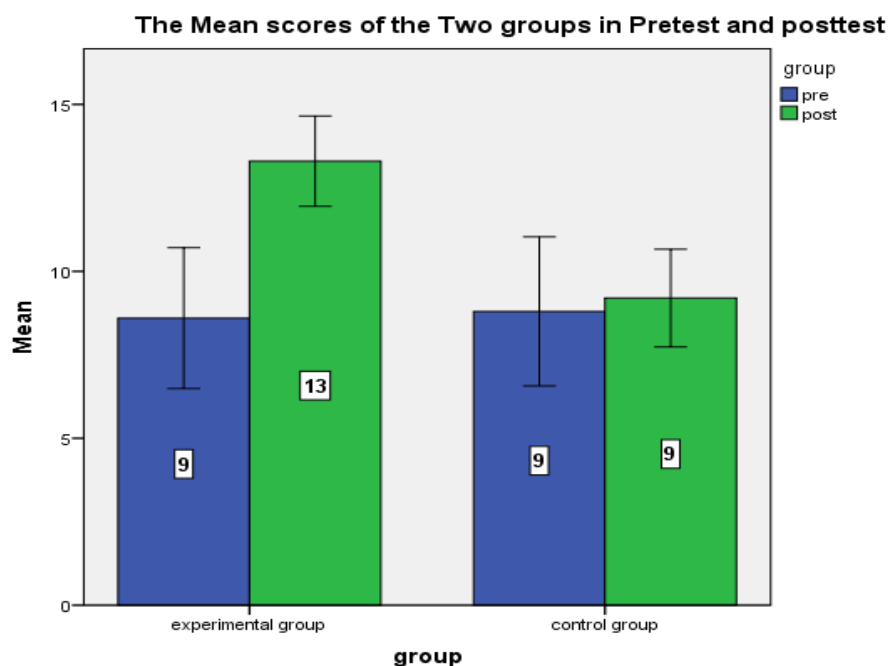
More specifically, in order to figure out whether there were significant differences between the two groups before initiating instruction, the one-way ANOVA was performed. The findings showed that no significant differences between the two groups were obtained: F (1, 18) =.022, p=.885. In other words, at the outset, the two groups did not have any individual advantages over each other in the pre-test results.

Dennis and Cramer (2008) stated that in order to locate differences among groups in SPSS, independent sample t-test can be performed to point where such differences lay. Hence, independent sample t-test was conducted and the results are as follows:

- The results showed that there are significant differences between the two groups: t (18) = 7.678, p<0.001. This result suggests that the experimental group outperformed the control group. Put it in another way, the group which received instruction based on eclectic approach improved significantly more than the group which was taught using deductive teaching.
- Moreover, a paired-sample t-test analysis was conducted for each group. In this kind of analysis, the pre-test and post-test in each group were compared to figure if the group improved before and after instruction. Regarding the experimental group, the results showed that it is improved significantly: t (9) = -10.944, p< .001.
- With reference to the control group, the findings revealed that the group improved slightly from pre-test to post-test, but the improvement was not significant: t (9) = -402, p= .697.
- Based on the above-mentioned results, it can be concluded that there were significant differences lay between the two groups. The Experimental group gained more scores in the post-test than the control group.

6. Conclusion

This study was conducted in order to figure out the influence of the eclectic approach on teaching English pronouns in elementary schools in Benghazi. Two groups of students were selected and taught by the same instructor. One group (the experimental group) was taught using direct method and structural-situational teaching techniques; whereas, the other group (the control group) received techniques based on deductive teaching.

The findings showed that the experimental group made more significant progress than the control group. This means that the teaching technique which was used with the experimental group facilitated and accelerated the process of learning. It also assisted learners to acquire grammatical rules, to speak and communicate in class. This study indicated that eclectic teaching was effective and led students to learn English pronouns and to improve their speaking skills. Hence, it can be said that adopting some teaching techniques can be beneficial and affect the process of learning in that they assist students learning and acquiring more than one language skill.

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Application of Bloom's Taxonomy to English Reading Comprehension: Case Study on Secondary Schools in Beida, Libya

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Abstract

Reading is one of the four language skills. In addition to listening, reading is a receptive skill, in which the individual receives information from others. Hence, reading is sometimes difficult to evaluate because reading is associated to comprehension (Omar, 2014). So, the purpose of this study was to apply Bloom's Taxonomy Model (BTM) to a teaching plan of comprehension of a reading task titled "Mikas's Homestay in London" in Libyan secondary schools. In this study, the researcher analyzed and planed teaching strategies based on BTM in order to investigate the effect of this model in mastering of reading tasks and developing high level of cognitive practices for a sample of 13 secondary school students in Beida, Libya. It is a matter of fact that Bloom's Taxonomy is a classification of different cognitive skills is an effective model educators recommend. So, this study studies this model represented in seven cognitive levels: retrieving, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and creativity. According to the discussion and the students' feedback in regard to the teaching plan in this way, most of the students mastered and developed high levels of cognitive processes in consistent to BTM. Several educational implications and research recommendations are discussed and presented in this study.

Keywords*: Bloom's Taxonomy; learning; evaluation; cognitive domain; affective domain; psychomotor domain.*

1. Introduction

Education is the most important field for developing a modern country. Educational policy makers over the countries are extensively working on improvement educational practices, through which they develop various patterns of learning processes in general. Recently, most of teaching and evaluation strategies are focusing on learner's cognitive and practical activities instead of focusing on knowledge and findings. At this point, several proposals, theories, implications, and perspectives are applied to enhance teaching and learning practices. One of the most universal and common educational model is called Bloom's Taxonomy that represents a guide to plan teaching and evaluation processes.

2. Literature Review

This part covers the theoretical part of the study.

2.1 Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy was created in 1956 under the leadership of educational psychologist Benjamin Bloom in order to promote higher levels of thinking in education, such as analyzing and evaluating concepts, processes, procedures, and principles, rather than just remembering facts. It is most often used when designing educational, training, and learning processes. Bloom found that 95% of questions used in learning evaluation were from lower levels of cognitive thinking (Lord and Baviskar, 2007). According to this finding, Bloom and his team of educational psychologists proposed three domains of educational objectives under Bloom's Taxonomy: cognitive (intellectual), affective (emotional), and psychomotor (physical) domains (Forehand, 2005).

The current study focuses on the cognitive domain of Bloom's model that consists of six levels of cognitive skills towards the higher levels of critical thinking skills. Whereas, the affective (emotional) domain focuses on encouraging students to develop feelings, motivation, attitudes, perceptions, and values towards learning's materials and contents. The psychomotor domain deals with physical movement and skills that may be required in order to complete a course or subject matter (Cullinane, 2010).

In literature, most references to Bloom's Taxonomy refer to the cognitive domain. The objectives dealt with in the cognitive domain place an emphasis on remembering or recalling information. Cognitive objectives vary from simple recall of material that was learned to highly original and creative ways of combining and synthesizing new ideas and materials. The taxonomy is divided into six levels: Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation. Bloom's Taxonomy is hierarchical; meaning that learning at the higher levels is dependent on having attained prerequisite knowledge and skills at the lower levels (Crowe and Wenderoth, 2008). (See Figure 1)
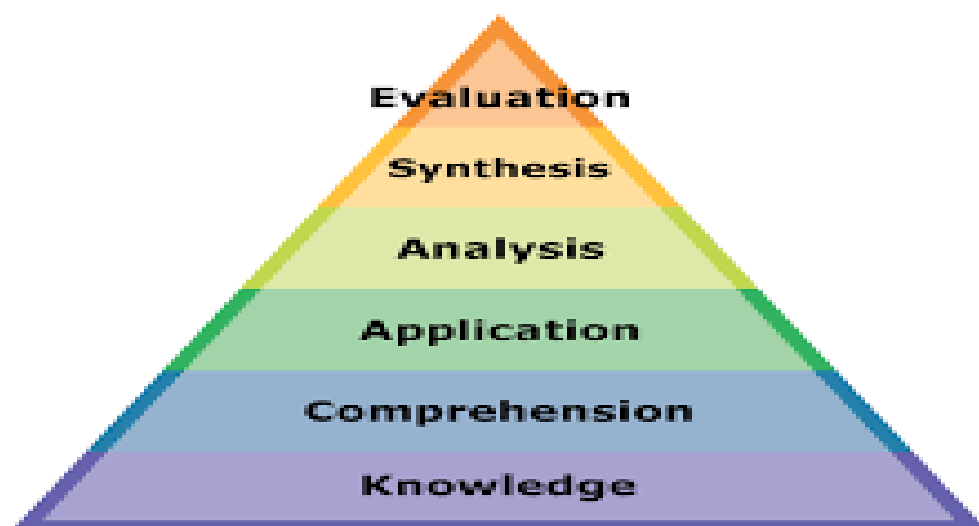
Figure 1: Illustrates the Cognitive Domain of Bloom's Taxonomy.

The above hierarchical system can be described as:

1. Knowledge

It is the recall of information. This is the lowest level of the Taxonomy. Questions are asked solely to test whether a student has gained specific information from the lesson. Definitions, naming dates, naming people, and the like are all examples of knowledge type questions. It can also include knowledge of the main ideas being taught (Dong, 2014).

2. Comprehension

It is the second level that includes items for testing the ability to more fully understand a text by determining the meaning and purpose of terms and phrases from the context in which they are found, and to analyze the parts of the passage, understand their argumentative or rhetorical roles, and grasp the relationship of those parts and their roles to each other. These skills would seem to be at a higher level than just basic recognition of what the sentences of a passage say given the ordinary meaning of their words (Luebke and Lorié, 2013).

3. Application

In this level, students are encouraged to construct a model to demonstrate using it, or designing a relief map to include relevant information about an event. Students, according to this level, should be able to apply role, theories, and principles to new learning settings that are different from the original learning experiences (Gregory and Chapman, 2007).

4. Analysis

In this level, students are required to go beyond knowledge and application and actually see patterns that they can use to analyze a problem.

This involves dissecting ideas and material into its component parts; therefore, examining and discriminating between the relationships of the parts (Cullinane, 2010). For example, while knowledge task asks about what is explicitly stated in the passage, analysis task asks about what is implicit in the passage (Luebke and Lorié, 2013).

5. Synthesis

For reaching this level, students are required to create a model that shows new ideas from related parts. Constructivism is a main skill of this level. Students are encouraged to gain how to build hypotheses about finding and propose a method to solve problem or discuss issues (Gregory and Chapman, 2007).

6. Evaluation

It is the highest level of cognitive domain. It is a complex process and is regarded to encompass combinations of all the other objectives. Students are expected to assess information and come to a conclusion such as its value or discuss the pros and cons of the information (Cullinane, 2010).

According to the previous discussion, cognitive domain involves hierarchical skills. At this point, we could propose that most of teaching and learning practices fall in the lower levels of knowledge, comprehension, and application. Whereas, limited teaching and learning practices encourage students to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate findings and theories. From another hand, these levels of cognitive domain are a supportive guide to plan teaching and evaluate the outcomes of learning process generally.

According to Dong (2014), most students are not aware of different levels of learning, and once they are exposed to Bloom's taxonomy, students are better prepared to check their learning levels. They then understand what their instructor means when he mentions 'higher-order

thinking'. Remember that up to now, most students are not aware that there is more to learning than memorization.

At this end, the current author's experience as teacher and educational psychologist has clearly observed the absence of higher level of thinking processes within learning and teaching practices. This in turn, makes the focus on knowledge instead of learners' cognitive activities.

3. Methodology of the Study

This part includes the methodology used to conduct this study.

3.1 Methodology

A qualitative approach of phenomenological research was followed for implementing the current study. Phenomenological study describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon. According to this method, the researcher collects data from people who have experienced the phenomenon and develops a composite description of the essence of the experience for all of the individuals. This description consists of what they experienced and how they experienced (Creswell, 2007).

A phenomenological research design is used in the current study to analyze and find the essences / themes that the students experienced while they are reading and answering questions based on Bloom's Taxonomy.

3.2 Objectives of the Study

In regard to classroom's practices, there is no doubt of the absence of Bloom's Taxonomy in the local educational environment. Therefore, the idea of current study emerges to draw attention and focus on Bloom's Taxonomy. Seeking to apply a model of Bloom's cognitive skills, the researcher raises the importance of Bloom's Taxonomy in moving our

educational practices from knowledge to learners' critical thinking and positive cognitive activities.

The objective of this study was to apply Bloom's Taxonomy Model (BTM) to a teaching plan of comprehension of a reading task titled "Mikas's Homestay in London". Specifically, the researcher analyzed and planed teaching strategies and questions based on (BTM) in order to investigate the effect of this model in mastering of reading tasks and developing high level of cognitive practices.

3.3 Participants of the Study

A sample of 13 secondary school students in Beida, Libya (10 females and 3 males). The participants were in the third year with quite good knowledge of English language. The participants have almost the same background as they learn English as a foreign language in Libya, and Arabic is their first language.

3.4 Data Collection

To examine the role of Bloom's Taxonomy in developing new direction and high order thinking for the students, 13 students were given a paper which contains reading task titled "Mikas's Homestay in London". The topic contains eight paragraphs talking about a Japanese student who had homestay and English learning experience in London. Initially, the participants were given eight munities to read the topic, and then they were provided six questions about the topic, which represent the six levels of Bloom's Taxonomy as follows:

- Give meanings of some words? (retrieving/remembering)
- Write the main idea using your own words? (comprehension)
- How will be your plan if you were in Mika's situation? (application)
- Could you discuss some social and cultural values? (analysis)

- Choose some words from the topic and make two sentences? (synthesis).

- Evaluate the ideas (find conflict or misrepresentation or grammar mistake? (evaluation)

When receiving these questions, students needed to reread the topic in a different way with different demands from what they used to handle. The students had taken their time to answer the questions. When they finished, the students were requested to give their feedback about the strategies of reading and, the role of questions to the learning process.

4. Data Analysis

The process of data analysis in the qualitative research is different from what is used in the quantitative research method. According to Creswell (2007), data analysis "consists of preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the cods, and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or a discussion" (p. 148).

For analyzing the collected data in this study, the current researcher analyzed the data based on a method which was proposed by Moustakes (1994) as follows:

- Develop a list of significant statements. The researcher finds statements about how participants were experiencing the idea of Bloom's levels cognitive skills. The researcher has taken the significant statements provided by the participant and then grouped them into unites of information called 'themes'.

- Write a description of what the participants in the study experienced with the Bloom's Taxonomy while they were answering the questions on the topic. This is called 'textural description'.

- Next, write a description of how the experience happened. This is called 'structural description' in which the researcher reflects on the setting and context about how students dealt with the experience of the questions based on Bloom's Taxonomy.

- Finally, write a composite description of the experience (phenomenon) taking into account the textural and structural descriptions. In this final stage, the researcher writes the essence of the experience and represents the main themes and aspects of the phenomenological study. In this study, the researcher has written the main aspects of the students' experience with Bloom's Taxonomy as feedback that was giving by the students.

5. Findings of the Study

In light of the participants' responses to the six questions on the reading topic, the current researcher summarized the extent to which the participants were able to reach levels of Bloom's Taxonomy as follows:

- Retrieving: 13 students mastered this level by giving meanings of some words (impression/wonderful/native-born) which depend on memory and remembering in the low level of Bloom's Taxonomy.

- Comprehension (understanding level): Every student summarized the topic in the main idea in good manner. Here, we gain the second level of Bloom's Taxonomy.

- Application: The target of question in this level was to motivate students to use some roles and advice emerging from Mika's experience for making their plan if they were in her situation. Five students from 13 answered the question in this level. Just three students mastered the application level of Bloom's Taxonomy.

- Analysis: In this level of Bloom's Taxonomy, the students were requested to find the cultural and social values which is discussed in the reading.

Seven students of 13 wrote some social and cultural values, and they mastered this level.

- Synthesis: In this level of Bloom's Taxonomy, the students were requested to build two sentences by using some words from what they have read. Eight students of 13 mastered this level of cognitive patterns by building new sentences from some words in reading.

- Evaluation: Three students of 13 were able to evaluate by giving their opinions about the paragraphs' meaning and building; however, their evaluation focuses on positive sides only. This, in turn, showed that the best students in this group were not able to use a critical thinking skill.

As noted from the students' responses to Bloom's Taxonomy questions, few students mastered the high levels of cognitive skills (application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) in comparison to the low levels of remembering and comprehension. The participants in the current study had studied this reading topic "Mikas's Homestay in London" during the first year so that they were familiar to the words and meaning of this topic.

However, the requirements in this time were different from the traditional questions and reading demands. At this points, the researcher required the students to give their feedbacks about the patterns of questions on the reading based on Bloom's Taxonomy and how these questions could develop the way to master the reading task.

5.1 The Participants' Feedback

After they answered the six questions, the participants were requested to give their feedback, their strategies of reading when they read the questions, and their role of questions to the learning process.

According to the students' feedback, several themes and aspects were emerged from the students' feedback as follows:

- A different and effective strategy of understanding of reading passage. It motivates students to express their understanding freely by using their own words.

- This opportunity to reflect on the topic details was not offered by traditional and common strategy and questions.

- Using Bloom's Taxonomy level gives students opportunities to discuss, evaluate, and make perspective. Students are not compelled in particular answers.

- It is difficult to deal with these kinds of questions so that its demands put high level of cognitive abilities to understanding the topic and answering the questions.

- Dealing with knowledge in this way was exciting and enjoyable.

- Exciting strategy to learn but needs extensive / more practices during classroom to be familiar to Bloom's Taxonomy.

5.2 Interpretation and Discussion

The analysis of the data obtained revealed the following findings as:

- Most participants in the current study faced difficulties to responding to the questions based on Bloom's Taxonomy. This in turn provides evidence for the absence of Bloom's Taxonomy practices during teaching and evaluation processes.

- The shared aspects and themes that students provided regarding to their first experience with Bloom's Taxonomy skills could encourage teachers and educators in our educational environment to apply this hierarchical taxonomy. Such cognitive skills and activities would make students more active learner than what other traditional method does.

- Referring to the main target of the educational process, the application of Bloom's Taxonomy to teaching and evaluation processes provides effective strategy to move the learning process from focusing on

knowledge to focusing on building and developing students' critical thinking. The purpose of education is to develop students' thinking styles.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings obtained, the researcher is presenting the following recommendations regarding Bloom's Taxonomy:

- It is necessary that teachers build an educational guide for each lesson which contains teaching goals in different levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.
- Teachers may plan their lessons and teaching practices in light of levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.
- Teachers may build their exams and evaluation tools in light of levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.
- Students should be trained by analyzing the topic according to Bloom's Taxonomy.
- The extent to which educational practices are successful should be based on Bloom's Taxonomy.

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Metacognition to Enhance Libyan Students' Reading Comprehension in Libyan schools: Case Study on Secondary Schools in Ajdabyia

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Abstract

Reading is one the language skills that has less attention in studies and research. Therefore, this study is directed to explore the effectiveness of metacognition in improving the reading skill in Libyan schools. The study aims to highlight the problems that English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers face when teaching reading comprehension to Libyan students in Libyan schools and to suggest ways to reduce or eliminate these problems. The current literature review has identified various instructional strategies for improving reading comprehension in school. The researcher has used three methods of investigation: questionnaire, classroom observation, and students' tests (pre-test and post-test). The analysis of data collected from the teachers' questionnaire and the classroom observation has shown that EFL teachers face problems when teaching reading comprehension. The analysis of the two tests has shown that comparing the subjects' scores for the comprehension tests indicated no significant differences found between the two groups' scores on the pre-test for reading comprehension. In conclusion, the researcher has set some recommendations. According to this study, it was evident that teaching students the modern reading comprehension strategies has a greater effect in improving and developing reading comprehension in school.

Keywords*: Metacognition; comprehension; reader; reading strategies.*

1. Introduction

Reading is one the four language skills that is concerning with the part of receptive besides listening. In contrast to speaking and writing, which are productive, reading is an activity that requires learners to read without showing and traces of their level of English. When we talk about reading, we talk about comprehension because reading a text does not show the proficiency of English a learner has. Reading comprehension shows how competent a learner is. It shows whether a learner understands what he has already read or not. Thus, the focus on reading comprehension is necessary as an active to be taught from early stages in school. As research and studies show the skill of reading comprehension is almost lack in Libyan schools, so this study is dedicated to cover this ignored part.

2. Literature Review

Reading is the act of understanding what someone is reading. Reading is one of the main skills that EFL learners should learn in their learning process. Learning to read is not an easy job as many students and teachers think; reading is considered an intellectual activity and important to other skills like writing, speaking vocabulary, and grammar. Many EFL teachers pay no attention to the role of reading when they teach English. Several studies have focused on the relationship between metacognition and reading comprehension. The findings of this study show that metacognitive strategies have a significant effect on the perception of written texts.

2.1 Metacognition and EFL Reading Comprehension

Studies and research show that metacognition is very important for good readers. Being a good reader means one knows how, when and where to use these reading strategies. These kinds of strategies guide the reading before, during, and after reading. However, these strategies require good instruction

and training. The teachers' job is to help the students how to use these strategies effectively. These strategies include prior knowledge activation, taking notes, recognizing text structure, highlighting important information, and summarizing. Good readers must utilize their metacognitive knowledge and control to ensure successful comprehension.

The development of metacognition is an important focus of education which describes and promotes strategic learning. Harris and Hodges (Cited in Israel, 2007) define metacognition as "thinking about ones' thoughts" (p. 1). Flavel (1976) asserts that "metacognition includes: active monitoring, consequent regulation and orchestration of information processing activities" (p. 232).

Metacognition involves planning and thinking about learning where the important goal of any EFL teacher is to enable students to become strategic readers. Metacognitive skills play a strategic role in developing reading skills and the overall communication. Schraw (Cited in Hudson, 2007) argues that "Metaconitive skills help students to understand and regulate performance on task" (p. 112).

Hence, it is essential that EFL teachers encourage students to become more strategic readers inside and outside the classroom. Pressley and Afflerbach (Cited in Israel, 2007) found that "expert readers and highly skilled readers use specific metacognitive strategies before, during, and after reading to aid their comprehension and understanding of the text being read" (p. 3). A good and experienced reader is the one who tends to use the most effective strategies that leads him to complete processing of the text.

Readers must have sufficient metacognitive awareness in order to develop, select, and use the strategies which lead them to successful reading

comprehension. Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman, (2007, p. 3) suggest the skills and strategies that good readers use as:

1. Rapid and accurate word reading;

2. Setting goals for reading;

3. Noting the structure and organization of text;

4. Creating mental notes and summaries;

5. Making prediction about what will happen, checking them as they go along, revising, and evaluating them as needed;

6. Monitor their understanding while reading;

7. Capitalizing on what they know about the topic and integrating that with new learning;

8. Making inferences; and

9. Using mental images such as visualizing to assist them in understanding events or characters.

These strategies are very important and can lead to meaningful comprehension of a reading text, but they require effective training and instruction. Reading strategies suggest how readers interact with written text and how strategies are related to text comprehension. Metacognitive strategies tend to focus on student-centered reading. Flavel et al. (Cited in Hudson, 2007) point out that

metacognitive knowledge involves a knowledge of persons, tasks and strategies. Knowledge of persons includes cognitive differences between and within people. Knowledge of tasks involves comprehending the inherent demands of task and understanding the nature of information encountered. Knowledge of strategies involves

the strategies for monitoring one's cognitive process and how to remedy comprehension failures. (pp. 112-113)

This means that reading strategies seem to be very necessary in any reading lesson because they are used to self-regulate the reading process. Pressley (2000); Brown, Eldinary and Afflerbach (Cited in Cubukcu, 2008) state that "through metacognitive strategies, a reader allocates significant attention to controlling, monitoring and evaluating the reading process" (p. 85).

Metacognitive strategies enable students to plan and monitor their learning. It is essential for EFL teachers to integrate metacognitive strategies in their teaching and to encourage their students to become independent strategic and expert readers. Palinscar (Cited in Cubuku, 2008) suggests that "an effective reading instruction program requires the identification of complementary strategies that are modeled by an expert and acquired by the learner in a context reinforcing the usefulness of such strategies" (p. 86).

Good readers use the comprehension strategies to facilitate the construction of meaning. Flavel (Cited in Israel, 2007) identifies the three primary functions of metacognition as "knowledge, procedural and executive" (p. 3). Metacognitive knowledge involves the understanding of reading strategies and skills. Procedural allows the reader to understand the way to use the strategies. Executive means the actual application of strategies.

Similarly, Pressley and Afflerbach (Cited in Israel, 2007) point out that "metacognitive strategy used to aid reading comprehension can be divided into three types: planning strategies, monitoring strategies and evaluation strategies" (pp. 6-7). This means that the reader follows multiple strategies

prior, during, and after reading. The next part will show the most important strategies expert readers use in comprehending a reading text.

2.2 Metacognitive Instructional Strategies

It is important to define what the term strategy means and how it differs from skill. Duffy (Cited in National Reading Panel, 2000) argues that "strategies are not skills that can be taught by drill; they are plans for constructing meaning" (pp. 46-47). In another view, Paris et al (Cited in Hudson, 2007) state that "skills refer to information processing techniques that are automatic and applied to text unconsciously. Whereas strategies are actions selected deliberately to achieve a particular goals" (p. 106).

Teachers who desire to improve their students' reading comprehension must take into account the modern reading comprehension strategies. These strategies include setting purposes for reading, activating background knowledge, making predictions, asking questions, identifying main ideas, and summarizing texts. Teaching reading strategies put a great emphasis on what the EFL teacher does before, during, and after reading.

It is necessary for EFL teachers to focus on the most important strategies that are supposed to be taught before reading. They have to do a number of things in order to prepare their students for the reading lesson. Graves, Calfee, Graves, and Juel (Cited in Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman, 2007, pp. 103-104) suggest six strategies that teachers should use prior to reading:

1. setting purposes for reading;
2. motivating students to read;
3. pre-teaching key vocabulary and concepts;
4. linking students' background knowledge and experiences with reading;
5. relating the reading texts to students' lives; and
6. building students' knowledge of the text features;

Before reading, the teachers have to define the purpose of reading very accurately to the students. There are different purposes of reading the EFL teachers must adopt before reading. These purposes involve reading for information, reading for language learning, performing tasks or for pleasure. Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman, (2007) suggests that "providing students with a goal for reading is a guide to the task they will be asked to engage in after reading" (p. 104). Simply, in many cases, setting a purpose for reading is a very important strategy because it guides students for what purpose they are reading.

Another strategy that EFL teachers can use prior to reading which is text previewing. The purpose of text previewing is to provide students with the most important information and to bring their experiences to the text. Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman (2007) state that "text preview is a technique that motivates students for understanding by providing a structure in which they can integrate prior knowledge with text" (p. 104). Teachers can do a number of procedures to preview the reading text effectively. Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman (p. 105) identify three steps for involving in the text preview:

1. Reading a short selection from the text or provide interesting information about reading.

2. Giving a brief description of the theme.

3. Asking questions to guide reading.

Before reading, the EFL teacher should teach the students to preview text by looking at the topic, headings, and the pictures. Teachers can also encourage students to use the K-W-L chart to help them record what they already know about the topic. The purpose of previewing a text is to provide access to background knowledge.

Prediction strategy is one of most effective strategies that helps to improve reading comprehension. Duke and Pearson (2002) state that "the teachers who present students with oral previews of stories, which then turned into discussion and prediction will help them to increase their comprehension" (p. 213). Making prediction can also help students to activate prior knowledge.

Monitoring comprehension strategies are other effective strategies that help prevent the reader from comprehension failure and help him be a good strategic reader. When comprehension breaks down, good readers know how to use comprehension strategies that maintain comprehension. These strategies help students monitor their understanding while reading the text. Paris et al. (Cited in Texas Reading Initiative A, 2002) suggest that "the strategies that can be used to repair comprehension include: rereading, reading headings, clarifying words by looking them up in dictionary or asking someone for help" (p. 10).

Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman (2007, p. 108) also state that teachers can assist students in monitoring their understanding by carrying out the following strategies:

1. Encourage students to monitor their understanding while they read and to make notes of difficult words or ideas.

2. Ask students questions during reading to guide and focus their understanding.

3. Ask students to summarize the main ideas of passage as they read.

4. Remind students to consider predictions made prior to reading and confirm them.

5. Give students opportunities to respond to and elaborate on what they have read.

6. Ask students to formulate questions about what they have read and then to answer these questions.

7. Ask students to summarize the key ideas about their reading.

The questioning strategy is one of the strategies that can be used by skilled teachers during reading because it can help students understand and make connections with a text. The importance of generating and answering questions is to help students think about what they have read. Asking questions while reading is valuable because it helps them integrate relevant information and to identify main ideas. It can be more effective if the teacher provides his students with ample time in order to help them answer the questions more accurately.

Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman (2007) state that "it is important not only for teachers to ask good questions but also to provide time for students to ask and answer their questions" (p. 119). Good readers ask many questions before, during, and after reading. Asking questions is a good way to monitor comprehension and to understand the main ideas in the text. EFL teachers should encourage their students to generate and answer their own questions, which will in turn help them better understand what they read. Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman (2007) suggest that "question-answer relationships (QARs) help students to analyze teacher initiated-questions and to create their own questions. QARs include: right there, think and search, author and you and on your own" (p. 110).

QARs help students understand the teacher-initiated questions and answer them according to the information required. "Right there" means the reader will find the answers of the questions somewhere in the text. "Think

and search" means that the student answers the question by integrating information from more than one place. "Author and you" means that the students answer the questions from their own experience. This means that students are required to answer the questions using some information from the text and from their own experiences.

Text structure strategy is very important in reading comprehension. Text structure refers to the way that events are organized within the story. Dickson, Simmson, and Kame'enui (Cited in Texas Reading Initiative A, 2002) state that "the ability to identify and take advantage of text organization can contribute to students' comprehension" (p. 12). The EFL teachers ought to teach the students how to recognize story structure through using different graphic organizers. Story map is considered as one of the most effective graphic organizers which help the teacher to easily arrange the events of the story.

In this regard, Kamil (Cited in National Institute for Literacy, 2006) states that "teachers can model graphic organizers to show different categories of expository texts and to use the various organizers to record and organize important information from the text they are reading" (p. 23). The story map shows a sequence of events within the story.

Think aloud strategy is another strategy used for improving reading comprehension. Duke and Pearson (2002) argue that "think aloud involves making ones' thoughts audible, publicly saying what you are thinking while you are performing a task. The teachers demonstrate the reading strategies and as importantly, when and when not to apply them" (p. 214). Think aloud practice is very important in reading comprehension. It involves making one's thoughts audible by saying what you are thinking while you are performing a task.

Another strategy that EFL teachers should teach to the students while reading is to identify the main ideas of the text because it enables students to know how to synthesize a large amount of information and put it into one single idea. According to William (Cited in Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman, 2007), "knowing how to construct the main idea of what is read is essential because it helps students to easily distinguish between important information and details" (p. 116). Paragraph shrinking is one of the strategies that helps students identify the main idea. Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman (2007, p. 118) propose three steps of paragraph shrinking as:

1. Identifying the subject of the paragraph by looking for who or what the paragraph is about.
2. Stating the most important information.
3. Saying the main idea in ten or fewer words.

Teaching students to summarize texts is important because it helps students improve reading comprehension. Duke and Pearson (2002) state that "summarizing information requires readers to sift through large units of text, differentiate important information from unimportant ideas, and they synthesize those ideas and create a new coherent text that stands for the original" (p. 220). The National Reading Panel (Cited in Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman, 2007, p. 119) proposes five rules that students must use to write summaries as:

1. Delete trivial information.
2. Delete redundant information.
3. Use one word to replace a list of related items.
4. Select a topic sentence.
5. Invent a topic sentence if one is not explicitly related.

Teaching students to summarize the text after reading helps students focus on content, distinguish between important ideas and less important ideas and, remember what they read. The following section discusses the most important approaches through which these strategies can be taught.

2.3 Approaches to Strategy Instruction

There are three effective approaches suggested for teaching reading strategies that EFL teachers must use in enabling students to become strategic readers. The three approaches are reciprocal teaching, transactional strategies instruction, and collaborative strategic reading.

Reciprocal Teaching

Reciprocal teaching developed by Palincsar and Brown (Cited in Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman, 2007) states that "reciprocal teaching is built on four strategies which good readers use to comprehend a text: they are predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing" (p. 131). The EFL teacher should teach students to use these strategies individually or collaboratively. In this regard, Oczkus (2010) argues that "the four strategies are a part of comprehension reading program that is based on all strategies that good readers use, such as previewing, questioning, visualizing, knowing how words work, summarizing" (p. 114).

By using these four strategies, the students learn how to set purposes for reading, how to critically evaluate and monitor themselves, and how to find the main ideas in the text. The teachers who teach reading using reciprocal teaching must focus on these four strategies as they are the most effective strategies that are widely used by good readers. Brown and Palincsar (Cited in Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman, 2007) claim that

In reciprocal teaching, the students learn new skills through some guidance from expert or more capable partner. This guidance is

called scaffolding teaching which assist the students to accomplish tasks that they could not complete by themselves. Eventually the scaffolding can be removed and the students will be able to complete the task independently. (p. 131)

In reciprocal teaching, the teacher begins the lesson with a brief discussion on how to implement these strategies, then scaffolding his students to use these strategies while reading till they become more proficient users. Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman (2007) point out that "reciprocal teaching includes three essential components: dialogue, comprehension strategies and scaffolding" (p. 132). The teachers who are teaching reading strategies should begin the lesson by asking students to read a selected paragraph from the text, then asking them to make predictions about what will happen next. They should also encourage their students to ask questions about the content of reading and to write summaries of the selected paragraph.

The scaffolding of instruction is very important because it can guide the students while they use the strategies until they gradually become proficient in using strategies. Rosenshine and Meister (Cited in Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman, 2007) reviewed 16 studies on reciprocal teaching and found that "it was more successful when it included direct teaching of the four reading strategies" (p. 132). Reciprocal teaching allows students to develop skills in making predictions, asking questions, clarification, and creating summaries.

Transactional Strategy Instruction

Transactional strategy instruction developed by Pressley and colleagues (Cited in Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman, 2007) suggests that "transactional strategy instruction is a comprehensive, high intensity long term approach by which teachers provides support and guidance to students

as they apply strategies" (p. 155). Transactional strategy instruction is like reciprocal teaching; the teachers provide students with support and guidance in order to become self-regulated users of strategies. In transactional strategy instruction, the teacher teaches students to use multiple strategies flexibly. The aim here is to increase both self-regulated use of strategies and reading comprehension. Pressley (Cited in Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman, 2007) argues that:

> Three theories are used to describe the notion of transactional strategy instruction. Reader response theory (Rosenbalt, 1978) which emphasizes that meaning does not reside in the text only but requires previous knowledge and experiences. Developmental psychology theory (Bell, 1993) transactional means the importance of interactions with others during the learning process. Organizational psychology theory (Hutchins, 1991) meaning that emerges as teacher and students use strategies together to read and comprehend text collaboratively produced by everyone in the group. (pp. 136-137)

The above view stresses the notion of transactional strategy instruction and its effectiveness in the construction of meaning from a reading text. It also takes into account the role of background knowledge activation and cooperative learning. Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman (2007) suggest that "the underpinning of strategy instruction can be found in cognitive psychology" (p. 136). Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman (2007, p. 136) identify some implications from cognitive psychology as:

1. Students learn the strategies used by a capable thinker to accomplish tasks.

2. Instruction begins with explanation, modeling of strategies, followed by support.

3. Strategy practice typically continues for long time, until the strategy can be implemented with little effort.

4. Strategy instruction includes metacognitive information about when and where to use the strategy.

It is also important for EFL teachers to know how to implement the transactional strategy instruction within the classroom. Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman (2007, p. 138) state that transactional strategies instruction consists of three phases as:

1. Explanation and modeling: The teacher defines and explains the selected strategy to the students, models its usage, and emphasizes why the strategy is helpful.

2. Practice and coaching: The teacher provides students with opportunities for practice and feedback.

3. Transfer of responsibility: The teacher continues to coach students until they become completely proficient users.

In transactional strategy instruction, the teacher begins teaching the reading lesson by defining and explaining the strategy that he wants to teach and provides students with opportunities for practicing the strategy until the students become proficient users. The only difference is that in transactional strategies instruction, the students learn to use numerous strategies flexibly rather than a single strategy.

Anderson (Cited in Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman, 2007) conducted a study on the effectiveness of transactional strategy instruction and found that "students who learned comprehension strategies were more willing to

challenge material, collaborate with classmates during reading and respond to it" (p. 137). This means that teaching students to use multiple strategies can be more effective than teaching individual strategies. In this vein, Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman (2007, pp. 140-141) suggest six strategies in transactional strategy instruction as:

1. Predicting: Asking students to make prediction from the title, pictures, and headings.

2. Questioning: Students generate and answer questions about the passage.

3. Clarification: When the text does not make sense, the students select a strategy to help clarify the confusing text.

4. Activating background knowledge: Asking students questions to share what they know about a topic.

5. Visualizing: Students create mental images that represent text content.

6. Summarizing: Students required to recall and arrange only the important ideas in the text.

Transactional strategies instruction is a flexible approach to teach reading comprehension. Students are taught a variety of strategies and how to efficiently adapt the learned strategies to interact with the text to construct meaning.

Collaborative Strategic Reading

Collaborative strategic reading is an approach that can be used for teaching reading comprehension strategies. In collaborative strategic reading, all students have opportunities to interact as group members to learn from the text. The teacher teaches students how to use reading comprehension strategies while they work collaboratively in groups. As with reciprocal teaching, the teacher gives the strategy and gives a brief

description on how to use the strategy, and through scaffolding, the students will become proficient in using strategies. Klinger and Vaughn (1998, p. 33) explain that collaborative reading strategies include the follows:

1. Preview: The purpose is to help students identify what the text is about and tap into their prior knowledge. Teachers help students with previewing by using pictures and headings.

2. Click and clunk: Students use clicks when they understand information and use clunk when it does not make a sense. Students work together to figure out clunk words and sentences using fix-up strategies like rereading sentences without the word, break the word into smaller parts, or look for prefixes and suffixes.

3. Get the gist: Students synthesize the information and identify the main ideas of the paragraph.

4. Wrap-up: Students learn to formulate questions and answers about what they have learned. Students ask questions about important information using Wh-questions.

The above strategies can guide the students before, during, and after reading. It is necessary for students to preview the passage before they read it. Previewing helps students activate their background knowledge about the topic and help them make logical predictions about what will happen next. Teachers can help their students preview texts by looking at the topic, illustrations, headings, and pictures. Click and clunk is designed to teach students to pay attention when they fail to understand what they are reading. After the students identify the unknown words and unclear sentences, they can use fix-up strategies to help them repair comprehension.

Getting the gist is another strategy that can be used to identify the most important points in the text as a way to ensure that students have understood

what they have read. When a teacher asks students to get the gist, this leads them to identify the most important ideas in the paragraph using their own words. Wrap-up is an important strategy that helps students ask and answer questions about the important ideas in the text they have read. The goal of the strategy is to improve comprehension and memory.

EFL teachers should encourage students to use reading strategies while they are working in groups. According to Klinger and Vaughn (1998) "with collaborative strategic reading instruction all students have the chance to try out different roles such as leader, clunk expert, gist expert, encourager and time keeper" (p. 35). With collaborative strategic reading, every student has a chance to try out all the roles. These roles are important for a collaborative strategic reading because through cooperative learning each student has the opportunity to participate and take part in his self-independent learning. Klinger, Vaughn, and Boardman (2007, p. 146) identify the advantages of cooperative learning in the follows:

1. Positive interdependence.

2. Considerable face-to-face interaction among students.

3. Individual accountability.

4. Positive social skills.

5. Self, as well as group, evaluation or reflection.

Collaborative strategic reading is designed to improve reading comprehension and to maximize the students' involvement in the learning process. Implementing collaborative strategic reading, students work in small groups of 4-5 students and support each other in applying sequence of reading strategies.

3. Methodology of the Study

Two types of data collection methods were used in this study. They are qualitative and quantitative methods and three sub-methods were used within these two major methods. They are described as follows:

1. Qualitative Method:

Two qualitative methods selected for data collection: teacher's questionnaire and classroom observation.

Teacher's questionnaire: In order to obtain findings on the instruction of reading binding and generalize after the study, the researcher conducted a survey-questionnaire. It was mixed in nature. Both structured and unstructured questions were asked. In a sense, the questions were both open and close ended. The questions reflect the reading comprehension instructional strategies.

Classroom observation: The researcher conducted an evaluation of the entire teaching. The classroom observation was conducted to investigate and evaluate the teaching activities of EFL teachers regarding reading comprehension strategies instruction.

2. Quantitative Method:

One quantitative method was selected for data collection which is the students' test (pre-test and post-test). Surveys through questionnaire and classroom observation were thought in sufficient to understand the problems of reading and to suggest better strategies. With this in mind, the researcher thought it was appropriate to meet the students and conduct a quasi-experiment to test the workability of the advanced reading instructional strategies put forward by experts.

3.1 Sample of the Study

Thirty teachers picked up randomly from secondary schools in Ajdabyia were sampled for the survey. Ten teachers were selected for the observation. The researcher sampled students for the quasi-experimental study. One school was selected through the random sampling technique for the quasi-experimental study, 40 students were randomly selected to take part in the test.

4. Data Analysis

Different techniques of data analysis were used. The techniques were both statistical and non-statistical analysis. The statistical technique was used to calculate the data obtained from closed-ended questions. On the other hand, descriptive and content analysis was used to analyze the responded open-ended questions in the survey questionnaire, classroom observation schedule, and students' reading comprehension tests (pre and post-tests).

5. Findings of the Study

This study examined the effectiveness of the instructional strategies in improving the students' reading skill. It was hypothesized that the investigation and the analysis of the problems that EFL teachers face in teaching reading will significantly help produce better teaching approaches for teachers. The following findings have been obtained:

- The findings of this study indicated that teaching students the modern reading comprehension strategies had a significant effect on their reading comprehension and performance.

- The experiment conducted by the researcher has revealed that teaching students multiple strategies can help them overcome reading problems and enable them to be strategic and independent readers.

- Comparing the subjects' scores for the comprehension tests indicated that there were no significant differences found between the two groups' scores on the pre-test for reading comprehension while for the post-test, the experimental group scored significantly higher than the control group.

6. Recommendations

From the findings obtained in the study, the following recommendations have been made to enhance the teaching of reading comprehension, to eradicate all the problems that EFL teachers face when reading comprehension, and to help students become successful readers.

1. The introduction of modern reading comprehension strategies as a better approach for improving students' reading comprehension.

As we already know in order to become a good reader, one should use different reading comprehension strategies. These strategies are called metacognitive strategies. They include setting purposes for reading, making predictions, previewing texts, activating prior knowledge, comprehension monitoring, questioning, clarification, identifying main ideas, text structure, making inference, and summarizing. It is necessary for EFL teachers to teach students how to use these strategies. They must provide explicit instruction on each of these strategies. Then they scaffold their students until they become independent readers.

2. The provision of teaching technologies for teaching reading comprehension inside and outside the classroom.

The integration of teaching technologies into reading instruction has a positive impact in developing the literacy skills like phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary instruction, reading fluency, and text comprehension. The technologies that the teacher may use in the teaching of reading include computer software, Internet, radio, DVD, multimedia, and audio books. These technologies bring excitement into the classroom and enable students to learn successfully.

3. The provision of opportunities for students to practice reading inside and outside the classroom.

One of the most effective ways of improving the reading skill is to provide chances for students to practice reading. Different reading styles that the teachers may use with their students such as skimming for general ideas, scanning for specific information, intensive reading, extensive reading (wide reading), and silent reading. Each of the following has an effect on improving the students' reading. In addition to the reading styles, the teacher can also develop the students' reading by applying some reading fluency strategies like paired reading, modeled fluent reading, computer assisted reading, and reader theatre. These reading fluency strategies can help students to improve their reading speed and increase their comprehension.

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Autonomous Learning Readiness and Its Relationship with English Language Performance among EFL Libyan Secondary School Students in Malaysia

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Abstract

This study examined students' readiness to learning autonomy in English language learning from four major perspectives: ability, responsibility, motivation, and involvement in independent activities. This study also investigated the learning autonomy, and how it connects and influences students' English language performance. Two theories were used; Self-Determination Theory by Deci and Ryan (1985) and Student-Centred Learning Environments Theory by Hannafin and Land (1997). The data were collected from four Libyan secondary schools in Malaysia. The sample of the study consists of 103 students selected to answer the questionnaire and ten for interviews. All the data collected were analyzed by (SPSS) version 24 and Nvivo pro 10. The findings showed that the Libyan secondary school students were ready to carry out autonomous language learning and were willing to learn English autonomously, as their motivational level is significantly high. In addition, there was a significant relationship between autonomous learning readiness and students' language performance.

Keywords: *English foreign language autonomy; language performance; Libyan secondary school*

1. Introduction

For many decades, scholars have regarded learner autonomy as the major area of focus for empirical studies, particularly in the domain of English as a foreign language (Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012). A lot of studies can be traced, outlining the importance of learner autonomy and its implications. Language instructors have therefore started giving much importance to students in order to ensure that their needs are met effectively. This collectively has given rise to the idea of learner autonomy that asserts language learning as a cooperative process between teachers and learners rather than a set of guidelines transferred from teachers to learners. Holec (1981), the father of learner autonomy, gave the idea of learner autonomy for the first time in the domain of foreign language.

In principle, it was formulated for Council of Europe under the title of Autonomy in Foreign Language Learning. The idea was pushed for encouraging learners to have more autonomy and responsibility towards their learning. The concept expected and motivated learners to express ownership by being given the autonomy and responsibility of their work (Holec, 1979). According to Holec (1981), learners may be provided with full autonomy and responsibility when it comes to making decisions pertaining to their learning and learning styles.

Several studies have been conducted in learning autonomy. Research found that learning beyond class can develop learners' metacognitive and self-direction skills (Fuchs, Hauck and Müller-Hartmann, 2012; Cotterall & Murray, 2009). Bahrani and Sim (2011) found out that EFL speaking fluency can be improved by using TV news. Media is anywhere now so learners to use it autonomously in order to improve their fluency of the English language. Myartawan, Latief, Suharmanto (2013) conducted a study to investigate whether there is a correlation between learner autonomy and

English proficiency of EFL Indonesian college students. Their findings revealed that there was a highly significant relationship between learner autonomy and English proficiency. However, no literature is available regarding learner autonomy in the Libyan context. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate if there is a relationship between EFL Libyan secondary school students' autonomous learning readiness and their English language performance.

2. Literature Review

In the field of language learning, learner autonomy concept plays a significant role. An emphasis is put on the new form of learning which enables learners to direct their own learning (Orawiwatnakul and Wichadee, 2017). A main element of language learning is learner autonomy, and it has established a great deal of consideration from L2 researchers and practitioners over the years (Dam, 2011). It is related to boarding the path of self-directed learning through which the learner takes advantage.

According to Gardner and Miller (1996), autonomous language learners can initiate the planning and implement their own learning program. They set specific targets and goals for themselves and try to achieve these goals by taking opportunities while in and out of the classrooms. This thing motivates learners to move from the unconscious performance of a task to fully conscious learning. Therefore, acquiring how to learn is an important component of all self-sufficient learning schemes (Little, 2007), that shows progress and interprets individual learning performance (Benson, 2013).

These studies have tended to focus on examining the readiness of learner autonomy rather than the behavioral intention to complete a course (Rienties, and others, 2012). There are few empirical researches investigating whether Asian students have the tendency for autonomy.

Chan, Spratt, and Humphreys (2002) instructed a questionnaire to 508 university students in Hong Kong to find out this issue, taking the relationship between autonomy and motivation into consideration. Their development of the questionnaire was strongly influenced by Holec's (1981) idea of autonomy.

The questionnaire comprised concepts of ability and responsibility operating in five main areas: determining objectives, defining contents and developments, selecting methods and techniques to be used, monitoring the way out of acquisition, and evaluating what has happened. The results of the questionnaire specified that students have readiness for autonomy to some extent and motivation seems to be a requirement for their autonomy.

However, it was not clear whether these results can be universal to Asian students in other contexts, who have less opportunity to use English outside the class. Therefore, Rungwaraphong (2012) examined readiness for autonomy in students at a university in Thailand. He examined three aspects related to learner autonomy, learner's insights of teacher's roles and of themselves, locus of control and strategies employed by learners in their learning process. The findings found that learners take responsibility for their learning not only because they are intrinsically responsible, but they are forced by some other external factors. Grading systems, performance scores, and class rules are some of the external factors that force the learners to be responsible for their learning.

2.1 Autonomy and Language Proficiency

In understanding learner autonomy, it is important to consider not only educational and social contexts, but also the characteristics of each learner. Based on previous studies, it is assumed that students already have a certain degree of autonomy, but each learner is different and that teachers should

employ different approaches to promote autonomy. In English as a foreign language (EFL) environment, obtaining a high score in English tests is an indicator of good achievement. As a result, learners study outside of class, as well as in class in order to obtain good English proficiency. In other words, students need to take responsibility for their learning in order to obtain high scores in tests if they want to be academically successful.

There are a few researches into autonomy and language proficiency. A study by Ohno, Nakamura, Sagara, and Sakai, (2008) have been discovered that good performers tend to be obedient to their teachers and thought that teachers should take responsibility in class management. This finding seems to be contradictory to the notion of autonomy, but those students trusted their teachers and often followed their teachers' instructions. Poor performers tended to be two types of students. One type was indifferent to learning English, and the other type was resistant to accepting their teacher's advice. Sakai and Takagi (2009) found positive correlation between EFL Japanese student readiness to autonomous learning and their English proficiency. Yet, Zarei (2015) revealed that language proficiency is not an influential factor for developing learner autonomy of Iranian EFL learners.

2.2 Theories Related to this Study

The current study uses two theories in the investigation of readiness to learning autonomy. The theories are Student-Centered Learning Environments Theory (Hannafin and Land, 1997) and Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan 1985). The following section discusses these theories in detail:

2.1.1 Student-centered Learning Environments Theory

Learning environments, directed as well as constructivist, are rooted in five core foundations: (1) psychological (2) pedagogical (3) technological

(4) cultural, and (5) pragmatic (Hannafin, Hannafin, Land, and Oliver, 1997). According to Johnsen and Land (2012), hypothetical establishments of learning conditions clarified these establishments as mental stress hypothesis and research identified with how people think and learn. For instance, behavioral brain science and subjective brain science frame the foundation mental establishments of conventional direct guideline.

Besides educational framework the affordances and exercises connected to relating cognitive learning. For example, grounded academic techniques steady with behaviorist's presumptions ought to reflect objective based, progressively sorted out, and firmly built reaction criticism. Cognitively based pedagogical basis may reflect external strategies associated with Gagne's (1985) internal guided events.

Third, technological basis influences how media can support, hinder, or enhance the learning environment. A variety of media can be expanded to support learning in many ways, but deployment of technology is linked to the epistemological framework in specific ways. Technology can control the pacing of information where cognitive limitations are assumed. Technological foundations determine what is technologically possible and what is not, but basic practice requires determination of how capabilities should be expanded. In grounded design, the way in which technology is utilized depends on its appropriateness to the particular epistemological expectations of provided learning environment.

Fourth, cultural foundations reflect the prevailing values of a learning community. Learning environments that are practice-oriented, such as engineering, business, and medical schools, might emphasize case based, laboratory- based or project-based methods for solving difficult and realistic issues. Finally, practical foundations accentuate the reconciling of available resources and constraints with the actual design of any provided learning

environment. Many schools, for example, perceive the benefits of counselling teachers, students, and administrators around the globe.

Practical foundations represent the reality of learning environment design and their implementation. During student-centered learning, individuals undertake responsibility for defining learning goals, observing progress toward meeting goals, adjusting approaches as warranted, and determining when their goals have been adequately addressed. This can be particularly challenging in learning from the World Wide Web (WWW), where billions of resources address a variety of needs. The individual must identify which resources are available and appropriate, how to accumulate them, and how to manage the process to support exclusive learning goals (Hannafin and Hannafin, 2010).

Hannafin, Land, and Oliver (1999) defined student-centered activity during open learning where the locus of activity and control shifts from external to individual responsibility for establishing learning goals a determining learning means. Consequently, the cognitive demands shift from selecting externally organized stimuli to anticipation based on individual wants and goals. In many examples, the related cognitive shifts have proven problematic when students lack required self-regulation skills. Researchers have noted that students failed to develop theories or explanations and retained misconceptions (De Jong and Van Joolingen, 1998), to reflect or enact metacognitive processes (Atkins and Blissett, 1992; Hill and Hannafin, 1997).

In spite of increases in availability and improved availability, metadata standards propose only limited pedagogical utility for student-oriented, Web-based learning. The fundamental student-oriented learning task classifying candidate means appropriate to an individual's need is complicated by the raw number of false hits generated by typical search

engines. Research is needed to develop and refine alternative metadata standards that cover student-oriented learning and to refine and customize search engine technology capable of identifying user-relevant means (Hannafin and Hannafin, 2010).

2.1.2 Self-Determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) was developed by researchers Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan in 1985. This theory deals with human motivation, personality, and ideal functioning. Rather than just the amount of motivation, self-determination theory focuses on different types of motivation. Self-determination theory maintains that an understanding of human motivation needs a consideration of innate psychological needs for competency, autonomy, and affiliation. Self-determination theory formulates that the promotion of more effective learning is achieved when the learner is intrinsically motivated in an autonomy-supportive environment.

In academic settings, the concept of autonomy is present, as described in self-determination theory Deci and Ryan (1985) means that the teacher takes the learners' perspective, recognizes their feelings, and delivers them with relevant information and opportunities, however reducing the use of pressure. Self-determination theory proposes an exceptional view for understating how autonomy supportive climate can promote intrinsic motivation through supporting the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

People have three basic psychological needs: competency, affiliation, and autonomy. First, the need for competency means the desire to control and master the environment and outcome. One wants to know how things will turn out and what the results are of our actions. Second, the need for

affiliation pacts with the desire to interact, be connected to, and experience caring for others. Our actions and daily activities involve other people and through this we pursue the feeling of belongingness.

Third, the need for autonomy alarms with the urge to be causal agents and to act in agreement with integrated self. To be autonomous does not mean to be independent. According to self-determination theory, motivation is shaped by three basic human needs: the need for autonomy, the need for competency, and the need for affiliation; that is, the need to be part of a social world (Deci and Ryan, 1985). Postulating a need for autonomy is a central principle of self-determination theory; in turn, the need for autonomy is important to intrinsic motivation, a construct that has strongly shaped the motivational research landscape and plays an important role in motivated learning behavior (Deci and Moller, 2005; Deci and Ryan, 2008; Deci and Ryan, 2010; Vallerand, Fortier, and Guay, 1997).

Unambiguously, intrinsic motivation refers to the motivation that arises from the pleasure an activity produces from itself (Deci and Ryan, 1985). Choice appears to play an important part in intrinsically motivated behavior (Deci and Moller, 2005; Deci and Ryan, 1985), in that people appear to derive more pleasure from activities they have chosen to do, as meeting challenges (e.g., Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura, 1989; Danner and Lonky, 1981; Deci and Ryan, 1985). Progressively, self-determination theory has also provided research on language learning and teaching, such as in the field of language learning autonomy (Allford and Pachler, 2007).

The theory's value for exploring language learning motivation has long been accepted (Brown, 1994) and researchers have been looking into the relationship between motivation and learner autonomy (Benson, 2001). Self-determination theory has found a predominantly strong echo in motivational research conducted in the Canadian context; findings propose that intrinsic

motivation is an important variable for exploring students' motivated engagement with language learning (Comanaru and Noels, 2009).

3. Methodology of the Study

The methodology of the study represents the procedures used to conduct this study.

3.1 Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were from a Libyan secondary school in Kajang and Kuala Lumpur which called Klang Valley in Malaysia. 103 students were selected to answer the questionnaire and 10 for interview. The participants were secondary school students from grade one, two, and three. They had been learning English since the fifth grade in public schools.

3.2 Data and Data Collection

Three instruments for the purpose of collecting data were used. The first instrument was a questionnaire adapted from Chan et al. (2002). It was used to find out EFL Libyan students' readiness for autonomous English language learning. The second instrument was an interview to investigate students' perceptions to the learning autonomy. Lastly students' performance measurement was determined by using their results in English language subject in the previous semester. In addition, interview questions created by the researcher were used to obtain students' opinion on the topic. Students' opinion is essential to outline their motivation, readiness and aptitude towards English learning autonomy in the Libyan schools.

Similarly, students were also asked five questions pertaining to their opinions about learner autonomy and issues in English learning autonomy. The responses from the interview were then categorically matched and analysed.

Questionnaire was distributed during the classes. Teachers were notified prior to the distribution. Once the consent was received from the teachers, a brief introduction was given to students regarding the survey in their classrooms. The students were also informed that their participation was voluntary and that they would not be asked to reveal any personal details. The students were also advised that the questionnaire required around 20 minutes to complete and requested to give their honest opinion in this regard. Class teachers were requested to collect the completed questionnaires.

3.3 Questions and Hypothesis of the Study

This study is guided by the following research question:

- Are the students ready for learner autonomy in learning English?
- What are the perceptions of students toward autonomous learning?
- Is there a significant relationship between autonomous learning readiness and English language performance among EFL Libyan secondary school students in Malaysia?

The null hypothesis for this study is as below:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between students' readiness for learner autonomy and their English language performance.

3.4 Objectives of the Study

The study is designed to answer the questions whether the Libyan secondary schools are capable enough to take control of their own learning in their study of English as a foreign language from the perspective of abilities, responsibilities, motivation, and self-determination. the objectives of the study are:

- To investigate students' readiness toward autonomous English language learning;
- To examine students' perceptions towards autonomous English language learning;
- To outline the relationship between EFL Libyan secondary school students' autonomous learning readiness and their English language performance.

4. Findings of the Study

The results of the study are presented according of the sequence of the research questions.

Q1. Are the students ready for learner autonomy in learning English?

To investigate the readiness of students towards learning English autonomy, the researchers developed a semi-structured interview taken from sample of 10 EFL students in Libyan secondary schools in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. The data collected from the interviews with the students were transcribed verbatim in order to analyse the findings. Two questions and three sub questions were asked:

- Do you learn English out of the classroom? What kind of strategy is used to learn English language? How many hours have you spent per day in learning out of the classroom?
- Do you enjoy in learning English? What level of learning English language do you want to reach before you go to university?

Table 1

Students Q1(a) Themes Frequency (students' readiness to learn English autonomy)

Themes	Refs
Do you learn English out of the classroom? What kinds of strategies are used to learn English language? How many hours have you spent per day in learning out of the classroom?	
Sub-Themes	
Yes	10
No	0

Table 2

Students Q1 (b) Themes Frequency (students' readiness to learn English autonomy)

Themes	Refs
Do you enjoy in learning English? What level of learning English language do you want to reach before you go to university?	
Sub-Themes	
Enjoy	9
Hard	1
Sub-Themes	
Advance Level	9
Intermediate Level	1
Themes	**Refs**

Figure 1 Students readiness autonomy to learn English

In Figure 1, the student's readiness to learn English has been estimated through the perspective of learning English out of the classroom or in class

preference. All 10 students preferred out of class leaning better than in class learning. They preferred various activities like speaking English with friends, listening to English music, reading books, watching movies and videos on YouTube. On an average they spend 4 to 6 hours learning English out of class.

Q2. What are the perceptions of students toward autonomous learning?

To investigate the perceptions of students toward autonomous learning, the researcher interviewed 10 EFL students. The data collected from the interviews with the students were transcribed verbatim in order to analyse the findings. To investigate the perceptions of students toward autonomous learning, they were asked two questions and two sub-questions:

- Which do you prefer: learning English in class room or use other materials out of classroom to improve your English? Why?
- Do you do any activity to learn English out of class? If yes, please tell me what are the activities you use to learn English?

Table 3

Students Q2 (a) Themes Frequency (perceptions of students toward autonomous learning)

Themes	Refs
Which do you prefer: learning English in class room or use other materials out of classroom to improve your English? Why?	
Sub-Themes	
In class	0
Out of class	10

Table 4

Students Q2 (b) Themes Frequency (perceptions of students toward autonomous learning)

Themes	Refs
Do you do any activity to learn English out of class? If yes, please tell what the activity are you use to learn English?	
Sub-Themes	
Yes	10
No	0

All 10 students preferred to use other materials out of classroom to improve their English instead of class room learning.
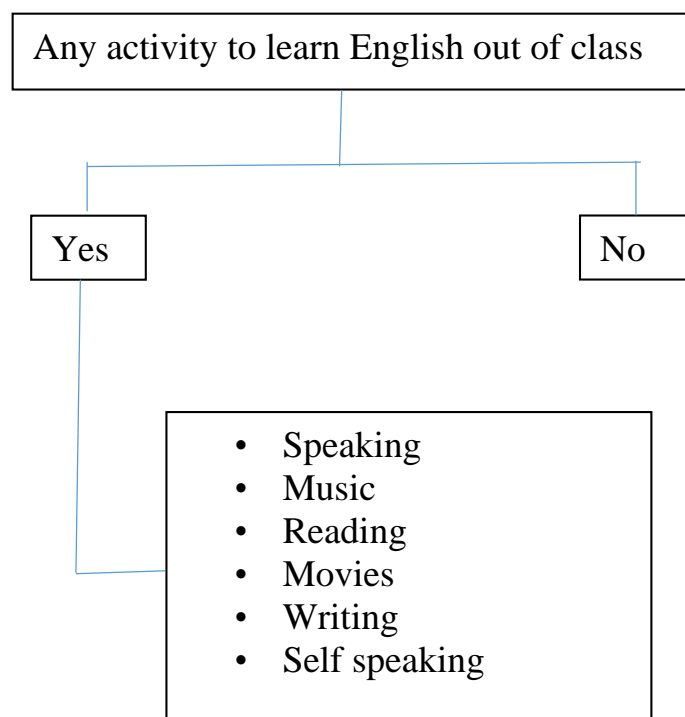
Figure 4: Activities for Learning English out of Class

In figure 4, the student's perceptions of students toward autonomous learning estimated through the perspective of learning English out of the classroom preference. All 10 students have preferred out of class leaning

better than in class learning. They prefer various activities like speaking English with friends, listening to English music, reading books, watching movies and videos on YouTube. This is enhanced by a study conducted by Omar (2014).

Q3. Is there a significant relationship between autonomous learning readiness and English language performance among EFL Libyan secondary school students in Malaysia?

The null hypothesis for this study: There is no significant relationship between students' readiness for learner autonomy and their English language performance.

The Results shows the p-value is smaller than (P>0.05). Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 5

Relationship between students' readiness for learner autonomy and their English language performance.

Coefficientsa						
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P value	R Square
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	22.284	1.902		11.718	0.000	
ALR	0.468	0.110	0.391	4.265	0.000	0.271
a. Dependent Variable: ELP						

Table 5 shows that Autonomous Learning Readiness has a positive significant relationship (t-value 11.718=P-value 0.000) with English Language Performance. The null hypothesis was rejected. R-square value; 0.271 which indicated that model was significant to the explained relationship.

5. Discussion

This study is guided by the following research question:

1. Are the students' ready for learner autonomy in learning English?

2. What are the perceptions of students toward autonomous learning?

3. Is there a significant relationship between autonomous learning readiness and English language performance among EFL Libyan secondary school students in Malaysia?

Research Question One

The first research question examines the student's readiness to learn English autonomously. 10 students were questioned individually. Majority of the students' responded positively and showed their willingness and readiness to learn English autonomously. The interview session revealed that the learners in an English class were ready and confidently willing to accept their responsibility of learning.

The below questions were asked to measure the readiness of students to learn English autonomously:

- Do you learn English out of the classroom? What kinds of strategies are used to learn English language? How many hours have you spent per day in learning out of the classroom?

- Do you enjoy learning English? What level of learning English language do you want to reach before you go to university?

The first question asked students either they wanted to learn English out of class room or inside the class learning, and what were their preferences or choices to learn English language? In answering these questions, all ten students gave positive response that they preferred to learn out of the class by using various methods like speaking with friends, listening to English music, reading English magazines, books and novels. Richards (2015) have categorized language learning into two dimensions: what goes on inside the classroom and what goes on outside of the classroom which seemed to be more interesting from learners' perspective.

This study confirms the findings from previous studies that provided evidence that out-of-class study has a significant role in language learning process and it can enhance learners' educational output in multiple ways (Fathali& Okada, 2017; Lai &Gu, 2011). Out-of-class learning is mainly influenced by self-determined behaviours and self-regulated actions (Reinders, 2014).

The second question was on the interest and self-motivation of the students to learn English autonomously. All the students replied positively and wanted to achieve the highest level of learning. Only one replied that he wanted to reach an intermediate level. The autonomous learning readiness signifies an adult's attentiveness for self-directed learning which is quite high among all students in the sample.

Research Question Two

In the second research question, the perceptions of students towards learning English are examined by two questions:

1. What do you prefer in learning English learning in class room or use other materials out of classroom to improve your English? Why?

2. Do you do any activity to learn English out of class? If yes, what are the activities you do to learn English?

This part of the research relates to the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan which concerns human motivation, personality and optimal functioning. Rather than just the amount of motivation, self-determination theory focuses on different types of motivation. Self-determination theory (SDT) maintains that an understanding of human motivation requires a consideration of innate psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Self-determination enhances the motivation and give a boost to the performance of the individuals. The results in this study conform the theory as ninety percent of the students wanted to achieve the maximum grade and highest level of achievement in EFL.

Research Question Three

The results showed that there is a significant relationship between autonomous learning readiness and English language performance. The results proved that autonomous learning readiness contributed significantly to the English language performance. This is in line with the findings from Rienties and Giesbers et al. (2012).

Earlier studies have tended to focus on examining the level of learner autonomy rather than the behavioural intention to complete a course. There is little empirical research investigating whether Libyan students have the propensity for autonomy. Previous studies showed that the results of the questionnaire indicated that students have readiness for autonomy to some extent, and motivation seemed to be a precondition for their autonomy. However, it was not clear whether these results can be generalized to Libyan students in other contexts, who have less opportunity to use English outside

the class. Hence this study gives a comprehensive example of Libyan students having readiness towards English language learning autonomy.

At a broader level, the current study aims to empirically outline the relationship between learning autonomy and how it connects and influences students` English language performance. This has been significantly achieved, as the sample was suitably chosen from students of Libyan secondary school in Malaysia which were then not only examined by the statistical method of a quantitative study but also by a deeper and broader prospective of a qualitative study.

There were few limitations in the study like it has been tested on population of one type of schools; it can be a limitation of the study. This study investigated the students' readiness for learner autonomy amongst Libyan EFL students is limited in its scope and the results can only be generalized to similar audience i-e EFL students in Libyan secondary schools.

Additionally, only one subject area which is English as a foreign language was used to measure the effect on autonomous learning on the students' performance in English language learning. It is hoped that future research will cover this limitation.

6. Implications

Based on the findings of this study the following are pedagogical and theoretical implications:

6.1 Pedagogical Implications

The current study examines the relationship between autonomous learning readiness and English language performance among EFL students in Libyan secondary schools in Malaysia. The results showed that there was a strong

connection between autonomous learning readiness and English language performance. Hence the pedagogical implications are also very significant in this regard.

As most of the students either surveyed or interviewed favoured autonomous learning and gave their opinion in favour of out of class learning method i.e. autonomous learning, teachers need to have clear guidelines in adopting new ways of learning the English language in EFL class in the Libyan secondary schools.

According to Reeve (2002) there are many pedagogical practices which can give students more confidence in their study and make teachers also competent for what they are going to deliver, develops a sense of relatedness between students and their teachers, and regulate students' behaviours in an intrinsic, rather than a controlled, manner.

Ryan and Deci (2009) argue that the autonomy-supportive practices mean that the students' views and perspective are well understood by the teacher; followed by acknowledgement and respect to students' perspective and ideas; providing them guidance and liberty of thought and pace to think; and minimizes the use of pressure and control, such as task deadlines, performance-based rewards, imposed goals for a given activity, and competition.

Skinner and Belmont (1993) explains the involvement means that teacher understand the students learning objectives and efforts to achieve the targets which should be realistic. Also, she/he knows the students' interests for seeking knowledge so that s/he can embed the knowledge accordingly.

Reeve (2002) elaborated that the teacher should be well aware of student's expectation from the course, expected challenges and timely feedback accordingly. Skinner and Belmont (1993) suggest that teachers who are in

favour of students' autonomy and are involved in their out of the classroom learning, need to have a well-planned study program.

Cornelius-White (2007) and Hattie (2009) explained the perception of person-centred teaching whereby teachers who listen, are caring, and have positive regard for others produce higher achievement outcomes.

Related to learning approaches, students need to develop their learning efficiency by learning more about how to learn (Dickinson, 1995).

Methodological readiness means that students have the abilities and techniques they need for their autonomous learning. They need to become aware of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in order to successfully us autonomous learning methods.

EFL teachers should be conscious of the readiness level of the students for learner autonomy and adjust their pedagogical methods in promoting learner autonomy.

Teachers' role should be in helping students develop their self-confidence and capacity for autonomous learning. Students value the supports provided by the teachers, which is essential for helping students develop positive attitudes towards autonomous learning and their English learning experiences.

Students should not be left to perform autonomous learning without help and support from the teachers.

6.2 Theoretical Implications

Student-Centred Learning Environments Theory addressed the needs for individuals to undertake responsibility for defining learning goals, observing progress toward meeting goals, adjusting approaches as warranted, and determining when individual goals have been adequately addressed. This

can be particularly challenging in learning, where billions of resources address a variety of needs. The individual must identify which resources are available and appropriate, how to accumulate them, and how to manage the process to support exclusive learning goals. (Hannafin and Hannafin, 2010).

Self-determination theory maintains that an understanding of human motivation needs a consideration of innate psychological needs for competency, autonomy, and affiliation. Self-determination theory formulates that the promotion of more effective learning is achieved when the learner is intrinsically motivated in an autonomy-supportive environment (Deci and Ryan, 1985).

Postulating a need for autonomy is a central principle of self-determination theory; in turn, the need for autonomy is important to intrinsic motivation, a construct that has strongly shaped the motivational research landscape and plays an important role in motivated learning behaviour (Deci and Moller, 2005); Deci and Ryan 2008; Deci and Ryan 2010; Vallerand, Vallerand, Fortier, and Guay, 1997). In understanding the theories and from the findings, it can be established that there is need for teachers to select learning strategies to teach depending on the point in a learning task in which students need the most help.

The findings of this study showed that students were highly ready for autonomous learning. Students valued autonomous learning and were highly ready to achieve it. Though help, understanding, guidance, supports, and care of the teacher, students will be successful autonomous language learners. However, since autonomy can be incrementally developed by the teacher, students can be gradually given full learning responsibility in the hope that they will one day become fully autonomous.

7. Recommendations

From the data obtained, the researcher presents the following recommendations:

- This study gives a new perspective to the EFL teachers and program coordinators that the learner autonomy and students performance can be enriched by adopting multiple ways.
- Moreover, based on the findings on the readiness for learner autonomy and students' English language performance, secondary schools' administrators and Ministry of Education can be made attentive of whether autonomous learning is appropriate for the Libyan learning framework and use these findings for further actions or implementations of autonomous learning in schools.
- In the future, researchers could also obtain information about autonomous language learning from the teachers.
- As much as the students need to know the best classroom language learning activities to be used, the teachers need to know about that too.
- A more interesting study could be done if researchers could compare the activities used by other international schools in their language learning and what the Libyan school students use in language learning.

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Speaking Anxiety among Libyan Students at ELS English Centre in Kuala Lumpur

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Abstract

The study aims to investigate the level of speaking anxiety of Libyan students at ELS English Centre in Kuala Lumpur, examining the reasons that cause speaking anxiety. The study also attempts to find out if the age is a significant factor in speaking anxiety among Libyan students and if speaking anxiety affects on the performance of the students. This study was conducted on 30 randomly-selected Libyan students studying at the English at ELS Centre in Kuala Lumpur. Using mixed methods of data collection and analysis, the qualitative data was collected from the participants through the questionnaire from Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014), adopted and developed based on the Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986). For the qualitative data, the current study used a semi-structured interview. The findings of the study indicate that the majority of the Libyan students experienced high level of speaking anxiety due to lack of confidence, fear of negative evaluation from friends, lack of vocabulary, and fear to make mistakes in pronunciation or grammar. The findings indicate a significant relationship between age and speaking anxiety among Libyan students.

Keywords*: Anxiety; motivation; foreign language; fear*

1. Introduction

Learning a foreign language is a difficult process. Many studies have demonstrated that not every learner is a successful user of a second language, and there are many dissimilarities between learners in how to learn well and fast a foreign language based on some issues that affect the attainment of foreign language students. Anxiety is one of the most significant factors that are related to the verbal parts of language learning. According to Spielberger and others (1983) anxiety is known as feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, or worry.

There are many problems caused by anxiety, for instance, distress to learners, particularly when talking in the class, delivery of sounds, incapability to replicate the pitch and rhythm of the language 'scaring' when called to do presentation, and disremembering words and expressions just learned or just rejecting to talk and continuing quiet. According to Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986), talking in the foreign language contemplates the most intimidating parts of learning the language.

2. Literature Review

The review of the literature examines the concepts of anxiety and previous researches on speaking anxiety.

2.1 Anxiety

Anxiety touches negatively on the human emotional state. When someone is nervous, he feels concerned, anxious, and terrible. There are many studies conducted on the special effects of anxiety. But, anxiety is a compound problem that many researchers have not been able to decide on an exact and brief meaning. Horwitz and others (1986) have described anxiety as the personal feeling of tension, worry, nervousness, and concern

related to a stimulation of the autonomic nervous system. Another meaning of anxiety according to Suleimenova (2013) "is distress or apprehension of mind provoked by fear of danger".

2.2 Types of Anxiety

The current study in the area of linguistics EFL which has been performed about anxiety showed that the three kinds of anxiety are: state of anxiety, trait of anxiety, and situation-particular. The state of anxiety is a temporary anxiety which happens as a consequence of a reply to particular anxiety-cause incentives like doing a significant exam (Spielberger, 1983; Horwitz, 2001). Young (1991) specified that it is not a typical enduring, but it can be a response that is caused by the circumstances of a particular condition.

Conversely, the trait anxiety is a kind of anxiety where the person is stable to be anxious. Findings of studies show that trait anxiety has a negative result on the personal's memory and other reasoning types. This means that anxiety happens when someone feels anxious, almost in each circumstance. Situation-particular anxiety is stimulated by specific types of actions or circumstances like tests or public talking. Accordingly, the three kinds of above anxiety are almost coinciding, and there is a strong connection between trait and state anxiety.

A foreign language anxiety (FLA) is a separate compound of self-insights, feelings, and actions associated with classroom language learning arising from the individuality of the remote language learning process. According to Horwitz and others (1986), the process of learning a remote language can be one of the greatest difficult learning processes; it was perceived that most people frequently confront problems to learn a new language, and some of them unsuccessful in spite of their achievement in

other areas of learning. In that case, some people have anxiety responses in contradiction of learning language, and those anxiety reactions are amplified slowly in their efforts to development in their process of learning. Thus, a foreign language anxiety often makes people fail in learning the language.

Among all the four skills, speaking is considered the most productive. It is also one of the greatest vital parts of language learning due to its important role in in the process of language learning. If we improve speaking skill, it will help to make an active link to the individual in the society. The learners always tend to increase their speaking skill in the classrooms in many forms, for instance, some students use oral presentations, and others may carry out orally in front of the lesson.

Most researchers found that speaking is the most ability that received experiential devotion in the literature. For instance, numerous studies have been carried out in students' remote language speaking anxiety. The research by Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014) examined the level and main reasons and determined the issues of remote language speaking anxiety among EFL Turkish students and their understanding of speaking anxiety in Turkish EFL situation. They discovered that the students usually practiced a low level of EFL talking anxiety in their classes. Besides, the study also exposed that there were three key issues that provoked foreign language speaking anxiety: fear of making mistakes, a perfectionist attitude, and responses of other students.

2.3 Previous Arab Studies of Speaking Anxiety

There is a number of Arab studies carried out on language anxiety in general based on the review of the literature. Remarkably, studies carried out by the examiners Salem and Al Dyiar (2014) are very significant

because they have examined the speaking anxiety sources in Arab learners and how it influences on language attainment.

In respect to studies of Arab learners, there is research directed by Salem and Al Diyar (2014) to find if there is a connection between speaking anxiety and the confidence in talking among Arab English as foreign language (EFL) students. The discoveries showed that statistically there were no differences between males and females learners to speaking anxiety.

Elmenfi and Gaibani (2016) carried out a study which aimed to examine the influence of social evaluation on public speaking anxiety among Libyan students at Omar Al-Mukhtar University in Libya. They have selected a number of 111 learners at Omar Al-Mukhtar University in the academic year 2014/2015. The researchers took their samples from 1st year, 2015, 2nd and 3rd year, 2014 in order to inspect the significant association between the social appraisal and public speaking anxiety. The results have shown that social evaluation has an important influence on public speaking anxiety.

Elmenfi and Gaibani (2016) aimed to examine the effect of age aspect on the community speaking anxiety of English language learners at Omar Al-Mukhtar University in Libya. The results of the study have proven that age as an issue is measured the most important inspiring factor which provoked public speaking anxiety among people. The results also indicated that the alterations of the age among the learners who study at English department at Omar Al-Mukhtar University had touched significantly on public speaking anxiety. The researchers again found out that the learners below 34 revealed higher anxieties when they speak in public than the others who are in higher ages.

Saidi (2015) has conducted a study to discover the issues of how foreign language anxiety affects on the oral performance of the learners at the Mohamed Khider University of Biskra in Algeria specifically at Faculty of Letters and Languages, Department of Foreign Language. Based on the findings of the study, there are many causes which lead the learners to feel anxious like, negative self-perceptions lack motivation, test anxiety, communication apprehension, and fear of negative evaluation which consequently leads to a weak performance in the classroom.

3. Methodology of the Study

To conducts this study, the researchers followed the below methodology:

3.1 Methodology

The study adopted a mixed-method approach including both quantitative and qualitative research study. In terms of the quantitative research, a questionnaire was used to collect data and, for qualitative research, the interview was selected as the best technique for data collection.

3.2 Problem of the Study

Speaking is a significant skill in the language because it is a creative and collaborating skill that the speakers are vigorously convoluted in communication. Consequently, speaking anxiety plays a critical role in learning a foreign language. Speaking anxiety is known as a mutual phenomenon that the majority of the learners have, although the level of anxiety varies from individual to individual. Students frequently feel anxiety when they talk a foreign language. Studies show that speaking anxiety has significant emotional characteristics that affect foreign language learning, often has a negative result on the students' verbal performance of English.

The importance of learning English is growing every day principally in Arabic countries. But, the most educational systems in Arabic countries have weakness in learning the English language. Consequently, postgraduate Arab students who are doing their higher education overseas have a problem as a result of their weakness in the English language in schools. When these students go to countries in which the English language is a second language like Malaysia, they find difficulties in speaking English. A study conducted by Keong and Jawad (2015) on postgraduate Iraqi students who studied Master in English Language Studies Program, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of a Malaysian university show that these students have a lack of aptitude to talk.

3.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study are as follow:

1. To determine the level of speaking anxiety among Libyan students.

2. To find out if the age is a significant factor in speaking anxiety among Libyan students.

3. To help Libyan students improve their performance and reduce the level of speaking anxiety.

3.4 Questions of the Study

The following are the questions of this study:

1. What is the level of speaking anxiety among Libyan students?

2. What is the relationship between age and speaking anxiety of Libyan students?

3. To what extent does speaking anxiety affect the performance of Libyan students?

3.5 Tools of the Study

A set of questionnaire was given to 30 Libyan students who were learning English at the ELS Centre in Kuala Lumpur. The questionnaire was divided into two sections; the first section was demographic questions for the learners which focused mainly on gender, age, and the current level of study. Moreover, in the first section, there were two questions concerning the student's English background before moving to the second section of the questionnaire. Below shows the two questions asked in the first section:

- Do you generally speak English outside the class? (Yes, No)
- If yes, how frequently do you speak English daily? (Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely).

Moving into the second section of the questionnaire, we defined the level of speaking anxiety among Libyan students at ELS Centre in Kuala Lumpur. The questionnaire is essentially based on the Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) who established (FLCAS) as an instrument to calculate the level of anxiety for students. The Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) covers 33 items with important part-whole correspondences with the total scale which aimed to measure the communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative appraisal connected to language anxiety.

Each item on the FLCAS is valued on a five-point Likert-scale oscillating from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). The total scores of the measure variety from 33 to 165, and the lower scores indicates the higher levels of anxiety. As the present study only dedicated on speaking anxiety among other four skills of remote languages, the researchers have adopted the questionnaire from Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014) who established it to assess the level of speaking anxiety.

The questionnaire has counted in 18 items that described the motives or circumstances which may cause speaking anxiety among students, followed by 5-graded Likert Scale designation, which makes the total score range from 18 to 90 (if all answered 1 or 5), and to define the level of speaking anxiety among students. Öztürk and Gürbüz's (2014) scale has been used as scoring guide as showed in the table (1) below.

Level of speaking anxiety	Score
High Level	From 72 and above
Moderate Level	From 54 to 72
Low Level	From 54 and below

Like mentioned earlier, the second method for data collection used in this study is a qualitative method. Interview is a widely used technique for qualitative data collection. According to Brown (1994), the interview allows the researchers to obtain the data through a face-to-face interview in order to get personal responses and the participant's point of view.

Consequently, a group of four semi-structured interview questions were directed to ten Libyan learners from different cities in Libya in order to gather information concerning the motives for speaking anxiety and to find out and if age is one of the factors that provoke feelings of anxiety when students speak in front of other colleagues in the class and to decide the effect of speaking anxiety on their performance.

The interview with learners and the questions were as follow:

- Do you think speaking English is an anxiety provoking factor in language learning process?

- What are the reasons which make you feel anxious when you speak?

- Do you worry about making mistakes while speaking in front of other students?

- Through your experience in learning English, do you think you can consider the age as one of the factors which cause anxiety to old learners when they learn to speak?

- To what extent does speaking anxiety affect on your performance in the class?

4. Findings of the Study

The first research question of the study examined the level of speaking anxiety among Libyan students. In order to find out the speaking anxiety level, the questionnaire adapted from the work done by Ozturk and Gurbuz (2014) includes 18 statements. The overall score ranges from 18 to 90 as the questionnaire based on 5-Likert Scale. If an obtained score is more than 72 that indicates a high level of speaking anxiety; if it ranges between 54 to 72 demonstrates a moderate (medium) level of speaking anxiety; if a respondent score is less than 54, it indicates a low level of foreign language speaking anxiety.

The majority of the Libyan students have experienced the high level of speaking anxiety because the of lack of confidence, fear of negative evaluation from their friends, lack of vocabulary, fear to make mistakes in pronunciation or in grammar. As shown in table (2), the mean value scores of students show the high level of speaking anxiety mentioned in table (3).

Table (2) Level of Speaking Anxiety

N	Items	SA(1)	A(2)	N(3)	D(4)	SD(5)	Score	Level
1	I am never quite sure of myself when I am speaking in English.	1x1	6x2	21x3	2x4	0x5	84	High

2	I don't feel confident when I speak English in the class.	2x1	15x2	10x3	3x4	0x5	74	High
3	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in English classes	3x1	9x2	13x3	4x4	1x5	81	High
4	I feel nervous while speaking English with native speakers.	3x1	9x2	10x3	7x4	1x5	84	High
5	I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.	4x3	6x2	11x3	4x4	0x5	65	Mode rate
6	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak English	2x1	13x2	11x3	4x4	0x5	77	High
7	I get nervous when I don't understand every word my English teacher says.	2x1	8x2	12x3	8x4	0x5	86	High
8	I get embarrassed to volunteer answers in English classes.	6x1	7x2	13x3	4x4	0x5	75	High
9	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English classes.	2x1	7x2	16x3	5x4	0x5	84	High
10	I get frightened when I don't understand what the teacher I saying in English.	0x1	13x2	11x3	4x4	5x2	85	High

11	I am afraid of making mistakes in English classes.	2x1	9x2	12x3	5x4	2x5	86	High
12	I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on in English classes.	1x1	10x2	15x3	3x4	1x5	83	High
13	I tremble when I know that I am going to be called on in English classes.	1x1	11x2	13x3	5x4	0x5	82	High
14	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.	0x1	15x2	10x3	5x4	0x5	80	High
15		1x1	11x2	10x3	7x4	1x5	86	High
16	I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	2x1	7x2	16x3	4x4	1x5	85	High
17	I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.	1x1	10x2	12x3	7x4	0x5	85	High
18	I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	1x1	9x2	14x3	4x4	2x5	87	High

Table (3) High Level of Foreign Language Speaking anxiety

	Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety
Mean	48.96

The findings indicate there is a significant relationship between age and speaking anxiety among Libyan students, and based on this relation some of the students considered the age as a factor which leads them to feel anxiety. They confirmed that they feel shy and inconvenience when committing mistakes in front of their younger classmates in class.

In contrast, others did not see the age as that much factor to cause speaking anxiety rather than the other main factors such as communication apprehension and fear of mistakes. This discovery in line with the results from research conducted by Gaibani and Elmenfi (2016) where they discovered that age variances among the learners who study in English Department at Omar Al-Mukhtar University had an important influence on public anxiety speaking, and this shows a strong relation between age and anxiety speaking. Table (4) summarizes the number of respondents for the question about the age if it is considered a significant factor in speaking anxiety.

Table (4) Respondents about if age is considered a significant factor in speaking anxiety.

Do you worry about making mistakes while speaking in front of younger classmates?		
Frequency	Number	Percentage
Yes	7	70%
No	3	30%
Total	10	100%
Do you worry about making mistakes while speaking in front of younger classmates?		
Frequency	Number	Percentage

Yes	7	
No	3	
Total	10	
Do you worry about making mistakes while speaking in front of younger classmates?		
Frequency	Number	Percentage
Yes	7	70%
No	3	30%
Total	10	100%
Do you worry about making mistakes while speaking in front of younger classmates?		
Frequency	Number	Percentage
Yes	7	70%
No	3	30%
Total	10	100%

The third objective was to help Libyan students improve their performance and reduce the level of speaking anxiety. The findings showed that speaking anxiety has a great impact on students' performance, where the majority of the learners agreed that their speaking performance in the class is affected by speaking anxiety. The main motive for this is perhaps because learners are more aware of the significance of the ability to speak than the other skills as that it is a key in communication skills with others. Therefore, their emotional state of anxiety while speaking in the class is impacting their speaking performance.

5. Recommendations for Future Research

Out of the findings obtained, the researchers are presenting the following recommendations:

- For the future study, the discoveries should comprise the curriculum planners or English course teachers in order to have a great understanding of the motives that provoke speaking anxiety to the

learners because it would make easier for them to discover the best techniques to minimize anxiety. The discoveries could also help them concentrate more on older students in the class and make them feel more relaxed and more confident in front of younger students in the class.

- Discovering the effect of speaking anxiety on students' performance is very important for students as well as teachers.

- Teachers should aware students to know that anxiety is a natural feeling of any human being, and everyone can experience speaking anxiety and can be diminished.

- Students should know also that mistakes are part of the learning process, so they should not be anxious about making mistakes.

- Teachers should encourage students to talk about their learning problems and find the appropriate solutions for them.

- Teachers should motivate students to work in groups to develop their speaking skill through using the foreign language between them.

- Both teachers and students should create a competitive atmosphere in class.

- Teachers should use authentic materials in the classroom which help learners to ameliorate their fluency in the target language.

- Families should encourage their children use English language within themselves at home as well as outside.

- Families should encourage their children to engage in the Malaysian community to practice English as much as they can.

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Using Online Technology for Promoting English Language Learners' (ELLs') Autonomy in Early Stags

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Abstract

Studies and research in the field of language learning and language teaching reveal that technology plays a significant role in teaching and learning foreign languages nowadays. New methods of teaching and learning foreign languages utilize technology to enhance students' learning and teachers' teaching (Omar, 2014). Hence, it has become necessary that teachers use the Internet to bring foreign cultures into their classrooms. Also, students can practice language through communicating with native speakers via technology. This paper investigates English Language teachers' (ELTs) perceptions about learner autonomy and about using online technology for promoting adult ELLs' learner autonomy. It also inquires into teachers' thoughts regarding examples of online technology that could help in promoting learner autonomy and the challenges that ELTs could encounter in using online technology for promoting their students' learner autonomy. The findings reveal that autonomous learning and using online technology for promoting learner autonomy are affected by some factors such as teacher's guidance and assistance, institutional policy, learner's culture and motivation, learning awareness, technological literacy, and the way technology is used in teaching.

Keywords*: ELLs; autonomy; communicative teaching; scaffolding*

1. Introduction

I have been always interested in the learner-centered philosophy of teaching, and I believe that it is an effective technique for teaching and learning languages. I studied about learner-centered method and communicative approach of teaching when I was in college in Libya. However, I had never experienced them practically, either as a learner or as a teacher, before I came to the United States and studied at Gonzaga University (GU). In the MA/TESL program at GU, I learned about the term *learner autonomy,* which is related to communicative approach and learner-centered method of teaching, as Benson (2001) indicates that "communicative teaching, learner-centeredness and autonomy share a focus on the learner as the key agent in the learning process" (p. 17). Later, I became interested in learner autonomy and wanted to know more about it.

I was, also, fascinated by how widely online technology was used in the educational system in the United Sates and how it was helping in teaching and learning. Moreover, I thought that availability of learning resources online would help students learn on their own. However, I was not sure if that would help them to improve their skills to be autonomous learners. Therefore, I wanted to explore if learner autonomy could be promoted by using online technology and decided to make it the topic of this research study.

2. Literature review

This section of the research presents literature that was introduced for defining and promoting learner autonomy in addition to the relationship between learner autonomy and online technology. It begins with a definition of learner autonomy that I adopted as a standard definition for the term in this study.

2.1 Defining Learner Autonomy

The concept of learner autonomy was first introduced at Council of Europe's Modern Language Project in 1971. The project inspired the idea of establishing the Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pedagogiques en Langues (CRAPEL), University of Nancy in France. The founder and former leader of CRAPEL, Yves Chalon, is known as the first researcher who referred to learner autonomy. Henry Holec, who became the director of CRAPEL after Chalon's death, is also a well-known writer in the field of autonomy (Smith, 2015).

There is no clear consensus as to what learner autonomy means. Holec (1981) defines learner autonomy as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (p. 82). He explains that taking charge means having the ability and responsibility for setting learning goals, determining learning content, selecting learning strategies, monitoring learning process, and evaluating what has been learned.

As stated earlier, Holec's definition will be used as a standard definition for learner autonomy in this paper. In an alternative definition, Little (Cited in Morbedadze, 2015) states that learner autonomy is "essentially a matter of the learner's psychological relation to the process and content of learning--a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision making and independent action" (p. 2).

Kumaravadivelu (2003) states that there are two views on learner autonomy: a narrow view and a wider view. The narrow view means helping learners learn how to learn. That is, providing them with tools that enable them to learn on their own and training them to use appropriate strategies for realizing their learning objectives. The purpose of this type of

autonomy is achieving academic success. The wider view means helping learners learn how to liberate themselves.

In other words, getting learners to recognize the sociopolitical barriers that hinder their progress and helping them overcome those barriers. For this type of autonomy, which the Kumaravadivelu (2003) calls "liberatory autonomy" (p. 141), the focus is on enabling learners to be critical thinkers to realize their personal potential, unlike the academic autonomy, which aims to enable learners to realize their learning potential. In their discussion of defining learner autonomy, Scharle and Szabo (2000) compare it with responsibility.

So, we may define autonomy as the freedom and ability to manage one's own affairs, which entails the right to make decisions as well. Responsibility may also be understood as being in charge of something, but with the implication that one has to deal with the consequences of one's own actions.

Scharle and Szabo state that both autonomy and responsibility entail independent action from the learner's side in learning, and there is an evident similarity and interrelationship between the two concepts; a fact that makes it hard to distinguish between them in practice. They give examples of actions where it is hard to tell if an action is considered autonomy or responsibility:

- Interrupting the teacher's explanation to ask about a certain point in the explanation;

- Looking up a word at home that the teacher used in the lesson but did not teach; and

- Paying special attention when the lesson is about something that the learner is not so good at.

Scharle and Szabo point out that all these actions mean that learners are aware of their responsibility to contribute to their learning, and they are also autonomous because their actions are independent, and they do not rely on the teacher to tell them what to do. That might lead to the conclusion that responsibility is one of the components of learner autonomy.

Benson (2011) reports that advocates of social theory, which supports teaching and learning language through social context, criticize the idea of autonomy as being centralized on the individual learner. That is, learners cannot be totally independent from their teachers and other people included in their learning such as peers. However, advocates of autonomy try to avoid this discussion by emphasizing that autonomy is "a social construct that implies interdependence rather than independence" (Benson, 2011, p.16). The issue of interdependence will be discussed in more details in the following section, which will also invoke the subject of social theory.

2.2 Autonomy as Interdependence

Some researchers claim that learner autonomy does not mean learners' total independence from their teachers and other learning assistants. Rather, they argue that it means interdependence, which is the integration of dependence and independence. Little (2009) states that he does not agree with the idea of connecting autonomy to freedom. He argues that being autonomous does not mean to be one hundred percent free, as he describes people who are totally free even of their responsibilities being not autonomous, but autistic.

Little notes that people laugh at this description, but he responds, "We are not living under some sociopathological handicap. We are social beings, our independence is always balanced by dependence, and our essential condition is one of interdependence." (p. 223). Little rationalizes his belief

that social interaction helps in developing learner autonomy as it does in acquiring a language. Little links his thoughts regarding this point to Vygotsky's social theory that we will refer to later in this paper.

Kumaravadivelu (2003) also clarifies that "autonomy is not independence" (p. 134), arguing that learners need to learn by cooperation with their teachers and other learners. To this, Kumaravadivelu adds that "autonomy is also not context free" (p. 134). That is, there are other factors that can affect practicing learner autonomy such as the learner's personality, motivation, needs, and learning environment. Furthermore, he asserts, "autonomy is not a steady state" (p. 134).

In other words, autonomous learners are not always autonomous. They might be autonomous in some situations, but sometimes they might need to abandon their autonomy and depend on their teachers for guidance and assistance. Zoghi and Dehghan (2012) argue that learner autonomy is a dual conceptualization that includes "two binary opposites: independence and dependence" (p. 24).

The two opposites are needed for learning, and to get this learning to happen, we need to integrate both as illustrated below:
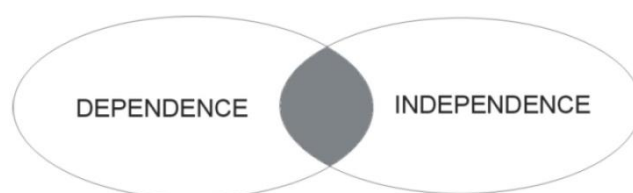

Figure 1: Interdependence: adopted from (Zoghi and Dehghan, 2012, p. 24).

As Zoghi and Dehghan explain, learner autonomy takes place in the shaded area of the framework. If learning is practiced only in the left oval domain, then learners will be too dependent on the teacher, and that is not what we strive for. In a similar way, if learning happens only in the right

oval zone, learners will be totally independent from the instructor, which does not work either.

The compromise that would solve this issue is balancing dependence and independence by scaffolding. Scaffolding, according to Bruner (1983), who first came up with the term, means that we build a structure to support our students in their learning process, and then we start taking away that structure step by step until we reach our goal of having confident students who "can stand on their own two feet" (Zoghi and Dehghan, 2012, p. 24). The shaded area in the framework that Zoghi and Dehghan referred to can incorporate the term: interdependence, mentioned earlier in this paper, that Little (2009) presented as an outcome of combining dependence and independence.

2.3 Promoting Learner Autonomy

In this part, I will present some strategies that researchers proposed for promoting learner autonomy. Some authors suggest teaching methods that could help in promoting learner autonomy, and others proposed certain models with specific details for promoting learner autonomy. For example, Godwin-Jones (2011) states that developing learner autonomy does not happen with just isolating learners with learning materials, but it entails helping them develop skills and cognitive abilities that help them regulate their learning.

Godwin-Jones states that the psychological side is important in this process where learners need to have the motivation to learn on their own. He adds that the political factor should be considered too, since learners need an environment in the educational system that encourages them by not imposing policies that restrain their freedom in deciding on and choosing their learning preferences.

Illes (2012) states that learner autonomy can be promoted through a wide range of methods. These methods include self-access facilities and getting learners to get involved in deciding on topics, materials, and activities. In addition, engaging learners in communication, interpretation, and problem-solving settings can promote their autonomy. Learning tasks that can be presented for this purpose include teaching literature where learners can be engaged in communicative, interpretive, and problem-solving discussions. Tasks of translating from one language to another also can be used for autonomy-promoting where not only is finding equivalent words in the target language required. but also considering the context and the audience, which engage learners in thinking and decision-making processes.

Moreover, CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) tasks can support learner autonomy. For example, engaging students in blog discussions can give them the opportunity to find ways of expressing themselves and improving their own writing styles. Furthermore, encouraging learners to assess themselves and having them work in pairs or groups can contribute to promoting their learner autonomy through interaction.

Some of the ideas that Illes presented in the last paragraph are included in a model that David Little introduced for promoting learner autonomy. According to Little (2009), there are three principles that describe what teachers should do to promote their students' learner autonomy. The first one is involvement, where students should be involved in planning, monitoring, and evaluating their learning. The second principle is learner reflection, which means that learners need to be encouraged to reflect on the process and content of their learning and assess its outcome. Thirdly, teachers should ensure that the target language is the medium, not only the

goal, of learning.

In another approach, Nunan (Cited in Benson, 2001, p. 129) suggests five levels through which autonomy can be encouraged as:

Level	Learner action	Content	Process
1	Awareness	Learners are made aware of the pedagogical goals and content of the materials they are using.	Learners identify strategy implications of pedagogical tasks and identify their own preferred styles/strategies.
2	Involvement	Learners are involved in selecting their own goals from a range of alternatives on offer.	Learners make choices among a range of options.
3	Intervention	Learners are involved in modifying and adapting the goals and content of the learning program.	Learners modify and adapt tasks.
4	Creation	Learners create their own goals and objectives.	Learners create their own learning tasks.
5	Transcendence	Learners go beyond the classroom and make links between the content of classroom learning and the world beyond the classroom.	Learners become teachers and researchers.

In a similar way, Scharle and Szabo (2000) propose three stages of a process that learners should go through to develop their learner responsibility: raising awareness, changing attitudes, and transferring roles.

Raising awareness means making learners aware of their learning goals and strategies.

However, learners are not expected to take decisions or to be responsible for their learning at this initial stage, while tasks and activities are controlled by the teacher. What is meant by changing attitudes is influencing learners' previous beliefs and behaviors towards learning so that they replace them with new ways of learning and start practicing the skills that they were made aware of in the first stage. In the third stage of transferring roles, learners take teacher roles by deciding on and creating their learning activities. At this level, learners become more autonomous and can monitor and assess their learning. Scharle and Szabo claim that fostering learner autonomy requires developing a sense of responsibility for learners and encouraging them to participate actively in planning their learning.

2.4 Learner Autonomy and Online Technology

In this part, I will broach the topic of using online technology for promoting learner autonomy. We will read about some researchers' thoughts regarding the topic and some examples of studies that were conducted for exploring whether online technology can promote learner autonomy or not. We will start this discussion with a definition of the autonomous learner.

Hamilton (2013) emphasizes that analyzing the relationship between learner autonomy and technology should begin with a definition of the autonomous learner, based on which one can investigate whether a learner can be described as showing signs of autonomous learning. Hamilton (2013) discusses that "the autonomous learner and user of the target language shows signs of being capable of taking responsibility for independent thought, action and interaction, grounded within a social structure in response to experience" (pp. 71-72).

Regarding supporting autonomy, technology not only makes resources available to the learner, but it also provides affordances for autonomous learning such as facilitating interaction with native speakers, with other learners, and teachers, supporting situated learning, and encouraging learning outside the class (Reinders and White, 2015).

However, technology also can limit the development of autonomy. Access to authentic materials and other affordances might be unfavorable if learners did not receive guidance and feedback from the teacher. Availability of online dictionaries, for example, can cause learners to lose motivation to memorize vocabulary if they get used to relying on them. Technology, based to Reinders and White (2015) "can also give students a false sense of development" (p. 2). Online games, for example, provide great opportunities for practice, but they may not get users exposed to varieties of genre and domain and may also not get them involved in other significant types of communication such as extensive reading or writing a longer text (Reinders and White, 2015).

Benson (2011) states that educational technology is usually tied to autonomy because technology is often designed for independent use. Benson mentions that some researchers do not support this kind of connection because they believe that educational technology presupposes autonomy instead of using it to promote autonomy. Benson (2001) points out that the Internet gives language learners the opportunity to study whenever they want and provides them with resources of unlimited range of authentic materials. He lists some Internet-based activities, stating that they are very significant in terms of autonomy, such as e-mail, online discussion, and web authoring. For instance, the Internet, as a resource of self-directed learning, provides an opportunity for collaborative learning. Internet technology helps learners to open up interactions with other learners and

users of the target language in addition to interactions with their teachers that could be difficult to achieve in the classroom.

3. Methodology of the Study

To conduct this study, I used a mixed methodology for analyzing the data that I collected, which investigate teachers' perceptions about learner autonomy and about using online technology for promoting adult ELLs' learner autonomy. What made me use a mixed methodology was the nature of the data that I collected from the participants. Surveys and interviews were used as instruments for this study to collect data from English Language Teachers in Spokane Region, Washington State, USA. The participants that I chose for my research study were current and former EL teachers in the Spokane region, Washington, USA. 54 EL teachers responded to the survey, and 5 EL teachers were interviewed for the purpose of getting more detailed responses regarding the relationship between online technology and learner autonomy.

3.1 Need and Significance of the Study

This study was conducted with ELTs in Spokane, Washington in the United States, where styles of teaching English are typically learner-centered, and online technology is widely used for teaching English.

Therefore, I believe that the participants' perceptions about learner autonomy and online technology are useful for ELTs who work in educational systems where learner autonomy is not encouraged and online technology is not commonly used. They will learn about whether learner autonomy can help ELLs in their learning, and whether online technology can help in promoting learner autonomy according to the perceptions of ELTs who have an experience of working in an educational environment that encourages learner autonomy and online technology use.

3.2 Questions of the Study

I created four questions for this research study to help me investigate English language teachers' perceptions about learner autonomy and about using online technology for promoting their adult students' learner autonomy. The questions are as follows:

- What are ELTs perceptions about learner autonomy?
- What are ELTs perceptions about using online technology for promoting their adult students' learner autonomy?
- What examples of online technology do ELTs think can promote their adult students' learner autonomy? How can they use specific types of online technology to promote their adult students' learner autonomy?
- What challenges do ELTs encounter in using online technology to promote their adult students' learner autonomy? How can they cope with those challenges?

4. Findings of the Study

This part introduces the findings of the research study categorized under four main headings: perceptions about learner autonomy, contrasting the five aspects of learner autonomy, promoting learner autonomy using online technology, important types of online technology for promoting learner autonomy, and challenges in using online technology for promoting learner autonomy.

4.1 Perceptions about Learner Autonomy

I labeled the ideas that the participants included in the discussion of what learner autonomy means under four main categories: teacher's guidance and assistance, institutional policy, student's motivation, and student's culture.

Teacher's Guidance and Assistance

The point that kept recurring through the participants' discussion about defining learner autonomy is that autonomous learners cannot always work independently from their teachers. Many participants revealed that it is not an easy task for ELLs to manage their learning without teacher's guidance and assistance.

Institutional Policy

Some participants also referred to the importance of institutional decisions about learning. For example, some of them implied that content standards set by the government limit the teacher and the student's freedom in deciding on teaching and learning.

Student's Motivation

Some participants acknowledge that learning can be supported by combining student's motivation and learner autonomy. Some even believe that students' motivation plays a significant role in promoting their learner autonomy. For example, a participant perceives that intrinsic motivation helps in learning, giving the students the freedom to choose what to do for their learning supports their intrinsic motivation.

Student's Culture

Some participants state that students' cultural background can be related to learner autonomy. Some even perceive that culture can be one of the factors affecting autonomous learning. The findings reveal that students' attitudes towards teaching and learning, based on their cultural background, can affect how responsive they are to promoting their learner autonomy.

4.2 Contrasting the Five Aspects of Learner Autonomy

I asked the participants to rank the five aspects of learner autonomy that Holec included in the definition that was presented in the literature review of this research. The following chart shows the results of the ranking according to the importance of each of those aspects to autonomous learning.

Figure 2: Ranking aspects of learner autonomy
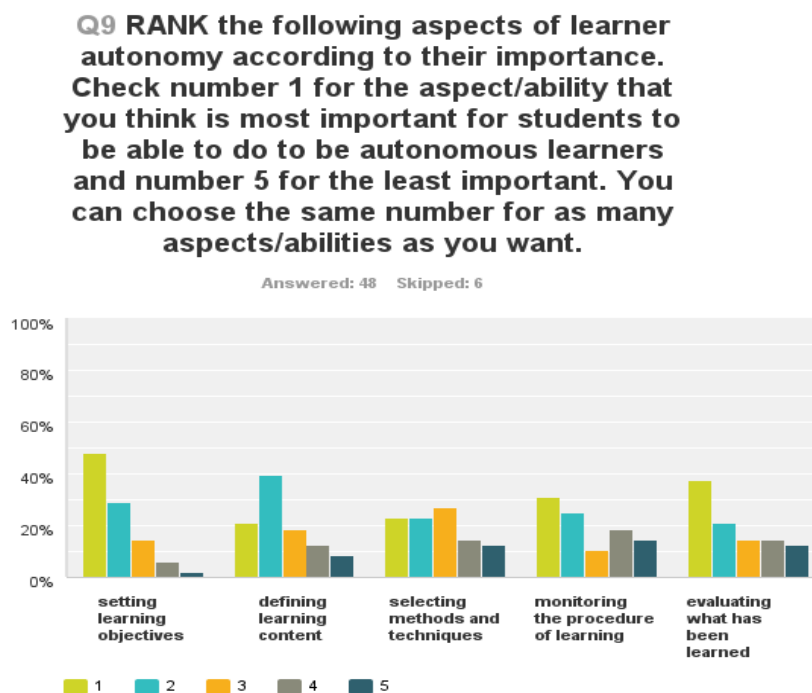
4.3 Promoting Learner Autonomy Using Online Technology

This part presents participants' agreements and disagreements about the effectiveness of using online technology to promote adult ELLs' learner autonomy in terms of setting learning goals, defining learning content, selecting methods and techniques to be used, monitoring, and evaluating learning. The following table explains the percentages:

Using online technology for learning helps adult ELLs to learn how to:	strongly agree	Agree	not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Set their learning goals	15%	28%	47%	10%	0%
Define their learning content	18%	41%	35%	6%	0%
Select methods and techniques for their learning	10%	49%	31%	10%	0%
Monitor their learning	16%	41%	33%	10%	0%
Evaluate their learning	12%	43%	35%	10%	0%

Student's Technological Literacy

Some participants consider students' literacy in technology as a major factor in helping them promote their learner autonomy through using online technology.

Student's Motivation

Some participants conceive motivation as an influential aspect that helps in using online technology to develop ELLs' learner autonomy. The participants view motivation as a key element in helping students learn on their own. That is, if students are not motivated to learn, online technology alone cannot be sufficient to promote their learner autonomy.

Learning Awareness

According to the data of this study, availability of resources online and students' motivation to learn by themselves are not enough to help them be autonomous learners. Students should have skills, such as setting learning goals and selecting learning content that enable them to use resources available on the Internet for their learning.

Teacher's Guidance and Assistance

Teacher's guidance and assistance was the most common theme in the data of this research study. The participating teachers heavily focused on the aspect of guidance and assistance in discussing the concept of learner

autonomy and the possibility of using online technology to promote learner autonomy. Some participants referred to guidance without stating how it should be applied, but others highlighted the strategy of giving students choices in terms of guidance and assistance. Moreover, some participants indicated that the teacher should be the one who provides the choices to the students, but others were not clear regarding this issue.

Way of Using Technology

Some participants state that the effectiveness of using online technology to promote learner autonomy sometimes depends on how technology is used. The participant states that technology can promote autonomy, but the content of technology should be purposefully selected to teach students how to set their learning goals and select their learning content using online technology.

Q20 **What types of online technology do you think are important for promoting Adult ELLs' learner autonomy? You can choose as many answers as you want.**

Answered: 45   Skipped: 9
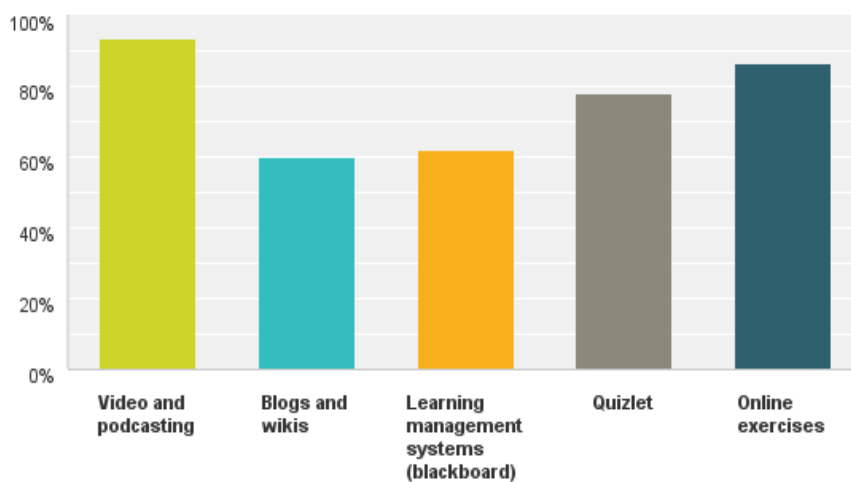
4.4 Online Technology for Promoting Learner Autonomy

I asked my study participants to make their choices on and give their own examples of online technology that they think are important for promoting adult ELLs learner autonomy. The following chart shows percentages of the participants' choices, regarding online technology for promoting learner autonomy.

4.5 Challenges in Using Online Technology

The data of my survey show that teacher's and student's literacy in technology and teacher's resistance to change their traditional method of teaching are the greatest challenges that EL teachers encounter in using online technology for promoting their adult learners' autonomy.

Therefore, some participants assert that teacher and student training on technology is a significant factor that can make online technology more efficient in teaching and learning. 64% of the participants reported that the greatest challenge was student's technological literacy, 61% mentioned that it was teacher's technological literacy, and 64% indicated that it was teacher's resistance to change. Some participants believe that one of the greatest challenges EL teachers encounter in using online technology in teaching is logistics. Examples of logistic issues are access, updates, and other technical issues.

5. Discussion

This part discusses the results of the study in terms of perceptions about learner autonomy, using online technology for promoting learner autonomy, challenges that ELTs encounter in promoting their students' learner autonomy through online technology, and how they can cope with those challenges. It also presents some implications for using online technology to promote learner autonomy and recommendations for future research.

Perceptions about Learner Autonomy

According to the results of this study, setting learning objectives is the most important aspect of learner autonomy, and there is a considerable difference between this aspect and the rest of the aspects in terms of importance (the aspect of *setting learning objectives* was ranked as number 1, as the most important, with 1.85 mean. The mean range of the rest of the aspects was between 2.44 and 2.77). Defining learning content and evaluating learning are considered very important too. We can conclude that since learners are able to identify the purpose for which they are learning, what to learn to achieve that purpose, and how to know if they have learned, then they have gained the most important skills for autonomous learning.

After analyzing the data of this study, we can conclude that teachers' guidance and assistance is an important supporter of ELLs to study on their own. Furthermore, it is hard for students to learn in isolation from their teacher and other assistants such as peers and tutors. In this regard, many writers claim that learner autonomy does not mean independence. Rather, it means the combination of dependence and independence, which Little (2009) refers to as interdependence.

In addition to teacher's assistance, policies of the educational system can be another factor that affects ELLs' learner autonomy. According to the data of my study, institutions participate in making decisions about learning by establishing certain curricula and requirements that teachers and students should follow in their educational process. However, those requirements sometimes confine the teachers' freedom to design their own teaching to promote the students' learner autonomy.

In addition, those requirements sometimes limit the students' opportunities to practice their learner autonomy. Institutional policies and

teacher's guidance should be considered when we discuss learner autonomy, but there are other considerations that are personally related to the learner him/herself such as culture and motivation.

Student's culture and motivation influence their autonomous learning. The data of my study can be interpreted to suggest that ELLs' culture affects their attitudes towards teaching and learning. Some learners from some cultural contexts may perceive that all of what they learn should come from the teacher.

Moreover, going off what the teacher assigns and coming up with your own learning techniques sometimes is considered disrespectful of the teacher. Therefore, promoting learner autonomy for students who come from such cultural backgrounds would be more challenging for teachers.

However, if the students are motivated to learn, then that would make a difference regarding promoting their learner autonomy. The analysis of my study results showed intrinsic motivation as a key factor in promoting autonomous learning. If the students are learning because they are interested in learning, they are more likely to put effort in learning on their own than those who are just extrinsically motivated to learn or unmotivated. In other words, intrinsic motivation encourages autonomous learning.

Using Online Technology for Promoting Learner Autonomy

The conclusion after analyzing the data of this study would be that the participants consider online technology more effective in terms of developing the skill of selecting learning methods and techniques, less effective in terms of developing the skills of selecting content, monitoring, and evaluating learning, and probably not effective in terms of setting learning goals.

What surprised me was the obvious difference between *setting learning goals* and the rest of the aspects, which could be related to the perception that students need guidance from their teachers to be aware of their learning objectives. After that, they might be able to improve their other autonomous skills by using online technology.

The participants acknowledge that using online technology would not be efficient in promoting learner autonomy if the students are not technologically literate. Moreover, if they are literate in technology but not motivated to learn, it will be hard to promote ELLs' learner autonomy through online technology. The ELTs who participated in this study believe that literacy in technology and availability of learning resources online are not enough to make learning on one's own happen. Students should have a personal reason for learning so that the teacher can help them to promote their learner autonomy using online technology.

In addition to technological literacy and motivation, the participants acknowledge that ELLs should be aware of what to learn and how they learn. Learning awareness is another element that the participants gave importance in terms of using online technology for promoting learner autonomy. After analyzing the data in this regard, we can conclude that learners need to be aware of their learning level so that they can define the learning content that is appropriate for them.

Furthermore, they need to be aware of the objectives behind their learning. The interpretation of the data suggests that autonomy may not happen on its own, but may need to be carefully and intentionally scaffolded by teachers. In this regard, Omar (2020) explains that "ZPD, in fact, is essential in language learning as it enhances learners to show progress through scaffolding when interacting with others in real communicative situations" (p. 4).

The data analysis of my study shows that teacher's guidance and assistance is one of the most important issues that help adult ELLs to learn on their own by using online technology. This topic is closely related to the topic of learning awareness where learners, most of the time, need assistance from their teachers to make them aware of what, why, and how to learn through online technology. Students need their teacher's assistance to learn by themselves using online technology; however, teachers also need to use technology appropriately in their teaching so that they can make it more efficient in terms of promoting their students' learner autonomy.

Challenges ELTs Encounter in Using Online Technology

According to this study, technical issues such as free access to technology and availability of technology that works appropriately are among the greatest challenges that ELTs encounter in the use of technology in their teaching. The other challenge for teachers in using online technology for promoting their students' learner autonomy is literacy in technology. The data indicate that students' and teachers' technological literacy is very important because teachers need to be skillful in the technology so that they can make it effective for their students' learning, as the students need to know how to use it as well to be able to learn through it. For coping with such challenges, the participants of my study mainly focused on technological literacy and training.

The data can be interpreted to suggest that teachers should improve their skills in educational online technology so that they can use it in promoting their students' learner autonomy. Moreover, they should make sure that their students know how to use the technology so that they can make use of it in their learning. Therefore, we would say that training in technology for students and teachers is what my study participants

recommend for making online technology more effective in promoting adult ELLs' learner autonomy.

6. Implications

According to the results of my study, teachers can take some actions to promote their adult ELLs' learner autonomy through online technology. For example, designing technology-based content for teaching that is engaging, interactive and rewarding is very important. It should get the students motivated to learn and teach them what they specifically need to learn. Moreover, teachers should follow up with their students and observe how they are learning because students cannot always learn on their own even if they can in some situations.

In this regard, scaffolding can be helpful when the teacher introduces an activity to the students to make sure that they can do what they are required to do so that they get the full benefit of it. Hence, Omar (2020) argues that "This indicates that a learner develops his mental cognition through interacting with other people in the real world, which is called scaffolding" (p. 6).

Learning can be made more exciting and motivating by giving learners a voice in. However, sometimes teachers need to change their students' attitudes towards learning and raise their learning awareness to make them more responsible about it. According to my study participants, learners can be involved in making decisions about their learning by giving them choices where they can select their learning preferences.

To do that, teachers can consult their students about what they want to learn, how they want to learn it, and why they want to learn it. In this way, teachers get their students to feel more responsible about their learning and raise their awareness that it is their responsibility to learn. After all, it

changes their attitudes towards learning that knowledge does not always come from the teacher; rather, students should depend on themselves and be able to plan their learning.

Effectiveness of using online technology for promoting adult ELLs' learner autonomy is influenced by many factors. Among those factors are teacher's guidance, motivating learners, changing their attitudes, and raising their learning awareness. However, if the students are not literate in technology, it will be challenging for teachers to use it for promoting their learner autonomy.

Moreover, teachers themselves need to know how to use educational technology very well so that they can make it more effective in promoting their students' learner autonomy. Therefore, institutions should schedule training workshops on technology for teachers and students. Moreover, teachers should find time to learn how to use technology on their own and scaffold, for their students, any new educational website that they want to use in their teaching.

7. Recommendations

The researcher presents some recommendations based on the data analysis and findings obtained as:

- I recommend for future research regarding perceptions about learner autonomy and using online technology.
- For promoting online technology in learning, other studies targets not only teachers, but students as well should be enhanced.
- We need to compare teachers' thoughts about learner autonomy and about the effectiveness of online technology to promote it with what students say about their learning experiences regarding the topic.

- The comparison could lead to more solid conclusions since it includes perspectives from the two angles of teaching and learning.

- It would be useful if teachers are asked about their experiences as learners, not only as teachers. Teachers' experiences as learners might influence their perspectives on teaching.

- Students' cultures and the educational backgrounds that they come from can be considered as well in future research on learner autonomy and how to promote it through online technology.

- Having perspectives from different cultures and different educational backgrounds, either from students or teachers, can be helpful for better understanding of the relationship between learner autonomy and online technology.

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Irony of Teaching a Learner-Centered Curriculum to a Teacher-Centered Classroom: *'English for Libya'* and the Libyan Classroom Realities

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Abstract

In search of what constitutes best possible practice in a language teaching classroom, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), since the 1970s in Europe, has been perceived as the most effective second or foreign language (ES/FL) teaching approach because classroom activities guided by CLT are characterized by the focus on meaningful communication. Yet, Omar (2014) argues that it is difficult that CLT be applied in Developing countries due to "overcrowded classrooms, lack of facilities, and lack of well-qualified and well-trained teachers" (p. 163). Even though the lesion of EFL curricula lies in the ignorance of the cultural and educational background of the learning settings, "*English for Libya*" curriculum is not an exception for it adopts the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach on the ground that it was successful in its cradle environment for the suitability of the teaching strategies and learning styles of learners in those contexts. Little research has discussed the implementation of the new communicative English language curriculum in Libyan schools. The contribution of this study to the literature review is that it investigates the implementation process of English curriculum in Libyan secondary schools with no assumption that this curriculum is the best!

Keywords: *CLT; Libyan curriculum; English language; secondary schools; EFL*

1. Introduction

For some political reasons in 1986, English was banned from being taught in Libya for many years. However, English language teaching was resumed in the mid-1990s, but the students experienced a lack of qualified teachers and a limited curriculum. In 2000, the Libyan Ministry of Education developed new English curricula based on Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLTA) principles to be used in Libyan primary and high schools in place of the previous curricula. However, Libyan English teachers have not been able to help their students of English achieve the objectives of the new curricula because these teachers predominantly use traditional methods, such as Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and teacher-centered pedagogy.

According to Orafi and Borg (2009), the ban of English deprived teachers of training on new trends in teaching methods and made students struggle with the unfamiliar communicative technique-based activities such as group and pair work. Moghani and Mohamed (2003) believe that there is a growing tendency in Libya to learn English, and they also claim that if the cultural and structural impediments were removed, students could find the support they require; thus, they may enhance their opportunity to travel, study, work abroad, or get better jobs at home. But the radical change and the political instability that followed the Libyan revolution have negatively impacted the whole educational process including English teaching.

2. Literature Review

For the purpose of this study, literature review is used as a secondary resource through searching in books, journals, and websites about the topic of the study.

2.1 Background of CLT

As a trendy teaching approach, CLT has its roots in the late 1970s and early 1980s as a reaction to the "dissatisfaction with the structural focus of Audiolingualism, which was producing learners who could communicate, but not effectively or, at times, particularly meaningfully" (DELTA, 2009, p. 15). CLTA has been the core discussion among a big number of researchers from different perspectives. Its main principles have been implemented globally in ES/FL teaching classrooms. Through this approach, new teaching methods have come to existence, and their main focus is on the practice of language in real situations regardless of the language system knowledge.

Thornbury (2017) explains that in such educational environment, students are encouraged to share ideas, acquire knowledge, and exchange it through working in pairs or groups. That would be successfully effective if they were exposed to this type of learning setting in their former education. Thornbury (2017) further puts it right that "there was a concern less for what language *is* and more for what language *does*" (p. 46). It promotes the natural communicative environment as if it were a process of a first language acquisition with no emphasis on "linguistic competence". Accordingly, there will be fluency, possibly at the expense of accuracy for some time until the learners reach the level of awareness where they can correct themselves.

A number of studies addressed the shift in the teacher's role in the CLTA in that the teacher who is perceived as the source of knowledge has to be a facilitator after he played the role of the orchestra leader for decades. CLTA reflects the Cognitive-Mentalist model, which assumed that we acquire language through hypothesis, trial and error, and making mistakes. Its focus is more on "notions" and "functions" more than on language structure, on

the ground that learning the structure of a sentence does not mean the ability of mastering it. Further, the CLT educational philosophy bases itself on learner centeredness and creativity, as it focuses on fluency rather than accuracy, which is great in respect of naturally acquiring usable and applicable language in everyday situations.

The increasing popularity and successful practice of CLT in ESL classrooms have drawn widespread attention and interest from policy makers, curriculum designers, and practitioners in other parts of the world, who need a good teaching method that can prepare their learners for real-life communication outside the classroom setting. The desperate need for a new method and the curiosity about its promising avenue have led to the importation of CLT into EFL contexts where reforms in national curriculum were initiated to include CLT as its central component. A national CLT-based syllabus, for example, was introduced in China, North Korea, and Japan in 1992, 1997, and 1999, respectively (Butler, 2011). Other nations such as Turkey, China, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Vietnam have been reported to adopt and incorporate CLT into their curricula as well (Nunan, 2003).

This curriculum, when designed, seemed to have considered only the principles of the communicative approach; other factors that may contribute to its effectiveness or its failure were neglected. Segovia and Hardison (2009) investigated Thai EFL teachers' perspectives towards a learner-centered curriculum innovation in ELT. The findings of this study revealed that the TCA was still dominant, and there was little evidence of fluency. Several factors were noted as causes for this failure, including proficiency and training of teachers, and a lack of continuity between curriculum and classroom practice.

2.2 CLT and the Libyan Classroom

Graves (2000) provides analogy between designing a course and designing a house when she proposed that course designers "need to have a lot of information in order to design a structure that will fit the context" (p. 14). When it comes to *English for Libya* curriculum, it is obvious that the authors did not consider the Libyan context carefully including students' learning strategies, their prior education, their beliefs towards English, teachers' beliefs, the local culture and some other technical issues such as professional development and assessment.

The Ministry of Education in Libya adapted a new English curriculum which was designed in the United Kingdom (UK). This curriculum is a series of textbooks titled "*English for Libya*" for 12 grades in the three cycles: elementary, preparatory & secondary. The components of the course of each grade consist of: (1) fully illustrated course book; (2) black and white workbook; (3) teacher's book; and (4) cassette. The textbook was designed to follow a specific sequence in all stages or cycles and focuses on developing the listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The same order of lessons is in all parts of the series of textbook.

It appears that the books were designed to foster an interest in learning English. Phillips (2008) state that "these textbooks have been designed to provide stimulating topics, written exercises, and a wide range of activities to maintain students' interest and to offer materials relevant to the different disciplines in secondary education". The series divides each unit into different sections that discuss the same topic. Each unit starts with pre-reading comprehension questions in order that learners become familiarized with the content of the text. This is followed by the while-reading section that includes questions to emphasize understanding while the last section is the comprehension questions that test students' understanding.

Presenting grammar as a sub-skill in the textbook follows the inductive approach that contributes to the development of students' analytical skills. Reading-based writing, on the other hand, is the approach adopted in presenting writing; this automatically contributes to the development of the two receptive and productive skills: reading and writing respectively. Students are required to read a text and internalize it before they start writing based on their understanding of that text. The other pair of receptive and productive skills (listening and speaking skills) are dealt with by using pair and group work in addition to the included cassettes.

The designers of this curriculum assume that students have to predict before reading, comment when reading, and suggest post reading. In addition, they should work in pairs or groups and use only English. The disparity between the Libyan context and British vision poses a question of how effective this new curriculum is. A good implementation of as communicative-oriented, learner-centered, English language curriculum in Libyan secondary schools requires a change in English teachers' instructional approaches from teacher-centered to a learner-centered (Saleh, 2002; Orafi and Borg, 2009).

Textbooks have been designed to provide stimulating topics, written exercises, and activities to arouse students' interest; yet grammar translation and audio-lingual methods are used instead of the curriculum-based methods. In the area of feedback and correction, Phillips (2008) emphasized that students should incorporate peer correction; he also recommends that teachers should vary their error correction techniques and not to correct during oral activities. Phillips gave examples of communicative activities included in the textbook which, in practice, are not actually used in Libyan English classes.

As teachers' instructional approaches are often guided by their conceptions of teaching (Bruner, 1996), their misconception of innovations can affect the way they teach the new English curriculum in the classrooms. The goal of introducing a learner-centered curriculum in Libya was to develop Libyan students' competence and ability to use English as a foreign language appropriately and accurately. Therefore, the new curriculum includes different communication activities that help students practice English in an engaging and active participation. In this learner-centered type of learning, teachers adopt the role of facilitator (Phillips, 2008).

However, the current study and a number of studies have proven that teacher-centered approach is still practiced in EFL classes in Libya despite the different method on which the new curriculum is based on (Saleh, 2002; Ahmad, 2004; Dalala, 2006; Alhmali, 2007; Orafi and Borg, 2009). It has been found that skills such as listening and speaking are ignored in the Libyan secondary schools; as a result, students struggle when they are exposed to real situations where listening and speaking are central to communication.

2.3 Teaching and Teachers in Libya

The current format of Libyan English classes makes it difficult for students to develop their productive skills, namely, speaking and writing as well as their understanding. The only dominant feature in those classes is memorization. In addition, the shift from teacher-centered class to student-centered class is confronted with many impediments. Some of them are cultural; for example, the hierarchical relationship in which the teacher is conceived of as a father, so when he speaks, students have to listen and, possibly not to question. Such a cultural factor may impede interactions in class and make students unable to participate or ask questions if they need further elaboration.

In the Libyan environment, the teacher is the central character in class, and free flowing dialogue was rare. Orafi (2013) highlights those quotes from teachers; for instance, one says, "The students only act as listeners. The students come to the school only to listen to what the teachers say. They do not think that they should actively participate in the classroom activities in order to learn English" (p. 5). In his reflection on the teaching style of Libyan teachers that sounds like criticism, one says, "We are used to the idea that the focus should be on the teacher … Here in Libya the focus is always on the teacher. The teacher does everything in the classroom" (p.5).

Another crucial aspect is that teachers seem to feel insecure due to their inability to answer students' questions due to their poor knowledge or their poor relationship with their unsupportive supervisors. It seems that the problem of imported syllabi is that they marginalize the context of its implementation. In this respect, Wang and Cheng (Cited in Orafi, 2013) assume that "without knowing what is happening during the implementation phase, it is impossible to probe the underlying reasons why so many educational innovations fail" (p. 228). Thus, its success or effectiveness is still questioned.

When the ultimate goal of any teaching style or a modern syllabus is to help learners develop their thinking skills, it is pointless to depend only on the up-to-date methods or techniques and ignore context. This, of course, will not achieve the goal. Bax (2003) puts it right when he explains that language teaching everywhere will benefit from fuller attention to the context in which it operates, and teachers will only devote this attention when they are explicitly empowered, educated, and encouraged to do so. As things stand, they are not empowered by the dominant paradigm to address the context directly, nor are they encouraged doing so - on the contrary they

are implicitly and in practice discouraged from such matters by the emphasis on methodology.

Furthermore, it is apparent that there is incongruity between teachers' practice in class and the curricular principles. In other words, they may read about the content of the syllabus and the appropriate techniques as designed in their teacher's manual, but their teaching styles prove to be irrelevant to any of those disciplined theoretical principles in the curriculum (Orafi, 2013).

2.4 English Teaching and Libyan Secondary Stage

Secondary stage in Libya starts at 10th grade and ends at 12th. It is divided into two sections: scientific and literary. In "*English for Libya*" curriculum, students find different topics relevant to their specialties. The language and activities are designed to suit each section. Those activities are meant to promote communication in English by presenting meaningful tasks rather than grammatical tasks. English is supposed to be used in class as much as possible, but the fact is that students tend to use English only when dealing with a text. Teachers explain and define new words in Arabic to help students understand and interact, which is a typical Grammar Translation Method.

They also present grammar with the focus on form rather than on meaning which is likely to lead to the inability of students to use the structure correctly since they focus on the form, not both form and meaning together. What makes it worse is that students are almost guided to highlight specific parts in their textbooks to guarantee a good mark in the achievement tests. This means students learn what they are tested in only. This also means that students' relationship with English will be ended after they take their exams.

Teachers are determined to use such teaching strategies for many reasons: they prefer to teach in a way they learned; they are unable to use a communicative approach, which requires teaching skills they are not trained on. They also lack fluency and the knowledge of language system (phonology, lexis, grammar, discourse), and they do not have the creativity or training to design their own materials and activities, nor to adopt different class management techniques such as pair or group work. Teachers also do not tend to use innovative strategies because they think that they may lose control over their classrooms.

Teachers are believed to feel more comfortable in using their own methods because they need to avoid stress by not leaving their "*Comfort Zone*". Furthermore, as Crandall (Cited in Hameda, 2011) emphasizes that teachers' previous experience as students plays a significant role in the formation of their ways of teaching. This could be one of the reasons behind the Libyan teachers' usage of the traditional methods of teaching, such as the grammar translation method and their focus on teaching grammar rules. They were taught this way, so they apply it in their teaching.

2.5 Sociocultural Perspectives and the Libyan Learning Context

The political instability that followed 2011 revolution left its negative impacts on education and, particularly, on English teaching. The impacts manifested themselves in different perspectives. From an academic perspective, many educational zones in Libya have experienced a reduction of the time frame of the academic year that reached its maximum to be six months a year.

Certainly, that was at the expense of the quality of teaching and learning, and as a result, it was not possible to cover the curriculum of many different subjects including English. Libyan secondary stage students attend

four English periods per week; each is 45 minutes in length for a total of three hours a week. Another negative aspect is the closure of many schools that led to the high-density classes; some classes may contain 35-40 students! Because of the instable situation, many Libyan teachers start their teaching career directly after graduation, without being enrolled in teacher-training programs. This could make their first year of teaching a very challenging and demanding experience.

At psychological level, many Libyan families lost a member during the war which caused pain to students; especially those who lost their parents, and many students and teachers were not able to attend their classes because they fear getting injured or killed.

Financially speaking, Libyan employees have encountered many financial challenges, and Libyan English language teachers are not an exception. Such challenges have lowered their motivation and performance.

3. Methodology of the Study

The methodology of the study covers the following points:

3.1 Questions of the Study

The main questions of this study are:

1. What are the most common attitudes of English language teachers in Libyan secondary schools towards the new English language curriculum?

2. What are the most common teaching practices used by those teachers to implement this curriculum?

3.2 Procedures of Data Collection

A total of 30 English language teachers participated in this study, and the data obtained through two instruments: a questionnaire and interviews.

1. Questionnaires

For the convenience of the participants, the questionnaire used in this study is written in both English and Arabic and developed through a literature review. Each copy of the questionnaire has an introduction in which the researchers explain the purpose of the study. The questionnaire consists of three sections and contains 29 items. The first section of the questionnaire includes questions about the participants' background information. The second section is concerned with the participants' opinions and beliefs about English language curriculum based on their teaching experiences. The third section is concerned with the participants' actual practices in the class.

Before analyzing the questionnaire data, two teachers were eliminated from the data analysis because they were believed to give misleading answers. To answer the research questions, the most common attitudes of English language teachers towards the new English language curriculum in Libyan high-schools and also the most common English class practices, needed to be reported. Descriptive statistics for the questionnaire were conducted using the following rule: the most common positive attitudes and the most favorable practices are those that belong to answers 1 and 2. The most common negative attitudes and the most unfavorable practices are those that belong to answers 3 and 4.

The most common attitudes and practices of English language teachers towards the new curriculum belong to the questions that are answered by more than 21 subjects nearly (75%) while the least common attitudes and practices are those adopted by less than seven subjects, (25%). It has been noticed that it is difficult to draw conclusions about the attitudes and practices occurring in the middle of the range.

2. Interviews

The interviews aim at explaining the quantitative data collected from the questionnaires. The researchers used a follow-up interview approach. Two teachers were selected from the participants. It is presumed that those teachers were very knowledgeable and informative about the topic and the setting of the research and would help the researchers gain a deeper and broader picture about the teachers' perceptions and practices of the new curriculum.

Discussions were held informally and they were asked to discuss most common problems faced by them during teaching *English for Libya* syllabus, and their responses were noted down. The two interviews were in Arabic to make both teachers feel free to express themselves. Later, they were summarized and translated into English. Both interviewees were asked three main questions:

1. Why do you think that the implications of the Libyan revolution have also affected English language Education?

Interviewee 1

As a result of the Libyan revolution, study was suspended from time to time. Our students were badly affected due to the interruption of the study. Additionally, schools were closed and some were changed into war related fields or even arms storages. Some students joined the conflict and many of them died. After the end of the war, schools re-opened for our students. However, the infrastructure of those schools were affected badly and many buildings were damaged, and many language laboratories were destroyed or at least stolen.

After the revolution, students' behavior was more aggressive. They started to show very little respect for us and some of them may carry weapons to

school which was life threatening issue. Such problems affect our performance at class as well.

Interviewee 2

Because of the limitation of the time frame of any academic year during the war and because we were obliged to finish the syllabus in time, we were forced to neglect skills such as speaking and listening. We also were obliged to translate new words into Arabic constantly to help our students gain the largest amount of vocabulary in shorter time. The time allowed for each lesson was not enough to complete the workbook activities and exercises.

2. What financial issues have hindered the implementation of the new curriculum?

Interviewee 1

The lack of the required teaching technologies such as computers, OHPs, Language Labs, or even CDs. The activities which are designed to be interesting and funny have become boring and dull.

Interviewee 2

The lack of motivation is not only found on the students side but on the teachers side as well. Teachers are struggling with their daily family needs because they find it difficult to get their money out of their bank accounts.

3. Why do you think that communicative activities have not received popularity particularly among the Libyan students?

Interviewee 1

The large number of students in a class is big challenge to us and affects teaching and learning negatively as we find it difficult to control the class as

well as to focus on students individually. In such large classes, correcting every mistake is an impossible mission.

Our students are very shy and not eager to speak English in the class and they feel that the nature of the communicative activities are very demanding. This is simply because they are not used to express themselves even in Arabic!

Interviewee 2

Our classes are not suitable for teaching communicative lessons because the noise caused by our students prevent us from doing the tasks properly. Group work, for example, is time and effort consuming because I have tried this before and I found myself spend half of the time of the class in just rearranging the desks!

Our students and sometimes their parents ask us to give them questions and answers of the English exams because their only intention of attending classes is only to pass the subject not to learn English.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Background Information

The data analysis of section one in the questionnaire reveals that there is a complete lack of knowledge by all participants (100%) of the language teaching method used in designing this curriculum, CLTA! Even those who answered with (yes), gave incorrect answers. This complete ignorance was regardless of whether the participants were graduated from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences or the Faculty of Education. The latter is known by a more educational focused curriculum, which is a curriculum that concentrates on modules relevant to English language pedagogy.

Unfortunately, the majority of the participants (75%) did not receive any training in how to teach the curriculum. The negative effects of this lack of professional training in teaching English is seen clearly in their attitudes and teaching practices.

The analysis shows that 85% of the participants do not have an access to the technological equipment needed to deliver their lessons. This includes the lack of technological tools and services such as computers, head projectors, digital video disks (DVDs), smart boards, and the whole range of modern devices that are used in modern language teaching.

4.2 The Most Common Attitudes

The more interesting results occur at extremes of the range where the majority of participants indicate that they either adopt a certain attitude or not, or practice a certain teaching strategy or not. Items in the questionnaire were designed to explore not only teachers' attitudes, but also the factors and sources of difficulties that teachers encounter in implementing the CLT curriculum in Libyan high schools. It has been noticed that teachers encounter many barriers in achieving the goals of the intended curriculum in class practice.

The analysis shows that 78% of the participants believe that this curriculum does not suit the prevailing general teaching methods in Libya where the teacher is the center of knowledge and in charge of learning, and the students are usually passively receiving information, and where education is generally reading-oriented, rather than being communication-oriented.

In spite of the fact that 78% of those teachers use the teacher book, they find it difficult to apply all the included instructions because they are challenged by many real classroom obstacles. Many of them will be

discussed in details below, but presumably, the most important of them is that all subjects are seen as subjects to be passed in school rather than subjects for which functional proficiency is the end goal. Alhmali (2007) has frankly put it out that the objective of educators in Libya is for students to pass exams with the highest possible scores.

The analysis shows that 89% of the participants believe that the negative impacts of the Libyan revolution has affected education, particularly English language teaching. The state of instability and the lack of long term plans to develop the country have negatively affected all sectors in various ways, including English language education.

The analysis shows that 82% of the participants believe that communicative activities have not received widespread enthusiasm among their students because of the students' conservative cultural background.

The analysis shows that 85% of the participants believe that CLTA does not suit the Libyan student who learns English in an EFL classroom where English is not the dominant language: students share the same language and culture, and English is usually not the native language of the teacher. Outside of the classroom, students have very few opportunities to use English and for many of them, learning English may not have any obvious practical benefit. They have also limited exposure to English-speaking culture, most often through TV, music or the internet. Any effective language teaching approach must take those features into account when dealing with designing language textbooks.

4.3 The Most Common Practices

The analysis shows that 75% of the participants admit that they use the same teaching strategies that were used by their teachers when they were students which means following the same old teaching norms that

emphasize the authority of the teacher and view him/her as the only source of knowledge. The new English curriculum, though, challenges this tradition by asking teachers of English to adopt roles and behaviors which require them to lessen their control over the classroom (Orafi and Borg, 2009).

The analysis shows that 79% of the participants focus mainly on teaching grammar, and this results in neglecting the other important skills as listening, speaking, writing, and reading. The participants, also, do not arrange the classroom in a way that allows them to do group work and other communicational activities properly. The reason behind this should be the large number of students and the unmovable nature of desks, where the desk and the chair are not separated which makes it difficult to move them easily.

The analysis shows that 75% of the participants complain that the time allowed for each lesson was not enough to complete the tasks related to each lesson. As a result, teachers are obliged to summarize the lessons by deleting certain sections and sometimes complete units!

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on Eveyik-Aydin (2003), "it is necessary to question the cross-cultural applicability of language teaching methods that originate in a particular educational context to some other contexts with different cultural norms and educational theories. In cases where adoption is out of question, adaptation may be a good solution" (p. 19). Sarawathi (2004) also argues that "there is no best method. What works with one learner may not work with another. Different methods may be appropriate to different contexts. If we start searching for the perfect method or the ideal single solution to the problem of language learning, we bound to fail" (p. 63).

This study is significant because it adds to the literature new insights about the adoption of CLTA in Libya and how it is should be reformulated

to suit our students and teachers' needs simply because it is impossible to do the opposite; that is, changing our students and teachers to suit CLTA. The study reached some conclusions and presented some recommendations as:

- While some Libyan teachers claim to use the communicative language teaching techniques that are implemented in *English for Libya* textbooks, this paper reflects a partial application of those techniques.

- Most Libyan teachers focus mainly on grammar, vocabulary and reading, and ignore speaking, listening, and writing.

- The lack of professional training is one of the reasons behind the use of inappropriate and ineffective teaching methodology by the Libyan-schools' teachers.

- Choosing CLTA requires designing a CLT course for Libyan teachers to learn how to design instructional activities, materials, and assessment.

- Although Libya is an oil-rich country, English language education in the country has not been as efficient and productive as expected. This may be because of the mismanagement and lack of well-designed policy to achieve the aims and objectives of the English language education.

- Schools may have basic infrastructure but lack advanced, and much required facilities like functional language labs and other audio-visual aids to make CLTA effective, interesting, and dynamic.

- The suspension of English teaching in Libyan schools for seven years caused a general weakness in the output of English among teachers, students as well as parents.

- Low achievement in communicative activities by students is related to low motivation: students think that they will not need to use English as a means of communication in the future. They are also reluctant to talk and share their ideas with their friends.

- The expectations of the educational system regarding classroom management and covering the content of curriculum in time are not realistic. Large size classes and the difficulty of managing and monitoring group/pair work activities, prevent the successful implementation of the English language Libyan curriculum. In this respect, four main authorities are needed to be addressed: educational policy-makers, curriculum designers, English language teachers, and Libyan students.

- Educational policy-makers in Libya are recommended to involve Libyan English language teachers and pedagogues side by side with *English for Libya*'s designers in the process of the curriculum making simply because they are well informed about the Libyan context.

- The curriculum designers should take the Libyan context into account by implementing the appropriate methods. The content of the English curriculum should be reviewed in order to meet the interests of the Libyan students who are EFL learners who have their own perceptions and needs regarding learning a new language.

- English language teachers in Libya are recommended to encourage and motivate their students in order to develop positive attitudes towards English by highlighting its importance as an international tool of communication.

- Teachers should work on themselves by developing the skills and knowledge needed to keep pace with global developments in the areas of English teaching methods, and the use of modern teaching techniques.

- To stop the degradation of the quality of education due to the instability in the country, the issues of the Libyan students' inappropriate learning habits and their undisciplined behaviors should be also dealt with seriously.

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Appendix 1

General and Background Information

1. Presumably, you are graduated from an English Department. Which faculty are you graduated from?	Faculty of Arts and Sciences		Faculty of Education		Somewhere else	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
	16	57	12	42	0	0

	Yes		No	
	number	**%**	number	**%**
2. After graduation, have you attended a training course related to the new English curriculum?	21	25	7	7**5**
3. Do you have knowledge about the teaching method used in designing this curriculum; if yes, kindly name it	4 Note: all gave wrong answers	15	24	85
4. Is the required technology for effectively teaching this curriculum available?	4	14	24	86

Appendix 2

Teachers' Attitudes

Question No.	Positive Attitudes (Choices 1 and 2)		Negative Attitudes (Choices 3 and 4)	
	Number	%	Number	%
5. the suitability of new curriculum with the prevailing general teaching methods in Libya	6	22	22	78
6. After nearly 9 years of revolution, do you think it has negatively impacted education, particularly English language teaching?	3	11	25	89
7. Do you think the interactive method in the curriculum culturally suits the Libyan students?	5	17	23	82
8. Do you think teaching grammar inductively effective?	8	28	20	72
9. Do you believe that learner is central to the learning process and the teacher is only a facilitator not the source of knowledge?	14	50	14	50
10. Do you think that the size of classroom is large?	18	64	10	36
11. Do you think the student's vocabulary competence is good enough to cope with the curriculum?	4	14	24	86
12. Do you think that CLTA suits the Libyan student who learns English in an EFL context?	3	11	25	85
13. Do you think that the selected texts increase the students' vocabulary competence?	16	57	12	43

Appendix 3
Teaching Practices

Question No.	Favorable practices (Choices 1 and 2)		Unfavorable practices (Choices 3 and 4)	
	%	Number	**%**	Number
14. Do you teach all the skills found in the textbook?	18	64	10	35
15. Do you use the Teacher's book?	22	78	6	22
16. When you need assistance in teaching a lesson, do you ask for the educational inspector's help?	17	60	11	40
17. To what extent does your educational inspector cooperate with you?	19	67	9	33
18. Do you use the same teaching methods your teachers used when you were a student?	21	75	7	25
19. Is English your instruction language?	18	64	10	36
20. Do you ask students to do all activities in each unit?	16	57	12	43
21. When teaching the curriculum, is the student ability to communicate in English your main priority?	22	78	6	22
22. In addition to grammar, do you equally focus on the main four skills?	6	21	22	79
23. Do you ask students to do communicative tasks such as asking someone for directions, writing to someone or buying something?	13	46	15	54
24. Do you manage seating in a way that enables pair or group work?	6	21	22	79

25. Do you monitor all students when do pair or group work activities?	16	57	12	43
26. What is the percentage of students participating in the activities related to the curriculum?	14	50	14	50
27. What is percentage of students using English language when doing activities?	17	60	11	40
28. In quizzes, do you focus on interactive questions in addition to grammar?	15	53	13	47
29. Is the time frame specified to deliver the curriculum, sufficient?	7	25	21	75

About the Editor

Associate Professor Youssif Zaghwani Omar is the head of Department of European and Asian Languages at Faculty of Languages at the University of Benghazi. He used to be an assistant professor in German and Russian Studies Department at the University of Missouri, Columbia in the United States. He was the manager of *Artifacts Journal* for undergraduate students' writing at the University of Missouri, an assistant editor of *ECV* (Engaging Culture Voice), and president of LTC association in School of Education at the University of Missouri, Columbia. He is a holder of six masters (applied linguistics, translation, business administration, linguistics, reading literacy, and English education) and a holder of three doctorates (English education, linguistics, and translation studies) from the United States. He received several honors and scholarships because of his academic achievements. He published more than 30 papers and 4 books in the fields of language learning, teaching, and acquisition in addition to presenting in more than 60 international conferences and chairing three international conferences in the fields of language learning and teaching. He, also, chairs several workshops and seminars in the field of language teaching and language learning. He is now a reviewer of seven international journals, and the implementer of international language learning programs in Benghazi, Libya, including Solyia Connect Program. He is the credited translator of the University of Benghazi and Academy of Graduate Studies in Benghazi. He is, also, credited as a legal translator and language expert at the court.