



Challenges Faced by English Teachers in Implementing the Curriculum in Libya

Hawa Misbah AlJamal *


Department of English Language, Faculty of Education, University of Bani Waleed, Bani Walid, Libya

hawamosbah@bwu.edu.ly

التحديات التي يواجهها معلمو اللغة الإنجليزية في تنفيذ المنهج الدراسي في ليبيا

حواء مصباح الجمل *

قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، كلية التربية، جامعة بني وليد، بني وليد، ليبيا

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المخلص:

يواجه معلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في ليبيا عامة وفي مدارس بني وليد خاصة تحديات كبيرة ف عند تنفيذ منهج "English for Libya". تهدف الدراسة إلى تحديد أبرز العقبات التعليمية والبيئية التي تؤثر على فعالية تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية. تم اعتماد منهجية مختلطة تجمع بين البيانات الكمية والنوعية، جُمعت من خلال استبيان وُزِع على 30 شخص من معلمي المرحلة الثانوية. كشفت النتائج عن عدة تحديات رئيسية، تشمل نقص الموارد التكنولوجية، عدم كفاية التدريب، كثافة الفصول الدراسية، وعدم توافق محتوى المنهج مع مستويات الطلاب. ورغم أن المنهج حديث ومصمم بشكل جيد، إلا أن تنفيذه الناجح يتعطل بسبب هذه العوامل. لذلك توصي الدراسة بتوفير تدريب مستمر للمعلمين، وتحسين البنية التحتية للمدارس، وتكييف المنهج لتلبية احتياجات الطلاب بشكل أفضل.

الكلمات الدالة: منهج اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، English for Libya، تحديات المعلمين، التعليم الثانوي، بني وليد.

Abstract

EFL teachers in Bani Waleed schools face significant challenges when implementing the English for Libya curriculum. This study aims to identify the main pedagogical and environmental obstacles that affect the effectiveness of English language teaching. A mixed-method approach was adopted, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collected through a questionnaire distributed to 30 secondary school teachers. The findings reveal several key challenges, including lack of technological resources, insufficient training, large class sizes, and a mismatch between the curriculum content and students' proficiency levels. Although the curriculum is modern and

well designed, its successful implementation is hindered by these factors. Therefore, the study recommends providing continuous teacher training, improving school infrastructure, and adapting the curriculum to better meet students' needs.

Keywords: EFL curriculum, English for Libya, teacher challenges, secondary education, Bani Walid.

1. Introduction

English Language Teaching (ELT) in Libya has undergone significant reforms in recent years, driven by the increasing need to meet global communication demands and align with modern educational standards. In response, the Libyan Ministry of Education introduced the English for Libya national curriculum, which aims to replace traditional teacher-centered and rote-learning approaches with learner-centered methodologies that promote interaction and meaningful communication (Libyan Ministry of Education, 2010).

Despite its well-structured theoretical foundation, the practical implementation of this curriculum in classroom settings continues to face considerable challenges. Research indicates that Libyan EFL teachers encounter various pedagogical and environmental constraints when applying communicative language teaching strategies. For example, a case study conducted in Maslata identified overcrowded classrooms and the lack of language laboratories as major barriers to effective instruction (Abdullah, 2026).

Findings from Bani Waleed University reveal that many students struggle to develop essential academic language skills, which increases the burden on teachers and reduces the overall effectiveness of the curriculum (Salheen, 2024). Although previous studies have highlighted these issues, there remains a lack of recent, localized research focusing specifically on the challenges faced by EFL teachers in Bani Waleed schools in 2026. Therefore, this study investigates the key pedagogical and environmental obstacles that hinder the successful implementation of the English for Libya curriculum. It also explores the impact of school facilities, such as language laboratories and technological resources, and proposes practical, context-sensitive solutions based on teachers' perspectives.

The significance of this study lies in providing up-to-date, context-specific insights that can support teachers, curriculum developers, and educational policymakers in Bani Waleed. It also contributes to the broader body of research on EFL teaching in developing educational contexts.

1.1 Background of the Study

The evolution of English Language Teaching (ELT) in Libya marks a shift from traditional grammar-translation methods to modern communicative approaches. Historically, Libyan schools focused on rote learning and linguistic rules, which, as noted by Orafi and Borg (2009), failed to develop students' practical communication skills. In response, the Ministry of Education introduced the English for Libya curriculum, based on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), to promote learner-centered interaction.

However, implementing CLT in practice remains difficult. Research by Abukhattala (2016) indicates that despite a well-designed curriculum, teachers face pedagogical hurdles that limit the use of communicative strategies. In regions like Bani Waleed, these challenges are intensified by environmental factors such as overcrowded classrooms and a lack of modern facilities. Hamid

(2021) emphasizes that the absence of technological resources and language laboratories hinders the creation of effective learning environments.

Furthermore, data from Bani Waleed University (2024) show that students often lack the foundational skills required for the curriculum's advanced levels. This creates a significant gap between curriculum theory and classroom reality, necessitating a localized study to explore the specific obstacles faced by EFL teachers in Bani Waleed during the current academic year.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Although the English for Libya curriculum is well-designed in theory, its practical implementation in Bani Waleed secondary schools faces significant challenges. Teachers in this region struggle to apply communicative language teaching (CLT) methods due to systemic issues such as overcrowded classrooms, lack of technological resources, insufficient professional training, and a mismatch between curriculum content and students' actual language proficiency levels. These obstacles prevent the curriculum from achieving its intended outcomes, leaving many students unable to develop effective communication skills in English.

Therefore, this study aims to identify, analyze, and document the specific pedagogical and environmental challenges that hinder the successful implementation of the English for Libya curriculum from the perspective of EFL teachers in Bani Waleed.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

This study aims to:

1. Identify the main pedagogical and administrative challenges facing EFL teachers in Bani Waleed when implementing the English for Libya curriculum.
2. Examine the impact of environmental factors, such as classroom size and availability of technological resources, on the teaching process.
3. Propose practical strategies and solutions based on teachers' perspectives to support effective curriculum implementation.

1.4. Research Questions

1. What are the main challenges faced by EFL teachers in Bani Waleed schools during the implementation of the English for Libya curriculum?
2. How do environmental factors and the availability of technology affect the effectiveness of English language teaching in these schools?
3. What practical strategies can be recommended to help EFL teachers overcome these challenges?

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study provides updated insights into the state of ELT in Bani Waleed in 2026. It is significant for:

- Teachers: By identifying shared challenges and offering practical recommendations.
- Curriculum Designers: By highlighting the gap between curriculum goals and classroom realities.
- Educational Authorities: By providing data to support informed decisions regarding resource allocation and teacher training.

1.6. Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to EFL teachers in public secondary schools in Bani Waleed during the 2025-2026 academic year. Therefore, the findings are specific to this geographical and temporal context and may not be generalizable to other regions in Libya.

1.7. Definition of Terms

- Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): A teaching approach that emphasizes interaction and communication as both the means and the ultimate goal of language learning.
- Curriculum Implementation: The process of applying the official English for Libya syllabus in classroom practice, including methods, activities, and resources.
- EFL (English as a Foreign Language): The study of English by non-native speakers in a country where English is not the primary or official language.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of relevant literature and previous studies that investigate the multifaceted challenges of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) within the Libyan context. The discussion specifically explores the historical and pedagogical transition toward the English for Libya curriculum, analyzing how global teaching trends intersect with local classroom realities.

As noted by Abusrewil (2014), the implementation of any new curriculum in Libya is often hindered by deep-seated traditional beliefs about language learning. By incorporating recent academic findings, this chapter aims to provide a contemporary perspective on the systemic, pedagogical, and localized obstacles that define the current educational landscape. Furthermore, Orafi and Borg (2009) emphasize that the successful adoption of communicative reforms depends heavily on aligning teacher practices with the intended curriculum goals—a gap that remains a significant concern in Libyan schools today.

2.2. The Shift toward Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

The reform of the Libyan educational system is fundamentally grounded in the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). According to Richards (2006), CLT is a methodology that prioritizes functional language use and meaningful communication over the traditional focus on rote memorization and grammatical abstraction. This approach encourages learner-centered instruction, pair work, group activities, and real-life language tasks.

In the Libyan context, while there is a general awareness among educators regarding the theoretical benefits of CLT, its practical application remains limited due to systemic constraints. Several studies (e.g., Orafi, 2013; Abukhattala, 2016) have confirmed that Libyan teachers express positive attitudes toward CLT in principle but struggle to implement it effectively in their classrooms.

Richards and Rodgers (2014) further explain that CLT prioritizes functional language use and meaningful communication over rote memorization, making it particularly suitable for preparing students for real-world language encounters. Unlike traditional methods that focus on grammatical rules, CLT encourages pair work, group activities, and problem-solving tasks that simulate authentic communication situations. However, the effective implementation of CLT

depends heavily on teachers' understanding of its principles and their ability to adapt them to local classroom contexts.

2.3. Systemic and Technological Challenges

The obstacles facing EFL education in Libya are multi-dimensional, spanning across technological and infrastructural domains. Abdullah (2026) emphasizes that the integration of technology in EFL classrooms is often hindered by a lack of technical support and digital literacy resources. Furthermore, emerging research highlights the critical need for investment in educational technology to bridge the digital divide between urban and rural areas.

2.4. Pedagogical and Learner-Related Obstacles

This section explores internal classroom dynamics by examining both teacher-related and learner-related challenges that influence the effectiveness of the English curriculum.

2.4.1 Teacher-Related Challenges

Teachers in the Libyan education system face significant pedagogical constraints that hinder the effective implementation of modern teaching approaches. One of the most critical challenges is the lack of continuous professional development. Without regular training and updated workshops, many teachers feel unprepared to adopt communicative methodologies, leading to a reliance on traditional instructional practices.

Another major issue is time limitation. Although the English for Libya curriculum is extensive, the number of allocated teaching hours is insufficient to allow for both syllabus completion and interactive classroom activities. As a result, teachers often prioritize covering the syllabus over promoting meaningful communicative engagement.

2.4.2 Learner-Related Challenges

On the learner side, several factors negatively affect English language acquisition. Research consistently highlights low intrinsic motivation and minimal exposure to English outside the classroom as key barriers to progress. Since English is rarely used in daily life in Libya, students often struggle to perceive its practical relevance. However, studies such as Elkhimry (2022) suggest that innovative pedagogical approaches, such as storytelling and narrative-based instruction, can significantly improve student engagement and comprehension. Despite these positive findings, integrating such creative strategies remains challenging due to the rigidity of the official curriculum and examination requirements.

2.5. Assessment Mismatch and Curriculum Alignment

A major issue identified in the literature is the mismatch between curriculum objectives and assessment practices. While the English for Libya curriculum emphasizes communicative skills such as speaking and listening, national examinations continue to focus primarily on grammar-based translation and memorization. This misalignment creates a strong washback effect, where teaching practices are driven by exam content rather than curriculum goals. Consequently, communicative activities are often neglected, undermining the overall objectives of educational reform.

2.6. Localized Context: Bani Waleed and Similar Regions

Regional studies, particularly those conducted at Bani Waleed University (2024), indicate that schools in such areas experience intensified versions of national challenges. Overcrowded classrooms, sometimes exceeding 40 students per teacher, significantly limit opportunities for

group work, interaction, and individualized feedback. These conditions reflect a "double burden," where general systemic weaknesses in Libya are compounded by geographical isolation and limited attention from central educational authorities.

2.7. Challenges Faced by Teachers in Bani Waleed

In Bani Waleed, the implementation of the English curriculum is further hindered by specific local constraints. Teachers report a significant lack of curriculum-specific training, as most professional development programs are too general and fail to address the integrated structure of the English for Libya series. In addition, the digital divide is more severe in this region, with limited access to audio-visual teaching aids and unreliable internet connectivity.

Another major challenge is the wide variation in students' academic levels, particularly in basic literacy skills. This forces teachers to spend considerable time bridging learning gaps while still attempting to complete the prescribed curriculum. Furthermore, administrative burdens and weak coordination between educational stages contribute to a fragmented learning process rather than a continuous developmental pathway.

2.8. Recent Studies on EFL Challenges in Libya

Recent studies have further illuminated the multifaceted challenges facing English language teaching in Libya. Zargoun (2024) conducted a quantitative study investigating speaking difficulties among EFL undergraduates at Msallata College, part of Bani Waleed University. The findings revealed that students encounter significant challenges in speaking English, primarily attributed to lack of vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, with psychological factors also playing a crucial role.

Al-Shbeli (2023) employed a quasi-experimental mixed-methods design to examine the effectiveness of CLT activities on developing speaking skills in Libyan state secondary schools. While the experimental group demonstrated statistically significant improvement, the study identified important barriers to implementation, noting that "the approach requires further development, guidance, and awareness in the Libyan context".

Orafi (2018) conducted an in-depth qualitative investigation using Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), examining ten secondary school English teachers in eastern Libya. The study found that inconsistencies between what teachers reported and their practice were evident, with practice remaining teacher-centered. Importantly, the study revealed that Libyan school culture "tended to be incompatible with the current English curriculum principles".

Hadia (2023) investigated Libyan EFL teachers' perceptions of implementing Task-Based Approach (TBA), highlighting cultural and contextual factors that influence adaptation. El Sadi (2019) examined problems encountered by first-year secondary school students in learning speaking skills, confirming multiple obstacles including unsuitable teaching methods, lack of teaching aids, and students' fear of criticism leading to low motivation.

Abukhattala (2015) provided a critical analysis of CLT adoption in Libya, arguing that CLT "has failed to make the expected impact on ELT" due to constraints including beliefs about the roles of teachers and students, teachers' lack of language proficiency, examination pressure, and cultural teaching and learning styles.

2.9. Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature reveals a complex and multidimensional reality regarding English language teaching in Libya. Although significant progress has been made in adopting a communicative curriculum, effective implementation remains constrained by pedagogical, technological, and contextual challenges. Recent studies by Zargoun (2024), Al-Shbeli (2023), Orafi (2018), Hadia (2023), El Sadi (2019), and Abukhattala (2015) collectively confirm that challenges such as lack of training, overcrowded classrooms, assessment mismatch, and weak student foundational skills are persistent and widespread. In regions such as Bani Waleed, these difficulties are even more pronounced, highlighting the urgent need for both systemic reform and targeted institutional support.

3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction

Research methodology refers to a set of procedures employed by researchers to construct a systematic plan in order to achieve predetermined research aims (Glatthorn, 1998). The purpose of this chapter is to present the research methodology adopted in this study. It includes the research design, research questions, data collection instruments, data collection procedures, and methods of data analysis.

3.2. Research Questions

The study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. What are the main challenges faced by EFL teachers in Bani Waleed schools during the implementation of the English for Libya curriculum?
2. How do environmental factors and the availability of technology affect the effectiveness of English language teaching in these schools?
3. What practical strategies can be recommended to support EFL teachers in overcoming these challenges?

3.3. Research Design

Research design refers to the overall strategy that integrates the different components of a study in a coherent and logical manner (Cohen et al., 2007). This study adopts a mixed-method research design, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches through the use of a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire includes both closed-ended and open-ended questions. The closed-ended items are used to collect quantitative data regarding teachers' perceptions, while the open-ended questions are designed to gather qualitative insights into their experiences and opinions. This combination was chosen to ensure a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of the research problem.

3.4. Data Collection Tools

To achieve the objectives of the study, a questionnaire was used as the primary data collection instrument. This tool was selected due to its suitability for collecting both structured and descriptive data from a relatively large group of participants.

3.4.1. Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was divided into five main sections:

- Section One: General information about participants.
- Section Two: Pedagogical challenges faced by teachers.

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- Section Three: Environmental and infrastructural factors.
 - Section Four: Curriculum implementation and assessment issues.
 - Section Five: Suggested solutions and recommendations.

The inclusion of open-ended questions allowed participants to freely express their professional experiences and provide detailed insights regarding the implementation of the English for Libya curriculum.

3.5.Data Collection Procedure

The researcher personally introduced herself to the participants and explained the purpose of the study to ensure clarity and build trust. The questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 30 EFL teachers across seven secondary schools in Bani Waleed. Participation was voluntary, and consent was obtained prior to distribution. After completion, the researcher collected the questionnaires manually for further analysis.

3.6.Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative approaches to ensure a comprehensive interpretation of the findings. For the closed-ended questions, descriptive statistical techniques such as frequencies and percentages were used to identify common trends and patterns among participants. For the open-ended questions, a thematic analysis approach was applied. Responses were categorized into themes in order to interpret teachers' opinions, experiences, and suggestions regarding the challenges of implementing the English for Libya curriculum.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

The researcher adhered to ethical guidelines throughout the study to protect the rights and privacy of all participants:

1. Voluntary participation: All teachers participated voluntarily, and no one was forced or pressured to complete the questionnaire.
2. Informed consent: Before distributing the questionnaire, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and obtained verbal consent from each participant.
3. Anonymity: Participants were not asked to provide their names or any identifying information in the questionnaire.
4. Confidentiality: All responses were kept confidential and used solely for academic research purposes.
5. Right to withdraw: Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

4. Data Analysis and Results

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected from 30 EFL teachers in Bani Waleed secondary schools. The results are directly related to the research questions and aims of the study. Descriptive analysis methods (frequencies and percentages) were used to interpret teacher perceptions effectively.

4.2. Demographic Information

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	9	30%
Female	21	70%

Table (4.1): Gender Distribution of Participants

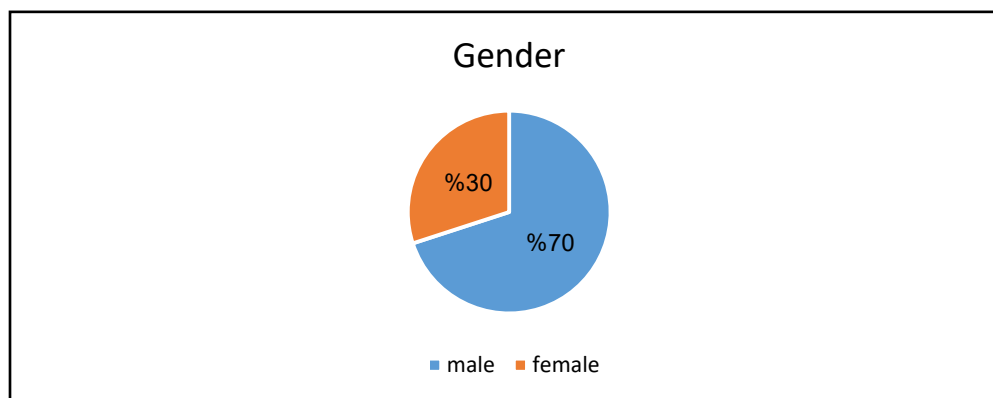


Figure (4.1): Gender Distribution of Participants

The data shows a significant majority of female teachers (70%), reflecting the general trend in the Libyan educational sector in Bani Waleed.

Years of Experience	Number	Percentage
Less than 5 year	4	13.3%
5-10 years	12	40%
11-15 years	7	23.3%
More than 15 years	7	23.3%

Table(4.2): Distribution by Years of Experience

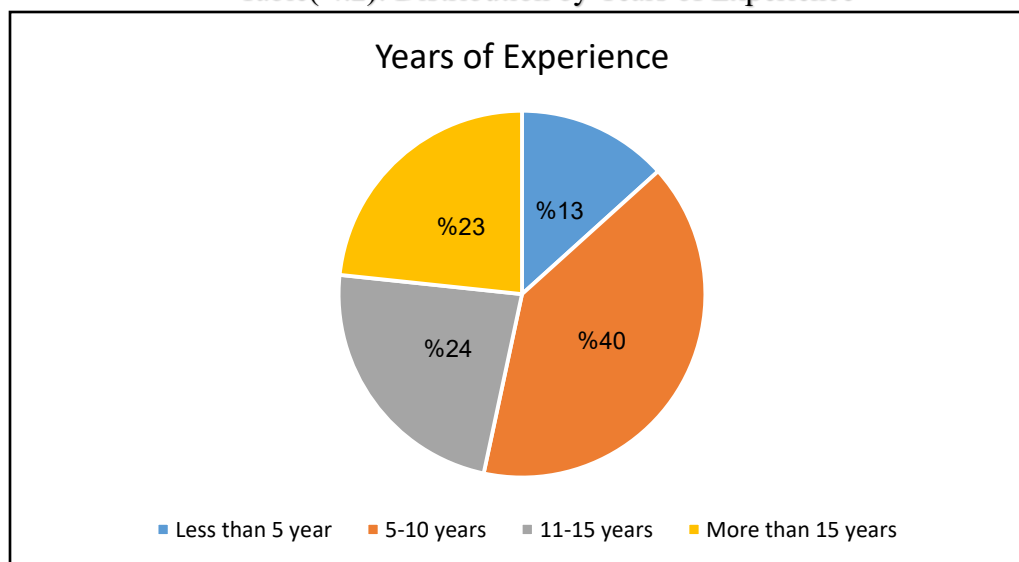


Figure (4.2): Distribution by Years of Experience

The largest group (40%) has 5-10 years of experience, indicating that most teachers are in the middle of their careers and can compare previous methods with the new curriculum.

Educational Qualification	Number	Percentage
Bachelor	24	80%
Diploma	4	13.3%
Master	2	6.6%
PhD	0	0%

Table (4.3): Educational Qualification

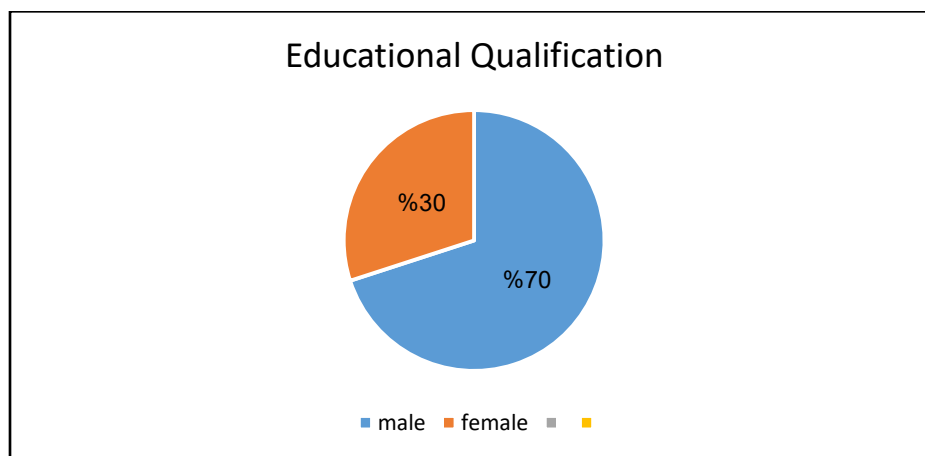


Figure (4.3.): Educational Qualification

The vast majority (80%) hold a Bachelor's degree, which is the standard qualification for secondary school teaching.

4.3. Pedagogical Challenges

Statement	Percentage	Average	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
I find it difficult to apply interactive teaching strategies due to limited time	%46.6	2.1	14	5	11
The curriculum content is too extensive for the available time.	%26.6	1.7	8	6	16
I lack sufficient training to teach this curriculum effectively.	%20	1.9	8	11	11
I face difficulty-motivating students to speak English.	%26.6	1.7	6	2	22
Students' weak basic skills hinder implementation.	%16.6	1.3	5	1	24

Table (4.4): Teachers' Perceptions of Pedagogical Challenges

The most prominent challenge is the difficulty of applying interactive teaching strategies (46.6% agree), indicating a gap between curriculum goals and classroom reality.

4.4.Environmental Factors

Statement	Percentage	Average	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Overcrowded classrooms limit communicative teaching.	%13	1.3	4	2	24
My school lacks a language laboratory.	%20	1.4	6	1	23
Lack of technology hinders teaching.	%20	1.6	6	8	16
Classroom environment is unsuitable.	%30	1.9	9	11	10

Table (4.5.): Environmental Factors

A large majority agree that overcrowded classrooms hinder communicative teaching, and many report the absence of language laboratories.

4.5.Curriculum and Assessment

Statement	Percentage	Average	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Exams focus on grammar rather than communication.	%36.6	1.8	11	2	17
There is a mismatch between curriculum and exams.	%46.6	2.1	14	7	7
Activities require unavailable resources.	%36.6	1.9	11	5	14

Table (4.6.): Curriculum and Assessment

Many teachers confirm the mismatch between curriculum goals and exam content, creating a negative washback effect.

4.6.Teachers' Suggested Solutions

Statement	Percentage	Average	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Exams focus on grammar rather than communication.	%36.6	1.8	11	2	17
There is a	%46.6	2.1	14	7	7

mismatch between curriculum and exams.					
Activities require unavailable resources.	%36.6	1.9	11	5	14

Table (4.7.): Teachers' Suggested Solutions

Teachers emphasize the urgent need for training and technology support to improve implementation.

4.7. Summary of Results

The analysis reveals that EFL teachers in Bani Waleed face significant pedagogical, environmental, and assessment-related challenges. While most teachers hold the necessary qualifications, they are hindered by limited time, lack of training, overcrowded classrooms, and a mismatch between curriculum goals and exam content. Teachers recommend targeted training, technology support, and smaller class sizes to address these issues.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings gained from the analysis of both the closed-ended and open-ended questions in the teachers' questionnaire. The focus is on relating the research findings to the research questions and the existing challenges in the Libyan educational context. This chapter includes a discussion of findings, conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for future research.

5.2. Discussion of Findings

5.2.1. Pedagogical and Administrative Challenges (Research Question 1)

The findings reveal that teachers face significant pedagogical challenges, including difficulty applying interactive teaching strategies due to limited time and insufficient training. This aligns with Orafi and Borg (2009), who found that Libyan teachers struggle to implement communicative methods despite positive attitudes toward them. The lack of curriculum-specific training identified in this study confirms Abukhattala's (2016) observation that professional development programs in Libya are often too general to be effective.

5.2.2. Environmental and Technological Factors (Research Question 2)

A major finding is the significant gap in digital resources. Teachers highlighted that while the curriculum is modern, schools lack the necessary infrastructure, such as high-speed internet, smart boards, and language laboratories. This digital divide is more severe in Bani Waleed due to geographical isolation, creating what this study terms a "double burden" for local teachers. Furthermore, overcrowded classrooms hinder the effective implementation of communicative activities.

5.2.3. Practical Strategies and Solutions (Research Question 3)

Teachers proposed several practical solutions, with training programs and technology support being the most frequently mentioned. These recommendations reflect teachers' willingness to adopt communicative reforms but also highlight their need for systemic support. The mismatch

between curriculum objectives and exam content further exacerbates the challenges teachers face in implementing the curriculum as intended.

5.3. Conclusion

This study confirms that while the English for Libya curriculum is valuable and modern, its effective implementation faces systemic hurdles in the local context of Bani Waleed. Teachers are motivated but feel hindered by the lack of resources, inadequate training, overcrowded classrooms, and a mismatch between curriculum content and students' proficiency levels.

The findings directly answer the three research questions: (1) the main challenges include time limitations, lack of training, and insufficient resources; (2) environmental factors such as class size and technology availability significantly affect teaching effectiveness; and (3) teachers recommend training, technology support, and smaller class sizes as practical solutions. For the curriculum to succeed, a shift is needed from traditional teaching to a digital mindset, supported by proper school facilities and continuous professional support.

5.4. Recommendations

1. Teacher Training and Development:
 - Provide intensive and continuous training programs on integrating technology into ELT.
 - Conduct workshops specifically focused on communicative language teaching (CLT) and student-centered strategies.
 - Develop curriculum-specific training rather than general professional development.
2. Infrastructure and Resource Allocation:
 - Equip schools with modern technology, including computers, data projectors, and reliable internet access.
 - Establish dedicated language laboratories to support the audio-visual components of the curriculum.
3. Administrative and Policy Reforms:
 - Take serious steps to reduce class sizes to allow for better teacher-student interaction.
 - Review the curriculum timeline to ensure it aligns with the actual teaching hours available in schools.
 - Align examination content with curriculum objectives to reduce negative washback effects.

5.5. Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should investigate the effectiveness of specific training programs on teachers' implementation of CLT in Libyan classrooms. Additionally, a comparative study between urban and rural schools in Libya could provide further insights into geographical disparities.

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