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Factors affecting the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching in Libyan secondary schools

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my husband and children. Without the love and support of my husband, Esam, and my children, Ameera and Almutasim, it would not have been possible to complete this thesis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

CC Communicative Competence

CLT Communicative language teaching

EFL English as foreign language

EL English Language

EL English Language

ELF   English as a *lingua franca*

ELT   English Language Teaching

ESL English as second language

FLL   Foreign Language Learning

GNA The Government of National Accord

GPCE The General People Committee for Education

GTM Grammar Translation Method

ICE International Conference on Education

L1 First Language

L2 Second Language

LBSC Libyan Bureau of Statistics and Census

LEC Libyan English curriculum

NTC The National Transitional Council

PCK Pedagogical Content Knowledge

QCA Qualitative Content Analysis

SCT Socio-Cultural Theory

SLL   Second Language Learners

SLL   Second Language Learning

SRI Stimulated Recall Interviews

ZPD Zone of Proximal Development

ABSTRACT

Because English is considered and taught as a foreign language in Libya, where the classroom is the only environment offering exposure to English, an effective teaching method is required to underpin the quality of teaching English in such a context. This study was undertaken to investigate the implementation of communicative language teaching (CLT) in Libyan secondary schools by exploring the implementation of the Libyan English language curriculum in which the CLT principles are incorporated. The study examines the teachers' perceptions and understanding of CLT. It investigates whether and how CLT is implemented, and identifies the challenges faced by both teachers and students, highlighting the socio-cultural and contextual factors that facilitate or hamper its implementation. It also explores how appropriate the curriculum is for use in the Libyan secondary school context.

For this study, an interpretive research paradigm was chosen, and the qualitative research approach was adopted. Three kinds of participants, including 20 teachers, three inspectors of English and 10 secondary school students, were involved. The qualitative data were gathered by undertaking audio- and video-recorded classroom observations of teachers' practice and stimulated-recall interviews. Finally, I conducted semi-structured interviews with all of the participants: the teachers, the inspectors, and the students. Qualitative content analysis of the observation and interview transcripts, plus field notes, was used for the data analysis.

The findings showed (1): an inconsistency between the theoretical principles of the curriculum and its practical implementation in the majority of the teachers' practices; (2) that the majority of the teachers' practices were characterised as traditionally oriented, adopting traditional teaching methods, such as the teacher-centred approach, the grammar translation method, reading aloud, and an over reliance on the mother tongue ,and translation between Arabic and English; (3) a lack of student participation in the classroom with the rare implementation of pair and group work, combined with some degree of misunderstanding of its purpose; (4) that exams dominated and shaped the teaching of the curriculum, affecting the teachers' practices and students' expectations regarding English teaching and learning; (5) the students' dissatisfaction with the majority of the teachers' practices, such as the overuse of the mother tongue in the classroom, the omission of pair and group work activities, and the neglect of the teaching of productive skills; and (6) that the students were aware of the international importance of English, and that their positive attitude towards learning English as a

communicative language contrasted with the teachers' outlook, as the students were critical of the exam, which neglected the communicative side of English language. These findings, along with the challenges related to contextual and socio-cultural factors such as the lack of teaching aids, large class sizes, and (Libyan) parents with no knowledge of English, were found to impact negatively on teaching using CLT.

The study concludes by offering pedagogical recommendations about how CLT implementation in the Libyan secondary school context might be improved. In addition, the study identifies several important areas for further research: the implementation of CLT in the Libyan primary school context, given its significance as a foundation for the secondary stage, an investigation of the teaching of productive skills, and improved teacher training.

The study offers fresh insights by attempting: (a) to bridge the gap existing in the previous literature and give Libyan students an opportunity to have their voices heard; (b) to use stimulated-recall interviews as a research tool, which facilitated effective data collection, and is a method that has not been used in the Libyan context hitherto; (c) to identify key socio-cultural factors related to CLT implementation, which have restricted the teachers' practices; and (d) to offer recommendations, as this study sheds light on the importance of primary schooling as a key stage for improving secondary school attainment and promoting more effective CLT implementation.

Chapter 1 Introduction to the research

1.1 Introduction

This qualitative research presents an interpretive investigation of the implementation of communicative language teaching (CLT) in Libyan secondary schools (the pre-university phase). The study aims to explore the teachers' understanding and perceptions of CLT and how their knowledge impacts on their classroom practices. This study opens up fresh angles for implementing CLT not only by investigating teachers' views and practices regarding this phenomenon, but also by examining the different experiences and views of students and inspectors of English. This research aims to investigate whether and how CLT is implemented, identifying the challenges that teachers and students face. It also explores how appropriate this curriculum is in relation to the Libyan secondary school context.

 This research identifies the different patterns whereby the communicative curriculum is implemented by teachers within their teaching context. In addition, the study reveals the contextual and socio-cultural factors of the context in which the participants' interaction take place and their influence on CLT implementation. The nature of this investigation requires the interpretive paradigm as its philosophical basis and a qualitative approach design is adopted using different research methods in sequential stages. The research data include classroom observations, stimulated-recall interviews, field notes and semi-structured interviews.

1.2 Background to the study

The place of English as a global language is undeniable, and, importantly for this study, it is gaining momentum in developing countries such as Libya. The significance and place of the English language, as a global language that provides a means of communication between people as a *lingua franca* (ELF) when individuals do not share a first language or even a second language, are widely acknowledged. Therefore, many people possess the ability to communicate effectively with other speakers (native or non-native speakers of English) and know how to use and speak English as a *lingua franca* in real situations (Churches 2015). As Seidlhofer (2005:339) points out "as a consequence of its international use, English is being shaped at least as much by its non-

native speakers as by its native speakers". The significance of English is underpinned by its rapid growth worldwide, as well as its widespread use in every scientific field. Learning English is essential, as an ability to speak English is considered a benchmark for understanding and knowing the outside world.

In the context of this research, it is very important for all citizens in Libya to learn English in order to meet the demand for involvement in the international world as an industrial oil country. There is growing interest in learning English across the economic and educational sectors in the country. This has consequently created an urgent need to learn English in the way that will help Libyans to communicate efficiently. This strong awareness of the need to learn English arose from the Libyan government's changing of its foreign policy and nurturing of a new, friendly relationship with the international community in 1990. This opened up the door to foreign investment. Thus, learning English offers an opportunity to establish a channel of communication which matches these requirements.

In 2000, this interest in learning English became clear from the fact that many language centres were established in which English was taught for general and academic purposes at all levels. More importantly, the education system witnessed a reform of the curriculum with the introduction of a new, communicative curriculum based on CLT principles. To promote this innovation and enable Libyan students to use English as a *lingua franca*, therefore, many factors are involved. One of the most important factors is the methodologies or techniques employed to teach the language, as many English language learners, whether foreign or even second language learners, can only learn the target language within a school or university environment. Similarly, in the current research context, the classroom is the only environment in which students may gain exposure to the English language. As Hedge (2001) notes, the methodology for teaching the language will have an obvious impact on the learners and on improving their ability to use the language.

In Libyan secondary schools, the students are currently exposed to the CLT curriculum. There is no doubt that the communicative approach provides a valuable tool, from which Libyan students can benefit in order to communicate effectively by using English language in a number of situations. As Farrell and Jacobs (2010:3) point out, "the purpose is to enable second language learners (SLL) to be able to use language functionally, meaningfully and appropriately". Additionally, the majority of Libyan students require a strong communicative ability, which will enable them to

communicate their meaning or the content of English language in real-life situations. Thus, the communicative approach opens up a variety of opportunities to interact in different situations (Mitchell 1994). It is striking that the communicative approach is leading teachers to alter their views or techniques regarding language teaching. The process of learning a language is not just a matter of learning its structures (grammar and vocabulary) but, as Widdowson (1990:159) states, "It concentrates on getting learners to do things with language". Learning a language is, in fact, a creative act.

However, a number of research studies have also pointed to the issue of transferring teaching methods from one part of the world to another (Pennycock, 1989; Holliday, 1994; Kramsch and Sullivan, 1996, quoted in Hiep 2007). Regarding this point, it could be argued that the CLT approach may be miss-implemented within certain foreign language contexts. In other words, the context of language teaching, upon which the theoretical tenets of CLT were established, is completely different and does not coincide with the criteria of foreign contexts for teaching English. Consequently, such an inequality between the contexts creates gaps and causes difficulties regarding CLT implementation.

English Language Teaching (ELT) in the Libyan context was dominated by grammar and comprehension teaching in the 1980's, using oral drills, reading aloud, and memorisation strategies, and depending largely on Arabic to translate between languages (Orafi and Borg 2009). Also worth noting is the ten year gap, during which English was banned from being taught at universities and colleges as a result of the constrained Libyan-Western relations. Even though this was rectified by the introduction of a new English curriculum in 2000, the state of English language teaching remained underdeveloped and based on highly traditional methods, such as grammar teaching and translation.

Thus, this study seeks to investigate the factors which help or hinder the implementation of CLT in Libyan secondary schools located in a city in the east of the country. The sample, which included 20 teachers from eight secondary schools who had been teaching the new curriculum for at least five years, were subjected to classroom observations, followed by stimulated-recall interviews and semi-structured interviews. The study was a comprehensive investigation that included 20 teachers, ten students and three inspectors of English.

1.3 Rationale for the study

Since I was a child, I have always been interested in learning English in a way that will enable me to speak the language in a communicative way. I started learning English in my first year of preparatory school, then continued learning it at secondary school, where I studied it for six years, both in the preparatory and secondary stage. During the preparatory stage, I had to memorise a list of vocabulary every day and was tested by writing the words on the blackboard the following day in front of the teacher. Additionally, learning English was characterised by reading a comprehension text and answering questions about it. A similar technique was employed at my secondary school, with the focus on the teaching of grammar rules. I did not have any opportunity to speak English. I majored English at university in a hope of obtaining a chance to practise and improve my English proficiency. I recall that this experience was also frustrating as the only spoken English practice I engaged in involved memorising a dialogue and performing it with my friend in front of a lecturer to pass the oral exam. Learning English was limited to memorising vocabulary lists and grammar rules, which did not give me a strong sense of English as a language, since I was aware that the only way to learn English was to practise it. The focus led to the neglect of the practical side of teaching English.

Consequently, my choice of topic was inspired by Libyan students' needs and my sympathetic attitude towards these. The main focus of these needs is on the development of their English language oral skills via the implementation of communicative language teaching in Libya. Although a new curriculum, based on the communicative approach, was introduced in 2000, Libyan students still do not appear to be able to communicate in English confidently and effectively. Libyan students spend a great deal of their time learning English language, but it may be argued that they still face a number of issues when it comes to communicating and interacting in natural settings. In other words, the implementation of the communicative approach in the learning process appears to have limited potential. This communicative approach is based on the idea that communicative ability is the goal of foreign language learning, which appears to be what Libyan students have lost. They have not been presented with any opportunity to use the language themselves for any communicative purpose. The most important aspect of the learning process remains how to pass the exam. As Harmer (1998) explains, it seems that there is no real interest or enjoyment in terms of learning English language, because useful instruments and learning methods are found to be

wanting. Learning a language has become an absolute requirement for many people in the world today, but the creative side of learning is yet to be concretised or experienced in the Libyan learning context; consequently, students have started to lose interest and motivation with regard to English language learning.

As mentioned above, this research was inspired by a desire to explore students' needs and attitudes regarding learning English. As a researcher, I am not isolated from the social context which I study. This choice of topic was motivated by my own previous experience both of learning English as a student, who devoted a great deal of time to this without developing an ability to communicate effectively, and as a Libyan English teacher, who believes that CLT provides an appropriate approach for promoting communication in the classroom.

My experience as a secondary English teacher in Libya has equipped me with sympathetic and inspiring insights into the challenges that Libyan teachers and students face with regard to English teaching and learning. Currently, my role is that of a researcher who is interested in the area of teaching a language from a communicative perspective. Added to this, the literature review of the Libyan context suggested that there remains a gap and a lack of investigation into the students' perceptions, attitudes and experiences with regard to learning English in secondary school. This influenced me to develop a number of questions, which helped to define the current research focus. This influenced the way in which I conducted the research and impacted upon my interpretation and analysis of the data. I should acknowledge that my positionality could influence and affect my views and decisions with regard to the data collection, the research findings and their interpretation. According to Sword (1999:277 quoted in Berger 2015:229), "no research is free of the biases, assumptions, and personality of the researcher and we cannot separate self from those activities in which we are intimately involved".

However, to ensure that the influence of my positionality is transparent to the reader, trustworthiness measures were taken before and while conducting the fieldwork, as explained in the methodology chapter (see section 4.9). My insider positionality as a Libyan individual who shares the same background as my participants helped me to obtain more truthful and actual data and descriptions.

Because of this situation, it may be argued that there is an obvious problem associated with CLT implementation of CLT that needs to be investigated and studied in order to

identify the reasons or factors underlying these issues or difficulties faced by Libyan teachers and students. Thus, this research has the following aims:

- To investigate the teachers' understanding and perceptions of CLT and the socio-cultural and contextual factors which may either facilitate or hamper CLT implementation in the Libyan secondary school context.
- To identify the factors underlying the difficulty of implementing the communicative approach in Libya and investigate whether these are teacher-related.
- To investigate the Libyan students' expectations and learning experiences, many of whom are unaccustomed to communicating in a classroom environment and so will lack familiarity with this methodology.
- To examine the degree of appropriateness of this curriculum within the Libyan secondary school context.

1.4 Research questions

Based on these aims, four research questions were designed to guide the process of data collection for the current study:

1.   How do the teachers understand and perceive the communicative approach?
2.   Is the communicative approach used in the classroom? And, if so, how?
3.   What are the problems and challenges which Libyan teachers and students face with regard to CLT implementation?
4.   Is the curriculum appropriate for the Libyan secondary context, the students' needs and their level of EL proficiency?

1.5 Significance of the study

Teaching a language is mainly influenced by the method of teaching, which is considered a significant aspect for effective teaching. Consequently, any limitations in teaching methods will have a critical influence on the process of teaching and on the achievement of the outcomes of the educational programme, so it is important to review and observe the approach to teaching to examine its impact and effectiveness with regard to how language is taught. More importantly, teachers should not be left behind, struggling and trying to implement an innovative teaching approach, without being offered any assistance or support. An investigation into teaching approaches plays an

important role in assessing all of these aspects. Thus, the significance of this study is as follows.

This research arises from the need to investigate both the implementation and non-implementation of CLT when teaching the Libyan English curriculum (LEC). The research emerged from both the students' need to improve their English proficiency and the problems that the teachers encounter with regard to teaching the curriculum which has been introduced, based as it is on CLT principles. In addition, this research is the first comprehensive investigation to address the phenomenon from different perspectives, including those of the teachers, students and inspectors of English. More importantly, it marks the first attempt to identify and open up opportunities to hear the students' voices and examine their expectations and experience of learning English.

The theoretical framework and methodology add a unique feature to this research. For example, previous research on CLT implementation conducted by Shihiba (2011) used a questionnaire containing several open-ended items to investigate this approach. However, in this study, the participants' views are investigated in a more detailed way by employing a variety of different methods, such as classroom observation, followed by stimulated-recall interviews (SRI) with some of the teachers and semi-structured interviews with all three groups of participants (the teachers, inspectors and students). SRI is applied in Libyan secondary schools for the first time, where the teachers who were observed were given an opportunity to review their teaching practices in the classroom by making responses about certain aspects of their teaching. Moreover, this study adopted the interpretivist approach/social constructivism as the theoretical paradigm which, to some extent, is difficult to implement in the Libyan school context because of the cultural limitation, as teachers are usually viewed as the source of knowledge, of which the students are the recipients.

It is hoped that the findings of this research will serve the students' needs and pay special attention to their requirements and desire to improve their proficiency in learning English. The findings may enable me, as the researcher, to make recommendations regarding the more successful implementation and adaptation of the CLT approach in Libyan secondary schools. This study may contribute to the field of English teaching by filling the gap that exists in the literature review. In other words, the previous literature (Altaieb 2013, Elabbar 2011, Omar 2014, Orafi 2008, Shihiba 2011) shows that there is a clear lack of investigation and inclusion of one of the most

important participants in the process of teaching English using CLT in the Libyan context; namely, the students. This study makes a significant contribution to the literature and paves the way to hear the voices of Libyan students. In this research, the students' voices are taken into account.

1.6 Organisation of the thesis

This chapter (Introduction chapter) provides the initial background to the research study. It presents the rationale for the study, identifying its aims, research questions and the significance of the study.

Chapter two (the Libyan Context) aims to equip the reader with detailed information about the Libyan context in which the study is undertaken. This contains a general background and the influence of the historical and the recent political events and its effect on the education system, followed by the structure of the modern education system and its objectives. Additionally, the different stages of English language teaching in the Libyan context are explained, after which the different conceptions of the curriculum are explained, followed by a discussion of the history of different types of English curriculum in Libya.

Chapter three (Literature Review) represents the literature review linked to CLT and its implementation. It defines the communicative approach, with an explanation of the contextual and socio-cultural factors. The first section discusses the development and implementation of CLT, shedding light on the second language learning theories and associated teaching methodologies, followed by an exploration of the theoretical underpinning of communicative competence in CLT, the reasons for CLT's emergence, its classrooms methods for ELT and its critique. The second section then examines the perceptions of CLT, its adoption in English foreign language (EFL) contexts before outlining the various challenges associated with this adoption. This study seeks to investigate CLT implementation by filling the gap in the literature review and examining students' attitudes, perceptions of learning English using CLT and learning experience in the classrooms as well as the inspectors of English's views.

Chapter four (Methodology) outlines the methodology of the research. It starts with the underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions behind the current research and explores its interrelationships with the interpretive paradigm, methodology and methods of this research. It provides a detailed description of the data collection methods and their justification. The chapter then outlines the design of the research,

encompassing the research context, participants, stages of the data collection, ethical considerations, pilot study, and procedure and process of the data analysis. The chapter also discusses the criteria for reliable qualitative research, ending with the challenges and limitations of the fieldwork.

Chapter five (Data Analysis Phases 1&2) presents and discusses the findings in two sections. The first section presents and answers the first research question about the teachers' understanding and perceptions of CLT, while the second part of the chapter outlines all of the findings related to teaching CLT and the teachers' practices in the classroom **(RQ2)**.

Chapter six (Challenges to CLT Implementation) displays all of the findings and factors which emerged during the second stage of the data collection with all the participants. This chapter discusses all of the contextual and socio-cultural factors which hinder or help CLT implementation **(RQ3)**.

Chapter seven (Appropriateness of the ELT Curriculum) offers a critical analysis of the appropriateness of the curriculum in the Libyan secondary school context in light of the teachers and students' views and practices **(RQ4)**.

Chapter eight (Conclusion) provides a general summary of this research by highlighting the major findings of the study and linking them with its aims and research questions to present the conclusion and suggest recommendations for improving the situation regarding CLT teaching in the Libyan secondary school context. The chapter also points forwards to the significance of the research and its contribution to knowledge about both theory and practice.

Chapter 2 Libyan context

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the essential and contextual issues of this study are presented by introducing the background of Libya, the context in which the study is undertaken, as this influences the process of CLT implementation. The first section provides an overview of the Libyan context, including its geographical status, recent political changes, and religious and historical background. The second section provides a general background to the Libyan education system, its structure and general objectives, with special reference to ELT in the Libyan context. The third section discusses the curriculum's definition and presents the various concepts related to it. Moreover, the section discusses the history of the different types of English curricula in Libya. The various aspects outlined above have a bearing on the research and the interpretation of the research findings.

2.2 The state of Libya: General background

Libya is an Islamic Arabic country located in the Maghreb region of North Africa. It is the fourth largest country on the African continent, with an area of 1.77 million sq. km (685,524 sq. miles) and a population 5,173,062, with 2,608,030 males and 2,565,032 females (Libyan Bureau of Statistics and Census LBSC 2012). Libya is surrounded by four Arabic countries: Egypt in the east, Tunisia and Algeria in the west, Niger and Chad in the south, and the Mediterranean coastline borders Libya in the north for about 2000 km (approx. 1250 miles). The majority of the population is settled in the north of Libya, near the coastal line of the Mediterranean Sea, whereas the Sahara Desert covers a vast part of the Southern part of Libya (Elabbar 2011, Ying et al. 2013). Libya's geographical position is the closest to Europe, which has given it an important strategic position politically. As Mainwaring (2012) argues, Libya occupies an important geographical position, close to European nations such as Greece and Italy. Although the majority of inhabitants (90%) are of Arab ethnicity, the Libyan population also contains multi-ethnic groups, including 10% Amazigh, who speak Berber as their first language (L1) and Arabic as a second language (L2), and other citizens comprising Egyptians, Sudanese, and Bangladeshis, for example.

Arabic is the official language of Libya, and Islam is the main religion in the country. Although Libya has been subjected to colonisation by various foreign powers, particularly Italy from 1911 to 1942, this does not appear to have influenced the social and cultural structure of Libyan society to any great extent, and only a few elderly people now speak Italian. Generally, English is the most widely-spoken foreign language in Libya.

Figure 2-1 Map of Libya (https://www.welt-atlas.de/map_of_libya_2-635).

Libya's name originally derived from the ancient tribe recognised as Rebu or Ribu. Due to the political events which have occurred since the mid-twentieth century, the country's official name has been changed several times. On 24 December 1951, the independence of Libya was proclaimed under a constitutional and hereditary monarchy system, where Libya was called "the Libyan Kingdom". On 1 September 1969, Colonel Muammar Al-Gaddafi staged a bloodless coup against King Idris Al-Sanusi, which led to the downfall of the monarchy. Libya was officially renamed the "Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya" in 1977. With effect from the uprising of 17 February 2011, the name of the country was changed officially to "Libya" by the International Organization for Standardisation.

During Al-Gaddafi's regime, it was almost impossible for Libyans to engage in demonstrations. On 17 February 2011, due to the revolutionary wave which spread through many Arab countries (Tunisia and Egypt), a violent demonstration arose in Benghazi (the second biggest city in the eastern part of Libya). The revolution started with a small group of young people, who rose up, demanding change and the overthrow of the Al-Gaddafi regime. The security forces quelled this demonstration by gunfire, which led to many deaths (Zoubir and Rózsa 2012). Consequently, dramatic protests

erupted across the majority of Libyan cities, with many citizens making similar demands. Armed forces loyal to Al-Gaddafi entered into armed battle with the protesters. More importantly, several army units withdrew their allegiance to Al-Gaddafi and joined the revolution, refusing to follow Al-Gaddafi's orders to fire on the protesters. As the violent protests and disorder increased across Benghazi, Al-Gaddafi loyalists were expelled from the majority of the eastern cities. The demonstrations and fighting continued for about eight months, during which the National Transitional Council (NTC) was established as a temporary government (Gritten 2011), which was legitimised and recognised internationally.

During that time, both Arabic and international interventions were launched. Consequently, to protect civilians and reply to the demands of the Libyan people, the Security Council approved the imposition of a no-fly zone over Libya on 17 March 2011, which helped to topple AL-Gaddafi. Revolutionaries from across Libya marched on the presidential palace in Tripoli, which led to the overthrow of the Al-Gaddafi regime on 20 August 2011. After a violent conflict, NTC declared that Al-Gaddafi's rule had ended in October 2011. The NTC faced various challenges related to containing the situation, and filling the vacuum caused by this political transition, and setting out a national reform programme for Libya (Chami, et al. 2012). Another challenge was meeting the revolutionaries' demand to focus "on capacity building, infrastructure renewal, private-sector development, improving education, job creation, and putting in place an effective social safety net, within a framework of transparent and accountable governance" (Chami, et al. 2012:1). More significantly, the spread of arms created a challenge throughout Libya, and there remains a need to disarm the armed groups who continued to threaten the stability of the country.

Although Al-Gaddafi implemented his political, social and economic ideology based on a dictatorship and ruled Libya with an iron fist for more than 40 years, Libya was one of the most stable countries in the region during that period. Libya has witnessed various civil and political conflicts since 2011. In 2016, a new government, namely the Government of National Accord (GNA), under the leadership of Mr. Fayaz Seraj, was nominated under the auspices of the United Nations, facing two competitor governments and armed militias.

The recent political events have critically influenced Libya's education system. For example, on several occasions, the schools were closed due to internal fighting, which led to continuous interruptions and suspensions during the school year (See section 2.5).

2.3 The influence of religious and cultural factors in the Libyan context

Culture and religion significantly influence people's views about the pursuit of knowledge. Libya is an Islamic country, so the majority of Libyans have been influenced by the Islamic characteristic of valuing and emphasising education and knowledge. Islam is not simply a religion, but also a comprehensive system regarding how to live one's life. Muslims are invited to seek and gain knowledge as an important aspect of life. The first verse dictated to the prophet Muhammad revealed the significance of reading and investigation for human beings. As Allah said:

"Read in the name of your Lord who created"

"Created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood"

"Read, and your Lord is the most Generous"

"Who taught by the pen"

"Taught man that which he knew not."

(Surah Al Alaq 96:1-5, Holy Qur'an)

The prophet Muhammad encouraged people to search for knowledge which will enable them to live nobly and ethically, and avoid useless knowledge. As he said, "My Lord, save me from the useless knowledge". Seeking education or knowledge is essential in Islam. As Muhammad said, "It is an obligation for every Muslim to seek knowledge". Thus, the importance of education is widely emphasised in Islamic religion, as mentioned in various places in the Quran: "O my Lord! Increase me in knowledge" (Quran 20:114). Firstly, an interest in knowledge and learning is stated in the majority of the Quran's Surah (chapters). Secondly, knowledgeable people should be held in high esteem and be appreciated and differentiated from other people. The Surah Az-zumar asks (Quran 39:9), "Are those who know equal to those who do not know?" "Allah rises of those who believe and those who have been given knowledge at many levels" (Quran 58:11). Thirdly, seeking knowledge is considered an endless process and is required everywhere and at any time; as the prophet Muhammad mentioned, "Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave". Fourthly, seeking knowledge is seen as a form

of worship under Islam, which can be interpreted as both sacred and secular, as one who seeks knowledge is under Allah's protection.

These religious principles have influenced the beliefs of Libyans and strongly influenced their lives. Libyan parents send their children to Mosques to be taught about the Quran. Children learn how to read and write Quranic verses from an early age. The technique for teaching the Quran involves an Imam (teacher) sitting at the front of the class. The students sit in circles, where they read and repeat Quranic verses aloud after their teacher, in order to memorise and be able to recite them. The Imam plays an essential role in teaching and strengthening the religious views of the students, as he is considered a reliable source of knowledge and the students should show respect towards and appreciation of him. This Islamic culture or principles have clearly reflected and influenced the teaching methods employed in Libyan schools. These beliefs regarding education and learning have shaped both the teachers and students' expectations in the classroom. More specifically, a sacred rapport links teachers and students. Politeness and respect form the basis of the teacher-student relationship. For example, students are not supposed to argue with their teachers because their teachers are the source of knowledge and the students should show politeness and respect towards them at all times. Such a relationship restricts the method of communication between teachers and students, as students must raise their hand in order to speak in class, and must obtain their teacher's permission to do so. Consequently, CLT, which is the focus of the current research, may contradict the students and teachers' expectations. The students may be unfamiliar with talking, taking part in activities, such as pair or group work, or speaking in front of the class. Teachers tend to deliver their lessons in a highly controlled manner. Therefore, the majority of Libyan classroom teaching can be characterised as adopting a teacher-centred approach. Apart from the cultural and religious impact on the nature of the education, Libya has passed through different historical periods which have had a major influence on the education system, as will be explained in the next section.

2.4 Historical background of Libya's education system

Due to its distinctive geographical features, Libya has been a target for occupation and colonialism by various foreign powers through history. Thus, Libya has witnessed various stages within its educational system (Pargeter 2012). Because education was usually employed as a tool for promoting the principles of the political system, Libyan

education has undergone various historical stages throughout the different imperialistic periods, including the Ottoman (Turkish) period (1551-1911), the Italian occupation (1911-1943), the British and French administrations (1943-1951), and the period of Monarchy (Obeidi 2001). It is important to review the history of Libyan education, as it has had a clear effect on the current education system. Education originated in 642AD, when Arabs entered Libya under the leadership of Amr Ibn-al-AS and Islam spread across the country. At that time, education was based on the teaching of religion and literacy. Education consisted of two main stages, and was the sole preserve of boys, who could attend and pursue religious studies. Girls lacked the opportunity to gain an education, due to social and cultural reasons. In the initial stage, children aged 7-8 attended religious teaching sessions in mosques, called "Katatib", to read and memorise verses of the Quran. The children read and practised writing the Quran using wooden scrolls. In the second stage, the children were required to learn about different, more advanced aspects, such as religious rulings and Islamic jurisprudence. After completing these two main stages, the students were allowed to teach and engage in teaching religious lessons in mosques. Thus, the education was of a strongly religious nature, which relied on memorisation (Wright 2012) .

Under Ottoman rule (1551-1911), the education system continued to prioritise the teaching of religious sciences. Quranic centres were the sole institutions that provided the teaching of Arabic literacy and religion. The Ottoman Empire attached little importance to the education sector in the country. In other words, the lack of a curriculum and gender discrimination in learning was clear within the Ottoman education system (Obeidi 2013).

However, at the end of the nineteenth century, and to serve its regime and provide employees for its bureaucracy, a few modern changes began to emerge in the education system. For example, primary schools were established mainly in Benghazi and Tripoli, offering education in Arabic, Turkish, religious principles, Turkish history and geography (Obeidi 2001). Moreover, education was offered to mature students who had finished their primary schooling through the establishment of five schools in five Libyan cities, including Benghazi, Tripoli, Al-khummas, Derna and Fezzan. More importantly, a school for girls was opened in Tripoli.

Although there were improvements to the field of education, higher education was not introduced, as students who wished to study at this level travelled to Istanbul or

neighbouring countries, such as Egypt or Tunisia. Additionally, only an elite group was able to attend these educational institutions because of their economic advantage (Obeidi 2013).

Another stage of the Libyan education system was the Italian occupation, which lasted over three decades (1911-1943). To implant and expand both Italian culture and education, different procedures were adopted in order to remove all traces of the Ottoman educational regime. "The first measure taken by the Italian invaders was closing down all existing learning centres and burning down what was left of libraries and publishing houses" (GPCE General People's Committee of Education 2008b:3). Additionally, Italian education started to spread through the school curriculum, as a main agent for penetrating and influencing the Libyan people. For example, 12 Italian schools were established in Tripoli and Benghazi in 1911 (Obeidi 2001), where the main focus was on teaching and disseminating Italian language and culture among students, as part of the Italian colonial system. For example, the school curriculum described Italy in the following way:

> Italy offers you a great deal; it protects men, property and religion…. Rome ruled the world in the old ages, Libya flourished under Roman rule… God give me increasing love to Italy, my second home. (Obeidi 2001:34).

This policy of erasing the identity of the Libyans caused Libyan citizens to fight the Italians, and the country was in a state of combat for a long time.

Although Italy was interested in education and the number of schools increased nationwide (in accordance with the Italian colonial plan), "only 5% of Libyans were allowed to attend Italian schools" (GPCE General People's Committee of Education 2008a:3) . Additionally, even those who attended Italian schools were not permitted to pursue their education after the fourth year of primary school. Consequently, the majority of Libyans were illiterate and lacked a basic learning foundation (Gulinao 2013).

Libyan education entered a new era when the allied forces occupied the country during the period 1943-1951, dividing Libya between the British and the French. Britain located its military administration in both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in the north, while the French entered and took Fezzan as their military territory in the south. Britain sought to decrease the national illiteracy rate in Libya. Different curricula were adopted in these regions. For example, Tripolitania adopted the Palestinian educational system,

since "The British influence on Arab education in Palestine was very strong, and the Arab school system was controlled by the department of Education whose director was always British" (Gibb 1954:912). This was later replaced by the Egyptian education system, as a result of Libyans' calls to unite the education system nationwide. Cyrenaica also adopted the Egyptian education system, whereas Fezzan was largely neglected by the French administration. The building of schools increased in the majority of cities and an awareness of the importance of education spread among Libyan parents, leading them to send their children to be educated. Moreover, girls were given more opportunities to attend school and be educated than before, which resulted in the establishment of the first women's training centre in Tripoli in 1950 (Obeidi 2001).

Although Libyan education witnessed some improvement under the British administration, the system was characterised by instability because of the continual changes in the teaching methods and curriculum content. For example, the curriculum employed in Cyrenaica was different from that in Tripolitania (Obeidi 2001). The above events had a major effect on Libya's current education system, as will be explained in the next section.

2.5 Modern education system in Libya

After Libya obtained independence and under the monarchy (1951-1969), the right to free education was guaranteed to all Libyans (Clark 2004). Education institutions were established and the Koranic schools reopened, where Libyan education was heavily dependent on the religious schools. The government sought to improve literacy among the populace and increase the literacy rate (Najeeb 2013). School enrolment escalated rapidly. As Clark (2004:1) points out, "Total school enrolment rose to 34,000 on the eve of independence in 1951". Additionally, a major achievement was the establishment of the first significant Libyan university in Benghazi (Garyounis University, now Benghazi University) at the beginning of the kingdom era. The Faculty of Arts was opened and became a source for all Libyan universities, followed by the establishment of different faculties in both Tripoli and Benghazi.

UNESCO visited Libya in 1951, and offered major recommendations regarding the education system. The first demand was to increase the number of schools and improve the quality of Libyan teachers. There were only 29 primary schools in Tripoli. It was also proposed to establish secondary schools and increase women's training centres, paying special attention to educating women and nomads.

In September 1969, when Al-Gaddafi came to power, the Libyan education system witnessed a fundamental change alongside other sectors (Alhmali 2007, Clark 2004, Orafi and Borg 2009) . For example, the first positive step is summed up in the following statement:

> Education is a right and a duty for all Libyan citizens, it is free and compulsory until the end of the preparatory level, and the State is responsible for building and establishing schools, institutes, universities and educational and cultural foundations (World Data on Education 2007:1)

Thus, the percentage of students' enrolment increased to 360,000 (Clark 2004). There was an increase in the number of primary schools, and secondary schools were established and located throughout the nation. According to Hamdy (2007:2), "The policy is to reach out even to the nomadic hard-to-reach areas, and mobile classrooms were introduced to cover all of Libya". Moreover, in 1970, a training centre for Libyan teachers was established in an attempt to improve the quality of Libyan teachers and replace the Egyptian teachers and teachers of other nationalities who dominated the teaching sector. The number of educated Libyan women also increased rapidly, with more than 70% of women being literate by 2004 (Tamtam et al. 2011). As Hamdy (2007:2) stated, in the Libyan Country Report:

> Libya boasts the highest literacy rate in the Arab world, and the UN's Human Development Index, which ranks standard of living, social security, health care and other factors for development, places Libya at the top of all African countries.

Growth in Education in Libya		
Year	Number	Literacy
1951	34000	population literacy < 20%
1962	150000	female literacy ~6%
1969	360000	
1977	980000	overall literacy 51% but females 31%
1986	1245000	literacy: 54% male, 46% female
2004	1477000	literacy: 92% male, 72% female

Table 2-1 Growth in literacy in Libya.

Quoted from Alhmali, (2007:76)

Nevertheless, since 2011, and 7 years after the overthrow of the Al-Gaddafi regime, Libya is still struggling to regain its stability. Libya has witnessed different internal conflicts which have had negative effects on every sector of society. Thus, it is unsurprising that the education system is also facing many challenges in meeting the requirements of Libyan students. For example, during this period and on a number of

occasions since, teaching stopped in many local and international institutions (Wedeman 2011) .The majority of educational institutions have been closed due to shelling and sniper fire (which also delayed the conducting of my fieldwork in Libya in 2015). Education is regularly disrupted, which causes delays in learning. Many schools have been badly damaged and exploited for military purposes. For example, during an interview conducted by Adamson and Kilani (2016) with a head teacher (Fauzia Mukhtar) in Benghazi, published in BBC News Magazine, she commented:

 "*The first shell landed near one boy and another boy ran over to help. Then a second shell came in and blew his leg off. The first child also lost a leg. It was absolutely terrifying*".

As a result, parents stopped sending their children to school. The majority of children have been sitting at home for almost two years because of the fighting and some teachers refuse to resume teaching in schools, due to concerns about their personal safety. As reported by Turner (2014:1) in the EL-gazette newspaper, "the roadblocks and armed skirmishes are part of life". This was also stated clearly in the United Nations General Assembly (2015)

> The challenges facing the country in the current phase have cast a shadow over the teaching process. Education has been significantly affected by the recent conflict, and some educational institutions have been targeted by armed groups. (National report of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21, 2015: 6) (United Nations General Assembly 2015)

2.5.1 The structure of Libya's education system

Like other education systems, Libyan students pass through different educational stages to complete their learning. In Libya, education is the primary responsibility of the government, and they plan and provide financial support through the Ministry of Education. According to the United Nations General Assembly (2015:6), "Libya has kept education compulsory and free for boys and girls alike until the end of basic education". Basic education is the first main stage, which children attend from the ages of six to 15 years old. The current education system consists of five main stages: kindergarten, primary, preparatory (basic education), secondary and university education. Students learn at the expense of the state in each of these stages. Diagram 2.1 illustrates the sequence of these stages.
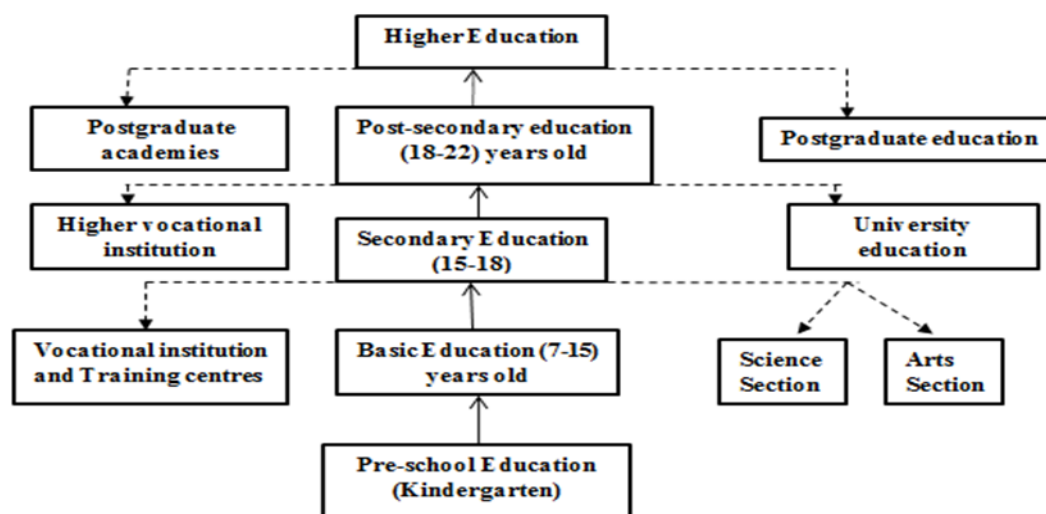
Figure 2-2 The sequence of Libya's education system.

Adapted from Asker (2012)

Pre-school education (kindergarten)

This stage starts from age 4-5 and continues for two years. It is optional and aims to prepare children for school and strengthen their skills. English is taught at this stage because the majority of kindergartens are private schools, which offer English courses.

Basic Education

Basic education is free and compulsory. This stage lasts nine years, including six years in primary schooling and three years of preparatory school. Children attend primary school from the age of six to 12 years old and then they move to the preparatory stage (year 7-9) to complete their basic education. This stage is compulsory because it enables students who have not completed secondary school to register at vocational institutions. Students are required to study different subjects, such as Islamic education, Arabic language with its branches, Mathematics, Science, English, History, Geography, Physical Education and Arts (Gulinao 2013). Students are equipped with a basic knowledge of different subjects, which prepares them for the next secondary stage. Students in the final year sit a national examination in all of these subjects to obtain their Basic Education Certificate. The teaching of English in this stage starts from the fifth primary year to the third year of the preparatory stage.

Secondary Education

Upon completing their basic education, students move on to their secondary education, which is divided into two types: vocational and secondary education. This stage is optional and funded by the government for all students. In both kinds of education, students take three years to finish their learning. Vocational education is provided by special training and teaching institutions, where students tend to be trained and equipped with practical skills in subjects such as IT, Mechanics, Engineering and Business. At the end of these three years of education, students are awarded a Diploma (GPCE General People's Committee of Education 2008a).

Secondary education is the second type of this education. Students can also attend three years of secondary school education, during which they must choose either science or arts. Based on the students' choice of secondary education type (Science or Arts), they will be directed to the Scientific or Arts/Education departments of universities. For example, students who have successfully completed the science route of secondary education are allowed to enrol in scientific departments, such as Medicine, Pharmacy, Chemistry, Engineering and Mathematics, whereas those who choose the Arts secondary education route can register at the Social Psychology, Jurisprudence, Geography, History and Language departments. Students are examined at the end of this stage in order to begin their university education. This secondary stage of education is the focus of this research. English is taught during this stage according to whether the students' specialisation is Science or Arts. The English curriculum is entitled "English for Libya". In the first year of the secondary stage, students study the same textbook. The specialization begins from the second year of secondary school, where the curriculum textbooks are divided into the Science or Arts routes, as shown in Figure 2.4

Post- Secondary School Education

There are two main phases within this stage of education: university education, which lasts from four to seven years, and higher technical training and vocational institutions (three to five years) (Rhema and Miliszewska 2010). Both kinds of education are offered free by the government to the citizens. In order to pursue a higher education, students should pass an entrance exam and obtain the Secondary School Certificate. It is important to note that higher education in Libya is still in its early stage of

development due to the influence of the Italian and Turkish colonial eras, during which higher education was neglected (Tamtam et al. 2011).

The government provides and finances higher education, as it is considered part of the state's educational institutions. In order to obtain a place at a Libyan university, students must pass the secondary stage with an average grade of 65%. Students with an average below 65% are transferred to higher technical and vocational institutes. Libyan universities offer four main disciplines, including Arts and Education, Science, Technology and Medicine, under which different programmes subjects are studied, such as Islamic studies, Arabic, Mathematics, Physics, Law, Economics and Medicine. Upon successful completion of their degree programme, which is four years for Arts and Education, five years for Science and seven years for Medicine, students are awarded a Bachelor's degree in these disciplines. Although teaching English depend on a student's specialisation during this stage, English is taught and General English courses are offered to all students in the first year of this stage.

University Education

Students who graduate from university with a distinction can complete their higher education by obtaining Master's and PhD degrees in their field, either in Libya or abroad. In certain fields, the large Libyan universities (Benghazi and Tripoli) and Academy of Higher Studies offer postgraduate programmes to PhD level, (particularly in subjects such as Arabic, Social Sciences, Islamic Studies, and Humanities). This kind of education is usually free to all Libyan students. Teaching English is required in this stage, particularly in scientific subjects. However, it seems that teaching English is not an essential requirement in certain areas of study, such as Social Sciences and Islamic Studies.

Teacher training and development

The majority of Libyan teachers including EFL teachers hold a Bachelor degree after their graduation. They start immediately teaching in schools (Primary, Preparatory and Secondary Schools) without any previous pedagogical training whether in English or any other fields. Teacher training programmes and development do not exist as the Libya educational system does not offer such support and training to teachers in all subjects. It is a rare to find a teacher who receives training after graduation (Pathan et al 2016). Practical teaching training and training sessions are largely neglected by the

Libyan faculties of education. All Libyan teachers appear to learn from their experiences and share their teaching practices or techniques of teaching with their colleagues which may or may not meet the expected outcomes. For example, Libyan teachers have devised their own methods in teaching the Libyan English curriculum. Several research studies have identified such a lack of professional development and training as a major common problem which Libyan EFL teachers face all over the country (Altaieb 2013, Elabbar 2011, Omar 2014, Shihiba 2011, Soliman 2013, Youssef 2012). Such a lack of training and development has made Libyan EFL teachers unaware of teaching methods and it affects their teaching practices. More importantly, it has resulted in the use of inappropriate and ineffective teaching methods, in particular in relation to teaching English.

2.5.1.1 The general objectives of Libya's education system

According to the National Report on Educational Development in Libya, which was introduced at the International Conference on Education GPCE (GPCE General People's Committee of Education 2008a), the educational objectives are based on the philosophical orientation that aims to establish general knowledge as well as to promote a spirit of innovation, thinking and creativity. It is important to note that the International Conference on Education (ICE) "is a major international forum for education policy dialogue among Ministers of Education and other stakeholders (researchers, practitioners, representatives of intergovernmental organizations and civil society)" (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training). This conference seeks to guarantee inclusive learning and ensure the importance of education by leading innovation within the curriculum and addressing critical problems. The following are some of the objectives that reflect these aims (GPCE General People's Committee of Education 2008a:4-5):

- To enable students to acquire the appropriate knowledge of the skills, positive attitudes and cultural and social values appropriate to the needs of the students.

- To provide educational opportunities for all and help students to choose a specialisation, which is in conformity with their orientation and abilities, and meets the needs of society to achieve sustainable human development.

- To provide and support new types of education, and enable students to discover their abilities and acquire knowledge through self-learning

- To enable students to acquire the skills and scientific analysis ability to keep pace with the scientific and technical developments in the contemporary world.

- To help students to achieve growth in their physical and mental, psychological, emotional and social development.

- To develop students' capacity to interact with other cultures and open up to the world, qualifying them as citizens able to live positively and jointly within the global community.

- To develop a partnership of innovation and creation and enable students to access diverse sources of knowledge.

It is clear that these objectives seek to give learners a field for constructing their personal interests, which reflects the spirit of authenticity and autonomy. These objectives share the same philosophical foundations of humanistic education, which is also characterised by person-centred education. According to Veugelers (2011:1), "Education from a humanist perspective focuses on developing rationality, autonomy, empowerment, creativity, affections and a concern for humanity". Additionally, the objectives are potentially quite similar to the principles of CLT (the focus of this research). For example, the third objective of enabling students to discover their abilities and acquire knowledge through self-learning is aligned with the main purpose of CLT: to develop learners' autonomy in a reflective and interactive manner within a social context (see section 3.3)

The achievement of these objectives implies changing both the teaching approach and the kind of curriculum in the Libyan context. Moreover, they suggest transferring Libya's educational institutions into a dynamic context where learners are an active element in constructing meaning and knowledge. Thus, the exploration of these ideas contributes to the theoretical underpinnings of this research, which seeks to investigate CLT implementation via the ELT curriculum in Libya.

2.6 ELT in the Libyan context

Libya is a bilingual country and there exists two spoken languages (Arabic and Berber). Arabic is the majority spoken language nationwide, while Berber is used by a small percentage of the population (Imazighen). Imazighen were forbidden to speak Berber during the Al-Gadhafi era, but they kept it alive among themselves in order to pass it on to their children. Arabic is the formal language used in Libyan education. There are

Libyan dialects of Arabic that are used as the Libyan mother tongue. It is a comprehensible and spoken language by all Libyans in different parts of the country.

Regarding teaching English in Libya, it has undergone various stages since 1943. English teaching dates back to when the Allied forces occupied Libya and after the end of the Second World War (Mohsen 2014). The British mandate on the two Libyan regions (Tripolitania and Cyrenaica) started to generalise the use and teaching of English in the school curriculum nationwide in an attempt to replace Italian, which was used by the majority of Libyans as a second language. French was introduced in the Fezzan region, which was controlled by France.

In order to serve its military administration, the British policy began recruiting Libyans to work at the British military bases, where they had to converse with British soldiers and where English was the only tool of communication. Moreover, many centres and strong courses for learning English were established nationwide. As a result, in 1951, English was dominant as the FL, and used as a medium of instruction in all public Libyan educational institutions. The British policy achieved the spread of English usage, teaching and the substitution of English for Italian as the medium of communication in all public educational institutions (Mohammed 2005, Omar 2014). As Mohammed (2005:40) points out, "In 1966, English was introduced from the 5th grade, and American and British teachers were teaching English to cover the lack of the qualified Libyan teachers of English".

In the period from 1964 to 1968, there was considerable interest in improving the quality of English teaching in Libya, as reported by Barton (1968), who was an envoy within a UNESCO mission to design an English curriculum for Libya. He mentioned that teaching English in Libya was given significant priority due to the discovery of oil and the desire to improve the economic and industrial situation of the country. Moreover, there was a strong political relationship between the UK, the US and Libya during the era of the Kingdom, which led to improved English teaching at that time.

The situation regarding English teaching changed dramatically during the September revolution of 1969. The government focus was on teaching Arabic in all schools. English language was considered a symbol of hostility. As Carlson (2010:65) argues, "The authority forbade shopkeepers to use signs written in English, and the English names of the streets were Arabicizied", but English continued to be taught as a

compulsory subject in both the preparatory and high stages from the 1970s until the mid-1980s (Sawani 2009).

In 1986, a negative-turning point was witnessed in the history of English teaching in Libya for many political reasons. The western states of the UK and US severed their ties with Libya because of the murder of a British police woman in April 1984. Additionally, the Lockerbie bombing of a flight, that caused the death of 259 people on board, led to an air-raid against Al-Gadhafi's rule and sanctions being imposed by America and Britain in April 1986 (Aloreibi and Carey 2017) .

Consequently, the Al-Gaddafi regime sought to remove and eliminate any Western influence from every sector in the country. The education sector was not excluded from this, as reflected by the suspension of English teaching in every educational institution, under decision No195/1986. This decision has had a deeply negative influence on every educational sector in Libya. As Sawani (2009:2) points out:

> This, in turn, made the teachers of English jobless or otherwise to teach other subjects such as history and geography. At that time students were unaware of the problem until they became university students where the failure to study many subjects in English was evident.

In 1999, in an attempt to renew relations with the West, Al-Gaddafi started to change his foreign policy by establishing a new era of good relations with the West in order to reform the economic, social and political status of the country. For example, Al-Gaddafi abandoned his nuclear programme. International companies were invited to make various investments in the country, particularly in the oil and gas industry. There was a reform plan to improve the infrastructure of the national highways, network system, telecommunications and railroads. As part of this reform, it was necessary to improve the status of learning foreign languages, particularly English, in order to meet the country's educational and economic requirements (Aloreibi and Carey 2017, Mohamed 2014).

Consequently, in 1990, English teaching was resumed in every educational institution, alongside the teaching of other foreign languages. More importantly, a new curriculum for English teaching was introduced in 2000 by the General People's Committee for Education (GPCE) (now the Ministry of Education). This curriculum was based on CLT principles and was designed to improve the level of English proficiency among Libyans, as shown in 2.7.1. Moreover, in 2007, English started to be taught from the fifth year of primary school.

However, once English teaching started again, the drawbacks of having ceases to teach English for a decade rose to the surface. For example, there was a lack of English teachers. Even teachers who had specialised in English originally had become unable to teach it, since the majority had either switched to teaching other subjects or had taken an administrative job. Additionally, as teachers had stopped teaching English for almost ten years, this had an impact on teaching the new series of English textbooks, as the teaching approaches had become outdated. As a result, teachers faced difficulties and confusion with regard to teaching the curriculum (Omar 2014).

To overcome this problem, schemes for training teachers and programmes were introduced in 1996 in Libya. Although this step was intended to repair and develop the situation regarding English teaching, this remains underdeveloped in Libyan secondary schools due to the educational values and beliefs held by certain English teachers. There is still a reliance on the old methodologies for teaching English explicitly as a set of grammatical rules and vocabulary (Aldabbus 2008, Sawani 2009). Nevertheless, there is great interest in and a recognition of the importance of learning English nowadays due to the spread of social communication networks, especially among young Libyan people.

Since 2011, and after the toppling of the AL-Gaddafi regime, the situation regarding English teaching and the curriculum has remained the same. Yet, in order to remove the impact of the Al-Gaddafi regime, some parts of the English curriculum have been revised and deleted. For example, the former name of the state and flag have been changed on the outer cover of the curriculum, and topics about Al-Gaddafi's life, photos, and political and economic achievements have also been omitted.

2.7 Conceptions of the curriculum

In this section, a general overview of the meaning of a curriculum is included before moving on to describe the Libyan curricula and more specifically the Libyan ELT curriculum.

Since an educational curriculum usually represents the ideological and epistemological knowledge that affects an education system of a certain society (Apple 2004), a change in this knowledge can have multiple meanings. As Paechter (2000:2 cited in Westbrook (2013:14) argues, "Curriculum change often goes hand in hand with and reflects social change". The nature of this relationship between the curriculum and social change has made it difficult to define precisely what is meant by a curriculum. A curriculum can be

seen from different angles due to the variety of its meanings. It can be described as a general umbrella which embraces a set of multiple meanings or interpretations. A curriculum can be defined as a set of general objectives which aims to achieve an outcome or educational goal. Su (2012:154) describes it as "a checklist of desired outcomes". Thus, it is a set of vital requirements or criteria to be achieved by the end of a teaching process. The focus here is on the outcome. In this sense, it could be argued that teachers should be involved in implementing a new curriculum. In other words, setting a curriculum without involving teachers may not achieve the intended outcomes, and make teachers feel compelled to teach a curriculum which they feel is irrelevant to them.

A curriculum can be understood as a course or content. In this regard, it can be seen as prescriptive or descriptive of the course or content of study. More specifically, a curriculum is prescriptive when it is regarded as a guideline to which teachers conform. As Ellis (2014:5) argues, it is concerned about "how things ought to be", whereas a curriculum can also be seen as descriptive in the light of "how things are in the real classroom". The focus is on achieving the experience and content of the knowledge. As Silva (2009:1) explains, it includes "An emphasis on what students can do with knowledge, rather than what units of knowledge they have". A curriculum is also viewed as a plan for achieving instructional goals. In this context, a curriculum can be understood to have a wider scope, including both the content and the instructional methods. Alan (1984:89) describes it as "a plan of teaching and instruction". However, the instructional methods do not refer here to the actual process of teaching. Pratt (1994:5) claims that "actual teaching and learning is not curriculum, for curriculum refers to plans for instructional acts, not the acts of instruction themselves".

Another view of a curriculum is that it means documents. The curriculum is represented in the official textbooks that are usually provided by the government. As Barrow and Milburn (1990:84) explain, the curriculum "has become associated with the official written programs of study published by ministries or departments of education, local authorities or boards of education, and commercial firms or teams of educational specialists working on specially funded projects". The purpose is to provide a unified model for teachers to follow while teaching. This documented curriculum may share the same meaning as the term 'syllabus' (Barrow and Milburn 1990). From a broader perspective, a curriculum is interpreted as experience, which includes the theoretical plan of the curriculum content as well as unplanned experiences that happen in the

classroom or school context. Willis and Marsh (2003:13) define this type of curriculum as "an interrelated set of plans and experiences that a student undertakes under the guidance of the school". Thus, in this sense, the curriculum means the whole range of experiences which students engage in, regarding both the actual content and the learning environment. As Su (2012:154) explains, "All interactions that students are exposed to, in an academic environment, can be considered part of their curriculum".

From the above, in light of the Libyan context, a curriculum is understood to be a formal written document that is delivered by the government. This is also equated with a prescribed curriculum, which is handed down to teachers to implement. Arguably, "the developer proposes, but the teacher disposes" (Ellis 2014:4). The ELT curriculum is embodied in a series of official textbooks; namely, course books, work book and teachers' guidebooks. These books are named the curriculum and used as the main and sole reference in language classrooms. As Westbrook (2013:12) explains, "in developing countries…the curriculum is encoded in the official textbook and teacher guides". The following section explores the English language teaching curriculum in Libya, which forms part of the wider Libyan curricula.

2.7.1 The history of the English curriculum in Libya

The Libyan education system has undergone numerous changes regarding the English curriculum. The first kind of curriculum was based on teaching an English vocabulary of 850 words (Mohsen 2014). English textbooks were introduced, entitled, "The Basic Way to English" by K.C. Ogden. In addition, there was a "Basic Reading Book", comprising reading and comprehension books, in the 1940s.

In 1957, following the independence of Libya, English education continued to spread and was supported by the Libyan Monarchy system. New textbooks were introduced entitled the "Modern Reader" by Johnson, who was an English inspector (Mohsen 2014). These textbooks contain a series of five comprehension books which were taught throughout the three years of preparatory school and the first two years of secondary school. They were based on the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), which entailed teaching both grammar and translation techniques. Grammar rules were presented in a deductive way, followed by grammar drills. Teaching was focused on reading comprehension by memorising a set of vocabulary and translating from and to the target language.

These English curriculum textbooks were replaced in the early 1960s by the "New Method" textbooks, designed by Michael West, who was also an inspector of English in Libya (Hashim, 1997 cited in Mohsen 2014). These books were based on Arabic culture, and also oriented towards the traditional teaching methods, such as GTM and the Audio-lingual Method. A committee was formed, under a decision by the Minister of Education on 19 February 1968, to revise the Libyan education system, which decided to make English the language of instruction in both schools and universities.

To develop the process of teaching English in Libyan schools, a further change happened regarding the kind of English textbooks employed in both preparatory and secondary stages in the 1960s. A new curriculum was introduced to cultivate Libyan culture and respond to the learners' needs. The curriculum was named "English for Libya" by Mustafa Gusbi (1977), and focused on reading comprehension and grammar translation. This curriculum comprised a series of nine books, including three textbooks (Books 1, 2 and 3), three workbooks, and three teachers' handbooks. The latter were designed to guide teachers in explaining lessons, and provided detailed information about the steps and visual means that teachers should adopt during the lessons as well as the required time or teaching hours.

The classification of the textbooks as Book 1, 2 and 3 was equal to levels 7, 8 and 9 in the preparatory stage (the first, second and third year of the current preparatory stage) and the books focused on Libyan culture in order to familiarise the students with it, while the secondary stage textbooks focused on English culture "as a vehicle for teaching the English language, sensing that (the student), in this stage, is ready for that" (Mohsen 2014:59). *Further English for Libya* textbooks, written by Gusbi et al. (1971) for the secondary stage, were used up until 1986.

In 1986, as explained above, due to the political tension existing between Al-Gaddafi and the West, the teaching and learning of English were completely suspended in Libya. This political decision had very negative influences for the future of English teaching, which continue to have an effect. These include a general lack of English proficiency among Libyan citizens; a lack of qualified teachers and a low level of students' English (see section 2.6).

In order to fill the gap resulting from this decision, when English teaching resumed in Libya, the former textbooks, *English for Libya*, were employed again in 1993/1994. The curriculum was mainly centred on the traditional method of teaching (GTM), and

focused on one theme: namely, agriculture. Due to their emphasis on the structural aspects of learning English and neglect of the communicative aspects, this curriculum had had little effect in terms of improving Libyan students' English proficiency.

In 1999, new English textbooks were introduced, entitled *English for Libya* by Adrian-Vallance et al. (2014). These were published by Garnet Education for both preparatory and secondary schools in Libya. The curriculum was based on CLT principles in order to address the problem of teaching and learning English and strengthen the communicative ability and level of English proficiency among both teachers and students. Furthermore, teaching English has begun from the third primary year since 2006, which this policy changed to the fifth primary year. Currently, English is taught from the fifth year of primary school until the third year of secondary school.

 The communicative approach is the key feature of this curriculum, where the students are the main focus. As Saleh (2002:49) points out, the content is "communicative-oriented and student-centred based". Different activities have been provided in the textbooks to encourage the use of English. A range of topics and tasks in each unit encourage various ways of communication and the authentic use of English. These topics have been chosen to encourage a student-centred approach. Thus, the implementation of the curriculum mainly depends on the students engaging in a range of activities, including listening, speaking, reading, writing, pair and group work, conversation, role-playing, describing photos and games, which they perform either personally or in groups. The following are example activities drawn from the secondary stage textbook:

- In pairs, discuss these questions about the five events in the pictures. (lesson 1: Reading ,p. 6 Course Book) Predicting the content
- Work in pairs. Think of problems or emergencies that could happen in these situations. (Lesson 6: Speaking, p. 11Course Book). Problem-solving
- Check your work for errors. Then give it to a partner to check. (Lesson 7: Writing, p. 48 Course Book). Peer assessment.
- Work in pairs. Look at the picture of the cowboy then discuss these questions. (Lesson 9: Treating snakebites, p. 14 Course Book). Pair work.
- Imagine you are standing on a street in your town or village. Think about what you can see (shops, houses, offices, etc.) (Lesson 6: Speaking, p. 47 Course Book). Play a guessing game.
- Discuss these questions in groups. (Lesson 1: Reading, p. 54 Course Book). Group work.

- Student A, you were bitten by a snake. Explain what happened, what you did and how did felt. Student B, try and find out about their experience. (Lesson 9: Treating snakebites, p. 14 Course Book). <u>Role play in pairs.</u>

The secondary school textbooks entitled "English for Libya" are divided into Literary and Scientific books. In each stage, there are three books, including a course book, workbook, teachers' book, as well as a class cassette. The course books in each section (Literary or Scientific) consist of 8 units with a variety of different stimulating subjects and activities to motivate and increase Libyan students' interest, while the teachers' handbook provides a holistic overview to guide the teachers on how to teach the curriculum. These textbooks are the focus of this research.
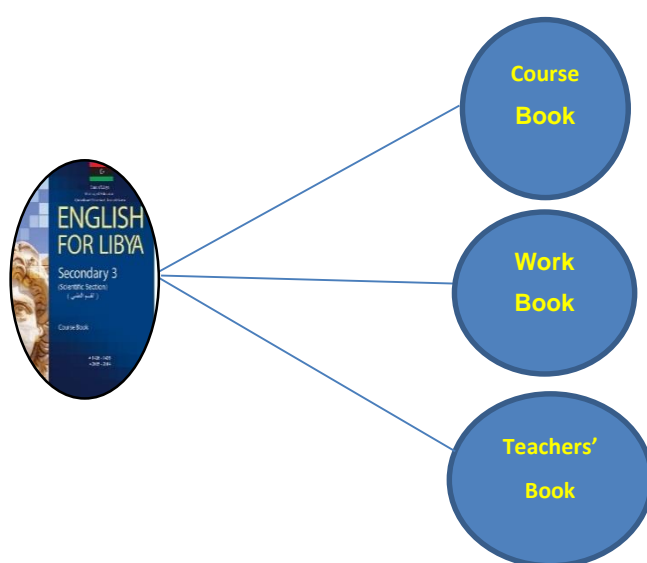
Figure 2-3. **The components of the *English for Libya* curriculum**

Each unit is divided into 12 different lessons. As explained in the English for Libya Teachers' Book by Adrian-Vallance (2014), "Each unit provides seven core lessons which follow the same format". The other five lessons start with specialist subjects either in the Arts or Science section.

1. Reading 1

2. Reading 2

3. Vocabulary

4. Grammar1

5. Grammar 2

6. Speaking

7. Writing

8. Specialisation 1

9. Specialisation 2

10. Specialisation 3

11. Specialisation 4

12. Listening

Thus, according to the above description, eight units in both course books bear the same title. The first section in each unit contains seven core lessons which need to be studied by all of the students from both the Literary and Scientific sections, while the specialist sections start from lesson eight in each unit. The purpose of the specialist section is to enable Libyan students to study all of the aspects that are related to their specialisation, whether that be the scientific or literary path. Figure 2-4 displays the lessons and differences between the Literary and Scientific section in (Unit 2 Weather and Climate) in the third year of secondary school. This curriculum is cumulative in nature. More specifically, it has been built in such a way that each series depends on completing the previous one. For example, the secondary school textbooks complement those from the primary stages. Therefore, a failure to understand one series of units in the curriculum will have undesirable effects when accessing the latter parts of curriculum. As explained above, the curriculum reform in secondary schools seeks to compensate for the disruption that occurred in the history of English teaching.

Reading: lesson 1& 2:

Hot and cold

Lesson 3: vocabulary Adjectives with prepositions

Lesson 4: *Grammar 1:* **Adjectives with so, enough & too.** *Grammar 2:* **Order of adjectives**

Lesson 5: speaking

Telling a news story

Lesson 6: writing

Writing a new article

Lesson 7: Listening to a weather forecast

Specialisation: 4 lessons

Water for life

Climate & settlement

Settlement & population

The changing climate

Unit 2
Weather
&
climate

Reading: lesson 1 & 2: Hot and cold

Lesson 3: vocabulary Adjectives with prepositions

Lesson 4: *Grammar 1:* **Adjectives with so, enough & too** *Grammar 2:* **Order of adjectives**

Lesson5: speaking

Telling a new story

Lesson 6: writing

Writing a new article

Lesson 7: Listening to a weather forecast

Specialisation: 4 lessons

Solids, liquids & gases

Heating and cooling

Shapes, puzzles & mysteries

Figure2-4 The *English for Libya* Curriculum

(Unit 2 in the Scientific& Literary Sections)

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter has presented a background about the Libyan context to enable the reader to understand the situation regarding English teaching and the setting in which the study is located. It has provided comprehensive information, including the geographic, religious, and cultural background of the Libyan context and how this influences the education system. It has discussed the recent political events in Libya and their effect on education. The chapter has highlighted the different stages of the historical background of Libya and how these have been reflected in the field of education, particularly with regard to English teaching. The modern education system, its structure and objectives have also been explained. The chapter has reviewed the history of teaching English in Libya, and ended with a presentation of the curriculum conceptions and the history of the English curriculum in Libya. In the next chapter, I will review the relevant literature on CLT and its implementation, together with its theoretical underpinnings, which support this study.

Chapter 3 Literature review

3.1 Introduction

As explained in 1.2 any teaching method can be influenced by social context which informs its implementation and identifies its appropriateness to a certain context. The methodology through which a language is taught is neither definite nor agreed as the only way to teach a language. Thus, the methodology is shaped and impacted by the host educational environment (Holliday, 1994). For example, attitudes and expectations that people bring to the learning situation can influence the methodology which differs from one context to another.

In order to explore the appropriateness of the methodology, it is important to understand and investigate what happens between teacher and students within different social contexts. In this regard, Holliday (1994) considers the classroom as a culture which is placed in educational institutions, For example, a classroom in a state school which is located in a wider social educational environment. Holliday (1994: 15) defines this as "any type of environment which influences the host institution and in turn, the classroom".

This cultural view of the classroom involves the classroom being regarded as a microcosm of the wider social context, which is seen as a macro view. Holliday (1994:13) distinguishes between the macro and micro aspects in which that "the macro context includes the wider societal and institutional influences on what happens in the classroom". That means, what happens between teacher and students within classrooms reflects the outside wider social context which in turn influences methodology of teaching. As Holliday (1994:19) explains "The means for investigating the micro concern of what happens between teacher and students will be through looking at the macro context".

One can therefore argue that the view of regarding teaching methodology as value neutral and neglecting the social context appears to contribute to the lack of a particular methodology's success and adaptation within a classroom context. In other words, teaching methodologies are social constructions which are affected by social context to satisfy the needs of a certain group and include culturally sensitive teaching methods. Consequently, any teaching context holds social assumptions, beliefs, views and values

about the nature of teaching, and relationships between teachers and learners that inform teaching methodology in which it appears to be based.

The impact of social context on methodology seems to be evident in many EFL contexts. For example, in the literature reviewed for the current research, the practice of CLT approach was commonly influenced by social structure in many EFL contexts. For example, a great deal of research has been done in Chinese contexts to examine the appropriateness of CLT in China (Ju 2013, Lia 2000, Rao 2002, Yu 2001). Traditional education was rooted in Chinese social structure in that it served as a legitimation to maintain, perpetuate Chinese beliefs, traditions and educational customs. With reference to language teaching methodology, Ju (2013: 1583) argues that "Only combined with the characteristics like teaching environment, educational background and cultural background of teachers and learners, as well as test systems will CLT play a more significant role in language teaching".

Relating this issue to the current research, Libyan education has widely been influenced by religious and social cultural perspectives through rituals and traditional education (See sections 2.3 & 3.2). Moreover, the colonial policy such as that of the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire and Italian colonialism (See section 2.4) that limited the provision of education to a particular category left the country with a poor education foundation. All these issues have influenced the method of teaching in the Libyan context. Consequently, teaching methods are socially constructed and it is difficult to detach from that context. Methodology requires an understanding of the link between macro with micro contexts and vice versa. Therefore, there is a need first to look at the social context in order to understand the reasons why Libyan classrooms seem to be traditionally oriented and find out how macro context has contributed to shape of classroom practices. In this research, a number of factors (religious, historical and socio cultural factors) linked to the social structure of Libya context have been identified as having either positive or negative influences on CLT approach. However, the research does not neglect the investigation of the other technical issues and contextual factors such as lack of teachers' training, lack of teaching aids and large class sizes.

Thus, to analyse the implementation of a teaching methodology such as CLT and understand how it works, the concentration should not just be on technical issues associated with it, but we should also explore and try to understand the outside social setting (Macro context) where the proposed methodology is being encouraged.

In this chapter, I present the key concepts relating to CLT and its implementation in two sections. In the first section, an overview of CLT is presented, including the following sections. Firstly, the definition, origin and historical background of CLT are presented; secondly, I discuss the development and implementation of CLT, including second language learning theories and associated teaching methodologies, the theoretical underpinnings of CLT, the reasons for CLT's emergence, and CLT classroom methods, which are based on a learner-centred approach; and, finally, a critique of CLT in light of its appropriateness and challenges is explained. In the second section, I examine the key areas of the learner-centred approach; namely, teachers' perceptions within different contexts, the adoption of CLT in English as foreign language contexts, and finally the challenges associated with this teaching approach. Despite the numerous studies that have addressed the teaching of English using this approach from the perspective of teachers' practices and beliefs regarding teaching the curriculum in the Libyan context (Altaieb 2013, Elabbar 2011, Omar 2014, Orafi 2008, Shihiba 2011), the literature review contains a clear gap with regard to investigating and presenting the students and inspectors' voices. This study seeks to fill that gap in the literature by investigating CLT implementation from different angles, including the perspectives of the teachers, students and inspectors of English in Libya.

3.2 The meaning of the contextual and social-cultural factors of CLT

CLT is an area which has grown rapidly in the field of foreign and second English language teaching for more than four decades. CLT is perceived and categorised as an approach to rather than a method of language teaching. It is widely believed that CLT is a significant theoretical model and one of the most influential language teaching approaches available (Knight 2001, Littlewood 2013). Because of the influence of CLT on language teaching practice, it has served as a popular approach worldwide. According to Littlewood (2013:1), "CLT was exported enthusiastically over the world as a ready to use package of ideas and techniques".

Despite introducing CLT as an advanced innovation serving different learners' needs, its implementation around the world is affected by different factors, including contextual and socio-cultural factors. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the aim of this research is to

investigate the effect of contextual and social-cultural factors on CLT implementation. Thus, it is important to identify the meaning of these factors.

The contextual factors can be defined as "characteristics of the learning environment that influence the effectiveness of instruction" (Harris 2017:1), such as the examination system, teaching hours and class size. One may argue that CLT is an approach that requires certain contextual criteria in order to be implemented successfully. In other words, principles such as the use of authentic materials, technology and pair or group work require appropriate and special learning environments which, in many cases, are unavailable within the local settings of English as a foreign language (EFL). Thus, environmental features may either facilitate or hamper the learning process and be incompatible with CLT principles, as investigated regarding the influence of contextual factors in different Libyan contexts in the current research (see Section 8.2.1/the third research finding). Socio-cultural factors are the elements which combine both social and cultural aspects of a certain society, such as teachers' beliefs, students' attitudes and gender. Because the cultural conventions of a certain society are an output of the social interaction and habits of its people, social and cultural factors can be mutually related.

Certain social and cultural factors may conflict with CLT principles; for example, education in the Libyan context can be considered as a packaging process of abstract information without giving a chance or place to acquire learning for its practical purposes. Consequently, teachers are viewed as a symbol of knowledge that guides and feeds an education process in a controlled manner, based on the assumption that they possess complete knowledge. As Orafi (2008:4) points out:

> The inability to answer students' questions, for example, would be seen as a deficiency in the teacher as would any admission that they were not sure about particular aspects of the English language.

Therefore, in order to retain the picture of a knowledgeable teacher, Libyan teachers tend to be more concerned about improving their knowledge of English, particularly with regard to grammar and pronunciation, than about developing their teaching skills. Under this belief, some teachers are more likely to remain within the framework of a teacher-centred method as this gives them a sense of authority and enables them to retain their position as an individual who should be neither questioned nor interrupted. Thus, such a discrepancy may make it difficult for some teachers to abandon this traditional belief that they are dominant in the classroom.

Sociocultural views have also influenced the students' attitudes regarding their roles in Libya's education system. Libyan students tend to consider themselves as recipients who are not supposed to enter into a discussion with their teachers. In order to ask a question of their teacher, students must first raise their hand and obtain their teacher's permission to speak. This perception might produce students who feel shy and hesitant to participate in the classroom. Additionally, because Libya is considered a conservative society, cultural barriers exist; for example, it is unacceptable for females to work with males in the same group. According to Orafi (2008:6):

> There is always separation even within the families. As a result females and males grow up without having close relationships. Therefore, in classrooms, it might be seen as a violation of the sociocultural norms to work in groups of the opposite sex.

Such sociocultural perceptions may cause difficulty regarding the implementation of CLT, as it may at times be seen as contravening these traditional perceptions and cultural values. This study explores the influence of these socio-cultural factors on CLT implementation, as one of the aims of this research.

3.3 Definition of CLT and its principles

To date, there exists no absolute consensus regarding the meaning of CLT, but it is widely believed that it is an approach that advocates the use of language as a means of communication. CLT is introduced and characterised in various ways in the literature (Harmer 2015, Hymes 1972, Klapper and Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research 2006, Littlewood 1981, Nunan 1991, Richards 2005, Richards and Schmidt 2013). CLT has been recently defined as:

> An approach to foreign or second language teaching which emphasizes that the goal of language learning is communicative competence which seeks to make meaningful communication and language use a focus of all classroom activities. (Richards and Schmidt 2013:99).

Thus, the basic goal of CLT is to develop learners' communicative ability (communicative competence), which helps them to interact effectively using a foreign language (Halliday 1975).

Despite the variety of definitions that are attached to CLT, it is based on the following general assumptions or characteristics:

- The main purpose of learning a language is to achieve meaningful communication through involving learners in an active process of target language interaction (Brown 2014, Canale and Swain 1980, Hymes 1972).

- The development of both accuracy and fluency is required in learning language. As Littlewood (1981:1) argues, "CLT gives planned emphasis on the functional as well as structural features of language". Additionally, the building of communicative ability should be achieved by adopting a tolerant attitude towards errors.

- The instruction includes an integration of four skills (Richards and Schmidt 2013)

- CLT is a learner-centred approach, where learners play a prominent role by spending the majority of the class time practising the language (Richards and Rodgers 2001), while the teachers' role is to facilitate and monitor the teaching.

- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation is expected in CLT (Nunan 1991:1).

Although the above characteristics seek to achieve communicative competence, they differ in how this communicative competence is to be attained. In this vein, different researchers have made a clear distinction between the weak and strong version of CLT (Howatt 1984, Holliday 1994, Ellis and Shintani 2014). For example, Howatt (1984) differentiates between these in that the weak version is associated with the combination of structural features of a language and communicative elements. That means, it aims to use a traditional accuracy oriented methodology to teach features of communication. Holliday (1994:170) points out that "teachers who have been used to the lesson structure of presentation, practice and production in the earlier "structural approach" find this version, easier to understand and adopt than the more mysterious strong version." The weak version focuses on the functional and social side of communicative competence (Ellis and Shintani 2014). Whereas the strong version emphasizes fluency oriented method in reaching the communicative use of language and encourages learners to use language for communication rather than to practise language in a controlled manner. As Hughes (1983), quoted in Ellis and Shintani (2014:54) explains "the strong version is predicated on the principle that classroom language learning will proceed more efficiently if it occurs in a similar way to "natural" language learning".

However, in a context where English is regarded as a foreign language, it seems hard to learn or develop a language naturally during the interaction or use because of the lack of exposure to English in an environment of that context.

In the context of this research, the weak version of CLT may be the most suitable version in which both structural and communicative elements have a role to play in EFL in the Libyan classroom setting for two reasons. Firstly, structural and traditional practices have been rooted in the Libyan context for decades and its influence is still clear in learning and teaching English. As Omar (2014) points out, the use of traditional methods such as Grammar-translation method, Audio-lingual method, and direct method are still in effect in Libyan classrooms. Thus, it may be possible to argue that the use of the weak version of CLT combining both the structural and communicative elements will be appropriate to implement as well as being easier for teachers to adopt. Secondly, for a setting such as Libya where English is a foreign language, an understanding of language (Grammar and structure) will help in developing and achieving the communicative proficiency (Communicative competence).This grammatical or linguistic knowledge can provide a foundation before further development of communicative competence.

From the above distinction between the strong and weak version of CLT, and as a result of my research, it could be argued that the weak version seems to be more suitable to adopt in Libyan secondary schools.

To understand the historical background of CLT, it is important to retrace the development stages of second language learning in reference to the following language learning theories.

3.4 Development and implementation of CLT

In this section, a general overview of the development of CLT is presented by identifying the main theories of second language learning (SLL) and their associated teaching methodologies. The theoretical underpinnings of the term "communicative competence", alongside the reasons for CLT's emergence, are discussed. Finally, this section ends with the classroom methods for CLT and a critique of this approach.

3.4.1 Second language learning theories (SLL) and the associated teaching methodologies

Learning language has been associated with various learning theories, which consequently led to different methods for language teaching. It is important to understand the influence of each theory of language learning in order to comprehend the mechanism involved in teaching a language. In this section, I will highlight the most prominent theories of language learning.

Five hundred years ago, foreign language learning was focused on the teaching of Latin, which was the prevalent language in most fields in Europe, such as education, commerce, and religion. Teaching a foreign language was based on the presentation of Latin grammar, which "was taught through learning of grammatical rules, study of conjugations, translation, and practice in writing sample sentences" (Richards and Rodgers 2014:4). However, due to the European political changes in the 16th century, English and other languages like French and Italian gained importance, which caused Latin to vanish as a dominant language at that time.

Although the status of Latin teaching decreased, it had become the standard method for teaching foreign languages, which later became recognised as the Grammar Translation Method (GTM). Richards and Rodgers (2014:6, 7) outline the characteristics of GTM as follows:

1- The goal of foreign language study is to learn a language in order to read its literature, translating sentences and texts into and out of the target language
2- Reading and Writing are the major focus , and little attention is paid to speaking and listening
3- Vocabulary selection is based solely on the reading texts, and words are taught through bilingual word lists and memorisation
4- Accuracy is emphasised, grammar is taught deductively, and students' native language is the medium of instruction.

These rigorous characteristics for leaning a foreign language by memorising isolated lists of vocabulary and grammatical rules, and focusing solely on translation, attracted criticism towards GTM in the mid- and late-19th century, particularly given the increased demand among Europeans for communication and oral proficiency in foreign languages.

The behaviourist theory is based on the principle that learning a language involves acquiring a new behaviour through a process of conditioning and reinforcement. This theory was exemplified by Skinner (1986), who viewed human behaviour as a natural response to a stimulus in the environment, so learning is a process of forming habits through stimulus, copying, response and imitation techniques.

Learning, according to this theory mainly focuses on observable behaviour and disregards the role of mental ability, but learning underlies all kinds of behaviour, whether this is observable or not. As Johnson (2008:18) points out:

> Behaviourism undermined the role of mental processes and viewed learning as the ability to inductively discover patterns of rule-governed behaviour from the examples provided to the learner by his or her environment.

Behaviourists use a contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH) in which a comparison between the first language (L1) and second language (L2) can reveal areas of similarity and difference. More specifically, an L2 learner has already a well-established set of L1 habits that could be transferred during his/her L2 learning, resulting either in facilitating or inhibiting the L2 learning process (Lado 1957, Mitchell and Myles 2004). Lado (1957) argues that L1 transfer will facilitate L2 learning when similarities exist between the two languages, whereas transfer will be a source of difficulty when differences exist between the L1 and L2 systems. Under this theory, in order to avoid the fossilisation of errors, reinforcement and error correction are anticipated.

 The influence of behaviourism is clear in the field of teaching language, where it provides the theoretical basis for the Audio-Lingual Method. This method is known as an "army method", since it originated during World War II and served American military operations in making people fluent in a target language (Richards and Rodgers 2001). The Audio-Lingual Method emerged from a combination of "structural linguistics theory, contrastive analysis, aural-oral procedures, and behaviourist psychology" (Richards and Rodgers 2014:61). Fries (1948) outlined structural linguistic principles which viewed structured "grammar" as the main backbone of teaching a foreign language. In other words, grammatical structure and sentence patterns were the main features of teaching, with a focus on pronunciation through involving learners in intensive oral drills of sentence patterns. Thus, the Audi-Lingual Method was underpinned by structural linguistics as the theory of language and the psychological principles of behaviourist learning theory, as explained above (Ellis and Shintani 2013).

Due to the increased perception of the importance of practising a language and dissatisfaction with GTM, which gave priority to literary rather than spoken language, the Audio-Lingual Method emerged. It adopted the behaviourism principles which views language learning as habit-formation using the techniques of repetition, rote memorisation and mechanical drills (Lightbown and Spada 2013).

Although the Audio-Lingual Method was widely employed as a popular teaching method in different language contexts to achieve oral communication, in the 1960s, the theoretical principles of audio-lingualism were challenged. Dialogues and drill techniques were no longer considered a suitable model of learning, as they do not help students to transfer what they learn into actual communication. Additionally, humans have an innate ability to use and learn a language in different ways rather than through mindless repetition.

This view of language learning suffers from limitations, as it neglects the role of humans' mental ability in learning a language. Chomsky (1959) claimed that learning a language is a different process that cannot be understood as a kind of behaviour and stimulus response, and so proposed a mentalist (cognitive) theory of language learning, which will be explained later. Learning during a behavioural exchange is not considered a source of learning but, rather, a display of the learning process (Ellis and Shintani 2013).

Thus, the theoretical underpinnings of this method began to fade, influenced by Chomsky's mentalist view of language learning; namely, the cognitive theory, which offered an alternative perspective to behaviourism theory in the 1960s. It highlighted the important role of the innate mental capacity of humans to develop a systematic understanding of language, offering an internalised system for language learning, which occurs through a whole mental process. Under this theory, learning is viewed as an active process and learners are regarded as effective participants in learning a language. According to Grider (1993:2), "As individuals learn, they actively create cognitive structures which determine their concepts of self and the environment". Learning a language cannot be simply embodied in a stimulus-response process, but can be seen as a conscious process, where importance is given to unobservable constructs, such as the mind, attitudes, motivation and thinking, that influence learners' behaviour (Mitchell, et al. 2013). Due to the active nature of the learner's role, the influence of this theory on language teaching can be explained most effectively in terms of focusing on the mental activities of learning, such as problem-solving, information-processing and reasoning

questions. The view of learning language under this theory has led to language teaching methods that give priority to learners' inherent capacity to learn a language, such as the Natural Approach (Krashen and Terrell 1983).

Although the cognitive perspective contributed to the theoretical basis for designing teaching language instruction by providing a range of practices and strategies, its failure to acknowledge the tangible role played by social processes led to the development of socio-cultural theory (SCT). SCT assumes that humans' mental function and cognitive capacity develop as a result of social communication through the involvement of social performance entailing communicative functions. From this perspective, learners' use and participation in communicative activities are viewed as "scaffolding or nutrition" for their language learning.

The theory was first proposed by Vygotsky who observed both children and also children and adults in the 1920s-30s. He found that the children's language was mainly improved through social interaction. This mediation process that emerged from the social interaction between individuals and the interactive environment was referred to as the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). According to Lantolf (2000:17). Vygotsky defined ZPD as:

> The difference between what a person can achieve when acting alone and what the same person can accomplish when acting with support from someone else and/or cultural artifacts.

According to Vygotsky, individuals learn a language on two levels: firstly, through social interaction with others (interpsychological) and, secondly, on the individual level (intrapsychological) (Mitchell, et al. 2013). Thus, under this theory, learning a language is mediated and constructed through social interaction and then individuals transfer what they have received from their environment during the process of appropriation.

SCT contributed to learning language by presenting a new ideology. Therefore, its influence on language teaching occurs during social interaction and cooperative learning. Learning takes place through interaction, including aspects such as storytelling or thinking aloud. According to Dongyu, et al. (2013), "One major implication of sociocultural theory is that it provides the psycholinguistic framework for a number of approaches (task-based learning and collaborative learning)".

Another learning theory that arose in response to behaviourism is constructivism. This is based on the assumption that learning occurs as a result of creating meaning from

experience. As Ertmer and Newby (2013:55) point out, "Constructivism is a theory that equates learning with creating meaning from experience". In other words, learners play an active part in making and constructing knowledge. While the traditional cognitive theory viewed the mind as a reference to reality, according to constructivism, the mind interacts with the world in order to refine and filter the input producing its reality. More specifically, constructivists believe that knowledge is a result of humans' interpretation of the world rather than being mind-independent. They contend the existence of the world in building the knowledge (Ertmer and Newby 2013). Constructivists believe in the value of actual experience with regard to learning. Thus, knowledge is constantly changeable, since it is subject to alterations in the context in which it occurs.

Due to the importance of the philosophical assumptions of this theory, it began to be applied in the classroom. Constructivism advocates active learning construction by encouraging critical thinking and fostering students' motivation. Learning requires learners to create new ideas and construct knowledge, and teachers to create an environment that enables learners to construct and strengthen their understanding. Fosnot (1989) argues that constructivist teaching helps to create learners who are independent and critical thinkers, who ask questions and are eager to explore.

This view towards learning contributes as well as constitutes the theoretical principles of the communicative approach. Based on the constructivist theories of language use, Applebee (1993:200) argues:

> Rather than treating the subject of English as subject matter to be memorized, a constructivist approach treats it as a body of knowledge, skills, and strategies that must be constructed by the learner out of experiences and interactions within the social context of the classroom.

These theoretical developments have influenced language teaching instruction, where the focus of learning has shifted from the "passive transfer of facts and routines to the active application of ideas to problems" (Ertmer and Newby 2013:58). Thus, these assumptions lay the theoretical underpinning of CLT

Drawing on the above theories, learning English as a foreign language in the Libyan context has been influenced by various learning theories, starting with teaching English using GTM and the Audio-Lingual Methods in the 1970s and 80s, based on the theoretical assumptions of behaviourism theory. However, the fact that these teaching methods did not help Libyan students to communicate in English led to an innovation in English teaching with the introduction of a new curriculum, grounded on the CLT

approach, which aims to promote communicative competence, as explained in the following section

3.4.2 Communicative Competence (CC)

Many applied linguists have contributed to the theory of communicative competence (CC) (Bagaric and Djigunovic 2007). This term was first proposed by Hymes (1972), who described it as "the overall underlying knowledge and ability for language which the speaker-listener possesses".

The term "competence", as coined by Hymes (1972), is related to learner's needs. Learning a language should enable a learner to use that language appropriately in specific settings and situations (Klapper and Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research 2006); for example, communicative competence reflects the speakers' communicative ability, which allows them to communicate effectively in the real world, considering the context in which the utterances are made (Li and Song 2007, Littlewood 1981, Nunan 1991, Richards and Rodgers 2001, Savignon 1991).

Hymes added the term "communicative" to "competence" to draw a contrast with Chomsky's theory of language and to highlight the importance of meaning in language learning (Brumfit 1984, Savignon 1976). Hymes emphasized the same concept: "there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless" (1972: 278). CLT requires learners to consider the communicative function of these grammatical rules and vocabulary.

Throughout the 1970s-80s, further contributions were made by various applied linguists who focused on different aspects of CC. Among these was Widdowson (1983), who differentiated between "competence" and "capacity". He defined capacity as: "the ability to use the knowledge of language as resources for the creation of meaning" (Widdowson 1983), while competence implies knowledge of linguistics and sociolinguistic conventions.

Savignon (1972) perceived CC in terms of learners' ability to communicate and interact actively with others in truly communicative settings. She described CC as potentiality and performance as the appearance or a mirror of this ability. Thus, CC is regarded as a dynamic aspect of language learning. Like other applied linguists (Bachman 1990, Stern 1983, Taylor 1988), she associated CC with language proficiency (performance), and

believed that this potentiality can be developed and observed through actual performance.

Canale and Swain (1980) proposed another model that identified CC in terms of the different dimensions of language use; namely, grammatical or linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. Grammatical competence refers to knowledge of grammatical rules and the use of these to trigger meaningful language use.

Sociolinguistic competence is the competence to employ social rules in a certain situation, so it reflects the learner's ability to know what to say and how to say it in a particular situation. Strategic competence is the learner's ability to keep a conversation going and overcome obstacles that may lead to communication breakdown.

Later, Canale (1983) added another model of competence (discourse competence), that refers to the ability to produce language coherently and conveniently, so it reflects the learner's ability to produce coherent, unified sentences in spoken or written texts. Therefore, cohesion is the basic concern of discourse competence.

Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) introduced actional competence as part of CC. According to Celce-Murcia (2008) "actional competence is the ability to comprehend and produce all significant speech acts and speech acts sets". The main purpose of language learning is to develop CC, which comprises different components of language use. According to Savignon (2002:8):

> Learners gradually expand their communicative competence, which comprises grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociocultural competence, and strategic competence.

The following diagram illustrates the combination of these kinds of communicative competence.
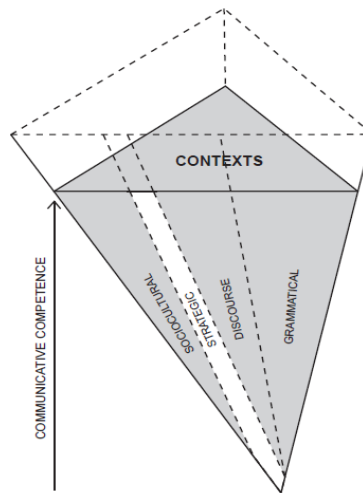
Figure 3-1 Components of communicative competence

Adopted from Savignon (2002: 8)

Consequently, and based on these, a wide range of different methods for teaching CLT have been created to achieve CC. In the context of this research, communicative competence can be defined as a kind of competence or ability which enables Libyan learners to use English effectively in communicative situations by conveying and receiving messages clearly during the communication.

3.4.3 Reasons for CLT's emergence: a summary

Many factors contributed to the emergence of CLT, including:

- The conviction that language should represent and perform its communicative purpose and that communicative function should be considered part of language teaching in order to serve the learners' needs (Howatt and Widdowson 2004).

- The appearance of the European common market which encouraged immigration and interdependence between European countries. Consequently, a need arose to teach people how to communicate in a foreign language. Thus, it was necessary to consider other effective teaching methods which make communication a high priority. Canale and Swain (1980) observed that CLT is based on the communicative functions of language, such as apologising, describing, promising and inviting, which serve the learners' needs.

- The effect of Chomsky's concept of "competence", which sparked criticism that his view of language learning ignores the social function of language (Howatt and Widdowson 2004). This is illustrated by Harris' comment that "language

does not occur in stray words or sentences, but in connected sentences" (Harris 1952, cited in Howatt and Widdowson 2004).

- The shift towards a functional-notional syllabus, developed by Wilkins in 1972, which laid the groundwork for language teaching in terms of its social functions as well as the syllabus design (Wilkins 1972). Brown (2000:4) points out that "the functional-notional syllabus attempted to show what learners need to do with language and what meaning they need to communicate". Functions refer to communicative speech acts, such as asking, requesting and describing, while notional categories embrace perceptions of time and direction among others. Thus, this concept of the functional-notional syllabus contrasted with the traditional syllabus, which focused on grammatical rules.

3.4.4 Classroom methods for CLT

Unlike the traditional teaching methods, such as GTM, which adopted traditional techniques related to translation, rote learning and grammar, the main characteristic of CLT, as indicated by Larsen-Freeman (1986), is "almost everything that is done with a communicative intent". Communicative activities, such as games and roleplay, are designed to promote appropriate communication and develop learners' CC (Brown 2007, Richards and Rodgers 2001). Savignon (1991) also argues that learners are required to negotiate meaning in order to achieve the desired competence. According to Knight (2001), "the learner can communicate successfully in the target language in real situations, rather than have a conscious understanding of the rules governing that language".

Another distinctive feature is that, in order to enhance learners' motivation to learn a language, the CLT approach encourages the learning of English through the use of authentic and real-world materials (Larsen-Freeman 2000, Liao 2004, Littlewood 1981, Widdowson 1972). To practise a language effectively, different means are used as teaching aids, such as communication games, problem-solving and activity cards. Richards and Rodgers (2001) identified three different types of materials, including text-based materials, task-based materials and realia. Thus, learners of CLT are offered opportunities to interact and communicate genuinely, which enable them to understand a language as it is used by fluent speakers (Canale and Swain 1980). This technique contrasts with the traditional language learning methods, such as GTM. Learners acquire a language by interacting with others. Hence, it is desirable for students to perform communicative activities in small groups in order to maximise their language

practice, although this dimension of CLT can be difficult to implement in large classes with high numbers of students as it is difficult to meet all of the students' needs (Ju 2013).

What characterises CLT is also its label as a learner-centred approach, which alters both the teachers and students' roles. In CLT, the learning process is centred on the learners, who "are seen as being able to assume a more active and participatory role than is usual in traditional approaches" (Tudor 1993:22). Students play a more responsible role during the learning process, through taking part and making sense of what they are learning.

In order to develop and enhance this active student role, students should be given a high level of tolerance and comfort, which consequently requires teachers to change their roles and adopt more active and facilitative roles. As Ahmed and Rao (2013) point out, "teachers abandoned lecture notes and power point presentations for a more active, engaging, collaborative style of teaching". Thus, this kind of stimulating environment encourages students to participate freely in class without being concerned about making mistakes.

3.4.5 Critique of CLT

Despite the substantial impact of CLT, it is not immune from criticism. Celce-Murcia et al. (1997) described it as "a natural process of cyclical development". Consequently, the approach might be revised, modified, or rejected. However, CLT comes up with principles that might be impractical and incompatible in many real-life English FL contexts. For example, one principle of CLT is to encourage learning by doing (Richards 2005), which might be difficult to apply in the Libyan environment, where learning is still based on theoretical principles, such as repetition and memorisation. Moreover, to enable students to practise a language practically in the way that reflects real life situations, teaching should be promoted by a variety of authentic materials, such as magazine texts, audio/video recordings, photographs and other teaching sources. Such authentic materials provide learners with exposure to the target language. Bax (2003) argues that CLT neglects one of the crucial elements of language teaching, which is the context in which it takes place. For example, Libyan contexts might be an inappropriate place for implementing CLT principles because the teaching environment and surrounding factors might not always be suitable for the CLT principles. As a

result, a gap between the theoretical principles and their practical implementation has arisen.

There are widespread misconceptions and distrust between English language teachers regarding the practice of CLT (Swan 1985, Widdowson 2003). Teachers may feel confused and uncertain about how to behave in the classroom. Various studies have contended that discrepancies exist between the teachers' beliefs and CLT (Chang 2011a, Jafari, Shokrpour and Guetterman 2015, Kim 2014, Manzano 2015, Orafi 2008); for example, Manzano (2015:557), in her investigation of teachers' beliefs and practices regarding using CLT, claimed: "Although the respondents claim that they use CLT in their English language classroom, some of their beliefs are incompatible with CLT". Furthermore, as explained in (3.1), several contextual factors are related to the language teaching and learning environment, which might hinder the implementation of CLT principles, such as the students' expectations, the resources, class size and the EFL context. The influence of these factors emerges most clearly in countries where English is considered a foreign language (FL), and they are described as adverse local factors. Thus, it can be seen that there is no absolute answer regarding whether or not CLT can be implemented effectively.

Another consideration is the concentration on oral language and the neglect of written language. Although the communicative approach emphasises that listening, reading, writing and speaking are mutually related, it seems that the spoken language has taken priority over written language because learning an FL occurs during oral interaction. Hence, speaking and listening are regarded as communicative skills.

Concerning grammar learning, CLT focuses on oral fluency. Thus, it might be argued that a greater emphasis on fluency over grammar can lead to the production of errors and inaccurate expressions. Furthermore, this focus on fluency cannot meet all of the learners' needs for whom English is an FL. In some contexts, learners have few opportunities to communicate with native speakers. For instance, in China, writing accurately in English tends to be regarded as more important than oral fluency. Ju (2013) also points out that the principles of the communicative approach are difficult to implement in countries such as China because the majority of Chinese speakers focus on their reading and writing skills in order to pass the entrance exam. Additionally, he claims that:

In China, there are a large number of English learners (as L2) who expect that they will be able to publish academic articles in international journals. They do not care much about their speaking ability because most of them have little chance to communicate with native speakers face to face. For those people, writing accurately in English, instead of "writing fluently", is their language need (Ju 2013:1850).

Hence, it is considered a challenge for CLT proponents to cater for Chinese. It might be argued that CLT is an effective teaching method if the communicative activities incorporate systematic grammatical rules. As Chang (2011b:21) states:

In order to be able to speak a language to some degree of proficiency and to be able to say what people really want to say, some grammatical knowledge must be grasped.

In sum, the implementation of a communicative approach is often associated with obstacles and challenges. Theoretically, the teachers themselves are required to be competent in the target language but, in practice, in countries like Libya, where the teachers do not have a chance to interact with native speakers, they do not receive sufficient input to enable them to become fluent speakers (Omar 2014). Therefore, this kind of language environment does not help to produce competent language users. Additionally, some students do not have an urgent need to learn an FL, so their motivation to practise communicative activities is relatively weak (Ju 2013). Thus, it is often difficult to incorporate CLT in countries where English is an FL. Despite the above limitations of CLT implementation, there is still a need to investigate its implementation in the Libyan secondary school context as an appropriate communicative teaching approach that helps Libyan students improve their communicative competence and ability with regard to using English as the world's *lingua franca*.

3.5 Teachers' perceptions of CLT within different contexts

Research into the teachers' perceptions sheds light on their thoughts and helps us to understand their decision-making processes and practices. Understanding teachers' perceptions adds to our understanding of how and why CLT is or is not implemented in classrooms around the world. Teachers' perceptions of CLT have been investigated in many different countries for many years as an important factor in understanding CLT implementation. One aim of this study is to examine the teachers' perceptions of CLT in order to identify and understand the gap between these and CLT implementation in the

classroom. Studying teachers' perceptions is crucial when developing and adopting appropriate teaching methods and materials in order to achieve the desired learning outcomes. Understanding the perceptions of both teachers and learners helps to identify how well the content serves the learners' needs. In this vein, Borg (2003:86) highlighted the term "cognition" as "an inclusive term to embrace the complexity of teachers' mental lives". Consequently, the teachers' perceptions can be considered one component of their cognition, which is inextricably linked to other components, such as beliefs, conceptions, and intuition (Verloop, et al. 2001).

Another significant component is teachers' beliefs, due to which the degree of the consistency and inconsistency of CLT principles and its implementation has resulted. Beliefs are defined and interpreted in different ways (Borg 2003, Borg 2001, Pajares 1992). Borg (2001:186) suggests the following definition for the term "belief":

> A proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual, and is therefore imbued with emotive commitment; further, it serves as a guide to thought and behaviour.

In the context of this research, the concept of teachers' beliefs is related to positive or negative effects that shape their practices regarding CLT implementation. According to Borg (2008, cited in Garret and Cots 2017), examining the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices can stimulate cognitive dissonance, which inspires teachers to make changes. However, one might argue that the contrast between beliefs/ attitudes and behaviour or practice could lead to a lack of balance and doubt within teachers' practices which, in turn, might cause cognitive dissonance. This is due to the effect of the sources of teacher knowledge, such as Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK). PCK transforms teachers' knowledge in order to make it adaptable to teaching (Shulman 1987 cited in Borg 2006: 19). Additionally, consistency and inconsistency may be closely connected to outside controller factors which influence and shape the majority of teachers' practices. Teachers work with the contextual and teachable factors available to them.

Although teachers' cognition is complicated and intertwined, studying its impact helps us to make sense of teaching and learning. Thus, in this section, teachers' perceptions as a component of cognition, as outlined in the literature, will be reviewed. For example, a very early study was conducted in Scotland by Mitchell and Centre based on information language teaching and research (1988). He investigated 59 French teachers' perceptions and attitudes from 20 schools regarding the meaning of communicative

competence. The analysis of the data revealed that the teachers understood CLT and its underpinning concepts in various ways.

Likewise, Karavas-Doukas (1996) used attitude scales to explore the perceptions of 40 Greek teachers from private language institutes. The results showed that, although the teachers viewed CLT in a positive light, their practice completely contradicted their beliefs, and teachers were more likely to follow an eclectic approach, dominated by the traditional methods.

In the Australian context, Mangubbai et al. (1998) studied the teachers' perceptions of the practical aspects of CLT, such as group work, error correction and the teacher's role. Although the teachers acknowledged that group work is effective in promoting learner autonomy, they believed that these activities were highly time-consuming, as it seemed difficult to control and monitor all learners. With regard to error correction, the majority of the participants emphasise the importance of error correction as well as the direct teaching of grammatical rules.

In Asia, teachers' perceptions have attracted considerable attention (Burnaby and Sun 1989, Chang and Goswami 2011, Chowdhury 2012, Ghanbari and Ketabi 2011, Gorsuch 2000, Hiep 2007, Li 1998, Liao 2003, Raissi and Mohd Nor 2013, Wong 2012, Wong 1998). For example, Wong (1998) conducted an exploratory study to examine 114 Chinese teachers' perceptions of CLT in secondary language classrooms, using questionnaires followed by interviews as the research tools. One aim of the questionnaire was to identify the teachers' perceptions of the basic tenets of CLT, such as the integration of skills, student-centred approach, activity-oriented teaching, error correction and the importance and place of grammar. The findings overall demonstrated the existence of positive attitudes towards CLT.

However, the findings were misaligned with the principles of CLT with regard to error correction, as over half of the participants regarded error correction as an essential stage of language learning. Another finding was that the majority of the participants wished to continue teaching mechanical grammar drills because these were still viewed as an important feature of language learning.

Teachers' perceptions and practices have been further explored in the Malaysian secondary school context. Raissi and Mohd Nor (2013) held semi-structured interviews with 30 secondary school teachers and found that, while Malaysian teachers consider CLT principles to be effective in encouraging students to speak in a tourist-oriented

country like Malaysia, misunderstanding of its principles emerged as most of the participants emphasise the use of translation in class, and so focus on error correction to avoid errors becoming fossilised in students' minds and on teaching grammar explicitly.

Thus, a heated debate on the meanings and difficulties regarding the theory and practice of CLT has arisen. Bax (2003) argues that CLT neglects the context in which it occurs. However, other Chinese researchers have offered solutions and strategies for overcoming these difficulties (Liao 2000, Liao 2004, Xiaoju 1984, Xiaoshan 2011). Liao (2004) embraced Larsen-Freeman's "absolutist" stance, stating that "the adoption of CLT is the government's position and application of CLT will bring about a positive effect on English teaching and learning". However, Hu (2005) observes that Liao's (2004) absolutist claim that CLT is a universal aspect in every context is problematic, as it disregards the various ELT contexts in China and the different learners' needs.

Concerning the Arabic context, abundant empirical studies have investigated teachers' perceptions of CLT (Abdel Latif 2012, Al Rabadi 2012, Bataineh, Bataineh and Thabet 2011, Farooq 2015, 2011). For example, a recent study by Farooq (2015) explored teachers' perceptions of CLT in the Saudi context. A questionnaire was used to examine the teachers' perceptions of ten characteristics of the concept of CLT. The participants defined CLT in various ways; for example, 98% of the teachers agreed on the communication purpose characteristic, 97% claimed that CLT involves the use of pair and group work, and 85% stated that CLT focuses on the learner-centred approach. The results also identified a difference between the female and male teachers' views regarding the place of grammar in the CLT classroom. For example, 50% of the male teachers agreed with the claim that CLT does not focus on teaching grammar, while 76% of the female teachers disagreed, as they viewed the teaching of grammar as an aspect of CLT classes. Thus, in this study, the participants emphasised different aspects of CLT.

In line with this research, a recent study conducted by Pathan et al. (2016) examined the challenges that Libyan teachers faced in teaching English as a foreign language in 12 different school stages (the primary, preparatory and secondary levels). The teachers' questionnaire, informal discussions and observations were used as the primary tools for the data collection. One hundred questionnaires were sent to various schools located in seven cities across the country. Only 55 questionnaires were returned, of which 20 were discarded due to being incomplete, leaving a total of 35 completed questionnaires. The findings revealed that a lack of professional development training led the teachers to

follow a variety of teaching methodologies, including some that were inappropriate, such as GTM, direct methods and the teacher-centred approach. The questionnaire data also revealed that 20% of the teachers believed that the communicative approach promoted oral communication in the classroom, claiming that they focused on this approach in their teaching. These studies show that reviewing the literature on CLT is a huge task, and so it is impossible to survey all of the literature available in either the Arabic or other contexts because of the broad meaning of this approach.

It could be argued that, in order to guarantee the successful employment of CLT, it is important for teachers to have clear-cut ideas about this model. As Carless (2003:485) states, "If teachers' views are not sufficiently taken account of the already challenging nature of implementing something new may be exacerbated". Teachers' perceptions should be addressed, since they are the main actors in applying any teaching method. As Chang and Goswami (2011) state, "Only the classroom teachers can decide what really happens in their classroom. Thus, it is essential to learn the teachers' views regarding the implementation of CLT".

In sum, the broad foundations of the theoretical principles of CLT make the model vulnerable to different interpretations. This study focuses on investigating the meaning of CLT by asking English teachers about its meaning as well as their perceptions and practices. Additionally, this research makes a new contribution by investigating students' attitudes and perceptions regarding this approach, their learning experience inside the classroom and the views of the inspectors of English.

3.6 Adoption of CLT in EFL contexts

Before exploring the adoption of CLT in EFL contexts, the differences between the terms "English as a Second Language" (ESL) and "English as a Foreign Language" (EFL) will be identified in order to identify implementation-related issues, which will be explained in the following section. The term "ESL" refers to the study of English by L2 learners in an English environment. Thus, it could be argued that these non-native speakers will have more opportunities to be exposed to the use of the target language outside the classroom, whereas "EFL" refers to non-native speakers learning a language in an environment where English is not spoken as the primary or official language. Consequently, the classroom is the only location where EFL learners can practise their English. This might constitute a difference and have a potential influence on CLT implementation and its adoption in EFL contexts in terms of learners' motivation. For

example, Libyan learners who learn English in Libya are viewed as EFL learners. Many studies showed that learners' motivation in such environments does not exceed the scope of both the curricular and exam requirements. For example, Koosha and Yakhabi (2012:3) explain:

> In a setting where English is a foreign language, students usually learn with low intrinsic motivation; English may be deemed irrelevant with students' needs...On the other hand, in a setting where English is a second language, students have high intrinsic motivation because the language is part of everyday life.

Thus, it might be difficult to achieve the communicative aim of CLT in EFL contexts, where there exists minimal social involvement with native English speakers (Widdowson 1998). Furthermore, conventionally, the teaching of English in an EFL context, particularly in Arabic countries, has been dominated by GTM which, for many teachers, suits the EFL environment. Under this scenario, teaching depends on two main factors, including grammar and memorisation.

Nevertheless, to respond to the need to improve learners' communicative competence and compensate for the shortcomings of the previous methods (for example, the fact that GTM fails to achieve learners' communicative ability), the literature reflects increasing calls for the adoption of CLT in EFL contexts.

The majority of educational sectors in the Arabic context have undergone changes with regard to the kind of EFL curriculum, from a structure-based curriculum to a communicative-based one (Anderson 1993). For example, regarding the adoption of CLT in Gulf countries, Bahumaid (2012) stated that, since the early 1980s, a communicative syllabus has been offered in the public education systems, which had a positive effect on both teachers and learners. Similarly, Bataineh, et al. (2011) state that the traditional syllabus was replaced by a CLT-based textbook in Yemeni educational institutions in 1993. In Jordan, the Ministry of Education adopted CLT as a new policy for EFL teaching in both the public and private sectors in the mid-1980s.

Libya is one of the Arabic countries which has also witnessed innovation in the educational curriculum since 2000. A new communicative curriculum was introduced at all levels in the government schools in an attempt to improve the communicative ability of Libyan learners. The emphasis of this curriculum was on teaching Libyan students how to use the language rather than the traditional techniques of grammar, translation and memorisation. In my research, I seek to examine the execution and the adoption of

this innovation in terms of examining the teachers' practices regarding teaching the principles of CLT.

3.6.1 Gaps and challenges in CLT adoption

As explored above, although the majority of Arabic Educational Ministries have taken steps to incorporate CLT principles into the EFL curricula, one can argue that this process of adoption is challenging in EFL contexts (Anderson 1993, Asassfeh et al. 2012, Bahumaid 2012, Bataineh, Bataineh and Thabet 2011, Ellis 1996, Li 1998, Schweisfurth 2011, Wang 2014). Consequently, it causes a gap between the theoretical underpinning of the CLT principles and its implementation. This section explores the challenges that constrain the efficient outcomes of CLT, including the teachers and learners' English proficiency, large class sizes, time constraints, teaching resources and heavy workload.

The empirical research on CLT has revealed that language lessons remain dominated by form-based instruction, such as GTM, in EFL contexts. For example, researchers in Yemen, such as Al-Shamiry (2000) and Thabet (2002), claim that teachers still prefer to use grammar-based methods, even in the higher educational stages.

Al-Mahrooqi (2012) conducted an exploratory study to examine students' perspectives of learning communicative skills in Omani public schools and at Sultan Qaboos University. The findings revealed that grammar was the main focus of the instruction, leaving students feeling that they lack communicative ability. These findings contrast with those of Farooq (2015), that revealed that, although there some difficulties existed, the majority of teachers, particularly female one, displayed a positive attitude towards and awareness of the CLT principles, and applied them in their classroom practice in Saudi universities.

In the Chinese context, the findings revealed that classroom practices remain characterised by the traditional grammar based methods (Li 1998, Liao 2000, Rao 2002, Yu 2001), and the teaching of grammar is still regarded as a valuable aspect of language teaching. The same finding is further explored in a study of Bangladesh by Ansarey (2012:77), who claims that "English instruction is mostly limited to traditional large-group instruction where grammar is given a high significance".

Unlike the findings reported by Ansarey, a previous study conducted by Karim (2004) revealed that the majority of Bangladeshi teachers incorporate communicative activities

into their teaching. Moreover, Karim found that the teachers had an awareness of CLT principles as 31 of the participants (86.11%) reported that CLT means not teaching grammar. The teachers explained that grammar is combined with explanations to facilitate the meaningful use of a language.

Although Karim stated that his findings differed significantly from those of previous studies of Bangladesh, it could be debated whether the use of a questionnaire with open-ended questions is sufficient to capture an overview of CLT implementation. In other words, observation is considered an essential stage, particularly when investigating language teaching methods, as words do not always reflect actions. To compensate for this limitation in other research, in this study, classrooms observation followed by stimulated-recall interviews are employed as the main tools for investigating CLT implementation in Libyan secondary schools.

Although the above literature shows that the dominance of GTM persists, this can be attributed to the following factors that can be viewed as potential barriers to the implementation of CLT.

3.6.1.1 Exams

In many EFL contexts, the education tends to be characterised by the examination system that focuses mainly on testing students' grammatical competence and memorisation ability. Thus, both the teachers and students find themselves under the pressure due to the requirements of the exam, which is misaligned with the communicative orientation (Al-Shamiry 2000, Altaieb 2013, Andrews 2004, Ansarey 2012, Cheng 1997, Choi 2008, Ghanbari and Ketabi 2011, Lamie 2004, Orafi 2013, Orafi and Borg 2009) For example, Ghanbari and Ketabi (2011) point out the importance of grammar in the University Entrance Exam when identifying Iranian learners' expectations. Likewise, Orafi (2013) argues that the grammar bias of the exam leads to the neglect of other language skills, such as speaking, listening and writing.

Additionally, although the Ministries of Education in many EFL contexts have called for English curriculum reform as explained in the previous section, the controlled centrality of the examination system leads to a mismatch between the aims of curriculum innovation and the teachers' practices. For example, Gorsuch (2000) found that, in Japan, a discrepancy exists between the goals of an innovative communicative curriculum and its implementation because priority is given to grammar and vocabulary in the exam.

3.6.1.2 Lack of training

In order to apply of principles of any teaching method, teachers should be equipped with sufficient ability and knowledge to deal with these principles. Carless (1999:23) stated that "teachers need to acquire the skill and knowledge to implement something particularly if it is slightly different to their existing methods". In EFL settings, teachers are often required to adapt their teaching practices according to the functional use of a language without receiving any training on how to do so.

This factor has been reported as a major concern in different EFL contexts (Abate 2015, Al Rabadi 2012, Butler 2011, Liao 2003, Orafi 2013) For example, AlRabadi (2012) conducted a study to compare the theory and practice regarding CLT implementation by two Jordanian university instructors, using observation and semi-structured interviews. The participants revealed that they suffered from a lack of training, which causes evident limitations regarding certain aspects of CLT, such as pair/group work and a different approach to error correction.

3.6.1.3 Teachers' English proficiency and the use of the first language (L1)

Another constraint to the application of CLT is teachers' English proficiency. CLT aims to promote the communicative competence of learners and develop their ability to use English in real situations (Larsen-Freeman 2000, Littlewood 2007). However, there appears to be a lack of communicative competence, which is not restricted to EFL learners alone.

The literature shows that EFL teachers appear to struggle to introduce communicative activities for this reason (Burnaby and Sun 1989, Butler 2004, Farooq 2015, Koosha and Yakhabi 2012). For example, Farooq (2015) conducted a descriptive study to investigate Saudi teachers' perceptions and practices regarding CLT and its influence on the communicative competency of learners. The findings revealed that the adoption of CLT is difficult unless the teachers possess basic language proficiency. Burnaby and Sun (1989) argued that teachers' lack of English proficiency was among the stumbling blocks affecting CLT-based teaching. As Littlewood (2007:244) states:

> In many cases, teachers themselves lack confidence to conduct communication activities in English because they feel that their own proficiency is not enough to engage in communication.

Although the findings from previous research studies claim that the lack of teachers' English fluency presents a problem with regard to CLT adoption, it is also important to

note that EFL teachers have little or no opportunity to use the target language themselves. As Widdowson (1998) states, the EFL teaching setting conflicts with CLT's goal of promoting communicative competence, when the social interaction with native English speakers is minimal. Consequently, the lack of opportunities for teachers to practise their English may contribute to their lack of confidence about using English fluently.

Regarding this issue, it is worth mentioning that teachers' lack of English proficiency affects the use of English in many EFL classrooms settings. The role of the target language is essential in developing communicative ability in ELT through CLT because it is important that every task is aimed at achieving the goal of meaningful communication. However, the use of L1 when teaching a target language is hotly debated (Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain 2009).

On the one hand, those who advocate avoiding using the L1 (Lightbown 1991, Liu 2008, Turnbull 2001) claim that this avoids L1 interference, which could create confusion and the blending of two languages during the learning process. Krashen (1987) states that code-switching decreases the learners' opportunity to gain exposure to the target language.

It could be argued that this process of alternating back and forth from one language to another leads, to some extent, on a reliance on translation. According to Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain (2009:9), "any notion of the first language use in language teaching and learning connotes the dreaded grammar translation methods". Two major benefits of the maximum use of the target language in ELT include the development of learners' target language and the avoidance of translation. The use of the target language is also likely to increase learners' motivation, as they enjoy practising the target language.

On the other hand, other researchers argue that the use of L1 is important when learning a target language (TL), especially when the knowledge of the TL is insufficient. For example, Cook (2001) claims that using L1 can serve as a positive tool for conveying and checking meaning and also explaining grammatical points. Additionally, empirical studies show that the maximum use of TL is no guarantee of the quality of the linguistic input (Gearon 1997, Guthrie 1987, Mitchell and Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research 1988, Polio and Duff 1994). Due to various contextual factors, like learners' language level affecting CLT, L1 can be used to provide basic scaffolding for L2 learners. According to Bhooth et al. (2014:76):

L1 can be used as a scaffolding strategy by students in facilitating their learning and can be used as a pedagogical tool by the teacher to enhance learning experience as well as maximize engagement in the classroom.

However, one can argue that the target language should be used whenever possible. In other words, in order to realise a language as a means of communication rather than a subject, the TL should be used as a tool for explaining and giving instructions. In this vein, the use of L1 can be a double-edged sword in terms of the benefits to language learning: the positive edge means that the ambiguity of complex issues is eliminated, but the negative edge is the difficulty in benefitting from the language teaching due to the excessive use of L1.

Research studies in EFL contexts have found that L1 is used excessively during CLT (Al Rabadi 2012, Lee 2005, Li 2003, Orafi and Borg 2009, Rao 1996). For example, Al Rabadi (2012) identified the limited exposure to English as one of the major challenges, leading to a lack of CLT application. Thus, the excessive use of L1 can constitute a major stumbling block that seriously affects the process of CLT implementation.

In sum, teachers' English proficiency is a focal point in delivering a communicative lesson, which also has significant effects on aspects such as the use of the target language, the level of L1 usage during lessons and the development of learners' English proficiency.

3.6.1.4 Learners' English proficiency

Another challenge is students' English proficiency. In CLT, learners are required to construct meaning through interacting with each other. However, many studies conducted in EFL contexts have explored how students' low level of English proficiency and competence constitute a major obstacle to the successful implementation of CLT. This makes it difficult for learners to adjust their role to the learner-centred component of CLT.

Regarding Libyan learners' English proficiency, anecdotal evidence as well as the majority of research studies (Altaieb 2013, Omar 2014, Shihiba 2011) suggest that FL learning remains characterised by features such as rote memorisation, resorting to translation, focusing on grammar and reading aloud with a complete neglect of listening and writing skills and, finally, a lack of oral interaction in class. Two factors emerge from this. Firstly, learners appear to prefer the teacher-centred approach. Secondly, these learning characteristics lead to students' low level English speaking ability, which impedes and discourages teachers from implementing CLT.

The literature highlighted this factor as one of challenges associated with CLT implementation. For example, Ahmed and Rao (2013) divided the barriers to CLT implementation into different categories in Pakistan. Students' low English proficiency and lack of motivation were amongst these barriers. The participants stated that, due to the pressure of the exam, students do not feel a need to use English for communication purposes. By and large, this agrees with the findings of Li's (1998) study, who identified that both teachers and students' English deficiency curbs CLT implementation.

As mentioned before, this factor is a natural consequence of the educational policy in many EFL settings to prioritise exams. However, it is also the teachers' responsibility to shape learners' experience of learning a target language. Teachers are a key element in determining a communicative classroom atmosphere and encouraging their students to develop their proficiency in speaking English.

If teachers still adhere to teacher-centred instruction and act as the gatekeepers to knowledge, their students' English communicative proficiency will not change or develop. However, the literature on the EFL context showed that EFL teachers feel that their English proficiency is lacking (Alkhawaldeh 2010, Al-Mahrooqi 2012, de Segovia and Hardison 2009). For example, De Segovia and Hardison (2009) conducted research involving several classrooms observations, followed by stimulated-recall interviews and interviews with teachers in Thailand. One of the findings revealed that the teachers were concerned about their English proficiency. Therefore, one can argue that students' English proficiency is related to and dependent on their teachers' level of English proficiency.

3.6.1.5 Time constraints

Unlike the traditional methods, such as GTM, in which learners learn in a controlled way, in CLT, learners should be able to achieve a great sense of "ownership" to enhance their motivation. Therefore, in order to achieve this sense of ownership, students should be given sufficient time to practise the TL as much as they can.

However, most EFL teachers find it difficult to incorporate communicative activities into their classes because of a lack of time. As a result, the traditional teaching methods are widely preferred among EFL teachers. For example, almost all English classes in Libya last for 40-45 minutes, which is not long enough to implement communicative activities or even conduct classroom management. CLT requires time to construct the

learners' meaning and knowledge by interacting with them and involving them in an active dynamic process of speaking, reading, writing and listening (Napoli 2004, Wyatt 2009).

Many studies conducted in EFL contexts have revealed that the majority of teachers are dissatisfied with the time allocated for teaching a communicative syllabus (e.g., Abdel Latif 2012, İnceçay and İnceçay 2009). An investigation conducted by Abdel Latif (2012) entailed data triangulation by administering a questionnaire to 263 teachers, plus observing and conducting semi-structured interviews with 33 teachers to assess a standard based-communicative English textbook series in Egypt. According to Abdel Latif (2012:79), the goal was "to use English for social purposes…The focus of language instruction is on functional, communicative English and all the four language skills are emphasised".

However, the findings indicated that the content of the textbooks was being taught non-communicatively. Moreover, the time limitation was among the five factors that influenced the teachers' practices, and was mentioned at the highest frequency in the teachers' responses. Thus, in order to achieve CLT's intended goal, both the teachers and learners should be provided with ample time to use the language functionally.

3.6.1.6 Teaching aids

Teaching aids are another problem associated with the application of CLT. Communicative teaching involves developing learners' interest in using a language. In order to convey and implement the communicative principles in a practical situation, the physical classroom settings should be equipped with different teaching aids and authentic material that can help to construct their learners' knowledge and increase their motivation. Teaching aids can be essential in encouraging learners to pay attention and expose them to more use of TL. Additionally, they provide a beneficial tool for supporting and assisting the teaching process, particularly for EFL teachers.

Teaching aids seem to be widespread problem for many EFL teachers. The empirical evidence reveals that some EFL contexts suffer from an acute lack of teaching equipment (Abate 2015, Abdel Latif 2012, Farooq 2015, Rao 2002, Schweisfurth 2011, Urwick and Junaidu 1991, Yin 2013).

For example, the detailed observation of eight Nigerian schools conducted by Urwick and Junaidu (1991) showed that the students' achievement is largely influenced by the school's physical input and classrooms maintenance. Another investigation by Farooq

(2015) revealed that, despite the teachers' enthusiasm regarding CLT and awareness of its influence on the development of learners' communicative competence, "They are not optimistic about the complete adoption of CLT due to the problems and challenges they face in the classroom, like non-availability of AV aid" (179). It could be argued that teaching aids and facilities make a real contribution towards increasing students' motivation and facilitating teachers' roles in CLT implementation. According to Abate (2015:134) "poor school facilities and physical conditions can have a strong negative consequence on students' learning motivation".

3.6.1.7 Heavy work load

This factor seems to be a concern for many EFL teachers, who are required to fulfil many teaching responsibilities. For example, exam preparation and marking homework means that they cannot teach every communicative activity. Additionally, their heavy workload also influences the teachers' performance which means that, in many cases, teachers need to teach classes without paying very much attention, for example, to engaging their students in active communication processes.

Unlike the traditional ELT methods, CLT places different teaching demands on teachers, and they should be ready to listen and interact with learners in a natural way (Medgyes 1986). Thus, this factor, combined with the other factors (namely, examination pressure and time constraints) might influence teachers' instructional choices (Borg 2003). Consequently, teaching in a more traditional way can be viewed as an appropriate choice according to contextual criteria of many EFL teachers' context.

The results of Ansarey's (2012) study in Bangladesh revealed that 80% of the respondents had a heavy teaching workload. Another study, conducted by Ozsevik (2010), showed that the Turkish teachers were concerned that their heavy workload affects and decreases their overall performance. Similarly, an earlier study, carried out by Crookes and Arakaki (1999), identified that the teachers' heavy workload negatively affected their teaching practices.

One can argue that this issue of their heavy workload can influence teachers' motivation, but another relevant factor here is the financial position of the teachers, which can also impact on their performance with regard to CLT. This is characterised as one of the extrinsic factors regarding the investigation of CLT in Egypt by Gahin and Myhill (2001), where their low level of wages leads teachers' practices to deviate from

the ideal communicative syllabus. Thus, due to these factors, it is unsurprising that the teachers' motivation to implement changes is decreased.

3.7 Conclusion

The literature highlights several implications for this study. CLT has been adopted as the main teaching approach in the Libyan secondary context. Its introduction has brought with it a radical change to teachers' practices and roles in the classroom. The literature outlined earlier provides a detailed explanation of the socio-cultural factors involved here and how they work for or against the principles of CLT in the following ways.

First, the definition of CLT was outlined and the development stages of SLL explored in light of the language learning theories. The development theory of CC and its relevance to second language learning were investigated from a range of perspectives (Hymes 1972, Savignon 1972, Widdowson 1983, Canale and Swain 1980, Canale 1983, Celce-Murcia and Thurrell 1995). The primary meaning of this theory is concerned with measuring learners' knowledge of, and proficiency in, the use of a language, so communicative competence is related to learners' ability to use a language effectively in communicative situations, which has not yet been achieved in Libyan secondary schools. It could be argued that Libyan learners need to know how to employ their linguistic knowledge "Grammatical Competence" during real-life, natural communication in order to fulfil their practical needs (Communicative Competence) regarding this kind of competence.

The challenges, which have a clear influence on the mechanism of CLT implementation in EFL contexts, are contextual factors, such as teachers and learners' English proficiency, large class sizes, time constraints, exam pressure, teaching resources and the heavy workload. These factors are considered as major areas of concern. Communicative teaching cannot achieve its aim unless a combination of essential contextual factors becomes available. Hence, the purpose of this research is to investigate the influence of these factors on CLT implementation and teachers' practices in the Libyan context.

Compared with the previous studies conducted in the Libyan context, this study aims to address a gap that has been identified by several researchers (Altaieb 2013, Elabbar 2014, Omar 2014, Orafi 2008, Shihiba 2011). This research may extend the previous research by filling the gap noted in here and in previous studies. Several research studies have investigated and emphasised the importance of teachers' practices, beliefs and perceptions regarding the implementation of this approach in both the Arabic

context and the Libyan context in particular. However, only a few studies have been conducted to investigate this approach from the students' perspective. To address this gap, this study has examined students' attitudes and learning experiences and inspectors' views as important components of the learning process.

This study is the first investigation of teachers, students and English inspectors' perceptions of the communicative curriculum and its appropriateness within the Libyan secondary school context. This study is comprehensive in terms of its scale, including as it does teachers, students and English inspectors.

This research has examined the teachers' actual practice through the use of observations and stimulated-recall interviews. By employing this research method, the teachers were given an opportunity to recall their cognitive process of teaching at the time of action. This technique has not been previously used in the Libyan context, and entailed making videos recordings during classrooms observations (see section 8.3). Stimulated-recall interviews were employed to complement the other research methods, including observations via video/audio recordings, field notes and semi-structured interviews, as will be outlined in the following chapter.

Another main critical gap that needs to be filled is to investigate and explore Libyan students' perceptions, experiences and preferences regarding learning English. Although a wide range of research has been conducted previously in the Libyan context, none of this examined the students' actual voices regarding this issue. In previous research, the students' views have been revealed by the teachers' opinions, which show a significant contrast with the findings of this research, as explained in (8.3). This research has paved the way to hearing the students' views about their experience of learning English, which has not been the case hitherto. The students' voices and needs are given careful consideration in this study.

This study constitutes the first attempt to identify the differences in CLT implementation in private language teaching centres and government schools (see section 8.3). Thus, I believe that it will make a significant contribution to the existing literature, particularly as it sheds light on several important areas for the first time. The following chapter will present a detailed outline of the methodology adopted in this research.

Chapter 4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The underlying philosophical assumptions provide the basis for undertaking a valid investigation and choosing appropriate methods for any research endeavour. Therefore, it is essential to understand these assumptions in order to examine and conduct any research study. This chapter starts by outlining the common philosophical underpinnings and identifies the interpretive paradigm as the most appropriate philosophical perspective for this research. The chapter discusses the process of the fieldwork, including an explanation of the research context, negotiating access and research ethics, the pilot study, the research participants of the study and data analysis which informed the data collection methods of the study.

The nature of this investigation is interpretive and it aims to understand the implementation of CLT and the appropriateness of a CLT-based curriculum in Libya. Owing to this, classrooms observations and field notes, followed by stimulated-recall interviews and semi-structured interviews were used as the most appropriate instruments for addressing the research questions. Moreover, the chapter presents the justification of each research method employed in this research and the procedures followed for the data collection and analysis. To enhance the trustworthiness of this study, the criteria for trustworthiness in qualitative research and the strategies for addressing them are discussed. Finally, the chapter is concluded by illuminating the challenges encountered during the fieldwork.

4.2 Philosophical perspectives

It is important for researchers to understand the philosophical assumptions of research in order to select appropriate research methods and conduct valid research. The philosophical assumptions provide the framework that underpins and orients the whole research venture. Three basic components are essential to any research paradigm; namely, ontology, epistemology and methodology. Ontology is concerned with the nature of being, i.e. "what is the real world and what exists in it" (Crotty 1998:10). Ontological assumptions are based on the idea of knowing the foundation of reality (being), as they view the world as a physical entity which is external to the social world. Any attempt to engage and conceptualise political or social phenomena will prove

difficult unless the researcher adheres to some sort of ontological claim (Lewis 2002). Succinctly, one can argue that ontology is the starting point of any inquiry.

Grix (2010) identified two ontological positions, centred on foundationalism and anti-foundationalism beliefs. Foundationalism views reality as external and independent regardless of individuals' knowledge of it. Based on the foundationalist view and according to the context of this study, the factors affecting the implementation of CLT exist independently. More specifically, these factors exist regardless of the teachers' acknowledgement of them. As Grix (2004:60) claims, the "ontological position, is implicit even before you choose your topic of study." By contrast, anti-foundationalists believe that reality is constructed and formed as a result of people's interactions. Referring this position to the current study, the perceptions and understandings of CLT and the mechanism of its implementation lie in the teachers, students and inspectors' actions and performance. Therefore, both ontological perspectives are applicable and pertinent to the context of this research. The above ontological assumptions lead us to ask what constitutes reality in light of the following epistemological positions.

Epistemology "deals with the nature of knowledge, its possibility, scope and general basis" (Crotty 1998:8). It requires the recognition of what is embodied in knowledge. In other words, it is interested in understanding how knowledge is made. The theoretical framework is inextricably related to the structural components of research, including the research methodology, based on the theoretical perspectives, the methods adopted and the epistemological view of the research (Grix 2010). Figure 4-1 shows how the basic components of research are interrelated.
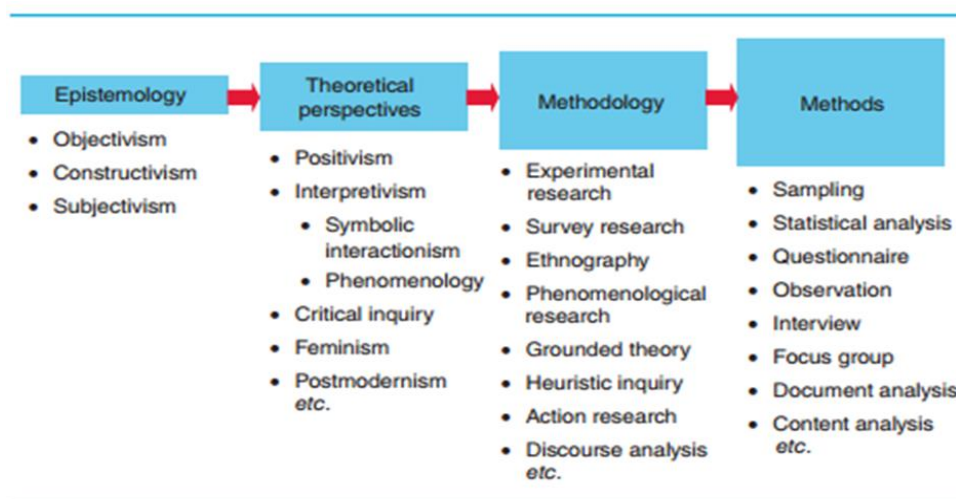
Figure 4-1. The interrelationship between the basic components of research

Figure 4.1 Quoted from Crotty (1998:5).

In Figure 4-1, three key philosophical perspectives that are the most frequently used in contemporary qualitative research (the positivist, interpretivist/constructivist, and critical) are deliberated below.

Positivism originates from the natural sciences and adopts the view that knowledge is associated with these. Positivists assume that the external world is independent and can be verified or rejected based on rational justification or scientific proof. Positivism is concerned with observing and assessing phenomena using scientific tools, such as observations and experiments. This philosophical perspective is characterised as being "value-free". In other words, researchers adopt the criteria of objectivity, neutrality and rationality in seeking truth.

The ontological stance of positivism investigates the reality in a purely measurable, objective manner that is detached from the investigator (Cohen, et al. 2007). The positivist epistemology views knowledge as a fact, based on stable, unchangeable perceptions, which are either true or false. As Scotland (2012:10) points out, "Meaning solely resides in objects, not in the conscience of the researcher". At the methodological level, positivists aim to explain the relationships between the variables in order to form rules that enable them to make generalisation and prediction. Thus, a deductive approach is adopted in this scenario.

Although positivism seeks to detect abstract knowledge, based on scientific truth and validity, it neglects the significance of the social role in shaping reality. Therefore, it is

difficult to adopt this approach in the context of this research, as its aim is not to test or generate a theory.

The interpretivist/constructivist perspective believes that reality lies in the interactions between individuals' subjective experiences of the external world. Thus, "reality is socially constructed" (Antwi and Hamza 2015:221). According to Cohen et al., (2000:22, quoted in Assalahi 2015:314) interpretivists deal with "understanding the subjective world of the human experience". Flowers (2009) emphasises the difference between the natural and social sciences in understanding reality. More specifically, individuals make sense of reality by constructing constantly different meanings based on their experiences, resulting in various interpretations of reality (Denzin and Lincoln 2011). Interpretivist researchers are concerned with understanding people's thoughts and feelings. People's verbal and non-verbal communication and performance are deeply appreciated in this approach. Therefore, reality is a meaningful entity.

The ontological position of this paradigm is based on relativism, in which reality is regarded subjectively rather than as an absolute. The epistemological position is underpinned by subjectivism in understanding knowledge. For example, Crotty (1998:43) proposes an example on the existence of a tree, pointing out that:

> We need to remind ourselves that it is human beings who have constructed it as a tree, given it the name, and attributed to it the association we make with trees.

People's interactions play an essential role in shaping humans' experience of the world. Due to the understanding which arises from individuals' standpoints, interpretivism embraces different methodologies, including symbolic interactionism, phenomenology, realism, hermeneutics and ethnography (Gray and Gray 2014). Thus, different assumptions contribute to the philosophical basis of interpretivism/constructivism. Based on these assumptions and in the context of the current study, this paradigm is the most appropriate choice for investigating CLT implementation, as it helps to infer the different meanings of CLT from the participants' perceptions and unravel the different mechanisms associated with the adoption of this approach.

Critical inquiry is the third epistemological perspective that appears to hold different assumptions to positivism and interpretivism. This paradigm advocates discarding the "false awareness" in order to challenge the unjust social restrictions and so gain fresh insights into reality, that will guide effective social practices (Gray 2009). Critical inquiry suggests that people have equal opportunities to pursue knowledge, change and

critique an ideology. The critical perspective contributes towards filling the gap between theory and practice. More specifically, critical researchers assume that an objectivist stance in positivism does not engage with educational issues and questions because knowledge is either true or false. On the other hand, justified knowledge in the interpretive paradigm, which is based on the subjectivist view, might avoid or forget the foundation of the knowledge, resulting in false beliefs (Assalahi 2015). Thus, the task of the critical paradigm is to inspire investigation in order to stop inhibiting or restraining the freedom of a person or group of people. This study sets out to interpret and reveal the different meanings of CLT implementation. In this investigation, I seek to investigate and analyse different teachers' practices by conducting an in-depth examination of their teaching in the field, so critical theory seems to be an inappropriate option to adopt in this research.

4.2.1 Research paradigm

A paradigm can be described as a comprehensive system that contains a set of theoretical assumptions, beliefs, values and research strategies that form the nature of the research. Lincoln and Guba (1985:15) define a paradigm as "a world view, a general perspective, and a way of breaking down the complexity of the real world". On the basis of the above philosophical assumptions mentioned in (4.2), this study is informed by the underpinnings of the interpretative paradigm. In this paradigm, meaning is essential for understanding social phenomena and knowledge is obtained from people's consciousness and interactions with the external world and so cannot be excluded from the context in which it occurs.

An understanding of human behaviour cannot be illustrated solely by applying natural sciences methods but rather may be seen as an aspect of individuals' experiences as well. Thus, the focus is on the qualitative rather than the quantitative relationship between the variables (Wallen and Fraenkel 2001). Interpretivists view reality from a subjective point of view, which creates multiple constructions of reality. According to Gray and Gray (2009:23), "There is no, direct, one-to-one relationship between ourselves (subjects) and the world (object)". People shape different plans, models, and concepts in expressing and making sense of phenomena and experiences. Interpretivists place themselves in a linked position with regard to an investigation process. As Savin-Baden and Major (2012:63) argue, "Subjectivity and objectivity are in a sense united".

This perspective provides researchers with an opportunity to assess the influence and consequences of actions and investigates a phenomenon by asking questions such as "why" and "how". Moreover, its purpose is to gain an overview of a context and the contextual factors which affect a process. In the context of this study, the focus is on teachers' multiple perceptions, understanding and practices regarding CLT. Furthermore, it examines the students and Libyans inspectors' views regarding CLT. It might be argued that CLT cannot be understood without understanding the meanings which the participants assign to CLT adoption. Thus, the rationale for choosing this paradigm and its characteristics are justified by the following:

- It enhances my understanding of Libyan English teachers' perceptions and understanding of CLT and whether these are compatible with their practice in their actual setting. My role is not to evaluate or make judgements.

- It provides me with an understanding of how teachers without previous training construct meaning and deal with a curriculum which is based on CLT. In other words, teachers who have already constituted their subjective (conscious) understanding of the curriculum share their ideas and experiences, thereby forming an intersubjective view which contributes to the formation of an objective view that reflects their reality. As Crotty (1998:9) points out, "people may construct meaning in different ways". Consequently, they might share and face the same factors that help or inhibit the practical implementation of CLT.

The characteristics of the interpretive paradigm in the light of the aim of this study, namely the ontological position (the nature of reality), the epistemological position (view of knowledge) and the methodology, can be summarised by the following points:

- The aim of this study is to investigate CLT implementation by examining the teachers, students and Libyan school inspectors' views of the factors affecting its implementation, including contextual and socio-cultural factors.

- The teachers' views and practices revealed the different methods of CLT implementation, which reflect the multiple realities associated with teaching this approach. The teachers develop their way to teaching the communicative curriculum by constructing and sharing their different teaching experiences, so the reality is socially formed and constructed (ontology).

- Knowledge is also constructed by the teachers' subjective teaching experiences, perceptions and beliefs (epistemology).

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- Data were obtained by using classroom observations, stimulated-recall interviews and semi-structured interview instruments (Methodology).

In summary, the research philosophy can be viewed as assumptions about the nature of reality and the nature of knowledge that inform the researcher's perspective regarding the world. In this respect, the metaphorical concept of the philosophical research "onion diagram", based upon Saunders, et al. (2012:160), has been slightly amended according to the current research, as shown in the following diagram.
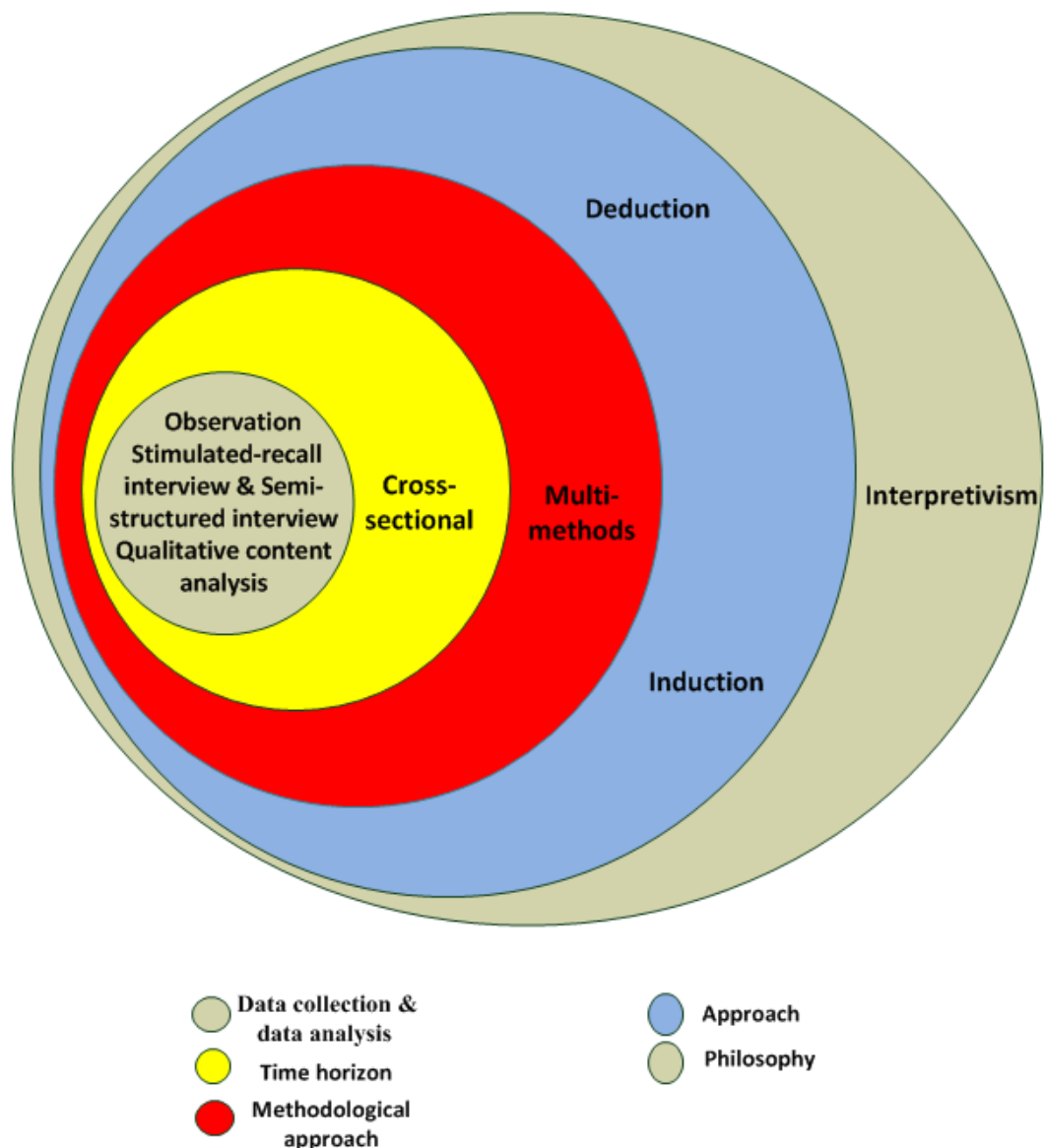
Figure 4-2. The visual components of the onion layers model of this research

Adapted from Saunders et al. (2012:160)

As shown in Figure 4.2., the interpretivist philosophy has been selected for the present study used a deductive and inductive approach. The deductive approach aims to test a theory. It starts with a hypothesis, which emphasises the causality relationship between variables. In a deductive approach, the researcher works from the more general to the more specific by gathering and testing empirical evidence to prove the validity of the hypothesis. A deductive approach is also called the "top down approach", because it starts with a general, absolute standard and then examines and works its way down to the more particular level. This approach is generally used in scientific research which is related to quantitative research, while an inductive approach is involved with generating a new theory arising from the data. It aims to build a theory by generating meaning from the data, and starts with particular observations of social phenomena or events and then proceeds analytically to making broader generalisations (the bottom up approach). Thus, it is more strongly associated with qualitative research. Although the deductive and inductive approaches differ, there are no set rules and some qualitative studies may have a deductive orientation. Accordingly, in this study, both a deductive and inductive approach has been adopted. As Trochim (2006:1) points out, "most social research involves both inductive and deductive reasoning processes at some time in the project". More specifically, although I have investigated CLT implementation from different perspectives (teachers, students and inspectors), it has been previously researched, so the "inductive approach does not prevent the researcher from using existing theory to formulate the research question to be explored" (Saunders, et al. 2012:146).

I have adopted qualitative research as the methodological design, used observations, field notes, stimulated-recall interviews and semi-structured interviews as the qualitative research methods. Due to the pressure of time and resources, the study has adopted a cross-sectional time horizon, as the data were collected to investigate CLT and the influential factors regarding its implementation at a certain point in time rather than over a long time period. Finally, I used qualitative content analysis to analyse the qualitative data.

4.3 Research methodology

Holden and Lynch (2004:3) argue that "the choice of the methodology logically follows the assumptions the researcher has already made". Qualitative and quantitative are the most frequently used research methods in the human sciences. Grix (2004) points out that both the qualitative and quantitative approaches can be described as umbrella terms, containing a wide range of concepts, paradigms and approaches related to data

collection and analysis. Thus, qualitative and quantitative research reflects the differences between the ways of viewing the world, the nature of knowledge and the research aim.

The purpose of quantitative research is to examine natural phenomena or test hypotheses in the natural sciences. Qualitative methods, on the other hand, have their roots in the social sciences, where they are used to interpret and understand a specific social phenomenon. Although both quantitative and qualitative research is widely adopted in the field of education, the choice of which to use is usually determined by the context and purpose of the research. In other words, one approach may be more appropriate than another when conducting a research venture. Additionally, some researchers use mixed research methods in order to take advantage of the difference between the two approaches.

Quantitative and qualitative research is often perceived differently among researchers. For example, Nunan (1992:3) distinguishes between them as follows:

> Quantitative research is obtrusive and controlled, objective, generalizable, outcome oriented and assumes the existence of "facts" which are somehow external to and independent of the observer or researcher. Qualitative research, on the other hand, assumes that all knowledge is relative, that there is a subjective element to all knowledge, research, and studies should be justifiable.

A further distinction is related to the process of the data collection, analysis and presenting the findings. Quantitative researchers examine the relationships between variables and the test hypotheses in order to obtain generalisable results, while qualitative researchers investigate social phenomena by interpreting and describing individuals' views and perspectives in natural settings. As Savin-Baden and Major (2012:13) point out, "Qualitative researchers tend to examine phenomena in their natural settings, often striving to interpret these phenomena in context". Furthermore, the researcher is the key tool in the data collection process. Savin- Baden and Major (2012:13) describe qualitative research as "value bound". That is to say, "researchers believe that their values are evident in the ways in which the researchers ask questions and interpret results". Thus, researchers are part of an inquiry process while, in quantitative studies, researchers place themselves in an independent, completely detached position with regard to the research process. However, it is often difficult to be fully detached from any type of research because "researchers are the sum of their accumulated knowledge, which is based on certain assumptions about the world" (Grix

2004:117). Table 4.1 provides the main characteristics and differences between quantitative and qualitative research:

Quantitative	Qualitative
- Interested in findings out numerical qualities of an event or case: how many, how much? - Goal of investigating is prediction, control, hypothesis-testing - Uses hard data (numbers) - Objective - Using large, random and representative samples - Employs a deductive research strategy - Its epistemological orientation is argued to be rooted in the positivist tradition - Aims at identifying general patterns and relationships - Survey methodology - Value- free - Abstract - Concepts are in the form of variables - Findings attempt to be comprehensive and generalizable	- Interested in the nature and essence of an event, person or case. - Goal of investigation is understanding, description, hypothesis-generation - Soft data (words or images from documents or observation, etc.) - Subjective - Using small, non-random and non-representative samples - Employs an inductive research strategy - Its epistemological orientation is argued to be rooted in the interpretive tradition - Aims at interpreting events of historical and cultural significance - Interview (in-depth case-study) - political - grounded - concepts are in the form of themes and motifs - findings are seen to be precise, narrow and not generalisable

Table 4-1. The differences between quantitative and qualitative research

Adapted from Grix (2004:122)

Based on the above overview, this study is mainly informed by qualitative research. In order to become familiar with and understand the method of teaching CLT and its implementation in Libyan secondary schools, qualitative research was seen to be the most appropriate approach for achieving a deep understanding of how the participants understand and perceive its meaning and interpret the teachers' practices of CLT in the classroom. The rationale behind choosing this approach and its relevance to this study is explained in the following section.

4.3.1 Rationale for choosing qualitative research

This research addresses CLT from both the teachers, students and inspectors' perspectives, and investigates the factors affecting its implementation. The focus of the study is on understanding how the participants make sense of and interpret the adoption of CLT in Libyan classrooms. It is therefore best to use a qualitative approach because of the importance of studying natural and social phenomenon. As Bogdan and Biklen (1998:3) argue, "In education, qualitative research is frequently called naturalistic because researchers hang around the event they are interested in".

Hennink et al. (2010:9) point out that adopting a qualitative approach helps "to understand the meaning and interpretations that people give to behaviours, events or objects". Consequently, in attempting to understand CLT, during an interaction with the researcher, the teacher participants are asked to describe their practices and identify the factors which influence their teaching process. The qualitative methodology plays a more effective role than quantitative research in providing a picture of different teachers' practices and experiences.

The qualitative approach entails a naturalistic inquiry (Berg 2009, Grix 2010, Punch 2009), which means that it enables researchers to study social phenomena in their natural settings. Therefore, employing a qualitative design for this study enables me to study the Libyan educational setting and teaching process in order to understand and identify the influence of the different contextual and socio-cultural factors on CLT implementation.

Qualitative research is characterised by an in-depth examination of knowledge that involves different data collection methods. These contain sources such as interviews, questionnaires, observations, focus group discussions, ethnography, case studies and document analysis. Moreover, researchers are immersed completely or partially during a research process. According to Reason and Rowan (1981: xi, quoted in Savin-Baden and Major 2012:13), "Qualitative research has many different approaches to enable us to understand the variety of human actions and experiences and to recognize that research cannot value-free". Due to the complexity of teaching and learning English using CLT in the Libyan context and understanding its adoption and implementation during teaching practice, different data collection methods were employed in order to enhance the quality of the research, including classroom observations, stimulated-recall interviews and semi-structured interviews, as well as field notes. Additionally, these

instruments enabled me to produce thorough descriptions and gain an understanding of the classroom context, taking into the consideration all of the participants' perspectives and even the complicated subtleties of their interactions, interpretations and relationships.

However, qualitative research can be criticised because it involves researcher subjectivity and bias in the design of the research. It seems that a researcher might be affected and involved in the process of the research which, in turn, produces bias in the analysis of the data. However, no researcher can be completely detached from his/her research. It is important to mention that the value of this research is the extent in which it addresses a radical problem, proposes a solution and provides descriptions of the subject area. The primary aim is to add to knowledge rather to make an evaluation or judgement about the setting. As Savin-Baden and Major (2012:13) point out, "Qualitative researchers attempt to assume a non-judgmental stance toward participants".

Briefly, this study focuses on the implementation of CLT, the perceptions of the teachers, students and inspectors regarding this and how appropriate the use of CLT is for use in the current Libyan curriculum. Qualitative research was the most appropriate choice for understanding how the teachers, students and inspectors regard CLT in practice. More importantly, the nature of this research requires not only an investigation of the teachers' CLT practices, but also an in depth-exploration and understanding of what happens around this phenomenon, such as the thought processes, perceptions, and feelings. Adopting the qualitative approach allowed me to examine and explore these topics, which are difficult to investigate using quantitative research methods. For example, accessing the teachers' understanding and perceptions of CLT, the students' general attitudes towards and learning experience of English, and the English inspectors' perceptions of the curriculum require the adoption of an in-depth qualitative approach, which will help to shed light on the influence of the contextual and socio-cultural factors on this area. Section 4.4 will explain the data collection methods.

4.4 Data collection methods

> Because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality, multiple methods of data collection and analysis provide more grist for the research mill (Patton 2002:555).

In this study, multiple instruments were used for the data collection, including classroom observation, field notes, stimulated-recall interviews and semi-structured interviews. These research instruments were employed in two stages. Firstly, non-participant classroom observation using field notes was used, followed by stimulated-recall interviews with the teachers. Secondly, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the students, teachers and inspectors of English. The use of observation, prior to the stimulated-recall interviews, enabled me to note different issues and generate different questions about the teachers' teaching practice in the classroom. The underpinning purpose of the observations was to gain a general overview of the teachers' practices regarding the CLT principles, and pave the way towards creating and developing interview questions. Thus, using classroom observations alongside in-depth interviews allowed me to explore the classroom context in more detail (Morse 2003). In this section, I explain the different techniques of my data collection together with the rationale for their choice.

4.4.1 Observation

As explained, observations was chosen as the first research tool, based on the research design and the nature of the problem being studied. One of the research questions is concerned with CLT use in the classroom and the technique for teaching it, so observation was valuable in this research as it provided me with detailed descriptions of the teachers' practices and revealed the different ways of implementing CLT in the classroom. Thus, this method helped me to answer the practical questions of this research, as it gave me access to classrooms.

Observation is a method for data collection that is used to enable researchers to obtain a systematic observation of individuals' performance, actions and behaviour (Hennink, et al. 2010). This tool provides researchers with in-depth, detailed descriptions of a social situation. Mays and Pope (1995:182) point out that "observational methods used in social science involve the systematic, detailed observation of behaviour and talk: watching and recording what people do and say".

Additionally, classroom observations involve understanding and investigating cultural and social habits, customs and behaviour (Mulhall 2003). They enable researchers to reveal or reflect the actual reality of a certain social context which is difficult to discover and study using other research methods. In other words, the interviewees might say or express something that is completely different from their actions and behaviour

in reality (Corbin and Strauss 2008, Robson 2011). The data gathered from observations are unique since they are regarded as living or natural data (Cohen, et al. 2011).

The use of observations has been identified according to the degree of participation. Thus, different types of observations have been distinguished by numerous researchers (Cohen, et al. 2011, Gold 1958, Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, Hennink, et al. 2010, Patton 2002, Robson 2011). Section (4.4.1.1) discusses these various kinds.

4.4.1.1 Types of observation

Observation is a natural process of viewing participants' behaviour according to a specific research problem (Gray and Gray 2009) . The observation type depends on the purpose of a research study. In other words, it is often related to the perspective of the research; for example, if it is quantitative or qualitative in nature. Thus, the former is largely based on structured observation and the latter is often related to unstructured or participant observation (Saunders, et al. 2009). Cohen et al. (2011:457) drew a clear distinction between the two as follows:

> A structured observation will already have its hypotheses decided and will use the observation data to conform or refute these hypotheses. On the other hand, a semi-structured and, more particularly, an unstructured observation, will be hypothesis-generating rather than hypothesis-testing.

It could be argued that systematic or structured observations are more frequently used by those who adopt a positivist view, which focuses on the frequency of behaviour, whereas unstructured or participant observations are widely adopted in the case of an interpretive or critical perspective because they focus on the meaning created by the individuals' interaction. In both kinds of observation, the data can be gathered either covertly or overtly.

Since my aim is to present an understanding and exploration of the real life situation regarding CLT teaching within Libyan secondary schools, rather than depending on my assumptions, my choice of kind of observation was non-structured observation. During the observation process, different procedures were undertaken, such as field notes and video or audio recordings, as will be explained later.

Concerning the degree of participation in the observation, Gold (1958) proposes a continuum whereby the role of the researcher is classified as complete participant, participant-as-observer, observer-as-participant or complete observer.

- The complete participant: researchers involve themselves completely and become immersed within a particular group, whereby the researcher's actual role is never revealed to the participants. The researchers, therefore, tend to build intimate relationships with a group. However, researchers can be affected by this immersion. As a result, investigators might risk losing their neutral view towards the research. Furthermore, ethically, it is unacceptable for people to conceal their purpose.

- The participant-as-observer: the researchers' role is similar to that of a complete participant but, in this type of observation, the researcher's role is known to the participants.

- The observer-as-participant: researchers do not take part but might participate slightly during an observation, and their identity is clear and overt to the participants.

- The complete observer: researchers adopt and utilise observations without taking part or becoming involved in the social situations or activities in question. Researchers observe in a covert and overt manner and are detached investigators. Section (4.4.1.2) explains and identifies my observation role during this research.

4.4.1.2 My observation role (overt or covert)

> Research staff and participants should be given appropriate information about the purpose, methods and intended uses of the research. (The Economic and Social Research Council ESRC 2015:4).

Hennink et al. (2010) also state that informed participants, for the purpose of the research, are an essential aspect of social inquiries. Therefore, I adopted an overt role as a non-participant observer for the following reasons. Firstly, ethically and religiously, it was not considered proper behaviour for me to deceive people regarding the reason for my presence. Secondly, although during the first stage of my fieldwork I was slightly reticent about the real reasons for my study, since I did not want the teachers' actual practices to be influenced in the classroom, my overt role allowed me to ask questions freely during the later stages of my data collection. Thirdly, I did not like to be viewed with suspicion, as my role might be understood as being an inspector from the education system, which might have led the participants to treat me in a distrustful, cautious manner.

Non-participant observation is one type of varied observation role, whereby a researcher plays the role of being detached and unobtrusive. In other words, researchers conduct an observation without taking part and interacting with a certain group. This kind of observation is described as a "fly on the wall"; that is, blending into the background and

not influencing what you are observing" (Hennink, et al. 2010:178). Furthermore, this non-participation in a situation enabled me to withdraw from a setting freely.

However, in a real situation, it seems difficult to adopt a wholly invisible role. As Robson (1995, cited in Hennink, et al. 2010:178) argues "becoming part of the wallpaper is never completely possible in observation". Although I decided to apply a non-participant observation role, my initial feeling about the participation ranged from the observer as participant to the complete observer, according to the level of participation in a continuum; for example, on one occasion, I was asked to clarify a certain question in the Teacher's handbook by a teacher (Patton 2002). Different techniques were embraced, such as observing, listening and taking field notes.

4.4.1.3 Rationale for observation

In order to examine the teachers' practices and the extent to which they were using CLT, observation was chosen as the most appropriate research method. The basic reason for adopting observation was to understand the teachers' practical practices in relation to the curriculum that is based on CLT principles. Additionally, observation gave me room to compare the teachers' perceptions and practices. As Hennink et al. (2010:173) explain, "We can use observation to identify discrepancies between what people say and what they actually do".

The strengthening of the observation by using audio and video recordings provided me with an accurate description of the whole social context, including the teachers and students together with their interactions and classrooms. As Dornyei (2007:185) notes, "observation is invaluable for providing descriptive contextual information about the setting of the targeted phenomenon". As I was the research instrument for the data collection, I had a chance to be present in the natural context and witness how the teachers construct meanings and deal with different curriculum-related issues (McDonough and McDonough 2014).

Although observation can be used as "a stand-alone method" (Hennink, et al. 2010:172), it was used as part of my research methods as it was combined with other tools to increase my understanding of the different factors of CLT implementation. As Hennink et al. (2010) and Cohen et al. (2011) argue, in order to gain thorough descriptions, a qualitative researcher utilises observation as an invaluable addition to other data collection methods, such as in-depth interviews. Moreover, the distinctive feature of

observation makes it possible to understand and recognise differences between cultures (Mulhall 2003).

Another advantage of using observation was that it enabled me to produce different questions, and investigate and reflect on the different practices of the teachers, while also giving the teachers opportunities to comment, justify, explain and provide different reasons for their practices and experiences when teaching a class. Accordingly, teachers might pay more attention to a particular aspect of their teaching or view a certain feature of their techniques from a different angle (Glesne 2015). For example, after I had completed the pilot study with Hana, she told me that she would have paid more attention to activities such as pair work, as she skipped this activity while being observed. It could be argued that the general importance of choosing observation for this study is, as Mulhall, (2003:307) states, because "it illustrates the whole picture".

To sum up this section, classroom observation played an essential role during the data collection process. It helped me to address and provide answers to the following main research question:

- Is the communicative approach used in the classroom? and, if so, how?

4.4.1.4 Field notes

As part of my observation was to describe what is happening in the context, field notes were made. An observation does not simply mean that a researcher is present in a situation. An investigator is required to be skilled and prepared to record, since these notes complement the observation process and play an essential role during the analysis stage. Field notes can be defined as:

> The written account of what the researcher hears sees experiences and thinks in the course of collecting and reflecting on the data in qualitative study (Bogdan and Biklen 1998:108).

During unstructured observation that is regarded as the most suitable technique for answering some of my research questions, I recorded my data using field notes and audio and video recording (Borg 2006). In an unstructured observation in a natural setting, researchers do not have certain criteria to observe (Cohen, et al. 2011, Mulhall 2003), but "The process of qualitative inquiry is an interweaving of inductive and deductive thinking. All researchers enter the field with a perspective" (Rossman and Rallis 2011:269).

Thus, I had already identified several categories that are linked to CLT implementation, such as the use of pair and group work and the students' interaction inside the classrooms. Additionally, to note the sequence of events as it occurs in the real situation, audio and video recordings were taken alongside the observations and taking of field notes. The technique of using audio and video recordings helped me to recall the whole real-life context, particularly during the data analysis stage

4.4.2 Interviews

Having explained observation as the initial method for the data collection, in this section, stimulated-recall interviews and semi-structured interviews will be explored as the second research methods used in this research.

Both semi-structured interviews and stimulated-recall interviews were used in the current research, as valuable methods for collecting qualitative data. Even though stimulated-recall interviews and semi-structured interviews are both interview techniques in qualitative research, they are completely different in many ways. For example, stimulated-recall interviews are an introspective research method which investigates the participants' internal thought process or feelings, as its purpose is to investigate how the participants respond with specific situations, whereas semi-structured interviews seek to explore the participants' attitudes, beliefs, views, values, and conceptions. Another difference is that stimulated-recall interviews are characterised by the use of audio recordings, video footage, photographs, film and photos, which assists the participants to recall their experiences through post-event interviews, while, in semi-structured interviews, a researcher depends on a predetermined set of questions which are flexible and can be modified by rewording or reordering the questions. These two methods also differ with regard to the kind of questions used; for example, the questions in semi-structured interviews are the same but have some degree of flexibility, while the sequence of topics and use of the probing questions differ for each participant in stimulated-recall interviews, depending on their individual experiences and situations in the classroom.

4.4.2.1 Stimulated recall interviews (SRI)

As part of this research is to investigate teachers' practices regarding CLT implementation in teaching the curriculum, stimulated-recall interviews were used as "a range of introspective methods that represent a means of eliciting data about thought process" (Gass and Mackey 2000:1). Stimulated-recall interviews are based on the

assumption that the internal and interactive processes of individuals can be described, examined and retrieved during a retrospective process. In other words, the internal thought of humans can be accessed and obtained, and so, in turn, verbalised at some level (Gass and Mackey 2000). Stimulated-recall interviews are characterised by the use of video or audio recordings, which are employed as cues to enable the participants to retrieve and recall the episode in the way that will provide relevant explanations and ideas of their internal thoughts during the event (Calderhead 1981).

Stimulated-recall interviews have a long history as an influential method for examining and identifying teachers' thoughts, practices, and reasoning while teaching in the classroom. In this sense, Calderhead (1981) argues that teachers' aims are apt to be constant or changeable during the teaching process, and that their intentions design and functions may alter considerably, depending upon the students' behaviour and interactions with the teachers in the classrooms. Thus, the use of stimulated-recall interviews in a natural classroom setting can provide useful information and descriptions related to disclosing the teaching practices and decision-making of teachers while engaged in teaching. This enabled the researcher to obtain insights into the teachers' thoughts, which are difficult to obtain using other methods (Cohen, et al. 2011, Nunan 1992).

Stimulated-recall interviews are described as the least intrusive but the most inclusive method for revealing a classroom situation (Pirie 1996). They provides teachers with opportunities to relive teaching episodes and verbalise the metacognitive thoughts that they had while teaching. Furthermore, video recordings allow teachers time to reflect on and revise their teaching, at any time in the future. In short:

> Video stimulated recall has been shown to be useful for teachers to find out the 'how' and 'why' of teaching by reliving teaching episodes – their knowledge in action – and thereby making explicit their knowledge of theory and practice (Reitano 2006:8).

Using this technique was beneficial and suitable in this research as it enabled the teachers to be significantly immersed, recall and verbalise their key teaching practices and performance related to their CLT implementation. The provided audio and video stimuli helped to remind the teachers about their actions in the classroom. Consequently, the stimulated tools provoked the sequence of the discussion and paved the way for asking the teachers questions about their internal thoughts or feelings at a certain point in their teaching. Stimulated-recall interviews were a novel research

method used in the Libyan secondary school context, as the teachers were given an opportunity to explain their decision-making practices in the classroom based on a recorded prompt drawn from the lesson itself. This technique has not been used in Libya before.

The influence of stimulated-recall interviews can be affected by using video and/or audio recordings. In other words, the procedure of videos recording should be undertaken unobtrusively in the classroom. This procedure can be difficult if the students have not been informed by their teachers of the intervention of a camera and unfamiliar adult in their class. However, such preparation can also influence and restrict students during their lessons, which may have a negative impact on the usual classroom dynamics. In this research, stimulated-recall interviews were used as a valuable method for accessing and encouraging a discussion of the teachers' practices, particularly with regard to implementing communicative activities in the curriculum. For this reason, the purpose of my presence and the use of the video recordings were explained orally to the students and their permission was obtained in order to avoid any kind of restraint (see section 4.8).

A further limitation is that the teachers' level of confidence or anxiety may be influenced by viewing their own teaching. Fuller and Manning (1973) describe this as anxiety-provoking and stressful experience. However, this was not a problem in this research, as a good rapport was established between the researcher and the participants during the pilot study and fieldwork, which allowed the participants the flexibility to talk and express their opinions freely. As Calderhead (1981:213) points out, "the establishment of rapport between the participating teachers and researchers considerably reduce these influences and result in fuller recall commentaries". Beyerbach (1989) also claims that, when watching themselves teaching, some individuals may find it difficult to express or articulate a clear justification of the decisions they made during the lesson, particularly for those who lack fluency. In this sense, Borg (2006:211) also argues that "the adequacy with which teachers can accurately report information (through processes) that is no longer in their short –term memory". In the context of the current research, this was addressed by conducting stimulated-recall interviews (in short time) a day after the video-recordings were made, which increased the data reliability of this research (Gass and Mackey 2000) As Reitano (2006:9) explains, "if the interview is conducted as soon as possible after videotaping, interruption to the teacher's cognitive processes will be reduced".

Calderhead (1981:213) refers to the term "tacit knowledge", which cannot be verbalised or retrieved during the stimulated-recall interview commentary. This knowledge has developed from the teachers' experience and may be difficult to elicit in a verbal form during stimulated-recall interviews. In this regard, Calderhead (1981) argues that experienced teachers reach a level of automatisation in their behaviour during teaching. Such automatisation may make teachers behave spontaneously without thinking of the rationale behind their teaching actions. However, one can argue that complete access to individuals' knowledge will never be reachable.

Even though stimulated-recall interviews are not devoid of limitations, their effectiveness and potential value are clear in this research, as the teachers were able to relive and reflect on their teaching practices, and so provide an explicit rationale of their teaching. The following points summarise the rationale for using stimulated-recall interviews:

- They provide a valuable technique for investigating the teachers' decision-making processes and practices regarding the use of the CLT-based curriculum in the classroom.
- They are a useful research method for producing in-depth and insightful data.
- The teachers were given an opportunity to view themselves in action, and review and recall their thoughts and practices as they occurred (Susan and Mackey 2017).
- They make a valuable addition to the literature on how to investigate CLT and other teaching methods, as well as the use of research methods in the Libyan secondary school context.

4.4.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

Interviews may be understood as an "inter-view" process that involves an exchange of different views and experiences between individuals (Kvale 2008). Hennink et al. (2010:109) define an interview as "a one-to-one methods of data collection that involves an interviewer and an interviewee discussing specific topics in depth". The interview method seems to be like a purposeful conversation that addresses a specific issue. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2010:128) describe interviews as "a special kind of knowledge -producing conversation".

There are different types of interview depending on the nature and design of the research; namely, structured, unstructured, and semi-structured interviews.

- **Structured interviews**

This interview is set up to be strict and less flexible. The interview questions are predetermined to lead an interview in a specific manner and order. Interviewees are asked the same closed questions that are to be answered from fixed options. This interview is easy to replicate, as researchers use the same questions each time. Thus, researchers tend to collect the same consistent and common data that allow comparisons to be made among the respondents. As Grix (2004:127) points out, "The key aim of structured interviews is to achieve a high degree of standardisation or uniformity, and hence ease of comparability". They can be characterised as easy to conduct due to the rigorous nature of the questions. Researchers follow the same instructions, and so do not need to be well-developed and skilled interviewers, unlike with other interview types, such as unstructured interviews. Although this interview is designed to be inflexible, this inflexibility can make it difficult for researchers to investigate unexpected issues or information that arise. Because of this limitation, this technique was not appropriate to use in this research as it does not match the nature and design of the subject context.

- **Unstructured interviews**

In this type of interview, a researcher does not follow a structured, organized questions order. Questions are posed in an open-ended manner during the interview to enable the researcher to test the preliminary concepts or understanding of a topic. It is also known as an informal conversational interview, non-standardized interview and ethnographic interview, and allows the researcher to elicit and understand the social reality of individuals. It is based on the unprompted production of questions that arise during the conversation between the researcher and the participant. This interview cannot be standardised, as it depends on the social interaction with the particular interviewee, and so does not follow the same format as other interviews. As a result, "each unstructured interview might generate data with different structures and patterns" (Zhang and Wildemuth 2009), which allow researchers to produce rich data and information. Although unstructured interviews allow deep investigation, it is difficult to compare the data of different respondents, because of the variety between the responses. Furthermore, it requires a lot of time to analyse the data.

- **Semi-structured interviews**

Grix (2004:127) describes this type of interview as "the most popular method of interviewing, as it allows a certain degree of flexibility and allows for the pursuit of unexpected lines of enquiry during the interview". Researchers have certain questions to

ask their interviewees in order to cover a particular topic, but these are not necessarily asked in the same order. Researchers usually use an interview protocol, moving from the general to more specific topics during the interview. In this type of interview, probes are used by the interviewers using additional questions to elicit further information and investigate wider ideas or concepts. Consequently, the participants have an opportunity to express their perceptions in a more elaborate way in the way, which allows researchers to draw comparisons across respondents. Semi-structured interviews were seen as the most effective approach to adopt in this research because of their flexibility.

Semi-structured interviews were applied as the third important instrument in my data collection. My aim in adopting semi-structured interviews was to gain access to the participants' opinions and experiences and understand their perceptions regarding CLT implementation and the proposed curriculum. As Patton (2002:341) points out, an interview allows researchers to "enter into the other person's perspective". Additionally, it is a powerful means of obtaining descriptions of different experiences, since it provides an investigator with a rich description (Kvale 2008).

Semi-structured interviews are characterised by their flexibility, whereby researchers can use probes to delve deeper when asking questions. As Patton (2002:372) argues "researchers use probes to deepen the response to a question, increase richness and depth of response that is desired". These probes are regarded as a technique for encouraging the participants to describe their experiences (Berg 1998, Bryman 2012, Creswell and Plano Clark 2011, Dörnyei 2007, Patton 2002, Yin 2013). Additionally, this technique was chosen in order to address some of my theoretical questions regarding the teachers' understanding and perceptions of the curriculum and the challenges of CLT implementation. It gave me a window for comparing and validating my understanding based on both observations and interview data collection. Furthermore, it helped to identify a link between what the participants perceive, say and actually do. The rationale for using semi-structured interviews in this research can be summarised under the following points:

- Semi-structured interviews are suitable for exploring the perceptions, understanding and views of all of the participants regarding CLT and the factors affecting its implementation. They enabled me to probe for more interpretations and information. As Alshenqeeti (2014:39) claims, "interviews - compared to

questionnaires - are more powerful in eliciting narrative data that allows researchers to investigate people's views in greater depth".

- Semi-structured interviews provide a valuable method for understanding the CLT-based curriculum from the teachers' perspective (Kvale 2007). It enables the interviewees to speak in their own voices and express their thoughts and feelings (Berg, 2009).

- Semi-structured interviews can be characterised as a flexible method which can allow the participants to explore and elaborate on issues related to CLT implementation.

4.5 Research context

This research was conducted in the eastern region of Libya, in the Green City (pseudonym). This city was the most logical choice for the fieldwork because there were different opportunities to meet teachers and inspectors of English there. In this city, I worked as an English teacher which enabled me to contact and meet several of my English teaching colleagues. Most importantly, this city was safe to visit during that period of time. This section is divided into two sub-sections: the research site (4.5.1) and the research participants (4.5.2)

4.5.1 Research site

This study was undertaken in eight Libyan secondary schools where classroom observations of the teachers' practices were conducted, followed by stimulated-recall interviews in four schools. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in all eight of the schools. As the purpose of the study is to investigate CLT implementation, the schools were chosen purposefully. They were all secondary schools because CLT principles are presented clearly in all curriculum activities during this stage. This gave me the opportunity to meet both teachers and students in the same context. The study was conducted in schools related to different genders, which provided me with information about diversity in CLT implementation in relation to contextual factors. They were five girls' schools and three boys' schools (see Appendix 19), located in different areas of the city.

Additionally, the research investigated CLT implementation in a private centre for learning English. In this regard, it is possible to argue that the learning context in which students learn a language plays essential role, particularly in developing communicative competence. The private centre context can be a helpful source for learners to use

language in a communicative way. In this regards, the private centre may offer more opportunity for nurturing the strong version.

CLT implementation requires a friendly environment and learning context which offer maximum exposure to the language input. Taylor (1983: 69, 70) describes communicative context as a context which "encourages learners to exercise their own initiative in communicating, and consequently, communication takes place comfortably". A convenient context can be characterized by including features such as a variety of teaching materials, activities, and teaching aids which enhance and enliven classroom instruction. Moreover, an appropriate context helps both teachers and students in the way that helps and encourages students to communicate in the target language freely and fluently as well as enabling the teacher to work as facilitator through available teaching aids and different activities.

Some Libyan students learn English in two different contexts. Government schools in the morning and private centres in the evening. These contexts have their own features with different techniques being applied to implement CLT principles. Therefore, this research investigated the two contexts to explore the difference in the implementation of CLT principles. It is important to mention that the investigation of CLT was not in my plan at the first instance of this research. However, due to the flexibility of qualitative research which makes it possible to respond in a flexible way to new details that may emerge during the investigation process (Dornyei 2007), it was possible to adapt the original research design. During the first stage of fieldwork, the different participants pointed out the difference between the government schools and private centres in the way CLT is incorporated in the teaching and learning of English. This encouraged me to visit a private centre for learning English, and at this point, I decided to extend my research. Thus, one classroom observation was conducted in a private centre for learning English. This observation resulted from the interviews with the teachers, students and English inspector participants. The interview findings revealed that CLT differs according to the context in which it takes place, due to contextual factors. Thus, based on several of teachers' invitation and encouragement, I visited and conducted a classroom observation in a private centre. The observational data revealed that a difference exists between the two contexts (the government secondary schools and the private centre) with regard to the contextual factors, which alter the situation regarding CLT implementation. The findings revealed that the more successful implementation of CLT is attributed to the factors such as small class sizes, availability of teaching aids

(audio and video recording), using English as the only main language in classrooms and enough time for implementing the communicative activities. All these factors were available in the private centre which could offer potential for implementing the strong version of CLT.

4.5.2 Research participants

In this research, three different categories of participant (namely, teachers, students and inspectors) were included. Since the aim of this research is to provide an in-depth understanding of the meaning and participant perceptions of CLT and its implementation through the observed practices of teachers, a purposive sampling strategy was employed. A purposive sample is also known as selective sampling. The aim in choosing this kind of non-probability sampling method was to identify participants who fitted the criteria of those who would best serve as a primary source of research data. As Bryman (2012:418) points out, "those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed". Burgess (2002) also argues that a researcher decides which informants will be recruited to suit the criteria of the research.

Due to the difficulties that the majority of teachers face at the beginning of their teaching career, the criteria when choosing a sample was based on the teachers' experience of teaching the curriculum. The majority of the teachers have taught English for more than six years (secondary stage). They were aware of the different issues associated with teaching the communicative curriculum. This teaching experience enabled them to be familiar with the content of the curriculum and made them more aware of the difficulties associated with teaching it. Additionally, my criteria for selecting participants were essentially based on the English teachers, students learning English in secondary schools, and inspectors of secondary school English teaching. Some teachers spent more than an hour talking about different aspects of CLT, particularly the obstacles associated with it. However, this does not mean that new teachers were excluded from sharing their experiences. Two new graduate teachers volunteered to be interviewed about the difficulties they encountered regarding teaching the curriculum.

When choosing the sample of participant inspectors, on one occasion, while observing an English teacher during the pilot study, an English inspector visited a class. I introduced myself to the inspector, who was the Director of the English Language Inspection Department. I explained the aim of the research. He expressed his

willingness to participate and invited me to the inspection office, where he gave me the name of two of his friends who were also English inspectors (see appendix 20). This process of identifying the other English inspectors is referred to as the snowball sampling strategy. According to Cohen et al. (2011:116):

> These people are then used as informants to identify , or put the researchers in touch with, others who qualify for inclusion and these, in turn, identify yet others - hence the term snowball sampling.

Students are also among the participants of this research. I purposively selected ten students from three different schools in the Green City (see appendix 19). The students were chosen based on certain characteristics. For example, all of the students were selected from secondary schools. They were aged around 15-17 years old. The Students were chosen from the first, second and third year of secondary schools. In order to represent and obtain the different students' views regarding learning English, they were of varying levels and abilities of learning English. The consent was sought from students, to whom the school principals (in loco parentis) introduced me with their permission. The majority of the school principals helped and introduced me to student participants. On the basis of their knowledge of students' level, the school principals chose those students from different abilities and levels in learning English which helped me to hear and investigate all students' attitudes and hear their voices. However, in some other schools, the recruitment of the student participants was undertaken by asking teachers' help. Some teacher participants also helped me by choosing students from their classrooms from different ages, level and abilities in learning English.

This purposive sample enabled me to obtain a broad range of perspectives regarding learning English and also a comprehensive understanding of Libyan students' needs in this area. Etikan et al. (2016:2) state that it is "the deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities the participant possesses. The researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience".

4.6 Research Ethics

4.6.1 The first phase of the data collection

> Fieldworkers are the kinds of people who can put up with constant and dedicated hard work, loneliness, powerlessness and confusion, and, quite possibly, some suffering at the hands of those being studied (Lee 1993:120).

Different procedures were followed in order to prepare for the data collection process after receiving ethical approval from my university in July 2014 (see appendix 1). I submitted my RF2 on 22 October and gave my presentation on 18 November. In December 2014, I sent a written request to my embassy in London, along with a letter from my supervisor, in order to obtain a formal letter which was addressed to the Scholarship Management to obtain approval to travel to Libya and conduct my fieldwork. The letter outlined the aim of the fieldwork. Consequently, the Libyan embassy sent me approval by the Ministry of Higher Education in Libya to travel and conduct my fieldwork on 18 December 2014. I thereby obtained all of the required legal approval here in the UK before venturing into the field.

According to my research plan, I intended to undertake my fieldwork in January 2014. As a result of the unrest in Libya at that time, schools were closed in the east of Libya (my research area), which led to the postponement of my trip. However, when the school reopened, I booked a flight to undertake my fieldwork. When I showed my passport at Manchester Airport, I was informed that Libyan passengers were not allowed to travel to Enfidha Airport (Tunisia). I was shocked and spent more than half an hour explaining to the staff member that I was a PhD student and it was important for me to travel to do my fieldwork. She apologised, saying that she appreciated that I had young children with me, but finally informed me that there was nothing she could do. This happened on 28 February at 3:00am.

Later that same day, I rang another travel agency, booked tickets for myself and my family and flew with Tunisia Airlines on 1 March 2015. I spent that night in Tunisia and finally arrived in Libya on 2 February 2015. These various problems associated with gathering the research data were due to the fighting in Libya, which led to school closures and then travel restrictions on Libyans entering Tunisia. This delayed the research by two months at this stage. The next section will explore all of the ethical considerations which were undertaken before and during the process of the data collection

4.6.2 Ethical Considerations

Ethical behaviour represents a set of moral principles, rules, or standards governing a person or a profession (Lichtman 2012:51). Since a qualitative researcher deals with human beings as the main source of the data collection, a commitment to ethical standards is an essential aspect of qualitative research, for two reasons. Firstly, a

qualitative researcher examines individuals' experiences, perceptions and feelings and, secondly, some qualitative issues are sensitive and require careful consideration. Any research should be conducted using key ethical principles, which can be categorised as "Beneficence - "doing positive good", Non-Malfeasance - "doing no harm", Integrity, Informed Consent, and Confidentiality/ Anonymity" (Sheffield Hallam University 2017, Research Ethic policy and procedures 2016:2-3); for example, Beneficence implies an action which is done for the benefit of people to improve their life situation. That means that the research purpose should be based on the idea of investigating a problem and seeking appropriate solutions and suggestions to bring benefit to a certain context. Non-Malfeasance means "doing no harm". In other words, it is essential to avoid any kind of harm, whether physical, emotional, or psychological as well as damage or threats to social or financial standing. Integrity has been defined as "central to ethical research principles that focus on the responsibility of researchers to do no harm, to gain informed consent from participants and to represent respondents' views as accurately as possible" (Watts 2008:1). Informed consent can be described as an agreement between a researcher and the participants. In this form, the researcher is responsible for informing the participants about the research purpose and methods, explaining that their participation is completely voluntary, and notifying them of any potential risks or benefits arising from their participation. The participants must then consent before they participate, equipped with a full understanding of their role in the research. Confidentiality/Anonymity refers to the assurance that all data will be stored securely and the basic participants' rights not to be named or identifiable in the research. For example, their personal information should not be revealed when the research is reported. A researcher should ensure and explain the methods and degree of confidentiality and anonymity afforded to the participants both during and after their participation.

These ethical principles were carefully considered both before and while conducting the actual process of the data collection in the current study. Firstly, before traveling to Libya to conduct the fieldwork, I informed and obtained permission from my educational institution (Sheffield Hallam University) by filling in the ethical application form that explained the purpose of the study and identifying all of the participants who would be involved in the study, under my supervisor's supervision. This ethical application included all of the ethical documents and forms sent to the research participants, such as the school principals, teachers, students and inspectors of English's information letters and consent forms. These forms provided all of the participants with

detailed explanations of the research and the expectations regarding their participation (see appendices 8-14). Thus, on 10 July 2014, I received the ethical approval document from the SHU ethics committee for my research project (see appendix 1).

Secondly, before the actual process of collecting the research data began, it was necessary to negotiate access and contact the responsible parties. As Cohen et al. (2007:55) point out, "The first stage involves the gaining of official permission to undertake one's research in the target community". Thus, on 4 March 2015, I embarked on my field work. The first step was to visit the Ministry of Education in the Green City. I met an official from the Education Department and showed him the ethical approval letter from the Libyan Embassy in London (see appendix 2) along with a written request for ethical approval from the educational departments in the city (see appendix 3). This letter confirmed that I was a doctoral student who wished to undertake fieldwork in the area of English language in the secondary school context. The Education Secretary read the letter and I was asked to send a written request, clarifying my purpose, to Mr. Tareq, who was responsible for the Educational Affairs in the city.

I submitted a written request and then the secretary presented it to Mr. Tareq, who signed the ethical approval request (see appendix 4, 5), and directed it to the Office of Educational Services in the region to enable me to access and visit the schools in the city. The Office of Educational Services is the authority that addresses schools formally. On the same day, I took the request to the Office of Educational Services at 12:30pm and, the next following, went to obtain another formal ethical approval letter, permitting me to visit the schools (see appendices 6-7).

This formal and ethical approval letter, which was directed to all of the schools' principals, gave me easy access to the schools, as it was issued by an official party. For example, on one occasion where I had an informal conversation with a school principal, she told me, "The letter came from a formal organisation and this is acceptable". Therefore, I informed all of the local authorities in the education system in the city about the purpose of the research and obtained a formal consent letter (see appendices 4-5). Thus, the next step was to knock on the doors of the schools' administration. As Cohen et al. (2017:135) explains, researchers should prepare for the next stage of "making actual contact in person, perhaps after an introductory letter, with appropriate people in the organization with a view to negotiating access".

Gatekeepers were contacted to obtain their permission and permission was gained from all individuals, such as the school principals, in order to facilitate the appropriate choice of participants who were informed about my purpose in collecting these data and that it

would be used solely for academic purposes (see appendices 8-9). I visited eight schools, and it is worth mentioning that the majority of the school principals welcomed the idea of the research and helped me to access English teachers; for example, some school principals invited English teachers to their office and introduced me to teachers. This enabled me to introduce myself to the teachers and to seek their agreement to participate in the research after I explained its aim and gave them the participant information sheet and consent form (see appendices 8-10).

My access to the schools in order to make classroom observations helped me to interact with the other participants; namely, the inspectors and students. For example, on one occasion, I introduced myself to an inspector of English (see section 4.5.2), who invited me to the inspection department, which gave me an opportunity to contact and seek the permission of other English inspector participants (see appendices 13-14). Then, I sought permission from the student participants of different ages and stages of secondary school, to whom the school principals (in *loco parentis*) introduced me. Before the students signed the consent form (see appendices 11-12), I explained orally to them in detail the purpose of the research and also the fact that their participation was completely voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from the study without giving any justification.

Consent forms were prepared and submitted to the different participants to ensure that their participation was voluntary (see appendices 9, 10, 12, 14). As Hennink et al. (2010:66) point out, "A basic rule in social science research is to inform participants that they are involved in a study, so that they can decide to participate freely or not". Additionally, I explained the research to all the participants orally before they signed the consent forms.

The participants were also told that only myself and my supervisors would have access to their data. They were given the freedom and options to withdraw from the study at any time. Another ethical criterion was that the participants might be concerned about their personal information. Therefore, I confirmed that the anonymity of the research participants, as well as the names of the different settings (schools), would be strictly protected.

To ensure confidentiality and flexibility during this research, the participants had the option and right to choose the location of their interview. Furthermore, to show respect for the cultural customs and traditions and fulfil the wishes of some of the female teachers, not all of the female teachers' classes were recorded (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007).

Additionally, no harm was threatened to my research participants. In other words, I explained to the teachers and students that I was not there to evaluate their teaching technique or level, so it was unnecessary to worry about my presence during the observation or my questions during the interviews.

Thus, in summary, negotiating access required me to pass through three stages: Firstly, I obtained formal access through obtaining an authorised agreement with the Ministry of Education; secondly, I accessed and obtained the agreement of the executives and the permission of the school principals; thirdly, I contacted English teachers, inspectors and students, developing a good rapport with them in order to understand the context. The following diagram shows the ethical approval sequence process.
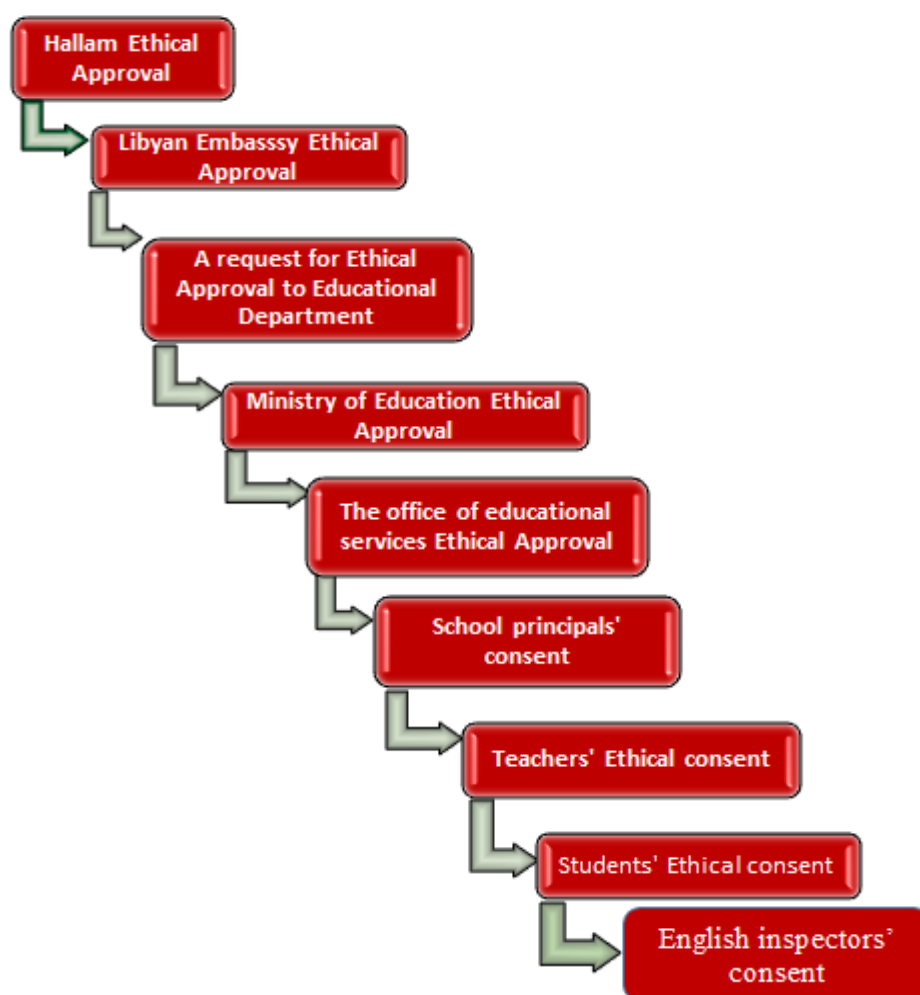
Figure 4-3.The stages for obtaining ethical approval and the participants' consent.

The advantage of this study is that it will contribute to knowledge, since it will add a literature review regarding CLT implementation within the Libyan context. It will address this issue from different perspectives, including those of the teachers, students

and English inspectors. Moreover, this study is conducted on the basis of different needs, such as the students' need to practise or use language and the teachers' training and continuing professional development needs if they are to overcome the difficulties associated with CLT implementation. Accordingly, the findings of this study might offer recommendations for different stakeholders in the Libyan context and this is the benefit of this study (Punch 2005). However, challenges and limitations are not excluded from any research study, as will be explained later in this chapter

4.7 The Pilot study

A pilot study is designed "to pre-test or try out a research instrument" (Baker (1994:182). To prevent the problems which may occur due to using untested instruments during the data collection, it was essential to test the research instruments by conducting a pilot study. As De Vaus (2013:54) points out, "problems may occur when collecting data using untested instruments, so researchers tend to test the instruments they use to forestall potential problems". In this study, the research instruments were pilot-tested in two stages. I agreed with both of my supervisors to trial an observation and stimulated-recall interview at my university in the UK. I conducted a classroom observation, followed by a stimulated-recall interview with my second supervisor in conjunction with the director of the study to evaluate and validate the appropriateness of the stimulated-recall interviews.

This pilot test was very useful, provided me with a valuable amount of feedback from my supervisors, and added a new experience to me as a researcher. Firstly, it showed me how best to behave in the classroom during the actual observations. For example, one of my supervisor's suggestions was to move freely around the class in order to record my field notes. Secondly, this experience enabled me to increase and develop my knowledge about how to use observation data, such as taking notes and using lesson transcripts. Thirdly, I learnt how important it is to use probing questions during interviews in order to gain more detailed information and maintain the continuity of the interview. Finally, some instructions were presented related to how to start and end interviews, and changes to the questions on the instruments were made.

Regarding conducting the pilot study in Libya, research instruments were piloted with the help of two English teachers, and the classroom observations were arranged, followed by stimulated-recall interviews and semi-structured interviews. The teachers have been teaching English for more than six years. After I had examined the classroom

observation methods in four separate lessons, this enabled me to understand the natural setting of the classrooms and the participants. For example, with regard to cultural habits, I was not allowed to video record the classes taught by certain female teachers, so I simply audio-recorded them instead. As McDonough and McDonough (2014:114) point out, "observation is concerned with understandings of natural settings and the representations of the meanings of the actors within that setting". This helped me to add and generate some questions regarding CLT implementation. This trial enhanced my skills in using audio and video recording equipment and I also gained an understanding of the classrooms which helped me to locate the video camera in an appropriate position for the classroom observations. With regard to the semi-structured interviews, suggestions were made about clarifying and rewording some of the questions. By conducting a pilot study, I was able to test the design of the research instruments (interview questions) and my approach to the observation technique. Additionally, it provided me with a whole picture about the context and the participants.

4.8 Procedure of the data collection

Several procedures were followed in order to collect the data, which differed according to each research method; namely, classroom observation, stimulated-recall interviews and semi-structured interviews. The data were collected in two subsequent stages. Classroom observation was used, followed by stimulated-recall interviews in the first stage of the data collection. The second stage involved conducting semi-structured interviews with all of the participants, including the teachers, students and inspectors.

The first stage was carried out with the purpose of investigating the implementation of CLT by examining and understanding the teachers' practices. Eight teachers were observed while teaching their classes. Each class lasted 45 minutes. The observation was conducted alongside the use of audio and video recordings. Due to the exploratory nature of this research and the use of unstructured observations, I was able to note down freely any relevant information about CLT, such as the use of pair and group work, the students' interaction and a description of the context.

Prior to the observation, I asked the teachers if I could introduce myself to the students, obtain their permission and explain my purpose in attending the class in order to avoid making them feel anxious. I sat at the back of the class to avoid being obtrusive. Four of the eight classes were video-recorded and the other four were audio-recorded. For cultural reasons, I was unable to video record the classes of certain female teachers.

Therefore, the majority of video recordings were related to the male teachers. Before each lesson began, the reason for the video recordings was explained orally (in both Arabic and English) to the students and permission was obtained from both the teachers and the students. Moreover, the camera was located in the corner of the classroom, which can be considered an unobtrusive procedure for using a camera in a classroom. The observation data helped me to obtain a detailed account of the teachers' practices regarding CLT principles.

When it came to the stimulated-recall interviews, the classroom environment provided an appropriate setting for investigating CLT implementation, utilizing stimulated-recall interviews as an innovative method to collect qualitative data. As explained above, after obtaining permission from the students, audio or video recordings were made during a class (with oral permission to do so). Eight teachers were observed teaching by using a video camera placed in the back corner of their classroom, and an audio recorder was clipped to the teachers' clothing. At the end of each lesson, the video and audio recordings of the classes were downloaded onto my laptop and labelled for replay with each observed participant teacher. Using various subsequent interviews can provide a nuanced understanding of the phenomenon under study (Charmaz and Belgrave 2001). Consequently, I conducted stimulated-recall interviews the day after each observed class, along with semi-structured interviews. This saved time, as it was hard to interview the same participant teacher twice and arrange another appointment. The interviews lasted between 30 and 55 minutes each.

The video recordings were made and the teachers were invited to watch and reflect on certain episodes drawn from them. The teachers were provided with opportunities to recall, comment on, justify and interpret their teaching practices. Similarly, with the audio-recordings, the teachers listened to particular episodes of their teaching, complemented by my field notes, I asked teachers to the comment on and offer a justification for certain aspects of their teaching practices; for example, I asked them to give the reasons for deciding to skip pair and group work activities.

Conducting a pilot study helped me to create some questions (Patton 2002). However, the use of probing questions and discussion of the topics during the stimulated-recall interviews was flexible, and so differed according to each teacher's experience and teaching practices (for example: 'Why did you decide to do that?', 'Can you describe anything that influences your teaching practices?, 'What is the alternative to doing this?', What were your thoughts or understanding when teaching this task?'; see

Appendix 16). The questions arose from my field notes as well as the video and audio recordings, whereby the teachers were asked to state the rationale behind their practices.

It is worth mentioning that stimulated-recall interviews helped me to stimulate the teachers to provide more responses about the influence of the contextual factors which affected their CLT practices. It was beneficial to elicit the teachers' interpretation of the lessons episodes and what informed their performance. The audio and video recordings were useful, because the data were readily available when I wished to review them, particularly during my analysis stage. In other words, I was able to return to a particular point by stopping and rewinding the audio or video recordings. The use of visual aids allowed me to preserve the details of my classroom observations for later review.

After stimulated-recall interviews, semi-structured interviews were conducted with all of the participants (20 teachers, ten students and three inspectors; see Appendices (17-18). The interviews were conducted in Arabic and then translated into English. In order to retain the validity of the meaning, I reviewed the translation together with a professional advisor. Although the interview questions were formulated to guide the interviews (see Appendices 15 and 17-18), some questions were developed and informed by the findings of the first stage of the data collection (the observations and stimulated-recall interviews). For example, the majority of the teachers claimed that the students do not have any motivation to learn English. Thus, more questions were developed to investigate the students' attitudes towards learning English, which revealed a huge difference between the teachers and students' views. Another area of concern was the teaching of listening and speaking skills, which prompted me to explore further the contextual situation factors and their influence on the teachers' practice and implementation of CLT principles. The finding showed that the main listening and speaking skills were not implemented in secondary schools as they were not determined as part of the exam. Thus, a particular question was assigned to the role of the exam and its impact.

I had tried to begin the interviews with an introduction that included a few reminders about my study, including my research purpose, identity and ethical issues. Then I asked the participants some background questions about their age, qualifications and experience. My intention was to start to build a rapport with the individuals and made them more comfortable during the conversation, as well as to gain an initial background about my participants.

The following step involved asking opening questions that were general questions, but still related to the study. Hennink et al. (2010) describe these questions as "broadly related to the key topics on the interview guide". Thus, the participants were asked their opinions about the teaching and learning of English and the curriculum. The purpose of this step was to maintain the diversity of questions and gain a general impression about CLT in the context (Patton 2002).

Next, I began to introduce the key questions that were the essential part of the interview, and had been carefully formulated to collect the fundamental data that addressed my research inquiry. During this stage, many probing questions were used to elicit extra information, particularly during the stimulated-recall interviews. Finally, the researcher used closing questions to end an interview. The participants were also informed of their right to have a copy of an interview transcript and asked if they had any questions, further suggestions or solutions to add. The flexible feature of semi-structured interviews allowed me to identify any problems which were raised by the participants and obtain an overview of the context.

4.9 Data analysis

Dornyei (2007:37) describes the main characteristic of qualitative research as an emergent research design. That means that "a study is kept open and fluid so that it can respond in a flexible way to new details and openings that may emerge during the process of investigation". This flexibility allowed me to illuminate different key issues regarding CLT implementation. I used the data as a guide to develop the analytical categories. In this regard, qualitative content analysis (QCA) was used, as it provided an appropriate and flexible method for analysing the text data of this research.

QCA is defined as "any qualitative data reduction and sense making effort that takes a volume of qualitative materials and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings" (Patton 2002:453). Unlike quantitative content analysis that relies on counting numbers to test a hypothesis QCA involves the negotiation of the semantic aspects underlying a text. In quantitative content analysis, a hypothesis is tested deductively. Thus, it seeks to address questions that are developed from previous theories. By contrast, the categories of QCA are derived inductively from the raw data. Since my data were obtained from a natural context using interviews with probes and video- and audio-recorded classroom observation, a qualitative inductive design was employed to analyse the data.

Unlike the quantitative approach, the analysis of qualitative data can be characterised as having a zigzag or nonlinear design (Dörnyei 2007). In other words, it is an iterative process, in which there is no definite time to begin. Similarly, the initial analysis of my data started at the same time as the data collection; for example, my involvement in the field as well as interaction with the different participants revealed hidden aspects about the practice of CLT implementation, such as the fact that its implementation in the government schools and private centre differed. The data analysis process will now be described.

4.9.1 Data analysis process

As mentioned above, I used qualitative analysis to analyse the findings of the non-participant observations, stimulated-recall interviews and semi-structured interviews. The first step in preparing the data was to achieve immersion and a sense of the whole data, so I started by listening to all of the interviews and classroom observations, and reading my field notes. By frequently stopping and listening to the whole data, I was able to write my notes and gain a general overview; for example, I could contrast the opinions and differences regarding CLT implementation. Then, I started translating and transcribing all of my data. In order to retain the meaning, the translation was reviewed by a native speaker at Sheffield Hallam University to validate the appropriateness of the translation. When the translation and transcription process were completed, I read the data repeatedly to obtain an overall sense of it. Although the process of translation and transcription, particularly the former, took me a very long time, as Dornyei (2007:246) indicates "it is a time consuming particularly if the text also needs to be translated", it made me aware of the small details about my data and able to identify the recurring categories.

After dividing the data into three files (namely, teachers, students and inspectors), I started with the observation data as the first stage of the data collection. The classroom observations were complemented by detailed field notes. I organised the observation data by transferring all of the video- and audio-recordings to my PC and labelling each lesson. I transcribed all of the video- and audio-recorded lessons and organised the field notes. Writing and reading through the field notes helped me to create some codes and linked them to the episodes of recorded lessons, highlighting some of the teaching practices of the teachers discussed in the stimulated-recall interviews.

Table 4.2 presents an example of my field notes, in which some teachers' practices regarding CLT principles and interactions with their students during class are highlighted.

Field notes taken 25th May, 2015. Adam's classroom observation
The teacher read the page number (42) of the lesson. Then, he read the title of the lessons (Great failure). Lesson 1 and 2: Reading: reading to retell the information. ==Adam asked the students to move to the next page (43) before page (42)==. As the teacher starts reading the main text==, the students translate every single world into Arabic. Some students seem to have prepared the translation of the lesson beforehand==. Adam asks the students if it is clear. Students (yes). ==Too many students in the class. The large number of the students causes it to be very noisy== in the class, to the extent that, if some students translate the text after the teacher, other students cannot hear and understand   🟩 Teaching practices   🟨 Translation   🟥 Large class size (Contextual factors)

Table 4-2 Field notes sample

After preparing and organising my data, I began coding them by reading them line by line to identify the codes. Coding involves analytical thinking, leading a researcher to the evidence for the themes or categories from the data (Rossman and Rallis 2011). I started the analysis with observational data. In order to obtain a general background regarding what happened during the class, I listened to all of the audio-recordings, and watched all of the video-recordings several times, using the replay button. By watching all of the episodes, I identified the different teachers' practices of CLT principles and noted down the categories. While my attention was on the teachers' practices in a class, I also noted down some interpretations of their engagement with the students and other actions during the class. Then, I transcribed the lessons, during which I wrote explanations, labels, and notes about the teachers' practices. Moreover, I was able to identify the relationship between the emergent categories in the observation data and interviews. Next, I created a new file in order to import all of the transcribed episodes and started coding the data related to the teachers' practices.

Since "the process of qualitative inquiry is an interweaving of inductive and deductive thinking" (Rossman and Rallis 2011:269), I commenced with a deductive coding approach, as some categories were pre-assigned in the literature. However, new categories emerged and were identified, particularly the practices linked to CLT implementation, as shown in Table 4.3. This helped me to compare the teachers'

knowledge and understandings of the CLT curriculum's principles with their classrooms practices as well as the impact of the contextual factors on the teachers' CLT implementation. Finally, bearing in mind my research questions, I grouped and relabelled the codes under the main categories. My in-depth knowledge of my data helped me to compare the teachers' practices in class with their knowledge and perceptions of CLT. These categories emerged from how the majority of the teachers' practices appeared to place importance on the exam, which meant that they prioritised grammar rules over communicative teaching. The following table presents the main categories from which the sub-categories were developed to help to explain the main categories.

Teachers' practices and CLT implementation
1. Teachers' practices and the content of the curriculum
The majority of teachers' practices contrasted with the curriculum
2. Adopting the traditional ways of teaching
Teacher- centred
GTM
3. The use of the L1 (Arabic) in the classroom
Translation; Students' ability
■ Main Categories
■ Subcategories

Table 4-3 The main categories and sub-categories of the observation

After completing the observation data analysis, I started analysing the semi-structured and stimulated-recall interviews. During the process of translating and transcribing the data, I became more familiar with the data. I typed all of the transcripts into Word documents and read, line by line, through all of the transcripts of the teachers, students and inspectors to identify the categories, as presented in 4.4. My reading of the whole data enabled me to capture and highlight the different experiences and opinions of the participants. After assigning a pseudonym to each transcript, I wrote down my initial thoughts, notes and memos about certain issues, which emerged from the responses of the participants, and then I commenced the coding, using different colours to highlight and label the main words and phrases. The following is an example of my initial coding.

The first problem is that the principles of the curriculum are incompatible with the mentality and level of the Libyan students. The curriculum is difficult without having

qualified teachers. The weakness of teachers is that, they graduated from university with grammar rules and materials of which there are few of them in the curriculum. The most difficult issue is the explanation or conveying the information to students. Another problem is class size. There is a large number approximately 45 students in each a class, and the use of English language within 35 or 45 minutes is really difficult. I am sure that there is no a teacher in Libya who can use CLT in this limited time

☐ The level of the students

■ Lack and weakness of teachers

■ Lack of consistency between what the teachers learnt at university and the curriculum

■ Large class size

■ Time restriction

Table 4-4 A sample of the initial coding of the interview data

Although it is worth mentioning that qualitative software programs are a helpful tool when analysing data, I analysed the data manually, which helped me to gain an intimate knowledge of them. As Rossman and Rallis (2011:284) argue, "Since analysis and interpretation require insight, judgment, and creativity, no software can substitute for human mind". The next step of the coding was to make a list of all of the discussed topics and identify one column for each data transcript. After I completed this stage for all data documents, I highlighted similar topics using the same colour; for example, all of the data linked to the teachers' factors, such as a lack of teachers' knowledge of teaching methods, and English proficiency, were highlighted in red. The following table displays this stage of the coding

The communicative curriculum does not match the level of the students	45 minutes are not enough to teach in a communicative way. Difficult to follow the curriculum's plan because of the time constraint	Students' weak level and background in English
Teachers' weak levels in English cause difficulty in teaching the curriculum.	Lack of language labs does not help teaching different communicative activities in the curriculum. Lack of teaching aids and technological equipment.	There is no match between what the teachers learn at university and the teaching curriculum. Teachers find it difficult to explain some content of the curriculum

A contrast between what the teachers are taught at university and teaching the curriculum. There is no link between the teaching at university and the curriculum	The weak level of the students hinders CLT implementation	A lack of training is considered a problem, particularly for new graduated teachers.

▢ Students' level

▢ Teachers' level

▢ Time limitations

▢ Lack of consistency between the school and university curricula

▢ Lack of teachers' training

▢ Lack of teaching aids

Table 4-5 The coding of similar topics from different interviews

When I clustered together the similar topics, I made a table and identified each main theme in one column, followed by the sub-categories related to the primary categories in the next column. Table 4-6 presents the main primary categories and their relationship to the sub-categories.

Primary categories	Sub-categories related to the primary categories
1- The weak level of the English language proficiency of the teachers	- The majority of the teachers appear unable to implement speaking activities and conversation tasks - This weak level of the teachers' English proficiency leads to the neglect of teaching speaking skills as they are proposed in the curriculum - A lack of English oral practices for both teachers and students
2- Lack of teachers' knowledge about the language, curriculum and pedagogical knowledge	- Teachers cannot evaluate and assess their students either writing and speaking skills - Skip and omit teaching two of the important language skills: speaking and writing

Table 4-6 Primary and sub-categories derived from the participant interviews

The qualitative analysis allowed me to read the gathered data in greater depth and identify the differences between the data from the interviews, classrooms observations and field notes and between the different participants' responses themselves; for

example, the data revealed a contrast between the teachers and students' opinions regarding the latter's attitudes towards English and also between the teachers and English inspectors' views regarding the latter's role. Thus, the data were analysed using a sequential and iterative process of moving forth and back throughout the data to produce the key categories and the sub-categories.

4.10 Criteria for trustworthiness in qualitative research

The terms "validity" and "reliability" were originally embedded in quantitative research that adopts a positivist perspective. Positivists view knowledge in terms of logical and scientific stances. However, this view of knowledge has been criticised when applied to the validity and reliability of qualitative research (Shenton 2004). Qualitative research utilises a naturalistic approach. As Patton (2002) states, the aim of qualitative research is to seek an understanding of a social phenomenon in its natural context. Strauss and Corbin (1990:17) also defined qualitative research as "any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification".

So far, many qualitative researchers have argued that the use of the terms "validity" and "reliability" is not applicable to qualitative research criteria. At the same time, they consider alternatives or equal terms that can be applicable to the qualitative approach (Davies and Dodd 2002, Glaser and Strauss 1999, Lincoln and Guba 1985, Seale 1999). They suggest terms such as "applicability", "truth", "credibility", "consistency", "value" and "dependability" (Brink 1993, Cohen, et al. 2011). Seale (1999) argues for the need to replace the terms "validity" and "reliability" in order to reveal and represent qualitative conceptions. In this vein, (Lincoln and Guba 1985) propose trustworthiness as a basic concept for evaluating the worth of qualitative research outside the criteria of quantitative research. Given (2008:895) defines trustworthiness "as the ways in which qualitative researchers ensure that, credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability are evident in their research". Thus, four criteria should be considered under the umbrella of trustworthiness.

4.10.1 Credibility

Credibility is the consistency between what the participants said and how the data are interpreted. In other words, credibility can be measured through an accurate interpretation of the data by presenting the realities created by the participants. Given (2008:138) defines credibility as "the methodological procedures and sources used to

establish a high level of harmony between the participants' expressions and the researcher's interpretations". To ensure the credibility of research, five procedures should be followed, as suggested by Jensen (2008, cited in Given 2008): time, triangulation, angles, member checking, and colleagues. These procedures were followed in this research, as outlined below.

4.10.1.1 Time

In the context of this study, I spent three months in the field to conduct the research. This time enabled me to obtain a nuanced understanding of the context and the participants of the study. During the first stage, I was able to introduce myself to different teachers; for example, one teacher invited me to attend her class in front of a school principal. Additionally, in one of the eight schools, I met an old friend who is currently an English teacher there, through whom I was introduced to other English teachers. She was also able to locate other teachers in the other schools. Thus, I was regarded as a trustworthy person. Additionally, this encouraged the participants to express and give their responses freely. However, in the other schools, I asked the school principal for support, and the majority of them helped and introduced me to the teachers. On many occasions, I met and talked to the participants about teaching English; for example, in the staff room during their free time and in the time before the actual interviews. These conversations enabled me to become closer to them and explore the different realities regarding CLT implementation. Prior to the actual process of the data collection, I piloted the observation instrument for a fortnight with two teachers which helped me to allay any concerns they might have had. This helped me to understand the social context and become better oriented to the situation.

4.10.1.2 Triangulation

Different research methods were used in this study, including observation with field notes, stimulated-recall interviews and semi-structured interviews. I used multiple techniques to capture the actual reality in different ways, which allowed me to understand the phenomenon in greater depth.

4.10.1.3 Angles

Jensen (2008, quoted in Given 2008:139) describes triangulation as a process that makes it possible to "look at the data from different perspectives and viewpoints to get a holistic picture of the environment". The credibility of the current study was enhanced by including all of the concerned parties (teachers, students and inspectors). This

allowed me to discuss the topic from different perspectives and obtain more complete information.

4.10.1.4 Member checking

Regarding member checking, all of the interviews were transcribed and translated into English. As explained above, I reviewed all of the transcripts with a professional advisor to maintain and check the meaning of both versions. Member checking can be formal or informal (Lincoln and Guba 1985). In this study and during the fieldwork, I carried out immediate, informal member checking by inviting some of the participants to check their responses during the interviews and identify any misunderstandings. This enabled me to verify the validity of the data and also gave the participants an opportunity to ensure that the data matched their responses and perceptions regarding the phenomenon under study.

4.10.1.5 Colleague technique

With regard to this technique, I attended many sessions to discuss the process of the data analysis with friends who are currently conducting their analyses as well as with those who have already completed their doctoral research. Additionally, constructive critical feedback was received from my supervisors for almost 16 months. All of these methodological procedures helped me to interpret and see the data from different holistic points of view.

4.10.2 Confirmability

To establish the confirmability of qualitative research, two main goals should be verified:

Firstly "to understand a phenomenon from the perspective of the research participants"; and secondly "to understand the meanings people give to their experiences" (Given 2008:112). It is concerned with providing evidence which shows that the data analysis and findings are rooted in and reflective of the participants' perceptions. In this study, I sought to understand the phenomenon of the study by becoming involved in and providing "live" natural data from the context of the study. I attempted to provide a clear picture of the different stages of the data collection and analysis, presenting examples of the coding of the data, using different methods.

4.10.3 Dependability

According to Given (2008), dependability entails a researcher providing sufficient and relevant methodological information in a way that enables other researchers to replicate the study. This technique was addressed in this study by providing detailed, adequate descriptions of both the theoretical and practical procedures of the research design together with the methods and stages of the data collection, preparation and analysis.

4.10.4 Transferability

In qualitative research, transferability is equivalent to external validity, or generalisability in quantitative research. Merriam (1995:57) defines this as, "The extent to which the findings of a study can be applied to other situations". Since qualitative research is not generalisable, and its findings are specific to particular contexts, populations and individuals, it is impossible to prove that findings are applicable to other contexts. Establishing the techniques of transferability is different for each research project. Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that thick description is a technique that enables a qualitative researcher to provide a robust, elaborate account of a context and data collection.

In this research, I have provided a thorough description of the whole context and a full account of the geographical, social, religious, cultural and educational background of the context (see chapter 2). Accordingly, by making the context of this research clear and detailed to the reader, others in a similar context may be able to derive a deeper understanding about their own contexts as a result of reading the findings of this research.

4.11 Challenges of the fieldwork

Before and while conducting my fieldwork, I encountered the following challenges

- The fighting and war in my country led to the postponement of the process of data collection several times and the closure of schools, which let me to doubt whether I would be able to complete my data process. Additionally, the situation meant that it was unsafe to move freely between different cities and sometimes within the same city itself.
- Although I obtained access to the schools from all of the school principals, I was viewed as a stranger by some teachers so I had to explain each time the purpose of my visit and introduce myself to the teachers and administrative staff. For example, on one occasion, at the beginning of my visit to School (A), one of my friends (an English

teacher) told me that some teachers had asked her about me and if I had been sent from the Ministry of the Education in the city as an English inspector.

- At times, it was difficult to meet the teachers, and sometimes I had to wait for them to come to the school. Some teachers came into the schools only to teach their classes, and left as soon as they ended. Additionally, it was difficult to find a quiet place or empty offices to conduct the interviews in some of the schools.

Despite these challenges, particularly the fighting, which caused me to enter the field later than planned, I was able to collect detailed data and capture a clear picture of the context and phenomenon of the study.

4.11.1 Limitations of the research instruments

Teachers are not accustomed to being observed in the current context. Thus, my observation of the teachers may have influenced their teaching practices in the classroom. However, because of my concern regarding this point, I attempted to talk to and be open with all of the teachers, explaining my research to them and helping them to understand the purpose of my presence in the class. Additionally, my presence in the schools daily from 8:00am until midday made me familiar with the majority of the teachers. For example, one teacher told me during the stimulated-recall interview: "In fact, this is my way and I did not change anything and I preferred to be natural". The teachers' admissions that they were following their usual practices were also reflected during the observations. I also engaged in multiple sources of data collection, starting from observation followed by stimulated-recall interviews and semi-structured interviews, which helped me to obtain an overview of the situation. Denzin states (1970:315):

> By combining multiple observers, theories, methods, and data sources, researchers can hope to overcome the intrinsic bias that comes from single-methods, single-observer, and single-theory studies.

Given the cultural and social conventions of the context of this study, employing stimulated-recall interviews with video recordings was unacceptable to some of the female teachers, so audio-recording was used instead of video recording.

Conducting semi-structured interviews was not an easy task. Sometimes it was difficult to find a quiet area to hold the interview; however, to overcome this problem, I arranged to meet for the interview outside the school; for example, I interviewed one inspector in my flat. Patton advises (2002): "Choose a place for interview that is quiet and free from interruption". Therefore, I was careful to choose a suitable place in which to interview

all of the participants. They were also given the option to be interviewed in the language of their choice (Arabic/English) to enable them to state their answers more fluently.

4.12 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided a detailed description of the methodology applied in this study, starting with the philosophical underpinning of this study. The research methodology and rationale, followed by a detailed account of the data collection methods, have been presented. Then, I proceeded to outline the research context, including the research site and participants. Next, detailed clarifications of the ethical considerations, the pilot study, the procedure for the data collection, and the data analysis process were provided. Moreover, the issues of trustworthiness that are associated with qualitative research and how these are addressed in this study are discussed. The chapter ended by listing the challenges and limitations faced during this research. The presentation of the findings of this research will follow, in which the findings are integrated with the discussion in the three following chapters (5-7). The findings are presented according to the sequence of the research questions. Then, the research is concluded in the final chapter (8).

Chapter 5 The teachers' understanding and perceptions of CLT and its implementation

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present the meaning of CLT and its implementation based on my data collection. To undertake this, I utilise a range of research tools, including observation, stimulated-recall interviews and semi-structured interviews. Various categories emerged during the analysis stage. These categories are a combination of different related factors which are mutually related; namely, they depend on each other.

I present the findings related to the first research questions by exploring the teachers' understandings and perceptions of CLT and its implementation. Because one of the research findings was that the conceptual ambiguity of CLT affects CLT implementation, this analysis of the findings is preceded by a review of the conceptual factors affiliated to CLT implementation, as discussed in the literature.

5.2 Conceptual factors

Conceptual factors are one of the persistent constraints in CLT implementation; there exist a large number of overlapping interpretations of CLT in the literature, which emphasises different characteristics. Differing conceptualisations of CLT arise because this approach is built on many assumptions; for example, one widely-held assumption underpinning CLT is that the purpose of learning L2 is for communication (Mangubhai et al. 2007). Another assumption is that CLT is primarily about the teacher's role as a "facilitator, who creates a classroom climate conducive to language learning" (Richards 2005:23)

5.2.1 The conceptual ambiguity of CLT

CLT can be characterised as an embracing approach that involves many features of language teaching. In other words, it entails different conceptual emphases of language teaching. Harmer (2003:289) describes it as an approach that "has always meant a multitude of different things to different people". These features focus on teaching a language for its communicative functions, reflecting the authentic use of a language, using a target language as a medium of communication and creating a secure atmosphere with a tolerance to errors in order to strengthen the motivation and confidence of learners (Taylor 1983).

Different stances with regard to CLT's theoretical underpinnings are to be found among the many researchers addressing this approach; for example, CLT was first introduced as an approach that is centred on a theory of language communication that seeks to enhance learners' competence (Richards and Rodgers 2014). It has also been argued that the underlying principle of CLT is to shift classroom agency away from the didactic role of teacher and focus on the activities of the learners. Savignon (2002) claimed that, in CLT, learners are the focus of the learning. In 1980, Canale and Swain presented CLT as communicative competence which was classified into four types; namely, the grammatical, the sociolinguistic, the discursive, and the strategic, as explained in (3.2). Larsen-Freeman (1986) considers the communicative intent as a paramount distinctive feature of CLT. Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) explained that CLT advocates the use of content-meaningful-based instruction rather than sentence-oriented instruction.

Despite the fact that the presence of CLT has grown over four decades, it is clear that CLT is characterised by different dimensions and understanding. As Li (1998:678) states, "It has no monolithic identity". This characteristic can be seen in the teachers' responses to the first research question.

Although the participants were clearly confident about the aim of CLT, they remained uncertain about the exact meaning of this approach. A range of views have been expressed about CLT because of its conceptual ambiguity. One participant maintained that it was a natural process that differs from the process of learning a language and thus this is challenging to implement in a school context with its inherent time constraints and also in a foreign English environment where there is a lack of natural communication in English.

Conceptual ambiguity has led teachers to become confused about CLT and its adoption (Duquette 1995, Li 1998). Another interpretation of CLT amongst the participants that is aligned with the theoretical principles of CLT is based on a group work approach. Another perception that emerged from the teachers' responses was that it was as much considered a tool of classroom management as a means of increasing motivation and interest, as it was a mode of teaching the curriculum. Thus, there is no fixed agreement within the participants' views in the data.

Although the teachers display various understanding and perceptions of CLT, they are all rooted in the same principles of communication and autonomy that underpin CLT. In

other words, there is an overlap between these aspects; for example, cooperation and participation are a result of engaging students in group work activity.

The following presentation of the data is arranged according to the research questions; for example, the first research question: "How do the teachers understand and perceptive the communicative approach?" generated responses that testify to the breadth of the interpretation of CLT.

5.3 Teachers' understanding and perceptions of CLT

One of the research aspects regarding the implementation of CLT is to examine the teachers' understanding of CLT. Thus, based on the interviews, I explored the teachers' responses about CLT with an open mind. This entailed an analysis of the teachers' understanding of CLT without being influenced by the pre-conceived notions or ideas that have been associated with this approach.

To avoid the influence of the researcher's subjective point of view, an analysis was conducted to describe the teachers' understanding of this approach without making judgments alongside the researcher's previous understanding of CLT. However, my previous experience and awareness of this approach will help me to distinguish the different teachers' perspectives of CLT. Thus, the analysis was based on examining the raw data about the teachers' understanding and the researcher's inferences.

How different teachers understood CLT was elicited from numerous readings of and listening to the interviews. The responses to the first research question: "How do the teachers understand and perceive the communicative approach?" can be divided into categories that reflect the teachers' understanding and perceptions of CLT. The notions of understanding and perception are distinguished here from understanding to denote knowledge about a subject, situation or about how something works, while perception is regarded as a belief or opinion, often held by people and based on how things seem (these are the Cambridge Dictionary definitions).

Although it is difficult to draw a clear distinction between these two terms, since the boundaries between them are blurred, the responses have been grouped according to 'understanding' (section 5.3.1) and 'perceptions' (section 5.3.2) in order to make the findings clearer. This distinction highlighted the teachers' understanding of CLT and their opinions about its value and implementation, as emerged from the data. The

following table differentiates between the teachers' understanding and perceptions of CLT implementation.

	Teachers' understanding of CLT	Teachers' perceptions of CLT implementation
1.	**CLT** is an approach emphasising communication	Different techniques for dealing with students
2.	**CLT** is a learner- centred approach	A way of raising motivation and interest
3.	**CLT involves** • Cooperation and participation • Group work • Active learning	Its success depends on the students' level and background
4.	The teacher has a minor role	It depends on the teachers' and students' ability
5.	It is an approach of language acquisition	It is a difficult approach to implement due to the following challenges: Students' level, teachers and students' ability, time constraints, lack of training, noise.
6.	It is a communication process between the teachers, students and parents.	

Table 5-1Teachers' understanding and perceptions of CLT

The above table illustrates the participants' responses, divided according to their understanding and perceptions of CLT. The following is a detailed presentation of their responses.

5.3.1 Teachers' understanding of CLT

5.3.1.1 CLT is an approach emphasising communication

Although the majority of the teachers and English inspectors understood and demonstrated a positive attitude towards CLT as a way to improve students' English proficiency, it appears that some of the participants did not have a clear, firm conception of CLT, possibly due to the short amount of time allocated to it during teacher training. For the majority, the concept of CLT is related to communication between teachers and

students, and conversations (speaking skills). It is noteworthy that, while I was questioning them, they clung to the word 'communication', assuming that CLT was implemented by involving students in active participation; for example, eight teachers highlighted the purpose of CLT as being communication. The following is an extract from Salma's interview. She presents the concept of CLT from different angles, including communication and learner independence:

It helps a teacher and students to communicate. It creates communication inside the classroom... When you apply CLT, you feel that you are not teaching a curriculum and that it can be finished... It helps students to acquire a language. When students learn in a communicative way, they won't forget what they have learnt during the lesson and they will become more self-sufficient. (Interview no.2 with Salma)

Salma interpreted CLT as an approach that achieves interaction by generating communication between teachers and students. In her view, the implementation of CLT is not simply restricted and applicable to the school curriculum. She believes that teaching students in a communicative way will help them to learn English and become more independent.

It is evident that, overall, the teachers' understanding of CLT lies within the field of communication in general, but there was confusion with regard to the exact definition of CLT. It was noticed that some participants were hesitant to reply to my inquiry about their understanding of CLT so sometimes I gave examples to clarify the picture.

The understanding of CLT as an approach centred on communication, a category into which many of the interviewed teachers' responses fell, is generally supported in the literature (Ahmad and Rao 2013, Canale 1983, Ellis and Shintani 2013, Howatt and Widdowson 2004, Richards 2005, Savignon 1972, Shihiba 2011, Thompson 1996); for example, Thompson (1996) argues that the general conception of CLT is that it places emphasis on conveying meaning through communication. This was also referred to by Shihiba (2011), who used a questionnaire followed by interviews to investigate Libyans EFL teachers' conceptions of learner-centred approaches. His results showed that 17 teachers understood CLT to be an approach that promotes communication.

5.3.1.2 It is a learner- centred approach

Another key way in which the teachers conceptualized CLT was as a learner-centred approach in which students are required to perform tasks with help and guidance from a teacher. The following is one teacher's understanding of CLT. During his description of the difference between the old and new curricula, he stated:

I consider CLT as an approach that puts students at the heart of the learning process. It is a self-study approach. In this approach, students rather than the teacher are required to make the most effort. The teacher's role is to give students the opportunity to present their skills in the classroom (interview no.9 with Osama)

Osama believes that CLT should enable students to experience the learning process and engage in different learning activities in class. He emphasised that teachers should give students the opportunity to develop their talents. In fact, this point reminded me of a student who stressed the same point, when she commented that:

I would like to talk about the problem of English language. Teachers do not give you a forum in which to talk in English whether you understand or do not understand. (Interview no.5 with Moda)

Moda expressed her concern and dissatisfaction regarding how English was taught in the classroom, where students lack an opportunity to use English as a language and the emphasis is on English as a subject being examined.

This pedagogical orientation that characterises CLT as a learner-centred approach is also pointed out by different researchers (Larsen-Freeman 2000, Littlewood 2007, Memari 2013, Richards and Rodgers 2001, Schiro 2008); for example, Memari (2013) stated that this feature of learner centrality distinguishes CLT from other teaching methods.

This trait of learner-centeredness seems to be difficult to achieve in many foreign educational contexts, where teachers still play the key role (Elabbar 2011, Hu 2002, Orafi and Borg 2009, Prapaisit and Hardison 2008); for example, Elabber (2011) investigates the influences on Libyans English teachers' choice of teaching approach in language classrooms at Benghazi University. Due to the educational circumstances of teaching at Benghazi University, such as unexpected changes to the curricula without previous notification, and to situations which lead to the postponement or interruption of English teaching, the teachers can be divided into two generations, the old and new

generations (OGTs &NGTs) (Latiwish, 2003 cited in Elabber 2011). As Latiwish (2003:25, cited in Elabber 2011) notes, "teachers who have been teaching at university for more than 18 years could be considered as the old generation teachers". The majority of those teachers follow their own teaching methods and some of them are still working according to their own teacher-centred system which is oriented towards generating good student exam results. Additionally, Elabber (2011:54) points out, "This way of teaching reflects a belief of how teaching and learning should be, as their beliefs and perspectives would not have changed or developed".

5.3.1.3 CLT involves cooperation and participation, group work and active learning

The teachers' responses revealed three categories that overlapped: cooperation and participation, group work and active learning; for example, two teachers understood CLT as an approach marked by cooperation and participation between teachers and students as well as being an approach that helps to improve the process of teaching. Furthermore, the teachers believed that the process of cooperation between students fosters an atmosphere for learning since it is important to encourage the students to work cooperatively as this makes them more interested and it is enjoyable to learn the language in this way. The following is one participant's understanding of this approach:

CLT creates cooperation and participation between the two (teacher and students). It improves the teaching process. It renews the ways of learning a language. (Interview no12 with Hanan)

Similarly, when Salah conceptualised the communicative approach, he pointed out the spirit of the cooperation that is generated among the students:

Trust and, believe me, CLT is an approach that makes students feel that they are in a different atmosphere when learning English, because the cooperation and participation between the students will support them to develop and share their ideas with others; for example, when I get the students to talk to each other in pairs, they feel differently and there is a different atmosphere when they talk in English. (Interview no.7 with Salah)

The teachers' understanding of CLT as a method which encourages cooperation and participation is revealed in many research studies (Basta 2011, Canale and Swain 1980, Savignon 1991, Sutiah 2011); for example, Basta (2011) argues that one of the most positive effects of CLT is that it enables learners to practise a language through dynamic

cooperation. Savignon (1991:261) also stressed that CLT underpins the students' communicative competence through the "collaborative nature of negotiating meaning or making meaning".

Another teacher's understanding which may fall under the same category is that CLT involves group work and an active learning approach; for example, one teacher defined CLT as a way of dividing students into groups. She understands CLT as a different technique of teaching which encourages learning in groups. She believes that CLT promotes active learning in class, as students can work and perform different activities in groups. The following is her understanding of CLT:

My understanding of CLT is that it is a way of dividing the students into groups. The maximum is to divide the students into three groups...It is a method of active learning in class when a teacher makes students work in groups. This technique will increase the students' motivation to learn English. I would like to add another point: that this technique is not just limited to English. Group work can also be deployed in other subjects, such as Maths. (Interview no.16 with Iman)

Iman's understanding of CLT stressed different points; CLT involves working in groups, which consequently increases the learners' motivation. She believes that CLT promotes active learning in the classroom, because students can work and perform different activities in groups, which creates a spirit of cooperation among them.

Different researchers have emphasised the importance of group work activities that maximise the extent of using a language during CLT (Brown 2007, Larsen-Freeman 2000, Richards 2005, Sutiah 2011). As Olsen and Kagan (1992: 8 cited in Basta 2011) argue:

> A group learning activity is organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is responsible for his own learning, and is motivated to enhance the learning of others.

CLT was interpreted as a group work activity, which is one of the CLT techniques that promotes communication. According to Thompson (1996:12), both "pair work and group work are far more flexible and useful techniques".

5.3.1.4 The teacher's minor role

This category was elicited from two teachers who defined this approach based on their teaching experience. After applying CLT over the last two years, they believe that it is an approach to teaching that has changed their role in the classroom. They believe that CLT is a kind of active learning that offers students more opportunities to practise English as well as making them take the responsibility for making considerable efforts in the class. The following is another example of Adam's understanding of CLT:

It is a way of changing the outdated roles of both teachers and students. In CLT, a teacher will play a minor role in the classroom…The teacher is regarded as a clarification tool. Students are the agents who control the situation in the class. They are required to do all the tasks in order to enable them to practise English. Thus, their English proficiency will improve. (Interview no.1 with Adam)

Adam showed that he was very impressed by using CLT. He had used CLT as a method of teaching for three years. He described it as an unimaginable manner of teaching; however, it seems that there remains a lack of the understanding of CLT, as he held the general belief that the students are the main actors in the classroom, without taking into consideration that teachers should also involve the students in different communication activities and act as a co-communicator. Consequently, part of a teacher's role and task is to develop and build the students' capability (Larsen-Freeman 2000).

As shown above, CLT was understood by a number of teachers to be a learner-centred approach, with teachers' playing a minor role inside classrooms. The participants regarded their role as that of co-communicator. There was consensus about this category in the literature as being one of the CLT principles (Brown 1994, Chang 2011a, Larsen-Freeman 2000); for example, Chang (2011a:20) stated that the teacher's role is that of "analyst, counsellor, and group process manager".

5.3.1.5 Language acquisition and language learning

Another teacher reflects on his understanding of CLT in terms of the distinction between language acquisition and language learning. When Khalid was asked about his understanding of CLT, he linked the notion of CLT to a subconscious process of communication. He argued that the implementation of this approach entails learners engaging in a sort of natural communication, as if they were interacting with native speakers of English. He pointed out that there are obstacles to implementing CLT, as

CLT for him is a process of acquiring a language that needs to be implemented in a certain context. The following is his interpretation of CLT:

The problem is between teaching a language and language acquisition in class. What is the difference between them and what is better for me and my students? Teaching English with time management in class or the communicative approach? How can I use CLT in class when we have just 45 minutes to speak English in class and, when I leave the classroom, the whole environment speaks with me in Arabic; for example, (Marhaba Khalid, Keef Halak) (Hello Khalid, How are you Khalid?) Arabic, Arabic, no this is a problem for me and my students, but to compensate for this effect, I use a presentation strategy in the class. The presentation is very important because it gives students an opportunity to study English. (Interview no.15 with Khalid)

Khalid's understanding of CLT involves the creation of a natural context for the process of acquiring a language. In his view, teaching a language should be built inductively and on the theory of language use. Thus, the function of a language is for communication that raises the learners' ability or competence. Khalid's interpretation of CLT suggests that learning English at secondary school is artificial or technical, as it focuses on producing knowledge that does not match the principles of CLT. Hence, Khalid interprets CLT as an approach that entails a process of natural negotiation of the meaning, similar to first language acquisition.

5.3.1.6 Communication process between the teachers, students and parents

In order to avoid confusing the teachers, I did not use the common abbreviation 'CLT', but instead the used the full term, "communicative language teaching", although even this was not sufficiently clear to some of the participants. The following is another teacher's interpretation of CLT, where it is viewed as a whole process of follow-up between the teachers, students and parents:

When there is communication between me and my students as well as the parents, it will have a clear impact on the students' level but, unfortunately, there are few parents who are interested in keeping up with what their children are learning. (Interview no.4 with Mohammed)

It is evident that Mohammed had misunderstood the term 'CLT', assuming that communication meant the follow-up process between parents and teachers. Consequently, I explained the meaning of this approach by presenting some examples

and activities that are related to the principles of CLT to clarify matters during the remainder of our interview.

The above subheadings for the notion of 'CLT' offer a comprehensive overview of the teachers' understanding of this approach. However, some of the participants' understanding of CLT represents its actual principles, such as the learner-centred approach and group work. It can be seen that CLT is an umbrella term under which mutual categories are contained. There are further categories that fall under the teachers' perceptions of this approach. The following section will explain these perceptions by focusing on the views and beliefs about CLT.

5.3.2 Teachers' perceptions of CLT

The teachers displayed different evaluative responses to CLT. On the one hand, some of them viewed it as a beneficial approach that offered a different way to deal with students as well as to manage a class. Additionally, they felt that it served the learners' communication needs. Accordingly, some view it as a way to increase learner motivation. On the other hand, other participants feel that the implementation of CLT in the classroom is impractical because a number of aspects pose challenges. For example, the students' English language level and background in English can present a barrier. The teachers' perceptions of CLT are examined in the following.

5.3.2.1 Different techniques for dealing with students

One teacher, Sally, told me that she had studied CLT at the Academy of Graduate Studies. She also stated that it was one of the devices that had benefited her teaching practice. When she started teaching, she made great efforts with few results until CLT helped her, as she found that she was a "weak" teacher initially, since she could not handle the students very well.

It is an approach that helps me in many facets of my teaching. It helps me to deal with students, how to divide a class composed of a large number of students into groups, how to prepare myself for teaching and how to teach the lesson. Although I have a big class, CLT offers me strategies for dealing with different students' levels. (Interview no.10 with Sally)

As Sally stated, CLT helped her to find an appropriate technique for teaching her class. She studied CLT as a subject and found it a valuable method for dealing with the

different levels of ability within her class as well as enabling her to manage large classes.

5.3.2.2 Motivation and interest

Other teachers view CLT as a way to increase the students' interest and motivation regarding English. They feel that, by giving students an opportunity to practise English using CLT activities, the students' interest and motivation increase, and consequently their attitudes towards English may change; for example, one teacher commented:

I am sure that (the students') interest and motivation increases because they are practising a different language from that of their environment. (Interview no.7 with Salah)

Salah's comment reminded me of the first time I practised speaking English; I felt very happy because I was speaking in a different language. Because of the importance of practice, particularly in language learning, it can be argued that the practical side of CLT implementation offers a valuable opportunity to increase students' motivation regarding learning English.

Sameera, likewise, perceived CLT as helpful in stimulating students' motivation and interest. The following quotation reflects her perception of CLT:

As soon as students learn how to practise English using CLT, their motivation increases; their attitudes towards English change too because they try to speak in English. (Interview no.10 with Sameera)

CLT has been characterised as an approach which increases learner motivation. The participants felt that students' involvement in the different CLT activities helps them to achieve a sense of ownership and assume more responsibility for their own learning. Thus, this helps to increase learner motivation because the students feel more confident through practising a language. Diaz-Rico (2008:104) defines learner autonomy as "the learners' feeling that studying is taking place due to their own volition". Moreover, this act of practising a language and achieving a sense of competence helps to increase learners' intrinsic motivation. This perception of CLT, mentioned by several teachers, is said by Belchamber (2007) to be one of the advantages of CLT. He argues that CLT motivation is related to involving students in ongoing negotiations during interactions.

It is apparent that the implementation of a CLT approach will have a motivational impact on language learners due to the different strategies for learning a language that it offers. The theoretical underpinning of CLT is based on the communicative competence and active involvement of the learner rather than a controlling model of language learning. The practical or communicative side of CLT helps students to make sense of a language and construct their own understanding and knowledge in regard to it. Thus, it contributes towards enhancing the motivation to learn a language.

The principles of CLT embody different strategies for developing motivation in language learning. Dornyei (2001:29), in his exploration of the four motivational aspects of teaching practice in the L2 classroom, shows that the components of each aspect resemble the CLT principles; for example, the first aspect of creating the basic motivational conditions contains the three elements: "appropriate teacher behaviour, a pleasant and supporting atmosphere in the classroom and a cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms". These strategies are also recommended in order to achieve CLT implementation; for instance, Dornyei (2001) argues that the teacher's role and behaviour are significant tools that affect leaners' choices and attitudes.

His argument for adopting an appropriate teacher role and behaviour as a motivational strategy is similar to the role assigned to teachers in CLT. Because CLT encompasses different ideologies to accomplish language learning, these ideas include the teachers adopting different roles. According to Richards and Lockhart (1994, quoted in Abebe et al. 2012:53) "teachers may adopt various roles like manager, facilitator, planner, motivator, group organizer". Thus, in CLT, the teacher's responsibility is to embrace new techniques in order to engage the learners in a meaningful language atmosphere.

Additionally, in order to maintain learner motivation, Dornyei (2001) suggests a series of eight executive motivational components. One of these maintenance procedures is to make the learning stimulating and enjoyable by changing the routine of the learning process, introducing tasks in more exciting way by maintaining a diversity of activities, such as the use of auditory, visual and tactile means in learning, and enhancing learner participation in cooperative pair and group work. Thus, developing learners' motivation depends more on the practical and functional use of a language.

These key features of nurturing learner motivation resemble the characteristics of the CLT style. As Diaz-Rico (2008:59) argues in CLT, "language is taught in a strategic/pragmatic/contextual form, and the learning is immediately useful outside the

classroom setting". Thus, it is possible to argue that the communicative and functional goal of CLT gives this approach a motivational trait.

5.3.2.3 Teachers and students' level and ability

Another perception of CLT is that it is an approach that depends on both the teachers and students' level of English ability. In other words, almost all of the participants emphasised that communication was one of the key aims of CLT but, in one way or another, they also expressed concerns about the students' levels and background in English, both of which features can hamper teachers' teaching according to the CLT principles. For example, Adam stated that the teaching method he chose was determined by his students' levels and background in English:

It is a method of communication between the teacher and the student. It is a process of communication. That means that a teacher will need to prepare a lesson properly and the student needs to have the ability to understand the lesson as well as a good grounding in English in order to participate and for there to be cooperation between teachers and students. (Interview no.1 with Adam)

Adam sees CLT as a process of communication that mainly depends on the student having a good background acquired from his/her previous stages of learning, but he also stressed the role played by the students' language level in determining the method of classroom teaching, assuming that the smooth implementation of this approach would depend on the students' level:

It depends on the level of the student who is in front of me. If a student's level is good and he/she has a solid foundation from the previous years, I am sure it will be easy to apply CLT. (Interview no.1 with Adam)

Thus, Adam regards a high student level and strong grounding as the basis for applying CLT. A similar finding emerged from an investigation of Malaysian teachers' perceptions of CLT, whereby some participants believed that it did not provide a suitable pedagogical mode, as it is difficult to apply with students with a poor background in the language (Raissi et al. 2013).

A further two teachers viewed CLT as an approach that depends on both the teachers' and students' ability to communicate with each other. They believed that both parties needed a high level of English proficiency in order to implement this approach. They considered CLT to be a process whereby both the teachers and students' language

ability is a vital factor. Consequently, they assumed that CLT was a way that exposed the ability of both the teachers and students. One of the teachers interpreted this approach as follows:

It is a good way at the current time. This approach should be used. It is how to communicate with students in English. At the moment, neither teachers nor students lack ability. This ability is revealed during communication with each other. (Interview no.18 with Nisreen)

Another teacher's perception of CLT was linked to her ability to communicate with students. She commented:

My understanding of the communicative approach is that it depends on my ability to communicate with the students, but the teacher should not be put under pressure. (Interview no.14 with Sarah)

When Sarah was asked what she meant by "pressure", she answered "time" as a serious factor influencing teachers' practice. This factor will be explored later under "challenges".

5.3.2.4 It is difficult approach to implement

Despite the fact that the majority of the teachers recognised the communicative purpose of CLT, different perceptions of CLT emerged, and three participants admitted that they had not heard of this approach because they have not used CLT themselves. Two of them looked confused when I first mentioned the "CLT approach" and asked them to define it. I was informed that CLT was not used during their teaching. When I asked one of those teachers, who has 36 years' teaching experience, a more probing question about the reason for this, he replied:

I haven't tried to use this approach. I'm now teaching a third year class at secondary school. The students enter this stage and say that they have not covered the curriculum (which is an interconnected series). Honestly, I haven't tried to apply it. As you see, it is difficult to adopt or perform with our current facilities and the surrounding factors. Moreover, CLT depends on the students. Where is the student who can use it? (Interview no.3 with Sami)

Although Sami has not implemented CLT during his teaching, he raised an important issue; namely, the nature of the curriculum. In fact, the nature of these curricula

complements each other. That means that it is difficult to start teaching any curriculum at any stage before completing the previous one. All of the participants, including the teachers, students and English inspectors, remarked on this. They complained that, in general, the first and second year secondary school curricula were never completed. These are important years because they lay the foundation for later study.

This point was confirmed by Sufian, a sixteen year-old student in his second year at secondary school. He described his teacher's English classroom teaching practice as follows:

Truly, it (the way of teaching) is the wrong way. The first point is that a teacher spends the year explaining things during the lessons and, at the end of the school year, gives you questions and asks you to memorise them. They don't teach us English for use in the future or in later stages of our life. They teach English on the basis that you study and succeed in English; for example, this year, a teacher explained seven lessons and the rest of the unit was not explained. She then moved straight on to the second unit. This is the wrong approach since the students will not benefit. (Interview no.4 with Sufian)

This point was confirmed by Abdullah (an English teacher), who added that some teachers make mistakes when teaching the curriculum:

I want to add the point that some teachers make mistakes. Sometimes, a teacher who is teaching the first and second stages does not concentrate on completing the curriculum because they are not in the final stage of secondary school; for example, a teacher might teach only five of the ten units. In other words, a teacher will explain units 1 to 5 and neglect the other associated units. This is a problem and wrong. As a result, when a student enters the third year of secondary school, the foundation that should have been laid in the first and second years of secondary school has not been covered or studied. Thus, the idea of not completing the curriculum is a problem in itself. (Interview no.7 with Abdullah)

Accordingly, this practice of failing to complete the curriculum for the first stages of secondary school is a factor that contributes to teachers' failure properly to implement CLT and this makes it difficult to teach according to a CLT-based curriculum.

Another teacher justified his lack of knowledge about CLT as due to the fact that he had not studied this teaching method at university. When asked about his perception of CLT, he replied:

We did not study teaching methods at university. Teachers need a retraining process. (Interview no.17 with Ahmed)

Concerning the difficulty of implementing CLT, another teacher informed me frankly that she could not offer any account of CLT because she has never used it. During her description of CLT, she also highlighted the noise that would arise in the classroom:

I can't apply it because it's difficult to apply. It would lead to mayhem and I would lose control of the class so I am forced to teach my class (45 minutes) and leave.

She pointed out that she taught a third year class at a boys' secondary school and could imagine how rowdy their behaviour would be were she to convert to a learner-centred approach.

In the same vein, Sameera believed that CLT was a difficult approach to implement because of the reality of the students' level:

CLT is difficult to implement because the actual reality that is in front of me makes it obligatory to avoid implementing this approach. The curriculum was designed for students who are at a very advanced level. There are many aspects of the curriculum that I cannot apply and, if they are implemented, they would be implemented indirectly. (Interview no.11 with Sameera)

The teachers believed that there are several factors that make this approach difficult to apply: when the first and second year secondary stage curricula have not been completed; when teachers lack knowledge of the relevant teaching methods; and when students become noisy when not immediately under the control of their teachers.

It may also be argued that the above factors lead teachers to justify their controlled practice and influence inside the classrooms. Although their different reasons may make them hesitant to implement CLT, it was observed that CLT has been implemented in other Libyan contexts, as evidenced by the observation data.

To sum up, the above subheadings constitute a comprehensive overview of the participants' understanding and perceptions of this approach. Different ways of understanding CLT emerged, some of which entailed the underlying principles of CLT; for example, Salma and Ali stated that CLT is a process of communication that creates interactions between teachers and students. This view is in line with one of the main principles of CLT, which espouses teaching a language as communication. That means

that the main purpose of a language is to achieve social communication between people, in either written or oral form. As Richards (2005) suggests, the core assumption of CLT is to involve learners in meaningful communication.

Another way of understanding of CLT, as mentioned by Hanan and Salah, is as a method that stimulates cooperation and participation. This is also supported by Richards and Rogers (2014:98), who argued that "learners now had to participate in classroom activities that were based on a cooperative rather than individualistic approach to learning". Osma's understanding of CLT as a learner-centred approach has been identified by many researchers, such as Larsen-Freeman (2000), as a characteristic of CLT. Similarly, two participants stated that CLT has changed their role. As Richards and Rodgers (2014) suggest, the role of the teacher in CLT is that of a "needs analyst", who serves and responds to the learners' language needs.

Although the teachers recognise that CLT entails different assumptions about teaching English, they expressed reservations about teaching using CLT principles. In other words, they recognise that the aim of CLT is to help students to communicate in English. However, in the actual classroom situation, these beliefs seem difficult to realise. Consequently, a gap between the teachers' understanding and perceptions of CLT and their actual practices may be attributed to various challenges, which will be explained later.

These different ways of understanding and perceptions of CLT indicate some of the teachers' awareness of CLT. Additionally, the participants' interpretations show that CLT cannot be constrained within a fixed framework which supports the view that conceptual ambiguity exists. However, one can argue that these various interpretations and perceptions of CLT offer flexibility regarding teaching language using CLT so it tends to be an advantage rather than indicating misconceptions or confusion surrounding the term 'CLT'.

5.4 The implementation of a communicative approach in the classroom

5.4.1 Classroom practice

As one of my research aims is to investigate the extent of CLT implementation, the second research question to be investigated is based on the observation of the teachers' practices in the classroom. Thus, this section will address the following question: "Is the communicative approach used in the classroom and, if so, how?"

My aim is to address this research question in terms of what the teachers actually do when teaching in class. As Burns (1990:9, cited in Fitzgerald 2012:6) states:

> The task of the qualitative methodologist is to capture what people say and do as a product of how they interpret the complexity of their world, to understand events from the viewpoints of the participants.

However, this is neither to defend nor to refute or judge what the teachers understand and how they perceive this approach, since the main purpose of the research is to provide a holistic picture of CLT implementation drawn from different data sources. Accordingly, to return to the interviews and my observation of the different teachers' classes, following content analysis of the observation data, six categories were created, as shown in the following table.

CLT Implementation	
1	Teachers' practices and the curriculum content (CLT principles)
2	Adopting the traditional teaching methodologies a- Teacher- centred b- GTM
3	Use of L1 (Arabic) in the classroom / translation a- Translation b- Students' ability
4	Students' participation and interaction in the classroom
5	Reading aloud
6	Students' perceptions of the teachers' practices in class

Table 5-2 Observation categories of CLT implementation

5.4.2 Teacher practice and the curriculum content (CLT principles)

The observation data reveal a variety of teacher practice in teaching the communicative curriculum. We will first examine Adam's teaching of a third year secondary school class (Literary Section).

Adam is in his late 40s. He graduated from Benghazi University in 2000 with a BA in English. He has now accumulated 14 years' English teaching experience. When I first visited Adam's boys' secondary school, the school principal told me that Adam is one of the most experienced teachers in the school and that he had asked him to take this third year class because Adam will later be moved to the inspection department, and will become an English inspector of the preparatory stage next year. From the outset of his teaching career, Adam has used different kinds of textbooks, including Headway, Cutting Edge and Face to Face.

When I first entered Adam's class and introduced myself, the size of the class surprised me so much that I felt confused initially. It contained over 40 students. The desks were organised so tightly in four rows that I had to walk sideways in order to take my seat at the back of the class. The students were aged around 16 to 17 years-old. I felt that their bodies were too big for the desks, and noted that they were unable to move comfortably during the lesson. The class lasted 45 minutes. Adam's class was the third year (Literary section) and the observed lesson was based on the third year of the literary section of the textbook.

The following is a summary of teaching Adam's lesson entitled "Great Failures":

As mentioned before, Adam was teaching the first core reading lesson in unit four, entitled "Great Failures" (page 42-43). According to the sequence in the teachers' handbook, the recommended approach to teaching this lesson is to divide it into three main stages: *Before you read*, *While you read* and *After you read*, since the main aim of teaching these stages is to develop and build the students' sub-skill of prediction and strengthen their ability to discuss and read for either gist or detailed information. Thus, the main purpose is to inspire and involve the students through discussions in pairs at different stages of the lesson.

During the teaching observation, Adam skipped the first page of the lesson and started immediately to read the whole text. He started reading every paragraph of the text. Two

or three sentences were read followed by their translation into Arabic. In some cases, the teacher read the sentence in English and the students translated it directly into Arabic, as if they had prepared this translation prior to the lesson.

Although there was no participation in English, the students' involvement and understanding of the lesson in Arabic were clear. Their participation was almost completely in Arabic. The teacher sometimes read a sentence and asked the students if it was clear in order to check that they understood its meaning. When the teacher had finished reading and explaining the whole text, the students were asked to go back to the first page of the lesson to discuss the questions presented in the "Before you read" stage.

As will be shown in the transcript, the students were asked to engage in the pair work individually, which did not seem to accord with the recommendation in the teachers' handbook. Thus, the next transcript shows Adam's practice of teaching the pre-reading activity, which is supposed to be undertaken prior to reading the text.

Table 5-3 Observational transcript and summary of the Great Failures lesson. (25/03/2015, 8:00 to 8:45am)

	Adam: OK, unit 4, page 42, 'Great Failures', lessons 1 and 2: Reading: 'reading to retell the information'. Adam: Before we start this page, we have to go to page 43 to the reading. Adam: 'Great failures'. 'Great scientists, world leaders, famous writers, singers and film stars all have a special talent'. Adam: Is that clear? (*In Arabic*). Sts: Clear. Adam: *reads the first three sentences again and translates them into Arabic.* Sts: *Start translation with the teacher.* Adam: They are all especially good at something. Sts and the teacher: *They translate the sentence together into Arabic.* Adam: *(continues reading)* 'Millions of pages are written about them in books, magazines and newspapers'. Sts: *They translate the sentence into Arabic.* Adam: *(continues reading the text).* 'But what about those who are especially bad at something? This page is for them'. Sts: *They again repeat and say the sentences in Arabic.* Adam: 'The worst driver in the world'. Sts: *They translate the title into Arabic.* Adam: 'This title is proudly claimed by a British woman who had 212 driving lessons'. Sts: *Some students translate the sentence*.

Adam: Is that OK, guys?

Sts: Yes, it's clear.

Adam: 'But could not pass her driving test. She failed her test 38 times in eight years'.

Sts: *They translate.*

Adam: OK, your participation is fine, but without relying on students who want to understand *(in Arabic)*

When Adam finishes reading the whole text, he goes back to the first page of the lesson.

Adam: OK, we have to go back to lessons 1 and 2.

Adam: Before you read, work in pairs. Discuss the following…

Adam: …the three best sportsmen in Libya?

Adam: Ali, can you name three sportsmen in Libya?

Ali: Mohmmed Saad, Ahmed Azwai and Tntosh

2- 'While you read'

Adam: Read only the introduction to the text on page 43. With your partner discuss what you think happened to the people (and the animal) in the pictures.

Adam: With your partner, have a quick discussion and tell me what happened? For example, the worst driver in the world. What happened to her?

Sts. *The start to talk to each other.*

Adam: OK, give me a brief summary.

Adam: starts to talk with the students

(The teacher tries to encourage the students to speak about what happened to the woman.)

Adam: The woman is from …?

Sts: Britain.

Adam: She had 212 driving lessons.

Sts: She failed her test 38 times,

Adam: 38 or 39 times?

Sts: 39 times.

Adam: Then what happened?

Sts: She passed her test.

Adam: In the same way, we can summarise the different paragraphs.

Adam: *Divides the class into four groups.*

Adam: Now, each group has to summarise the other paragraphs.

Adam's justification during the stimulated-recall interview included two points: the students' weak background and the curriculum design. He commented:

Q1. We are going to watch the first part of yesterday's lesson. When you started explaining the lesson, the first step, which was "Before you read, work in pairs, discuss the following", was skipped. My question is; why did you decide to do that?

This is one of the points that indicate that the curriculum is prepared or designed on the basis that English is a second language. 'Before you read' indicates that students are expected to have a good background before reading. If I had taught the class according to the instruction, it would have looked as if I regularly taught the curriculum as expected and directed, but I did not change the way I teach for your observation, and this is the way I do things. I didn't change the way I teach because you were there. Even if I'd changed it, next morning, the students would have said that Ostath ('teacher' in Arabic) Adam changed his teaching method because someone was visiting the class. In fact, this is the way I do things and I didn't change anything. I preferred to be natural.

Accordingly, Adam followed his own approach when teaching this reading lesson. He started reading the whole text and translated it into Arabic to ensure that the students understood and participated in the pre-reading activities. However, when Adam divided the class into four groups and asked them to summarise each paragraph during the "While you read" activities, the students did start to speak in English, albeit using simple sentences. Although the students' background did not seem to help them to participate very much, once they understood and had a chance to speak, they replied and provided summaries using simple sentences. Therefore, the teachers are a key factor in the implementation of CLT because they can be considered as the implementing tool in shaping the CLT principles by creating opportunities for the students to speak in groups.

Adam's practice appears to differ from that of Sarah, who tried to follow the student schema by involving her students in a pre-reading activity. However, the similarity between Sarah and Adam's practices is that the same technique was applied during the 'while-reading' activity. This was noticed in relation to Sarah during both during the observation and stimulated-recall interview with her:

I read the lesson word by word in detail. I give the meaning in English and sometimes translated it into Arabic. As you saw, I tried to read aloud to ensure that all of the students could hear me and then, when the students understood the text, I answered the

questions with them. This is my way of teaching reading lessons. (Interview no.14 with Sarah)

It seems that the teachers devise their own techniques for teaching reading lessons; and these may follow the same pattern. This pattern was also described by Roeda (a third year student) when she described how her teachers arranged their reading classes:

The way of teaching is that a teacher is interested in the subject. The teacher reads out loud and then translates some of the words. The teacher reads the questions and we answer them. (Interview no.8 with Roeda).

Similarly, the first English inspector complained about the lack of a standard model for teaching reading and writing skills. He stated:

There is no one who gives us an ideal model on which to base skills teaching, regarding how teachers teach reading and writing skills. (Interview no.1 with an English inspector)

The findings about the current CLT implementation seem to match those of Orafi (2008), who investigated the characteristics of teachers' practices and their congruence with the innovative curriculum. Although Orafi (2008) showed that the teachers' practices, particularly those related to pre-reading activities, were implemented as intended in the curriculum, it was reported that, as in the instances cited above, "during the reading lessons, teachers spent substantial time reading word by word and sentence by sentence, explaining vocabulary, translating into Arabic, and reading aloud" (Orafi 2008:198).

Accordingly, the implementation observed in the eight classrooms ranges from consistency to complete inconsistency when using CLT; for example, although Adam's lesson ended with him trying to encourage his students to work with a partner and he asked them to discuss what happened in each paragraph, this did not lead to a group discussion between the students. This took a question-answer form rather than a discussion, and thus did not reflect the intended aim of this task. Additionally, his skipping of the pre-reading activity deviated from the implementation of the lesson plan as recommended in the teachers' handbook. More specifically, the purpose of a pre-reading activity is to encourage lively conversation between the students before the main text is introduced and to activate their existing knowledge. Thus, the classroom practice does not seem to reflect the consistent implementation of the curriculum's

principles. The teacher tried to modify his teaching of the lesson according to the actual context of his class and his view of his students' abilities

Although all the classes taught followed teacher-centred instruction (whereby all instruction was led by the teacher, who acted as the sole provider of knowledge), this is not to be generalised to every part of the lessons. Sally, for example, asked her students to discuss two questions in group that formed part of the 'teaching vocabulary' core lesson (on p.20), concerned with phrasal verbs such as "knocked out" and "run out". According to the teachers' handbook, students are required to guess the meaning of these words and use the phrasal verbs productively. Although Sally was teaching a large second year class at a secondary stage, she asked the students to engage in a group work activity.

Although part of the students' discussion with each other and with the teacher was in Arabic to check the usage and understanding of several words in Arabic, the following account shows that Sally gave her students an opportunity to work in groups of four. They spent the rest of the lesson trying to answer these questions and writing their answers down in their notebooks. At the same time, Sally moved around the whole class, checking and explaining the meaning of several words in Arabic. In some cases, she also repeated the two questions. The students started working and asking Sally questions. They started to work out the meaning of the unfamiliar words in the questions. When the students had finished their discussion, one student per group stood up and gave the answers individually. The following extract illustrates one pattern of Sally's classroom teaching.

Table 5-4 Observational transcript of the vocabulary lesson (phrasal verbs): (29/03/2015, 10:15 - 11:00 am)

	Sally: Discuss these questions with a partner. Sally: In pairs or groups of four, discuss the following two sentences from your life experience. Sally: No 1- 'Has your father ever run out of petrol? If so, explain what happened?' 2- 'Do you know anyone who has been knocked out? If so, explain what happened?' Sally: *(In Arabic)* Do you want to work in twos or fours? That is OK. Answer now and take your time. Sts: *Start discussing the two questions and write the answers in their notebooks.* Sally: Keep the noise down and discuss for 10 minutes. Sally: *Asks one student to join a group.*

	Sally: *Moves around the whole class.*
	St: *(In Arabic)* Teacher, what is the meaning of forget?
	T: I cannot remember/ forget.
	Sts: *students spent the rest of the 45 minutes discussing and write the answers to the two questions.*
	St: *(In Arabic) one student asks the teacher what 'petrol station' means in English.*
	Teacher: You can write 'the petrol station'.
	St: Another student asks Sally, 'Teacher, it is 'full of petrol', is that right?
	Yes, Yes, it is 'full of petrol'. Yes, that's right
	Sts: *Keep asking the teacher to check meanings and spellings.*
	Sally: *Moves around the students and corrects the students' sentences and clarifies the questions. She gave the spelling of some words.*
	Sally: *Finishes the discussion and each group is asked to give the answers.*
	Sally: Let's start with this group.
	St: My father's car has stopped, because the petrol has finished.
	The bell rings
	The lesson is finished
	Sally: OK, next class we will start with this activity

Although Sally encouraged her students to talk and practise in groups, during the observation, she did not display the one-to-one student interaction recommended in the teachers' handbook. The students were supposed to discuss the questions in pairs and then share their stories with the whole class for approximately 10-15 minutes, but the discussion lasted until the end of the lesson. Most of the students were discussing the issues in Arabic. Questions were answered individually. Some students seemed to find it difficult to take part in the discussion; for example, Sally conducted the following discussion in Arabic with the student whom I was sitting beside:

Sally: Why aren't you working? There are marks for participation.

St*:* I can't write.

Sally: What do you mean?

St: I can't write in English

Sally: How have you managed to come up into the second year?

St: I can write a whole page in Arabic, but not in English. I swear, I can't.

Sally: You should try.

Accordingly, although Sally was interested in implementing CLT and encouraged her students to work hard in class, the pattern of CLT implementation failed to meet the standard laid down by the curriculum.

To sum up, Sally tried to deliver her lesson using a communicative approach, but it was clear that her students' English ability and lack of experience in writing in English created a barrier that limited her teaching practice.

5.4.3 Adopting the traditional method of teaching

Although almost all of the teachers maintained that it was important to encourage their students to practise English, during the observations, they tended to teach using the traditional method. This involved the teacher controlling what happened in the classroom and using traditional methods such as reading aloud, translation, and memorisation. The teacher is the key performer in the class and the students are the listeners. In other words, students are simply required to answer a few questions or read out a text, and they have little active involvement in the class beyond that.

Although some of the teacher participants stated that they had tried to motivate their students to be more active in class, the observation revealed that a teacher-centred approach dominated their teaching. The following summarises Sarah's teaching of a third year class in the Scientific Section. Although in the interview, Sarah claimed that she used CLT in her teaching (*"I use it. When I read the participant information sheet, I felt that you came and put a name to it" (Interview no.14 with Sarah),* during the observation, it was noted that she played a larger part in the classroom activity than did her students.

Sarah was teaching lesson 8 ('Telephones') of unit four, from the specialist Scientific Section. Sarah started explaining the lesson by asking her students if they knew what 'phone' meant in an attempt to encourage their engagement at the beginning of the lesson; the students laughed and answered "Yes". Then she read the title of the lesson, which informed the students that the lesson was about telephones in Africa. Sarah read the question and asked the students to reveal some facts about themselves; for example, how many of them had a fixed line phone at home. When Sarah read out the question, she explained the meaning of "to find out" in English by using the synonym "discover". Then she read the question about which students had a fixed line phone at home. She repeated the question and asked students to answer the question, "Do you have a fixed line phone?"

 After about 10 minutes of Sarah talking, one student responded to the question by saying "Yes", as shown in the transcript. Then Sarah asked the students about the meaning of "a fixed line phone"; the students replied in Arabic, 'a landline'. Sarah

asked all students who had a landline at home to raise their hand, then asked the students to calculate the percentage of these students in the class. When Sarah felt that there was little participation in the class, she explained the meaning of the question in Arabic. She wrote the calculation on the board and explained the question, with little participation by the students. The following table presents an episode from Sarah's class:

Table 5-5 Observational transcript and summary of the telephone lesson: (22/3/2015, 11:00-11:45 am)

	Sarah: All right, look at me. Our lesson today is about telephones.
	Sarah: Open your text book to page 49.
	Sarah: Do you know the meaning of the word 'telephone'?
	Sts: Yes.
	Sarah: We're going to have fun.
	Sarah: Today, we're going to talk about telephones, especially in Africa, especially in …
	Sts: Africa.
	T. Section A, do a quick survey. You will do a quick survey with us. Find out, you must discover, you, all of you, must find out the following facts. Firstly, we will discover some facts about you.
	Sarah: Number one, what is the percentage of students who have a fixed line phone at home?
	Sarah: Who can tell me? *She repeats the question.*
	Sarah: Do you have a fixed line phone?
	St: Yes, I do.
	Sarah: Who else has a fixed line phone?
	Sarah: What does "a fixed line phone" mean?
	Sts: *(In Arabic)* A land line.
	Sarah: Excellent/'
	Sarah: How many students have one? Put up your hands.
	Sarah: How can we get the percentage? *Then Sarah explains this sentence in Arabic.*
	Sarah: The percentage, if I would like to get the percentage of students who … Some of you have a fixed line phone. Some of you only have …

	Sarah: That's right.
	Sts: Yes.
	Sarah: All of you have … Sts: No

This traditional method, whereby the teacher controls the classroom was also in evident in the participants' interviews. For example, one teacher commented:

As I am teaching a third year secondary school class, I'm surprised that a student can reach this stage and still depend on the traditional way of teaching…This was the old way, how Libyans were accustomed to learn English in the 70s and the early 80s, the Grammar Translation Method. It is passed down from one teacher to another and students are accustomed to this way of learning. (Interview no.1 with Adam)

Similarly, the second English inspector commented that teachers still follow the traditional teaching methods.

Teachers were taught using the Grammar Translation Method and the teacher-centred method. I notice, during inspections, that teachers always tend to emphasise the teaching of grammar because they are strong on teaching grammar. Teachers find themselves teaching grammar. (Interview no.2 with the second English inspector)

Because of the prior learning of the teachers and, as their English teaching experience was basically focused on the traditional method, these views or beliefs about learning English had been inherited and consequently impacted on their ELT methodological approach (Borg 2001).

The first inspector assessed the students' participation in the class as follows:

The teacher takes up 80% of the time and the students talk for or participate in about 10% of the class because the teacher is convinced that he is central and the students are just recipients. (Interview no.1 with the first inspector)

Similarly, apart from Sally, the majority of the participant teachers stressed this point. For example, Kamal mentioned:

Students still depend on the teacher. They are still receivers. If you ask them something that is not required, this'll cause a problem. (Interview no.13 with Kamal)

Kamal stated that students did not accept the curriculum because they lack the ability to meet its requirements. Kamal's statement reminded me of one of the students' suggestion that CLT had been implemented during the early stages of her learning:

Communicative activities were used at the beginning of my learning when I was in year 5 of primary school and I responded to it in an amazing way, but the problem was that the students sometimes did not know how to communicate in English and it upset me that some students did not care about this international language. (Interview no.1 with Maryam)

Thus, Maryam believed that her classmates' level prevented her from communicating with them properly in year 5 of primary school. At the same time, Maryam described the current role of her teachers as follows:

The teacher does everything in class. She answers all the questions, reads the text, writes on the board and she also identifies the topics that will come up in the exam. For example, she told us to read the workbook and ignore the textbook. (Interview no.1 with Maryam)

A similar response was made by another participant student, Roeda, who stated:

The teacher answers the questions. She writes the answers on the board. When exam time comes, she points to what in the book will come up on the exam and we answer the examination questions. (Interview no.8 with Roeda)

Returning to Sarah's class observation, she tried actively to engage all of the students in the pre-activity task. As shown, she asked them various questions, and clarified the meaning by using extra English vocabulary. She read out almost all of the questions and wrote the answers on the board. The students participated by replying in simple sentences such as "Yes, I have …"

The above overview of the participants' responses and classroom observations seems to suggest that teacher-centred instruction continues to dominate overall classroom practice. The current findings are consistent with previous research, particularly that conducted in EFL contexts (Abdel Latif 2012, Alkhawaldeh 2010, Asassfeh et al. 2012, Chung and Huang 2009); for example, using observation, interviews and questionnaires, Abed-latif (2012) investigated how teachers use textbooks to teach communicative English to secondary students in Egypt. The findings showed that 82.23 % of the class's

pedagogical time continued to be dominated by the traditional teaching methods, including grammar, vocabulary and reading. Furthermore, the teaching of skills such as writing, listening and speaking were almost completely neglected. Similarly, in Chung and Huang's (2009) study, the learners revealed that the classrooms practice in Taiwanese high schools remains characterised by traditional aspects, such as teacher centrality, memorisation, grammar and translation.

According to the teachers' guidebook outline for the lesson, teachers should introduce the lesson by asking questions, such as "Who's made a telephone call since the last lesson?" What kind of call was it? "Personal or business?". Then, following the discussion, students should also be asked to write down ten words related to the subject. However, as shown by the observation transcripts, the classroom practice did not appear to implement this step. Additionally, the teacher was asked to divide the students into groups, with each student asking every other member of the group questions about their phone. The students were supposed to complete the survey and then share their results by asking each other question. The above description of Sarah's lesson shows, however, that Sarah spoke for the majority of the lesson. In other words, she was the main speaker in the class, while the students uttered only simple sentences or a few words.

In summary, based on the above description, two points can be observed. Firstly, the teacher seemed to deviate from the intended lesson plan. There is a difference between what the teachers do during their lesson teaching and what is proposed or required according to the teaching approach of the curriculum. In other words, teachers construct their own ways of teaching the curriculum that suit their actual teaching situation. Secondly, it is clear that the traditional ELT methodologies were still in effect and there is evidence of some inconsistency between what teachers believe and say they do and what they actually do in class.

5.4.4 The Use of the L1 (Arabic) in the classroom and translation

During my observation of the actual setting, I noticed that some teachers conducting a literal translation of the whole class. The following is a summary of one of the class teaching practices.

This episode was from an observation of the same lesson as taught by Adam, "Great Failures", but this time the observation was of a female teacher at a girls' secondary school. Heba started to explain the lesson's purpose by reading out the title and the number of the unit, then asked what the title meant. She translated the meaning together

with several students. She read out the pre-reading skills: "Before you read, work in pairs. Discuss the following". She read out the first category, "Three sportsmen in Libya" then, in Arabic, asked the students to study the word "best". The students described the meaning of the term "the best" in Arabic, and Heba replied, also in Arabic, "Yes, it means "the best:" She then moved onto the second category and read out "The three worst programmes on television". The students explained the meaning of "the worst" in Arabic, then Heba explained, in Arabic, what "the best" and "the worst" meant and mentioned that the unit focuses on these two words. She then read out the third category in English, "The three greatest scientists in history" and gave the Arabic translation of this.

I noticed that Arabic was used for all instructional purposes; for example, on one occasion, Arabic was used for translation and on another to clarify the questions. The following extracts show examples of the transcription where the L1 (Arabic) is used:

Table 5-6 Observational transcript and summary of Heba's class

	T: The three best sportsmen in Libya? T: *(in Arabic)* We took the word best, Sts: *(in Arabic)* The best. T: *(in Arabic)* Yes, it means' the best'. *Another example where the L1 was used to give instructions to the class* T: *(in Arabic).* This unit focuses on the word and its counterpart. For example, the best and worst…… T: Three worst films ever made. T: *(in Arabic)* The three worst films ever made. T: *(In Arabic)* These are general questions, but you should concentrate on the best, worst and greatest.

The observations showed that the use of Arabic was dominant in the class. During the stimulated recall interview, Heba mentioned:

This is my way of teaching and I am used to teaching in this way. I cannot use English for the whole class because the students wouldn't be able to understand me. (Interview no.19 with Heba)

It appears that Heba is accustomed to speaking Arabic in the English class. This is not completely related to the students' level, since not all of them had a low level of English. Her practice of using Arabic conflicts with some of her students' wants and needs. The students 'views of their teachers' practices in the classroom have also been investigated

and a number of participants viewed L1 use as a negative element of classroom practice; for example, one student stated:

In general, the use of Arabic dominates in class. I feel that the teachers are accustomed to using Arabic in class. Because they are teaching a language, it is necessary to explain in English. It is expected that they will use English but the majority prefer using Arabic. (Interview no.6 with Ameera)

At the end of the interview, when I asked this student for suggestions or solutions, she said:

I have just one important point to make that is that a teacher must communicate in English in order to strengthen the students' ability in English.

Another student asked to be interviewed when she came and introduced herself to me in the school corridor. She said, *"I'm always on the lookout for someone to speak in English with".* I was informed that she practises speaking English in front of a mirror. She began to talk and express herself in English. This indicates that the student lacks the opportunity to practise English in class. She expressed her dissatisfaction with the overuse of the L1 (Arabic) as follows:

In the classroom, there are things that I take advantage of, and there are other things that do not benefit me. For example, when a teacher speaks in Arabic more than English, he/she does not give the English language its rightful place. These things annoy me. Another thing that upsets me is when I engage with a teacher in English and he/she responds or answers me in Arabic. I feel sad when a teacher replies in Arabic. I feel that I'm not learning English and the teacher is an Arabic language teacher, but he/she has learnt a little English. This behaviour does not encourage the students. (Interview no.1 with Maryeem)

The above examples reveal the students' views about their teachers' use of Arabic to provide explanations. Similarly, the third English inspector also mentioned that he always alerts teachers to their overuse of Arabic language. He stated:

An English teacher will not say 'Open your book' in English, but 'Aftah Ketaba' in Arabic. They ask the students to open their books in Arabic. Teachers know that I strongly oppose their use of Arabic. We have a special record book in each school for

English inspectors; I always write down that teachers should avoid speaking and using Arabic in the classroom. (Interview no.3 with the head inspector of English)

Cook (2001:409) describes these examples as a golden opportunity to use a target language in the classroom:

> A teacher who uses the L1 for classroom interaction is depriving the student of the only true experience of the L2 that they may ever encounter. The teacher is wasting a golden opportunity if he/she says "What's the time?" or "put your homework on my desk" in the L1.

While the above example reflects the teachers' overuse of Arabic, other teachers asserted that the main reason for using Arabic was the students' level. One teacher made the following comment about an inspector when he was forced to translate during his visit to her class:

Most students like and prefer everything to be translated into Arabic. It is necessary to translate and, if I didn't translate, there would be no response. Sometimes, I am forced to translate into Arabic. This is the first difficulty that I face. When the inspector visited me last week, and began to talk and explain in English, he didn't elicit any response so started using some Arabic words, after which there were responses and participation. That means that even the inspector found himself compelled to speak Arabic. (Interview no.14 with Sarah)

I noticed, during our conversation, that she deliberately spoke in English in front of the English inspector in order to avoid criticism. She commented:

We, as English teachers, are open to criticism from our mentors. They criticise us. Thus, when the inspector visits me, I tend to speak English because, after I finish the lesson, he himself will start and he will find that, unless he translates some words or tries to clarify his meaning in Arabic, he will be in one world and the students in another. (Interview no.14 with Sarah)

Kamal also gave the following example of the students' reaction to speaking for the whole 45 minutes in English:

For example, if I entered the class and spoke in English for 45 minutes, after a few seconds the students would go to the school office to say that a teacher wasn't explaining anything but speaking in English. (Interview no.13 with Kamal)

Although the participant students were all dissatisfied about their teachers' speaking Arabic in class, many teachers stated that their students complained about teachers who speak or explain in English. This did not tally with what the students told me. The same point was made by the English inspector, who confirmed that some parents put pressure on the schools' principals:

Parents' problems, when they come and say that a teacher is not explaining, the reason is that he/she has explained in English. (Interview no.3 with the head inspector of English)

This indicates that some parents and school principals seem to have different beliefs about the importance of English, which contrast with the curriculum principles, although this is not true for everyone. Another teacher told me that her school principal had spoken to her about students' complaints. When she explained the reason for using English, the principal understood and told her that this was her job and that she was to do what she considered appropriate.

Other teachers explained that the use of Arabic and translation contributed to an increase in the number of students who were failing to achieve English proficiency. The teachers explained that, when a student cannot fully understand a particular point, the teacher sometimes speaks in Arabic for clarification:

I started explaining the lesson in English, but felt that the students did not understand me or were having difficulty in understanding me. I tried to translate some points of the lessons. This was the first problem. (Interview no.10 with Salay)

In the same way, another teacher expressed her concern about the need to use translation as one of the problems that hinders the use of CLT in the classroom:

The problem which I face in the classroom is translation. It becomes obligatory to translate most parts of the lesson. (Interview no.6 with Mona)

However, in order to avoid overusing the L1, Mona used a strategy of providing synonyms in English. When I asked why she provided the meaning in English, Mona stated that this way helped her to clarify the meaning:

That is because I am accustomed to giving the meaning of the vocabulary in English. I feel it enables me to compose new sentences. I use this technique instead of translating into Arabic.

The above examples and comparisons of the participants' views indicate that teachers cannot be criticised entirely for using translation. However, in the same way, there are no criteria that control or dominate a teacher's approach in the classroom. In other words, teachers are free to do whatever they want in the classroom. Thus, the students' expectations are created by the teachers themselves. If students are accustomed to translation, this is a result of the teachers' classroom techniques and practices.

It is also worth mentioning that the use of Arabic can be attributed to other factors, including firstly the overall low level of the teachers' English proficiency, secondly the level of student proficiency that prevents the teachers from working properly in class, and thirdly the severe shortage of teaching and clarification aids. In other words, if teaching aids were available, this would enable the teachers to clarify some aspects of the curriculum without using translation and, accordingly, would contribute towards reducing the amount of translation into Arabic during English classes.

The use of the L1 in teaching English remains a controversial issue among researchers. On the one hand, researchers such as Atkinson (1993), Ahmed and Jusoff (2009), Celik (2008), Del la Colina and Mayo (2009), Deller and Rinvolucri (2002), Greggio and Gill (2007), McMillan and Rivers (2011), Jingxia (2010), and Stevick (1990) argue that teaching English using the L1 can have a positive impact on learning. For example, Atkinson (1993) advocates the use of the L1, as it can encourage learners who are at a low level and/or from a particular age group, such as adults and teenagers, because they may find learning a language difficult and frustrating particularly in the early stages of learning it. Thus, this use of the L1 can help to build their confidence. As Atkinson (1993:13) suggests, "For many learners, occasional use of the L1 gives them the opportunity to show that they are intelligent, sophisticated people". However, he also claims that the integration of the L1 with CLT is valuable "if it is used at appropriate times and in appropriate ways" (p.2). Cook (2001) further argues that the use of the L1 can be regarded as scaffolding for constructing the basics to promote further learning.

The literature (Butzkamm 1998, Cook 2001) also shows that using the L1 is a beneficial strategy from the cognitive and sociolinguistic perspectives. From the cognitive point of view, the use of the L1 as a cognitive tool enables individuals, through their cognitive ability in their L1, to understand and make sense of their L2 learning. As De la Campa and Nassaji (2009:743) point out, "Banning L1 would ignore the cognitive reality that connecting new concepts to pre-existing knowledge creates better chances for language

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learning success". In addition, the L1 can be seen as a socio-cognitive mediation tool which helps to collect ideas that encourage interaction among learners (2005).

On the other hand, different arguments have been put forward against the use of the L1 in teaching English (Cook 2001, Deller and Rinvolucri 2002, Harbord 1992, Krashen 1985, Phillipson 1996). It could be argued that the non-use of L1 will increase the chance of learning a target language. Krashen (1985) points out that one of the disadvantages associated with using the L1 in EFL classrooms is that it inhibits learners from acquiring the required input in the L2. Similarly, the use of Arabic, as evidenced in the data, has led to a lack of exposure to English in the Libyan context, which consequently contributes to Libyan students' weak English proficiency. Other researchers go further, arguing that the use of the L1 is likely to be an indicator of inadequate proficiency among non-native speaker teachers (Harbord 1992, Turnbull 2001). Thus, the over-use of the L1 may cause confusion and negative consequences for learners. More specifically, it is a source of interference, which leads to learners blending the structures of the systems of L1 and the TL, thereby causing errors and creating difficulties for them. According to Dulay et al. (1982, cited in Al-Mahrooqi 2012:29), interference is "an automatic transfer, due to habit, of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language".

On the basis of the above review, many studies have examined the use and role L1 in the L2 classroom (Ahmad and Jusoff 2009, Carless 2007, De la Campa and Nassaji 2009, Malik 2010, Mansor 2017, Shuchi and Islam 2016, Yavuz 2012). A research study conducted by Shuchi and Islam (2016) in two different teaching contexts (Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia) investigated the use of L1 (Bengali and Arabic) in two universities. They examined 1,000 students and 30 teachers' attitudes using two surveys containing identical questions. The findings suggest that the target language should be increased and used whenever conceivable and that the main role of the L1 "is to supply scaffolding to lower affective filters by making the FL and classroom environment comprehensible" (Shuchi and Islam 2016: 71).

Two main negative effects of the over-use of Arabic in the Libyan EFL classroom were noticed during the observation. Firstly, the aim of CLT is to increase learners' exposure to the target language, but Libyan students have little chance to practise English. This is supported by Krashen and Terrell (1983, cited in Salah and Farrah 2012:404), who indicate that:

L1 use should not be included in the English classroom to increase students' exposure to the foreign language, since students acquire the target language through the same way they acquire their L1.

Secondly, the observation and note-taking revealed that the students seem to be accustomed to translating every single word into Arabic during the lesson. This was also noted by Harbord (1992), who argues that the overuse of the L1 makes students believe that word for word translation is a useful technique in L2 learning. Accordingly, the students work on the basis that it is helpful to translate the meaning of the English into their mother tongue. Therefore, my conclusion is that the over-use of Arabic during English classes has a clear and serious impact on Libyans students' level of English proficiency. The total dependency on Arabic ignores the idea that an English class is a space in which students can be helped to acquire as much English as possible, particularly in Libya, where the classroom is the only environment in which they can learn English.

Similarly, the literature on the Arabic context also revealed the dominant use of Arabic in learning English (Dmour 2015, Kharma and Hajjaj 1989, Omar 2014, Orafi 2008); for example, Omar (2014) revealed the dominance of Arabic in teaching and learning English in the Libyan classroom.

To return to the consistency of classroom practice regarding CLT implementation, the teachers' actual practice appeared to deviate from the instructions laid out in the teachers' handbooks. For example, the first stage of the pre-reading activity skills requires the students to discuss in pairs ideas relevant to all four categories, for example, regarding the topic of 'sportspeople'. They should then be encouraged to discuss this topic so the aim is to allow the students to practise English through this pair work activity.

However, in practice, a teacher started reading these categories and translating them with the students into the L1, and the students did not have any opportunity to perform the task themselves. Additionally, it can be argued that the teachers did not demonstrate that they had fully grasped the purpose and aim of this stage of the lesson.

T: (In Arabic) These are general questions, but you should concentrate on the "best", "worst" and "greatest".

Thus, in brief, it may be argued that the classroom practice is characterised by the use of the L1 and a teacher-centred approach.

5.4.5 Students' participation in the classroom:

One of the constant aims of CLT is to engage students in effective participation by providing them with an opportunity to discuss different negotiable topics on the curriculum. However, it was observed that student participation rarely occurred, and was confined to a very small number of students, who uttered a few words or simple phrases.

There follows a summary of my observation of the third literary secondary class. Mona was teaching reading lessons 1 and 2 of unit 5 (Literature). She started by telling the students that they were going to study an interesting subject and then read out the title "Literature". She then wrote the word "Literature" on the board and stated its meaning in English. Next she began to teach reading lessons 1 and 2, entitled 'Identifying styles of writing'. She started teaching the "Before you read' stage by reading the following command. "Discuss these questions in groups". She read out the first question and answered it, then asked the students what the kind of fiction they prefer reading. She explained the meaning of 'fiction' by describing it as any writing that is imaginary, or the art of writing stories. Following the same pattern, Mona continued to read out all of the questions, and answer them. When she had finished answering all of the questions, she moved on to the second stage, "While you read". The following transcription illustrates the first part of her classroom teaching.

Table 5-7 Observational transcript and summary of the literature lesson (19/3/2015, 9:15 am)

	Mona: Unit 5 Literature. We are going to talk about an interesting subject. This subject is called 'Literature'. Mona: *Writes the word 'Literature' on the board and gives its meaning in English.* Mona: Literature is poetry, books and written books. Mona: There is another meaning of literature. That is poetry, books, writing poetry and written books. Mona: Lessons 1 and 2: 'Reading: identifying styles of writing'. Mona: Before you read, pay attention. Mona: Discuss these questions in groups. Mona: Question one, I will write it down,' Do you read when you travel?' 'Why? /why not?' Mona: Yes, I read. I enjoy reading when I am travelling. I think that the journey can be boring unless you read something. Mona: 'Do you read when you travel? 'Re-answer. Sts: No. Mona: 'Why not/ why do you not read when you travel?'

	Mona: I will go on to read the second question. 'Do you prefer to read fiction or non-fiction?'
	Mona: The first word 'fiction'. Its meaning in English is anything that is only imaginary, not fact.
	Mona: Another meaning of fiction is the art of writing stories.
	Mona: *The third question, Mona reads the question*.
	Mona: 'Who are your favourite authors writing in Arabic?'
	Mona: Favourite authors in Arabic.
	Mona: Like what?
	Sts: Nizer Qabbani.

As shown, the above episode illustrates Mona's strategy of teaching the "Before you read" stage. It is clear that Mona was performing every single task during the lesson. She started by writing the title of the unit on the board. She read it out and then answered all the questions in the "Before you read stage" herself. Additionally, Mona was in complete control of her class. She herself carried out almost every step of the lesson, from reading the instructions to answering the questions.

The students participated in the class very little. Some wrote down the answers, while others watched the teacher and remained silent. Thus, it seems that the students did not have an opportunity to practise the language and share their answers.

In the same vein, different views were expressed regarding students' participation during the interviews; for example, Sami pointed out that student participation is the first difficulty that arises when teachers try to implement CLT:

The first problem is student participation in the classroom. The implementation of CLT rests on shared participation between the teacher and students. We need more participation by the students in order to perform our roles and present excellent materials to them. Students always want the teacher to translate every word. They do not want to use their minds. They always depend on the teacher, but we try to change their ways and beliefs and get them to participate in many ways. We try to use the CLT approach (interview no.3 with Sami)

As Sami was not the first teacher to criticise student participation, his response may reflect and justify Mona's classroom practice. He stated that the students' unwillingness to participate caused the teachers problems during the class.

Likewise, the majority of the teachers touched on the teacher/student role in the light of the curriculum reform; for example, Osama stated that there had been no change in these roles:

The problem with changing the type of the curriculum from a central curriculum to one that concentrates on the students is that there has not been any change in these roles. The learning process still depends on the teacher. (Interview no.9 with Osama)

However, the views he expressed differs from that of Sally. She gave me an impression of her role before and after her implementation of CLT. When she was asked about the students' role and her own role, she told me that CLT provides her with multiple tracks which enable her to engage the students in the lesson:

When I first started teaching, and before I was able at the Academy of Graduate Studies to study CLT as a subject, I used to come into the class, explain in English and write on the board. I felt that all the students simply looked at me and wanted the lesson to end but, when I applied CLT and used group discussions, the students began to participate in the class. I also asked the students to do a presentation in front of me. They have become accustomed to participating in my classes. At the outset, the students were surprised and then they got used to it. (Interview no.10 with Sally)

From the above, it seems that student involvement in the lesson is more likely to be related to the teacher's ability because teachers are considered the keystone of the class. Furthermore, they have a clear influence on student participation in the class, as Mohmmed confirmed, when he said:

The problem in the classroom lies in the teachers themselves, since a student is like dough in the teacher's hands and the teacher moulds this dough. I wouldn't be able to form this dough if I were a weak teacher. (Interview no.4 with Mohammed)

It might also be argued that the lack of student participation in the classroom leads to their decreased motivation and self-confidence, as student involvement has an obvious impact on building students' motivation and confidence (Dörnyei 2001).

This category can be regarded as an expected result of the two previous categories, which are the adoption of the traditional method of the teacher-centred approach and the widespread use of translation into the L1 (Arabic). That means that the class instruction follows a teacher-centred approach (Ansarey 2012, Chang and Goswami 2011, Coskun

2011), that adopts the traditional methods, which make students reluctant to engage actively in the classroom.

This challenge to student participation is further noted in other EFL contexts (Ansarey 2012, Chang and Goswami 2011, Coskun 2011); for example, Coskun (2011) observed two teachers with regard to CLT implementation in a Turkish context; the observation revealed that both teachers dominated the classrooms by conducting the discussion themselves. As Coskun (2011:18) argues, "there was almost no active interaction among students and the teacher did most of the talking". Like Chang and Goswami (2011) also investigated CLT implementation; the findings from their research involving seven Taiwanese teachers revealed that student resistance to class participation is one of the main barriers to CLT.

A comparison of Mona's actual practice with the aim of the lesson reveals a mismatch between the theoretical plan of the lesson and its realisation. Teachers would best practise CLT and initiate discussion by asking their students to focus on pictures and providing them with an opportunity to discuss the first question: "Do you read when you travel? Why? /Why not?", in groups of three or four. The students should be given time to make notes prior to the discussion. The teachers should move around the students, listening and asking them to give reasons for their answers; however, actual practice showed that the teachers answered all of the questions, with very little participation by the students.

5.4.6 Reading aloud

One particular aspect of teaching the reading lessons on the curriculum is the strategy of reading aloud. The eight observational classes show that reading aloud appears to be an essential step in teaching. Almost all of the teachers read word by word, paragraph by paragraph, with a continuous translation of any difficult words. They stood in front of the class or moved around the desks and read. In the same way, the students were asked to stand up and read aloud, but were interrupted by the continuous correction of their pronunciation.

This method reminded me of my old classes, when the GTM employed repetition, copying and memorisation. It seems that meaning is rarely a matter for negotiation. The following observational transcript illustrates several aspects related to the teaching of a reading lesson. This too is drawn from Mona's teaching of a third year class in the

literary stage. When Mona had finished the "Before you read" stage, she moved on to teach "While you read".

Table 5-8 Observational transcript and summary of a Reading lesson: identifying styles of writing

	Mona: 'While you read'.
	Mona: Now we are going to number two, 'While you read'.
	Mona: 'while you read'. Now do exercise A in the workbook, page 30.
	Mona: Before we go to the workbook, we are going to do some reading about Mousa.
	Mona: I am going to read now. 'Mousa'.
	Mona: Two texts, text 1 and text 2.
	Mona: Text one, about what, about Mousa.
	Mona: *(Starts reading)* 'I enjoy reading a good story'.
	Mona: 'I enjoy reading a good story'.
	Mona: 'I mean, I mean an exciting story with plenty of action, plenty of action'.
	Mona: 'I've tried reading other kinds of novels'. *Underline this one*
	Mona: 'Other kinds of novels, but I prefer this kind'.
	Mona: 'They are relaxing. They are relaxing and easy to read.' *Under line*. 'They are relaxing and easy to read'.
	Mona: 'Sometimes, sometimes I feel like reading at home and I often read, I often read on the bus.
	Mona: 'I travel a lot by bus, I travel a lot by bus, and the journeys can be boring, so it is good to have something to read. So it is good to have something to read'.

The above episode illustrates how Mona taught the "While you read" stage; she started reading the two texts aloud and the students simply listened. When she had finished reading the text, the students were asked to read the text again individually. As shown in the transcript, Mona continued reading sentence by sentence. While reading a text, she sometimes repeated certain phrases and words. During the stimulated-recall interview, she justified what she did using the following rationale:

I read the text out loud, because I think it is one of the ways to teach the reading lesson. To enable students to answer the questions in the text, I have to read the text, highlighting the difficult words so, when the students have understood the text, they can answer the questions...Yes, you're right, during my reading, I repeated some sentences many times because I need to make sure that the students know the correct pronunciation of the words. Students should be aware of the relationship between the sound and spelling of the words. You know, some letters are not uttered, for example in "while". Students need to be aware of these things. (Interview no.6 with Mona)

Different views have been expressed regarding the subject of reading aloud; for example, Gibson (2008:30) posits one of the arguments against reading aloud in class: "it is boring, stressful and the speaker uses most of their brain power in the process of reading aloud, leaving little for comprehension" yet, during the stimulated-recall interview, Hana also described a good teacher as one who asks the students to read the text by themselves, when asked about the respective benefits of making students read out loud and individually. The following is her perception of reading aloud:

What good teachers do is to give the words and ask the students to read them by themselves. It is similar to when a young child is learning the alphabet and you give him words to read. In the same way, English is considered to be just as difficult by my students. Thus, I'm trying to teach them how to read the passage because, when students get used to that from me, they will stop worrying. The second point is that, if I read the text, I will lose the students' attention. If a text is long, I will lose their attention. (Interview no.20 with Hana)

From the above, it is clear that Hana perceived reading aloud as a technique that helped her to keep her students attentive because her students anticipate being asked to read aloud at any moment during the lesson.

The data revealed that reading aloud, whether by the teacher or students, seems to be one of the features of teaching reading lessons. The majority of teachers start teaching by reading the whole text aloud to the class; others walked around the room or up and down between the rows to ensure that all of the students could hear the pronunciation of words. The debate about reading aloud seems to be persistent among researchers (Gabrielatos 2002, Gibson 2008, Huang 2010, Wilson 2010). Wilson (2010) responded to the five arguments mentioned by one teacher about the benefits of reading aloud, by arguing that not all students enjoy it, many of those who keep their nose in their book and just listen. He also stated that this manner of reading does not activate students or bring the text to life. Consequently, it causes students to fall asleep in class.

However, other researchers have a very different attitude; for example, Huang (2010) advocates the use of reading aloud in the learning process, arguing that it plays a useful and important role in the learning of English. He points out five functions of RA: to practise pronunciation, to improve oral English, to help students gain a deeper understanding, to strength knowledge and to improve the classroom atmosphere. Harmer (2009) states three main useful characteristics for RA: firstly, it helps students

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to link the written and spoken form; secondly, it reveals the students' pronunciation problems; and, thirdly, it stimulates learners to practise.

Returning to the question of the consistency of the CLT principles and the curriculum, a teacher should display different photos of the characters during the lesson, and explain the reason for reading the text, taking into account the communicative principles of stimulating students. The classroom described above can be characterised by the teacher's control rather than free communication. Such a controlled, formal lesson prevents the students from participating and they will feel bored before the lesson even starts, as shown in the observation data. Teachers can encourage and involve students, particularly shy ones, by asking pre-reading questions, as shown in the curriculum. Reading habits can be improved by encouragement and stimulation when teaching English, which has a positive impact on learners. Such techniques are useful in provoking cognitive thinking processes in students.

Reading can be classified into two techniques: "Silent reading and reading aloud". Accordingly, it might be argued that the aim is not the "reading aloud" itself but rather to develop the students' pronunciation, intonation and stress. Taking into consideration the disadvantages of some manners of reading aloud, it should be accompanied by authentic materials, such as newspapers, stories, and photos, which enhance comprehension, although reading can offer other advantages. As Semistraitis (2003:4) points out:

> Every reading leads to some logical conclusions and emotional impressions. Every reading enriches the vocabulary. The teacher must connect what is read with the students' personal experience and personal emotional impressions. It can be a topic for discussions in the class.

However, the observed teacher's practice conflicts with the principles of the curriculum whereby learners are viewed as effective agents who build their own knowledge based on their previous learning. During this observed lesson, learning seemed to be a passive process of information transfer rather than knowledge building. The learners seem to copy the source of authority, the teacher, rather than constructing and building their own understanding through the encouragement and stimulation of the teacher.

5.4.7 The use of pair and group work:

One of the requirements of teaching the curriculum as well as one of the principles of CLT is to engage students in pair and group work. Although all of the participants highlighted the importance of the kinds of tasks that contribute to increasing student

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participation and making them more active in class, based on the observation of seven classes (apart from Sally's), it seems that pair or group work tends not to be implemented in the activities requiring it, Consequently, different views emerged regarding the implementation of these activities in the class.

These can be traced to the challenges mentioned during the stimulated-recall interviews. For example, when I asked Adam why he had skipped the pair work activity, he replied:

It is impossible, because there are 45 students and, if I set them this task, it would adversely impact on my time plan. And if I gave them this task, I would find them discussing other subjects, such as what they'd had for breakfast or football. The large class size hampers me. We are supposed to have fixed desks and a maximum number of 17 students per class in order to be able to communicate with them. Furthermore, the classroom is too small to divide the students into groups. It is also difficult to pass among them.

From the above illustration, it is clear that, in Adam's view, it is impossible to implement group or pair work. Adam referred to a range of different challenges, such as the lesson length, class size, the design of the desks and the amount of space in the classroom. Additionally, Adam also perceived that this activity might lead to the students chatting about irrelevant things in class.

The head English inspector also mentioned the issues associated with implementing these activities and the challenges posed by a large class size. He mentioned that it was easier to implement these activities at the preparatory stage level, where the classes were smaller. The following is his description of implementing pair and group work:

For pair and group work activities, we, as English inspectors, apply them when we visit preparatory schools. We apply them, because there are a lot more preparatory schools than secondary schools. Thus, you find the number of students per class to be fewer, which enable us to divide them up and set up competitions. We try to encourage slow students to be more active. (Interview no.3 with the head of English inspection)

On another occasion, I observed that Salma had decided to cancel the implementation of pair work. Salma was teaching a specialised lesson about plants with the third literary year. The lesson's objective was to talk about the uses of the plants and to present and practise the verbs linked to them. Thus, as the first task of the lesson, the students were required to look at various photos and discuss in pairs the different uses of the plants.

However, this task was implemented instead by questioning the students individually. Each student raised her hand to give an answer. The following are some extracts from my fieldwork notes. (Some students had already prepared the answers at home so that they were able to answer the questions; other students had copied the answers from their classmates' books).

During the stimulated-recall interview, Salma gave me the impression that the idea of pair and group work depends on preparation. In other words, the implementation of these tasks in the curriculum did not seem to be a direct response but was based instead on the students' prior preparation of the material. The following is Salma's reason for cancelling the pair work activity:

For the pair work, I just read the question exactly, but I do not apply it. For, if I introduced this task, one student's efforts would be copied by another and there wouldn't be any discussion between the two. What happens is that one student prepares, and the other student doesn't. The one who hasn't prepared will take the other's work and read out the answers to the teacher. It is all prepared beforehand. I tried to apply this pair and group work at the beginning of the year, in week one. When the students are asked to discuss, one student will read the answer she has worked on and another student will read the answer from her classmate's book. Consequently, I stopped doing it because the students were simply copying from each other. (Interview no.2 with Salma)

The above example reflects Salma's view of the practice of pair work. She believed that the implementation of this task led to students copying each other because they did not all undertake the preparatory work.

In another situation, while I was attending a class with another teacher, namely Hana, an English inspector visited her. The lesson was about the weather and climate. During the teaching process, the English inspector interrupted Hana when she skipped a task that required pair work during the "while you read" stage. He told the students to work in pairs. He divided the class into two groups and the students were asked to discuss the information in the two texts. During an informal conversation with him during the class, he informed me: "we try to push the teacher to do this, but we come up against resistance" (informal conversation).

However, Hana was convinced about her own way of teaching this task. A discussion took place between Hana and the English inspector at the end of the class. She stated that the students were required to do this task as homework. During the stimulated-recall interview, she explained her rationale for skipping this task as follows:

I always skip this task, as the students do not use it as a learning experience but as an opportunity to have a chat. Secondly, it causes mayhem in the class and the subject will become annoying. Thirdly, I have a curriculum that needs to be finished by a specific time. It may be unfair on the students, but this task doesn't help me meet my deadline. If I implemented this task, only two or three students would take part in the discussion. It is not expected that the whole class would come up with the correct answers. (Interview no.20 with Hana)

Although the English inspector tried to implement this task in an attempt to encourage Hana to do likewise in her next class, it seems that Hana's beliefs guide her to do what she perceives to be the most appropriate thing. She considered the implementation of this "pair work" task a waste of her time, since the students would simply discuss other subjects in Arabic. Additionally, while the purpose of the question was to involve the students in a discussion, whatever their answers were, it seems that the teacher was intent on the students giving the correct answers.

However, the above teacher's views about the use of pair and group activities contradict some of the students' views. The following is Maryam's response. She expressed her frustration at her teacher's normal response to her efforts, saying:

I love working on questions (pair work). This's my favourite task. Once, I went home and wrote stories and did different activities. The next day, I showed what I had written to my teacher, and felt that she didn't care very much about my work. The teacher has never shown it to the class or given me a positive response. Her response is very common. (Interview no.1 with Maryam)

Another student stated that the first time they took part in pair or group work was at a private centre, as this activity is not used in school:

We've never, ever taken part or worked in pairs or groups at school. The first time I did so was at the centre. Even if this method were to be used in school, I would be unable to talk to the others because the majority would not understand me. They'd call me a show off. They don't implement it because the curriculum is too full already and the teacher

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hasn't enough time. She does and answers everything in class. (Interview no.9 with Yusra)

Yusra's answer confirmed that the students lack the opportunity to take part in tasks of this nature while at school. Yusra touched on various reasons why they are not being implemented in schools, such as the level of her classmates' English, and a full curriculum with strict time constraints.

These results about the implementation of pair and group work correlate other research findings about contexts where English is taught as a second and foreign language (Al Rabadi 2012, Baleghizadeh and Nasrollahi Shahri 2014, Basta 2011, Orafi 2008, Raja and Saeed 2012); for example, Raja and Saeed (2012) investigated the teachers' reluctance to use communicative strategies, such as pair and group work, in their teaching in both the public and private sectors in Pakistan. The teachers gave different reasons for their beliefs, including a shortage of teaching aids, a lack of teacher training which causes ambiguity in the objectives of the communicative principles, the exam-oriented education system, the authority of the teacher's role, the loss of classroom control that such situations brought about and, finally, the noise generated by such activities. Such educational situations are similar to those found in Libya.

The above discussion focused on the teachers' practices and perceptions regarding pair and group work activities and the reason for their choices in the classroom. From what I witnessed during the observation, it appears that the teachers tended not to include these activities in their lessons. Thus, if the teachers' beliefs and views were in favour of pair work, the students would become accustomed to this technique being used in the classroom from the outset, but what actually happens is that students do not have an opportunity to practise using the language.

5.4.8 The students' perceptions of the teachers' practices in the classroom:

One of the motivations for conducting this research was to elicit the students' needs. Therefore, one of my aims was to interview the students to find out what challenges they encounter when learning English using CLT. One of the main interview questions was directed at investigating the students' perceptions of their teachers' practices in the classroom. Although all of the teachers were convinced about their own method of teaching and practice in the classroom, and believed that what they did was appropriate

for their students and matched their level, all of the students expressed dissatisfaction with their teacher's practice in the classroom, which they believed led to their low level in English.

Although the majority of the students did not seem to have attained the required level during the observation, almost all the students interviewed were aware of their teacher's practice. They complained about teaching techniques which did not help to improve their English. For example, when I asked 16 year-old Alham about her attitude to English, she told me frankly, "*I don't like English at all*" but, at the same time, she believed that her teacher's approach could well be the reason for this attitude. She described her teacher's practice as follows:

The way of teaching us depends on the teacher. There are teachers who read the lesson and translate it, other teachers just read and do not deliver a comprehensible content… Honestly, I don't like this method. This method could make me hate English. I want to understand it as a language that I can use. (Interview no.7 with Alham)

The above description shows that different teachers' practices of teaching English can influence the students' attitudes towards learning the language.

Similar views were expressed by 17 year-old Roeda. Her teacher informed me that Roeda was hoping to obtain high grades in the final exam. Roeda was very keen to talk about various issues related to learning English, including teachers' practices:

This is a language that we are supposed to practise more than it just being a subject with marks. We should be experienced in English, especially now everything needs English. It is supposed that the teacher gives us an opportunity to practise English… I'm talking about myself here. Some years, I simply work towards getting good exam grades rather than learning the language. (Interview no.8 with Roeda)

Although sometimes Roeda resorts to memorising in order to obtain a high final mark, she is conscious that the teacher's classroom practice might not help her to use English for communication purposes.

 Moda, who spent more than an hour answering my questions, was also very dissatisfied with her teacher's classroom practice. She mentioned that, although she had been learning English for seven years, she had not benefited from English classes at school. Additionally, she also referred to the rote learning methods:

In class, they use the teachers' handbook. There are even some girls who bring the teachers' book in to answer the questions. We don't get anything out of studying; for example, a story, or how to summarise a paragraph, discuss questions and describe photos. They don't teach us how to do these things. The student is expected to work out the answers at home and brings them to the lesson. The teacher should teach you how to summarise...My friend passes exams and gets high grades, but she can't say the simplest word, she can't read or write it; for example, she memorised the phrase "do you have" without understanding it. It is the English language, something distinctive! Even the Arabic, but they do not pay attention for both the languages. (Interview no.5 with Moda)

These views were similar to those of the male students, who also disagreed with the teachers' strategy of teaching English in class; for example, Idris, who is in his third year of high school (17 years-old), also described the way of learning as follows:

The way of learning is wrong; for example, no student can answer a question off the top of his head (from understanding). They all depend on the teachers' handbook, even the teachers themselves. In Arabic, students may answer the question using their own understanding, but this does not happen in English. A student cannot express or answer based on comprehension. In class, I totally disagree with those teachers who fail to teach us some texts. They consider it unimportant. The most important thing is to give the answers that will help you pass the exam. (Interview no.2 with Idris)

Accordingly, the above descriptions represent the students' concerns as well as reflect their views of the teachers' practices that seem unable to help them to achieve their ambition of speaking English.

Although the students expressed their disagreement with their teachers' practices in the classroom, some students seemed to understand and be aware of the other surrounding factors which restrict their teachers' practices; for example, although Ameera expressed her concern and dissatisfaction regarding the overuse of Arabic among teachers, she justified this as due to the low level of English proficiency of some of her classmates, when asked about the reasons for this:

They (teachers) may feel that they able to convey the content and information to the students because they (the students) do not have experience in English. (Interview no.6 with Ameera)

While Yusra criticised the technique of teaching in her school when she compared it with a private centre for learning English, she mentioned some of the challenges associated with teaching the curriculum and suggested solutions to them:

They should increase the number and duration of the English classes. They should increase the school time to 3:00pm instead of 12:30pm, which is lunchtime. We should have extra classes in order to visit language labs. The problem is that there is not enough time and the teachers want to finish the curriculum. (Interview no.9 with Yusra).

Although the students criticised the method of teaching English in the classroom, they also demonstrated an understandings of the challenging factors. It could be argued that the teachers should still take responsibility, as these challenges appear to be unrelated to certain teaching practices, such as the overuse of the L1 and involving just two or three students in the lesson out of the whole class.

5.5 Conclusion

A lot of ELT curriculum innovation has adopted CLT-based methods as a teaching approach for enhancing English teaching in many contexts. Although CLT has spread worldwide as a way of teaching English as a foreign or second language, various problems have arisen regarding its implementation. In the Libyan context, CLT is endorsed as a novel attempt to find a solution to improving English teaching. A new series of textbooks was designed based on CLT and the teachers were asked implement these principles in their practice. Thus, it has been important to examine the teachers' understanding and perceptions of CLT and its implementation. The data reveal a variety of teachers' understanding and perceptions of CLT, some of which reflect the theoretical assumptions of this approach, such as that CLT advocates a focus on communication, or suggest strategies for applying CLT, such as a group work approach. Although the teachers' understanding and perceptions reflect numerous aspects of CLT, there is an overlap between them; for example, CLT, as an approach based on communication, overlaps with cooperation and participation. These aspects of CLT have kept its purposes very broad, and accordingly it is difficult to provide a clear definition of it. Additionally, the teachers' perceptions reveal several beliefs regarding CLT's achievability; for example, some teachers believed that CLT is a way of stimulating motivation, while others participants thought that it is difficult to apply due to various factors, such as the students' level, time constraints and a lack of teacher training.

Although the findings reveal that the majority of teachers were convinced of the value of CLT practices, they were also aware of the barriers which surround its implementation, which leads the teachers to teach according to their pedagogical context rather than the CLT principles. Thus, the observation data show different approaches to its implementation. On the one hand, some participants have a general understanding of the approach, but are unable to apply it because of the realities of Libyan schools, such as lack of teaching aids and language labs. On the other hand, other teachers demonstrated a misunderstanding of its principles, which impeded implementation due to a lack of training; for example, the majority of the teachers stated clearly that they had not received any further training after graduating.

Additionally, the observations with stimulated-recall interviews offer an overall picture of the mechanism of CLT implementation with regard to teaching the curriculum. The

findings showed that the teachers' practices contrast with the content of the curriculum, and that they adapt their teaching practices in consideration of various factors; for example, the students' lack of English proficiency and the large class size do not help teachers to achieve the practical implementation of pair and group work activities. In addition, classroom practices were also characterised by the adoption of the traditional teaching methodologies, where all the teaching is centred on the teachers' practices and instructions in the classroom, using techniques such as reading aloud and translation. Although the observations revealed the challenges which the teachers faced while teaching, the findings also indicated that some teachers' practices appeared to be unacceptable and had a negative influence on their students' participation, such as the overuse of Arabic. The use of stimulated-recall interviews is a novel method in the Libyan secondary school context, as the obtained data gave me the opportunity to explore further and establish why the teachers did not appear to implement the CLT principles outlined in the new ELT curriculum; for example, teachers stated various reasons for their failure to implement pair and group work activities and the students' lack of participation in class.

One of the significant findings is that the students' voices have been heard in this study. The students were given an opportunity to describe their perceptions of their experience of learning English in secondary school for the first time in the Libyan context. The findings revealed the students' dissatisfaction with the majority of their teachers' practices, which do not help them to improve their English proficiency. All of the students mentioned that English classes are geared towards examinations rather than providing an opportunity for the communicative practice of English.

Having discussed the meaning of CLT and its implementation, I will now consider the factors which influence its implementation in the next chapter.

Chapter 6 The Challenging factors related to CLT implementation

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I investigate all of the findings that address the third research question regarding the challenges which Libyan teachers and learners of English face in implementing CLT. I provide a thorough analysis and discussion of these challenges in the light of teachers, students, contextual and socio-cultural factors. Different categories have emerged under each of these factors.

6.2 Teachers' factors

In order to achieve the effective implementation of this approach, the teachers' English level and proficiency should be adequate. The significance of the teacher's role is crucial in implementing CLT, since they are the tools for employing and transferring any teaching methods (Carless 2003, Fullan 2001, Malderez and Wedell 2007, Thompson 1996). The following section explores the challenges that the teachers face, which are divided into the following six categories:

1- Teachers' English proficiency level
2- Teachers' lack of pedagogical knowledge
3- Teachers' heavy workload
4- Teachers' low salaries
5- Teachers' beliefs
6- Non-experienced teachers are assigned to teach beginners.

6.2.1 Teachers' English proficiency level

Almost all of the teachers stated that they lack English proficiency regarding practising the CLT approach; for example, in the first interview with Adam, he indicated the weakness of teachers as one of the factors hindering CLT implementation:

I can summarise these problems in three aspects and I will not exempt myself from these problems. One of the shortcomings is the weakness of the teachers and this is due to several factors, which are the weakness of the students and the inappropriate curriculum. There is an urgent need to provide Libyan teachers with extensive training to enable them to improve their level of English. (Interview no.1 with Adam)

The first English inspector also noted this issue, saying:

The teachers should themselves be able to speak English. Teachers need to work and make efforts which will enable them to convey their ideas in English language. We miss this aspect. Someone who lacks these things cannot impart them to others. We have a deficiency with regard to teachers. (Interview no.1 with the first English inspector)

Although the teachers are restricted by multiple factors regarding CLT implementation, it is shaped and influenced by the teachers' level. Thus, a lack of proficiency and English practice affects the teachers' practices and plays an essential role in making the CLT approach inaccessible. The observations revealed that teachers encounter problems while speaking and expressing themselves in English. A lot of them seemed to lack confidence, particularly regarding their pronunciation of words, as they repeatedly made errors in this area when delivering explanations of the lessons.

Another teacher emphasised that the actual exchange of meaning and communication during a lesson depended on the skills of both the teacher and the students. She believed that the implementation of this approach has a direct relation with the teacher's knowledge of English. She mentioned that this approach helps to improve learners' ability which is difficult to achieve due to the teachers' lack of English proficiency. In fact, she frankly admitted that she did not try to use CLT herself for this very reason:

It is a good way, but it requires a person who has good information and knowledge. Additionally, it requires a teacher who is familiar with how to communicate with students. In fact, it is an approach that needs skills from both the teachers and students. Honestly, I've found that it's difficult to create genuine communication between myself and my students. I can tell you that, as a teacher, I need to improve and practise English as well as my students. A failure to practise English both in and outside the class affects our language ability and proficiency as teachers. (Interview no.6 with Mona)

Thus, the participants believed that a relationship exists between the EL proficiency of the teachers and the successful implementation of CLT. Mona's description of CLT highlights an important aspect, which is that a failure to practise English has a clear impact both on the teacher and students' competence. This factor has affected teachers' implementation of the curriculum. In other words, even if teachers are convinced about the value of CLT, they might be unable to implement it due to this factor. Malderez and

Wedell (2007) described a teacher as a key factor in the efficient implementation of a teaching approach. Apart from the teachers' belief, and whether or not this is compatible with this approach, teachers should be trained and exposed to English, as it is a foreign language to them.

6.2.2 Teachers' lack of pedagogical knowledge

Teacher's lack of educational knowledge leads to the loss of their ability to assess their students' level in regard to teaching productive language skills; namely, speaking and writing. Consequently, they usually face difficulty in assessing their students and avoid teaching these skills. The following is a quote from Adam:

Actually, I'm not sure; teachers do not trust the students or do not have confidence in themselves because they can't assess their students. Students might have achieved a good level from elsewhere; for instance, due to the social circumstances of their parents, they might travel abroad with their parents for studying purposes. We find students who have a good level of English and a good background of language structure and academic writing. Teachers lack this skill or technique for evaluating their students. Even if a student participates in class, the teacher may stop his/her because of the teacher's weakness (interview no.1 with Adam)

The first inspector expressed the same concern regarding the teachers' insufficient pedagogical knowledge that prevents them from assessing their students' skills. He stated that the teachers omit these activities and consider them unimportant:

When teachers come to teaching writing or speaking (conversation), they cancel or omit these activities. They skip the writing sections and say that these parts do not form part of the curriculum. The reason is that the teachers are incapable of teaching these sections because they face obstacles in implementing these activities. (Interview no.1 with the first language inspector)

Almost all of the teachers admitted that they do not teach productive skills and this can be attributed to various related factors, such as teaching aids, so it is not purely a product of their lack of pedagogical knowledge. Other teachers emphasised teaching these skills, acknowledging that they are central to learning English. They illustrated that there is a purpose behind teaching them, such as grammar rules.

Although these teachers tried to implement these skills, the actual implementation of them does not reflect the theoretical principles of CLT as it was designed to be used in

the curriculum because of other factors, such as teaching aids. Salma described the importance of these activities:

Some teachers omit these kinds of activities such as listening and speaking because, in their view, they are unimportant, but in fact the purpose of these activities is that there are important grammatical rules underlying them; for example, a question tag. Consequently, I can't skip or omit these activities. For me, I teach this activity and ask my students to engage in conversation and explain to them that the purpose of this activity is to elicit an important grammar rule. (Interview no.2 with Salma)

She has tried to use multiple techniques in order to teach these skills:

Even though there are no facilities to help me to employ these activities in class, I try to do my best in order to convey the multiple tasks on the curriculum; for instance, listening activities need a lab to operate the cassette, so I bring a recorder with me, play the cassette and let the students listen to the tasks. For the conversation and speaking activities, the students are asked to read from the book. It is just reading practice. Writing activities – actually, the students cannot write. I write everything down on the board.

Salma expressed surprise and concern at the fact that some of her colleagues do not teach and omit writing and listening activities. She discussed this with a colleague, who told her that she does not teaching these activities as they are not included in the final exam and also there is insufficient time to do so. Consequently, the exam has influenced some teachers' practices regarding the teaching of productive skills (see section 6.4.5).

To sum up, the teachers' lack of knowledge plays a significant role in the challenges related to CLT implementation. As Westbrook (2013) argues, the position of teachers as a source of knowledge is challenged by the perceived demands of CLT in the global curriculum. This lack of knowledge was reflected in the teachers' practices regarding the curriculum. Accordingly, two categories were noticed during the observation; namely, that the teachers are still adopting the traditional way of teaching and the use of Arabic and translation during English classes (see sections 5.4.3 & 5.4.4)

6.2.3 Teachers' heavy workload

"It stands to reason that teachers will not have strong intentions to adopt the innovation if these uncontrollable and negative factors are not moved from the context" Wu (2002:34). The teachers complained about the heavy workload assigned to them.

Secondary school teachers are usually required to teach around three to four classes per day throughout the week, which makes them feel exhausted and they cannot concentrate properly on teaching the curriculum. Additionally, a teacher is sometimes asked to teach different stages of the same years, such as first and second years of secondary school, which leaves them feeling confused between the different courses books used in each stage. Sami, for example, highlighted this point:

The classifications of the different stages from the first, second and third years of the secondary stage are really difficult. The teacher sometimes needs to prepare lessons for the first, second and third years. It makes teachers feel confused and tired. This does not help and leads us to concentrate on just one or two books of one stage, when we should concentrate on six books - two books per stage. (Interview no.3 with Sami)

Hana also stated that the lack of coordination of her school's administration led to the teachers' fatigue:

If the school's management gives me one a class with a minimum 20 students, the idea of CLT would be beautiful and strong and its value could be affirmed, but I enter a class where there are 40 students. I feel confused about teaching three classes. I have a fourth and fifth class and I also have a sixth class. Where I entered the class, I felt exhausted. There is no organisation by the school's administration. This factor causes teacher fatigue. I sometimes feel that I just want to teach my class and leave. (Interview no.20 with Hana)

Hana expressed her dissatisfaction with her school management, stressing that it is supposed to be more organized and provide her with one class in which to teach and implement CLT. She stated that she sometimes explains the lesson then leaves, due to fatigue.

This point was also made by the first inspector, who was keen that the teachers' timetables should be organised to enable them to implement CLT:

Another point is not to overburden the teacher. It is unacceptable to give teachers a lot of classes and exhaust them. The timetable should be distributed in a logical way. (Interview no.1 with the 1st inspector)

Although these sides may not be noticeable by the schools' management, they are supposed to be taken into the consideration, since they influence CLT implementation.

6.2.4 Teachers' low salaries

Another factor which seems to affect the teachers' motivation regarding CLT implementation is the financial factor. Some teachers complained about their financial status which makes them seek extra sources of financial support. Consequently, the teachers undertake different jobs in order to afford the cost of living; for example, one teacher's salary was 800 D.L, which was insufficient to meet the current living costs in Libya. Osama considers this issue as one of the main problems that teachers face, when asked about the general problems related to CLT implementation:

The first problem is the low level of the teachers' salary. Teachers are forced to taken on extra jobs in order to meet their living expenses. (Interview no.9 with Osama)

This point was also strongly confirmed by the first inspector, who mentioned that teachers have some concerns and the State should seek to improve their status in order to achieve the implementation of the curriculum and its CLT principles; for example, he described these factors as "disturbing psychological factors":

Even economic factors play a role in teaching the curriculum; for example, a teacher with a family earns a salary of 800 D.L per month, which is not enough. This is an annoying psychological factor for the teacher. The teacher becomes frustrated. It is difficult for someone to work when feeling frustrated. There are other aspects that disturb the teachers; for example, if a teacher drives a taxi and a student gets into the taxi and asks the teacher to take him somewhere, the teacher will feel embarrassed.

He also added:

If we want teachers to concentrate on their teaching, they shouldn't be worried about financial or economic issues, such as living costs. These issues make them want to leave the teaching profession. (Interview no.1 with 1st inspector)

This factor may play a role in CLT implementation, since one of the requirements for CLT is that teachers are more active facilitators in class. Thus, this factor of the teachers' anxiety about their financial situation may decrease their motivation regarding CLT implementation. This economic factor affects and directs the teachers' performance and motivation, which has a potential impact on CLT implementation (Milanowski 2007).

6.2.5 Teachers' beliefs

Borg (2003) explains that belief is part of teachers' cognition, which he suggests is a term that is used to "refer to the unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching - what teachers know, believe, and think". Although these beliefs have been described as unobservable, it could be argued that they have a strong influence on teachers' practices and can be noticed in teaching.

Some teachers taught according to their beliefs. They appeared to make complex assumptions about teaching. These beliefs seem to be followed during their teaching practices and were also discussed by several teachers.

As Borg (2003) suggests, these beliefs are based on former assumptions; for example, a belief in strict teachers and the authority of school principals. More specifically, a teacher is a leader whose influence extends beyond the classroom. A teacher is a figure who should be respected by not being interrupted in class, while school principals are the persons responsible for everything within the school and the power to control all school-related issues. They are usually characterised or seen as strict persons. Although some of these beliefs might not be in the required direction, human beings usually follow their beliefs based on these accumulated assumptions which cannot be abandoned easily because people are convinced of their beliefs.

Some participants are likely to be affected by their prior knowledge and learning experiences, that shape their classroom practices. This point was also indicated by the first inspector, who mentioned that the teachers' beliefs may inhibit their perceptions of the new curriculum:

Another issue that may need to be added is the teachers' beliefs, what the teacher believes; for example, I have a new curriculum with certain principles and regulations, but these principles or pillars do not match the teacher who will teach this curriculum. The teacher doesn't know these principles. Therefore, implementing the new curriculum becomes a problem. We are suffering from psychological problems due to having to persuade the teachers. The teachers should be convinced about this idea so that, when it is implemented, we will all be aiming in the same direction. When a teacher is convinced by the ideas in the book that skills such as writing and speaking skills are supposed to be taught, then benefit will be achieved from this curriculum.

He added:

During the inspection process, it is notable that the teachers omit speaking and writing skills. We, as Libyans, when we changed the curriculum, we forget the teacher (the tool) who would apply this curriculum. There is a clash between the teachers' beliefs and the principles of the curriculum. The curriculum comes with ideas and the teacher has other ideas. Thus, we missed the point. The teachers are a problem. They teach and focus on grammar. Even during the inspections, you find they focus on grammar. (Interview no.1 with 1st inspector)

He noticed that, during the inspections, the teachers still need to be persuaded to implement the principles of the curriculum. He described the adherence to their existing beliefs as psychological problems that impede the teaching of the curriculum; for example, the teachers teach in a certain manner and the principles of the curriculum lie in another direction. He also claimed that the teachers focus on teaching grammar to such an extent that some language skills might be neglected.

The beliefs of the school principals are also not excluded from this:

Some school principals don't understand the curricula. Some principals, when they pass by the classroom and hear noise inside the class, think that the class is out of control. The principal doesn't understand that the curriculum is communicative in nature. The principal knocks on the door in order to attract the teacher's attention, and doesn't understand that the nature of the communicative curriculum is like this. They don't know that the communicative curriculum looks like a "beehive" in the class. Thus, what happens is that the teacher takes 80% and students may talk or take part in 10% of the class.

It seems that a lack of awareness of the CLT curriculum principles is not limited to the teachers' beliefs, as the schools principals' views are also often affected by the traditional picture of teaching, where a teacher should be seen to be in control, or run the risk of appearing weak.

This belief was touched on by several of the teachers, who seem to be influenced still by their memories of their own teachers; for example, when Hana was asked about her aim in testing her students' ability to memorise words, she indicated her own teacher's strategy that was followed when she was a student:

I remembered, in the preparatory stages, my teacher X. He read the text and took the new words from it. Then he wrote the words on the board and read out each one and we repeated them after him. If he felt that any of the words were difficult, he reads it several times, and we repeated it after him. He then covered the words on the board and asked who could remember them. He tried to test the students' ability to memorise words, and the next day there was a test. Like what I do with my students. (Interview no.20 with Hana)

It appears that Hana is still affected by the way in which she herself learnt English. It could be argued that this indicates the teacher's lacks of awareness of teaching the curriculum. She has not been provided with any guidance on how to teach the curriculum. This is what the 1st inspector recommended when the interview ended:

In order to make a teacher follow the principles of the curriculum, the teachers' ideas should be changed and this is a psychological phenomenon. Thus, teachers should be given extensive training in order to change their current ideas and inform them about the goals and principles of this curriculum. The state should be persuaded that the teacher is the backbone of this country. (Interview no.1 with 1st inspector)

Thus, in order to realise the proposed change, the development should start with the teachers, since they are the core of the teaching process.

6.2.6 Non-experienced teachers are assigned to teach the first stages of learning English

According to Westbrook (2013:14), "many students spend years of instructions with no progress on basics. If students do not learn the basics early on, the rest of the curriculum is inaccessible to them".

This issue of neglecting the first stages by assigning non-experienced teachers to teach these makes it difficult for teachers in the secondary stages to implement CLT. This can be attributed to the incorrect beliefs of the school principals, who focus on the final year of the third secondary year because of the entrance exam.

All of the teachers referred to this point that seems to bother them and create barriers to CLT implementation; for example, Salma complained about her students' weak foundation this year to the extent that she had gone to the school administration and

asked them to give her one class in order to concentrate on teaching them. She commented:

The reason is the policy of the school management in general. They say that the third secondary year is the year of qualification so it should be taught by a qualified teacher. They believe that the final year needs a good teacher to teach students whereas their view of the basic years - the first and second years - is normal, since the exams are internal to the school, which is different from the final year. We don't have basic rules. (Interview no.2 with Salma)

Adam expressed a similar opinion:

Unfortunately, what is happening in Libya is that teachers with a low level teach the foundation years and this is a big mistake. A good teacher should teach the early stages in order to build a good generation in English, so this good generation will improve, despite the lack of facilities. (Interview no.1 with Adam)

In fact, this strategy was also acknowledged by Adam's school principal, who informed me, during an informal conversation, that he had asked Adam to teach only the final year of the secondary stage because he is a skilful teacher and before Adam moves on to the inspection department next year.

The same situation applied to Sally, who told me that she was required to teach the final year of the secondary stage when she started teaching, due to her high level:

The first stage which I taught was the third year of secondary school; this was because my degree was excellent, after four years at university. When I first came to teach in this school, I met an English inspector who had taught me at university. He praised my level. Thus, the administration asked me to teach the third year. It was difficult to teach the third year of secondary school as a novice teacher. I was supposed to be asked to teach the first or second year, especially since I had no previous experience of teaching, at least until I was accustomed to the nature of teaching and the new environment (School); for example, how to control a class. (Interview no.10 with Sally)

Thus, there appears to be a general belief among the schools principals that good teachers should teach the certificate year, while the foundation years are neglected or taught by less qualified staff.

This strategy not only hinders CLT implementation, but also causes a delay for the teachers to complete their curriculum in the later stage. It also reflects contradictory views between the teachers and inspectors. On the one hand, the majority of the teachers admitted that the students enter the secondary stage without any background to the extent that the teachers find that they need to explain some aspects of the foundation years that the students should have been taught already. Many views have been expressed about this issue; for example, Ali's described the problems which he faced while teaching third year classes as follows:

The curriculum is based on a continuous series, from the fifth year of primary school until the third year of secondary school. When students reach the third year of the secondary stage, they are supposed to be totally prepared and equipped with a strong foundation in the basics but, as a teacher, I find a gap and it is difficult to teach all of the previous stages in just a year; for example, when I teach the passive voice, that depends on the verb "to be" and the past participle of the verb, the students should be familiar with the past participle of the verb from the previous years, but are not, so how can explain the active and passive voice, especially in all tenses? (Interview no.5 with Ali)

Another teacher, who felt unenthusiastic about the idea of CLT, also indicated that her students lack of the essential basics caused obstacles for her with regard to CLT, when she said:

I began teaching from scratch with the students and this is because the basis is wrong in all of the skills - reading, grammar and writing. I try to improve their level. The lessons are divided into reading, writing, listening and speaking. The problem I face is because the students' foundation was wrong when learning English. When I begin with them from scratch, I feel tired and find myself teaching two curricula instead of one. I combine teaching both primary and secondary. (Interview no.10 with Sally)

Teachers who teach the secondary stages find themselves forced to cover various aspects of the previous stages in order to convey a certain point about the secondary curriculum that consequently causes them to fall behind with the final year curriculum.

On the other hand, the head of the inspection department, for example, was dissatisfied that the teachers explain these points from the previous stages, since it waste time:

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The teachers are supposed to explain their lessons step by step, but what is happening, for example, is that the teachers explain " if condition" and say to the students that you do not study it in the third preparatory school , come to explain it. They waste time and gives lessons from the third preparatory year. They aren't required to do that. (Interview no.3 with the head inspection)

Although the above illustration reflects the head inspector's view that the teachers should be responsible for teaching the required curriculum, this contrasts with the teachers' views, that emphasise the need to explain these rules as they are based on the previous grammar or writing rules; however, this does not reflect all the inspectors' views. For example, the first inspector stated that he faced this problem when teaching:

When I was a teacher, I faced this problem. The body in front of me is a body from the first year of secondary school, but the educational mentality is that of the fifth or sixth year of primary school. This is a problem, as the student lacks the background knowledge. The student doesn't have the level of the curriculum that is taught. Thus, you fail to teach the curriculum in front of you. (Interview no.1 with 1st inspector)

It is clear that this issue of failing to equip students with a good foundation for learning English from the early stages causes a major gap in English learning in general and CLT implementation in particular. In other words, if learners are not equipped with the basics at an early stage, the curriculum will be inaccessible to them and so, consequently, the CLT principles are more likely to be impeded. Additionally, this issue has a clear influence on the students' levels, as will be presented in the following section.

6.3 Students' factors

Students' factors also play a role in the application and non-application of CLT. Many research studies have highlighted the role of the students' level and English background in CLT implementation (Ahmad and Rao 2013, Ansarey 2012, Farooq 2015, Li 1998, Yu 2001). In this study, it seems that the students' level and background in English have made the task of implementing CLT more difficult. Two categories are investigated in this section:

1- Students' levels and background in English
2- Students' attitudes towards English

6.3.1 Students' levels and background in English

Although the majority of the teachers indicated the weak level of their students in English, that seemed to cause obstacles to implementing this approach, different views have been expressed about this issue; for example, Adam summarised the weakness of the students as one of three essential problems in implementing CLT. He regarded the curriculum as inappropriate because of the weakness of the students' level and background in English. Additionally, he viewed the students' levels as the criteria according to which he selects his method of teaching:

With the level of the students whom I'm teaching now, I can't choose CLT as my teaching approach.

Adam justified the skipping the first step of his teaching lesson because of the low level of his students:

You saw the evidence when you attended the class. At the beginning of the lesson, there was "Before you read". This indicates that it is supposed that the students' English background should be good. It is impossible to follow this way and explain this point. My way is to give "While you read!" first and then go back to "Before you read". This is further evidence that the students' background in English is weak and the curriculum is designed for second language learners. (Interview no.1 with Adam)

Abdullah also regarding CLT as difficult to implement, given the level of his students. Additionally, he mentioned that his implementation and use of CLT might occur indirectly. In other words, students are required to prepare the conversation or pair and group work at home before they practise it in class:

If I implement CLT, I implement it indirectly. I teach the students, for example, a passage and then they'll study and prepare it; for example, there's a story about a football player. This player's called Tareq Mostafa. He's a famous player and has a team school. I teach the story and the students discuss with each other. They study it in the form of questions and answers, but if I asked the students in class to discuss it, I can't and this's because the students' level does not help them. Thus, the basics and the students' level usually mean that it is impossible to use this approach. (Interview no.7 with Abdullah)

Ali also claimed that the students' lack of vocabulary and weak level are considered a general problem related to CLT implementation, due mainly to the suspension of teaching English in Libya in 1986:

I think the first problem is the suspension of teaching English which causes a big gap for the students. The new curriculum depends on communication and trains the students in how to use English. Currently, this is considered to have been deleted because, when a teacher asks students to implement the activity, they cannot do it, because they have a gap. They do not have enough vocabulary or background to help them. Based on this, as we teach a third year of secondary school, we always ask ourselves why the students aren't ready. Is it the influence of their former teachers or a lack of vocabulary? (Interview no.5 with Ali)

This issue of the suspension of English teaching has obviously influenced not only the students' level but also the level of the parents who face obstacles in teaching and supporting their children to learn English at home, since they find themselves without any background in English. These effects of the suspension of English will be discussed later under the socio-cultural factors

Another reason was given by Iman, who interpreted the students' weak level as being because they consider English a subject:

The level of the students is weak except for those who have an interest in studying English and taking sessions. Those students have a tendency to learn the language and not just memorise it. As I said, if we get rid of the idea that English is a subject and needs to be taught, I feel that this approach will be implemented because the curriculum design also helps and consequently the level of the students will improve. (Interview no.16 with Iman)

Hana also stated that she cannot implement CLT because of her students' level:

When I want to implement CLT, I can't apply it with the level of the students in front of me. It's a way of conveying a language between two parties (the teacher and the students), but sometimes you lose this communication because of the students' level. The level of the students doesn't help. In the whole class, you find three or four students who have a good level of English. (Interview no.20 with Hana)

Hana referred to the very important fact that the whole class contains only three or four students with a good level of English. Since this is not the first time that this point came up, it seems a common problem that requires an urgent solution. Osama, for example, commented:

The solution should be radical. It is urgent to supply teachers and provide developmental courses. The first important solution is to improve the teachers and the school administration should be strict about the criteria when choosing the teachers' levels. When the school administration is lax regarding the teacher's levels, this is unfair on the students. (Interview no.9 with Osama)

Therefore, a radical solution is required to solve this problem and help Libyan students to improve their English proficiency. Although almost all of the teachers complained about the low level of their students, one might argue that this issue is attributable to schools administration's strategy of allocating the first stages of learning English to inexperienced teachers (see section 6.2.6).

This neglect of the foundation stages and allocating these to less experienced teachers to teach has contributed to the students' low level of English. One student commented:

We, as students, our basis in English is weak. Although we have learnt English since the third year of primary school, our teachers did not teach us or provide us with a good background in English. The curriculum is good and varied, but teaching is considered questions and answers. A teacher reads and writes answers on the board. (Interview no.8 with Roeda)

From the above, three factors can be identified which cause students' low level of English. Firstly, there is the neglect of the early stages of English learning. Secondly, there was the suspension of teaching English in all the educational institutions in 1986 (Elabbar 2011, Omar 2014, Orafi and Borg 2009, Sawani 2009, Soliman 2013). Soliman (2013:122) commented:

> One of the worst problems faced by the Libyan higher education sector after 1986 was the political decision to stop teaching English and French languages at all the educational sectors.

Thirdly, English needs to be regarded as a language rather than a subject, as recommended in the curriculum. As Jha (2014:17) indicated, "English is taught merely as a subject for a few months in schools and colleges".

However, two experienced teachers stated that the students' level had improved in recent years; for instance, Mohammed, who had been teaching for 30 years, commented:

I've noticed that the level of the students has improved compared with previous years. This year, the level of the students is very good. Additionally, previously, English was taught from the first year of preparatory stage while, for the last three years, English teaching has started from the fifth primary year. This was a good step for developing the level of the students. (Interview no.4 with Mohammed)

Based on the above clarification, it is not the students' fault that they lack the language proficiency which would enable them to communicate effectively with teachers using CLT. The first inspector confirmed this, as follows:

It isn't the students' fault that they're weak. It's right that they're weak because, in all of the previous years, they haven't been provided with enough of the language. Students are not taught in the correct way…Libyan student have an advantage. They aren't stupid - they have been neglected and circumstances have led to them failing to achieve the required level. (Interview no.1 with 1st inspector)

6.3.2 Students' attitudes towards English

Due to the continuous complaints heard from the teachers regarding their students' negative attitudes towards learning English, it was important to investigate these. Different views were expressed. On the one hand, some teachers claimed that the students had a negative attitude towards English, which other teachers viewed this attitude as a normal response because of the poor scaffolding learning they had received during the basic years, that meant that they faced difficulties, and so they hated English.

Although I did not ask students about the term 'CLT' directly, because they neither knew nor understood its meaning, their answers showed that they had a real interest in learning English in a communicative way. They were asked which techniques of teaching English they preferred and their views on how English is being taught in the classroom. They expressed positive views about learning English, which were in direct contrast to the teachers' views. This section is divided into two sub-sections: the teachers' views about their students' English learning, and the students' attitudes towards English

6.3.2.1 Teachers' views about their students' English learning

The findings revealed that the teachers stated that their students have negative attitudes towards learning English; for example, Sami explained:

One of the biggest problems in the class is that the students come to the school without any motivation to learn English and do something useful for their future. They come to school to pass the exam and move onto the second and third year of the secondary stage. They don't need the language for communication. (Interview no.3 with Sami)

Sami's comment is supported by Jha (2014:17), who describes learners as "being Englishophobic". That means, the learners' aim is to pass the English exam rather than to learn English for communicative purposes.

Sami's statement that "*They don't need the language for communication*" also reflects the view that English is a foreign language in Libya and the classroom is the only environment where students can speak it. As Adam stated:

We are in Libya, dealing with English as a foreign language…If there's no way to practise English in class, our students will be unable to express themselves in English because the class is the only environment where they can speak English here in Libya. (Interview no.1with Adam)

Regarding the students' attitudes towards English, Ali thought that these originated from the suspension of English teaching. More specifically, he viewed that decision No. 195/ 1986, that removed English from the Libyan education system, had caused a huge gap in English learning, as a result of which the students as well as the teachers were suffering from a lack of English background (Sawani 2009).

The first problem is the lack of the students' ease with English. I think that 80% of the students have no interest in learning English; for example, I didn't teach a class yesterday because the students weren't ready. A student originally comes and isn't ready to learn English and I think it's because of the suspension of English in the past. (Interview no.5 with Ali)

Adam expressed a similar view about the students' attitudes:

I can say 80% of students dislike English. They don't hate English itself but it's because they don't understand it, and this is normal. (Interview no.1 with Adam)

It is clear that Adam had identified the problem and found a reason for it. Thus, it is normal that the students dislike English, because they do not understand the basics.

From the above, one can argue that the teachers shared the same opinion about their students' negative attitudes towards learning English. Both Ali and Sami stated that their students dislike learning English, but they mentioned different reasons for it; Sami stated that students learn English for exam purposes, whereas Ali saw that the suspension of English in the past had led to this negative attitude.

6.3.2.2 Students' attitudes towards learning English

Although the teachers stated that students have a negative attitude towards and an unwillingness to learn English, all of the students I interviewed displayed a positive attitude towards learning English as well as an awareness of important status of English worldwide. Although I did not ask students about their perceptions of CLT in a direct way, their attitudes towards English reflected implicit favourable attitudes towards CLT. They all wished to learn English in the way that would enable them to communicate effectively in the language, which reflects the main principle of CLT; for example, in the first interview, Maryeem told me, "*I like English as hobby*". She stated the following:

In order to learn anything in the world, I have to learn English. English is in every time and place. English is the language of the world and around the world. It is the language used even at airports. They speak in English and it'd be embarrassing if you didn't speak English, especially in this century. (Interview no.1 with Maryeem)

Moda was another student who expressed a positive attitude towards English:

It's a modern language. It's always the language used in the scientific field. It's used in all branches of Medicine, Space, Mechanical Engineering and Pharmacy. It enters all areas and important scientific aspects. The majority of the modern world now speaks English. This shows that there is greatness and marvel in this language. I like it. I always watch TV. I like listening to the words and repeat them many times. I imitate the manner of the actor to avoid forgetting the words. (Interview no.5 with Moda)

Ameera also expressed a positive view about English:

Sure, I like learning English. I've been learning English since I was in the third year of primary stage. The majority of my relatives study abroad and I always contact them via

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the internet using English. I always watch educational programmes to learn English and download educational programmes to learn English from the internet, because English is the language of the world; for example, English enables us to contact French and Korean people. (Interview no.6 with Ameera)

Similarly, the boys also expressed positive attitudes towards learning English; for example, Idris referred to the importance of English, but at the same time explained why students hate studying English:

I like English because I can't get a job without knowing English. Even when someone travels abroad not for studying purposes, everything's in English, but when I study English, I face difficulty. The reason why students hate English is that they find it difficult. (Interview no.2 with Idris)

Sufian also emphasised the significance of English, saying:

It's a good language. My motivation's to learn English communicatively. It's a language which I will encounter in the future. They should be more interested in teaching English. They should give English language more focus when teaching it. (Interview no.4 with Sufian)

It was noticed that the students shared similar views and complaints about learning English; for example, when Marwan was asked about his attitude towards English, his answer was similar to Roeda's comment, as he said:

It's an important subject. We'll benefit from studying English in the future, but from the beginning of the fifth year of a primary school, there is no teacher who can convey the information. (Interview no.3 with Marwan)

To sum up, although the teachers felt frustrated by their students' attitudes towards learning English, the data revealed that the students have positive attitudes towards it. They recognised the essential role of English in their future careers. All of them were keen to practise English in order to use it in more interactive ways. They informed me that they need to learn English for communication purposes and not just to pass exams.

6.3.3 Anxiety

Although some of the teachers complained about their students' lack of participation during class, their unwillingness and their lack of motivation to learn English, the findings of the interviews and observation data revealed that anxiety contributed

towards the students' reluctance and fear to participate and speak in class. The findings revealed that the students felt hesitant about participating, and that this often prevented them from fully engaging in class, preferring to remain silent instead (see section 5.4.5). This lack of student participation was also highlighted by the head inspector of English, who traced this back to teachers' criticism. He mentioned three points, including rare participation, a lack of confidence and a fear of failure, and commented:

Students' rarely participate because of their lack of confidence in themselves and a fear of failure. This is very, very important, and the reason this occurs is that teachers criticise them when they make mistakes. (Interview no.3 with the Head of English Inspection)

Mona voiced a similar concern about students' participation when she stated that they wanted to participate and to learn but were afraid to do so.

In class, students try to participate. Students say that they want to learn but feel frightened. What they most feel is fear. Fear dominates them. (Interview no.6 with Mona)

Sixteen year-old Yusra also mentioned this idea that the students feel frightened and reluctant to speak in class. Yusra's English proficiency was good. She told me that she had learnt English by listening, and mentioned:

Students feel frightened when they talk in English. My classmates sometimes know how to talk in English, but they're anxious and shy. (Interview no.9 with Yusra)

Yusra mentioned that only two or three students out of the whole class performed the activities and participated with the teacher because the majority of her classmates preferred to remain silent and felt very hesitant about offering their answers or opinions. This feeling of reluctance, concern, fear and unwillingness to participate in the classroom may be attributed to their anxiety about learning a foreign or second language. According to Horwitz et al. (1986:125), "Anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system". Thus, this psychological state has multidimensional aspects which negatively influenced the students' involvement and participation in communicative activities. CLT requires learners to participate actively, which can have an "anxiety provoking" influence on many students and make them unwilling to engage in communicative activities. Teachers should be aware of this implicit factor by creating

a supportive learning environment and involving all students in the class in order to break down these barriers inside students by encouraging them to participate.

A review of earlier studies has shown that anxiety is one of the major factors which inhibits learners from speaking a language that they are learning; for example, a study conducted by Horwitz et al. (1986:127) revealed three factors, including "communication apprehension; test anxiety; and fear of negative evaluation". Communication apprehension is related to a fear or concern about communicating with others. In other words, learners with lower communicative competence are likely to have difficulty speaking in groups, as they may not be able to respond promptly to a forthcoming communicative situation since others are monitoring their performances. Test anxiety may be identified as a kind of fear about failing an exam, particularly among those learners who are used to being evaluated. This anxiety is predominant in the Libyan classroom because of the heavily exam-orientated culture. A fear of negative evaluation can be defined as a kind of social anxiety and fear of people's reactions, evaluation and expectations. Cutrone (2009) investigated EFL learners' fear of speaking in Japan, and found that various factors contribute towards Japanese learners' anxiety, including inexperience and cultural inhibitions related to dealing with Western teaching methods; teachers' demeanour and attitude; the shyness and evaluation paradigm. Further research was undertaken to investigate the reluctance to speak in class among 22 young adults who were studying English in a Turkish context. The findings indicated that "anxiety, fear of being despised, teacher strategy, and culture were found to influence the reluctance problem among speakers" (Savaşçı 2014:1).

In the context of this research, factors such as a fear of making mistakes, a fear of failure and evaluation, and a reluctance to be seen as a "show off" were identified as the causes of anxiety among Libyan secondary school students. These factors are classified under classroom context, and cultural and social factors, as will be explained in the following sub-categories.

6.3.3.1 Classroom context factors

The data showed that some classroom situations affected the students' participation during lessons and increased their anxiety.

- **Fear of making mistakes**

The findings revealed that the way in which the teachers dealt with the students' mistakes built barriers between them and the students and the students' participation, and therefore engagement, in class; for example, the head inspector of English described the teachers' behaviour towards their students' mistakes as discouraging, which influenced the students' participation and made them reluctant to speak in class:

Teachers jump on students if they make a mistake. Yet if a student makes a mistake, it's not a problem because that's when they learn but, if the students are told off, they won't respond to the teacher. They'll be very reluctant to answer. (Interview no.3 with the Head of English Inspection).

Roeda is in the third year of secondary school (17 years-old) and indicated that some students do not attempt to read during the Reading lesson in order to avoid the teacher's sarcasm:

Some students find it difficult to pronounce words, and some teachers are sarcastic when students pronounce words incorrectly, so the students avoid reading in order to avoid pronouncing words incorrectly, because they are afraid from being mocked if they make mistakes. (Interview no.8 with Roeda)

Consequently, some teachers' responses to their students' mistakes and their manner of dealing with these can significantly limit their students' participation.

The findings show that some students felt anxious about making mistakes in front of their teacher because feared the reaction of both their teacher and peers. As Jones (2004:31) explained, students may feel "a fear of appearing awkward, foolish and incompetent in the eyes of learners' peers or others". Additionally, due to the cultural concept within the Libyan education system that students should always maintain a positive image in the view of their teachers and classmates, making mistakes can be seen as a negative sign regarding their level in class; for example, Idris is in the third year of secondary school (Scientific section). He intends to specialise in Medicine because of his good level. He dislikes making mistakes because is concerned that this will affect how his teachers view him. He commented:

I work hard all year long and am interested in studying Medicine after the secondary stage...I dislike making mistakes because I'm afraid this will affect my teachers view of me (Interview no.2 with Idris)

This anxiety about making mistakes may play a major role in making the students feel hesitant to speak out in class, and may also reduce their confidence. More importantly, they make the students feel reticent about expressing their answers or opinions comfortably and trying to experiment, even if their responses are wrong.

These findings are consistent with Tanveer's research (2007), who investigated the factors which cause language anxiety among EFL/ESL learners and its influence on communication in learning a language in the context of Glasgow University, UK, with multi-lingual groups of students from different cultures and nationalities. Twenty participants, including 6 EFL/ESL learners, three experienced EFL/ESL teachers and 11 practitioners, took part in this qualitative study using semi-structured and focus-group discussion groups to examine the topic. The findings revealed that the students expressed a feeling of fear and anxiety about making mistakes and others' evaluation of them as a result of that.

- **Fear of failure and evaluation**

The Libyan education system can be characterised as having an exam-orientated culture, which causes major concern for the majority of Libyan students. This fear puts students under pressure and makes them feel anxious about their assessments and exam results. Students strive to be successful and pass exams. One might argue that they are likely to be more oriented towards exam-related learning than communicative learning. Exams occupy their thoughts and make them feel anxious; for example, 16 year-old Marwan expressed his opinion of the exams and the anxiety they cause:

Teachers teach English as a subject. Even for the exam, they give the students five questions and ask the students to study these as they will come up on the exam. You find that the majority of students are worried about the exam and how to pass it, particularly at exam time. Some students simply memorise the questions without understanding them. English should be taught as a language from which we will benefit in the future. (Interview no.3 with Marwan).

All the student participants seemed to complain about the exam and its influence in making them feel stressed and anxious.

Although a test can provoke anxiety during language learning, there is controversial debate about its influence on learning language; For example, Horwitz et al. (1986) identified test anxiety as one of three components of foreign language anxiety. This

claim has been challenged by MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) and Aida (1994), who viewed test anxiety as a general problem which is not specific to foreign language learning. The findings of this study contrast with the latter's findings, and support Horwitz et al.'s (1986) argument that test anxiety is an element of foreign language anxiety.

Another research study was conducted by Salehi and Marefat (2014) in the Iranian context, in which 200 hundred EFL students were involved. The researchers used two questionnaires; one was used to measure foreign language anxiety and the other to measure test anxiety at the Iran Language Institute. The results showed that "Both foreign language anxiety and test anxiety had a statistically significant negative correlation with the exam grades, suggesting that both types of anxiety have debilitative effects on test performance" (Salehi and Marefat 2014).

6.3.3.2 Cultural and social factors

The cultural perspectives and social influence factors, inside and outside the classroom context, among Libyan secondary students have influenced their participation and created anxiety among them. This anxiety was voiced during the interviews with the students. Due to a lack of cultural and social awareness, some students expressed their reluctance to be seen as a "show off" in the classrooms and within their social surroundings. Accordingly, this section is divided into two parts.

- **A reluctance to be seen as a " show off" in the classroom**

One source of students' concern about speaking in class is a reluctance to be seen as "showing off" in front of their classmates. This belief seems to impact negatively upon the students' participation and make them reluctant to participate; for example, Yusra, who is 16-years old, said that some of her friends know how to speak and answer, but they are reticent and therefore reluctant to speak out:

Even when someone tries to talk, and give their opinion, they're seen as showing off. This is what happens and causes frustration. (Interview no.9 with Yusra).

These findings are in line with Pattapong's (2010) investigation of Thai learners' unwillingness to communicate in a second language. The teachers' and students' perceptions were investigated in this study using semi-structured interviews, stimulated-recall interviews, and classroom observations. The participants were 29 undergraduate students from two universities in Bangkok, Thailand, and five teachers; two native

English teachers were involved in the study. Among the variables that influence the students' willingness to speak out was the fear of being viewed as "showing off".

Yusra also pointed out that shyness among her classmates in the classroom prohibited them from participating in lessons. She commented:

A large number of the students are shy in English and this is the reason. I was shy till I went to a private centre of learning English. In school, I didn't have the courage but, when I went to the language centre, I found that there is encouragement and all speak English, and then I became able to speak in English, but not at school. At school, learning English is considered questions and answers and getting full marks in the exam. Even if a student has a good level, they do not help to develop this ability or skill. (Interview no.9 with Yusra)

Shyness in this context can be viewed as a negative characteristic which inhibits students from communicating. In a similar vein, Cutrone (2009:59) commented, "While shyness may impede learners' chance of success in an oral EFL class, it is often considered as admirable trait in Japanese society" as a reason why Japanese learners were reluctant to join in communicative activities.

- **Social influence**

It seems that the view of English as a foreign language in Libya rather than a language that is used daily by people has influenced society's view of it. The majority of the students complained about people's views, attitudes and reactions towards their interest in learning English. The participants mentioned that this social influence came from those around them, including their relatives, friends and family, which makes them feel frustrated; for example, Maryam mentioned that, when she talked about her enthusiasm to learn English, people asked her what was interesting about learning English, which makes her feel disappointed:

I'm always looking for someone to communicate with in English. If I tell someone that I'm keen to learn English, he tells me that English is dull and boring. Even when I tell my relatives that I like English, they tell me that English is a heavy subject: why do you like it? When my relatives ask me to translate or clarify the instructions about something they've bought, such as a fridge, when I read and explain the instructions, they tell me to stop, which is frustrating. (Interview no.1 with Maryam).

Similarly, Yusra described the reaction of her relatives and friends when she speaks in English:

When I sit with my relatives and friends and talk in English, they mock me and say, "See how she pronounces the words". Even if you're creative, they don't even let you try. (Interview no.9 with Yusra)

In brief, it seems that various interrelated factors have caused anxiety related to learning a foreign language and participating in communicative activities. The findings suggest that language anxiety is a set of different anxieties which can be classified into different sources; for example, anxiety emerges from the classroom context, such as fear of making mistakes and failure. Social influence and cultural perspective appear to be other causative sources of increased anxiety among Libyan secondary school students.

Additionally, the students' fears of making a mistake, failure and evaluation indicate that the classroom environment still follows the traditional teaching methods. It could be argued that these anxieties are the expected results of the previous observational categories which are the adoption of the traditional methods of the teacher-centred approach and the widespread use of translation into the L1 (Arabic). This suggests that the class instruction follows a teacher-centred approach (Ansarey 2012, Chang and Goswami 2011, Coskun 2011) that adopts the traditional methods, which make the students feel unenthusiastic about engaging actively in the classroom.

6.4 Contextual factors

It was imperative to investigate the influence of contextual factors on the teachers' practices during CLT implementation as they may facilitate or hamper CLT and its implementation, as shown by the findings.

Different categories were developed in relation to these contextual factors, including teaching aids, class management, time constraints, large classes, the examination system, teachers' training and teacher' consultation. The following is an explanation of these categories as they emerged from the interview data:

6.4.1 Teaching aids and facilities

Urwick and Junaidu (1991:24) state that, "The availability of teachers' manuals and of other teaching aids also affected the extent to which lessons called for active contributions by the pupils". Teaching a language, particularly in the secondary stages,

requires the use of encouraging teaching aids that stimulate learners to be more engaged in the learning process.

All the participants expressed their frustration about the lack of teaching aids, which restricted their implementation of CLT and affected the teaching of skills such as listening and speaking. Moreover, it was also observed that the classrooms were not equipped with the required teaching facilities which are essential for CLT, such as audio and visual aids, and language labs.

The participants gave different responses about how they deal with this lack of teaching aids; for example, Ali brings a recorder with him in order to provide listening activities:

The second problem is that teaching a listening skill is on the curriculum and we're supposed to apply it. We don't apply it because there aren't any recorders or teaching facilities. Sometimes, a text is quite long, especially in the advanced years. One text sometimes takes the whole class. In a previous year, I wrote the text on the board and brought a recorder and let the students listen to it. I told myself that it might benefit the students. (Interview no.5 with Ali)

Mohammed characterised teaching aids as missing factors when he said:

We've a missing factor, which is teaching aids. Teaching aids are considered a very, very important means for teaching students. Clarification means are the most important aspect in a class because, when I explain a lesson to a student using clarification aids, the information will be clear in the students' minds and it is impossible to forget it. Additionally, CLT principles in the curriculum need a lab in order to apply them correctly. It depends on listening, so it's important to work on listening. When a student listens to a cassette, his pronunciation will improve and will be beautiful. Four skills are necessary to work and apply them. Both teaching aids and language lab are essential when teaching a language. It influences strongly the application of the curriculum. (Interview no.4 with Mohammed)

Mohammed states that the process of teaching the curriculum cannot be completed in the absence of teaching aids. Additionally, the participants expressed their concerns about teaching listening skills, since they consider it more beneficial for the students to listen to the native pronunciation of words. Mohammed states that the students' enthusiasm will increase through the use of instructional materials, such as video-tapes, TVs, and recorders.

It was noticed that the shortage of teaching aids seems to control or shape the teachers' practices when teaching the curriculum; for example, Salma told me that some teachers omit the teaching of listening skills because of the lack of a language lab:

We have a conversation task; the students should listen to this conversation in order to answer the questions. We don't have any equipment in any school in this city; for example, a lab, we don't have a lab and, consequently, I'm compelled to make two students have the conversation in order to answer the questions. Some teachers omit listening activities because, in their view, they are unimportant and another reason is that there are no labs. (Interview no.2 with Salma)

This issue of resource constraints seems to be a recurrent concern regarding CLT implementation in a foreign language teaching context; for example, the negative consequences of poor school facilities were discussed by Abate (2015:134):

> The availability of educational resources including: books and papers, audio-video, broadcast, projected media and other innovations have a strong impact on foreign language teaching/learning process.

Thus, teachers can exploit these teaching aids to increase their students' understanding of English and save time in explaining and reading listening texts during class.

It could be argued that the actual reality of the foreign and L2 learning environments seem to be far removed from the theoretical assumptions of CLT. According to Schweisfurth (2011:472), "Classroom realities in developing country contexts evidently create challenges for learner-centred education". CLT's assumptions require more practical criteria to be reflected clearly in the actual setting of teaching a language; for example, the curriculum should be introduced with all of the required equipment and all books should be accompanied by a cassette to apply listening or speaking skills and give students a chance to listen to the correct pronunciation, since English is viewed as a foreign language in Libya and the class is the only environment in which they can speak it. Consequently, the successful criterion for applying these skills is unavailable, or 'missing' in Mohammed's words.

6.4.2 Class management

This factor seems to be incompatible with the theoretical assumptions of CLT. The structure of the classroom consists of three or four rows of desks that might make it difficult to perform CLT activities, such as group work. The class is crowded with desks so it can be difficult for teachers to move easily between them. This nature of classroom

management plays a significant role in impeding the communicative activities on the curriculum; for example, the head English inspector summarised this problem as follows:

Another problem is the class management. The desks are not big enough to hold two books at the same time so two students share the same desk, and sometimes you find three students sharing the same desk. (Interview no.3 with the head English inspection)

He mentioned that teaching the curriculum's CLT principles requires working on two books at the same time, including the textbook and the workbook, in class, so the students are supposed to be able to refer to them both simultaneously, which is difficult, due to the layout of the classroom furniture.

Similarly, Adam described how the structure of the classroom makes it difficult to implement pair and group work activities:

It is supposed that that there are fixed desks and a maximum numbers of 17 students per class in order to communicate with them. Additionally, the classrooms are too small to divide the students into groups. (Interview no.1 with Adam)

Adam regards the reality of teaching his class as preventing him from fulfilling the requirements of the curriculum's teaching approach. The lack of an effective classroom layout, such as fixed desks with large class sizes, may make the classroom feel chaotic when desks are pushed together and moved during a lesson.

The impact of the reality of the teaching situation has been identified by many studies (Abate 2015, Koosha and Yakhabi 2012, Waters and Vilches 2008, Wyatt 2009); for example, Water and Vilches, (2008) indicated that the poor teaching equipment is one of the main barriers to effective teaching. The influence of the teaching setting is also discussed by Abate (2015:134). "The natures of the classroom, flexibility of seats, class size have significant effect in facilitating versatile learning activities and tasks which also influence the application of communicative methodologies".

Although, during the interviews, the participants showed a preference for using the CLT approach, few of them had adopted it, as evident from the class observations. It seems that different obstacles prevent the full application of this approach. As Schweisfurth (2011) explains, the challenges associated with a learner-centred approach can be explained due to the classroom reality in developing countries.

6.4.3 Time constraints

All of the participants agree that there is no consistency between the actual time required and the theoretical planned time for teaching this communicative curriculum. In other words, the principles of this curriculum require ample time to achieve its communicative purpose but what happens is that teachers find themselves restricted to teaching classes lasting 45 minutes, that is insufficient to cover one page of teaching communicative activities. Salma stated that the lack of time is a major constraint on her efforts to develop and construct the communicative activities on the curriculum:

We face a problem in teaching the curriculum in that there is not very much time to teach or cover all the present aspects in the lessons. We have just 45 minutes per class and that isn't enough to cover all aspects of a lesson, from grammar, writing, reading, listening etc. When you come to the division of the curriculum, they say to you that this entire lesson should be explained or taught in one period; for example, when I look at the division of the curriculum, I'm supposed to be teaching unit 2 now, but I'm still on unit one. On the basis on the division of the curriculum, I was supposed to finish the first unit in a week, which is impossible. (Interview no.2 with Salma)

Kamal also expressed his dissatisfaction, stating that allowing only 45 makes it impossible to use CLT, or even follow the sequence of English classes on the timetable:

The curriculum needs to be taught from 8-10am or from 1-3pm. I want enough time. I can't, in 35 or 45 minutes, teach a lesson that is designed to be taught in an hour. The fact that the last classes of the day are English suggested that they are less important. It is not usual to give the first class to teach English. The first class is for teaching Maths. It is a strange view, for a language that is spoken by more than half the world. (Interview no.13 with Kamal)

From the above, it appears that one of essential requirements for implementing CLT is to increase the time available for learning an L2. Since the aim of CLT is to give learners a greater sense and degree of "ownership" and to increase their sense of independence (Brown 1994), it seems challenging for teachers to meet these requirements in such a limited time. Additionally, it is known that, with CLT, teachers are required to meet more demands and taken on extra responsibility, so they should be provided with enough time to achieve this.

All of the teachers stated that they have insufficient time to prepare the communicative activities and manage the teaching resources that would enable them to create interaction in the classroom, as they need time to do this in order to embrace CLT. These findings are supported by other studies where English is taught as a foreign language; for example, in the Bangladeshi context, Ansary (2012) showed that one of the major barriers to developing communicative principles materials was a lack of time. Another study investigated teachers' perceived difficulties regarding CLT implementation in a Turkish context and also found that the teachers faced difficulty in term of the time available in which to create communication as well as to motivate their students. These findings were consistent with those of other research studies (Li 1998, Thompson 1996, Zhang 2004), where the teachers were concerned about the lack of time that hinders them from adopting CLT in their classrooms.

6.4.4 Large classes

Another factor which inhibits CLT implementation are large classes. Large class sizes make the matter more complicated. To work with the different communicative activities of CLT, teachers needs to ensure that their students are engaged with each other, and move around them to activate and share ideas with them. This teachers' role seems to be difficult with large class sizes, where teachers are more likely to be confused and lose their focus; for example, Abdullah stated:

I face many problems in the classroom and sometimes I can't apply CLT. The first problem is that the large number of students makes me unable to apply CLT in class, and means that I'm unable to concentrate on all of the students in the class. If I follow up a group of students, I won't be able to follow or observe another group due to time constraints, and chaos will result due to implementing this method. (Interview no.7 with Abdulah)

Ali also referred to this problem of large classes affecting his teaching:

Another issue is that the number of students has increased. Previously, the numbers were small and they could be controlled, but the numbers have now increased. There are 40-45 students per class. It is very difficult for a teacher to ask all of the students to read or participate in pairs or group work. (Interview no.5 with Ali)

Thus, the actual situation in the classroom makes it necessary to avoid implementing CLT principles in order to maintain control of the class. As Sally stated:

My problem in the class is that I can't control the class because of the huge numbers. (Interview no.10 with Sally)

During an informal conversation, this problem of the large class sizes was also raised by one of the school principals:

The problem is the number of students in a class that makes a teacher unable to perform his/her job one hundred percent. When you come to a class where there are 40 students and a small school; for example, in the fifth primary year, we have 40 students per class. The school is small and there are no more new buildings. When parents come to register their children, we tell them that the numbers are huge; they reply, 'We live near the school here'. That means that you are forced to register their children in the school. When I divide the number of students into classes, I find myself obliged to create two classes, each containing 40 or 35 students. Then, when an English teacher comes to teach a class for 40 or 45 minutes, he /she cannot care for all of the students. A student who is good at English has someone teach him at home. (A school principal)

This complaint was also heard from the English inspectors; for example, the first English inspector said:

I don't criticise the curriculum or its content of CLT principles. The problem is that the CLT principles on the curriculum fail because the other tools that accompany them do not match it. Give me a class of 15 or 20 students, and I'll work with you, but give me a class of 50 students and tell me to apply CLT, it's impossible; for example, taking the register may take up half the class - how then can one apply CLT? To make students quiet and control them, this's another story. (Interview no.1 with English inspector)

He blamed the state's policy for this situation, arguing that the government should build new schools and set up a limit to the number of students per class, particularly with regard to language teaching.

Although the majority of the participants referred to this problem, it seems that there are no precise criteria for class size, as the English inspector claimed. It was noticed that there is a substantial difference in the class sizes. Some classes were considered to have an acceptable number of students whereas other school in the same city have very large class sizes. As Mohammed stated, his class size is reasonable and does not pose a problem for his teaching:

The number for the stage which I teach is very reasonable. It doesn't exceed 20 students per class. (Interview no.4 with Mohammed)

From the above, it appears that a large class size is one obstacle to creating a communicative classroom that influences negatively teachers' practices in the classrooms. More importantly, the impact of large class sizes is not limited to language teaching, but also affects other subjects. According to Harmer (2001), a large class size is a source of annoyance and affects both the teacher and students' interaction, since it contributes towards decreasing their performance in the classroom.

Many studies have revealed that a large class size is a critical factor in CLT adoption (Ansarey 2012, Chen 2003, Gahin and Myhill 2001, Hedge 2001, Kokkelenberg, Dillon and Christy 2008, Musthafa 2001). Large class sizes create obstacles regarding the practical implementation of CLT.

Researchers point out problems associated with large class sizes and classify them into different types; for example, Hayes (1997) indicated that the teachers' problems related to this issue can be classified into five areas. Firstly, the physical restrictions imposed by large classes can cause discomfort. Secondly, control issues make teacher unable to concentrate on what is happing in a class. Thirdly, teachers find it difficult to provide individual attention during various activities. Fourthly, teachers find it difficult to assess and follow their students' practices during class. Fifthly, with a large class, teachers worry about learning achievement and whether or not they are conveying the information effectively.

It could be argued that large class sizes seems to create various concerns for teachers related to their CLT practices in terms of arranging communicative activities and allowing their students sufficient and equal time to practise English and improve their proficiency.

6.4.5 Examination system

Although there are many different approaches to student assessment, the majority of EFL contexts appear to adopt an examination-oriented system to evaluate learners' development. The challenges associated with CLT may increase due to the clear contrast between the instructional requirements of CLT and the exam criteria. Regarding the role of examinations in the Libyan context, the participants conceded that the nature of exams has different consequences particularly with regard to teaching the

curriculum; for example, Salma expressed her disagreement with the nature of the exams for many reasons:

I disagree with this kind of exam. The kinds of questions depend on the choices. Some students choose randomly without understanding anything, even the question. Additionally, the exam criteria exam lead teachers to teach the curriculum according to the exam standards; for example, some teachers say that we know that the exam does not include writing and listening and the questions are true /false, complete and matching, so there is no need to teach them. There is no question, for example, that requires the students to write a paragraph. By the way, some inspectors guide teachers towards exams; for example, some say that there is no writing aspect in the exam so there is no need to waste time teaching these aspects. (Interview no.2 with Salma)

Salma's response highlights two important points regarding both the teachers and students' orientation. Firstly, the exam affects the teachers' practices and influences their teaching direction. Consequently, their performance deviates from the proposed practice of a communicative curriculum. Secondly, by following this traditional approach to the exam, students' motivation will not be increased to practise English because their main focus will be on attaining high exam results.

This shaping of the teachers' practices in the classroom towards the exam requirements was clearly acknowledged by Sami, who viewed the role of exams as essential:

We teach according to the exam. The exam requires students to take in a large amount of information during the lessons. The exam does not deal with the meaning. A student is required to focus on memorisation. (Interview no.3 with Sami)

It was noted that the exam not only shapes the teachers' practices but also leads them to neglect the teaching of productive skills, including writing and speaking, as the first inspector pointed out:

The nature of the exams is wrong. The exam should include an oral element. Students move from one year to another without being assessed orally. Thus, how can they learn a language? Our culture is based on exams. This kind of exam does not create a motivation in the students. It builds a sense when students learn English as a language and not as a subject to be tested and passed. Thus, a student will take note of things that will help him to pass and neglect the other aspects...the problem is that the oral part is

neglected totally and the writing aspect. Students lack the ability to write. (Interview no.1 with 1st inspector)

To support this claim that the exam influences CLT, Lamie (2004:127) points out:

> If the tests are perceived by the teachers to have significant effects on their students' live, then they can see it as part of their duty to make sure that their pupils have the best possible chance they can to succeed.

The majority of ELT reports revealed that teaching to the exam misdirects both the teachers and students' attention (Abdel Latif 2012, Andrews 2004, Choi 2008, Gorsuch 2000, Li 1998, Orafi and Borg 2009, Yu 2001); for example, Gorsuch (2000) indicated the difference between the innovative claims of the curriculum and teachers' practices in Japan. The findings showed that students resisted learning skills such as listening and speaking because they were focused on the exam's requirements.

6.4.6 Teacher training

All of the teachers stated that they lack training. They expressed their need for service training which would enable them to teach the curriculum and make them aware of its aims. They mentioned that the Libyan State should pay teachers more attention, particularly with regard to their teaching of the curriculum. Additionally, the participants stated that a disparity exists between what they learnt at university and the content of the curriculum. Thus, one of their suggestions was that the materials studied at the university should be linked to the curriculum; for example, Kamal made the following suggestion about the training issue:

I haven't received any kind of training from the State. I understand the curriculum through practice. It is supposed to be linked to the materials taught at university. The students who are in the last years of university should be given a background in the curriculum. When students graduate from university and start teaching, it is a shock for them. (Interview no.13 with Kamal)

Kamal believed that it is difficult to explain the curriculum because of the lack of training and knowledge related to it. Kamal also informed me that he found a way to explain the curriculum after three years of teaching it. This issue of a lack of training constitutes a stumbling block for teachers, particularly novice ones.

Sarah also emphasised that she feels that English teachers are neglected:

There is no training at all from my home to the school. Recently, there was an IELTS course but it wasn't related to teaching the curriculum and it was cancelled because of the war. There is no strengthening of the curriculum. There are no books and support. This is the biggest thing that should be mentioned about teachers - no training, no support, and no courses. (Interview no.14 with Sarah)

Similarly, the first English inspector mentioned, with regard to teacher training:

There should be intensive training sessions for teachers. They should be sent abroad to attend sessions or be given training here in Libya by bringing a native speaker of English. Establishing extensive training sessions from morning to 5pm is one of the main solutions. Every summer, they should bring a native speaker. With this extensive training, teachers will improve. (Interview no.1 with 1st inspector)

To change teachers' practices, they should be equipped with appropriate training that will enable them to achieve innovation. Additionally, teachers may adopt a conservative attitude towards the adoption process, particularly those who are used to teach the GTM, since this might undermine their confidence unless they are trained and become familiar with this transition. According to Carless (1999:23), "without sufficient retraining, even teachers initially enthusiastic about an innovation can become frustrated by the problems in innovation and eventually turn against it".

The literature abounds with evidence that the majority of EFL teachers have not received any training on the CLT approach (Al Rabadi 2012, Bax 2003, Butler 2011, Carless 1999, Chang 2011a, Karim 2004, Li 1998); for example, one of the barriers to CLT adoption in South Korean secondary schools is related to the lack of teacher training on CLT (Li 1998). Likewise, a mixed research study, which investigated Iranian high school English teachers' perceptions, recommended that special attention should be paid to teacher training, since it has an impact on teachers' positive attitudes towards CLT (Jafari, et al. 2015).

6.4.7 Teachers' consultation

One of the teachers' concerns about teaching English, particularly under CLT, is the State policy of neglecting teachers' opinions, for example, about changing the curriculum. The teachers saw themselves as the only ones who are aware of the different issues related to teaching English and the students' needs. Thus, they should have an opportunity to give their opinions regarding the implementation of any kind of

innovation in the curriculum. The teachers expressed their concerns about not being consulted while the English inspectors are; for example, these issues were among the factors that Adam mentioned regarding the CLT implementation process in the Libyan context:

Teachers are not consulted on the development of the curriculum; for example, the State consults English inspectors but ignores teachers, who're more aware of problems related to teaching English and are at the heart of the situation. (Interview no.1 with Adam)

Adam mentioned that, although he will transfer to the inspection department next year, he did not think that English inspectors played an important role in teaching English using CLT. Iman agreed, when asked about the appropriateness of the curriculum:

The problem with the curriculum is that it is incompatible with the students' levels because, when they introduced these curricula, they didn't consult us. We, as teachers, are more aware of our students' needs and their level. These curricula were introduced without taking into account the teachers' opinions. (Interview no.8 with Iman)

Thus, the teachers feel that their opinions were neglected when the new ELT curriculum was introduced.

6.5 Socio-cultural factors

One of the barriers that makes the implementation of CLT quite unwelcome in many FL contexts are the socio-cultural factors related to the context in which CLT is used. Hence, it was seen as beneficial to discuss these socio-cultural factors under the aims of this study.

One can argue that CLT embodies principles that may not suit certain EFL settings. According to Rodgers and Everett (1971, cited in Koosha and Yakhabi 2012:5), "an innovative method has a far better chance of being accepted if it can be seen to be compatible with existing values and practices".

Although this claim has been acknowledged by many researchers to be one of the limitations regarding CLT implementation (Chowdhury 2012, Edge 1996, Lamie 2004, Liu 1998, Rao 2002), one can argue that these underlying assumptions do not always determine the adoption of CLT; for example, culture values may play a role, and the fact that the perceptions of the teachers and students' roles will change over time.

Cultural values have an influence on language teaching; for example, Brown (1994:165) characterises the relationship between a language and culture as follows:

> A language is a part of a culture and a culture is part of a language, the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture.

Thus, language serves as a tool of communication and a carrier of culture (Wei 2005). Two categories will be explored in this section.

1. Parents' lack of English language
2. Social and economic factors

6.5.1 Socio- cultural views of learning in the Libyan context

So far, the cultural view of education, particularly in schools, remains unchanged. This view seems to be rigidly circumscribed by the traditional beliefs about education. A stereotypical view is that it is necessary to provide an abstract education without giving a chance to build or acquire the practical aspect of this knowledge. This may also lead to the overwhelmingly prevalent view of the teacher as a person with profound and reliable knowledge and the students as receivers. Moreover, teachers were educated under the GTM, and remain attached to didactic techniques, so they aim to transmit the communicative content of the syllabus rather than provide opportunities for their students to communicate.

As explained in (3.2), this cultural view and belief seem to be inherent in Libyan culture, and so may prove a barrier to the adoption of the communicative approach. Many researchers claim that it is paramount to consider the sensitivity of the cultural values of different settings in implementing CLT (Anderson 1993). One can argue that the conflict between the CLT principles and the cultural views of teaching and learning might cause a gap in CLT implementation or adoption. Thus, what justifies an effective implementation of the principles of CLT might be attributed to certain cultural values.

However, this view of the role of cultural/value beliefs may be criticised, since each context is different (McKay 2000). This diversity was noticed when observing the disparity between implementing CLT in different contexts during the fieldwork; for example, it was observed that the government schools' practices differ from those of the private centres for teaching English in terms of several standards, such as teaching and clarifying aids, time, the student numbers and class management. Additionally, the oversimplified view of Libyan students as passive receivers does not always describe

fully the student's role. It was observed in the private context, where students show a variety of negotiation behaviour and engagement in communicative activities. This range of CLT adoption was also confirmed during the interviews; for example, the first English inspector described this diversity as follows:

In some private sessions, there are a limited number of students. They have all the facilities and CLT is used. There is a difference. Another proof is that we have distinctive students in class. When I ask them about their good level of English, the students say that they attend sessions at a private centre. When I ask them how many students there are in a class, they answer that there are 15 students per class, and when I ask them about the teacher, they say that the teacher delivers the whole class in English, and all of the vocabulary is in English. Also, when I ask students if they participate in the class, they say, 'Yes'. When I ask if they study writing and speaking skills, they say, 'Yes, we take writing and speaking'. Thus, if these success factors are present, the CLT approach will succeed. (Interview no.1 with the 1st inspector).

From the above quotation, one can argue that the implementation of CLT principles depends on the availability of certain factors and the context in which CLT occurs. Thus, it appears that the obstacle to the implementation may not lie so much with the cultural orientation of a certain society as much as with the availability of the success factors. As Butler (2011) points out, the focus on the traditional role of the cultural aspect is more likely to be misleading or exaggerated in shaping CLT classroom practices

6.5.1.1 Libyan parents' lack of English knowledge

One of the social problems which were revealed regarding CLT implementation in the Libyan context is the parents' insufficient knowledge of English. It could be argued that this issue stems from the suspension of English teaching in 1986 as a result of the political clash between the West and Al-Gaddhafi's regime, which deeply affected Libyan citizens' knowledge of English and continues to have an effect even today. This means that parents cannot help their children at home and contribute to improving the implementation process. Abdullah touched on this point when he stated:

The second challenge is the lack of follow-up by the parents because of their lack of knowledge. Some parents cannot understand English at all. In fact, many students face this problem, when they return home. One student's parents may have some knowledge of English, while another student's parents may have had no experience with English at

all. Consequently, this issue make CLT implementation more complicated. (Interview no.7 with Abduallah)

This issue was also highlighted by one of the school principals during an informal conversation. He mentioned that several school principals had discussed the low level of students' English that made CLT adoption difficult. They concluded that the main reason for this was the lack of parents' support at home because the parents have insufficient background knowledge about English. He said:

I talk to you as a school principal and in loco parentis at the same time and I can say that the difficulty of CLT adoption is attributed to many reasons. The level of the students' English ranges between medium and very weak. A very low percentage of students' possess a good level of English, We, as school principals, discussed this problem and found that the majority of the students' parents lack a background knowledge of English. A student does not have anyone who can help him with his English at home. Fathers and mothers don't have a foundation in English. (Informal conversation with a school principal)

This social factor may escalate the difficulty of implementing the CLT process. Thus, this factor could be regarded as one of the main challenges. In other words, if parents lack the ability to support their children with their English, this will have a clear impact on the students' performance in class. This finding is in line with Alkhawaldeh's (2010) study that indicated that uneducated parents are one of challenges that teachers face in teaching.

6.5.1.2 Social and economic factors

Among the various socio-cultural challenges that cause a gap in CLT implementation CLT is the variation in the students' levels, which stems from the differences between the social and economic conditions of the students' parents. This difference means that some parents can send their children to private centres, which seem to be completely different from the government-run schools in terms of the equipment and educational input. Consequently, not all students are able to participate actively in the classroom and benefit from the principles of CLT. Furthermore, this difference causes problems for teachers in class. Adam highlighted this issue as follows:

Yes, these cause problems in class. Once a student who attends private lessons participates in the class, the students who do not attend private lessons tell them, 'Be

quiet. You attend private lessons'. Thus, financial and social differences play a role in teaching English. (Interview no.1 with Adam)

Nora also noted the variation in her students' levels due to social-economic factors:

The majority of students who can participate with me during CLT activities are those who have had an opportunity to take private lessons or whose parents have a high qualification in English. These social and financial differences between students play a role in CLT implementation process. (Interview no.8 with Nora)

Similarly, the first English inspector viewed the distinctive levels of certain students as proof of successful CLT implementation in the private English centres. He regarded that all of the factors for ensuring CLT's success are available in these centres:

Further proof is that we have distinctive students in class. When I ask them about their good level, they tell me that they attend sessions at a private centre. (Interview no.1 with the 1st English inspector)

Accordingly, theses potential differences with regard to social and economic factors seem to have an evident influence on the students' level and consequently facilitate CLT implementation. In other words, students' good English ability makes a teacher's task easier when seeking to implement CLT.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter provides a detailed investigation of all of the obstacles to CLT implementation. I argue that these factors are interdependent. The findings demonstrate that these factors are associated with all of the components of the educational Libyan system, including the teachers, students and the school context. The findings show that the teachers face many challenges, and that their lack of English proficiency, academic knowledge to teach the curriculum and training are the major factors leading to the failure to implement CLT. The analysis also revealed that the students lack an English background and their low level of English creates difficulty in interacting and responding smoothly to the principles of CLT.

Additionally, the characteristics of the Libyan school context can be regarded as key obstacles, as they decrease Libyan teachers and learners' motivation to engage with CLT. Libyan schools lack teaching aids, such as visual/audio aids language labs, technology, such as computers, TV, PowerPoint software packages, appropriate classroom furniture, and authentic materials. All of these devices are essential in making the teaching contexts simulating and leading Libyan learners to discover knowledge. The next chapter addresses the fourth research question, which focuses on the appropriateness of the English curriculum in Libya.

Chapter 7 The appropriateness of the ELT curriculum

7.1 Introduction

Since the principles of the ELT curriculum in Libya are based on the implementation of CLT, it is important to include the curriculum as one aspect that needs to be investigated. Thus, on the basis of the findings of the previous two chapters (5 & 6), in this chapter, I discuss the main purpose of the Libyan curriculum and its appropriateness in the Libyan context under in relation to the final research question: "Is the curriculum appropriate for the Libyan secondary school context, the students' needs and their level of EL proficiency?" I divide this chapter into the following sections. In the first section, I discuss the importance of communicative English in meeting Libyan students' needs and, in the second, I present a critical overview of the Libyan ELT curriculum in terms of three dimensions: Libyan students' needs and level, the teachers, and the Libyan secondary school context.

7.2 The importance of a communicative curriculum for meeting Libyan students' needs

The growth in the importance of English as the main tool of communication worldwide has increased the demand for English learning and teaching. It is the *lingua franca* and the international language that is used all over the world (Crystal 2012, Kachru 1992, Pan 2016). English is not just used as the primary language by countries such as the USA and UK, but is also regularly spoken as a foreign and second language in many other countries. It is also employed as a *lingua franca* between ESL speakers with different first languages. Thus, English is the first choice for different areas of education. In other words, English is the main way of accessing many scientific achievements since it is the main language of academic research (Crystal 2012). Thus, learning English is not just valuable for communication but also a source of knowledge. According to Kachru (1992:4):

> English is often learned because of its heritage, because of the status it may confer on the reader or speaker, because of the doors which it opens in technology, science, trade, and diplomacy

For these reasons, learning English has become obligatory for many people. Libya has made the teaching of English a priority. Arabic was the language of pedagogical

instruction in all educational institutions in the 1980s and 90s, but was then replaced by English for some university subjects, such as Medicine, IT and computing, and this is because the majority of the scientific subjects are written in English. Additionally, the majority of Libyan students complete their higher studies in English-speaking countries. As a result, English is vital for meeting these demands and Libyan students' needs.

The importance of English as an international language has also impacted on the method of teaching English so that it has become more concentrated on the functional use of the language. That means, learners learn a language in the way that enables them to use a language in a communicative way. Thus, teaching the CLT approach has been adopted in many EFL contexts including Libya.

To compensate for the weakness of the traditional curriculum, as it is clear that Libyan learners face difficulty in communicating clearly in English, CLT was included on the national curriculum, different aspects of which encourage the communicative use of English (see section 2.7.1); however, the findings presented in chapters 5 and 6 show that a variety of factors are inhibiting the achievement of this curriculum. The majority of Libyan students face difficulty in expressing themselves easily in English. In the following section, the appropriateness of the curriculum will be addressed from different angles.

7.3 The appropriateness of the curriculum and Libyan students' needs and level

The general orientation of this curriculum is completely different from the previous one, which was based on GTM. From both my experience of studying the old curriculum on the one hand and teaching the new curriculum on the other, I can describe this innovation in the Libyan curriculum as a quantum leap.

Despite the introduction of the communicative curriculum in an attempt to satisfy Libyan students' needs and strengthen their communication skills, the findings revealed that some curriculum content does not match the students' needs and surroundings; for example, Sami described some of the lessons on the curriculum as far from the students' real lives. In other words, there are no benefits to be gained from studying these topics since they are irrelevant to the experience of Libyan students and their environment:

The students want simple lessons. There are some lessons that are simple and realistic and we can implement CLT, but there are other lessons where the students are

unfamiliar with the topic and even on the TV programmes, they are not presented. There is, for instance, a lesson entitled "The Mystery of the Nazca Lines", and we as teachers do not know about these subjects because they are strange topics. Students cannot interact with them and do not have the background or vocabulary to discuss them. Some subjects do not motivate the students. (Interview no.3 with Sami)

Accordingly, it seems that there are some subjects which do not reflect the students' reality; for example, "The mystery of the Nazca Lines", to which Sami referred, focuses on an unfamiliar topic that is difficult to understand even by the teachers themselves and does not match the students' interests at their age. This point was also mentioned by 15 year-old Moda, who described these lessons as follows:

There is important information which we don't study during the year. There're lessons such as Pluto, outer space and the planets. We don't benefit from them, either in terms of English or science. There aren't any lessons on how to use the World Wide Web to find information. We, as students, need to be trained in this type of information. (Interview no.5 with Moda)

It is clear that some students do not see these lessons as relevant to of their everyday life. Consequently, random topics may not contribute towards increasing the students' motivation and interaction during the lessons, since these topics do not interest them. Williams and Williams (2011:1) proposed five influences on students' motivation: the student, teacher, content, method/process, and environment. They argue that *"The content must be accurate, timely, stimulating, and pertinent to the student's current and future needs".* (2). Thus, this kind of content decreases the students' motivation to study English.

The appropriateness of the curriculum can be considered in relation to the students' English proficiency level. Although the teachers and inspectors have a generally positive attitude towards the curriculum, there was a variety of views about its appropriateness regarding the students' level; the majority of the participants displayed concerns about the students' levels when teaching the curriculum. They stated that the curriculum was difficult compared to the students' levels, which meant that it was impossible to meet the curriculum's goals; for example, the second inspector strongly disagreed with the curriculum, saying:

The quality of these curricula needs an infrastructure. So far, we don't have an infrastructure, so I suggest that the old curriculum should be reintroduced into schools. It's a traditional curriculum but it has advantages. The most important thing is that it suits the quality of the teachers we have and is more useful to the students. (Interview no.2 with 2nd inspector)

This idea of reinstating the GTM curriculum seems to be a matter for debate among the inspectors of English, because the head of English inspection commented:

Although I always discuss with my colleagues this point of returning to the old curriculum, for me the new curriculum is more beneficial than the old one…I'm sure the students can study it. It's not a big deal…some inspectors told me that it's necessary to reinstate the old curriculum and this isn't logical; for example, even the external cover of the old curriculum does not fit the mentality of students now, who want digital tools. Students want things that reflect the reality, whereas the old curriculum was all about farms and tractors. (Interview no.3 with the head of the English inspection)

From the above, it appears that the current curriculum is viewed by some of the participants to be appropriate for developing both the English ability and proficiency of the majority of Libyan students, but there might be various barriers to it being implemented as intended. The first inspector stated:

We took or adopted a modern curriculum and it was installed in a developing country. We should work on the infrastructure in order to install the curriculum in this society and its culture. (Interview no.1 with 1st inspector)

Many research studies show that the students' levels are one of the challenges when implementing an innovative curriculum (Abdel Latif 2012, Alkhawaldeh 2010, Altaieb 2013, Butler 2004, Carless 2003, Omar 2014). Alkhawaldeh (2010:855) investigated the challenges that Jordanian teachers faced in the directorates of education in Oman. One suggested improvement regarding the teaching of English was that the "EFL curriculum should be based on the actual levels and needs of the students".

Concerning the Libyan context, there are several reasons why teaching the curriculum is challenging. The first reason, as explained in 6.3.2, is due to the suspension of English teaching in Libya (Altaieb 2013, Omar 2014, Orafi and Borg 2009, Sawani 2009, Soliman 2013), which influenced every segment of Libyan society: parents, teachers and students of English. This political decision left Libyan citizens generally and

students particularly without a good background in English and continue to pose many obstacles to the teaching and learning of communicative English even today.

The findings showed that the majority of the students' levels restrict what their teachers can teach in the classroom. The teachers find it hard to teach several aspects of the curriculum. This factor also reduces the students' engagement in classroom activities (see section 5.4.5) and, consequently, their motivation. In order to make sense of English, students need to practise using it. Thus, the students' lack of practice in English makes them lose interest in learning the language (Anderson 1993). These findings are broadly in line with those of researchers such as Altaieb (2013), Orafi (2008), and Shihiba (2011). According to Altaieb (2013:91), "Students' low proficiency and the lack of professional training programs for teachers were also perceived by the participants as major barriers to the implementation process".

Preparing students with a good basic grounding from the early stage will have a positive influence on their language learning (Garton, et al. 2011), so the Libyan school principals' practice of allocating qualified teachers to teach the final year of the secondary stage while neglecting the basic stages so has complex ramifications regarding the students' levels (see section 6.2.6).

All of these factors contribute to Libyan students' low levels of English ability. The majority of Libyan students seem to lack confidence and proficiency in English, which makes it difficult for them to cope with the curriculum. The curriculum requires students to work and participate in different communicative activities, which are seen as simply inappropriate in light of the majority of Libyan students' level of English.

Another issue which needs to be considered is the students' expectations compared with the curriculum's principles. Students expect to pass the examination, which mainly entails the memorisation of grammar points and vocabulary and so conflicts with what the curriculum expects of the students. A focus on examinations was also evident in the majority of the teachers' practices. Some of the teacher participants stated clearly that they teach according to the exam, and so they tend to deviate from the curriculum.

Almost all EFL contexts are characterised by an examination system, which is designed to assess the level of the learners and often compels teachers to finish the curriculum, and so the traditional teaching method is seen as more appropriate (Abdel Latif 2012, Alkhawaldeh 2010, Andrews 2004, Garton, Copland and Burns 2011, Gorsuch 2000, Li

1998, Orafi and Borg 2009, Rao 2002, Yu 2001); therefore, a gap was identified between the teachers' implementation of the innovative curriculum and the traditional focus on examinations (see 6.4.5). The curriculum is seen as irrelevant to the Libyan school exam system, and there exists a clear gap between the requirements to pass the exam and the curriculum's aims.

The exam, therefore, has a negative washback on the actual teaching of the curriculum. The term 'washback' refers to the influence of a test on classroom practices, particularly teaching and learning. Buck (1988:17) describes the effects of a washback as follows:

> There is a natural tendency for both teachers and students to tailor their classroom activities to the demands of the test, especially when the test is very important to the future of the students, and pass rates are used as a measure of teacher success. This influence of the test on the classroom (referred to as washback by language testers) is, of course, very important; this washback effect can be either beneficial or harmful.

The influence of the washback can be classified as having either a positive or negative impact, according to the extent to which it stimulates or hinders the achievement of the aims of an educational programme. In the case of the Libyan secondary school context, although students spend eight years learning English, they find it difficult to use even the basics of the language, which can be traced to the washback influence of the school exam system. This washback effect of exams can be summarised as follows:

- It affects teachers' CLT-related practices and teaching activities. More specifically, teachers skip listening and speaking activities and concentrate instead on the aspects of English which feature in the exam.
- The teachers and students' orientation are closely related to the exam criteria. The classrooms observation showed that the majority of teachers stress the important tasks or questions that come up on the exam.
- The aim of teaching English is not to teach the language communicatively but rather to reinforce the material required for the exam. Consequently, the classroom is characterised by a tense atmosphere because of the exam pressure.

To conclude, although all of the participants referred to the value of the curriculum, they also emphasised the difficult of implementing it because of the students' low English levels and the demands of the exam. Thus, in terms of the students' levels, it is clear that the curriculum does not match these. Teacher-controlled classes seem to follow the

criteria of the exams, which again suggest that the curriculum does not match the learners' level.

7.4 The appropriateness of the curriculum and the teachers

The teachers are agents who enact the curriculum; they are expected to shift their practice to a learner-centred approach when implementing CLT. The majority of the teachers demonstrated a positive attitude towards the curriculum, but their positive views did not reflect a complete understanding of the implementation of the curriculum approach. The curriculum was often implemented mechanically without a full understanding of its overall purpose and importance. One might argue that the curriculum is incompatible not only with the students' level but also with that of the teachers. The curriculum was designed and introduced without any support or training being provided to the teachers, who face many challenges in teaching it.

The teachers expressed a fear regarding teaching the curriculum. Firstly, they mentioned that it is difficult to teach some aspects of the curriculum, mainly for teachers who are new to the field; for example, Kamal mentioned:

The teachers graduated from university with grammar rules and materials, of which there are few on the curriculum. A more significant thing is the difficulty of explaining or conveying information to the students. It was discovered after three years of teaching. The biggest problem I faced in the early years was how to convey the content to the students, because of the difficulty of the curriculum and because I didn't know how to explain things properly, which I acquired through years of experience. (Interview no.13 with Kamal)

It appears that the difficulties with the curriculum are not limited to the students, as the teachers also find it difficult to teach the curriculum, as Kamal mentioned. He found his own way to teach the curriculum after three years of teaching experience. Secondly, some teachers and inspectors complained about the amount of the curriculum compared to the time available. They expressed their dissatisfaction with the length of the curriculum because it is difficult to complete in only 6-8 months; for example, the head of English inspection mentioned:

The only reservation or criticism about the current curriculum is that it is long. This's my only criticism. (Interview no.3 with the head of English inspection)

The teachers were more concerned than the inspectors about the length of the curriculum; for example, Sarah stated that the main disadvantage is that it is long and intensive:

The current curriculum is excellent, but it suffers from a defect, in that it's a long curriculum. It needs time and more classes in order to enable the students to study all of the skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking. The curriculum is beneficial, but it's long. (Interview no.14 with Sarah)

Teachers find it difficult to teach the curriculum, despite having studied English for many years, including the different stages at school and four years at university using GTM, because they teach in the same manner as they themselves learnt English. The approach to learning English depends mainly on the memorisation strategy of handouts while at university. Thus, this technique of learning English is repeated and inherited from one generation to another. Teachers have little experience of strategies which would enable them to be more creative regarding teaching English because teaching a language does not follow a prescribed manner.

Richards and Rodgers (2014) claim that CLT plays an essential role in teaching language creativity because it underpins functional and situational use of language as it utilises different strategies, such as role-play, that require learners to be more creative and develop their imagination. He also argues that creativity is essential for developing academic achievement. According to Fisher and Williams (2013:11), "creative activity can rekindle the interest of students who have been turned off by school, and teachers who may be turned off by teaching in a culture of control and compliance". Nonetheless, both Libyan teachers and learners are more likely to omit this creative aspect when teaching and learning a language. Some teachers have not heard about the CLT approach, but create their own teaching approach instead. The majority expressed their lack of awareness about the various teaching methods, since they did not study them at the university. The teachers have not received any training on how to try out teaching the curriculum. Nonetheless they are required suddenly to teach large classes with an innovative curriculum, without any preparation. The following points summarise the teachers' challenges in light of the curriculum's appropriateness.

7.4.1 Teachers' lack of English oral proficiency

Proficiency is defined as "any language skill that is so thoroughly learned that it can be applied with little conscious thought" (Robinson, et al. 2000:29). Promoting English fluency is an essential element of CLT implementation. In order to deliver a lesson communicatively, teachers should have a good understanding of and continuously develop their oral English competence, but almost all of the teachers expressed their concern about their low level of English proficiency and lack of confidence in their speaking skills (see section, 6.2.1). Some of them, for example, stated explicitly that they are seeking private sessions to improve their English. Others mentioned that that their daily routine of teaching, without any Continuous Professional Development, meant that they felt uninterested and demotivated. More specifically, the teachers believe that their daily teaching routine does not stimulate them to make changes because of their lack of training and the absence of encouragement by other teachers.

All of the teachers stated that their oral skills are inadequate to adopt CLT. They themselves lack exposure to English, and have not received any training or support in English to enable them to update or develop their language skills. In all teaching, but particularly in language teaching, the teachers are the main tool for delivering good content. According to Samson and Collins (2012:9), the teachers must understand a language, as a system of speech contains many elements, including "specifically sounds, grammar, meaning, coherence, communicative strategies, and social conventions".

As explained above, Libyan teachers struggle to implement the curriculum without any preparation. According to Westbrook (2013:15) "curriculum reforms are often designed and implemented without parallel in initial teacher education and continuing professional development".

7.4.2 Teachers' lack of pedagogical knowledge

Richards (2013:5) argues that, "A knowledge base is important because without knowledge, imagination cannot be productive". Teachers should have solid knowledge in order to be able to master the teaching of different lessons or language skills. Libyan teachers' lack of pedagogical knowledge causes them difficulties when teaching certain aspects of the curriculum, such as listening; writing and speaking (see section 6.2.2 on the teachers' factors). Consequently, this makes the process of teaching the curriculum unproductive and ineffective. This claim is also supported by Westbrook (2013:31),

who commented that, "teachers' lack of subject knowledge was a key problem in new curriculum subjects".

Libyan Teachers should be equipped with strong pedagogical scaffolding that will enable them to understand different tasks, assess the students' level, and serve the demands of the curriculum. More importantly, this knowledge illuminates teachers' need to implement aspects that differ slightly from their previous pedagogical approaches (Carless 1999). Samson and Collins (2012:10) argue:

> Teachers must have a working knowledge of academic language and of the particular type of language used for instruction as well as for the cognitively demanding tasks typically found in textbooks.

This lack of academic knowledge makes teachers feel unsure and cautious when teaching productive skills, which can consequently have an impact on their progress in learning.

7.4.3 Teachers' lack of training services

Training is considered a full package that helps teachers to enhance their own English proficiency, understand the various teaching methodologies, have opportunities to discuss their teaching problems, and reinforce their confidence. Carless (1999) argues that an innovation may fail to achieve its intended purpose if it is introduced with insufficient on-going training; a lack of training causes enthusiastic teachers to become frustrated. Training is important because it opens up opportunities for teachers to assess and test their experience of innovation in order to enhance and increase their personal practical comprehension of the curriculum. The findings indicate that teachers have never received any kind of training which supports their teaching using the textbooks and subsequently understanding the communicative approach and finding a pathway to its principles (see section 6.4.6). The analysis of the data revealed that some teachers lack information about CLT. Moreover, the observation also revealed misunderstanding of the communicative approach when implementing certain activities on the curriculum. The above phenomena may be due to this lack of training. As Samson and Collins (2012:8) state, "teachers need the appropriate training to be able to meet their students' language and learning needs and to facilitate academic growth".

In sum, the curriculum does not suit the majority of the teachers' abilities. The above factors are obstacles to the implementation of the curriculum with regard to both language proficiency and pedagogic knowledge.

7.5 Libyan school context

The implementation of CLT is highly influenced by the context in which the teaching takes place. It could be argued that the curriculum was introduced without taking into consideration the poor condition of the Libyan classroom context. Teaching a new curriculum, particularly a communicative one, needs to be complemented by an appropriate teaching context. As Westbrook (2013:28) points out, "scaffolding and supporting with new curricula were key to developing higher-level teaching as in its absence teachers tended to default to traditional" As mentioned in 6.4, one can argue that the curriculum does not match certain criteria associated with the Libyan educational context.

- The lack of materials and resources (see 6.4.1-6.4.2 & 6.4.4); for example, Johnson et al. (2005:50) indicate that:

> A school in serious disrepair presents an array of hazards for everyone in it. The physical elements of schooling also influence instruction—both what can be taught and how it can be taught. A school's lack of textbooks, a library, science equipment, or reliable photocopy machines inevitably limits the kind of teaching and learning that can occur.

- The examination system, which leads to a neglect of CLT (see 6.4.5) (Carless 1999, Li 1998, Littlewood 2007).

- The Libyan school context lacks the visual aids and technology that are essential to teaching in a practical and communicative way. Herrell and Jordan (2015:20) describe the use of visual aids as a beneficial approach that makes the instruction more comprehensible: "visual aids allow students to hear English words and connect them to the visual images being displayed".

- The Libyan classroom environment is characterised by large class sizes and strict time constraints (see 6.4.4 & 6.4.3). Thus, it could be argued that the classroom situation, including the pressure to complete the curriculum within a limited time and the examination system, have negative effects on teaching the curriculum (Carless 1999, Garton, et al. 2011, Pandian 2002). Accordingly, although the curriculum was introduced to solve the problems related to English teaching and learning in Libya, it might be argued that introducing a new curriculum with a different educational ideology can create problems, unless it is presented with strong scaffolding for the teachers and students, as well as a suitable physical environment.

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7.6 Conclusion

Despite all of these reforms that were introduced in order to improve English teaching in many EFL settings, the evidence suggests that the implementation of these curricula is not always attainable, and likely to be partial in nature, depending heavily on the traditional methods. Introducing a curriculum without undertaking a realistic investigation of the criteria associated with the Libyan context has made it difficult to adopt by classroom teachers.

The implementation of the curriculum poses a challenge to the teachers' practices in the classroom. The findings have highlighted the factors that negatively affect the appropriate implementation of the curriculum. These can be classified into students' factors, teachers' factors and school institutional factors. Moreover, the findings show that these factors are interlinked. In fact, addressing the teachers' challenges could contribute to overcoming the students' challenges.

With regard to the teachers, the findings revealed that they face a variety of challenges; for example, they lack English proficiency that prevents them from teaching the curriculum with confidence, while their lack of pedagogical knowledge prevents them from teaching various aspects of the curriculum, such as writing, speaking and reading. Furthermore, some teachers believe that implementing communicative activities is a waste of time, and leads to the students depending on each other; for example, weaker students rely on the efforts of stronger ones. Above all, a severe lack of training has had a serious effect on the teachers' development and motivation. The teachers' professional development is a significant factor that is required to achieve the implementation of innovation.

Regarding the students, several factors, including their lack of proficiency, lack of a strong learning scaffolding in the early stages that supports and prepares them for the secondary stage, and the students' expectations, that are completely related to the exam system, lead to difficulties with curriculum implementation.

Concerning the school context, many challenges exist that have made CLT difficult to implement; for example, there is a shortage of teaching aids, such as visual aids, charts, flashcards, and projectors. Additionally, there is a lack of computers, internet access, language labs, and classroom basics. Thus, due to the lack of these teaching aids, the students become bored, sitting passively in class without participating. The lack of these

teaching aids has made the curriculum unworkable. In other words, it is hard to create a communicative language class without these tools. In addition, the curriculum is overloaded and includes some subjects that are irrelevant to the students' real lives as well as being difficult for the teachers to explain. All of these factors make teaching the curriculum difficult and its implementation has not been successful. Consequently, the appropriateness of the curriculum can be briefly summarised as follows.

The implementation of the ELT curriculum has not achieved the desired outcomes. The findings suggest that a gap exists between the aims of the curricula and the actual improvement in the classroom. There seems to exist a clear inconsistency between the theoretical principles of the curriculum and the reality; for instance, a CLT-based curriculum is seen as inappropriate in the Libyan classroom context in terms of the large class sizes, lack of materials, absent resources, dominant examination system and teachers and students' level of proficiency. This research has found that these factors have a negative effect on teaching the curriculum.

The curriculum is appropriate in terms of its theoretical principles, which aim to develop the level of both teaching and learning English in the Libyan context and improve Libyan students' communicative competence, but are unattainable in practical terms. According to Westbrook (2013:27), "New curricula were often implemented mechanically and without reflection on their relevance or application".

Finally, despite the fact that the curriculum contains elements that make it effective for CLT, "the ultimate success or failure can only be determined after trying it in the classroom with real learners" (McDonough, et al. 2012). Thus, in order to reap the benefits of this curriculum and achieve its successful implementation, a comprehensive strategy for addressing each of these inhibiting factors is urgently required.

Chapter 8 Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Introduction

Possessing good communication ability is extremely important in the current era. The need to acquire sound communicative skills in English has made communicative ability the goal of language teaching. In other words, to be able to use English for communication purposes, the communicative approach has become essential and popular in the field of English teaching. Many studies reveal that the practical implementation of the theoretical assumptions of CLT is hard to achieve in certain English as a foreign language classrooms. It could be argued that CLT principles are simply recognisable as a theory. Teachers claim to accept CLT, although this seems to be more in theory than in practice. In the Libyan context, English is considered a foreign language, so it is important to identify an effective teaching method which can improve Libyan students' communicative ability, where the classroom is the only environment in which they can learn English. Students should seek opportunities to be involved in actual communication in order to compensate for their lack of the exposure to English outside the classroom. Consequently, CLT principles have been proposed and are now deeply embedded in the Libyan ELT curriculum. This study aimed to examine the current situation regarding CLT implementation in the Libyan secondary school context.

This chapter will outline the main findings of this study in light of the research questions. It summarises CLT implementation in relation to the communicative curriculum. The chapter also highlights the limitations of the research and its key contributions to knowledge. It suggests recommendations for facilitating successful CLT implementation within the proposed curriculum in Libya as well as amendments to the curriculum, based on the findings of this study. Finally, it describes the scope for further research regarding the Libyan context.

8.2 General summary

This study investigates CLT implementation approach in relation to the innovative Libyan curriculum, which was introduced in 1999/2000. The CLT curriculum was a response to the negative consequences of the political decision to suspend the teaching of English in Libya in 1986 (See section 2.6), and the use of the old GTM curriculum. Despite introducing the communicative curriculum as a novel endeavour in the Libyan

context, the findings have revealed that the implementation of CLT principles has not yet been fully realised in English language classrooms.

In order to investigate CLT curriculum implementation, I utilised various research methods, starting with a three-month classroom observation period, followed by stimulated-recall interviews with the teachers who had been observed, and semi-structured interviews with all of the participants, including the teachers, English inspectors as well as the students. These data were gathered in order to answer the following research questions:

1. How do the teachers understand and perceive of the communicative approach?
2. Is the communicative approach used in the classroom? and, if so, how?
3. What are the problems and challenges which Libyan teachers and students face with regard to CLT implementation?
4. Is the curriculum appropriate for the Libyan secondary school context, the students' needs and their level of EL proficiency?

The findings revealed that serious obstacles exist to the successful implementation of the communicative curriculum. For example, Libyan students spend eight years learning English but still fail to achieve English proficiency or communicative competence, skills and knowledge that would enable them to interact fluently using English, as recommended on the curriculum. The following points summarise the main findings of this research.

8.2.1 Research findings and their implications

The presentation of the findings will follow the sequence of the research questions, as follows:

8.2.1.1 Understanding and perceptions of CLT

Before investigating the process of the communicative curriculum's implementation, it was necessary to examine the philosophical orientation of CLT principles by examining the teachers' understanding and perceptions regarding this approach. This was the aim of the first research question. The teachers' responses displayed a variety of understanding and perceptions regarding CLT. Thirteen categories emerged related to these phenomena.

The findings revealed that the majority of teachers held favourable attitudes towards CLT. The analysis also showed that CLT was familiar to several teachers, while others

teachers did not understand or agree with its application within Libyan schools. A few teachers appeared to have heard about this approach for the first time as a result of this research.

Although some participants appeared uncertain about the exact meaning of CLT, they expressed a general belief about the essential need to adopt and utilise CLT principles in order to improve the oral English ability of Libyan students; however, almost all of the teachers agreed that it was difficult to adopt this approach in English classes in the Libyan context. Additionally, the teachers also expressed concern about the challenges that they faced in teaching the curriculum, particularly novice teachers, who were still developing their own style of teaching. Some of the teachers and English inspectors stated clearly that neither the students nor teachers' levels matched the criteria and level of the curriculum. Some of the teachers did not conceal their intention to attend private sessions to improve their English proficiency.

These findings are broadly in line with researchers such as Karavas-Doukas (1996), Mustapha and Yahaya (2013), Shihiba (2011), Naruemon (2013), and Vongxay (2013); for example, Naruemon (2013) claimed that, due to the superficial and uneven understanding of CLT, teachers adopted this approach in a limited manner during their internship. Such disagreement about this approach has led to different interpretations of its meaning, which causes numerous debates about its implementation; for example, a number of researchers (Medgyes 1992, Sato and Kleinsasser 1999, Thompson 1996, Thornbury 1998) claim that the precise definition of CLT remains uncertain, which confuses many teachers; However, other researchers (Mangubhai et al. 2007) found that teachers had a good understanding of CLT that matched their classroom practices. Thus, one cannot make a general claim based on the above findings, which appear to signal a need for further research in different contexts.

8.2.1.2 The use of CLT and the manner of its use

The findings revealed that the engagement with CLT by both teachers and students is limited. CLT implementation does not appear to be feasible and is difficult to achieve in light of all the surrounding factors. The technique for teaching the communicative curriculum looks completely different from what was planned. There exists a clear inconsistency between the theoretical assumptions about the curriculum and the actual manner in which it is taught. The classroom observation followed by stimulated-recall interviews presented a thorough description of the method of teaching the curriculum as explored in CLT implementation (chapter 5). Teaching was characterised by the

teachers' complete control of the classroom (see section 5.4.3). Teaching using the traditional methods was dominant in the majority of classroom practice involving techniques, such as memorisation, repetition, reading aloud (see sections 5.4.4 and 5.4.6), correcting students' pronunciation and interruptions while reading passages. Moreover, the overuse of the L1 while teaching English seems to be a habit among some of the teachers. All these are features of actual practice in the classroom. This grammar-based, mechanical process may provide a feasible way to pass the exam but not to introduce CLT principles. Thus, it is hard to implement CLT principles due to this conventional approach.

These findings are congruent with those of other researchers in many foreign contexts (Abdel Latif 2012, Ahmed and Rao 2013, Asassfeh et al. 2012, Bataineh, Bataineh and Thabet 2011, Chang and Goswami 2011, Coskun 2011); for example, an investigation into the teaching of a communicative English textbook series in secondary schools in Egypt conducted by Abdel Latif (2012) found that the teaching practices were generally focused on the teaching of grammar and vocabulary.

The findings showed that the implementation process differs according to the context in which it is taught. The findings revealed that the possibility of CLT implementation depends on the appropriateness and availability of certain factors in a particular context. Although the findings revealed that CLT seems to be difficult to implement in the government school context, this situation is completely different from that in the private language centres. The observation data showed that the private language classrooms are equipped with all of the required features that make the implementation process accessible and effective; for example, these features include small classes with an average of 15 students. There are audio and video teaching aids, and authentic materials. In addition, in the private language centres, teachers are able to spend sufficient time implementing communicative activities. The participant teachers and inspectors of English claimed that practical CLT implementation is feasible in the private centres due to these factors. The availability of the right context has widely influenced the adoption and application of a communicative curriculum, suggesting that the context in which teaching takes place plays a significant role in the choice of language teaching method. As Brown (2007) argues, teaching and context have a mutual relationship and interrelated components. Hymes (1972: xix–lvii, quoted in Collentine and Freed 2004:153) states that "the key to understanding language in context is to start not with language but with context". Therefore, before enacting any kind of innovation, it is vital to consider its institutional context.

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8.2.1.3 Teachers and students' challenges regarding CLT implementation

The findings revealed that Libyan teachers and students encounter various challenges in teaching and learning the communicative approach. The teachers' challenges will now be discussed.

The findings revealed that the teachers' lack of English proficiency makes it difficult for them to implement communicative activities. The teachers consider their lack of English proficiency as a problem that needs to be addressed in order to teach the curriculum (see 6.2.1). This feeling seems to be widespread and has a negative impact on CLT implementation in a number of EFL contexts (Ahmad and Rao 2013, Chang and Goswami 2011, Christ and Makarani 2009, Vongxay 2013). In particular, this was confirmed in a study conducted by Christ and Makarani (2009) of two schools in India; the results clearly revealed that the teachers' English proficiency is among the challenges associated with CLT implementation.

Another major challenge which makes the teachers' task of teaching the CLT curriculum principles more difficult is the lack of the pedagogical knowledge and experience of teaching skills such as writing and speaking. This leads some teachers to omit the teaching of these productive skills (see section 6.2.2). Some teachers and English inspectors expressed their concerns about the teachers' heavy workload, which means that the teachers cannot focus properly on teaching the curriculum.

One of the main findings which affect the teaching of the CLT curriculum principles is the way in which the teachers are allocated different year groups, as explained in 6.2.6. The students also justified their low level of English as due to the fact that they have not been taught properly during their early stages of learning English (see section 6.3.2.2). The students claimed that although they spent eight years learning English both in primary and secondary school, they still have difficulty expressing themselves in English.

Some teachers do not place much importance on teaching the whole curriculum in the first and second years of the secondary stages. This is because the final exam is prepared by the teachers so they are aware of what it will contain. Consequently, they focus on the topics related to the exam, which has a negative influence on teaching the communicative curriculum; for instance, the series of textbooks entitled *English for Libya* needs to be taught sequentially because understanding one textbook depends on understanding the previous one. As a result of this inconsistency, students do not

achieve the intended development and progress, which creates problems for subsequent teachers when they try to implement and teach the communicative curriculum.

The research also found that the political decision to suspend the teaching of English in Libyan schools in 1986 had a profound impact on the general status of English teaching there. Some of the participants believed that this decision is the main reason for all the EL issues that Libyans now face; for example, the lack of experienced English teachers has put them in a situation where they simply ignore many of the theoretical principles when teaching the practical activities and productive skills of the curriculum.

The students also mentioned their concerns about the following challenges that they face with regard to learning English. Their weak level and background in English prevent them from participating effectively in the classroom and reduce their motivation. The teachers and students cited different reasons for their lack of English proficiency.

The view of English as a subject leads to students' low levels of English. The majority of participants voiced their anxiety and frustration about the technique of teaching to the exam, which inhibits the communicative aspect of the curriculum. The students were critical of the fact that they are only assessed on grammar and vocabulary via Multiple Choice Questions, and that there is no assessment of their speaking or listening skills as taught in the curriculum. There seems to be no connection between how the language is taught and the final assessment which they need to pass in order to continue their studies. It could be argued that this focus on the exam has created concerns among students linked to the importance of passing the exam. Yahya (2013:230) defined test anxiety as "a fear of failing in tests and an unpleasant experience held either consciously or unconsciously by learners in many situations". This exam-oriented culture not only causes concerns and anxiety, but has also led to the inhibition of the spirit of creativity and innovation among Libyan students.

The students realise that they have a low level of English, which they attribute to the reason stated above, and also their lack of a good foundation in the early stages of learning English (see page 89).

One of the main findings of this study is the contrast between the teachers and students' views of learning English (see sections 6.3.2.1 & 6.3.2.2). The teachers believe that their students have a negative attitude towards learning English. More specifically, they explained that their students always complain that English is a difficult subject or language. They report that the students are only interested in studying English to pass

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the exam rather than for any other authentic purposes. The teachers' opinions of their students' attitudes towards learning English are consistent with previous research findings related to the Libyan context (Altaieb 2013, Elabbar 2014, Omar 2014, Orafi and Borg 2009, Sawani 2009, Shihiba 2011, Youssef 2012); for example, Omar (2014) argues that, during his five years of teaching experience in different schools and at various levels, he has found that students adopt the same negative attitude towards learning English. Likewise, Youssef (2012:366) points out that a lack of motivation and negative attitudes among both students and teachers "has contributed greatly to the poor acceptance of English learning in these nations".

However, the findings of this research showed different results regarding students' attitudes towards English. It is worth mentioning that, due to a number of teachers who lack information about CLT, I preferred not to ask students directly about their perceptions of CLT because I thought that this phenomenon might be unclear to them. As a result, the students' attitudes and perceptions regarding learning English were investigated, and the results indicated that all of the student participants held a positive attitude towards learning English. The students' responses revealed different motivations regarding the relevance of learning English for their future (see section 6.3.2.2); for example, some students mentioned that English is the language of the world, which they should learn it in order to communicate with other people; others revealed a strong attitude towards learning English since it is the language of modern sciences. The findings revealed that the students have a clear awareness of the significance of English, which completely contrasts with the teachers' views; for example:

"*One of the biggest problems in class is that the students come to the school without any motivation to learn English*" (Sami/English teacher).

"*It is a good language. My motivation is to learn English*" (Sufiyan/a student).

Although the students were not asked explicitly about CLT as an approach to teaching English, their underlying attitudes highlighted the importance of English as a language of communication rather than an academic subject (see 6.3.2). The students were asked about their preferred techniques for learning English, and all agreed on the importance of learning English through practising it. They all complained about the lack of opportunities for oral practice in English. All the students' responses reflect their motivation and willingness to learn English communicatively. More importantly, all of the students expressed their dissatisfaction with the teachers' practices of using Arabic all the time and skipping speaking and listening activities. The students criticised the

teachers' practices in the classroom, which do not enable them to practise English orally. Thus, one can argue that it is possible that practising English through a variety of communicative tasks and activities is crucial for improving students' English proficiency, which implicitly contributes towards increasing their motivation.

Additionally, the findings revealed that some teachers pay little attention to their students' achievement; for example, some students felt unhappy and frustrated regarding some teachers' reactions towards their skills and interest in practising certain activities, such as writing and pair work. According to Bojovic (2006:490):

> Teachers need to have considerable flexibility, be willing to listen to learners, take interest in the disciplines or professional activities the students are involved in... The teacher has the opportunity to draw on students' knowledge of the content in order to generate communication in the classroom.

Among the challenges of CLT implementation are the effects of contextual and socio-cultural factors which make the implementation of communicative teaching almost impossible. The results showed that Libyan schools lack teaching aids and facilities which enable communicative teaching which impact on the teachers and students' motivation (see 6.4.1). This environment does not help to create a stimulating atmosphere for teaching. These findings are consistent with previous research conducted in the Kuwaiti context by Al-Nwaiem (2012), which revealed that the physical classroom environment was not equipped with the appropriate teaching aids, resources or facilities. This absence of teaching aids and resources contributes to the students' low performance and lack of motivation.

The observation data revealed overcrowded classrooms with bad lighting, old broken boards, walls containing graffiti and old desks (see 6.4.2). Both the teachers and students described the classroom as an environment which does not stimulate inductive communicative teaching.

It is a challenge to finish teaching a communicative curriculum within the limited time required by the examination system, inspectors and academic year. All of these contextual factors mean that a communicative curriculum fails to meet its minimal requirements.

Other contextual factors were related to teacher training, teacher consultations and the role of inspectors. Almost all of the teachers stated that they had not received any kind of training or support with regard to teaching the new curriculum. The teachers also felt that providing a session which is unrelated to the innovation or teaching methods for one week is insufficient to equip them with the appropriate knowledge and skills to

teach the curriculum. Adey (2004:156) explains that, "real change in practice will not arise from short programs instruction". Moreover, the teachers complained that their opinions about introducing the innovation were neglected. The teachers claimed that the curriculum was imposed on them suddenly, without consultation on different issues regarding the students' needs, level and the classroom context.

The research also found that socio-economic factors have influenced CLT implementation; for example, the social and economic differences between various Libyan families lead some parents to enrol their children in private English teaching centres. Consequently, this leads to differences in the students' levels, as the students who are enrolled in these centres are taught in communicative classrooms. Another social factor is the parents' lack of English language knowledge due to the suspension of English teaching in 1986, which increased the difficulty of teaching under a communicative approach. The majority of parents cannot help their children at home, as explained in 6.5.1.1.

8.2.1.4 The appropriateness of the curriculum

Concerning the appropriateness of the curriculum, which is covered by the final research question, the findings revealed that the curriculum is appropriate in terms of meeting the students' needs because it was designed and introduced for the purpose of improving English proficiency and communicative ability (see 7.3). Yet, introducing an innovation without taking into consideration the general infrastructure of a certain context often leads to the failure of its implementation. The research indicates that the curriculum is unworkable and difficult to implement in the real secondary school classroom context. The curriculum is implemented according to the current Libyan context and does not meet its aims and principles.

8.3 Contribution to the knowledge

In addition to providing some suggestions for future research, my research had made a major contribution to the literature relevant to CLT implementation. This study is the first attempt to provide considerable in depth details related to the implementation of CLT in Libyan secondary schools as it includes different perspectives and experiences of the phenomenon such as those of students, teachers and English inspectors. This richness of details highlighted the different issues relevant to CLT implementation. The interview data from teachers, students and inspectors provided me with comprehensive

understandings of the different practices, views, beliefs and attitudes towards CLT implementation.

This is the first time that Libyan students' attitudes were investigated with regard to learning English. This study is the first attempt to give students an opportunity to share their voices regarding their perceptions and attitudes to learning English. Previous studies revealed the students' attitudes indirectly while interviewing the teachers and asking about their viewpoints (Altaieb 2013, Elabbar 2011, Omar 2014, Shihiba 2011, Soliman 2013, Youssef 2012). Their findings revealed negative students' attitudes towards learning English. This is because the students' attitudes were investigated from one angle, which was the teachers' point of view, while the students' views themselves were not investigated.

The findings of this study showed different results regarding the students' attitudes towards learning English in comparison to the above research studies. As the opportunity was available to investigate and hear the students' their own views in the current study, the findings revealed that all of the student participants expressed positive attitudes and a range of motivation towards learning English. Consequently, this research has made a new contribution to knowledge and addressed the issue of avoiding or neglecting the students' opinions.

This study provides unique insights into the attitudes of the teachers, students and inspectors' perceptions of CLT and its implementation, based on both observed curriculum teaching in Libyan classrooms and the teachers' perceptions of the curriculum, using a variety of interview techniques. On the basis of the obtained data, this research provides a thorough description and critical analysis of the CLT curriculum implementation, and its appropriateness in terms of the teachers, students and the Libyan context.

Regarding the CLT implementation principles, this study presented different contexts of CLT implementation in terms of presenting the difference between how the government schools and private centres teach English. Additionally, the research provides a detailed explanation of the teaching practices in use (see 5.4). This range of perspectives revealed the wide range of issues that affect the implementation of CLT in Libya. However, I should acknowledge that I cannot make a general claim about the extent to which teachers' practices and views in the current study occur in all secondary schools in Libya. Nonetheless this study extends our understandings of the different practices

involved in CLT implementation as well as the other challenges such as the contextual and socio-cultural factors. Moreover, there are aspects that may be transferrable to other EFL contexts. The study provides in depth qualitative data and thorough explanations of the data collection methods, the procedures and analysis which offer to other researchers a wide understanding of methodological aspects that could be used in similar contexts.

The influence of the socio-economic factors on the implementation of a communicative approach was also explored; for example, the findings revealed the impact of Libyans parents' lack of English knowledge on the CLT approach due to the fact that the suspension of English teaching made the teachers' task of implementing CLT more difficult.

In terms of the methodology, comprehensive research methods were employed, including observation, stimulated-recall interviews and semi-structured interviews, in order to capture the whole picture of the communicative teaching practices. Stimulated-recall interviews have not been used previously to investigate the Libyan teachers' practices in the classroom, which will encourage Libyan researchers to employ this method in further future research work.

In conclusion, this study makes a valuable contribution and enriches the educational research in the Libyan context on the implementation of the CLT principles within the framework of an innovative communicative curriculum, curriculum description and critical analysis of its appropriateness. More importantly, it pays attention to Libyan students' voices and allows their problems with regard to learning English to be heard for the first time. Thus, I hope that the findings of my research will be taken into consideration by Libyan decision-makers, paying particular attention to the students' needs and encouraging their motivation to learn English for communicative purposes.

8.4 Recommendations

In order to develop the teaching of the communicative approach and achieve the curriculum's aims, the researcher proposes a set of recommendations that might improve this situation. These recommendations are based on the findings of the study, the participants' suggestions and the researcher's experience of doing the fieldwork. Thus, the following recommendations are offered to address specific areas of concern:

1. Before introducing an innovation in the education system, the Libyan Ministry of Education should propose a reform programme to mend the infrastructure, including all of the institutions of Libyan education (primary and secondary schools, higher institutes, universities, English and inspection departments). The general infrastructure of the Libyan education system requires a radical change if any kind of curriculum innovation is to be implemented: for example, the current conditions in schools should be improved. Broadband access to the internet, modern technology and language labs should be available. Classrooms should also be equipped with modern, comfortable furniture, and the teaching aids, which affect the students' motivation and help them to view learning English as a simulating, authentic process rather than an artificial one, must also be accessible.

2. The Ministry of Education should consider the lack of new buildings within secondary schools that leads to the overcrowded classes. The classrooms were designed to accommodate 20-25 students, but the observation data revealed that there are over 45 students per class, that makes it difficult to teach properly and pay attention to every student in the class. Thus, it is recommended that the class sizes should be reduced in order to enable teachers to implement communicative teaching.

3. Teaching a language is a process that mainly depends on the teachers. Consequently, Libyan education officials should work hard to improve the main axis in this process, who is the teachers. Libyan English teachers urgently require ongoing training to increase their understanding and awareness of the various methodologies for teaching English, strengthen their experience and knowledge of English and increase their motivation to teach. The participants suggested that training courses and programmes in English-speaking countries would improve their English proficiency and increase their confidence in teaching and assessing other language skills such as speaking and writing.

4. Tutorial programmes are required which bring together all categories of teachers (experienced and novice) and encourage them to share their different experiences, to give teachers a chance to address their students' issues in all stages and their level.

5. A link should be made between pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher education to avoid the difficulties which novice teachers face when they begin teaching. The teachers emphasised the gap as well as the difference

between what they studied at university and their actual experience of teaching the curriculum. The teachers suggested that what they learnt during their final year at university should at least be linked to the curriculum to enable them to teach the curriculum smoothly and reduce the difficulties they face after graduating.

6. Intensive educational English courses should be provided for Libyan parents in order to fill the gap of their lack of knowledge and background in English, which is attributed to the suspension of English teaching in the past. Improving Libyans parents' level of English will enable them to help their children at home.

Briefly, the education system is a very significant sector in any society. It is the main foundation for building the other sectors. Thus, Libyan Education Ministry officials should focus on improving the general quality of the teaching of all subjects, particularly English, to guarantee a good future for Libyan students as well as to ease the burden on English teachers who face different obstacles associated with teaching the curriculum and implementing its principles. Having explained the significant contribution of this research and its pedagogical implications, the following section highlights the limitations and challenges of this research.

8.5 Limitations and challenges of the research

8.5.1 Limitations of the research

1.   Although I see that my research is fundamentally significant in the Libyan context, since it has provided rich materials from the data collection and the theories which explain and interpret the participants' practices and perceptions of CLT implementation, I have been primarily concerned about the generalisability of the research findings. In other words, the findings may not be generalizable to other areas of Libya. However, regarding this point, I should make it clear that I deliberately avoided using a questionnaire as one of my research instruments, due to my awareness of the context and concern that it would not have been completed, or at least not fully, in many cases. Moreover, the purpose of this research is to provide an in-depth understanding rather than generalizable conclusions (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007).

2.   As qualitative research usually takes place in natural setting and allows researchers to obtain details through becoming immersed in the actual context (Creswell 2013, Williams 2007), I was unable to avoid being involved in the study; for example, I acted as an observer. As Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue, in qualitative research,

researchers are considered human research instruments and their perceptions are essential for the process of data collection and analysis and their insights; however, I addressed the influence of researcher bias by employing different methods of data collection, including classroom observation, stimulated-recall interviews, field notes, audio and video recordings, and semi-structured interviews. The use of both audio and video recordings enhanced the quality of the research by presenting a faithful picture of the teachers' practices in the classroom. Moreover, I adopted various criteria to ensure the trustworthiness of this research (see section 4.10).

3.   As explained earlier, my concerns should also be acknowledged regarding the use of observation in this context. Libyan teachers are not used to being observed while teaching; therefore, my presence with them in the classroom might have restricted their teaching practices. Due to my concern, I explained to all of the observed teachers in detail my research purpose and that I was not present to evaluate or assess their teaching style. Additionally, I believe that the majority of teachers followed their own teaching practices due to the variety of CLT practices that emerged.

8.5.2 Challenges of the research

1. As explained in 4.11, the first challenge which I faced was the process of collecting the data. The data collection could not to be carried out as originally planned, due to the security situation in Libya. I was supposed to collect data in November 2014; however, my journey to do the fieldwork was postponed until February 2015 after the schools were reopened again, due to the war in Benghazi.

2. My plan was to collect data and make a comparison of communicative curriculum teaching between two cities in the east of Libya (Benghazi and El-marj) yet, due to the difficulty of travelling between the two cities, the fear for those with me and the lack of the fuel, I decided to collect data from one city instead.

3. Another challenge was the time limitation. Although I met all of the participants, sometimes it was difficult to conduct more than one interview per day because of the time limitation. The school day starts at 8am and ends at 12:30pm. This time was very short for locating all of the participants and arranging the observations and interviews. On one occasion, the participant remained with me until 2:00pm to finish the interview, and I also interviewed the head of the English inspection department in my flat.

8.6 Suggestions for further research

Suggestions for future research have arisen from the findings of this research. This study investigated CLT implementation in the secondary school context. Possible areas for further research include the primary school context, which would also be very useful due to its importance as a preliminary foundation stage for both preparatory and secondary school. Moreover, the findings of this research suggest that it is important and relevant to investigate the process of teaching productive language skills, such as writing and speaking, in both the preparatory and secondary stages.

Although the data for the current study were collected from a variety of participants, including teachers, students and inspectors of English, one avenue for further study would be research on the Libyan parents' perceptions of CLT implementation and an examination of the challenges which they face in following up their children at home to support a communicative teaching of English.

Another area of investigation would be to focus on the gap between the university-level curricula and the secondary-level education curricula to examine whether the former are appropriate for preparing Libyan novice teachers to teach the latter as intended. The findings revealed that novice teachers face difficulty in teaching the curriculum during their early years of teaching.

The roles and relationships between the teachers and students are important and influence teaching under the communicative approach. The findings revealed that the majority of classroom practices seem to be characterised by the teachers' control in class. Thus, these issues deserve further investigation to examine the influence of the teachers' control in class on the students' learning motivation and involvement in the classroom.

Finally, this research illuminated the students' attitudes towards learning English and their preferred methods for doing so. The student participants expressed their awareness and motivation to learn English for communicative purposes and their dissatisfaction with the current technique of teaching English. They were very keen to share their experiences of learning English in the classroom, and they stated that was their first opportunity to discuss their learning experiences. Consequently, further research on Libyan students' challenges and problems with regard to learning English would be very valuable, such as university students. It is worth mentioning that investigating the students' voices is an important element of further research in the Libyan context.

8.7 Autobiographical reflection

Invaluable experience has been obtained from undertaking this research. This research journey has provided me with a deep understanding of various aspects of the nature of the research. In the first year of my study, I started learning about the different research methods by undertaking and finishing successfully some of my MRes Modules that were relevant to a research study. I have learnt about the research paradigms, approaches and the philosophical underpinning of the ontological and epistemological perspectives, a field that was completely new to me, which adds new information to my knowledge as a researcher. I was slightly confused and worried about my choice of research philosophy as it took me a long time to recognise its relationship to my research study.

This research study helped me to enhance a number of my skills, from delivering PowerPoint presentations to attending educational Doctoral Conferences and a PhD workshop series at Sheffield Hallam University, at which I was able to meet different teachers and experts in my subject, and discuss and hear different opinions; for example, issues regarding curricula innovation and their implementation. Attending Teaching Skills for Doctoral Students sessions at my academic institution also gave me valuable experience as a teacher on how to present, deliver, and plan lessons. Moreover, attending the inter-disciplinary doctoral conference, which explored the different research methods of various research students at Hallam University, opened up new windows and a fresh awareness of the different skills which were required to improve my research methods and identify how they differ from other research students and contexts. I also gained new knowledge about using various software programmes such as Ref-work. Additionally, my research journey developed my personal and research skills of reading, writing, and using different databases and electronic libraries. I learnt from the practical experience of conducting my field work and data collection process that things can be challenging to arrange, and research can be complicated and stressful, but at other times enjoyable, challenging and rewarding. I also learnt from my supervisors how to organise my work by dating and labelling all documents and notes as well as how to be more precise and explicit during my writing-up stage. From all of these things, I learnt a great deal. More importantly, this study has taught me how to be more patient, since any research is an endless process. The more you investigate, the more you search.

Based on the above reflections, it is my responsibility to employ all of the advantages and methodological aspects which I have learnt about during my study of the Libyan education context. I intend to reform and make changes to the Libyan secondary school context in order to make the situation of learning English using a communicative approach more applicable in improving English proficiency for both Libyan teachers and students, and developing their communicative ability. Consequently, this research is my starting point.

8.8 Final remarks

This research study was carried out with the main aim of investigating the implementation of communicative language teaching and exploring the factors which influence its implementation in the Libyan secondary school context. This has been achieved by examining the teachers' perceptions, understandings and practices regarding CLT, together with the students and inspectors of English's perceptions of CLT implementation, and also presenting their challenges, solutions, suggestions and recommendations regarding teaching English using a communicative approach.

The investigation and exploration of the findings of this research show that the factors affecting CLT implementation are likely to be interlinked. In other words, these factors depend on each other in developing and achieving the teaching of English within a communicative approach; for example, although Libyan students spend almost eight years learning English, their level of English proficiency remains low, which does not encourage them to be active participants in the classroom. As Westbrook (2013:6) argues, "if students do not learn the basics early on, the rest of the curriculum is inaccessible to them". Furthermore, introducing a new innovation in the ELT curriculum without providing the teachers with training and guidelines has led to great confusion, which influences the teaching method negatively (Richards and Farrell 2005). Additionally, creating a communicative classroom environment cannot be achieved with over-crowded classrooms and a lack of resources. Consequently, all of these issues need to be addressed. In other words, it is neither effective nor reasonable to solve one factor or issue while neglecting the others. One might argue that the issue is too complicated to simply reform the ELT textbooks and leave the other factors in place, as this will not improve the English proficiency and communicative ability of either the teachers or students. It is important to address this issue from its roots, specifying all of the linked factors and seeking a solution for them all.

Finally, it is hoped that this research study will contribute towards developing the teaching of English and CLT implementation in Libya to fulfil Libyan teachers and students' needs to use English in an effective and communicative way. As Garton et al. (2011) argue, learning English should be a priority in order to keep pace with the speeding wheel of change this century.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Sheffield Hallam Ethical Approval

Sheffield Hallam University

Our Ref AM/36-2014

Ms Souad Hussan
Apartment 1 Base 2
Trafalgar Street
Sheffield
S1 4LQ

10th July 2014

Dear Souad

Request for Ethical Approval of Research Project

Your research project entitled "**Factors affecting the implementation of a communicative English language teaching approach in Libya**" has been submitted for ethical review to the Faculty's rapporteurs and I am pleased to confirm that they have approved your project.

I wish you every success with your research project.

Yours sincerely

Professor A Macaskill
Chair
Faculty Research Ethics Committee

Office address:
Business Support Team
Faculty of Development & Society
Sheffield Hallam University
Unit 4, Sheffield Science Park
Howard Street, Sheffield, S1 1WB
Tel: 0114-225 3308
E-mail: DS-ResearchEthics@shu.ac.uk

Appendix 2: Libyan Embassy Ethical Approval

Cultural Attaché - London
Libyan Embassy

الملحقية الثقافية – لندن
سفارة ليبيا

وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي
Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research

التاريخ : 18-12-2014
الرقم الاشاري : 13193-12-2014
رقم الملف : 8229
رقم قرار الإيفاد:
بداية الصرف : 01/10/2013
نهاية الصرف : 30/09/2016
اشهر المنحة : 36

اسم الطالب : سعاد ضوء خليفة حسين
الدرجة العلمية : دكتوراة
التخصص : لغة انجليزية

السيد / مدير إدارة البعثات الدراسية

بعد التحية ،،،

الموضوع / دراسة حقلية

تقدمت إلينا المعنية بطلب لموافقتكم على إجراء دراسة حقلية في ليبيا لجمع بعض البيانات والمعلومات المتعلقة بدراستها ، وذلك حسب رسالة الاستاذ المشرف المرفقة.

الرجاء موافاتنا بالخصوص،

شاكرين حسن تعاونكم معنا.

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته ،،،

د. أحمد عبدالله الدويك
الملحق الثقافي المكلف

PrintedOn: 18.12/2014   Printed By: 89274

61-62 Ennismore Gardens, London, SW7 1NH T: +44(0)20 3806 9881 F: +44(0)20 7584 6963 W: culturalaffairs.libyanembassy.org

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Appendix 3: A written request for an Ethical Approval to Educational department

Educational Affairs Department

I am Souad Hussan, a PhD student at Sheffield Hallam University. I am now planning the process of data collection of my research which is basically related to the implementation of a communicative language teaching approach in the Libyan secondary schools. This research will investigate teaching CLT and the manner in which it is used by the Libyan teachers. The study also examines teachers' perceptions and understandings of CLT, and Libyan students' perceptions, experiences, and their attitudes towards learning English. The study depends on conducting audio, and video recorded classroom observations, field notes, stimulated recall interviews and semi-structured interviews. Also, inspectors of English will be invited to participate in my research by conducting semi-structured interviews. All of the participants will be informed of the nature of the research and of their rights including their privacy issues. Each of them will receive a letter of information and this will be followed by signing a letter of consent. The researcher will invite the teachers to have their own copies of the results of the study if they want, as she believes that teachers will benefit from these outcomes someway. Before the data is collected, there will be an approval for research ethics as a proof of permission to be shown to all the participants and their school principals or institutions to take part in the research.

Hereby, I am addressing you as the Ministry of Education in the city and responsible for the Educational Affairs to issue me a written permission to enter the field and collect my research data from the secondary schools in the city. On my behalf, I confirm that this research will not seek to harm the volunteer participants and will only serve the expected educational and academic intentions and targets.

Souad Hussan

Sheffield Hallam University

Faculty of Development and Society

Email: Khalifa_nora@yahoo.com.

Appendix 4: Ministry of Education Ethical Approval (Arabic Version)

المنطقة التعليمية المرج
Elmarj Education Zone

وزارة التعليم
Ministry Of Education

الموافـــــق : 19 / 4 / 2015م
الرقم الإشاري : 594 . 3 . 01

السادة / جامعة شيفلد هالم - بريطانيا

تحية طيبة وبعد ،،،

يشيدكم قطاع التربية والتعليم بأن السيدة / سعاد ضوء خليفة حسين تقدمت بطلب من أجل الحصول على موافقة لزيارة المؤسسات التعليمية وذلك لإنجاز البحث في مادة اللغة الانجليزية لمتطلبات الحصول درجة الدكتوراه .

وعليـــه ،، نفيدكم بأن السيدة المذكورة تمت الموافقة على زيارتها للمؤسسات التعليمية لإنجاز البحث المقدمة من أجله وكذلك قامت بزيارة المؤسسات وأنجزت بحثها بناءً على الإفادة المقدمة منها بالخصوص .

.. هذا للعلم والإفادة ..

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته ،،،

(جاد الله محمد يونس)

مسؤول شؤون التربية والتعليم / بلدية المرج

ص: هيئة الرقابة الإدارية. المـــــرج
ت: رئيس قسم المتابعة بالقطاع
ه: الملف

ح: حامد : ط: ريما

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Appendix 5: Ministry of Education Ethical Approval (English Version)

المنطقة التعليمية المرج
Elmarj Education Zone

وزارة التعليم
Ministry Of Education

Date : 19th / April / 2015
Ref. No. : 1.3.495

Sirs / Sheffield Hallam University in the UK

To whom it may concern

The Educational Sector of Elmarj confirms that Mrs. Souad Hussan has submitted a written request in order to obtain an Ethical Approval to visit educational institutions to achieve her research study in English language as a requirement of a doctoral degree.

Thus, an approval has been given to Mrs. Hussan to enable her to gain an access to educational institutions and we confirm that she visited secondary schools and accomplished her field work on the basis of the letter of permission that she gave to us.

This is for confirmation
Kind regards

Jadallah Muhammed Younis
Responsible for Educational affairs
Elmarj Educational Zone

⇨ : To Keep

Appendix 6: The Office of Education Services Ethical Approval (Arabic Version)

وزارة التربية والتعليم
قطاع التربية والتعليم والتدريب — المرج
مكتب الخدمات التعليمية — المرج

الرقم الإشاري: 015/117

التاريخ: 14 . جمادي الأول . 1436 هـ
الموافق: 5 . مارس . 2015 م

<u>الساده / مدراء مرحلة التعليم الثانوي</u>

السـ عليكم ـلام ، ، ،

نأمل .. تعاونكم مع السيدة " **سعاد ضوء خليفة حسن** " المتقدمة في الحصول على درجة الدكتوراه في مادة اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة شيفلد هالم ببريطانيا , وذلك بجمع بعض المعلومات و البيانات المتعلقة بدراستها .

شاكرين حسن تعاونكم الدائم

جمعة سليمان محمد
مدير مكتب الخدمات التعليمية المرج

الحفظ
ص/ / يوسف

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Appendix 7: The Office of Educational Services Ethical Approval (English Version)

5/3/2015

Reference No: 015/47

The Ministry of Education

Education and Training Sector/Marj

Educational Services Office/Marj

Dear Ladies & Gentlemen/ Principals of Secondary Schools

We would like you to cooperate with Mrs. Souad Hussan, who is advanced to obtain a doctoral degree in the subject of English at Sheffield Hallam University in the UK, to collect data relating to her research study.

Thank you for your cooperation

Juma Suleiman Mohammed

Director of Educational Services Office

Appendix 8: Information Sheet for school principals, teachers and inspectors

My name is Souad Hussan. I am a research student at Sheffield Hallam University in the UK. I am conducting research to explore different factors which affect the implementation of communicative English language teaching (CLT) in Libya. I would like to invite you to take part in this research study. Please, take time to read the following information carefully and decide whether or not to participate.

I am carrying out this study involving both observation and semi-structured interviews based on the Libyan English language teaching (ELT) curriculum at Secondary School level. During non-participant observation, teachers' practice will be video and audio recorded and field notes will be taken to investigate certain aspects of CLT. The observed techniques will be conducted once in different classrooms. Teachers will then be invited to participate in an interview. The interview should take no longer than thirty minutes. One part of the semi-structured interview is stimulated recall in which some classroom extracts will be played back from a recording and the teachers will then comment on their practices during the teaching. Only teachers who are observed will be invited into a stimulated recall. Thus, I am going to use the data which I obtain in order to investigate these factors and provide decision makers in the Libyan Ministry of Education with suggestions for the possible curricular choices, especially regarding the applicability or inapplicability of this approach in Libyan secondary schools.

The participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving reasons. The information collected from interviews and observations will be kept completely confidential and stored securely. A transcript of the interview will be available to you on request. All the information will be used for an academic purpose only. Your name and personal information will not be available to anyone, other than my supervisor and me. After the research has finished, I will be happy to share a summary of the findings with you. If you would like to discuss anything, please feel free to contact me at the below address. Please sign the consent form if you are willing to participate. I would be very grateful if you would kindly agree to take part.

Yours sincerely.   Sheffield Hallam University

 Souad Hussan   Faculty of Development & Society

                                                     Unit 9 Howard St., S1 1WB

                                                            United Kingdom

                                              Email contact: khalifa_nora@yahoo.com.

Appendix 9: School Principal Consent Form

Dear Sir/Madam

You are being invited to sign in *loco parentis* and give permission for the students and your school for participation in this research.

I have read the Participant Information Sheet, explaining the purpose of this research study and I certify that: Please tick the boxes (where appropriate)

- The participation of the school is voluntary. ☐
- I give consent for some English classes in the school to be observed. ☐
- I agree that teachers will be invited to be observed and participate in interviews ☐
- I agree that secondary students will be invited to participate in interviews and that permission will be sought from them. ☐
- I give my consent in *loco parentis* as students are under 18. ☐
- Only students who consent will participate in the study. ☐
- Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without giving reasons. ☐
- I have been informed that all the obtained information will be treated in strictest confidence. ☐
- I have been informed that all the information will be used for an academic purpose only. ☐
- I have been informed that the school will not be identifiable in any written reports about the study. ☐
- I have been informed that a summary of the findings will be made available to the school. ☐
- I may seek further information on the study from Souad Hussan on the following address. ☐
- I may decide to withdraw the school's participation at any time without giving reasons. ☐

Sheffield Hallam University.

Faculty of Development and Society. Graduate school.

Unit 9. Howard Street.

S1 1WB Sheffield, England, United Kingdom

Email contact: Khalifa_nora@yahoo.com

Souad Hussan/ PhD research student.

Agreed & accepted by…/ Signature and Date

Appendix 10: Consent form for teachers

I certify that I have been invited to take part in this research entitled "Factors affecting the implementation of a communicative English language teaching approach in Libya" which is being conducted in a Faculty of Development and Society at Sheffield Hallam University, England, UK by Souad Hussan (a research student) and I certify that I have voluntarily decided to participate in this research study.

 I also certify that. Please tick the boxes (where appropriate)

• I have read and understood the information sheet about this study. ☐

• My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand that I may ask further questions at any point.☐

• I understand the purposes of the research as they are explained in the information sheet. ☐

• I agree to participate in semi-structured interview as outlined on the information sheet.☐

• I agree to be observed as outlined on the information sheet. ☐

• I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study without giving a reason for my withdrawal.☐

• I have been informed that all the information will be kept completely confidential and stored securely.☐

• I understand that all the information will be used for an academic purpose only.☐

• I have been informed that my identity and personal information will be anonymous. .☐

• I have been informed that I can contact the researcher for any queries or complaints at any time by email or phone.☐

• I can request a summary of the research findings. ☐

<div align="right">

Sheffield Hallam University.

Faculty of Development and Society. Graduate school.

Unit 9. Howard Street. S1 1WB Sheffield, England, United Kingdom

Email contact: Khalifa_nora@yahoo.com

Souad Hussan. PhD research student

Teacher's name……………..

Teacher's contact No, and email………..

</div>

Appendix 11: Request for Interview Permission with the students

Dear student

My name is Souad Hussan, a PhD student at Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, England. I am conducting a research study which explores "Factors affecting implementation of a communicative English language teaching approach in Libya". I am currently undertaking field research to obtain data for my study.

I believe that student's understanding and experience of the changes which are brought in implementing educational innovations play an essential role in its success. Therefore, I would like to invite you to kindly take part in this research by participating in an interview about your experiences of learning English at secondary school. The interview should take approximately thirty minutes. The interview will be audio recorded from which it will be transcribed for analysis. It is also important to know that all the recorded speech will be completely deleted at the end of the research. Your name or any personal information will be confidential and will not be used in the research report. Your grades will not be affected by taking part.

I hope that you feel able to help me with this study. If at any time you feel that you do not want to continue to participate in this study, you are free to withdraw.

If you would like to discuss anything, please feel free to contact me on the following address.

Sheffield Hallam University.

Faculty of Development and Society. Graduate school.

Unit 9. Howard Street.

S1 1WB Sheffield, England, United Kingdom

Email contact: Khalifa_nora@yahoo.com

I will be grateful if my request is accepted.

Agreed and accepted by……..

Signature……/Date……….

Appendix 12: Consent Form for the students

I certify that I have been invited to take part in this research entitled "Factors affecting the implementation of a communicative English language teaching in Libya" which is being conducted in a Faculty of Development and Society at Sheffield Hallam University, England, UK by Souad Hussan (a research student) and I certify that I have voluntarily decided to participate in this research study.

I also certify that. Please tick the boxes (where appropriate)

• I have read and understood the information sheet about this study. ☐

• My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand that I may ask further questions at any point. ☐

• I understand the purposes of the research as they are explained in the information sheet. ☐

• I agree to participate in semi-structured interview as outlined on the information sheet. ☐

• I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study without giving a reason for my withdrawal. ☐

• I have been informed that all the information will be kept completely confidential and stored securely. ☐

• I understand that all the information will be used for an academic purpose only. ☐

• I have been informed that my identity and personal information will be anonymous. . ☐

• I have been informed that I can contact the researcher for any queries or complaints at any time by email or phone. ☐

• I can request a summary of the research findings. ☐

Student's name………………

Student' contacts No and email …………

Appendix 13: Request for Interview Permission with the Inspectors of English

Dear Sir

My name is Souad Hussan, a PhD student at Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, England. I am conducting a research study which explores "Factors affecting implementation of a communicative English language teaching approach in Libya". I am currently undertaking field research to obtain data for my study.

I believe that an English inspector's opinion is highly important in designing any innovation in curriculum. Therefore, I would like to invite you to kindly take part in this research by participating in an interview and discussing your views about the implementation of the curriculum at Libyan secondary schools. The interview should take approximately thirty minutes. The interview will be audio recorded from which it will be transcribed for analysis. It is also important that you know that all the recorded speech will be completely deleted at the end of the research. Your name or any personal information will be confidential and will not be used in the research report.

I hope that you feel able to help me with this study. If at any time you feel that you do not want to continue to participate in this study, you are free to withdraw.

If you would like to discuss anything, please feel free to contact me on the following address.

Sheffield Hallam University.

Faculty of Development and Society.

Graduate school. Unit 9. Howard Street

S1 1WB Sheffield, England, United Kingdom

Souad Hussan. PhD research student

Email contact: Khalifa_nora@yahoo.com

I will be grateful if my request is accepted.

Agreed and accepted by….

Signature …/ Date………..

Appendix 14: Consent Form for the English Inspectors

I certify that I have been invited to participate in this research entitled "Factors affecting the implementation of a communicative English language teaching in Libya" which is being conducted in a Faculty of Development and Society at Sheffield Hallam University, England, UK by Souad Hussan (a research student) and I certify that I have voluntarily decided to participate in this research study.

I also certify that: Please tick the boxes (where appropriate)

• I have read and understood the information sheet about this study. □

• My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand that I may ask further questions at any point. □

• I understand the purposes of the research as they are clarified in the information sheet. □

• I agree to participate in semi-structured interview as outlined on the information sheet. □

• I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study without giving a reason for my withdrawal. □

• I have been informed that all the information will be kept completely confidential and stored securely. □

• I understand that all the information will be used for an academic purpose only. □

• I have been informed that my identity and personal information will be anonymous. . □

• I have been informed that I can contact the researcher for any queries or complaints at any time by email or phone. □

• I can request a summary of the research findings. □

English inspector's name………

Inspector's contact No and email

Signature…../
Date………..

Appendix 15: The initial framework for the teachers' semi-structured interview questions

This initial framework of the interview is formed of open-ended questions addressing the different factors and issues that affect the implementation of communicative language teaching in the Libyan secondary school context. Additional questions can be investigated, depending on the participant teachers' responses. Thus, the order of the questions is expected to change, and more probing questions can be added during the interviews. All of the participating teachers will be informed that they have the right not to answer any question that they feel inappropriate.

Interview questions

1- Could you tell me your name, age, teaching experiences and qualification?
2- Could you tell me a little about your teaching experiences and if you teach here in this school or you teach in private centre?
3- Can you describe the problems which you face during your teaching experiences of a communicative language teaching in general?
4- What are your teaching problems inside the classroom using CLT?
5- What is your perception or understanding of CLT in your opinion?
6- Do you implement CLT during your teaching experience?
7- Is the CLT an appropriate way to improve Libyan learners' level in English?
8- Is CLT difficult to match with the Libyan context?
9- Have you been trained for teaching in communicative approach?
10- How do you teach the different language activities and skills in the curriculum?
11- What are students' language attitudes towards English?
12- Can you tell me about your role inside a classroom?
13- Can you tell me about the role of English inspector?
14- Do you have any further suggestions; solutions would you like to add?

Appendix 16: The initial framework of teachers stimulated- recall interview questions

1- What were your thoughts or understandings during teaching this task?
2- Can you describe anything that influences your teaching practices?
3- Why did you decide to do that?
4- What are the alternatives of doing this?
5- On what basis did you make this decision?

Episode of stimulated- recall interview sample

Suad: Mr.Adam, now, I would like to review with you some aspects of yesterday's lesson from the video recording and I need your comments or answers for the following questions and I am sorry for keeping you with me

Mr. Adam: No, not at all. Take your time; I may give information that cannot be obtained from another person.

Suad: We're going to watch the first part of the teaching of yesterday's lesson. When you started explaining the lesson (Great Failures), the first step, which is (Before you read, work in pairs; Discuss the following) was skipped. My question is; **why did you decide to do that?**

Mr Adam: This is one of the points that indicate that the curriculum is prepared or designed on the basis that English is a second language. *"Before you read"* is an indication that students are expected to have a good background before reading. If I had taught following the instruction, it would look as if I regularly taught the curriculum as expected and directed; but I did not change my approach, and this is the way I do things.

I did not intend to change my approach in front of you. Even if I had changed it, next morning students would have said that Ostath ("teacher" in Arabic) Adam changed his teaching method because of someone was visiting the class. In fact, this is my way and I did not change anything and I preferred to be natural.

Suad: In the video, it seems that you did not apply pairs and group work discussion. On, what basis did you make this decision?

Mr. Adam: It is impossible, there are 45 students and if I gave them this task, it will adversely impact on my time plan. And if I gave them this task, I would find them discussing other subjects such as what'd had for breakfast or football. The large class size hampers me. We are supposed to have fixed desks and a maximum number of 17

students in each class in order to be to communicate with them. Furthermore, a classroom space is too small to divide the students into groups. It is also difficult to pass between them.

Suad: In the video, translation takes precedencies over the classroom teaching practices? What are the alternatives to translation?

Mr. Adam: They are accustomed to leaching in this way but, if I think of the alternatives, giving synonyms will be one way.

I also want to add another point that there are a certain number of students who participated yesterday. You know when those students participate in the class; an oral argument arises between them. The students tell me that those students who participate in the class attend private lessons. Consequently, this affects us as teachers and I try to create a balance to enable all students to take part in the class.

Suad: So those who participate in the class have a chance to attend private lessons?

Mr. Adam: Yes, and these cause problems in the class. Once student who attends private lesson participates inside the classroom, student who does not attend private lesson tells him to keep silent, you take a private lesson. Thus, financial and social differences play a role in teaching English. I also would like to confirm that there should be quick and effective solutions which are that, the choice of qualified and expert teachers should be for the foundation years, and the teachers' teaching time should be increased.

Appendix 17: The initial framework for the students' semi-structured interview questions

As I conducted the interviews with the secondary school students, semi-structured interviews were used, which enabled me to conduct the interviews in a flexible way so that the order of the questions could be changed and more clarifications requested from the participating students. Before conducting the interviews, I explained orally in Arabic to the students the purpose of the interviews and that there would be no negative results from participating with regard to their studies. The students were also informed that participation was completely voluntary:

1- Could you tell me your name, age and in which year of a secondary stage?
2- Could you tell me your attitude towards learning English or view towards this language?
3- What is your feeling when you speak English inside classroom?
4- Can you describe the technique or the way of teaching English during the lessons? Or what is your experience of learning English inside classrooms?
5- What is your opinion in the curriculum?
6- Do you like the curriculum, and do you face difficulty in studying the curriculum? Which kind
7- Do you have any further suggestions or, solutions you would like to add?

Appendix 18: The initial framework for the English inspectors' semi-structured interview questions

1- Could you tell me your name, age, teaching experience and qualification?

2- What are your tasks as an English inspector?

3- As English inspector, you know that teaching English in Libya has passed through two stages, the old and new curriculum; can you tell me or describe the difference between the two curriculums?

4- Is time enough to cover the content of curriculum?

5- Have you been involved as English inspector in designing the curriculum?

6- Is CLT an appropriate technique to improve Libyan learners' level and needs?

7- Have you been asked to give training courses for teachers?

8- What is your opinion in the students' level?

9- Is there a change in the teacher's and student's role?

10- What is the role of the exam in the implementation of CLT?

11- Do you have any further suggestions; solutions would you like to add?

Appendix 19: Participating schools, teachers and students' sample

No	School	Teachers	Type of data collection	Students	Type of data collection
1-	School A	Hana	Classroom Observation & field notes SRI+SSI	Roada	SSI
		Salma	Classroom Observation & field notes SRI+SSI		
		Khalid	Classroom Observation & field notes SRI+SSI		
		Nisreen	SSI		
2-	School B	Heba	Classroom Observation & field notes SRI+SSI	Maryeem	SSI
3-	School C	Sameera	SSI		
		Hanan	SSI		
4-	School D	Adam	Classroom Observation & field notes SRI+SSI		
		Sami	SSI		
		Sally	Classroom Observation & field notes SRI+SSI		
		Abdullah	SSI		
		Ahmed	SSI		
5-	School E	Osama	SSI		
		Mohammed	SSI		
		Nora	SSI	Eyd	SSI
6-	School F	Sarah	Classroom Observation & field notes SRI+SSI	Ameera	SSI
		Mona	Classroom Observation & field notes SRI+SSI	Alham	SSI
7-	School G	Kamal	SSI	Moda	SSI
		Iman	SSI	Yusra	SSI
8-	School H	Ali	SSI	Idris	SSI
		Asma	SSI	Marwan	SSI
				Sufian	SSI

Appendix 20: The participating inspectors of English sample

Name		Age	Years of experience	Data collection method	Date and time
1-	1st English inspectors	57years	15 years	Semi-structured interview	29/3/2015, 10:00 am
2-	2nd English inspector	59years	15 years	Semi-structured interview	30/3/2015, 11:15 am
3	The head inspector of English	66years	15 years	Semi-structured interview	31/3/2015, 5:00 pm

Appendix 21: Data collection process

Time of data collection	Data collection tool	Participant group (English teachers)	Time of data collection	Data collection tool	Participant group (English teachers)
9/3/2015, 10:00am 11/3/2015, 10:30am	Classroom observation SRI+SSI	Hana	21/4/2015, 4:30 pm	SSI	Mohammed
11/3/2015, 8:00am 13/3/2015, 10:15 am	Classroom observation SRI+ SSI	Salma	14/4/2015, 10:00am	SSI	Abdullah
18/3/2015, 9:15 am 19/3/2012, 10:00 am	Classroom observation SRI+ SSI	Heba	14/4/2015, 5:00 pm	SSI	Ahmed
19/3/2015, 9:15 am 23/3/2015, 11:30 am	Classroom observation SRI+ SSI	Mona	6/4/2015, 10:00 am	SSI	Kamal
22/3/3015, 11:00 am 23/3/1015, 9:30 am	Classroom observation SRI+ SSI	Sarah	6/4/2015, 12:00 am	SSI	Iman
25/3/2015, 8:00 am 26/3/2015, 10:00 am	Classroom observation SRI+ SSI	Adam	21/4/2015, 10:30 am	SSI	Nora
25/3/2015, 12:00 am 26/3/2015, 1:00pm	Classroom observation SRI+ SSI	Sally	21/4/2015, 12:00 am	SSI	Osama
1/4/2015, 10:30 am 2/4/2015, 11:00 am	Classroom observation SRI+ SSI	Khalid	9/4/2015, 8:30 am	SSI	Ali
12/3/2015, 11:00 am	Semi-structured interview	Nisreen	30/3/2015, 5:00 pm	SSI	Sameera
25/3/2015, 11:00 am	SSI	Sami	30/3/2015, 9:30 am	SSI	Hanan
10/4/2015, 10:00 am	SSI	Asma			