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Understanding the Challenges of Elicitation Techniques in English Language Teaching in Libya

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores teachers' perceptions of challenges faced by English language instructors in Language Centers located in the Western area (Az-Zawia – Gharyan – Sabratha) when employing elicitation techniques to foster communicative learning environments. The study aims to identify factors influencing the utilization of elicitation techniques in English language teaching within Libya. Through a questionnaire administered to 30 teachers and interviews conducted with five instructors from language centers in the Western region during the academic year 2024, key elements affecting the effectiveness of elicitation techniques were identified. The findings suggest that techniques such as open-ended questions and visual aids significantly enhance student participation, as noted by four out of five interviewed teachers citing their positive impact on classroom interaction. However, challenges such as balancing these techniques with other instructional methods, limited class time, and large class sizes persist as significant obstacles. The study underscores the importance of these techniques for enhancing classroom engagement and communicative learning, while also recognizing the necessity for strategic planning by teachers to address associated challenges. The research findings offer valuable insights for educators in Libya seeking to optimize English language teaching practices.

Key words: Elicitation techniques, communicative teaching and classroom management.



فهم تحديات تقنيات الاستنباط في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في ليبيا

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ملخص البحث:

هذه الدراسة تستكشف تصورات المعلمين حول التحديات التي يواجهونها في مراكز تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في المنطقة الغربية (الزاوية - غريان - صبراتة) عند استخدام تقنيات الاستنباط لتعزيز بيئات التعلم التواصلي. الغاية من هذه الدراسة هي تحديد العوامل التي تؤثر في استخدام تقنيات الاستنباط في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية داخل ليبيا، وذلك من خلال استبيان تم توزيعه على 30 معلماً، وإجراء مقابلات مع خمسة مدرسين من مراكز اللغة في المنطقة المذكورة خلال العام الدراسي 2024. وقد تم التركيز على تحديد العناصر الرئيسية التي تؤثر في فعالية تقنيات الاستنباط. أظهرت النتائج أن تقنيات مثل الأسئلة المفتوحة والمساعدات البصرية تلعب دوراً بارزاً في تعزيز مشاركة الطلاب بشكل كبير. ورغم تأكيد معظم المعلمين المشاركين في المقابلات على التأثير الإيجابي لهذه التقنيات على التفاعل في الصف، إلا أنهم أشاروا إلى وجود تحديات أخرى مثل موازنة هذه التقنيات مع طرق التعليم الأخرى، وقلة الوقت المتاح في الصف، وزيادة عدد الطلاب في الفصول الدراسية كعوائق أساسية. تؤكد الدراسة على أهمية هذه التقنيات في تعزيز التفاعل في الصف وتعزيز عمليات التعلم الاتصالي، مع التأكيد على ضرورة وجود تخطيط استراتيجي من قبل المعلمين للتغلب على التحديات المرتبطة بهذه العملية. تقدم نتائج البحث إضاءة مفيدة للمعلمين في ليبيا الذين يسعون لتحسين ممارسات تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية / تقنيات الاستنباط، اللغة الإنجليزية.

1. Introduction

Teachers play an essential role in the domain of English language teaching, and their views and perceptions are directly reflected in the selection of certain methods and techniques to be applied in the classroom. As stated by Diaab (2016), Libyan students' inability to communicate effectively in English is attributed to the overuse of teacher-centered approaches and techniques that create a passive learning environment at the expense of student engagement and

participation. Spending years learning English and selecting valuable linguistic input is worthless unless teachers step back to be less dominant. Diaab (2016) also recommended that English language teachers in Libya should incorporate more student-centered methods and techniques where students participate and practice the language themselves in the classroom with less control from teachers. This closely aligns with Elmezghri's vision (2021), who asserted that English language teachers in Libya prefer traditional teaching methods due to difficulties encountered in implementing communicative approaches and techniques. Factors such as teaching time, large class size, lack of funding and resources, low level of students, their unwillingness to take risks with communicative activities, and the lack of teacher training programs all affect the usability of a communicative teaching environment in the classroom.

Kaswan (2014) asserted that the elicitation technique has a significant impact on students' communicative competence. Halim & Halim (2019) and Fitria & Sofyawati (2018) also clarified that one of the solutions to cope with these obstacles is to utilize more elicitation techniques to avoid a lack of target language production and to create positive opportunities for communication in the classroom. Many researchers agree that elicitation, on the whole, involves extracting information from students to encourage their participation during the lesson. It can enhance students' participation to establish various interaction patterns in the classroom. It is a simple and effective way of getting learners to produce language so learning happens naturally in the classroom (Harmer, 2007; Scrivener, 2012).

In light of previous studies that emphasize the role of elicitation techniques in fostering student engagement and participation in the classroom towards more communicative teaching, Halim & Halim (2016) listed some factors that affect the use of elicitation techniques in their conclusion. The current study aims to understand elicitation challenges in English Language Teaching in Libya. By addressing these aims, this research contributes valuable insights to the development of English language education. This research opens the door to demonstrating a connection between teacher perceptions and the application of elicitation techniques and the resulting impact on students' participation.

1.2. Research problem

Despite of the known significance of elicitation techniques in fostering student-centered classes and communicative methodology in English teaching in Libya, the challenges encountered by Libyan teachers in language centers in the

western area in Libya regarding this topic remain underexplored. This research attempts to investigate these factors for effective application of Elicitation techniques, addressing gaps in current literature view and offering better understanding to the communicative language teaching in Libya.

1.3. Aims of the research

The core objective of this paper is to provide a taxonomy that classifies the Libyan teachers' challenges in implementing Elicitation techniques. This study aims to identify factors that influence the implementation of Elicitation techniques in English Language Teaching and to explore their view regarding the importance of using them to foster communicative teaching environment, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of the obstacles in the application of the elicitation techniques.

1. Systematically identifying factors affecting the application of Elicitation techniques in English language teaching in Libya.
2. Explore teachers' views on the importance of elicitation techniques in fostering classroom interaction and promoting communicative teaching within the English language teaching context in Libya.

1.4. Research question

- What are the key factors influencing the use of elicitation techniques in English language teaching in Language centers in the western area (Az-Zawia – Gharyan – Sabratha) in Libya ?
- How do English in Language centers in the western area (Az-Zawia – Gharyan – Sabratha) view the importance of using elicitation techniques to encourage class interaction and support communicative teaching?

1.5. Research significance

English Language Education in Libya faces unique challenges and this study holds significant implications for the improvement of teaching practices by systematically identifying factors affecting the use of elicitation techniques towards more communicative teaching and exploring the view of English language teachers' in Language centers in the western area (Az-Zawia – Gharyan – Sabratha) on the importance of these techniques in creating the targeted communicative teaching, to the author's knowledge no previous research has addressed investigating Libyan teachers' challenges when implementing Elicitation techniques in English teaching classroom.

This research adds depth to the existing knowledge based on the insights gained from previous study's conclusion regarding English Language teaching in Libya. Exploring and categorizing these challenges will contribute to the development of teachers to cope with these hurdles in elicitation techniques and to raise the awareness of their importance among teachers. This, in turn, contributes to fostering more engaging and practicing in classrooms and lead to more effective teaching methods and improved students' communicative outcomes, in addition to a professional development of English language educators in Libya.

1.6. Limitations

This research is conducted in the academic year 2023-2024 and it is confined to English language teaching in Libya, the sample of the participants represents teachers of English Language centers in the western area (Az-Zawia – Gharyan – Sabratha). Therefore, the results may have limited generalize ability to different educational contexts and the finding may not fully capture the experience of all teachers in the country. Acknowledging these limitations is essential for maintaining transparency and ensuring the finding are appropriate interpreted within the defined boundaries of the study.

2. Literature review

1. Communicative teaching in Libya

The new teaching policy towards Communicative English Language teaching in Libya confronts challenges in its efficient implementation. Despite of taking realistic steps from changing the curriculum to cope with the new vision of the Ministry of education to the training opportunities for teachers to upgrade their linguistic and teaching levels yet the studies regarding the benefits of this process reveal some obstacles push teachers to resort to the tradition teaching methods in the classroom.

Abdulla (2008), asserted that teachers' classroom management and techniques are not in line with the principles and objectives of communicative approach. Libyan teachers encourage more teacher-talking time to present the target language traditionally where teachers control the whole process of learning the language with the absence of students' participation.

According to Abukhattala (2019) the complete implementation of communicative language teaching in Libya is not possible unless Libyan Education policy maker take realistic steps to overcome the challenges such as

limited resources, lack of trained teachers, the education and examination system and finally unmotivated students. All these factors prevent Libyan teachers to adopt this approach.

Abu Talag (2016) recorded the critical need for changes in educational policy in Libya, as well as providing resources and training opportunities for teachers to implement the CLT successfully. The finding of the two previous studies is in line with Elmezughi (2021) investigated Libyan teachers' intentions and classroom practices in teaching English as a foreign language. The finding uncovered the factors such as :Students' low level of proficiency, large class size, inadequate time duration, lack of funding and recourses that force Libyan teachers to apply traditional teaching methods and impact negatively on students' communicative abilities. In addition, the results also revealed that Libyan teachers' inability to implement the CTM is attributed to the lack of training programs to raise their knowledge about modern teaching methods. This research asserted that English Language teachers use the traditional teaching methods as grammar translation method GTM and they apply teacher-centered approach providing the least amount of opportunity for students to develop their communicative competence effectively.

2. Elicitation Technique

Many studies have been conducted on the subject of elicitation techniques. Some of them address the identification of types used by teachers in the classroom. Meanwhile, other studies explored a different aspect, specifically the impact of employing elicitation techniques on students' participation in the classroom of English Language teaching.

Suci (2017) designed an experimental research and studied the effect of applying elicitation technique on the students' speaking achievement; the participants of the study were the 11th grade students at SMA HARAPAN MEKAR MEDAN. The results revealed that using elicitation techniques effected positively with a percentage of 20.5% on the students' speaking achievement.

Rastari (2023) categorized Elicitation techniques used by teachers in Junior high school According to Cross (1992) in to two categories: short –answer elicit and long- answer elicit forms. The applied methods in this study included observation sheet, Interview for teachers and video – audio records revealed that all the techniques worked successfully in motivating students to speak.

In the experimental research by Suci (2017) the finding asserted the significant effect on students speaking achievement after utilizing Elicitation techniques. These findings are contradictory to Mandasari, Syarif and Refnaldi (2019). This descriptive research took place in Indonesia; the subjects were English teachers at SMAN 12X11 Kayutanam. The results proved that the short and simple response of students is attributed to teachers' lack of knowledge regarding the effective application of elicitation techniques. The participants tend to use one same elicitation technique frequently in each meeting, so students preferred to use their first language to interact instead of using English language.

So far, there hasn't been any dedicated study on elicitation techniques in Libya. All the existing studies on these techniques have been conducted in other countries. This highlights the significance of our study as a genuine contribution to the educational development.

3. Methodology

According to Halcomb (2015), mixed methods research combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches within a single research study. It involves collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data to understand a phenomenon better and answer the research questions. This research employed a mixed-methods approach to comprehensively investigate the factors influencing the use of elicitation techniques in English language teaching within the Libyan context. The quantitative structure of the questionnaire presents the numerical data analysis, while interviews provide in-depth details, context, and participants' experiences.

For the first aim of this study, identifying factors, a structured quantitative questionnaire is designed by the researcher on the basis of Halim's study (2016) who concluded with some factors affecting the application of eliciting techniques. This questionnaire will be distributed among English language teachers in Libya to collect data for the study. For the second aim, exploring the view of teachers about the importance of applying elicitation techniques to provoke communicative teaching, interviews of the participant teachers provide a qualitative data of teachers' experience in encountering these challenges.

By employing a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, this research seeks to contribute valuable perspectives and recommendations for enhancing the use of elicitation techniques in English language education in Libya.

3.1 Participants

The study comprises a cohort of 30 English language teachers from the cities of (Az-Zawia – Gharyan – Sabratha) in the western region of Libya. The selection of participants employed a purposive sampling technique, strategically chosen to include a group of teachers with varying backgrounds in training and experience in teaching general English applying communicative approach. Some of these teachers had certificates in teaching from British council as teaching knowledge test certificate **TKT** and International course in English Language teaching certificate **ICELT**.

3.2 Instruments of Data Collection

3.2.1 Questionnaire

The researcher designed a questionnaire to collect data needed to identify teachers' challenges in applying Elicitation Techniques in teaching English language.

3.2.2 Interview

To gain deeper information some participants were selected and interviewed. A semi- structured interview is used to provide information from the participants' lived experience when using elicitation techniques in the classroom that cannot be obtained through questionnaire.

Dealing with the second aim of this research, investigating the view of Libyan teachers within the importance of using Elicitation techniques in fostering communicative teaching to develop the educational system in English language teaching in Libya, Participant are asked to share their perspectives and experience about these questions. The interview was recorded and some important notes were taken by the researcher to be summarized and analyzed.

1. In your opinion, how do elicitation techniques contribute to encouraging class interaction and fostering a communicative teaching environment in English language classrooms in Libya?
2. What role do elicitation techniques play in promoting students' engagement and participation in the classroom?
3. How do you balance the use of the elicitation techniques with other instructional methods in your English language classes?
4. How do you describe your experience with using elicitation techniques in English language teaching?

4. Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Analysis of the Questionnaire

Table (1) shows the frequency and percentage of participants' answers of the questions in the questionnaire to identify teachers' challenges in applying Elicitation Techniques in teaching English language.

	YES	NO
Lack of skill and knowledge		
1. Have you received formal training on elicitation techniques?	60	40
Lack of confidence by students in class participation		
2. Does a lack of confidence in your students impact their active participation during elicitation activities?	100	0
The passive recipient of the information		
3. Have you noticed an increase in students' engagement when using elicitation techniques compared to traditional methods?	80	20
The short duration of the class		
4. Do you find it challenging to incorporate eliciting techniques within limited class duration?	73	27
Late arrival of students in class		
5. Do you face difficulties in engaging students who arrive late during elicitation activities?	60	40
Reluctant students		
6. Have you observed an improvement in the willingness of reluctant students to participate through certain elicitation activities?	93	7
Large class size		
7. Does large class size pose challenges for you in eliciting your students?	67	33
Lower level of students		
8. Have you observed positive outcomes in students' language by adapting eliciting methods for lower proficiency level?	93	7

4.2 Chart 1: Shows the frequency and percentage of participants' answers of the questions in the questionnaire to identify teachers' challenges in applying Elicitation Techniques in teaching English language.



Fig. 1: Results of the Questionnaire

4.1.1 Factors affecting the implementation of elicitation techniques

The primary focus of this research was to explore the factors influencing the utilization of elicitation techniques in the classroom. To achieve this goal, English language teachers were interviewed and surveyed. The findings from the data analysis distinctly indicate that teachers in Libya concluded that various factors impact the effective implementation of elicitation techniques.

The analysis of the research questionnaire reveals insightful trends in the use of elicitation techniques within an educational context. Notably, a significant portion of respondents (60%) have received formal training in elicitation techniques, indicating a recognized need for skill development in this area. The unanimous agreement (100%) on the impact of students' lack of confidence affecting their participation underscores the importance of addressing psychological barriers in the learning environment. The positive observation (80%) of increased student engagement with elicitation techniques compared to traditional methods suggests the potential efficacy of these approaches. However, the challenge of limited class duration (73%) and difficulties in engaging late-arriving students (60%) highlight practical hurdles that educators face. Encouragingly, there is a notable improvement (93%) in the willingness of reluctant students to participate through specific elicitation activities. Additionally, the acknowledgment of challenges posed by large class sizes

(67%) and positive outcomes for lower proficiency levels (93%) emphasizes the need for adapted strategies to address diverse classroom dynamics.

In conclusion, the findings of this research align with those in Halim & Halim's (2019) study regarding the challenges teachers encounter in effectively implementing elicitation techniques to establish a positive communicative language teaching environment. The results offer valuable insights into the effectiveness of these factors in influencing teachers' utilization of modern communicative methods, particularly in the context of elicitation techniques for speaking skills. These findings offer valuable insights for educators seeking to enhance student involvement through the strategic implementation of elicitation techniques while navigating associated challenge.

4.2. Interview analysis and discussion

The data of this part are taken of the interview section. The interview here is used to add more information and enrich data from the questionnaire the researcher merely conducted the interview with three people chosen by the special criteria such as certified teacher and ling experienced teacher. The researcher recorded the conversation then the researcher transforms into written paper to be easier to analyze data. The researcher reads all the answers and summarizes the data.

4.2.1. Teachers' reflection of the importance of using elicitation techniques

Question 1: In your opinion, how do elicitation techniques contribute to encouraging class interaction and fostering a communicative teaching environment in English language classrooms in Libya?

The first question explores teachers' perceptive about the value of using elicitation techniques in developing communicative teaching environment?

In response of this question, three four out of five teachers believe that Elicitation techniques play a crucial role in encouraging class interaction and fostering a communicative teaching environment, especially in English language classrooms in Libya. One of the teachers said "When I use these techniques, I notice that they help students become more active participants in the learning process. Instead of just listening to the teacher, students are encouraged to think, ask questions, and share their opinions.". Another teacher said "strong students feel more comfortable expressing themselves in English. It also allows them to practice language skills in a more natural and meaningful way, contributing to their overall language development."

Question 2: What role do elicitation techniques play in promoting students' engagement and participation in the classroom?

This question reflects teachers' real experienced benefits of using elicitation techniques.

Most of the teachers indicated that these techniques help them measure students' understanding and give them a platform to actively participate in the lesson. One teacher commented that "I've observed that when I use techniques like asking open-ended questions, prompting, or using visual aids, students are more engaged and willing to interact with their peers." . Another participant expressed "the use of Elicitation techniques also allows me to adapt my teaching based on students' responses, ensuring that the lesson is tailored to their needs and encourages continuous dialogue." Teachers agree that Elicitation techniques are fundamental in promoting students' engagement and participation in the classroom.

Question 3: How do you balance the use of the elicitation techniques with other instructional methods in your English language classes?

This question illustrates challenges encounter teachers in implementing these techniques regularly and effectively. The participants linked the relationship between the aim of the lesson to learners' needs to determine when and how to use each method. They think that balancing elicitation techniques with other instructional methods is the key to maintaining an effective learning environment. One of the teachers gave an example he said "While I use elicitation to encourage student interaction, I also incorporate direct instruction, group work, and multimedia resources to ensure a comprehensive approach to learning". The balance depends on the lesson's objectives and the students' needs. To Give a real detailed example he said " I might use elicitation at the beginning of the class to warm up and engage students, then switch to more structured activities like grammar exercises or reading comprehension. This way, I can address different learning styles while keeping the class interactive and engaging."

On the other hand some teachers indicate that it is challenging for them because it requires planning they added that "too much elicitation may cause confusion for students". One teacher commented, "at the beginning of my teaching experience I faced a lot of pressure to address the objectives of the class and to use different teaching methods including elicitation techniques" so making

balance even more complex for less experienced teachers. This can be solved with years of experience and a supervisor help to cope with this problem.

Question4: How do you describe your experience with using elicitation techniques in English language teaching?

This question represents teachers' reflection on using elicitation techniques to create communicative teaching atmosphere in their classes. Teachers might be hesitant, but they soon see the benefits in creating a relaxed and open classroom environment.

One of the answers was: "My experience with using elicitation techniques in teaching English has been positive. Applying these techniques changed the classroom from a passive learning environment to an active one." In other positive experience the teacher declared "Elicitation has allowed me to create a safe teaching atmosphere, where students feel more comfortable to share their ideas and asking or answering questions". In general the participants noted that this approach is helpful to assess students' understanding during the lesson, so they adjust their teaching strategies accordingly." All the reflections indicate the positive impact of the usability of elicitation techniques to enrich the teaching and learning process towards communicative education.

The interviews with English language teachers in Libya reveal that elicitation techniques are pivotal in creating interactive and communicative classroom environments. The majority of teachers agreed that these techniques encourage class interaction and provide students with opportunities to express themselves in English. This positive impact is especially notable among students who are already comfortable with the language, leading to a more dynamic classroom atmosphere. However, integrating elicitation techniques into English language teaching involves several challenges. Teachers noted that while these techniques help measure student understanding and encourage active participation, there must be a balance with other instructional methods. One teacher mentioned that open-ended questions and visual aids boost engagement, but they also require careful planning to avoid overwhelming students. This balance is essential for an effective learning environment, and too much elicitation can cause confusion, particularly among less experienced teachers.

The responses indicated that experienced teachers have found ways to balance elicitation with other methods, like direct instruction, group work, and multimedia resources. This balanced approach allows for a variety of learning styles and objectives to be addressed within a single lesson. By using elicitation

techniques at the beginning of a class to warm up and then transitioning to more structured activities, teachers can create a comprehensive learning experience. The evidence from interviews with teachers demonstrates that these techniques can effectively encourage students to participate actively, transforming passive learning into more dynamic experiences. However, effective implementation requires a balanced approach, as excessive elicitation may lead to confusion, particularly among less experienced teachers or students less familiar with communicative approaches.

This finding is consistent with the work of Suci (2017), which showed that elicitation techniques had a positive effect on students' speaking achievement in a high school setting. While the literature suggests that elicitation techniques can motivate students to engage and speak in English, there are challenges to successful implementation. Rastari's (2023) study highlighted that various forms of elicitation techniques, both short-answer and long-answer, were successful in motivating junior high school students to speak. However, Mandasari, Syarif, and Refnaldi's (2019) descriptive research in Indonesia found that a lack of variety in elicitation techniques and teachers' limited knowledge of effective application could lead to a reduced impact, with students reverting to their first language in classroom interactions. This contrast emphasizes the need for English language teachers in Libya to balance elicitation with other instructional methods to meet various learning styles and classroom dynamics.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the connection between the analysis of the questionnaire and the interview conclusions reveals both the effectiveness and challenges of implementing elicitation techniques in English language teaching in Libya. Both sources indicate that elicitation techniques can be a powerful tool to foster class interaction and create a communicative environment, but they also require a thoughtful approach to ensure success. The common themes emerging from both the questionnaire analysis and the interview conclusions suggest that while elicitation techniques are instrumental in promoting engagement and communicative teaching, their implementation requires careful planning and adaptability to address various classroom challenges. These insights are crucial for educators seeking to optimize their teaching strategies with elicitation techniques while addressing the unique dynamics within their classrooms.

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Appendix

1. Questionnaire

Lack of skill and knowledge

1. Have you received formal training on elicitation techniques?

Lack of confidence by students in class participation

2. Does a lack of confidence in your students impact their active participation during elicitation activities?

The passive recipient of the information

3. Have you noticed an increase in students' engagement when using elicitation techniques compared to traditional methods?

The short duration of the class

4. Do you find it challenging to incorporate eliciting techniques within limited class duration?

Late arrival of students in class

5. Do you face difficulties in engaging students who arrive late during elicitation activities?

Reluctant students

6. Have you observed an improvement in the willingness of reluctant students to participate through certain elicitation activities?

Large class size

7. Does large class size pose challenges for you in eliciting your students?

Lower level of students

8. Have you observed positive outcomes in students' language by adapting eliciting methods for lower proficiency level?