

Libyan Adult EFL learners' Perspectives on the Shift from Teacher-Centered Classrooms to Student-Centered Classrooms at the University of Zawia Language Center

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explores the perspectives of Libyan adult English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners regarding the transition from traditional, Grammar Translation Method (GTM)-based secondary school instruction to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) at the University of Zawia Language Center (UZLC). Data were collected using in-depth interviews with six master's degree students and document analysis of assigned course textbooks (face2face series), then analyzed using a cross-case approach. Findings reveal that participants held strong negative attitudes toward their previous school experiences, describing them as teacher-centered, crowded, reliant on Arabic translation, and focused almost exclusively on grammar rules rather than communicative ability. Conversely, participants expressed highly positive attitudes toward the learning environment at UZLC. They highlighted the effectiveness of interactive group work, task-based learning, communicative activities, and the integration of audio-visual technology. Textbook analysis corroborated these findings, demonstrating a focus on developing integrated skills and real-life communicative competence. The study highlights a critical gap in primary/secondary EFL pedagogy in Libya, recommending curriculum modernization, teacher development in student-centered methodologies, and broader implementation of CLT practices to enhance practical language proficiency.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Grammar Translation Method (GTM), Libyan EFL Learners, Student-Centered Learning, University of Zawia Language Center

انطباعات متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من الراشدين الليبيين حول التحول من
الفصول الدراسية القائمة على المعلم إلى الفصول الدراسية القائمة على المتعلم في مركز
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ملخص البحث

تهدف هذه الدراسة النوعية إلى استكشاف آراء ووجهات نظر متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من الكبار في ليبيا حول الانتقال من التعليم الثانوي التقليدي القائم على طريقة القواعد والترجمة، إلى التعليم القائم على النهج التواصلي في مركز اللغات بجامعة الزاوية. تم جمع البيانات من خلال إجراء مقابلات متعمقة مع ستة من طلاب مرحلة الماجستير، إلى جانب تحليل وثائقي للمناهج الدراسية المقررة (Face to Face)، وتم تحليل البيانات باستخدام منهجية التحليل عبر الحالات المتعددة. أظهرت النتائج أن المشاركين يحملون اتجاهات سلبية قوية نحو تجاربهم التعليمية السابقة في المدارس، واصفين إياها بأنها تتمركز حول المعلم، وتتعامل مع صفوف مزدحمة، وتعتمد بشكل مفرط على الترجمة باللغة العربية، وتركز تقريباً بشكل حصري على القواعد النحوية دون الاهتمام بالقدرة التواصلية. وفي المقابل، عبر المشاركون عن اتجاهات إيجابية للغاية نحو البيئة التعليمية في مركز اللغات بجامعة الزاوية؛ حيث أبرزوا فاعلية العمل الجماعي التفاعلي، التعلم القائم على المهام، الأنشطة التواصلية، وإدماج الوسائل التقنية والسمعية والبصرية. كما أكد تحليل الكتب الدراسية هذه النتائج من خلال إظهار تركيزها على تطوير المهارات المتكاملة والكفاءة التواصلية في الحياة الواقعية. تسلط الدراسة الضوء على وجود فجوة جوهرية في طرق تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية بالمرحلتين الأساسية والثانوية في ليبيا، وتوصي بتحديث المناهج، وتطوير أداء المعلمين نحو الاستراتيجيات التي تتمركز حول الطالب، والتوسع في تطبيق النهج التواصلي لتعزيز الطلاقة واللغوية العملية. **الكلمات المفتاحية:** تدريس اللغة التواصلي، طريقة القواعد والترجمة، متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في ليبيا، التعلم المتمركز حول الطالب، مركز اللغات بجامعة الزاوية

Background of the Study

Over the last century, methods of English language teaching have been considerably adjusted and enhanced due to the use of technologies as audio and visual teaching aids and smart phone applications and online materials.

The current study was conducted on 6 Libyan adult students (3 male and 3 female) who were learning English as a foreign language (EFL) at the University of Zawia Language Center (UZLC). The researcher aimed to explore the learning experiences of the participants and deeply understand how they perceive the shift from Grammar Translation-based classrooms (in Libyan high schools) to Communicative language-based classrooms at the UZLC.

Statement of the Problem and Research Gap

The field of Teaching English as Foreign Language (TEFL) methodology has been well studied and the conception of 'best practice' has always occupied the minds of researchers, educators and teachers. However, there exists a gap in the literature as regards Libyan students' perceptions on the shift from classroom that is, mainly, based on grammar translation method (GTM) to a communicative-based classrooms.

Purpose Statement and Central Research Questions

To gather data for this qualitative research, interviews and document analysis were utilized. Cross-case analysis was used to analyze the collected data. This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do Libyan students, learning English at the University of Zawia Language Center, perceive the shift from grammar translation-based classrooms (in Libyan schools) to the communicative language-based classrooms at UZLC?
2. To what extent do Libyan EFL students utilize the UZLC facilities to improve their communicative competence and self-confidence?

Significance of the Study

Generally, the findings of the study revealed that the participants expressed negative attitudes towards their previous English language learning experiences in their schools, and their attitudes towards UZLC were very positive. The findings of the current study are significantly valuable for Libyan teachers of English and educators who are willing to use more fruitful teaching methods and improve their teaching techniques in EFL classrooms. In addition, UZLC teachers will benefit from the information revealed by this study when they explore the weaknesses and the strengths of their classroom practices.

Literature Review

Language teaching has a long history and considerably evolved particularly over the last hundred years that witnessed massive technology advances. The names of language teaching methods (Grammar-translation Method, Direct Method, Audio-lingual Method, Communicative Teaching Method, etc.) are theoretically familiar for most teachers but they are not easy to grasp in practice because each method and approach is more than a single strategy or a particular technique.

According to Bowen (2000), conducting research on language teaching methods resulted in that the Communicative Approach in the 1980s and early 1990s became fashionable and other methods, in particular, "Grammar Translation" became traditional. Throughout history, foreign and second language teaching methods have played important roles in producing second/foreign language efficient users. Understanding the objectives of each method of teaching enables teachers to implement it properly and maximize its benefits for the targeted learners and motivate them so they may enjoy the learning activities.

Grammar Translation Method (GTM)

Richards and Rodgers (1986) state, "Since the 1950s a number of ambitious attempts have been made at testing the comparative effectiveness of methods" (p.165). During the last century there have been various usage and development in language teaching methods, and some of those methods are: Grammar Translation Method (the traditional method), the Direct Method, the Audio-lingual Method and recently the Communicative Approach. Many people have written about these methods and their effectiveness. Some people indicate that a particular method is more effective than another one and vice versa (Karrar et al., 2026).

Thuleen (1996) traces back the GTM to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and describes it as one of the most traditional methods of language teaching. O'Neill (2000) mentions that it is surprising that the GTM has survived right up until today alongside with more modern and more enlightened methods. GTM, he goes on, was developed for the study of "dead" languages involving little or no spoken communication or listening comprehension. Wringe (1989) indicates that the GTM is referred to as if it no longer exists and had died out to be replaced world-wide by the fun and motivation of the communicative-based teaching. Howatt (1984) indicates that if we examine the principal features of GTM, however, we will see that not only has it not disappeared but that many of its characteristics have been central to language teaching throughout the ages and are still valid today.

According to Liu and Shi (2007), "Grammar-Translation Method has been facing various attacks from reformers" (p.69). It has been criticized, Liu and Shi continue, because it often creates frustration for students by a tedious experience of memorizing endless list of unusable grammar rules and vocabulary, and the limitations of practice techniques never emancipate the learner from the dominance of the first language; others say that this method pays little attention to the student's communicative competence.

Thuleen (1996) criticizes the GTM because no class time is allocated to allow students to produce their own sentences, and even less time is spent on oral practice and students may have difficulties "relating" to the language, because the classroom experience keeps them from personalizing it or developing their own style. According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), GTM is "remembered with distaste by thousands of school learners" (p.4). But, they explain, it is undeniable that GTM served language teaching for many years and this criticism makes it worth looking at its objectives, characteristics and typical techniques that are commonly associated with it in order to understand how it works, what kind of language learners it produces and to compare it with other language teaching methods (Ayad et al., 2026).

Stern (1983) explains how GTM works and indicates "that the first language is maintained as the reference system of the foreign language" (p.455). Richards and Rodgers (1986) explain some objectives of GTM and address that "reading and writing are the major focus; little or no systematic attention is paid to speaking and listening" (p.3). Purwarno (2007) describes the GTM as unnatural because it does not follow the natural order of language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and then writing) when a child learns his/her first language.

Neufeld (2011) highlights that some disadvantages of using the GTM are: a) students get bored and lose motivation quickly because it lacks variety, b) teacher is the only authority in class, c) no interaction between students, and d) other aspects of language are simply ignored. On the other hand, Fitriyanti (2011) highlights the following as features of the GTM:

"The grammar translation method focuses heavily on the specific rules of English grammar, directly translating words and phrases from the student's native language into English using vocabulary lists and rote memorization. In this method, the written, literary English language is more important than spoken English, with reading and writing taking top priority, and with accuracy in grammar taking precedent over fluency."

Despite all that criticism and using the mother tongue of the learners as the medium of instruction, which is used to explain the contents of the target language and to discuss the use of a particular grammatical structure, it can be argued that the GTM has over the years had a remarkable success. Millions of people were taught a foreign language by teachers, who utilized only this method, have successfully learned that foreign language to a high level of proficiency. In the year when the teacher-centered and non-active methods dominated the classroom, many students were still able to master one or several foreign languages (Hmouma, 2025).

Richards and Rodgers (1986) argue that the most difficult kind of data to prove is that which "offers evidence that one method is more effective than another in attaining program objectives" (p165). Fitriyanti (2011) mentions that "ESL students taught successfully under the grammar translation method will have the ability to translate even difficult texts from their native language into English." Richards and Rodgers (1999) state, "Now taught with communicative methods; some students are still poor in language abilities" (p24). Why is it that a traditional teaching method may not necessarily produce poor language users, and the improved methods may still be unable to ensure proficient language users?

Researchers and writers have many arguments and discussions on the issue of language teaching methodology, however it is not clear that one particular method is agreed on as better than another or as "best practice." As a result of having read about language teaching methods and approaches, I understand that GTM is very much based on written words and texts. Such method could be described as presenting the rules and structures of a particular grammatical rule, introducing this rule more than once in a text and practicing using that rule through writing and translating it into the mother tongue of the learners. Normally, it deals with vocabulary lists of new words used in the text together with the mother tongue translation, and the central aspect of this method is the accurate use of the language forms and structures, paying little or no attention to fluency (Hmouma et al., 2026).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Davison and Dawson (1998) argue that one of the central orthodoxies of English teaching is that development in each of the "processes of speaking and listening, reading and writing is best promoted by the processes which are integrated" (p.126). I believe that it is essential to examine the implications of this idea for the teaching process.

Brown (1994) describes the march towards the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT):

"Beyond grammatical discourse elements in communication, we are probing the nature of social, cultural, and pragmatic features of language. We are exploring pedagogical means for 'real-life' communication in the classroom. We are trying to get our learners to develop linguistic fluency, not just the accuracy that has so consumed our historical journey. We are equipping our students with tools for generating unrehearsed language performance 'out there' when they leave the womb of our classrooms. We are concerned with how to facilitate lifelong language learning among our students, not just with the immediate classroom task. We are looking at learners as partners in a cooperative venture. And our classroom practices seek to draw on whatever intrinsically sparks learners to reach their fullest potential" (p.77).

There may be many interpretations of what CLT actually means and involves. As Brown mentions many objectives of the communicative approach he makes it seem as the 'best practice'. Woods (1977) asserts that CLT "aims to communicative skills, language learners must acquire the ability to communicate, that is to use language as means of communication or for communication purposes. They need communication practice through communication drills or natural communication use" (p.83).

Jack and Theodore (1986) define the CLT as the name given to a set of beliefs which included not only a re-examination of what aspects of language to teach, but also a shift in emphasis in how to teach, and it is closely related to the idea that "language learning will take care of itself" and that plentiful exposure to language in use and plenty of opportunities to use it are vitally important for a student's development of knowledge and skills (p.84). I understand that what Jack and Theodore mean is that activities in classroom within the CLT typically involve students in real communication with successful achievement of the communicative task that they are performing.

Spolsky (1989) explains that CLT "offered a theoretical foundation for the growing interest in the teaching of language for communication, and it led to the Communicative Approach to English language teaching which most teachers of English as a foreign language are familiar with, even if they do not use this method themselves" (p.139). Many researchers and teaching methodologists agree that CLT makes use of real-life situations that facilitate language learners to communicate and the main role of the teacher is to set up situations, similar to the ones we have in our everyday life, in order to make them unconsciously engaged in activities.

Holliday (1994) explains that communicative language teachers often "claim to be learner-centered" (p.174). Spolsky (1989) states, "This Approach focuses on language use rather than language form, on fluency rather than accuracy, and emphasizes the need for meaningful language practice in classroom" (p.139). It advocates, Spolsky continues, that the foreign language learner should acquire, not just control of the basic grammar of the language, but all the communicative skills which are conveniently labeled as communicative competence.

Ellis (1994) states, "Giving learners tasks to transact, rather than items to learn, provides an environment which best promotes the natural language learning process. The emphasis on language accuracy is shifted to language fluency." It is perhaps meant here that CLT procedure requires teachers to acquire less teacher-centered classroom skills and minimize the teacher performance as a teacher and maximize his/her role as a supervisor and facilitator. It is the teacher's responsibility to organize the classroom as a setting for communication and communicative activities.

Based on CLT theories, language classroom should be more student-centered where teachers' role shifts from directors to guides and assistants. In a language classroom that uses CLT, language learners are expected to interact with each other, either through pair and group work, or in the whole class discussion. Therefore, from the theory of CLT, group work is considered an important technique of classroom setting.

Willis (1981, p.26) argues that English language teachers are used to debating issues related to the teaching of language however, they may not often think of language as just one element of communication, which is made up of both verbal and non-verbal elements. If they, Willis goes on, place the communication as a whole, they would probably view that communication as a two-way process, in accordance with widely accepted wisdom amongst language teachers, although there are other ways of conceptualizing communication.

Due to the previous arguments, CLT does a great job in attaining the goal of creating "communicative competence" compared with some other language teaching methods such as the GTM which in, some way, has the same object as the Mimicry Memorization method. McDonough and Shaw (1993, p.225) indicate how modern it is to involve prior group work in the classroom and says that managing classes so that learners work in groups or divide into groups is now so much part of the everyday professional practice of leading numbers of English language teachers that the instructions leading to those activities sometimes seem to be switched on automatically, occasionally with a justifiable frequency.

On the other hand, Bax (2003) argues that the dominance of the CLT has led to the neglect of one crucial aspect of language pedagogy, namely the context in which that pedagogy takes place. Richards and Rodgers (1986) state, "There is, in a sense, a 'strong' version of the communicative approach and 'weak' version" (p.66). The weak, they explain, version focuses on providing learners with opportunities to use the target language for communication purposes and, characteristically, attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching, whereas the strong version is that it advances the claims that language is acquired through communication.

Methodology

Research Design

The current study utilized qualitative methods to gather data. A qualitative research design was chosen to enable the researcher to explore the learning experiences of the participants in depth and deeply understand how they perceive the shift from Grammar Translation-based classrooms to Communicative language-based classrooms.

Research Setting

The study was conducted at the University of Zawia Language Center (UZLC), where Libyan adult students were learning English as a foreign language. MA/MSc students have to pass a certain level (Pre-Intermediate) of English as part of their study requirements.

Participants

The participants (interviewees) were 3 female and 3 male adult Libyan students, who had been studying English at UZLC. All of them were MA/MSc students in different specializations. Those interviewees were adult English learners who had experienced learning English in Libyan schools as a foreign language and were, then, learning English as a foreign language at UZLC. That EFL course was required for them in order to defend their dissertations. Students

were in different levels. They (volunteers) were randomly chosen in order that they provide comprehensive responses and data sets for the study.

Data Collection Methods

Interviews

Interviews were conducted as the main data collection method and document (text books) analysis was also used as a secondary method of data collection in order to ensure triangulation and validity for this study.

In terms of making arrangements, the interviews took place in the UZLC and according to the convenience of the research participants. Interviews were conducted as the main data collection method, Rubin & Rubin (2005) state, "an interview is part of developing relationship in which issues of mutual interest are explored in depth" (p.128). To set the stage for each interview, the researcher had a friendly conversation with each participant before interviewing them. Also, details of the study were explained to each participant and the contents of consent forms were clarified to participants before they signed them. Having conversations with interviewees and explaining the study for them, according to Rubin & Rubin (2005), is to help them "feel protected and comfortable during and after the interviews" (p.83).

The 6 interviews were conducted in Arabic because the interviewed students were not proficient enough for such discussions. The interviews were recorded and the duration of the recordings ranged from 33 to 45 minutes. In-depth interviewing style was utilized. That is attributed to the fact that the researcher did the most questioning and the participants did the detailed answering. The main interview questions enriched the study because they required comprehensive answers and detailed responses about the background of the participants, their English instructions in their previous stages of education, and their perceptions about the EFL learning in UZLC.

The nine interview questions, follow-up questions, and the probes were comprehensive and sufficient to finding out about the students' perception on learning English in both contexts (Libyan schools and EFL in UZLC) with a direct focus on the following areas:

- Teaching practices and teaching methods
- Teaching environment
- Teaching aids
- Learning activities
- Learning preferences

The main interview questions were designed in advance and carefully prepared to cover the research inquiry. In addition to the main interview questions, during each interview, follow-up questions and probes were used. That is to get explanations for themes and concepts and also to keep interviews on track (Rubin & Rubin 2005, p.129).

Document Analysis

In addition to interviewing four students, two of the text books (face2face 2nd edition Elementary and Pre-Intermediate), assigned by the UZLC staff members for those students, were included in data collection. That is to say, the researcher looked at the general design, the contents, and the layout of those two text books. Reflecting on the structure and the contents of each book is to understand the connection between the ways English is taught (teaching methods) at the UZLC and the structure of the contents (teachers' guide). That will also enable the researcher to gain insight about instructional activity or approach and to find out how the design and the content of the text books have influenced the interview responses.

Data Analysis Approach

Data analysis involved organizing what was collected and recorded during the interviews and from the document analysis in order to make sense of what was collected. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) argue that, to turn the collected data into useful readings, a researcher "must categorize, synthesize, search for patterns, and interpret the data collected" (p. 127). The data analysis stage began when the first interview was conducted. Rubin & Rubin (2005) state, "you analyze your project interviews while the project is underway to look for core concepts and themes" (p.55).

The part of analyzing data utilized the method of cross-case analysis. When data is collected from multiple cases, the researcher will typically provide a within-case analysis with a detailed description of each case, and a cross-case analysis tracing the themes throughout (Merriam, 1998). The researcher reflected on the 6 responses to each question and highlighted themes and patterns. The researcher went by the interview questions as categories. According to Haynes (2007), the purpose of categorizing information is to "give meaning to words and phrases, identify trends, general themes, and patterns, including ideas, concepts, behaviors, terminology, or phrases used and to summarize and bring meaning to the text" (p.9).

The data collected for this study was organized into categories according to the interview questions in order to identify and label all relevant themes. Data was reviewed for emerging themes and patterns and conceptions in order to understand the experience of EFL students in both contexts; Libyan secondary schools and UZLC, and how they perceive the shift from grammar translation-based classroom to communicative-based classroom. To guide the final report, the observed themes and concepts were weaved into broader explanations of theoretical or practical import (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). New insights and understanding were revealed about what was occurring in the EFL classrooms as well as in the individual perception on both contexts of learning English. The information, pertaining to one theme and capturing the similarities and differences in students' responses, was summarized.

The researcher also reflected on the responses of each participant for the same question and checked if certain themes or perspectives were repeated by individuals during interviews. What coded data presents, according to Seidel and Kelle (1995), is the "decisive link between the original 'raw data' that is, the textual materials such as interview transcripts or field notes, on the one hand and the researcher's theoretical concepts on the other" (p. 52).

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

To ensure trustworthiness, the study employed triangulation through the use of multiple data collection methods (interviews and document analysis). The researcher established rapport with participants and provided clear explanations of the study purpose and consent procedures. All interviews were conducted in Arabic to ensure participants could express themselves freely and accurately. Participants' identities were protected throughout the research process, and consent forms were signed by all participants after the contents were fully clarified. Participant had been informed and assured that they could withdraw at any stage with no harm or negative consequences.

Findings and Data Analysis

For conducting this research, interviews and document analyses were used as data collection methods and a large amount of data was collected. The data of interviewing students explained that the educational system of Libya requires students to study English as a foreign language (EFL) for 12 years. The instruction is given for 45 minutes in each lesson and there are 4 lessons per week. The study reveals that 12 school years of teaching English neither ensured language competency nor guaranteed academic proficiency. The main findings of this research reflected, not only, GTM was the only method of teaching English used by most Libyan EFL teachers, but also, the students learned more about English language structure than how to use English efficiently. The findings of this study were classified into categories based on the students' perception of the two English language learning contexts (secondary schools and UZLC).

EFL Experiences

Despite being from different MA majors and having learned English in different Libyan schools, the six interviewees mentioned that they were taught English with the aid of Arabic translation and their teachers had mainly focused on teaching grammatical rules of English language. That was purely the grammar translation method which requires the use of the learners' native language parallel with the targeted language. Thuleen (1996) explains that the GTM "focuses on learning the rules of grammar and their application in translation passages from one language into the other."

Students showed their dissatisfaction of the way they were taught English in their schools. Too, the analyzed data showed that classrooms in Libyan schools were too crowded for teachers to communicate with every single student in the class, which in the end, the class turns into teacher-centered. Also, the class time is not sufficient for carrying on activities apart from introducing the new words and new pattern of each lesson. Jack and Rodgers (1986) state, "The Grammar Translation Method effect creates frustration for the students; it makes few demands on teachers" (p.5).

In addition, the in-depth interviews revealed that the typical English language classroom in Libyan schools lacked teaching facilities and audio/visual aids. Consequently, students were not interested in learning and interacting and the teacher had no options for variety of activities and the teaching techniques were limited to textbooks, CD or cassette player, and whiteboard and markers. EFL students who study at the UZLC have to take placement tests in order they are place in the right level and to study with people who have similar levels which will create

no level gaps between the EFL learners. The six participants of this study mentioned that, when they took the test, they were placed at the first level and moved on to the next levels. Placing students at the first level is a visible sign of the poor background of those students in spite of the fact that they had studied English for 12 years in Libyan schools.

Students' Experiences in UZLC

According to the analyzed interviews and reflecting on the textbooks, the EFL classes at UZLC were effective and productive. The analyzed data show that students were satisfied with the EFL classes and expressed positive attitudes. They perceived the EFL classes as new learning environment that was different from their school experiences. Participants of the current study had different specializations and were in different EFL levels at UZLC, however, they had similar responses about the way they perceived both contexts of learning English. In general, they perceived their EFL classes as beneficial and effective.

The analyzed data suggest that the students favored a variety of classroom activities such as group work, and task-based learning. The students highlighted that they liked to learn English through enjoyable activities and interesting tasks. Such activities are very effective and involve a great deal of student-student interaction and student-teacher interaction.

Interview responses also brought to light that students desired to be able to use English for communication in real life situations. The communicative activities, which they had in UZLC classes, helped them develop their communicative competence in the classroom and in some similar situations such as watching English TV programs and listening to English songs. Rao (2002) states, "In an ESL situation, students have a strong motivation to improve their communicative competence in the classroom because they need it to survive in everyday life situations" (p.96). The interview responses revealed that students were motivated not only that they needed English for meeting the requirements of their studies, but also for prestigious driving forces.

In addition, students mentioned that they enjoyed being in a class with other students who had different educational backgrounds, came from different Libyan cities and neighborhoods so that they had much to share. According to the interviewees, sharing experiences with classmates was very important for improving their English skills because it requires communication only takes place in English which engages students in unconscious learning and searching for words and expressions to maintain the communication.

Another reason for participants to perceive the UZLC classes as a fruitful learning context was that their teachers used technology in the classrooms. Audio visual aids in a language classroom motivate learners to be more interested in learning and encourage them to interact among each other. I believe that using a range of technology satisfies the different learning preferences and styles. Lo (1999) addresses that the use of teaching aids bridges the gap between the different types of learners and "since most people are visual learners, it's important to go beyond 'spoken words' when educating students."

Text Books

Documents not only provide valuable information about EFL classes, but they can "stimulate thinking about important questions" about the data collected from the interviews (Merriam, 1998). The document analysis revealed that the two analyzed books parallel with the classroom practice that the interview responses showed. The two books were designed to develop the students' competence and confidence in four skills. The instructional designs of the two books are simple and include motivating sections. They include multiple skills lessons and communication activities. Most of the lessons are student-centered and based on variety of activities. Both books were accompanied with CDs that included conversation models, speaking practices, and games and puzzles. The contents of the two books were designed to enable the learners to develop their conversation strategies, writing skills, confident communication skills, and gain vocabulary.

Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

Interpretation of Findings in Relation to Literature Review

The current qualitative research focused on four Libyan adult English language learners who were learning English at UZLC University. The research question was designed to know how those students perceive the shift from the grammar translation-based classroom (in Libyan schools) to communicative approach-based classroom at UZLC.

The findings of this study align with the existing literature on language teaching methodologies. The negative attitudes expressed by students towards GTM-based instruction corroborate the criticisms made by Liu and Shi (2007), Thuleen (1996), and Richard and Rodgers (1986), who highlighted that GTM often creates frustration for students through tedious memorization and pays little attention to communicative competence. The participants' experiences in Libyan schools—characterized by teacher-centered instruction, crowded classrooms, lack of teaching aids, and focus on grammar rules—reflect the limitations of GTM as described in the literature.

Conversely, the positive attitudes expressed towards UZLC classes support the claims made by proponents of CLT such as Brown (1994), Spolsky (1989), and Ellis (1994), who emphasize that CLT promotes meaningful language practice, real-life communication, and learner-centered instruction. The participants' appreciation of group work, task-based learning, and communicative activities aligns with McDonough and Shaw's (1993) assertion that group work is an essential part of modern language teaching practice.

The document analysis of the textbooks further validates the interview findings. The two books (face2face 2nd edition Elementary and Pre-Intermediate) reflect CLT principles through their focus on integrated skills, communication activities, and student-centered design, which contrasts with the GTM-based materials described by the participants from their school experiences.

Summary of Core Insights

The main findings of this study revealed that the 6 students expressed negative attitudes about their English language learning experiences in their secondary schools. However, they showed

their positive attitudes about their UZLC classes and highlighted that they made significant progress. Also, the document analysis showed that the two analyzed books were comprehensive and included variety of lessons and sections that cover the four language skills.

This study was focused on an important issue that Libyan ministry of education and Libyan teachers of English should pay attention to. The students' negative attitudes raised many concerns about the way English is taught in Libyan schools. The UZLC teachers and principals should also be aware of the strengths of their English language teaching and learning curriculum and build on them and look for weaknesses and improve them.

Practical Implications and Recommendations for Future Study

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. For Libyan Ministry of Education

There is a critical need to reconsider the English language teaching methods used in Libyan schools. The curriculum should be revised to incorporate more communicative and student-centered approaches rather than relying solely on GTM.

2. For Libyan EFL Teachers

Professional development programs should be provided to help teachers transition from teacher-centered to student-centered classrooms. Teachers should be trained in using communicative activities, group work, and task-based learning.

3. For University of Zawia Language Center

The institution should continue to build on its strengths in implementing CLT-based instruction. Regular assessment of teaching methods and materials should be conducted to identify areas for improvement.

4. For Future Research

This research may raise questions and maintain context for significant discussions around ESL and EFL development. Future studies could:

- Investigate the long-term impact of CLT-based instruction on Libyan students' communicative competence.
- Examine the challenges faced by Libyan teachers in implementing CLT in their classrooms.
- Explore the perceptions of Libyan EFL teachers regarding the shift from GTM to CLT.
- Conduct a larger-scale quantitative study to measure the effectiveness of CLT compared to GTM in Libyan educational contexts.

Conclusion

The current qualitative research focused on four Libyan adult English language learners who were learning English UZLC University. The research question was designed to know how

those students perceive the shift from the grammar translation-based classroom (in Libyan schools) to communicative approach-based classroom at UZLC. Interviews and document analysis were utilized to gather data for this study. Cross-case analysis techniques were followed to analyze the collected data. The main findings of this study revealed that the four students expressed negative attitudes about their English language learning experiences in their secondary schools. However, they showed their positive attitudes about their UZLC classes and highlighted that they made significant progress. Also, the document analysis showed that the two analyzed books were comprehensive and included variety of lessons and sections that cover the four language skills. This study was focused on an important issue that Libyan ministry of education and Libyan teachers of English should pay attention to. The students' negative attitudes raised many concerns about the way English is taught in Libyan schools. The UZLC teachers and principals should also be aware of the strengths of their English language teaching and learning curriculum and build on them and look for weaknesses and improve them. This research may raise questions and maintain context for significant discussions around ESL and EFL development

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