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**An Investigation of Libyan EFL Teachers' Conceptions of the Communicative  
Learner-Centred Approach in Relation to their Implementation of an  
English Language Curriculum Innovation in Secondary Schools**

A thesis submitted by Salama Embark Saleh Shihiba  
for a PhD in Education (TEFL)

School of Education at University of Durham

UK

June 2011

## Abstract

This phenomenographical investigation explores conceptions of the communicative learner-centred approach (CLCA) held by a sample of Libyan English foreign language teachers (EFL) in relation to their implementation of an English language curriculum innovation in secondary schools. A mixed approach employing quantitative (survey questionnaire) and qualitative (semi-structure interview) research methods was used for data collection during the first phase of this research. Martons' (1981) phenomenographical approach was employed for analysing the qualitative data and the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) programme was used for analysing the quantitative data. Content analysis was used for analysing qualitative data gathered through an open-ended questionnaire completed by ten English language inspectors during the second phase of this research.

Fourteen conceptions and misconceptions of the CLCA have been explored through this investigation. School location and place of graduation did not have significant effect on teachers' conception of the principles and practices of the CLCA and the teacher-centred approach (TCA). However, the less experienced teachers were more positive about those related to the TCA than were the experienced ones. Influential barriers related to individual, contextual and cultural considerations have been identified as responsible for limiting the success of the teachers' attempts to implement this approach. Nevertheless, the majority of the participants (teachers and inspectors) were positive about the notion of implementing the CLCA for teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) in the Libyan context. However, the current conditions and realities in Libya seem to fit a weak version of this approach but not a strong one.

This study is significant because it adds to the literature new insights about EFL teachers' conceptions and practices of the CLCA as a Western teaching methodology for TEFL in developing countries and challenges the argument of considering this approach inappropriate in these contexts. The findings of this study also have potential implications for school reform, curriculum design, EFL teacher education and training and for developing the role of language inspectors in Libya. These implications may be applied in similar contexts. Moreover, this study provides empirical evidence for the possibility of employing both qualitative and quantitative approaches in phenomenographical investigations.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like first to acknowledge Dr Barbara Riddick and Dr. Beth Howell, my supervisors, for their careful guidance and constructive feedback which assisted me in carrying out this research. I am deeply indebted to all the teachers and the inspectors who participated in this study for their participation and cooperation. Special thanks are due to the authorities of the Committee of Education in Shabiat al-Nikhat al-Khams, especially El-Mabrouk El-Zawam, the coordinator of the English language inspectors in the region and the headteachers of the schools involved in this study for their unlimited assistance, cooperation and support. I would like also to thank all staff members of the School of Education in Durham University from whom I learnt a lot during workshops, seminars and conferences. I am also indebted to all my friends who participated in administering the questionnaires of this research especially Salem Aboujila and Omran El-Thabet. I would like also to express my gratitude to my elder brother Ali Embark who undertook the responsibility for all my issues in my home country during the period of my study in the U.K. This deepest gratitude extends to all my friends who shared some of these responsibilities with him, especially Naser Al-Atrash. I sincerely wish to give my deepest gratitude to my wife and children for their patience and support. My completion of this thesis would not have been possible without their presence with me in the U.K during the full period of my study. Finally, I am most grateful to the Libyan Ministry of Higher Education for offering me the scholarship to pursue my PhD study.

## **Dedication**

*To the soul of my father*

*To my beloved mother*

*To my wife and children*

*To my brother, Ali*

*To all my brothers, sisters and dearest friends*

## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that this thesis is an original piece of work of mine. No part of this thesis has been previously published or submitted for another award or qualification in other institutions or universities.

## **Statement of Copyright**

Any information derived from this thesis should be acknowledged appropriately.



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### List of Abbreviations

CLCA	Communicative Learner-centred Approach.....	2
EFL	English as a Foreign Language.....	2
LCA	Learner-Centred Approach.....	3
ELT	English Language Teaching.....	5
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language.....	6
GPCE	General People's Committee of Education.....	9
GPC	General People's Committee.....	11
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching.....	14
TCA	Teacher-Centred Approach.....	31
TESOL	Teaching of English to Speakers of other Languages.....	44
FL	Foreign Language.....	48
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education.....	54
ESL	English Second Language.....	64
CA	Communicative Approach.....	133

## **Chapter I: Introduction**

*Teachers, too, need support and understanding as they face the struggle and pain of trying to change perceptions and behaviours (Rogers, 1969: 25).*

### **1.0 Introduction**

Introducing Western educational innovations into non-Western contexts can be a great challenge. This can be due to the incompatibility between the principles and practices of these innovations with the social, religious or cultural values which prevail in these contexts. This challenge may also result from the disinterest or resistance of those teachers who hold strong beliefs about the efficacy of their traditional teaching approaches. This resistance inevitably occurs when the implementation of the proposed innovations requires a change in teachers' conceptions about teaching and learning and involves a shift in their classroom instructional approaches from teacher-centred into learner-centred. As teachers' instructional approaches are often guided by the conceptions of teaching and learning they bear in their minds (Bruner, 1996; Marton & Booth, 1997; Peterson & Irving, 2008), their misconception or poor understanding of innovations can significantly affect the way they implement them in classrooms. Therefore, developing teachers' knowledge and understanding about curriculum innovations, training them effectively and providing them with sufficient support and guidance should be carefully considered before introducing these innovations into schools (see 3.3.5).

Investigating teachers' understanding of curriculum innovations can be realised through conducting phenomenographical investigations to explore their conceptual thoughts and



related experiences of these innovations (Marton, 1981, 1986). Under investigation in this study are the conceptions of the communicative learner-centred approach (CLCA) which was introduced into the Libyan context through an English language curriculum innovation in 2000. The term ‘conceptions’ used in this study was defined by Marton (1981) as the “different ways in which people experience or conceptualise any aspect of the world around them” (Marton, 1981: 188).

### **1.1 Rationale for the Study**

The introduction of a new communicative-oriented learner-centred English language curriculum in Libyan secondary schools in 2000 has mandated a shift in English foreign language (EFL) teachers’ instructional approaches from teacher-centred into learner-centred (Saleh, 2002; Orafi & Borg, 2009). (see 2.3.1.1).The main aim of introducing this curriculum was to “develop students’ oral communication skills” (Orafi & Borg, 2009:251).Therefore, the new English textbooks include different communication activities and learning tasks which have been primarily designed to be performed through pair and group work, role-play, problem-solving and language games.The appropriate implementation of these activities involves students’ true engagement and active participation and teachers’ adoption of the role of facilitator (Phillips et al, 2008). See (2.4.1). However, after many years of introducing this curriculum, personal observation and local research have revealed that the instructional approaches of most Libyan EFL teachers in secondary schools are still teacher-centred (Saleh, 2002; Ahmad, 2004; Dalala, 2006; Alhmali, 2007; Ali, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009) (see 2.4.2).This could be responsible for the phenomenon of Libyan students often finishing their secondary education with undeveloped speaking and listening skills which affects their English education at university (see appendix 16).

As an EFL teacher in a Libyan secondary school from 1989 to 2002, the researcher was aware that Libyan EFL teachers were not involved in the process of designing this curriculum or offered effective training for its implementation. This fact has been recently emphasised by Orafi and Borg (2009: 251). Then from 2003 to 2007, as a lecturer in a college of teacher training which annually receives an intake of those students who finish their secondary education, it was possible for the researcher to realise the weakness of these students' speaking and listening skills. This position also offered the researcher the opportunity to visit some secondary schools in the region during the supervision of the teaching practice of student teachers which was conducted in these schools. Contacting the teachers during these occasions and identifying their concerns and complaints about their job conditions established the foundations for this study.

This study therefore was based on a sympathetic attitude towards Libyan EFL teachers in secondary schools who were working under hard conditions within a specific situational context. There was an implicit willingness and concern to support these teachers, praise their efforts, assign due importance to their work and highlight the value of their involvement in curriculum design or development.

Two more motives were generated from reviewing the literature about the learner-centred approach (henceforth, LCA). The first was an interest in responding to Guthrie's (1990; 232) and O'Sullivan's (2004, 600) invitations for researchers from developing countries to investigate the suitability of this approach to their own contexts. The second was an interest in addressing a neglected area in this literature about exploring EFL teachers' conceptions of this approach. See (1.0, 3.3.2).

## **1.2 Definition of CLCA**

There are many definitions for the LCA in the literature (see 3.3.1). Nevertheless, the definition used in this study has been elicited from the explanations and instructions given by the authors of the new English textbooks for Libyan secondary school teachers in different versions of teacher handbooks (e.g., Blacknell & Harrison, 1999; Phillips et al, 2008). As the notions of communication and learner-centredness have been embodied within these explanations and instructions, the term 'CLCA' has been used in this study instead of the term 'LCA'. This was also related to the researcher's belief in the usefulness of integrating these two concepts for developing students' communication skills. The CLCA refers to the teaching approach which integrates communication and learner-centeredness as two aspects of teaching instruction inside language classrooms. Communication implies the involvement of students in performing communication activities such as pair and group work, role-play, games and problem-solving. Learner-centeredness involves shifting the role of teacher from a knowledge-transmitter into a facilitator of students' learning and the role of student from a passive recipient of knowledge into an active participant in the learning process. It also involves accounting for students' needs, interests and individual differences by designing appropriate and relevant meaningful language materials for their courses. The EFL student-centred language classroom advocated in this study was commented on by Jones (2007) thus:

A student-centred class isn't a place where the students decide what they want to learn and what they want to do. It is a place where we consider the needs of students, as a group and as individuals, and encourage them to participate in the learning process all the time. The teacher's role is more that of a facilitator... than instructor; the students are active participants in the learning process. The teacher (and the textbook) help to guide the students, manage their activities, and direct their learning (Jones, 2007: 2).

The role of language teacher in this classroom is “to help and encourage students to develop their skills” but without giving up his/her traditional role “as a source of information, advice, and knowledge” (Jones, 2007: 25). Learner-centredness has been used in this study in terms of Nunan’s (1995) interpretation of this concept as “not an all-or-nothing” (p: 134) and Sowden’s (2007) description of its ‘weak version’ (p: 304) (see 3.3.1).

### **1.3 The Study**

This study explores different conceptions of the CLCA held by a sample of Libyan EFL teachers in relation to their implementation of a curriculum innovation in English language teaching (henceforth, ELT) in secondary schools. A phenomenographical approach employing quantitative and qualitative research methods was used as the means of investigation and analysis for this study. The data for the first phase of this research was collected through a questionnaire completed by a hundred Libyan EFL teachers randomly selected from twenty secondary schools in a large region (Shabia) in the West of Libya namely Al-Nikhat Al-Khams (see 5.2.21) and through semi-structured interviews conducted with twenty teachers from this cohort. During the second phase of this research, the views of ten regional English language inspectors who were supervising the English language teachers and evaluating their performance were investigated through an open-ended questionnaire. Relevant documents including textbooks, teacherbooks, reports, a sample of national examination and a standardised form used by Libyan English language inspectors for evaluating teachers’ performance were also analysed. The self-reflection component explains the role of the researcher through all the stages of this research.

### **1.3.1 Aims of the Study**

This phenomenographical research aims to:

- identify the reasons behind the failure of Libyan EFL secondary school teachers to change their classroom instructional approach to be aligned with the objectives and the methodology embodied within the new English language curriculum; and
- to investigate the appropriateness of the CLCA for the Libyan context.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

Four research questions were formulated to guide the process of data collection for this study:

Q1- What are the different conceptions of the CLCA held by Libyan EFL secondary school teachers in the Western region?

Q2- What difficulties do these teachers encounter in implementing the CLCA for teaching the new English language curriculum?

Q3-What criteria do Libyan English language inspectors use for evaluating teachers' performance and what influence might these criteria have on teachers' conceptions and implementation of the CLCA?

Q4- Do Libyan EFL secondary school teachers and inspectors find the CLCA appropriate for Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) within their context?

### **1.5 Organisation of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of eight chapters presented as follows:

- Chapter One introduces the idea of the research and explains the rationale for conducting it in the Libyan context. It also outlines the aims of the study and the research questions.
- Chapter Two offers a detailed description of the context of the study. It explains the structure of the education system in Libya and describes the new English curriculum of Libyan secondary schools. It also offers a brief account of the findings of the recent research on ELT in Libyan secondary schools. This chapter also provides information about the assessment strategies and the inspection system in these schools
- Chapter Three offers a detailed description and critical analysis of the research on the philosophy of learner-centredness. It discusses how the ideas drawn from psychology and sociology contributed to the development of the LCA and explains the rationale for implementing this approach for language teaching and learning. It also provides a critical review of research on the LCA and explains the challenges of its implementation.
- Chapter Four explains the approach of investigation and the instruments of data collection employed in this study. It also describes the process of piloting the teacher's questionnaire and outlines the benefits gained from this process.
- Chapter Five describes the design of the research. It gives detailed descriptions of the sampling procedures and the samples of the study. It explains how the schools, the teachers and inspectors were accessed and explains the three stages of data collection.
- Chapter Six presents the data and explains and analyses the findings of the study in details.

- Chapter Seven brings the findings of the research together for discussion and interpretation. It explains the contribution of the study and points out its limitations. It also suggests further areas of research related to the issue investigated in this study.
- Chapter Eight outlines the conclusions and the final thoughts drawn from this research.

## **Chapter II: The Libyan Context**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter introduces the context of Libya where this study has been conducted. It outlines the objectives of education in Libya as a developing country and describes its educational system. It also offers a brief analysis of the new English language curriculum currently taught in Libyan secondary schools and presents a review of the local research on ELT in these schools.

### **2.1 Humanistic Objectives of Education in Libya**

There is an increasing desire to incorporate humanistic and democratic ideas into Education in Libya. This interest has been recently emphasised in the general objectives of education in Libya which have been outlined in the National Report of the General People's Committee of Education (*henceforth, GPCE*) about the development of education in Libya (*GPCE, 2008*). The GPCE, the equivalent of the Ministry of Education, is the governmental body which is responsible for education management in Libya. This report was submitted for the session 48 of the International Conference on Education in Geneva (25-28 November 2008). The objectives which indicate this orientation are presented below in the same order as in the report:

Objective 6: Enable students to acquire the appropriate knowledge of skills and positive attitudes and cultural and social values appropriate to the needs of the student, and the needs and aspirations of the society.

Objective 8: Provide educational opportunities for all and assist students to choose the specialisation, which is in conformity with their orientation and abilities, and meets the needs of the society to achieve sustainable human development.

Objective 9: Provide and support new types of education and enable students to discover their abilities and acquire knowledge through self-learning.



Objective 10: Enable students to acquire the skills and scientific analysis to keep pace with scientific and technical developments in the contemporary world.

Objective 11: Help students to achieve growth in their physical and mental, psychological, emotional and social development.

Objective 14: Develop students' capacity to interact with other cultures and open up to the world, qualifying them as citizens able to live a positively and jointly in the global community.

Objective 15: Develop the partnership of innovation and creation and enable students to access diverse sources of knowledge.

Objective 17: Enable students with special needs (gifted or disabled) to enjoy educational opportunities appropriate to their abilities and needs.

Objective 18: The development of the students' environmental awareness and motivate them to maintain the integrity of the environment and its various resources and make a positive contribution to solving environmental problems (GPCE, 2008: 4-5).

These objectives seem to be aligned with the democratic ideas of John Dewey (1859-1952) and the humanistic ideas of Carl Rogers (1902-1987) about education. They also imply most of the Learner-centred Psychological Principles which were developed by the American Psychologists Association (APA) in 1993 (see appendix 13). Therefore, these ideas and principles established the theoretical foundations for this study (see 3.1, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.2.1, 3.2, 3.2.1 & 3.2.2). A realisation of these objectives requires converting schools in Libya into places where students can enjoy equity, trust, caring, respect, self-esteem, confidence, freedom and creativity through shifting teachers' instructional approach to be student-centred.

### **2.1.1 Education for All**

The report of the GPCE (2008) states that the priority of education policy in Libya is given to '*spread education*' through a '*comprehensive policy of education for all*'

(GPCE, 2008: 20). According to this report, this policy was emphasised by the rule of law (Education Law of 1971) which declared that education is free and compulsory up to the end of basic education (grade 9) for males and females “without any distinction whether socially or in quality” (ibid). This orientation has resulted in increasing school enrolment rates up to 95% in 2003 (GPCE, 2008: 21). Table (2.1) shows the number of schools, classrooms, teachers and students at basic and secondary education for the academic year 2007/2008.

**Table 2.1: Number of schools, classrooms, students and teachers**

	Educational Stage	Schools	Classrooms	Students	Teachers
First	Basic Education	3397	40743	939799	119313
Second	Secondary Education	1033	10940	226000	39847
Third	Joint	72	1228	30697	3764
	Total	4502	52911	1196496	162924

*Source: Statistics of the GPC for Education (in GPCE, 2008: 13).*

However, it should be noted that the education system in Libya is highly centralised and characterised by a complex hierarchical structure (see appendix 23). According to this structure, education in Libya is managed and controlled by the GPCE. Therefore, all the decisions about funding, distributing schools across the country, teachers’ employment, regulating admission to schools, curriculum development, examinations and inspection are always made at the top of the hierarchy (see GPCE, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009). For example, Table 2.2 shows the regulations set by the GPCE for enrolling Libyan students who finish their secondary education for university (see 2.3). More regulations for this process are sometimes set by the General People’s Committee (henceforth, GPC) which represents the top of the hierarchy of the Libyan governmental system (see appendix 19).

**Table (2.2) Enrolment for University Education in Libya**

No.	Division	University Faculties- Students enrol in
1-	Basic Sciences	Sections of the Faculty of Science (Maths-Statistics,Physics,Earth Sciences,Computer-Meteorology,Teacher Training Colleges and Higher Vocational Training Centres)
2-	Engineering Sciences	Various Sections of the Faculty of Engineering, and Teacher Training Colleges and Higher Vocational Training Centres.
3-	Life Sciences	Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Veterinary, Medical Technology, Teacher Training College, Higher Institutes of Health, Faculty of Science Departments (plants and animals).
4-	Economic Sciences	Economy, Accounting, Administrative Sciences, Colleges of Teacher Training, and Higher Vocational Training Centres.
5-	Social Sciences	Literature, Law, Political Sciences, Physical Education-Arts and Media
6-	Languages	Language Departments in Faculty of Arts and Teacher Training

**Source: GPC (in GPCE, 2008: 8).**

## **2.2 Education Stages in Libya**

The Libyan educational system has been designed to include all different age groups from young children in kindergarten to adult learners in graduate and post-graduate studies. It includes the following stages:

1-Kindergarten: This lasts for two years and is for children aged four and five.

2-Basic Education: This entails nine years of study and enrolls the age group 6-15 years old. It starts with grade one and continues to grade nine.

3-Secondary (Intermediate) Education and Training: This includes three years of study and enrolls the age group of 16-19 years old. This system consists of general secondary education and vocational centres and institutions. The GPCE issued the decision No. 165 in 2006 which organises the specialised secondary education in Libya to include the following disciplines:

- Division of Basic Sciences; focuses on disciplines of mathematics and physics.
- Division of Engineering Sciences; studies sciences of engineering and construction.
- Life Sciences; focuses on disciplines of chemistry and biology.
- Division of Social Sciences: studies social sciences and humanities.

- Division of Languages; includes disciplines of Arabic, English, French, Swahili and Hausa languages.
- Division of Economic Sciences; includes the study of administration, accounting, economics and banking sciences (GPCE, 2008: 8).

4-University Education: includes universities, higher institutions, and higher technical and vocational centres.

5-Advanced Studies: includes masters and PhD (Doctorate) degrees.

### **2.3 Enrolment for Secondary Education**

Libyan students who successfully complete their basic education can continue their free secondary education. The variety of the disciplines in Libyan secondary education (see 2.2) offers these students options for joining different fields of study. However, these students should meet certain criteria set by the GPC for regulating the admission process of secondary education (see appendix 20). According to these regulations, students should achieve high marks in the subjects related to the discipline they wish to join in the final examination of basic education (see appendix 20). For example, a student who wants to join the English discipline in secondary education should achieve a high grade in the final English exam of basic education. The imposition of these restrictions contradicts Objective 8 of the objectives of education in Libya (GPCE, 2008) (see 2.1). It is also notable that even when students meet the required criteria, the decisions about this issue are made by parents, not by students (see 7.5).

### **2.4 ELT in Libyan Secondary Schools**

English language enjoys a significant status in Libya. This is not a new phenomenon, as it was reported by Barton (in UNESCO, 1968), a specialist in language teaching who

was on a UNESCO mission in Libya from 1965 to 1968 to design an English curriculum for Libyan schools. This specialist attributed the interest during that period to the speed in industrial, economic and social development and to the interest of the government in developing higher education (UNESCO, 1968: 1). It is notable that these factors have now become more influential. Libyan students' interest in learning English language has been emphasised through the findings of Alhmali (2007) who investigated the attitudes of 1939 Libyan mid and high school students towards four subjects of their curriculum (Arabic, English, Sciences, Mathematics). These findings indicated that these students were more interested in English than the other three subjects (Alhmali, 2007: 150).

Many decisions have been issued by the Libyan authorities to develop the quality of English language teaching and learning. A significant decision established the adoption of Communicative Language Teaching (henceforth, CLT) in the mid-1990s (Orafi & Borg, 2009: 244). Another decision was concerned with starting teaching English in Libyan schools from grade five instead of grade seven. More decisions were concerned with providing schools with modern teaching and learning facilities. The report of the GPCE (2008) pointed out that many secondary schools had been provided with computers and language labs (GPCE, 2008). However, Alhmali (2007), whose research involved twelve of these schools, reported their lack of these facilities (Alhmali, 2007: 190).

#### **2.4.1 New English Curriculum for Libyan Secondary Schools**

English language is taught in Libyan secondary schools as a compulsory subject among other subjects and in a variety of time scales. These time scales are determined by the

GPCE through the Administration of Syllabi in the Centre of the Educational Syllabi and Psychological Researches (see GPCE, 2009). This administration is responsible for designing textbooks, distributing weekly time scales for each subject and for determining the criteria for teachers' evaluation of students' learning (see GPCE, 2009). The scales of English classes in secondary schools range between 4 classes of forty-five minutes per week for non-English disciplines to 19 classes of forty-five minutes classes for students of the English language discipline (see GPCE, 2009). Students of this discipline spend most of their school day studying English through lessons of grammar, phonetics, listening, reading, writing and lab work. These students are prepared to join English departments at university.

Different language materials (textbooks, teachers' handbooks & cassettes) have been designed under the supervision of the GPCE to meet the specific needs for the different specialisations of secondary education (see 2.2). *'Language and Culture'*, (Phillips et al, 2002b) and *'Language and Society'* (Phillips et al, 2008) are among other titles that have been introduced through this curriculum. Saleh (2002) described the content of these textbooks as 'communicative-oriented and student-centred based' (Saleh, 2002: 49). These textbooks have been designed to provide stimulating topics, written exercises, and a wide range of activities to maintain students' interest and to offer materials relevant to the different disciplines in secondary education (see, Blacknell & Harrison, 1999; Phillips et al, 2008) (see 2.2). Phillips et al (2008) explained that "whilst students are learning about a particular subject in the Subject Book, they will also be practicing their English in various ways" and that "authentic or simulated authentic materials have been used" (Phillips et al, 2008: 2).

The notion of learner-centredness is implied within different types of communication activities repeated throughout the course books. Saleh (2002) stated that “the idea of student-centredness is, first of all, embodied in the design of the new syllabus” (Saleh, 2002: 49). The appropriate implementation of these activities requires the availability of teaching facilities which can promote students’ participation in open dialogues, playing games, acting role-plays and solving problems. This also involves training students for performing self and peer evaluation. Phillips et al (2008) emphasised that students should be encouraged to “recognize and correct errors in the written work of their partners” and recommended the teachers to vary their techniques of error correction and not to confirm or correct during oral activities (Phillips et al, 2008: 4). Below are some examples of these communication activities which have been extracted from English for Libya .Secondary 3-English Specialization: Language and Society-Skills Book A by Phillips et al (2008a):

- Work in groups of three. Practice the conversations. Read each role (lesson 2, SK3.2.D. p: 32). Group work.
- Exchange your work with another pair. Use the checklist to give feedback on each other’s work (SK2.5.C. p: 23). Peer assessment.
- Read the conversation with a partner. Practice both roles. (SK3.3.d. p: 33). Role play.
- After listening. Discuss these questions-what do you think...what do you think... (LP3.1.C. p: 36). Group discussion-critical thinking.
- Find ten words in connected with the change in the word search. (SK4.2.A. p: 44). Problem-solving.
- Listen and respond using the prompts. (LP4.5.D.p: 51). Active communication.
- Say in pairs the words in exercise D. Record your voice. (LP4.6.E. p: 52). Self-reflection.
- Work with a partner and design a crime prevention poster to display in your school. (SK5.5.C. p: 59). Creativity.
- Listen and check your answer to exercise C. (LP5.2.D. P: 61). Self-assessment.

- Ask your partner about his/her leisure activities. (SK6.2.D. P: 68). Free communication.
- Discuss the questions in groups-what do you think about TV? /what sort of programmes do you like/dislike? Why? /how much TV do you watch everyday? (SK6.3.F. p: 69). Reasoned thinking and responsible choice.
- What advice would you give Mary?
  - 1- Discuss your ideas in pairs and make notes;
  - 2- Compare your ideas with another pair. Make a note of any extra ideas.
 (SK8.2.C.p: 92). Problem-solving and critical thinking
- Play the part game in groups of four. One pair plays against the other. (SK8.3.C.p: 93). Games. (Phillips et al, 2008a).

Similar communication activities appear frequently in all the textbooks of Libyan secondary education disciplines (see 2.2). Reading, writing and listening sessions are also introduced in these textbooks through involving students in doing most of these tasks by themselves (see Phillips et al, 2002a; Phillips et al, 2008a). According to Phillips et al (2002a) the grammar sessions can be presented deductively or inductively:

The normal presentation method is deductive- a rule is given and then the students are asked to find examples in the text. If a teacher wishes to use a more inductive methodology, he/she can highlight the examples in the reading text before looking at the rules and invite the students to explain the use of the structure (Phillips et al, 2002a: 2)

Libyan EFL secondary school teachers have been provided with ‘Teacher’s Book’ to guide their teaching of the new textbooks. Although an examination of two versions of these books (Blacknell & Harrison, 1999; Phillips et al, 2008) (see 2.2) indicates that they give a thorough explanation about the the steps and procedures which teachers should follow for teaching the different skills, the language and the terms used in these books seem to be difficult and complex for the teachers to understand.



#### **2.4.2 ELT Methodology in Libyan Secondary Schools**

The previous English language curriculum of Libyan secondary schools was based on traditional educational philosophy which underpins the subject and teacher-centred view (see Gusbi, 1984). This curriculum was criticised for focusing on the memorisation of isolated vocabulary, application of grammatical structures and on translating and understanding reading texts (Orafi & Borg, 2009: 244). Therefore, traditional methods such as Grammar-Translation Method and Audio-lingual Method were appropriate for presenting the content of these textbooks and for achieving the objectives of their teaching in secondary schools (see Gusbi, 1984). Local research on ELT has revealed that these methods have been widely used by Libyan EFL secondary school teachers with an extensive use of students' native language (Arabic) (Saleh, 2002; Ali, 2008; Al-dabbus, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009). Nunan (1988) criticised this kind of curriculum for its lack of consideration of students' needs (Nunan, 1988: 16).

Saleh (2002) investigated the classroom behaviours of ten Libyan EFL teachers from ten secondary schools in the same region where this study has been conducted. This study aims to investigate teachers' control over classroom practice, the language of instruction and presentation (English/Arabic) and the most common interaction patterns during the English classes (Saleh, 2002: 6). The findings of this study reveal that teacher-centred instruction and led-activities were very common practices by most of these teachers (p: 29) and that translation was the main strategy of presentation (p: 32) with a clear dominance of teacher's talk (p: 34). The main conclusion drawn from this study is that the classroom strategies and activities observed in all the classrooms were "clearly teacher-dominated and not communicatively based" (Saleh, 2002: 49).

Ali (2008) conducted a study to investigate the oral correction techniques used by sixty-five EFL secondary school teachers in the same region. Some findings of this study are outlined below:

- less experienced teachers believed that “accuracy is the most important element in learning a language” (p: 270);
- less experienced teachers did not pay attention to the differences between individual students (p: 270);
- less experienced teachers “were affected by the methods and techniques they learnt when they were students and tried to apply them” (p: 270).
- experienced teachers “mixed different techniques including the ones gleaned from their teaching experiences”(p: 270);
- experienced teachers were “able to encourage students to build their self-confidence by establishing the meaning of communication rather than accuracy” (p:270); and
- experienced teachers believed that “encouraging students’ self-correction or peer correction creates confidence and student-student cooperation” (p:269);

Orafi and Borg (2009) investigated the implementation of the new English curriculum by three Libyan EFL secondary school experienced teachers. They observed these teachers for two weeks and conducted semi-structured interviews with them before and after the observation sessions. This study revealed the failure of these teachers to implement the changes embodied within the new curriculum with special consideration for these aspects:

- teachers’ transfer of pair work communicative activities into a teacher-fronted question-and-answer session (Orafi & Borg,2009: 247);

- lack of interaction in English and regular use of translation in these classrooms (Orafi & Borg,2009: 248);
- teachers’ conceptions about their role were not in line with those implied in the curriculum (Orafi & Borg,2009: 249);
- teachers’ positive views towards communicative activities were not translated into classroom practices (Orafi & Borg,2009: 249);

The small purposive sample involved in this study do not allow for the generalisation of its results. Nevertheless, these results offered useful insights about Libyan EFL secondary school teachers’ implementation of the new curriculum. Therefore, this research has been conducted to investigate this issue from another perspective by depending on two larger samples (teachers and inspectors) (see 5.2.2.3 & 5.2.2.4).

### **2.4.3 EFL Teachers in Libyan Secondary Schools**

Teaching in Libya is a popular profession among women. The statistics of the GPCE during the school year of 2006-2007 revealed that 79.38% of the teachers in kindergarten, basic and secondary education were females (GPCE, 2008: 22). Due to social and religious considerations, teaching is seen as an appropriate occupation for women in Libya. Metcalfe noted that in Arabic countries women have equal rights in education but not in employment (Metcalfe, 2006: 97) and attributed this partly to “cultural and ethical values which create strongly defined gender roles” in these contexts (Metcalfe, 2008: 85).

Teachers who are employed for teaching English language in Libyan secondary schools are mainly taken through the following routes:

1- Graduates of English departments from Colleges of Teacher Training (Education). These graduates receive four years of training in TEFL. The curriculum of the English departments in these colleges includes both theoretical and practical modules. The theoretical modules are concerned with developing student teachers' understanding of the linguistic component of English language through subjects such as grammar, phonetics, reading comprehension and writing. These modules are also concerned with introducing theories of psychology and their application into education through subjects such as general psychology, psychology and development and children's health. It is important to highlight that these subjects are taught in Arabic (see appendix 21). The practical modules of this curriculum are concerned with developing student teachers' production skills (speaking and listening) through implementing different communication activities and utilising the available facilities like computers and language labs. These modules are also concerned with training student teachers for implementing teaching methods in actual teaching tasks through subjects such as teaching methodology, instructional strategies, and teaching practice. These student teachers usually have one-month teaching training during which they teach an English class in a Libyan secondary school (see appendix 21a). Graduates of these colleges are assumed to be well-prepared and trained to carry out the task of teaching English in secondary schools.

2- Graduates of English departments of Colleges of Arts. These teachers receive four years of English language study. These colleges are established to prepare students for further studies and research but not for undertaking teaching tasks. Therefore, the curriculum of the English departments of these colleges does not include any teaching practice or teaching methodology modules. Literature, translation and theoretical

linguistics represent the core of the modules of this curriculum. Some subjects of this curriculum are also taught in Arabic (see appendix 22).

A common feature shared by the majority of graduates from the English departments of Libyan universities is their undeveloped listening and speaking skills. Orafi and Borg (2009) pointed out that “English language teachers in Libya typically graduate from university with undeveloped spoken communication skills in English” (Orafi & Borg, 2009: 251). This phenomenon was confirmed by the findings of Akle (2005) who investigated the qualifications of sixteen Libyan EFL secondary school teachers (Akle, 2005). The lack of qualified teachers in Libyan secondary schools was also reported by Alhmali (2007). Nevertheless, teachers in Libyan schools represent the main source for providing students with information and language input (Saleh, 2002). Alhmali (2007) studied a sample of 1939 students from Libyan preparatory and secondary schools and reported that the teachers were seen by these students as “suppliers of information which has to be recorded and reproduced accurately in examinations” (Alhmali, 2007: 69) and as authority figures whose instructions and knowledge should be beyond students’ questioning (Alhmali, 2007: 173).

#### **2.4.4 Assessment in Libyan Secondary Schools**

The assessment process in Libyan educational system is managed by the GPCE through the Administration of Syllabi which determines the criteria for evaluating students’ learning. An official document is issued annually by this administration outlining the instructions for the teachers (see GPCE, 2009) (see appendices 15a, 15b & 15c). These instructions and regulations indicate the summative orientation of the assessment process in this system. Therefore, examinations and grades represent the most common assessment strategies used by Libyan secondary school teachers (Alhmali, 2007; Orafi

& Borg, 2009) (see appendices 15a, 15b & 15c). This system has been criticised by Alhmali (2007) for its emphasis on “the rote recall of information and holds great power over the learners at key times of the year” (Alhmali, 2007: ii). The GPCE issued the decision (80/2007) about the application of an electronic examination system for final years of basic and secondary education to achieve more objectivity (GPCE, 2008: 30). This system entails students’ answering of questions by selecting options or matching column A with column B. Generally, it is a multiple-choice examination form (see appendix 18).

## **2.5 English Language Inspectors in Libya**

The process of inspection in Libyan educational system is “regulated by the Ministry of Education (the equivalent reference of the current name of the GPCE)” (Abdulali, 1986: 47) through the Administration of Pedagogical Inspection (see appendix 23). The responsibilities of this administration have been outlined in the item 8 of the decree of the GPC No. 185 (2009). They are translated below:

- undertaking the tasks of pedagogical inspection and evaluating the performance of basic and secondary school teachers;
- supervising the process of the application of teachers’ work load and providing proposals for redistributing them across the schools to fill the gaps and to ensure the adherence to the decided work loads;
- supervising the inspection process and inspectors’ performance and preparing written reports about them through the offices of inspection of this administration;
- conducting periodical inspectorate visits to the educational institutions and the institutions of cooperative education and identifying any violations and treating any aspects of weakness and participating in studying and analysing these aspects through coordination with the other relevant administrations.

Inspectors in Libya are responsible for monitoring and evaluating teachers' performance and competency. The inspectors of English language make (between 2 and 5) regular visits to schools and attend some classes with the teachers to evaluate their performance in order to write reports for the GPCE. A standard annual teacher's evaluation form outlining the criteria which should be used by all Libyan inspectors has been issued by the GPCE (see appendix 7). This form should be filled by the inspectors after completing their classroom observation with a statement of their judgement about the teacher, ranging from 'weak, to 'excellent' (see appendix 7). This final statement is often very decisive as other actions and decisions (rewards and punishment) taken by the GPCE are based on it (Abdulali, 1986).

The GPCE has issued certain criteria for selecting subject inspectors. According to Abdulali (1986) a number of years of teaching experience is often required and an average of 'very good' for the evaluation of the last three years of teaching the relevant subject. Those who meet these criteria can apply for an inspection competition which are sometimes held (there are no fixed dates for these competitions) under the supervision of the GPCE. These competitions are an examination-like process in which the candidates have to pass written and oral tests in their subject specialisation and in psychology (Abdulali, 1986: 145). Then, those candidates who successfully pass this competition are assigned as subject inspectors in the inspection offices of their regions where they are held responsible for monitoring and evaluating a certain number of teachers. Although this system of selection was criticised by Abdulali in 1986, it is still in effect in Libya.

## 2.6 Need for Change

The National Report of the GPCE (2008) criticised Libyan teachers' traditional teaching methods which focus on memorisation and recitation. This report described these methods as not being effective for twenty-first century Libyan students who "need a teacher that uses the methods of thinking, analysis and building of a full logical model for application" (GPCE, 2008: 26). The report emphasises the need for changing the traditional role of teacher from a specialist and a sole source of knowledge into an "assistant and a director to create the scene for the student and the active learner and even train students on the skills of thinking and analysis, installation, conclusion and practice" (underlined in GPCE, 2008:28). The report explains that the change in the role of teacher should be accompanied with a change in the role of the school from a centre "for indoctrination and conversation to a centre for cultural and scientific thinking and mediation that has an immediate impact on the social surroundings" (underlined in, GPCE, 2008: 28).

The report emphasises that the curriculum developed for Libyan schools should assist in achieving the humanistic objectives of education in Libya (see 2.1). This curriculum should "support democratic public values as a way of life, by explaining the concepts of democratic values and translating them into procedural process positions in the daily life of students and society" (GPCE, 2008: 7). Item 12 of section c (p.6-7) of the *National Report of the GPCE (2008)*, states that the curriculum should be linked with students' environment. Item (13) highlights the significance of consideration of age characteristics of learners and disparities in their individual differences and patterns of learning. It suggests providing the opportunities for "excellence, creativity and innovation and employing education in practical life" (GPCE, 2008:7). This implies that



any curriculum development in Libya should involve all those who are concerned with the learning and teaching processes.

## Chapter III: Literature Review

### 3.0 Introduction

The review of the literature about the LCA indicates that a strong foundation for the philosophy of this approach was established by Rousseau (1712-1778) and that its development and application into education have resulted from the influence of the democratic ideas of Dewey (1859-1952) and the humanistic ideas of Rogers (1902-1987). The review also indicates that Freire (1921-1997) made significant contribution for the application of these ideas in non-Western contexts. Therefore, this study was founded upon the ideas of these scholars.

Rousseau (1911) introduced some of the principles of the philosophy of learner-centredness in his work *Emile*. The citation below implies some of these principles:

Undoubtedly the notion of things thus acquired for oneself are clearer and much more convincing than those acquired from the teaching of others; and not only our reason not accustomed to slavish submission to authority, but we develop greater ingenuity in discovering relations, connecting ideas and inventing apparatus than we merely accept what is given us and allow our minds to be by indifference (Rousseau, 1911: 139).

In this citation, Rousseau (1911) emphasised the significance of learning through one's own discovery over the learning which results from teaching by others (discovery learning-independent learning). He stressed the notion of the learner's active involvement in acquiring and constructing ideas and knowledge for him/herself rather than being a passive recipient of knowledge (constructive learning). The idea of 'facilitation' was also implied in Rousseau's ideas as he preferred to "call the man who has this knowledge 'master' rather than teacher, since it is a question of guidance rather

than instruction. He must not give precepts; he must let the scholar find them out for himself” (Rousseau, 1911: 19) (facilitation).

The importance of communication and interaction between the learner and his/her environment (nature and people) for constructing knowledge is another notion emphasised by Rousseau (1911). He described nature as an available source of knowledge for everyone and suggested that “if your pupil learns nothing from you, he will learn from others” (p: 82). This implies that learning does not only occur in formal settings inside classrooms, as students may learn from nature, from each other and from the surroundings (independent learning/cooperative learning/experiential learning).

These ideas imply Rousseau’s interest in shifting the focus of classroom instructional approaches to be on more learning and less teaching in order to offer active and participatory roles for learners in constructing their knowledge. The influence of the ideas of Rousseau led other scholars to criticise the traditional approaches of teaching and learning and to call for adopting more humanistic approaches (Rogers, 1951, 1969) and for incorporating more democratic ideas into education (Dewey, 1916).

### **3.1 Humanistic Education**

Rogers (1902-1987), an influential figure in humanistic psychology, emphasised the worth of the individual and criticised treating him/her as “an object to be manipulated” (Rogers, 1951: 21). Although Rogers’ ideas on the “*client-centred therapy*” (1951) primarily addressed the advancement of psychotherapy, he pointed out the possibility of applying them to education especially by those teachers who have a strong philosophy of child-centred (Rogers, 1951: 3-21). This belief inspired him later to write the first edition of ‘*Freedom to Learn*’ (1969) and the second edition ‘*Freedom to Learn for the 80’s*’ (1983) in which he outlined the characteristics of his ‘person-centred’ model of

teaching and learning and reported some teachers' successful experiences with this model (see Rogers,1969;1983). Brandes and Ginnis (1986, 1990), two followers of Rogers, explained how his ideas could be developed into teaching strategies and practices in their books '*A Guide to Student-Centred Learning*' (1986), and '*The Student-Centred School*' (1990). In 1994, Freiberg, revised the first and the second edition of '*Freedom to Learn*' and developed the third edition of '*Freedom to learn*' in which he included his own working experience in schools and the findings of research related to the implementation of Rogers' 'person-centred' model in schools (see Rogers & Freiberg,1994). Hence, Rogers' humanistic ideas have become very popular and influential in the field of education.

Williams and Burden (1997) described humanistic approaches as those which "emphasise the importance of the inner world of the learner and place the individual's thoughts, feelings and emotions at the forefront of all human development" (p: 30). A humanistic approach emphasises that the aim of education should be creating self-directed learners and establishing humanistic relationships based on mutual respect and understanding between teachers and students. Another fundamental principle of this approach is concerned with providing students with caring, trust and support in schools. Therefore, it is important for humanistic teachers to promote positive feelings about students' learning and respecting the value of every student and his /her ability for directing his/her own learning (Brumfit, 1982; Tudor, 1996; Nunan, 1999; Jacobs et al, 2006; Rico, 2008).

School has a significant role in creating a humanistic atmosphere for promoting students' learning. A humanistic school should be a place where ideas, facts and feelings can be openly expressed and where students' curiosity and creativity can be

cultivated. Schmuck and Schmuck (1974) believed that in these schools both emotions and the intellect element should be given equal attention and suggested balancing between students' personal interests and general learning goals. Brandes and Ginnis (1986) emphasised that these schools should be characterised by "all-pervading air of positive cooperation and trust" (p: 181). Rico (2008) suggested that creating this atmosphere in schools would require teachers' adoption of a methodology which involves teachers' understanding and consideration of students' affective factors (p:56).

### **3.1.1 Teacher-Centred versus 'Person-centred' Approaches to Teaching and Learning**

Rogers (1983) described traditional teaching (teacher-centred) and his model of 'person-centred' as 'sharply' different (Rogers, 1983: 185) and outlined the differences in their characteristics and politics as follows:

#### *(A)- The characteristics of the Traditional 'Conventional' Approach*

According to Rogers (1983) a *Traditional 'Conventional' Approach* to teaching and learning is often characterised by:

- The teacher is the processor of knowledge, the student the expected recipient;
- The lecture, the textbook, or some other means of verbal intellectual instruction are the major methods of getting knowledge into the recipient. The examination measures the extent to which, the student has received it. These are the central elements of this kind of education;
- The teacher is the processor of power, the student the one who obeys;
- Rule by authority is the accepted policy in the classroom;
- Trust is at a minimum;
- The subjects (students) are best governed by being kept in an intermittent or constant state of fear;
- Democracy and its values are ignored and scorned in practice;

- And there is no place for the whole person, in the educational system, only for her intellect (Rogers, 1983:185-187).

Rogers (1983) portrayed a gloomy picture of traditional classrooms. He described the politics of conventional education which produces such classrooms as the politics of “*jug and mug*” theory of education because it emphasises the concept of “power over”. He pointed out two strategies by which this power could be practiced over students: (1) “the rewards and grades and vocational opportunities; and (2) the use of such aversive, punitive, and fear creating methods as failure in exams, failure to graduate, and public scorn” (pp: 187-188).

In fact, these two strategies can offer the opportunity for teachers to manipulate students. Accountability for examinations and grades often leads students to regulate their actions and behaviour to please their teachers. Students’ fear of failure makes examinations represent a serious source of tension which may lead them to do whatever is possible in order to pass these examinations even “cheating” (Rogers, 1983:301). This may convert schools into places for experiencing negative feelings rather than desirable places where students like to go. As “feelings-positive, negative, confused-become a part of the classroom experience” (Rogers, 1969:115), students may associate schools with negative experiences and attitudes. Research on assessment has provided empirical evidence about the negative impact of examinations not only on students’ learning but also on teachers’ teaching (see 3.2.7.1).

The assumptions of the teacher-centred approach (henceforth, TCA) about learners were explained by Knowles (1975) as follows:

- The learner is essentially a dependent personality and that the teacher has the responsibility of deciding what and how the learner should be taught;

- The learner's experience is of less value than that of the teacher;
- Students become ready to learn different things at different levels of maturation , and that a given set of learners will therefore be ready to learn the same things at a given level of maturation;
- Students enter into education with a subject-centred orientation to learning (they see learning as accumulating subject matter) and therefore learning experiences should be organised according to units of content;
- Students are motivated to learn in response to external rewards and punishments, such as grades, diplomas, awards, degrees and fear of failure (Knowles, 1975: 20-21).

Cuban (1993) developed some observable measures of teacher-centred classrooms from his action research in USA schools in his book '*How teachers taught; constant and change in American classrooms 1890-1990*' which was published in 1993. These observable measures included:

- teacher's talk dominates classroom interaction, which reduces the time for students to practice new information for better understanding and effective learning;
- whole class instruction, which may not account for learners' diversity and students' individual differences;
- textbook-based learning makes the teacher depends on it in determining curricular and in instructional decision-making; and
- classroom furniture is traditionally designed and use of class time is under teacher's control (Cuban, 1993: 6-7).

As the above measures offer a clear picture of the common practices inside teacher-centred classrooms, some of them were used for constructing some of the statements of the questionnaire (see appendix 1, statements 4-12-14).

*(B)- The Characteristics of the Person-centred Approach*

As a reaction to the limitations of traditional approaches of teaching and learning, Rogers (1951; 1969; 1983) developed a '*person-centred*' model as a humanistic approach and claimed that it would be appropriate for all educational levels and subjects. He outlined the characteristics of this approach as follows:

- The facilitative teacher shares with others-students, and possibly also parents or community members-the responsibility for the learning process;
- The facilitator provides learning resources, from within herself and her own experience, from books or materials or community experiences;
- The student develops her own programme of learning, alone or in cooperation with others;
- A facilitative learning climate is provided;
- The focus is primarily on fostering the continuing process of learning;
- The discipline necessary to reach the student's goal is self-discipline;
- The evaluation of the extent and significance of the student's learning is made primarily by the learner;
- In this growth-promoting climate, the learning tends to be deeper, proceeds at a more rapid rate, and is more pervasive in the life and behaviour of the student than is learning acquired in the traditional classroom (Rogers, 1983: 188-189).

Knowles (1975) explained the assumptions about the learner upon which this approach was based as follows:

- The human being grows in capacity (and need) to be self-directing as an essential component of maturing, and that this capacity should be nurtured to develop as rapidly as possible;
- The learner's experiences become an increasingly rich resource for learning which should be exploited along with the resources of experts;
- Individuals become ready to learn what is required to perform their evolving life tasks or to cope more adequately with their life problems, and that each individual has a somewhat different pattern of readiness from other individuals;



- Students' natural orientation is task or problem-oriented, and that therefore learning experiences should be organized as task-accomplishing or problem-solving learning projects (or inquiry units);
- Learners are motivated by internal incentives, such as the need for esteem (especially self-esteem), the desire to achieve, the satisfaction of accomplishment, and the need to know something specific, and curiosity. (Knowls, 1975: 20-21).

Cuban (1993) offered some observable measures which characterise the classrooms of facilitators who adopt this approach. These classrooms are characterised by:

- students talk about learning tasks is at least equal to, if not greater than, teacher talk;
- most instruction occurs individually, in small groups (2 to 6 students), or in moderate-sized groups (7 to 10) rather than being directed at the entire class;
- students help choose and organize the content to be learnt;
- teachers permit students to determine, partially or wholly, rules of behaviour, classroom rewards and penalties, and how they are to be enforced;
- valid instructional materials (e.g. activity centres, learning stations, interest centres) are available in the classroom so that students can use them independently or in small groups;
- the use of these materials is scheduled either by the teacher or in consultation with students, for at least half of the academic time available;
- the classroom is usually arranged in a manner that permits students to work together or separately, in small groups or in individual workspaces; no dominant pattern in arranging classroom furniture exists, and desks, tables, and chairs are realigned frequently. (Cuban,1993: 7)

As these features offer a clear picture of learner-centred classrooms, some of them were used for constructing some statements of the questionnaire (see appendix 1, statements 7, 11, 13). These measures can be usefully employed for observing classrooms to

investigate teachers' incorporation of the principles of the CLCA in their approach of instruction.

Rogers (1983) emphasised that the learner should be at the 'centre' (p: 190) and should have the "essential power and control" over his/her learning (p: 189). However, research on implementing the LCA which is often classified as a product of Rogers' humanistic ideas on education (Brandes & Ginnis, 1986; Cornelius-White, 2007; Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010) reveals that many psychological, cultural or contextual factors could interfere with the successful introduction and implementation of Rogers' humanistic ideas in schools (see 3.1.4.1 & 3.3.4). Teachers' and students' lack of familiarity with Rogers' notion of 'facilitation' could be a significant issue for consideration.

### **3.1.2 Facilitation**

Adapting the approach of 'Facilitation' in classrooms implies providing appropriate conditions for facilitating students' independent learning. Rogers' (1969) introduction of this notion was based on a humanistic perspective about the individual as implied in his definition of this concept as "the way we develop the learning man, the way in which we can learn to live as individuals in a process" (Rogers, 1969: 105).

Rogers (1969) rejected the concept of teaching because of its association with notions of instructing or imparting knowledge and skills from teacher to student. He criticised this approach for focusing on the intellect side 'mind' of the person without considering "feelings or personal relevance to the whole person". He described the learning which might result from this process as taking place "from the neck up" (p: 4). He believed that this kind of learning is no longer valid as it would not lead to involve the whole person or to facilitate students' independent learning (pp: 103-105).

There is a clear link between the notion of facilitation and student-centred learning. Voller (1997) pointed out the emphasis on associating the role of teacher as a facilitator with the notions of student-centredness such as ‘self-directed’, self-instructional’, ‘individualized’ and ‘autonomous learning’ in language learning contexts (p:101). Weimer (2002) also considered teachers’ adoption of this notion in learner-centred classrooms as a necessity (p:74). Similarly, Clifton (2006) explained that facilitation is often proposed as an alternative for the teacher-fronted classroom (p: 142).

Rogers (1969/1983) reported empirical evidence for successful experiences of some teachers who implemented his approach of facilitation. One of these teachers said “*I sincerely believe that the student-centred teaching method does provide an ideal framework for learning, not just the accumulation of facts, but more important for learning about ourselves in relation to others*” (cited in Rogers, 1969:111). Similar successful experiences supported with quotations have been introduced throughout the three editions of Rogers’ book ‘*Freedom to Learn*’ (for more details see Rogers, 1969/1983 & Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). This empirical evidence suggests that providing schools and teachers with appropriate conditions and sufficient support can enhance their successful implementation of facilitation (see Rogers, 1969/1983). However, this success was not mainly attributed to the availability of teaching facilities in schools or to the support the teachers had received from other stakeholders. This success was enhanced by the teachers’ belief in the value of these ideas, their understanding of the changes on their roles and their genuine willingness to implement the role of facilitator. This explains that the effective implementation of the facilitative approach requires teachers’ readiness to abandon their dominance over the learning process and to offer the opportunity for students to participate actively in this process.

Weimer (2002) believed that this stage would be realised only when teachers' presentation and explanations in classrooms would be seen as an "exception and not as a rule" (p: 82). This implies that teachers' interference during the learning process should be regulated by students' need for this assistance. From a constructivist perspective which emphasises students' construction of their own learning experiences, teachers' scaffolding for students' learning does not contradict with the role of facilitator or the role of student as an active constructor of his/her knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978) (see. 3.2.2.1).

### **3.1.2.1 Facilitator**

Changing the name of the act of teaching into facilitation is accompanied by a parallel change in the name of teacher into facilitator. Changing the approach of instruction into facilitation involves a change in the role of teacher from a knowledge-transmitter or an information-giver to a facilitator of students' learning.

The notion of facilitation implies that the facilitator's voice may be heard less than the traditional teacher. However, this should not be perceived in terms of disempowering teachers or fragmenting the role they play during the learning process. In fact, the role of facilitator brings new tasks and responsibilities for teachers different from those they used to perform within the TCA. Rogers (1969) listed some of these tasks and responsibilities:

- the facilitator has much to do with setting the initial mood or climate of the group or class experience;
- the facilitator helps to elicit and clarify the purposes of the individuals in the class as well as the more general purposes of the group;
- he relies upon the desire of each student to implement those purposes which have meaning for him, as the motivational force behind significant learning;

- he endeavours to organize and make easily available the widest possible range of resources for learning;
  - he regards himself as flexible resource to be utilized by the group;
- in responding to expressions in the classroom group , he accepts both the intellectual content and the emotionalized attitudes, endeavouring to give each aspect the approximate degree of emphasis which it has for the individual or the group;
- as the acceptant classroom becomes established , the facilitator is able increasingly to become a participant learner, a member of the group, expressing his views as those of one individual only;
- he takes the initiative in shaping himself with the group-his feelings as well as his thoughts- in a way which does not demand nor impose but represent simply a personal sharing which students may take or leave;
- throughout the classroom experience, he remains alert to the expressions indicative of deep or strong feelings;
- in his functioning as a facilitator of learning, the leader endeavours and accepts his own limitations (Rogers, 1969: 164-166);
- Provides a psychological climate in which the learner is able to take responsible control (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994: 214).

Knowles (1975) explained the tasks of the facilitator in more operational terms to include ‘climate setting’, ‘planning’, ‘diagnosing needs for learners’, ‘setting goals’, ‘designing learning activities’, and ‘evaluating learning outcomes’ (pp: 34-37). Tudor (1993) pointed out the tasks of the facilitator in the learner-centred language classroom which include ‘preparing learners’, ‘analysing learner needs’, ‘selecting methodology’, ‘transferring responsibility’, and ‘involving learners’ (pp: 24-28).

These tasks and responsibilities explain the demands and the complexity of the role of the facilitator. Therefore, teachers have to understand these new tasks and responsibilities and have to be well-equipped and prepared for undertaking them properly. Nevertheless, it is not expected that all teachers will perceive adopting and

implementing this role as an easy matter. These tasks may be interpreted by teachers from two different perspectives. Teachers who lack knowledge about these tasks and responsibilities or may lack the necessary skills for performing them may perceive them as demanding and challenging. An example of this situation was reported by Brush and Saye (2000) whose case study teacher had experienced certain difficulties in implementing student-centred learning because of her lack of understanding of the role of facilitator. Orafi and Borg (2009) also reported the same reason for the failure of three Libyan EFL secondary school teachers in implementing an English language learner-centred curriculum innovation (see 2.4.2). Other teachers may perceive these tasks as a source of motivation and encouragement for adopting the role of facilitator. These teachers' perception of the new tasks and responsibilities in terms of maintaining their significant role in the learning process may lead them to think positively about this role.

Teachers' personal qualities can be an influential factor in forming their perspectives about facilitation. According to Rogers (1951), this role would be accepted by those teachers who have the attitude of respecting the 'othernesses' as this would help them for developing the humanistic and democratic ideas of the LCA into classroom practices (p: 22). Rogers (1969) added that the facilitator should be characterised by the '*realness in the facilitator of learning*' (p: 106), '*Prizing, acceptance, Trust*' (p: 109) and '*empathic understanding*' (p: 111) and considered these qualities as essential for the attitude of those who would be successful in facilitating learning.

Self-actualising should be a characteristic of the facilitator in order to be able to translate the humanistic ideas of the LCA into classroom practices. Maslow (1970) believes that 'self-actualizing' should be a main characteristic of humanistic teachers.

This characteristic implies the “respect for another person, acknowledges him as an independent entity and as a separate and autonomous individual” and not to “use another, or control him or disregard his wishes. He will allow the respected person a fundamental ‘irreducible dignity’, and will not unnecessarily humiliate him” (Maslow, 1970: 196). This would help for establishing relationships characterised by ‘love and respect’ between ‘self-actualizing’ people with others (ibid). The positive impact of this relationship between teachers and students on enhancing students’ outcomes was reported by Cornelius-White (2007) who reviewed about 1,450 findings of 119 studies from 1948 to 2004 which involved 355,325 students (pp.113/134). Weimer (2002) believed that these characteristics should be acquired by student-centred teachers but pointed out the fact that most teachers lack these characteristics (p: 80).

Tudor (1993) emphasised that the proper implementation of the new tasks of facilitator in language classrooms would require their development of the following skills and qualities:

- Personal skills. Evaluating students’ potential and negotiating their involvement in a sensitive manner calls for an array of human and interpersonal skills. Maturity and human intuition are key qualities.
- Educational skills. In a learner-centred mode of teaching, the teacher has to develop students’ awareness and shape their ability to make the most of their knowledge and experience. Language teaching thus becomes an educational endeavour far more than a matter of skills training.
- Course planning skills. Being open to student input and participation can make advance planning more difficult, and requires the teacher to live with more uncertainty than is usual in traditional approaches. Furthermore, co-ordinating, goal-setting and choice of methodology assumes a solid familiarity with course design and with the various methodological options available (Tudor, 1993:29).

Despite the significance of the facilitator's possession of these skills and qualities, this may not be enough for leading teachers to shift their instructional approach into facilitation. Knowledge and understanding of this notion and what its implementation in classrooms entails is also a significant factor.

#### **3.1.2.1.1 Preparing the Facilitator**

Teachers who have been taught and trained through traditional teaching approaches may not accept or adapt the role of facilitator easily or unquestionably. Knowles (1975) experienced the difficulty of shifting from a traditional teacher into a facilitator and described this process as “fundamental and terribly difficult” (p: 33). Kasanda et al (2005) reflected on the findings of their research about Namibian teachers' implementation of the LCA in secondary schools and recommended that teachers should be educated through the LCA (p: 1821). Preparing teachers through the TCA may lead them to think positively about the efficacy of the role of the traditional teacher. The negative impact of this belief on teachers' implementation of the CLCA was reported in the responses of twenty-nine Turkish educators of colleges of teacher education in Turkey to Yilmaz's (2009) question “what kinds of problems are likely to thwart or impede the realisation of learner-centred instruction in secondary school classrooms in Turkey?” (p: 24).

Rogers (1983) emphasised the importance of changing teacher education and training programmes in order to produce genuine facilitators who can sincerely promote students' independent learning. He believed that institutions which undertake the task of pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes could play a significant role in this process. He stressed that these institutions should be a place where “a human climate for learning is created, where prospective teachers experience the excitement of



discovery-in both in regard to themselves and the subject matter they will teach” (p: 163). He offered a model of a ‘person-centred approach’ for teacher education and reported the benefits which had been gained by twenty-two student teachers from attending this programme in a Faculty of Education in the USA. These benefits included enhancing ‘self-esteem’, ‘in insight’, ‘confidence in career choice’, ‘understanding of children’, ‘personal maturity’, and ‘ability to handle difficult situations with responsibility and courage’ (p: 174).

Research on student-teachers’ conceptions of teaching and learning emphasises the need for addressing this issue if the CLCA is to be properly introduced. Zuljan (2007) investigated the conceptions of knowledge, learner and teacher roles held by a random sample of a hundred and ten first-year students of primary education at the School of Education, University of Ljubljana in Slovenia through a questionnaire completed by the students at the beginning and the end of the academic year. These student teachers conceptualised the role of teacher as ‘transmission’, ‘encouraging understanding’, ‘provider of direction for learners’ development’ and ‘encouraging personal growth’; and the role of the learner as ‘receiving’, ‘participation’, ‘constructive participation’ and ‘personal growth’. Generally, the participants of this study held teacher-centred conceptions (p: 30). These findings highlighted the importance of developing teacher education and training programmes prior to any attempt for introducing educational innovations into classrooms.

Modelling student teachers’ learning experiences to be compatible with the ideas brought with proposed innovations can aid in preparing them for implementing these innovations successfully and effectively. Empirical evidence which supports this notion was provided by Thanli et al (2008) who reported that their three case study teachers

managed to shift their traditional point of view to student-centred as a result of their attendance of learner-centred training programmes (p: 61). However, preparing and training student teachers through the TCA may result in complicating the process of their implementation of the facilitative approach. Zeichner and Ndimnade (2008) recommended preparing teachers for playing the role of facilitator (p: 334). Lyle (2008) highlighted the importance of enhancing teachers' knowledge and understanding of strategies which promote dialogic engagement in classrooms through teacher training (p: 237).

Teachers' proper implementation of the role of facilitator requires their full understanding of how to integrate the humanistic ideas of *'Learner-centred Psychological Principles'* (see appendix 13) in their instructional approaches. Lambert and McCombs (1998) claimed that these principles could be applied to "all learners from children, to teachers, to administrators to parents, and to community members involved in our educational system" (p: 16). Marshall (1998) suggested teaching these principles in educational psychology of teacher education programmes and believed that "if those preparing to teach are expected to follow these learner-centred and constructivist principles, they must experience these principles as learners themselves" (p: 457). This can lead to develop teachers' understanding of the benefits of using these principles as guidelines for constructing and selecting their instructional approaches inside classrooms and for establishing their relationships with other school members. Yilmaz (2009) believed that teacher education programmes should include "learner-centred instructional approaches such as cooperative learning, inquiry-based learning, students-led discussion, and concept mapping" (p: 29). Kasanda et al (2005) recommended that the LCA should be stressed as a main strategy for classroom instruction during teacher training programmes (p: 1818).

However, the positive belief of the instructors who are assigned to carry out the task of educating and training student teachers or teachers about the principles of the CLCA may outweigh the idea of incorporating these principles in the content of training courses. This positive belief can be reflected in these instructors' behaviours and practices inside classrooms. Thus, those who are taught or trained by these instructors can experience the positive impact of the instructional approaches which are guided by these principles on creating the appropriate environment for implementing the CLCA. In other words, teacher education and training courses should be run by 'facilitators', not by traditional teachers. Consequently, the satisfaction student teachers would enjoy inside these classrooms may encourage them to implement similar behaviours and practices when they start their teaching task (Baron, 1998:222). Generally, teacher education programmes should focus on providing students teachers with support, knowledge, skills and direction for playing the role of facilitator successfully and effectively.

Nunan (1989) recommended adopting a '*client-centred approach*' for designing successful 'TESOL' (*Teaching of English to speakers of other languages*) teacher-development programmes. He suggested the incorporation of the following principles for the development of these programmes:

- The content and methodology of workshops should be perceived as being personally relevant to participants;
- Theory should be derived from practice. In other words, teachers should be encouraged to derive theoretical principles from a study of classroom practices, rather than being exposed to a set of principles and being required to apply these;
- The approach should be bottom-up rather than top-down;

- Teachers should be involved in the structuring of the professional development programmes;
- Teachers should be encouraged to observe, analyse, and evaluate their own teaching; and
- Professional development programmes should provide a model for teachers of the practices they wish to encourage, i.e. they should practise what they preach (Nunan, 1989: 112).

Lui and Littlewood (1997) suggested introducing the techniques which language teachers can use for developing students' communication skills in classrooms through pre-service and in-service teacher education (p: 378). Garton (2002) emphasised the importance of training EFL teachers for the strategies which can be used for encouraging learner's initiative to develop successful second language (henceforth, SL) learning (p: 55). Wolter (2000) pointed out the trend of innovations in SL contexts to incorporate a LCA for language learning. He suggested 'a participant-centred approach to INSET (in-service training) course design' as an effective strategy for enhancing the success of learner-centred innovations. He emphasised that during these courses, participants should play the role of "initiators of information and ideas, and not only as receivers of the innovation" (p: 315). An investigation of seventy-nine Spanish EFL students teachers about what should their training programmes include was carried out by Pizarro (2007) in the Teaching Training School at the University of Balearic Islands through a questionnaire. The findings of this study confirmed the need for a '*Language Improvement*' component for preparing student teachers for the new demands brought by the communicative approaches and a '*Methodology*' component for training them for implementing the communicative instructional approaches and strategies inside classrooms (pp: 63-73).

Empirical evidence for the usefulness of preparing EFL student teachers through the LCA has been recently reported by Wang and Ma (2009). They introduced an 'instructional innovation' module based on the *Learner-Centred Psychological Principles* (see appendix 14) and adopted a LCA for teaching a hundred and ten third and fourth year undergraduate pre-service student teachers who selected this module as a partial requirement for the qualification of TEFL in secondary schools in China. This programme included twenty-week ELT course, a four-week practical skills training and a five-week teaching experience in schools (p: 241). The content of this module was selected to cover the learner-centred theories and practices which were related to a curriculum innovation in Chinese secondary schools. Questionnaires, regular shared reflections, focus group interviews and post-course and post-practicum reflections were employed for collecting the data for this study during the 6 months of the course. This programme had a strong impact on the participants' beliefs about teaching and learning and on enhancing their awareness of the limitations of traditional approaches. Moreover, by the end of the course, they were more confident and enthusiastic for implementing the LCA for TEFL and for promoting learner autonomy. However, these researchers noticed that the 'mediated practices' of their subjects needed more time to be developed and evolved in real teaching contexts (Wang & Ma, 2009: 243-252). These results emphasise the significance of accounting for the compatibility between teacher education and training programmes with the needs of classrooms if appropriate instructional teaching approaches are to be introduced. This may be achieved through developing partnerships between universities and schools and between academics and teachers to work through a 'collaborative inquiry'. Empirical evidence for the effectiveness of this cooperation was provided by Angelides et al (2006: 521).

However, we should not be very optimistic about the successful implementation of the approach of facilitation even by those student teachers who have been educated and trained through learner-centred instruction. Empirical evidence about the failure of 23 Kuwaiti EFL teachers in implementing the learner-centred methods for teaching a communicative English curriculum despite their learner-centred preparation during their university education and training was reported by Al-Nouh (2008) (see 3.3.3.1). Other contextual, cultural and personal factors can also impede teachers' successful implementation of this approach (see 3.3.4).

Rogers (1969) anticipated the challenge and resistance which would face the application of his ideas in classrooms. Rogers and Freiberg (1994) believed that learner-centred teachers would find it difficult to fit themselves within traditional schools (for more details about these challenges (see 3.3.4). Nevertheless, Rogers (1983) emphasised that no one would reject the democratic principles and practices of his approach but they would argue that it "is very commendable as a dream, but it just wouldn't and couldn't work in practice" (p: 190). For example, Gadd's (1998) criticism of implementing Rogers' ideas in language teaching was related to the overemphasis of these ideas on exploring individuals' inner thoughts and feelings (p: 233). Arnold (1998) criticised this argument and called for more humanistic approaches for language teaching. He pointed out the influence of Rogers' (1969: 1983) humanistic ideas on forcing many educational reforms such as in Spain and Finland to incorporate more humanistic ideas in ELT (p: 241).

Rogers' (1983) awareness of these challenges led him to argue for the possibility of thinking about 'conventional' teaching and facilitation as "two poles of a continuum" (p: 185). Results of relevant research indicate teachers' and students' preference of

integrating these two approaches in classrooms (Cuban, 1993; Schuh, 2004; Nonkukhetkhong et al, 2006; Wohlfarth et al, 2008).

The incorporation of Rogers' humanistic ideas in foreign language (henceforth, FL) settings can create a better environment for ELT. This environment may provide students in these contexts with an atmosphere of caring and constructive support in order to overcome the difficulties they encounter. This atmosphere is also necessary for EFL teachers who struggle to please students, inspectors, parents, headteachers and educational authorities. Libyan EFL teachers also struggle for changing their teaching approaches from instruction into facilitation. This can enhance teachers' motivation which has been empirically proved to have a positive impact on students' motivation to learn (Atkinson, 2000: 55).

### **3.2 Democratic Education**

Ideas drawn from sociology which emphasise the social function of educational institutions and their role in empowering individuals to be active citizens in their societies have had an influence on developing the philosophy of learner-centredness.

The name of John Dewey (1859-1952), a key figure in education, is often associated with 'progressive' movement and student-centred learning approaches. However, Handlin (1959) pointed out that Dewey was uncomfortable to attach his name to the label "progressive" because he believed that he did not revolt against traditions but against developments in the USA which had failed to enable the Americans to adjust their conceptions of education and culture in line with the changes taking place in the world around them (p: 48).

Dewey (1916) criticised traditional teaching practices and called for a move towards more democratic education. This kind of education was described by Freire (1972) as '*banking education*' and as '*conventional education*' by Rogers (1983). They all emphasised the consideration of psychological and sociological purposes in education through applying more democratic and humanistic principles and practices. However, these scholars were aware that the centralisation of educational systems in many contexts would hinder the process of introducing their ideas into schools.

Dewey (1916) believed that '*Democratic Education*' could be only realised within a democratic society which offers equal opportunities for its members to participate in making decisions related to their own issues. This kind of education may lead to promote democratic relationships between teachers and students, teachers and headteachers, teachers and inspectors and educational authorities. Creating democratic relationships could result in introducing social changes without disorder. However, Dewey (1916) argued that democratic education may not be realised within undemocratic societies where education "internally and externally sets up barriers to free intercourse and communication of experience" (p: 99). Freire (1992) suggested democratising schools through introducing curriculum innovations which constitute more humanistic and democratic ideas (p: 169).

Yilmaz (2009) believed that "schools are expected to play a central role in realizing democracy and democratic ends" (p: 23). The establishment of democratic schools requires flexibility in state control over education. Dewey (1916) distinguished between the aims of progressive education and those of state-controlled or directed education. He explained that the former would aim at the development of the 'individual's personality as a whole' which could not be realised through the latter (pp: 96-99).



Achieving this humanistic goal requires students' active participation and true engagement in the learning process through involving them in making decisions related to their learning.

Fostering experiential learning can be an effective strategy for enhancing learners' true engagement and active participation. Learning through experience is a fundamental principle in Dewey's philosophy on education. Dewey (1916) believed that education is a "fostering, a nurturing, a cultivating process" (p: 10)..., "reconstruction of experience" (p: 80) and not "an affair of telling and being told, but an active and constructive process" (p: 38). Therefore, utilising learners' prior experiences which they bring into classrooms can significantly contribute to maintain their interest and enhance their present learning. Dewey (1916) suggested that "learning in school should be continuous with that out of school" and emphasised that "the school should be a free interplay between the two" (p: 358). Relevant and meaningful learning in classrooms can be enhanced through encouraging students' reflection on their own experiences outside classrooms. Nunan (1988) emphasised this issue for developing learner-centred curricula.

Learning through communication and interaction is another fundamental principle in Dewey's approach for reforming schools. Dewey (1916) considered language as a medium of social interaction and an effective instrument for human learning. He believed that an association between communication and interaction would result in 'natural' learning.

Establishing and sustaining democracy in any society demands a kind of education which can produce critical individuals. The CLCA seems to be an appropriate innovation for this end. Tabulawa (2003) pointed out the belief of the *'International*

*Aid Agencies*’ about the appropriateness of this approach for realising democracy in the Third World (Tabulawa, 2003 :22). Yilmaz (2009) believed that “learner-centred instruction is the teaching model best suited to the realization of democratic education” (p: 34). This can be related to the emphasis of this approach on involvement of students in decision-making, on democratic dialogue and open communication and on emancipating students’ thinking, intelligence, curiosity and creativity. Moreover, this approach aims at the development of students’ positive attitude about participatory democracy and creation of individuals who can be responsible for their learning (Rogers, 1969; Brandes & Ginnis, 1986).

An achievement of this aim requires providing appropriate conditions for empowering students and for encouraging them to be responsible individuals for making reasoned decisions about their own issues. These conditions can be better offered by teachers who have democratic values and beliefs. Democratic teachers and student-centred teachers have similar qualities. A comparison between Rogers’ (1951-1969) and Weimer’s (2002) description of student-centred teachers (Rogers, 1951: 22; Rogers, 1969: 111; Weimer, 2002: 80) (see 3.1.2.1) with Shechtman’s (2002) description of democratic teachers explains this similarity. Shechtman (2002) described democratic teachers as being ‘self-transcendent’ and ‘more open to change’ rather than ‘self-enhancing and conservative’; as being ‘more cooperative and affective than oppositional’ and as being more ‘understanding and friendly rather than strict and admonishing in their behaviour” (p: 364). This similarity indicates the compatibility between the principles of democratic education with those of the LCA. In addition, the ethical principles implied in the concepts of ‘freedom’, ‘equality’ and ‘justice’ (Shechtman, 2002: 364) are compatible with the main principles of the LCA of shared responsibility, mutual respect, fairness, rejection of manipulation and open

communication (Rogers, 1969; Brandes & Ginnis, 1986). Teachers' belief in these democratic principles may lead them to shift their conceptions and practices to become learner-centred.

The effective implementation of the CLCA involves utilising both teachers' and students' intelligence and creativity (Rogers, 1969; Brandes & Ginnis, 1986). This is related to Dewey's (1916) conception of democracy which involves freeing the intelligence and creativity for independent effectiveness and emancipated thinking. Dewey (1903) criticised contemporary education for giving little responsibility for teachers in matters of curriculum development and selection of teaching methods in which their intelligence and creativity could be productively invested. He also criticised educational reforms for focusing on training teachers without utilising their intelligence and creativity and emphasised that educational systems should give "the largest scope for the free play of intelligence in its teachers" (Dewey, 1903, cited in Garforth, 1966: 181).

Misconception of Dewey's democratic ideas by associating them with the image of undisciplined and unorganised classrooms represents a major source of criticism for these ideas (Wirth, 1966: xi; O'Hear, 1991: 48). However, converting schools into democratic institutions would not lead them to become unorganised or undisciplined. Effective democratic education implies that every member should be held responsible for leading the learning process to achieve its objectives. Dewey (1910) related this misconception to the dominance of the image of traditional school discipline but emphasised that "deeper and infinitely wider discipline that comes from having a part to do in constructive work" (p: 17). Friere (1985) described the act of studying in democratic education as "a difficult task that requires a systematic critical attitude and intellectual discipline

acquired only through practice” (p: 2). Therefore, Freire (1998) criticised the separation between serious teaching and consideration of feelings and emotions and claimed that it would be possible for democratic teachers to manage their lessons in a serious manner within an enjoyable atmosphere (p: 125). Students’ realisation of their important role in the learning process may enhance their sense of ownership and responsibility for this process.

A reflection on Dewey’s concept of democratic education indicates that introducing it into schools will require teachers’ and students’ internalisation of conceptions of openness, confidence, trustfulness, cooperation, willingness and true responsibility. Both teachers and students also need to update their knowledge and to equip themselves with new social skills. It is also important to change the criteria for teacher evaluation. This should involve their proper conduct of social relationships in schools and classrooms as well as their competency in their subjects (Abdulali, 1986). Another significant issue related to the proper implementation of democratic education is shifting instructional relationship from top-down to bottom-up. A bottom-up structure provides an opportunity for utilising teachers’ intelligence and creativity for planning educational reforms and curriculum development. It is possible to involve teachers in open and participatory dialogues for making decisions about these issues. However, it may not be possible to realise this structure in contexts where education is state-regulated and directed. Hence, implementing democratic education and student-centred learning in these contexts can be a great challenge. This is due to the inevitable conflict which may arise between the individuals’ right for free learning and the desire of the state to control education in these contexts.

The difficulty of realising Dewey's democratic ideas on education into practice led many scholars to criticise their development into teaching approaches. Wirth (1966) pointed out that after sixty years; Dewey's progressive ideas on child-centredness were strongly criticised (p: xi). These ideas were later attacked by O'Hear (1991) who called for "less Deweyesque style of teaching and learning" in the UK primary and secondary schools (p: 48). Silcock (1999) reviewed the research on the criticism of the works which were based on the progressivism and investigated the empirical evidence provided by these critiques for supporting their claims. He also referred that the framework for inspection which was produced by the Office for Standards in Education (henceforth, OFSTED) included a 'skilled traditionalist' of good practice. He reported that the chief of inspectors for schools in the UK, Christopher Woodhead, called on teachers to "return to formal methods and give up on child-centredness" (Silcock, 1999: 1) due to his belief about the impracticality of this approach. The failure of most of the attempts to implement the LCA in different contexts is another indication for the complexity of implementing Dewey's democratic ideas on education (see table 3.1).

However, the difficulty of translating these democratic ideas into practice in our schools and the failure of many attempts to incorporate them in educational reforms should not lead us to lose hope. The potential value and usefulness we and our students could gain from incorporating the principles embodied within these ideas in our teaching approaches and practices should motivate us to continue working towards achieving this goal. This may convert our schools and teaching instructions and practices to become learner-centred. A good start should involve the development of teachers' democratic values and beliefs. Shechtman (2002) suggested that these beliefs could be developed

through equipping them with knowledge, skills and attitudes for shaping their instructional approach (p: 364). Careful planning and proper management of innovations which embody these ideas are other issues for consideration. These innovations could be better introduced through establishing an open democratic dialogue involving all education stakeholders. Habermasian *Ideal Speech Situation* (1984: 1987) may offer an appropriate model for solving problems of communication which may arise during this dialogue.

### **3.2.1 Habermasian Model of Ideal Speech Situation**

Jurgan Habermas (1929- ) is a well-known contemporary philosopher who developed a social critical theory offering a comprehensive critical analysis of the individual and interaction, structure of social institutions and forces of change and development in societies. Habermas (1984-1987) offered many significant insights about structures and pedagogical practices of schools such as communication, knowledge and discourse. This theory offers useful guidelines for educational reforms with clear focus on human freedom, autonomy and emancipation.

Habermas (1987) pointed out some problems of modern society such as quality of life, equal rights, individual self-realisation, participation and human rights and called for reviewing the way plans and actions are conducted to solve these problems (Habermas, 1987: 392). He suggested that plans and actions should be agreed on through full public participation to reach consensus during a public dialogue. He criticised the practice of power by experts and bureaucrats which results in authority-based decisions and actions (Habermas, 1984: 84-87). However, Habermas (1984) emphasised that certain conditions should be provided in order to make any communication act successful. Therefore, he introduced the concept of '*Ideal Speech Situation*' as a medium for any

communication act aiming to end with agreement among all participants. This situation could be realised when everyone participates in a given dialogue can debate, question or criticise any proposal raised. All the participants should be given equal rights to express their attitudes, wishes, and needs relevant to the topic of the discussion. Mutual confidence and trust should be shared among the participants in order to reach understanding. However, they all should be sensible in accepting the better argument or proposal for leading them to take actions which, in turn, can be questioned and reviewed again (Habermas, 1984).

Habermas (1984) suggested four validity claims that connect speech act to rationality. These validity claims include ‘comprehensibility’, ‘truthfulness’, ‘appropriateness’ and ‘sincerity’. He stressed that every utterance must be tested in terms of these four validity claims in order to be judged as rational (pp: 307-308). This process implies that any utterance in any successful communication act must be clear and understandable for all participants, truthful and relevant to the topic of the discussion, right and appropriate to be socially accepted and sincere to indicate the participant’s good intentions (Habermas, 1984). Stables (2003) explained these conditions as follows:

- Comprehensibility (can I understand what is being said?);
- Sincerity (does the speaker mean what is being said?);
- Veracity (is what is being said true?); and
- Appropriateness (is it appropriate that this be said there?)  
(Stables, 2003: 99-100).

Theoretically, the notion of *Ideal Speech Situation* may offer a successful model of communication for making decisions and plans about introducing educational innovations and curriculum development programmes. For example, in the case of

curriculum development, a democratic and open dialogue can be conducted on the basis of this notion and involved all those who are concerned with the learning process (policy-makers, administrators, inspectors, teachers, students and parents). This strategy may yeild a reasonable decision which can lead to an appropriate and agreed on action.

However, from a practical perspective, it may not be possible to adapt this model of communication for making large scale decisions such as the development of a unified nationwide curriculum. This could be due to the difficulty of reaching an agreement among all those who are affected by these decisions. Another critical issue can be related to the tension which may arise between the individuals' desire to direct curricula to meet their interests and needs with the pre-determined plans set by policy-makers.

But as schools should create a "community life" (Dewey, 1916: 358), the Habermasian *Ideal Speech Situation* can offer an appropriate model for communication between all school community members especially teachers and students. However, this will require a change in their conceptions about authority and control over the learning process which can be a major challenge for this process. Many scholars considered teachers' resistance to give up their authoritarian role and control over the learning process as an influential reason for the failure of implementing the CLCA (Brandes & Ginnis, 1986; Tudor, 1996; McCombs, 1998; Weimer, 2002) (see 3.3.4).

The difficulty of the practical application of Habermasian model of *Ideal Speech Situation* led Blake (1995) to criticise Habermas's prescription of this notion. Blake perceived this model as 'unstructured speech situation' which lacks careful management or rationality. He argued that the freedom given to the participants to say anything could lead 'selfish and narcissistic speakers' to dominate and frustrate dialogue among others. Therefore, he rejected treating this concept as a criterion for



teaching (pp: 357-358). Nevertheless, as all the school community members share the same aim about providing students with appropriate conditions for learning, they may all accept any proposal which can lead to the realisation of this aim.

### **3.2.2 Problem-Based Learning**

Problem-based learning represents an example of learner-centred teaching (Lindblom-Ylänne et al, 2003: 60). It implies the idea of learning through difficulty and discovery. Students' confrontation of challenging situations requires their reflection meaningfully and critically in order to come up with appropriate solutions. Rousseau (1911) emphasised that "we badly need someone to teach us the art of learning with difficulty" (p: 139). This notion was later developed by contemporary thinkers (Dewey, 1916, Bruner, 1960, Rogers, 1969, Freire, 1972) into problem-solving and 'problem-posing' methodology of instruction. Generally, all these thinkers emphasised the importance of offering students the opportunity for constructing new knowledge and relevant meanings from authentic experiences in challenging situations.

Dewey (1916) believed that problem-based learning could enhance students' critical skills which should be a shared characteristic among all those citizens who live in a democratic society. Therefore, he proposed a problem-solving methodology consisting of five stages and recommended adopting it as an approach of instruction in schools.

These stages include:

- 1- Students have a genuine task of experience that ensures their interest and active involvement.
- 2- Stimulating students' thought through a genuine problem develops within the task.

- 3- Students using the information they possess on the task to make the observation needed to deal with it.
- 4- Students suggesting solutions and are being responsible for developing them in an orderly way.
- 5- Students having the opportunity and occasion to test their ideas by application to clarify meaning and check validity (Dewey, 1916: 163).

Dewey's (1916) problem-solving methodology highlights the significance of selecting appropriate and meaningful tasks to ensure students' interest and true engagement. This could be achieved by relating learning tasks to students' actual experiences. Bruner (1960) suggested learning through "intellectual excitement" by employing an approach of active discovery learning (p: 31). Bruner's (1960) ideas on problem-based learning imply the construction of knowledge by using thinking processes through promoting students' cooperative work. He claimed that this would significantly contribute to learners' development and growth (p: 39). Rogers (1969) also believed that learning through inquiry would enhance students' understanding and could lead them to "achieve autonomous discoveries and to engage in self-directed learning" (p: 136). Self-discovery learning would be more meaningful and interesting than what would be learnt through teacher-centred approach of instruction. Freire (1974) considered problem-based learning as the best way for maintaining reflective and meaningful communication inside classrooms (pp: 46-54). He suggested presenting knowledge problematically through a 'problem-posing dialogue' for enhancing students' active participation and critical reflection (pp: 136-137).

The influence of these ideas has led to the development of problem-based learning as an instructional approach for teaching and learning instead of conventional teaching. Black

et al (2006) explained that the notion of problem-solving relates to the constructivist view of learning (p: 122). This approach has been widely used for developing learning programmes for many educational fields. Waters (2006) pointed out the trend in ELT for using problem-solving activities for enhancing cognitive processes of language learners (p: 319). Many different problem-solving activities have been included in English textbooks in schools. The incorporation of these activities in the English textbooks currently taught in Libyan secondary schools is an example of this trend (see 2.4.1). Phillips et al (2008) recommended Libyan EFL secondary school teachers to encourage students to do the challenging tasks which have been incorporated in the textbooks in pairs or in groups. These teachers were also recommended not to provide students with solutions for these problems but to enhance their critical thinking about their own right as well as wrong solutions (p:5). These activities can offer the opportunity for students' practice of the target language which may lead to their development of communicative competence. Waters (2006) pointed out the positive impact of these activities on students' active mental processing and creative thinking and recommended language teachers to provide their students with these activities. He proposed some examples of these activities (pp: 319-325).

Students' involvement in problem-solving activities represents one of the main features of CLCA classrooms (Cornelius-White & Hardbaugh, 2010: 135). The positive impact of implementing this approach of instruction on promoting student-directed and self-regulated learning was confirmed by the findings of Loyens et al (2008). Students' learning to solve meaningful and challenging tasks inside classrooms may lead to their development of critical skills.

However, Rogers (1969) warned that problem-based learning could be “routinized” to impose a teacher-centred curriculum on students. Therefore, he emphasised the importance of teachers’ understanding and willingness to employ this approach as a learner-centred strategy. He believed that no teaching method would be “effective unless the teacher’s genuine desire is to create a climate in which there is freedom to learn” (p: 137). The findings of Loyens et al (2008) indicated the importance of teachers’ and students’ clear understanding of student-directed learning in order to be able to employ problem-based learning properly (p: 424). Teachers’ misconception of this approach may lead them to resist or reject it. Teachers’ association between implementing problem-based learning with fear of losing or fragmenting the role they play in the learning process can be a possible reason for this resistance. However, Rogers (1969) and Margetson (1991) reassured teachers about their important role during this process because it gives considerable attention to expertise and content of subject matter. Rogers (1969) explained that the role of teacher in this approach involves setting the stage of inquiry, raising the problem and creating appropriate conditions for students’ cooperative learning and providing them with support and assistance (pp: 136-137).

Despite the advantages of problem-based learning for enhancing students’ critical thinking, students should not be left alone in solving all kinds of problems or in performing all challenging tasks. Maclellan (2008) believed that involving students in performing challenging tasks would be very useful but emphasised that this performance should be managed “through appropriate help-seeking” (p: 418). Students’ failure to come up with appropriate solutions for challenging tasks could negatively affect their motivation to learn. Therefore, it is important to provide students with assistance, guidance and constructive feedback to guide and develop their performance

(Vygotsky, 1978) (see 3.2.2.1). In a classroom setting, teachers or more capable peers can be an appropriate source for this assistance and guidance.

### **3.2.2.1 Vygotskian Zone of Proximal Development**

Vygotsky (1896-1934) was a leading constructivist whose sociocultural theory has made a significant contribution to child development, learning and education. According to this theory, learning is located in social, cultural and historical context, as “any learning a child encounters in schools always has a previous history” (Vygotsky, 1978: 84).

Vygotsky (1978) emphasised that social interaction has a significant role in the learning process. He believed that relating the learner’s past experiences to what is learnt in classrooms would lead him/her to construct knowledge independently. However, he stressed that teachers or more capable peers should provide less able students with assistance and guidance during solving problems or performing challenging tasks. Therefore, he introduced the notion of the ‘*Zone of Proximal Development*’ which refers to “the distance between the actual level of development as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978: 86). This notion may explain when teachers’ ‘scaffolding’ for students can be desirable.

Vygotsky (1978) believed that through “using imitation, children are capable of doing much more in collective activity or under the guidance of adults” (pp: 87-88). Therefore, he criticised the views which consider learning through imitation as a mechanical process and called for re-evaluating the role of imitation in learning through full understanding of the concept of the *Zone of Proximal Development*. He believed

that the role of the teacher in the learning process is to assist students in the *Zone of Proximal Development* “through demonstration, leading questions and by introducing the initial elements of a task’s solution” (Vygotsky, 1978:209). He added that the teacher should explain, inform, inquire, correct and motivate students to explain and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding (ibid).

The notion of EFL students’ imitation of teachers can be a useful strategy for certain activities and learning tasks during student-centred language classes. Jones (2007) highlighted the value of “teacher-led, repeat after me practice” in student-centred language classrooms and believed that this practice would help students “get their tongues around new phrases and expressions so that they can say them easily and comfortably” (p: 23). Therefore, he recommended EFL student-centred teachers to employ this kind of practice (p: 24).

Vygotsky’s (1978) ideas on the role of teacher and imitation in the learning process imply a behaviouristic view of thinking. However, his ideas on learners’ ability for self-construction of knowledge and on the value of cooperation and interaction (dialectic) between teachers and students and among students imply a constructivist view (DeVries, 2000: 188-189). These views indicate Vygotsky’s belief in the possibility of thinking about the TCA (behaviourist) and the LCA (constructivist) as two complementary approaches rather than two different extremes. This explains that teachers may integrate strategies and practices of these two approaches in classrooms. The contradiction in Vygotsky’s ideas led DeVries (2000) to argue for the difficulty of revolving “a paradox in Vygotsky’s work” (p: 188).

Providing learners with sufficient assistance and guidance is a central notion in Vygotsky’s (1978) theory on education. According to Ko et al (2003), the term

'scaffolding' was introduced by Bruner (1996) in his explanation of Vygotsky's (1960/1978) ideas on how learning occurs as a result of the "interpsychological support coming from the more knowledgeable other" (p:304). Bruner (1996) also believed in the importance of the role of the teacher in the learning process but he emphasised that the teacher should not "play that role as monopoly that learners "scaffold" for each other as well" (p: 21). Ko et al (2003) carried out a study in an English second language (henceforth, ESL) classroom of 21 students from different contexts (Asia, Latin America, Europe, and Arab World) to investigate "what differentiated higher quality from lower quality negotiation-of-meaning interactions" (p: 303). The findings of this study indicated that 'scaffolding' should be thought of as a "two-way exchange". Scaffolding offered by more capable learners may benefit less capable learners only if the latter accept it (Ko et al, 2003: 322). Therefore, teachers should explore the attitudes of less capable students about the notion of learning from their peers before adopting this strategy.

However, providing students with more scaffolding than what they seriously need may produce negative impact on their learning. Al-dabbus (2008) reported that the concept of 'scaffolding' was "routinely wrongly used by Libyan EFL teachers through providing students with more scaffolding than required" (p: 22). Teachers' understanding of the cognitive abilities of students can help them identify what tasks are suitable for them, how much support they need and when their scaffolding can be more effective. Fleming and Stevens (1998) suggested offering 'more structured support' for less capable students and more challenging tasks with less support for capable students in the language classroom (p: 115). However, teachers' over-reliance on scaffolding may lead students to be more dependent which can never lead to creating self-reliant and self-regulated learners. Therefore, Freire (1973) rejected the notion of

‘assistencialism’ in teaching and learning because it would produce more adaptive learners and would enable teachers to practice more manipulation over students. Consequently, this approach may not lead to realising democracy in schools (p: 15/16).

Nevertheless, teachers’ careful selection of learning tasks in the light of their good understanding of students’ cognitive abilities is an essential condition for enhancing students’ participation in problem-solving tasks and for promoting their active learning. It is possible to use the Vygotskian ‘*Zone of Proximal Development*’ as a model for explaining the role of facilitator in learner-centred classroom. For example, in a FL classroom, this notion can be used for distinguishing between the language tasks and challenging situations that students can perform independently with those that they can perform with teachers’ or more able peers’ assistance. This emphasises the significant role of teacher in the learning process and the importance of employing cooperative learning approaches inside classrooms. Cornelius-White and Harbaugh, (2010) believe that “authentic, inquiry learning strategies balanced with direct instruction and cooperative learning are important methods in a learner-centred classroom” (p: 135).

### **3.2.3 Cooperative Learning**

The concept of cooperative learning is often associated with notions of student-centred and independent learning (Brandes & Ginnis, 1986; Tudor, 1996; Oxford, 1997; Macaro, 1997; Lambert & McCombs 1998; Weimer, 2002; Abrami et al, 2004; Jacobs et al, 2006; Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010). Employing cooperative learning is a good strategy for freeing students from dependence on teachers and for encouraging their collaboration with peers. Jacobs et al (2006) suggested that this notion is related to student-centred perspective on education (p: 16). Abrami et al (2004) believed that employing cooperative learning would help students learn from each other and for using



their past experiences in learning new ones (p: 201). Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010) considered cooperative learning as an important learning strategy in learner-centred classrooms (p: 135).

Oxford (1997) defined cooperative learning as “a particular set of classroom techniques that foster learner interdependence as a route to cognitive and social development” (p: 443). Abrami et al (2004) described it as “an instructional strategy in which students work actively and purposefully together in small groups to enhance both their own and their team mates’ learning” (p: 201). Nunan (1988) considered it as a technique which is “highly structured, psychologically and sociologically based to help students work together to gain learning goals” (p: 88). In this study, cooperative learning is seen as a learner-centred strategy and a pedagogical practice which should be a common feature in learner-centred language classrooms.

Many scholars believe that employing cooperative learning in language classrooms can enhance learners’ motivation and interest in language learning (Kohonen, 1992; Macaro, 1997; Tudor, 1996; Freeman, 2000; Abrami et al, 2004; Jacobs et al, 2006; Rico, 2008). Rico (2008) explained that the flexible grouping patterns of cooperative learning in FL classrooms would allow for students’ exchange of information and for using different patterns of interaction (p : 307). Freeman (2000) pointed out the advantage of this approach for training learners to become more responsible for managing their own learning (Freeman 2000: 129). Oxford (1997) believed that ‘cooperative learning’, ‘collaborative learning’ and ‘interaction’ should be ‘three communicative strands’ in the language classroom (p: 443).

Teachers’ positive attitudes about cooperative learning was confirmed by the findings of Abrami et al (2004) who administered a cooperative learning questionnaire among

754 teachers from primary schools, 247 from secondary schools, 19 from school affairs and 11 from adult education/vocational schools in a Metropolitan school board in Montréal, Quebec/Canada (p:205). 89% of the participants in this study reported their employment of cooperative learning in their classrooms (p: 208).

However, Salvin (1997) pointed out the lack of clear understanding of the ideal way for employing this approach for developing students' learning (p: 161). Using cooperative learning as a successful and effective teaching strategy requires taking many factors into account. Five factors are seen as necessary conditions for the success of cooperative learning (Kohonen, 1992; Oxford 1997; Wee & Jacobs 2006). These factors were listed by Kohonen (1992) as follows:

- Positive interdependence , a sense of working together for a common goal and caring about each other's learning;
- Individual accountability, whereby every team member feels in charge of their own and their team-mates' learning and makes an active contribution to the group;
- Abundant verbal, face-to-face interaction, when learners explain, argue, elaborate, and link current material with what they have learned previously;
- Sufficient social skills , involving an explicit teaching of appropriate leadership , communication, trust and conflict resolution skills so that the team can function effectively;
  - Team reflection, whereby the teams periodically assess what they have learned, how well they are working together and how they might do better as a learning team (Kohonen 1992: 34-35).

Teachers' true engagement with students while working cooperatively is a significant factor for the success of cooperative learning. Through this engagement, students can learn the collaborative and social skills necessary for working together which can help them achieve their academic goals. Cooperative learning can be a good model for all

student-centred language classrooms as it can lead to produce active, responsible and critical learners. The variety of tasks and activities which can be implemented through cooperative learning may enhance students' interest and motivation to learn.

### **3.2.3.1 Pair and Group Work**

Pair and group work activities represent effective classroom strategies for enhancing learners' active participation in language classrooms (Mitchell, 1988; Tudor, 1996; Macaro 1997; Huda, 1999; Holliday, 2005; Iddings, 2006; Jones, 2007). Macaro, (1997) and Huda (1999) believed that pair and group work should be a common feature in all FL classrooms. These activities can provide valuable opportunities for students' practice of the target language in different situations. Although Wooden (2001) argued that these activities and tasks would not replicate real communicative situations of real life, he emphasised their appropriateness and usefulness for classroom contexts (p: 77). Hence, pair and group work activities such as role-play, games and problem-solving have been widely used in FL classrooms (Freeman, 2000; Butler, 2005; Rico, 2008).

Group work activities can be effectively employed by CLCA teachers for fostering students' cooperation, interaction and communication inside classrooms. Brandes and Ginnis (1986) described these activities as closely related to learner-centred teaching because they would lead to students' ownership of their own learning without affecting the teachers' power or control (Brandes & Ginnis 1986: 27). Mitchel (1988) considered pair and group work as a 'non-whole class' effective learning strategy (p: 25). Ellis (2003) believed that implementing group work in language classrooms could offer the opportunity for accounting for students' individual differences (p: 267).

However, Ellis (2003) emphasised that students' ability for working together effectively is a key issue for the successful application of pair and group work. He suggested the following strategies for fostering students' cooperation during these activities:

- Making students convinced that the task is worthwhile and not just simply an opportunity for fun;
- Making each student aware about his accountability for his/her own contribution to the completion of the work;
- Composing groups properly;
- Seating students in a way that they can easily talk together and maintain eye contact ,share resources, talk quietly, and take up less space;
- Providing students with training in the strategies needed to engage in effective collaboration;
- Making groups permanent and cohesion;
- Teacher playing the roles of: modelling collaboration, observing and monitoring the students' performance; and intervening when a group is experiencing obvious difficulty, or functioning as a task participant. (Ellis, 2003: 271).

An appropriate composition of groups can enhance students' true engagement and full participation. Livingstone and Lynch (2000) considered this issue as a condition for the successful implementation of group work in language classrooms. They explained that allowing students to select their group members would have a positive impact on their individualistic learning approaches and that the random selection would promote students' sociocultural skills (p: 342). Jones (2007) suggested the following guidelines for composing groups in student-centred language classrooms:

- Put talkative students in groups of three and less talkative students in groups of four or five;
- Stimulate a better exchange of ideas by putting shy students in groups of three rather than in pairs;

- Sometimes have two students talk while a third listens and takes notes, then have the third provide feedback at the end of the conversation (Jones, 2007: 8).

However, it is sometimes necessary for teachers to allow students select their group members by themselves in order to account for social, cultural or religious considerations. For example, Al-dabbus (2008) reported about the sensitivity of the contact between male and female students in Libyan secondary schools as a significant challenge encountered by Libyan EFL teachers in implementing interactive activities.

Unlike traditional methods of instruction which may limit the release of students' power and creativity, pair and group work activities can enhance students' active participation and offer the opportunity for releasing their intelligence and creativity. Many advantages of these activities have been reported, such as providing authentic circumstances for interaction among students, allowing for students' choice of learning tasks, promoting unpredictability and offering equal chances for students' talk (Brandes & Ginnis 1986; Holliday, 2005; Iddings 2006). A study conducted by Regan (2003) revealed that group work had a positive impact on directing students towards self-directed learning (p: 598). Garrett and Shortall (2002) suggested that the provision of different activities during group work would serve different needs for learners (p: 47). Therefore, Phillips et al (2008), the authors of the new English textbooks of Libyan secondary schools, have designed most of the activities to be performed in pairs or in groups. They highlighted the usefulness of these activities for offering students the opportunity for producing spoken language (see 2.4.1).

There are some challenges for implementing pair and group work activities. A serious issue for consideration is students' different perspectives about these activities. Garrett and Shortall (2002) reported significant differences in the evaluation of 103 Brazilian

EFL students of teacher-fronted and learner-centred classroom activities. Another issue is related to teachers' and students' different conceptions about these activities. Nunan (1995) discovered significant differences between teaching preferences of teachers and learning preferences of students of Australian Adult Migrant Education. The teachers rated pair work as very high but students rated it as low and games were rated very low by the students and low by the teachers among another 9 language learning activities (pp: 140-141). Similar differences were identified between conceptions of active learning held by 158 Hong Kong Chinese EFL students and 30 EFL teachers (Peacock , 1998: 244) and in the conceptions held by 228 Italian EFL students and 37 EFL Italian teachers of useful classroom activities (Hawkey ,2006: 142). Most importantly, these studies revealed the negative impact of these different conceptions on students' motivation, engagement and participation during these activities. To account for this problem, Garrett and Shortall (2002) suggested encouraging students to 'weigh up' the advantages and disadvantages of their active participation in communicative activities for developing their language proficiency (pp: 48-49).

Students' lack of interest in communication activities is often seen as a hindrance for implementing communication teaching methods in language classrooms. Lui and Littlewood (1997) pointed out this common belief among East Asian EFL teachers. They surveyed 2156 university students and 437 lecturers in two-large scale surveys at the University of Hong Kong to investigate this issue (P: 372). A significant result of these surveys showed students' preference of active speech roles and their liking of 'communicative work'. This result challenges the common belief among language teachers about students' tendency to adapt a passive role during communication activities. A similar preference was identified among a sample of 1939 Libyan secondary school students (Alhmal, 2007: 150) (see 2.4).

Space and time required for the proper application of these activities is another challenge for consideration. Sarwar (2001) reported that most language teachers believe that implementing communication activities through group and pair work in large classes is not possible (p: 127). However, Jones (2007) argued about the fallacy of this belief and emphasised the necessity for implementing the LCA in large language classes as it would be the “only way to give all the students time to speak” (p: 4).

Teachers’ lack of understanding of how to manage pair and group work activities properly can negatively affect the implementation of these activities. Brush and Saye (2000) reported the difficulties encountered by their case study teacher in managing groups due to her inability to establish well-defined roles and responsibilities for students. They considered this factor as a major reason for her failure to implement student-centred learning (p: 97). Orafi and Borg (2009) reported on three Libyan EFL teachers’ convergence of pair work activities into a question and answer session due to their lack of understanding of their facilitative role during these activities (pp: 247).

Butler (2005) investigated the perceptions of 46 Japanese EFL teachers, 22 Korean EFL teachers and 44 Taiwanese EFL teachers about communicative activities such as games, songs and role-plays. The finding of this study revealed that the challenges which were encountered by these teachers for implementing these activities were related to their lack of understanding of three factors: “what constitutes teaching for communicative purposes, the roles that developmental factors play in EFL learning and teaching, and strategies for harmonizing learning/teaching and context” (p: 423).

Despite these difficulties, employing pair and group work can be an effective and productive teaching strategy for language learning (Macaro, 1997: 153). The variety of activities and the flexibility of instructions associated with pair and group work

activities make their advantages outweigh their disadvantages. By employing these strategies of instruction, language teachers may succeed in promoting students' independent learning (Boud, 1995).

### **3.2.4 Independent Learning**

Introducing the concept of 'independent learning' is one of the major contributions of Rogers' (1969, 1983) ideas on humanistic education. It implies that learners can learn independently if appropriate conditions of caring, trust, support and guidance are provided for them. Promoting students' independent learning offers them the opportunity and experience for becoming responsible, capable, self-reliant, self-motivated and life-long learners. Rogers (1969) described independent learning as the approach which "produces self-reliant learners" who are capable of being in charge of managing their own issues and decisions (p: 9). He used different concepts to refer to this notion such as "*self-reliant*", "*self-determined*", "*self-initiated*" learning, "*self-directed*", "*non-directional*", "*experiential learning*", "*self-chosen*" assignments, "*self-assurance*", "*self-confidence*" "*self-evaluation*", "*self-criticism*", "*self-improvement*" and "*self-disciplined*" (see Rogers,, 1969). Knowles (1975) defined this notion as "a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their needs, formulating goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes" (p: 18).

According to these definitions, independent learning in schools aims to students' development of values, attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary for making responsible decisions and taking appropriate actions to facilitate their learning. Rogers (1969) explained that teachers should be aware that fostering students' independent



learning would require creating and providing appropriate conditions and experiences for enhancing students' motivation, curiosity, self-confidence, self-reliance and positive self-concept. He added that the provision of these conditions would require establishing appropriate school environments characterised by flexibility and democracy in order to account for students' needs (pp: 105-111). Independent learning implies students' undertaking the responsibility for their own learning. Rogers and Freiberg (1994) believed that encouraging students for making significant decisions in school would prepare them for making future decisions about their own affairs (p: xxii).

Training students for playing the role implied in the notion of independent learning represents a very significant step for the proper implementation of the CLCA. This process can be started by raising students' awareness and understanding of the concept of their responsibility over their own learning. Then, students need to be helped and encouraged to change their previous conceptions about themselves. Students should perceive themselves as active participants who can make responsible decisions about their own issues rather than as passive recipients of teachers' instructions and presentations. A realisation of this goal requires teachers' acceptance of transferring roles through restructuring classroom management and relationship structures (Brandes & Ginnis, 1986; Lambert & McCombs, 1998).

However, this process may not be simple or smooth. In contrast, it could be a demanding task for teachers who may need long time before they can get students become well-trained as responsible learners. Moreover, teachers themselves may need longer time and clear understanding in order to develop positive attitudes towards this approach and to perceive their new role in it clearly. Bolhuis and Voeten (2001) described the new role of teachers during students' independent learning as "activating

and process-oriented teaching” (p: 837). They conducted a study to identify “what teachers do to facilitate student learning” (p: 838). Sixty-eight teachers from six Dutch secondary schools participated in this study. The data of this study was collected through a computerised on-line observational system (p: 844). One hundred and thirty lessons were observed within a period of three months. The results of this study revealed that three teaching styles were observed during the same class including ‘traditional teaching’, ‘activating teaching’ and ‘process-oriented characteristics’ (pp: 845-848). This indicates the teachers’ tendency to implement teacher-centred and learner-centred instruction during the same lesson. However, the movement from one approach of instruction to another should be always guided by the aim and the stage of the lesson. Most importantly, teachers “must continuously support a physically and psychologically safe environment in which the students can feel free to express themselves and take intellectual risks” (Baron, 1998: 221).

Misconception of the concept of ‘independent learning’ may result in associating it with weakening or eliminating the role of teacher in this process. However, Rogers (1969) emphasised this role as the teacher would be responsible for “providing facilities for students to express and analyse their goals through the medium of psychology, facilitating the communication between persons with diverse interests and the enhancement of mutual respect between such persons” (p:39).

Despite the lack of consensus about the notion of independent learning, offering learners the opportunity to learn independently can be a good strategy for leading them to become autonomous learners.

### **3.2.5 Learner Autonomy**

Humanistic education emphasises the importance of developing learners' autonomy because it is a "process of becoming oneself" (Freire, 1998:98). Maslow (1970) explained the characteristics of the autonomous person as being "self-decision, self-government, being an active, responsible, self-disciplined, deciding agent rather than a pawn, or helplessly determined by others, being strong rather than weak" (p: 161). Cotterall (1995) defined learner autonomy as "the extent to which learners demonstrate the ability to use a set of tactics for taking control of their learning" (p: 195). Benson (1997) explained that learner autonomy "implies the recognition of the rights of learners within educational systems" (p: 29). The significance of accounting for learner autonomy led Friere (1998) to consider it as an ethical imperative and a necessity which must be supported by teachers and curricula. Accounting for learners' autonomy from this perspective involves allowing students to make significant decisions about setting their own goals, selecting the content of their learning programmes, methods of instruction and the criteria for evaluating their learning.

Fostering students' autonomy is one of the main principles of the CLCA. Therefore, the teachers who adapt this approach should provide students with appropriate conditions for realising their autonomy. However, these teachers should understand that encouraging students to become autonomous learners would require a change in the structure of classroom relationships regarding the distribution of power and control (Macaro, 1997: 178). Cotterall (2000) pointed out that many language teachers have become interested in incorporating the principles of learner autonomy into their practice (p: 109).

At the classroom level, teachers can foster students' autonomy by allowing and encouraging them to perform classroom learning activities and tasks independently (Jones, 2007: 2). Lee (1998) explained that students' awareness of the value of independent learning outside classrooms would lead them to acquire the habit of learning continuously after finishing their formal studies (p: 282). Peacock (1998) suggested that offering learners more choice on what learning activities they could do in classrooms would promote their autonomy (p: 246).

However, it is not enough for teachers to declare their incorporation of the principles of learner autonomy in their instructional approaches or among their aims. Teachers' acts and behaviours should be also aligned with these principles. Freire (1998) believed that "to know that I must respect the autonomy and dignity of the student demands the kind of practice that is coherent with this knowledge" (p: 60). Therefore, he stressed the significance of teachers' avoidance of practices such as discrimination, inhibition or arrogance which violate the principle of respecting the learner's dignity and autonomy (pp: 30 / 62-63).

At the level of curricula, appropriate selection of the learning materials is an important factor for the realisation of learners' autonomy. Incorporating some strategies and learning tasks which offer more active role and responsibility for students may lead to this end. In contrast, a curriculum which hands over the whole responsibility for the learning process to the teacher will never lead to develop students' autonomy. Therefore, in contexts where the aim of education is promoting learners' autonomy, the curriculum should be centred on experiences which stimulate students' decision-making and personal responsibility (Nunan, 1988). Developing this kind of curriculum requires involving both teachers and students in this process in order to account for the

specifications of learners' social context, culture, prior knowledge and experience. For example, in the case of developing an English language curriculum, Benson (1997) believed that promoting language learners' autonomy requires the recognition of "the rights of the 'non-native speaker' in relation to the 'native speaker' within the global order of English" (p: 29). Holliday (1994) emphasised the significance of accounting for local needs in planning for language programmes and suggested that "a culture-sensitive approach to English language education is needed if the question of appropriate methodologies is to be fully addressed" (p: 179). Robinson (2001) and Ehrman et al (2003) explained that understanding the effect of individual differences of language learners' cognitive abilities, aptitude complexes and learning conditions would support their learning. This indicates that imposing a certain curriculum on teachers or students may not aid in promoting learners' autonomy. The negative impact of this imposition can be more serious if it involves applying imported ideas from other contexts without considering their compatibility with the particularities of the context of application. This policy was criticised by Friere (1998: 28).

State regulations which may restrict students' choice about education can also have a negative impact on promoting their autonomy. In some contexts, e.g., Libya, students are not always free to make their own decisions about selecting their specialised fields of study. In fact, in Libya, the decision about joining a further stage of education often depends on meeting certain criteria set by the GPCE (see appendix 19 & appendix 20). As a consequence of this interference, Libyan students are sometimes forced to join fields of study which do not meet their interests (see 2.3). Cotterall (2000) considered the concept of choice as an indispensable practice of learner autonomy and emphasised that preventing or limiting choice for students' decisions is not an ethical practice (p: 111). This practice violates one of the basic principles of the LCA regarding

allowing students to make their own choices and independent decisions (Rogers, 1969) (see. 3.1.1).

Parents also have an important role for promoting children's autonomy. Preparing children for making decisions about their own affairs at home can significantly aid in achieving their autonomy. Freire (1998) insisted on offering children the freedom to make their decisions instead of forcing them to accept parents' decisions. However, he suggested that parents' role should be limited to discussing their children's plans and analysing the possible consequences of their decisions (p: 97).

However, teachers should be aware that not all students can be ready to accept the responsibility for their own learning. Fleming and Stevens (1998) believed that more gifted students would be more able to be responsible for their learning and to succeed in learning independently (p: 115). Therefore, exploring the level of students' readiness to become autonomous learners should be accounted for before implementing any intervention aiming at fostering their autonomy. Cotterall (1995) who identified significant differences in the beliefs of one hundred and thirty-nine ESL learners about the role of teacher, about feedback, about their role and about language learning suggested gauging language learners' readiness for autonomy through investigating their beliefs about language learning (p: 195).

Fostering students' independent learning and enhancing their autonomy requires employing formative assessment for evaluating their learning (Rogers, 1969; Blanche, 1988; Boud, 1995).

### **3.2.6 Assessment**

Assessment takes up a considerable proportion of time, effort and resources and occupies a central part in student's life. Many decisive decisions are often based on students' achievement in examinations. Boud (1995) and Sadler (1989) believed that assessment is more influential on students' aspirations and conceptions than other related teaching and learning matters. Therefore, Oscarson, (2009) emphasised that "the power of assessment on a personal as well as societal level should not be underestimated" (p: 234). Consequently, assessment often represents a source of tension and stress for students, parents and teachers (Tudor, 1996: 161).

#### **3.2.6.1 Summative Assessment**

Many contemporary philosophers and writers about education believe that summative assessment is no longer effective for evaluating students' learning (Dewey, 1910/1956; Bruner, 1960; Bernstein, 1971; Rogers, 1983; Boud, 1995; Freire, 1998). Bruner (1960) criticised this form of assessment for its examination of only trivial aspects of subject and for its encouragement of teaching in "disconnected fashion and learning by rote" (p: 30). Bernstein (1971) described it as being mainly answers (p: 224).

A major source of criticism for summative assessment is often related to learners' feelings of anxiety and concern about grades and examinations which represent the primary tools for evaluating students' learning in traditional teaching approaches. Boud (1995), an influential theorist of learner autonomy and self-assessment, attributed his interest in assessment to his experiences of "failure, feelings of unfairness when being assessed, increasing doubts about the validity of the judgements of others..." (p: 3).

Foster (1996) defined summative assessment as "pre-specified response assessment" which can come in different forms such as "true/false items, fill-in-the blank, multiple

choice tests and short answer questions” (p: 76). This form of tests is currently employed in Libyan secondary schools (see appendix 18). Shohamy et al (1996) investigated the perspectives of one hundred and fourteen EFL students, twenty-six teachers and inspectors about two national language tests of these forms. They reported that the teachers’ accountability to these examinations diverted their focus towards preparing students’ for these examinations through replacing the textbooks with worksheets identical to previous versions of these examinations (p: 301). This shows that accountability for examinations may not only affect students’ learning but also teachers’ teaching. Fleming and Stevens (2004) criticised this form of assessment for the little attention given to teachers’ valuable judgements and continuous assessment of students’ learning and progress (p: 120).

Other empirical evidence about the negative impact of summative assessment forms was implied in conceptions of assessment held by forty-one students from four diverse high language schools in New Zealand explored in a study conducted by Peterson and Irving in 2007 (Peterson & Irving, 2007). This investigation was carried out by using Brown’s conceptions of assessment (Brown, 2004: 301) (see 3.2.6.2.3.). For these students, assessment was mainly for ‘showing progress to parents’, ‘showing progress and abilities to future employers’ and for some of them it was ‘irrelevant’ (pp: 243-245). The conceptions identified in this study revealed that none of the participants conceptualised assessment as a strategy for improving learning.

Choi (2008) investigated the views of a hundred Korean students and forty instructors on the impact of EFL standardised testing on EFL education in Korea. The overall findings of this survey revealed that the majority of teachers and students were not satisfied with these tests due to the negative washback effects on their learning and



teaching. They considered these examinations invalid for evaluating English proficiency and pointed out the failure of preparing students on multiple-choice EFL tests for inducing “productive English skills” (p: 39). A significant conclusion was drawn from the results of this study related to the failure of preparing students for this form of tests in leading them to develop genuine communicative competence. Generally, research on implementing the CLCA for language teaching in foreign contexts reveals that accountability for examinations represents a major impediment for the successful implementation of this approach in these contexts (Shohamy et al, 1996; Li, 1998; Al-hmali, 2007; Al-Nouh, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009).

Despite this consensus on the negative impact of summative assessment on students’ learning, the opponents of this form have failed to invent more effective and practical means for evaluating students’ learning. Therefore, summative assessment in forms of grades and examinations are still prevalent in the majority of contexts (Li, 1998; Weimer, 2002; Remesal, 2007; Peterson & Irving, 2007, Al-Nouh, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009) even in learner-centred environments (Weimer, 2002: 145). The Libyan context is an example of these contexts (Alhmali, 2007; Orafi & Borg, 2009) (see 2.5). Nevertheless, the need for implementing formative rather than summative assessment in classrooms has become a common argument in the literature about assessment (Dewey, 1916; Bruner, 1960; Rogers, 1969; Bernstein, 1971; Sadler, 1989; Boud, 1995; Shohamy et al, 1996; Foster, 1996; Freire, 1998; Paris, 1998; Weimer, 2002; Nunan, 1988/2004). Paris (1998) suggested minimising standardised achievement testing and creating alternative assessments which could support teachers, inform parents and motivate students (pp: 207/208). Sadler (1989) suggested helping students develop necessary skills for evaluating the quality of their own work (pp: 142-143). Nunan

(2004) emphasised that testing should not be seen as the only form for evaluating students' learning (p: 138).

### **3.2.6.2 Formative Assessment**

To account for the limitations of summative assessment, formative assessment was offered as an alternative approach for evaluating students' learning. However, there is a lack of consensus about what this concept implies. Formative assessment involves informing students about their performance and creates opportunities for their reflection on their own actions. Different sources can provide students with formative feedback including teachers, parents, peers or students themselves (Foster, 1996). Boud (1995) emphasised the role of students in evaluating their learning and claimed that they "are always self assessing" (p: 11).

There is a strong link between the CLCA and formative assessment. Baron (1998) defined learner-centred assessments as "those that are intended to enhance student's learning" (p: 212). Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) claimed that implementing formative assessment techniques could be effective strategies for developing students' self-regulation learning (p: 200). Hence, suggestions for implementing self and peer assessment -two forms of formative assessment- have become a common issue in the writings about the LCA (Rogers, 1983; Brandes & Ginnis, 1986; Baron, 1998; Blanche, 1988; Tudor, 1996; Lambert & McCombs, 1998; Weimer, 2002; Geeslin, 2003). For example, Rogers (1983) expressed his interest in encouraging students to play a major role in evaluating themselves and their peers (p: 88).

A common characteristic of all forms of formative assessment is related to the active role of students during their performance of learner-centred assessment tasks. Baron

(1998) suggested some of the activities that students can perform while working on these tasks:

- formulate the problems;
- make and specify their assumptions;
- consider different points of view;
- make choices and decisions;
- activate prior knowledge of content and process;
- design and carry out an investigation;
- collect, analyze and interpret data;
- communicate results in writing and orally;
- collaborate;
- tell a whole story;
- self-assess the quality of their work using a set of pre-specified criteria; and
- reflect on their own work and the work of other groups (Baron,1998: 221).

Although peer and self-assessment represent two different forms of evaluation, they often appear together in the literature (Boud, 1995; 15; Nunan, 2004: 149; Weimer, 2002: 143). Boud (1995) pointed out the link between peer assessment and peer feedback with self-assessment and suggested that the proper implementation of these strategies would considerably enhance self-assessment (p: 15). Weimer (2002) also emphasised this link and emphasised the significant role of implementing peer assessment for students' development of self-assessment skills. She reported many examples to illustrate the benefits of combining self and peer assessment for evaluating students' learning in learner-centred classrooms (pp: 138-143).

#### **3.2.6.2.1 Self-Assessment**

Students' self evaluation is a central theme in Rogers' 'person-centred' approach (see Rogers, 1983). This concept is sometimes referred to as 'student self-assessment'

(Foster, 1996). Self-assessment, in general, is often used to refer to judgements made by learners about their own proficiency. Foster (1996) pointed out some forms of student-self-assessment such as “individual revision with specific criteria, peer revision with specific criteria and portfolios with evaluative comments based on familiarity with specific criteria” (p: 76). However, Boud (1995) emphasised that self-assessment does not only imply the idea of students’ grading of their own work, but also their involvement in the process of “determining what is good work in any given situation” (p: 12). Rogers (1969) claimed that offering the learner the responsibility for setting his/her learning objectives and criteria of evaluation would lead him/her to take responsibility for his /her own issues and directions (p: 143). By the same token, Boud (1995) stressed the usefulness of employing self-assessment for enhancing students’ learning and described it as “central to effective learning now and for future learning” (p: 15). Oscarson (2009) claimed that “self-assessment can be one way to reach the self-regulation learning” (p: 234).

Self-assessment strategies represent an essential component for student-centred learning and a fundamental pillar of learner autonomy. Therefore, Rogers (1983) considered encouraging students to evaluate their own learning to be “one of the major means by which self-initiated learning becomes also responsible learning” (p: 158). He explained some of students’ self evaluation techniques which were successfully implemented by him and other four teachers (see Rogers, 1983: 158-159). Foster (1996) also offered many forms and techniques of self-assessment which can be carried out by students in his book *Student Self-Assessment* (see Foster, 1996). Geeslin (2003) considered self-assessment as parallel to other instructional communicative goals of implementing student-centred learning in FL classrooms (p: 865).

McDonald and Boud (2003) conducted a study to explore students' perceptions of self-assessment. They reported that this form was perceived by students as useful for preparing them for their external exams and for developing their perceptions of their careers. Empirical evidence for the usefulness of implementing self-assessment in EFL classrooms has been confirmed by the findings of a recent research carried out by Oscarson (2009). The aim of this study was to investigate the role of self-assessment in developing lifelong language learning skills of EFL learners. Two EFL teachers and a hundred and two EFL Swedish upper secondary school students (aged 17-20) participated in this study. Four questionnaires and interviews were conducted with the two teachers and forty-one students from the eight focused groups. The participant students were allowed to assess their written assignments by using grades and these assignments were analysed by the researcher. The findings of this study revealed that the members of the focus group were able to assess their general writing. These findings also revealed that students' practice of this form is essential for developing their ability for assessing their written works. A general conclusion was drawn by Oscarson (2009) regarding the positive attitude of both EFL teachers and students about the incorporation of self-assessment in the FL writing classroom. Another conclusion was related to the importance of teachers' and students' cooperation to develop reliable assessment strategies with reference to national syllabuses and grading criteria (p: 231). This notion was also emphasised by Foster (1996: 36).

Many advantages have been reported about employing self-assessment for evaluating students' learning because it

- is a necessary skill for lifelong learning (Boud, 1995);
- enhances students' motivation and self-directive learning (Lambert & McCombs, 1998);

- contributes to self-empowerment and constitutes a form of learner-involvement (Tudor, 1996; Rico, 2008);
- empowers students to set meaningful goals (Tudor, 1996; Baron, 1998);
- provides one of the most effective means for developing critical self-awareness (Nunan, 1988; Brandes & Ginnis, 1986);
- develops students' ability to identify their weaknesses and difficulties (Nunan, 1999; Hunt,2001);
- fosters students' creativity in various aspects of their learning including their participation in classroom activities (Tudor, 1996);
- helps learners identify preferred materials and ways of learning (Nunan, 198);
- lightens the teacher's load in both practical and psychological terms (Tudor, 1996);and
- induces learners as well as teachers to regard assessment as a mutual responsibility which is conducive to the democratic development of language teaching (Oscarson ,1989).

Ability for self-assess is an essential quality for independent learners. Blanche (1988) believed that “self-assessment accuracy is a condition for learner autonomy” (p: 75). Weimer (2002) described skilful learners as those who can adapt to self-assessment to “analyze and reflect in ways that result in detailed and accurate self-knowledge” (p: 193).This implies that implementing learner-centred teaching requires students' good understanding of self-assessment.

However, due to lack of sufficient empirical evidence about the validity or reliability of self-assessment for evaluating students' learning, it is still not a popular form of assessment for many teachers in many contexts (see 3.2.7.1 & 3.2.7.3).

### **3.2.6.2.2 Peer Assessment**

Peer assessment is another form of formative assessment that teachers can employ for evaluating students' learning in learner-centred classrooms. Peer assessment involves arranging students in groups to carry out assessment tasks through commenting or making judgements upon each other's work. This form can be also implemented in classrooms by allowing students discuss their learning progress with one another (Brandes & Ginnis, 1986; Boud, 1995; Tudor, 1996; Weimer, 2002; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Rico, 2008).

Implementing peer assessment could have a positive impact on students' learning because it

- allows students exchange perspectives on the content of learning (Brandes & Ginnis, 1986).
- provides students with opportunities for real communication and may increase their confidence (Hunt, 2001);
- sensitizes students to evaluation criteria which enhances self-reflection (Saito & Fujita,2004);
- and increases the possibility for changing the traditional one way teacher-to-student route of evaluation to multi-route peer-to-peer evaluation (Saito & Fujita,2004).

### **3.2.6.2.3 Challenges of Students' Self Evaluation**

Despite the aforementioned advantages of peer and self-assessment, there can be many challenges and difficulties (Sadler, 1989; Boud, 1995).Therefore, many arguments have been raised against depending on these forms for evaluating students' learning in schools (Oscarson, 1989). Others suggested addressing certain questions before making

decisions about using these forms. Tudor and Hunt pointed out two important questions:

- Can language learners self-assess? (Tudor, 1996: 164);
- Is it possible for a learner to be realistic in self-evaluation? (Hunt, 2001: 159).

Boud (1995) considered teachers' and students' different perspectives on self-assessment and students' resistance to implement this new form of evaluation as major challenges. He explained that students' resistance might result from their lack of familiarity with this approach which could make the process of changing their habits and attitudes about evaluating their own learning more complex (pp: 177-188). This challenge was also emphasised by Oscarson (1989: 11). Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) claimed that more self-regulated students would be more able to produce better feedback (p: 200). Therefore, Nunan (2004) considered students' inability for making accurate judgements about themselves as a major source of criticism for self-assessment (p: 149). This suggests that students need to be trained on how to become self-regulated learners before expecting them to assess themselves. Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) proposed a model of seven principles of good feedback practice which could aid for developing student' self-regulation learning. These principles include:

- Clarify what good performance is;
- Facilitate self-assessment;
- Deliver high quality feedback information;
- Encourage teacher and peer dialogue;
- Encourage positive motivation and self-esteem;
- Provide opportunities to close the gap;
- Use feedback to improve teaching (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006: 203).

Sadler (1989) pointed out teachers' reluctance to implement this form of evaluation as another challenge and attributed this resistance to their fear of decreasing their authority



or control over classrooms (pp: 140-142). In this respect, Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) emphasised the importance of changing teachers' conceptions of assessment in parallel with changing their conceptions of teaching and learning (p: 200). However, it should be noted that teachers still have to play certain tasks during formative assessment forms. Baron (1998) explained that these tasks include ensuring students' ability for completing the assessment tasks successfully, clarifying the criteria of successful work and creating a safe environment for encouraging students to express themselves and to take intellectual risks (p: 221). Sadler (1989) and Fleming and Stevens (1998) suggested communicating and involving the students in selecting the criteria of assessment. Foster (1996) emphasised the importance of students' understanding of the criteria of evaluation. He believed that the teacher should also give a feedback on students' revision of their written works to help them develop the skill of personal goal setting (pp: 29-36).

Sadler (1989) considered examination systems and external allocation of grades in accordance to pre-determined criteria as other challenges (pp: 140-142). However, Weimer (2002) argued for the possibility of using grades for evaluating students in student-centred classrooms and emphasised that this approach does not deny the significance of grades (p: 119). Moreover, research on peer assessment revealed a number of biases and disadvantages associated with the practice of this form in classrooms. Saito and Fujita (2004) reported some of these biases such as 'friendship bias, 'reference bias', 'purpose bias', 'collusive bias' and 'feedback bias'(p: 33). This bias was practiced by a group of students who participated in Weimer's (2002) study (2002) on using peer assessment as a form of evaluation during a student-centred teaching session.

These disadvantages led Oscarson (1989) to consider self-assessment as quite inappropriate and Hunt (2001) to argue that peer assessment could not be as thorough as teacher's assessment. Consequently, these forms are not widely used by teachers even in student-centred classrooms (Weimer, 2002; Geeslin, 2003; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006).

However, these different views and attitudes about formative assessment strategies such as self and peer assessment necessitate an investigation of teachers' conceptions of assessment in order to be able to understand what they think about assessment. Remesal (2007) investigated conceptions of fifty Spanish (30 primary and 20 secondary) school teachers of assessment and reported significant differences in the conceptions of assessment held by these teachers. Understanding teachers' conceptions of assessment can be achieved through identifying their views about the four purposes of assessment suggested by Brown (2004) which include "improvement of teaching and learning; school accountability, student accountability or treating assessment as irrelevant" (p: 301). This may lead to identify what forms of assessment teachers think as effective for evaluating students' learning. This investigation is complementary to the exploration of teachers' conception of teaching and learning. It is possible to start by investigating teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning to be followed by an investigation of their conceptions of assessment (see 7.8). Remesal (2007) believed that this investigation is necessary if "propound strategies of change that are likely to be understood, accepted and assumed by teachers" (p: 36). Brown's conceptions of assessment can be used as a model for this investigation (Brown, 2004, 301).

Two main conclusions can be drawn from this discussion about peer and self-assessment and the arguments for implementing them in learner-centred classrooms.

The first conclusion is related to the lack of sufficient empirical evidence for the validity and practicality of implementing these forms for evaluating students' learning in schools. The second is that the lack of effective methods of assessment compatible with the principles of the LCA could be a major reason for the failure of the attempts to implement it in many contexts (see table 3.1). Evaluating students' learning in a rigorous manner is a complex process therefore transferring this task completely to students can not be a safe venture.

### **3.3 Learner-Centred Approach (LCA)**

The previous sections of this chapter explain the psychological and sociological ideas which have contributed to the development of the LCA.

From a psychological perspective, introducing the notion of learner-centredness into classroom practice was based on the belief that learning is a psychological process occurs in the heads and hearts of individual learners who should be offered the opportunity for making decisions about what, how, and when to learn (Rogers, 1969). This approach emphasises the significance of providing humanistic conditions for all learners. From a humanistic point of view, each person has the right to be in charge of his/her life. As learning is an important aspect of student's life, the responsibility for directing it should be in the hands of the student him/her self. Promoting and motivating learners to achieve their goals and to realise their full potential should be a significant aim of education. Lambert and McCombs (1998) defined LCA as "the application of the learner-centred psychological principles in practice- in the programmes, policies and people that support learning for all" (p: 9) (see 3.3.1). From a sociological point of view, societies can be directed towards democracy only through creating educational systems and schooling structures and practices which train students to be active critical

thinkers and responsible decision-makers (Dewey, 1916) (see 3.2). Hence, the LCA was developed to challenge the “adequacy of the traditional show-and-tell type of instruction” (Ammon & Black, 1998: 414).

In theory, LCA is a term used for describing the mode of teaching in which the teacher plays the role of a facilitator of students’ independent learning. It implies that setting the objectives of learning programmes and selecting the content of courses and the instructional approaches should be based on students’ needs, interests, abilities and social and cultural backgrounds. It also involves students’ active participation in carrying out learning tasks individually, in pairs or in small groups. This approach focuses on more learning and less teaching as learning “is not assumed or presumed to happen automatically” (Weimer, 2002: 77).

### **3.3.1 Lack of Clear Meaning**

A review of the literature about the LCA revealed a lack of consensus about the meaning of the notion of learner-centredness.

The concept of learner-centeredness may be first introduced in Rogers’ work (1951). However, Tudor (1996) pointed out that this concept has only become popular in books and articles in the 1980s and 1990s (Tudor, 1996: viii). Nevertheless, there is still confusion about the meaning of the concept ‘learner-centeredness’ (Holiday, 1994a; Tudor, 1996; Lambert & McCombs, 1998; Nunan, 1999). For example, the words ‘method’, ‘approach’ and ‘philosophy’ have been used interchangeably to refer to this notion (see 3.2.2.1). Learner-centredness is too broad than a method or an approach to be described in terms of measurable classroom practices such as those suggested by Cuban (1993:7). It is a concept which is a part of and is integrated within many psychological and sociological principles in the learning process. A sophisticated

definition of this philosophy was offered by Rogers and Freiberg (1994) as “a set of values, not easy to achieve, that places emphasis on the dignity of the individual, the importance of personal choice, the significance of responsibility, the joy of creativity” (p: 123). Similarly, Gibbs (1981) defined student-centred learning as a philosophy which “embodies assumptions and beliefs about how people learn” (p: 57).

Cuban (1993) cited some terms which have been used to refer to the LCA such as ‘child-centred’ or ‘progressive’, ‘tender-minded’ or ‘soft’ pedagogy and as ‘transformative’ and defined this approach in terms of students’ exercise of a substantial degree of responsibility for what is taught, how it is learnt, and for movement within the classroom (p: 7). Geelan et al (2004) focused on the cognitive aspect of this approach and defined it as “teaching for understanding” (pp: 448-449). Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010) used the term ‘learner-centred instruction’ and pointed out some of the usages of learner-centred synonyms and practices with their equivalent traditional ideas and practices (p: xxiv).

Due to the confusion around the meaning of the LCA, different interpretations have been attached with it. Kasanda et al (2005), for example, suggested three possible interpretations for this approach. They explained that it could be interpreted in terms of its focus on selecting content of curriculum that matches learners’ interests and experiences; or in terms of its emphasis on involving learners in classroom activities, or in terms of its flexibility for offering learners the opportunity to share responsibility for their own learning (p: 1808). These different perspectives have led to the emergence of a strong and a weak version of this approach. According to Sowden (2007), the strong version of this approach entails negotiation between teacher and students about the syllabus and content of learning programmes. The weak version entails accounting for

learners' needs and interests as well as for external or traditional requirements in course design and development (p: 304). The latter version seems to fit contexts where education is state-directed and in which the aims of educating individuals are often decided by policy-makers.

In line with the notion of the weak version of the LCA, Nunan (1995) defined the concept of learner-centredness in relation to language teaching as follows:

Learner-centredness is therefore not an all-or- nothing concept; it is a relative matter. It is also not the case that a learner-centred classroom is one in which the teacher hands over power and responsibility, and control to the students from Day 1. I have found that it is usually well into a course before learners are in a position to make informed choices about what they want to learn and how they want to learn, and it is not uncommon that learners are in such a position only at the end of the course. That said, I would advocate the development of curricula and materials which encourage learners to move towards the fully autonomous end of the pedagogical continuum (Nunan, 1995: 134).

In this definition, Nunan (1995) emphasised the importance of the gradual shift into the implementation of the LCA in classrooms in order to get students through different stages to play their new roles

A thorough review of these definitions indicates that the LCA can be defined in broad terms of its linkage with other notions such as 'learning to learn', 'flexible learning', 'experiential learning', 'self-regulated learning', 'autonomous learning'; 'active learning'; 'constructive learning'; 'learner-centred teaching'; 'student-directed instruction'; 'learning by doing' 'participatory learning' (Rogers, 1969; Gibbs, 1981; Brandes & Ginnis, 1986; Tudor, 1996; Lambert & McCombs, 1998; Nunan & Lamb 2001; Weimer, 2002). Elen et al (2007) referred to more notions such as "hand-on

learning or guided discovery’, ‘learning through problem-solving’, ‘curiosity driven inquiry’, and ‘theory improvement inquiry’ (p.105). Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010) have recently used the term ‘learner-centred instruction’ (p. xxiii).

An examination of the above definitions and characteristics of the LCA indicates that its realisation in classrooms requires radical changes in teachers’ instructional approaches. Weimer (2002) proposed five key changes including distribution of power and authority inside classrooms; changing the function of content of learning; directing the goal of teaching towards promoting learning; offering the opportunity for students to be responsible for their own learning in order to become autonomous learners; and changing the purpose and process of evaluation (pp:8-17). Dimmock and Walker (2004: 43) pointed out the essential organisational elements which should be involved in reforming schools to be learner-centred:

- Learning outcomes and the curriculum;
- Learning processes and experiences;
- Teaching approaches and strategies;
- Technology especially computers;
- Human and financial resources and their management, including appraisal; leadership and organisational culture.

Revisiting Rogers’ description of his model of *‘person-centred’* (see3.1.1) indicates that most of the above definitions, interpretations and changes seem to be formed with reference to this description. This explains the influence of Rogers’ humanistic ideas on the development of the LCA.

### **3.3.2 Lack of Consensus**

There is a lack of consensus in the literature about the usefulness or effectiveness of the LCA for developing students’ learning.

The advocates of this approach argue that its application in schools would result in enhancing students' motivation, increasing their active participation and improving their academic and social achievements (Dewey, 1916; Rogers, 1951/1969; Freire, 1972; Knowels, 1975; Boud, 1981; Gibbs, 1981, 1994; Brandes & Ginnis, 1986; Nunan, 1988; Tudor, 1996; Voller, 1997; Agran, 1997; Lambert & McCombs, 1998; Weimer, 2002; Kasanda et al, 2005; Sowden, 2007; McCombs & Miller, 2007; Cornelius-White, 2007; Zeichner & Bekisizwe, 2008; Segovia & Hardison, 2009; Yilmaz, 2009; Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010). Some writers claimed that implementing this approach for ELT would improve the quality of language learning and would help in improving students' communicative competence (Nunan, 1988, 1995; Powell, 1992; Tudor, 1996; Jones, 2007).

In contrast, others argue for the lack of empirical evidence for any benefits gained from implementing this approach and tended to point out the difficulties and the challenges which hindered the attempts of its implementation in many contexts (Guthrie, 1990; O'Hear, 1991; O'Neill, 1991; Silcock, 1999). O'Neill (1991) argued that the advocates of the LCA did not provide any empirical evidence to support their claims about its superiority over the TCA (p: 301). This argument was later advocated by Tabulawa (2003: 22). Some of these opponents specifically argue for the inappropriateness of this approach for non-Western contexts (Guthrie, 1990; O'Neill, 1991; Brown, 1994; Harmer, 1995; Holliday, 1994, 2001; Tabulawa, 2003; Jansen, 2009). However, these arguments have been recently challenged by Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010) who pointed out the results of the research which indicated that learner-centred instruction could be 'universally successful' ... and "contributes to success for nearly all students and teachers" (p: 8).



The conflict between the advocates and the opponents of the LCA has led another group of researchers and writers (Cuban, 1993; Schuh, 2004; Nonkuketkhong et al, 2006; Jones, 2007; Wohlfarth et al, 2008; Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010; Clarke, 2010) to argue for the possibility of embodying learner-centred principles in traditional teacher-centred practices in order to mediate the tension between these two approaches. This form was described by Cuban (1993) as a ‘hybrid’ of the two approaches (Cuban, 1993) and was reported in the findings of Schuh (2004), Nonkuketkhong et al (2006) and Wohlfarth et al (2008). Jones (2007) suggested that the role of teacher in language student-centred classrooms “may change as the lesson moves from teacher-led to student-centred and back again” (p: 25). Clarke (2010) offered some practical strategies for using these two approaches to complete each other (see Clarke, 2010: 18). Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010) suggested balancing the LCA with “teacher-directed methods to be most effective” (p: 122).

Rogers (1983) and Knowles (1975) also pointed out this possibility. Knowles (1975) suggested that facilitators can perform the function of transmitting knowledge when self-director learners ask for this. He added that “if self-directed learners recognize that there are occasions on which they will need to be taught, they will inter into those taught-learning situations in a searching, probing frame of mind and will exploit them as resources for learning without losing their self-directness” (p: 21).

Despite these different views about the LCA, its popularity has led many contexts (see table 3.1) to establish policies for reforming their schools, educational institutions and curriculum development programmes to be learner-centred. The adoption of this approach in many of these curriculum reforms in African countries (South Africa, Botswana, and Namibia) was prescribed by the ‘Aid Agencies’ which funded the

educational projects in these countries (Tabulawa, 2003: 9). However, the research about these reforms indicates that their results were not promising as most of the schools in these contexts were resistant to change. Table (3.1) shows the development of research on the LCA in different contexts. The studies are presented in a chronological order to make the comparison between the results of the earlier studies with those of the recent ones easier.

**Table 3.1: Review of Research on LCA**

Researcher(s)	Methods of Research	Main Results
Ghail (1992) UK	Observation/ discussions with teachers, students and a head teacher	Major limitations in implementing student-centred pedagogy/Teachers' had different perspectives towards curriculum change.
Powell (1992) UK	Case study- 6 teachers and their director	Many challenges limited teachers' implementation of the LCA in ELT
Cuban (1993) USA	Questionnaires, interviews, observations, documents	Prevalence of teacher-centred instruction in most of the schools involved
Karavas-Doukas (1996) Greece	Questionnaires, interviews, and observation.	Discrepancy between teachers' practices and their expressed attitudes towards the CLCA
Harrison (1996) Oman	Reports, interviews and observation	Problems in implementing a new English learner-centred communicative curriculum.
Carless (1998) Hong Kong	Observation, focused in interviews, attitude scale	Challenges for curriculum innovation/ positive attitude towards the change
Richards et al (2001) Singapore	A questionnaire	Direct grammar teaching for EFL/ESL students. / Positive beliefs towards the CLCA
Li (1998) South Korea	Questionnaires and interviews	Teachers' interest in traditional teaching approaches/Difficulties in implementing CLT
Waeytens et al (2002) Belgium	Interviewing 53 teachers	The majority of teachers had a narrow sense of 'learning to learn'
Gao & Watkins (2002) China	Questionnaire & interview	Differences in conceptions of teaching held by Chinese teachers and Western teacher
Schuh (2004) Midwestern	Case study: questionnaire, interviews / observation	Learner-centred principles were embodied in teacher-centred classroom practices
O'Sullivan (2004) Namibia	Interviews & observations	Teachers' implementation of different modes of the LCA
Kasanda et al (2005) Namibi	Analysing teacher-learner interactions & non-participant field notes	Success of learner-centred teaching in bringing students' experiences into classrooms
Nonkukhetkhong et al (2006) Thailand	Interviews, observation, self-reporting	Teachers' implementation of different models of LCA.
Yilmaz (2007) Turkey	Questionnaire	Lack of implementation of the LCA
Kalin & Zuljan (2007) Slovenia	A single questionnaire	Lack of teachers' understanding of their new roles
Matsau (2007) Lesotho	Questionnaire, observation, discussion	Successful implementation of some learner-centred strategies and activities.
Heip (2007) Vietnam	Conversation & observation	Difficulties in implementing CLT into Practice.

Researcher(s)	Methods of Research	Main Results
Eslami & Fatahi (2008) Iran	Informal interviews, a questionnaire	Weak language proficiency & lack of self-efficacy for using communicative strategies.
Kirkgoz.2008 Turkey	classroom observation and interviews	Positive Impact of teachers' understanding of an innovation on their implementation
Al-Nouh 2008. Kuwait	Observation/interviews	EFL Teachers' failure to implement CLT-based learner-centred methods.
Yilmaz 2009 Turkey	E-mail Questionnaire	Challenges encountered the implementation of the LCA in Turkish Secondary schools
Segovia & Hardison 2009Thai	Observation & semi-structured interviews	No evidence for communicative language use inside classrooms.
Brown (2009) USA	Questionnaire	EFL students' preference of a grammar-based approach/EFL teachers' preference of CA
Orafi & Borg (2009) Libya	Observation and semi-structured interviews	Teachers' failure to implement changes embodied in English curriculum innovation

The results of the majority of the studies shown in table 3.1 revealed the lack of or the improper implementation of the LCA and the existence of many challenges for this implementation. This indicates the prevalence of the TCA in most of the schools in these contexts. Comparing the results of the earlier studies of Ghail (1992) in the UK, Cuban (1993) in the USA, Karavas-Doukas (1996) in Greece and Harrison (1996) in Oman with the recent studies of O'Sullivan (2004) in Namibia, Nonkukhetkhong et al (2006) and Segovia and Hardison (2009) in Thailand, Yilmaz, (2007/2009) in Turkey, Al-Nouh in Kuwait (2008) and Orafi and Borg (2009) in Libya gives a clear indication for the existence of this phenomenon. The researchers who conducted these studies reported different reasons for the failure of implementing the LCA in the majority of these contexts. For example, Ghail (1992) attributed the failure of a curriculum change innovation towards learner-centred pedagogy in an English secondary school to its failure "to acknowledge the cultural specificity of pedagogic social relations" (p: 221). Waetynes et al (2002) believed that the minimal impact of introducing the concept of 'learning to learn' on teachers' behaviour was related to the lack of clarity of this concept (p: 319). Brown (2009) attributed EFL teachers' failure in implementing this approach for language teaching to the difference between teachers' and students' perceptions about effective teaching (pp: 46-60). Yilmaz (2009) reported that the

education system, teachers and students have all contributed to the failure of the LCA in Turkish secondary schools.

Generally, there is a trend in the research on the LCA to relate the failure of implementing this approach in non-Western contexts to the rejection of the Western ideas embodied within it or to the lack of teaching and learning facilities in some of these contexts (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Guthrie, 1990; Holliday, 1994; Bax, 2003; Simpson, 2008; Jansen, 2009; Yilmaz, 2009; Orafi & Borg, 2009). These arguments seem to be based on the differences identified between Western and non-Western teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning (Holliday, 1994; Gao & Watkins, 2002). They can be also related to the differences in the extent of centralised control of educational systems, in general, and the curriculum in particular, between the two contexts (Morris, 1986) or to the divergence in the educational philosophies between them (Simpson, 2008). Zeichner and Ndimnade (2008) pointed out the common belief in the literature about considering learner-centred education "beyond the capacity of teachers of developing countries" (p: 334). A strong argument against implementing the LCA in 'lesser-developed' countries which "place great value on respect for elders, on respect for wisdom and knowledge, and on respect to religion" was raised by Guthrie (1990) who argued that these contexts are not "right places for naïve experimentation with the effects of different Western values" (p: 223). Guthrie's argument has been advocated by Jansen (2009) who rejected transferring the Western ideas of learner-centredness to developing countries and claimed that this transfer had produced major problems for developing countries such as "large-scale wastage of resources and disastrous effects on students' learning achievements" (p: 240). In agreement with Guthrie (1990:225), Jansen (2009) gave the same reasons for his argument. Tabulawa (2003) criticised the prescription of the 'International Aid Agencies' for the

pedagogy of learner-centredness for many African countries (Botswana, Namibia and South Africa) curricula reforms and considered this prescription as a process of ‘westernisation’ (p: 7).

However, a significant conclusion can be drawn from this research review emphasising the fact that the implementation of the LCA has encountered many challenges and difficulties in Western (developed) as well as in non-Western contexts (developing). The argument of considering the LCA as an appropriate approach for Western contexts has been challenged by the findings of many studies which revealed the existence of many impediments for implementing this approach in these contexts (Ghail, 1992; Cuban, 1993), (Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Hawkey, 2006; Pizaro, 2007; Kalin & Zuljan, 2007). These studies were conducted in UK, USA, Greece, Italy, Spain and Slovenia respectively and reported the poor or the lack of implementation of the CLCA in these contexts; despite the availability of teaching and learning resources and facilities (see table 3.1). The other argument of considering this approach not appropriate for developing countries has been challenged by the findings of Matsau (2007) in Lesotho who reported about successful implementation of this approach for language teaching in this developing African country (see table 3.3.3.2).

Teachers’ misconception of the underlying philosophy of the LCA could be a possible reason for the failure of most of the attempts to implement it in Western as well as non-Western contexts. Holliday (2005) cited the findings of (Anderson, 2003a) and Baxter (2003) which revealed that language teachers’ misunderstanding of the philosophy of learner-centredness led them to ‘demote’ its humanitarian principles into classroom activities (such as group work) (see Holliday: 63-84). Despite the significance of accounting for non-native EFL teachers’ understanding of the CLCA, the research on

implementing this approach for TEFL in developing countries shows that little research has been carried out to investigate this issue (see 3.1). Therefore, this study has been offered as an attempt to address this gap.

### **3.3.3 LCA for Language Teaching**

Enhancing students' ability for communication in English language has become a common goal for EFL classrooms. To achieve this goal, EFL teachers are recommended and sometimes instructed to employ communicative teaching methods in classrooms. This has resulted from the influence of contemporary theories of language acquisition and learning which emphasise the primary role of communication in language learning (Klein, 1986: 146-147). Fleming and Stevens (1998) pointed out the common belief in the literature that "language develops primarily by being used in meaningful contexts" not by "instruction and practice in discrete skills" (p: 116). This notion was later advocated by Ellis (2003: 319).

Recently, there is an increasing interest in implementing the LCA for language teaching and learning through integrating communication with learner-centredness (Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Jin et al, 2005; Holliday, 2005). The development of this notion was based on the link between CLT and the LCA (Nunan, 1988; Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Tudor, 1996; Anton, 1999; Jin et al, 2005; Holliday, 2005; Segovia & Hardison, 2009). Nunan (1988) stated that a major 'impetus' to the development of learner-centred language teaching came with the advent of CLT and described the general learner-centred philosophy as an 'off spring' of CLT (pp: 24/179). Tudor (1996) also pointed out the contribution of CLT into the development of the LCA through focusing on considering learners' communicative goals in course design (pp: 10 /130). Similarly, Butler (2005) believed that the LCA has often been associated with CLT (p: 224).

Holliday (2005) attributed the rise of learner-centredness in language teaching in the 1970s to the realisation of the fact that “language learning is owned by the learner” (p: 63).

The implementation of CLT methodologies for FL teaching may yield better results in student-centred classrooms. The active role students are assumed to play in these classrooms and their involvement in different communications and interactions during language classes may lead them to develop their ‘communicative competence’. Lui and Littlewood (1997) emphasised the link between students’ active participation and the LCA and considered it as a solution for enhancing students’ active participation in language classrooms (p: 382).

### **3.3.3.1 Independent Language Learning**

The notion of independent learning has become very popular in the literature about language teaching and learning (Lee, 1998; Cotterall, 2000; Bordonaro; 2006; Field, 2007; Jones, 2007). Bordonaro (2006) defined self-directed language learning as an approach in which “a learner trying to progress independently of a language classroom in which the teacher directs the learning” (p: 29)

Creating independent language learners is one of the fundamental aims of the CLCA. Therefore, Al-Hazmi (2008) emphasised that developing self-directed language learners requires teachers’ development and implementation of learner-centred instruction in classrooms (p: 15). A development of students’ communicative competence may not be achieved through exposing them to the target language for few hours if not minutes inside teacher-centred classrooms. Encouraging students to learn independently outside schools could be a good strategy for increasing the time of their practice and exposure to English. However, students should be trained about making appropriate decisions

about how and what to read independently. Sheerin (1997) suggested that preparing students for independent language learning could be provided by self-access language centres (p: 59).

Cotterall (2000) referred to the increasing belief among language teachers about the usefulness of creating independent language learners (p: 109). Bordonaro (2006) conducted a study in 2003-2004 to explore the views of 20 ESL students who were learning independently in a library to improve their English. These students expressed positive views about independent language learning and found the library as “a place that affords them an opportunity to improve their English in the four language skills” (p: 32). Therefore, he advocated the notion of students learning independently and claimed that it would be possible to connect independent learning with content learning. The findings of this study indicate the important role of libraries in promoting independent language learning and emphasised the need for providing learner-centred schools with libraries. The significance of the availability of self-access materials was also emphasised by a group of writers who recommended the establishment of self-access language centres in schools to provide the necessary facilities for independent language learning (Sheerin, 1997; Sturtridge, 1997; Littlewood, 1997; LittleJohn, 1997; O’Dell, 1997; Fleming & Stevens, 1998; Miller et al, 2007). Fleming and Stevens (1998) believed that this provision could help language teachers for dealing with problems related to students’ individual differences (p: 110). Miller et al (2007) claimed that this would lead students to develop their language skills and “learning-to-learn skills” (pp: 226-227).

However, students’ selection of appropriate materials for their independent learning is a critical issue. Fleming and Stevens (2004) believed that careful selection and



understanding are necessary conditions for transforming the information taken from the internet into knowledge (p: 181). Al-Hazmi (2008) conducted a qualitative research to investigate the value of self-directed language learning as perceived by eight Saudi Arabian learners who were randomly selected from a group of learners at the Professional English Language Centre of Saudi, Dahrhan, Saudi Arabia. These participants were asked through a series of open-ended questions during 15-20 minutes interviews about their perceptions of the notion of 'self-directed language learning'. He pointed out the difficulty encountered by his participants for articulating a precise definition for this notion and reported these conceptions; '*depending on one self in learning*', '*self-teaching*', '*continuous process of learning*', '*a source of motivation to engage in reading activities*', '*you choose your way of learning*', '*an effective way to improve research skills and presentation skills*', and '*a means to challenge yourself learning more and more*' (p: 9). Generally, these participants were positive about the notion of self-directed language learning but they emphasised the role of the teacher during this process (pp: 11-12).

Teachers can foster students' independent learning through creating a supportive environment for leading them to accept responsibility for their own learning. Establishing good relationships with students may develop this sense of responsibility through involving students in making decisions related to their learning. Teachers can also select and organise classroom learning tasks and activities which promote students' independent learning (Brandes & Ginnis, 1986; Lambert & McCombs, 1998; McCombs & Miller, 2007).

### **3.3.3.2 Recent Research on Implementing the LCA for ELT in Non-Western Contexts**

Recent research on TEFL shows a clear interest in implementing the CLCA in non-Western contexts.

Nonkukhetkhong et al (2006) investigated perceptions and implementation of five Thai EFL teachers of the LCA to TEFL in Thai secondary school contexts through employing interviews, classroom observation and self-reporting as methods of investigation. The findings of this study revealed an interest among the teachers to implement the LCA and CLT for TEFL but reported many contextual challenges for this implementation (see 3.3.4). Although the sample involved in this study was not representative, its findings were very interesting and indicative.

Promising results about the implementation of the CLCA for ELT in developing countries were reported by Matsau (2007) who conducted his research in Lesotho, an African developing country, to investigate the implementation of this approach to language teaching in secondary schools. Ten teachers and twenty-seven students from five secondary schools were involved in this study. The data was collected through survey questionnaires, observation sessions and focused discussion. The findings of this study revealed the successful implementation of many strategies of the LCA by the teachers and students. Matsau observed that learner-centred methods were used as they were required in the syllabus. The students who participated in this study believed that their implementation of group and pair work activities improved their “confidence, assertiveness, and decision-making skills” (p: 145). These students also believed that the flexibility in the ways they were allowed to work through the LCA such as pairs, groups, or as individuals helped them for building useful skills for the classroom and

for their daily lives. These skills included “independence, self-confidence, decision-making, being self-reliant, assurance, being self-oriented, self-trusting, ... boldness, self-esteem, self-determination and taking responsibility for one’s own actions” (pp: 148-149). The findings of this study indicate the possibility of implementing the CLCA for ELT successfully in developing countries, which challenges the argument of considering this approach inappropriate for these contexts. It also suggests that the syllabus can be used as a guide for leading EFL teachers and students to implement the CLCA effectively.

Al-Nouh (2008) investigated the implementation of 23 Kuwaiti EFL primary school teachers of a CLT-based learner-centred method through interviews and classroom observation. He reported that the teachers were implementing a teacher-centred method despite the learner-centred training they had received during their university teacher education. He attributed this to these teachers’ focus on teaching to the test. The findings of this study revealed the mismatch between the teachers’ perceptions of their own practice with their actual practice inside classrooms. The more experienced teachers had better knowledge and skills for implementing a CLT-based learner-centred method than the less experienced (Al-Nouh, 2008).

Kirkgoz (2008) conducted a 2-year case study (2003-2005) to investigate 32 Turkish EFL state primary school teachers’ instructional practices and the impact of their understanding and training on their implementation of the communicative oriented innovation. Classroom observation and interviews were employed as tools for data collection in this study. This investigation revealed a considerable deviation in the classroom practices of sixteen teachers from the principle of CLT as they were delivering knowledge about the language rather than encouraging pupils’ active

participation. Six teachers adopted a more flexible style of teaching for applying the principles of CLT and focused on the development of pupils' communicative abilities. The other ten teachers tended to follow an eclectic approach by utilising practices of both traditional and communicative approaches through combining the 'old' with the 'new' (Kirkgoz, 2008).

Segovia and Hardison (2009) investigated 3 Thai EFL teachers' perspectives towards a learner-centred curriculum innovation in ELT. The data was collected through classroom observation, post-observation stimulated recall and interviews with the teachers and 4 supervisors. The findings of this study revealed that the TCA was still dominant and there was little evidence of "communicative language use" (p: 154). A lack of consideration for 'economic benefits of globalisation', 'teachers' English proficiency and methodological training' and 'disconnect between curriculum policy and classroom practice" were identified as reasons for this failure. Other challenges were also reported such as 'lack of insufficient teacher training', 'resources', 'mentoring support', and 'cost of further education for in-service teachers', 'learners' lack of interest in learning English and perceptions of its lack of value' and considering the teachers as 'untapped resource in the decision-making process' (Segovia & Hardison, 2009: 161).

Orafi and Borg (2009) reported the failure of three Libyan EFL teachers' to implement the changes embodied within learner-centred communicative curriculum innovation; despite their positive beliefs about these changes (For more details about this study (see 2.4.2).

Two interesting conclusions can be drawn from this review. The first is that EFL teachers and students were generally positive about the implementation of the CLCA

for ELT in these developing countries (Thailand, Lesotho, Kuwait, and Libya). The second is related to the existence of several challenges and difficulties which significantly hindered EFL teachers' implementation of this approach. These researchers addressed the issue of the implementation of the CLCA for TEFL from different perspectives and offered some useful insights about this issue. However, none of them investigated EFL teachers' conceptions of this approach. Therefore, this issue represents the focus of this study.

### **3.3.4 Challenges and Barriers for CLCA**

The implementation of the CLCA has been encountered with many challenges and impediments related to systematic, cultural, and personal considerations. Rogers and Freiberg (1994) believed that "changing perceptions of how people learn and what will take to significantly move us in new directions" is the greatest challenge for this process (p: 270). This difficulty was also emphasised by Thanli et al (2008: 78).

Students' hesitation or resistance to adapt themselves to the new learning environment and methods of instruction represents a major challenge for the successful implementation of the CLCA. This can be related to

- students' reluctance to be the focus of classroom activities,
- students' different conceptions about teaching and learning,
- students' lack of thinking about learning objectives ,
- students' low levels of proficiency ,
- students' lack of the capabilities needed for independence ,
- students' lack of ability to assume a self- directive role, or for taking ownership responsibility over their own learning,

- students' views of the status of their teacher as an authority inside the classroom,
- students different conceptions of learning activities and cooperative learning;
- students' accountability to examination demands;
- students' lack of interest in classroom participation,
- students' motivational, volitional and affective factors such as motivation, self-esteem, anxiety, self-confidence, self-concept, self-efficacy, lack of interest and dependence on frameworks.

Many of these conditions may result from students' lack of familiarity with notions of freedom and responsibility for learning or from their lack of self-regulation skills or adequate training to become independent learners. Rogers (1983) attributed this resistance to students' past experiences with teachers' manipulation through traditional approaches of instructions which made them "long for the continuance of the security of being told what to do" (p: 190). Paris and Gespass (2001) reported that the majority of their sample students who were taken from a learner-centred classroom were reluctant to take responsibility over their learning, to set personal goals, or to make decisions about course requirements (p: 403). Weimer (2002) related this resistance to students' conceptions of this approach as 'more work', 'more threatening', 'involve losses' and 'may be beyond students" (p: 153). Therefore, she argued that these students would think about the TCA as "easier, more efficient and much more comfortable" (p: 79).

Other impediments can be related to teachers. There is a trend in the literature about the LCA to consider teachers' resistance to implement this approach as a major impediment for its effective implementation. This resistance is often related to teachers' fear of losing power or control over classrooms (Rogers, 1969; Brandes & Ginnis, 1986;

Holliday, 1994/1994a; Weimer, 2002; Garret & Shortall, 2002). Brandes and Ginnis (1986) believed that “any move to transfer ownership from teacher to students is likely to be met with fierce resistance because it may be perceived as a threat to the profession as a whole” (p: 27). Weimer (2002) also believed that the idea of giving up control or involving students in making decisions often frightens many teachers due to their belief about the superiority of their role in teacher-centred classrooms over their role inside student-centred classrooms (pp: 28/78). Similarly, Holliday (1994a) argued that the concept of learner-centeredness is ‘inherently problematic’ for EFL teachers because they would perceive it in terms of affecting their authority (p: 7). Garret and Shortall (2002) pointed out the common belief among teachers that their professional judgement should be unquestioned and that students have no contribution to make in the instructional process. They emphasised that this misconception would have a negative impact on teachers’ willingness to implement the LCA (p: 48).

Teachers’ lack of satisfaction about the usefulness of implementing teaching methods developed in the West in non-Western contexts was reported as another reason for teachers’ resistance. Burnaby and Sun (1989) investigated the views of twenty-four Chinese EFL teachers on the appropriateness and effectiveness of ‘Western’ language teaching methods for their context. These teachers perceived these methods as inappropriate for their context due to the existence of many contextual constraints. They argued that the success of these methods for teaching ESL in the West does not necessarily mean that “they are exportable” (p: 236). Bax (2003) who holds the same belief criticised CLT for neglecting a key aspect of language teaching regarding the particularities of contexts of application which could have a negative effect on language learning in non-Western contexts. Therefore, he considered the context as a key factor for successful language learning (p: 286). Holliday (1994) warned teachers from

adapting Western approaches and practices without clear understanding of their potential consequences.

Differences between teachers' and students' perceptions about good teaching and good teaching practices may hinder the implementation of the CLCA. Brown (2009) investigated perceptions of 1600 EFL students and 49 EFL teachers at the University of Arizona through 24-item Likert-scale. The findings of this study revealed a discrepancy between students' and teachers' perceptions of good language practices. The students favoured a grammar-based approach but the teachers favoured more communicative teaching. He recommended that EFL teachers understand students' perspectives about teaching instructional approaches through engaging them in brief classroom discussions (p: 46).

Li (1998) and Heip (2007) considered teachers' deficiency in spoken English, lack of appropriate training, misconceptions about the CLCA, and lack of concern with material development as influential factors. Other factors relate to the new complex roles for teachers and the complexity for dealing with learners' diversity, accounting for their prior knowledge, their different needs and interests and affective factors (see 3.3.4). Carless (1998) reported about unsuccessful attempts of implementing learner-centred communicative curricula in China, Egypt, Greece and Oman and attributed this failure to the teachers' traditional teacher-centred methods background. Weimer (2002) added another reason related to teachers' lack of understanding of how to implement their new learner-centred roles. She believed that this would lead them to move back to familiar teacher-centred methods of instruction (p: 80).

The contextual effects of particular schools, family, education system, culture and environment may also negatively affect the implementation of the CLCA



(Ghail, 1992; Tudor, 1996; Simons, 1997; Frisby, 1998; Li, 1998). Frisby (1998) emphasised the significance of accounting for the possible impact of context effects on the content and quality of classroom teaching and learning in any effort to implement student-centred approaches (p: 75). These include large classes, insufficient funding and limited resources, pressure of exams and lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments (Guthrie, 1990; O’Sullivan, 2004; Li, 1998). Morris (1986) considered governmental control of educational systems, in general, and of curricula in particular as other influential factors (p: 171). Tudor (1996) pointed out the negative impact of imposing pre-established curricula and prescribed textbooks in learner-centred schools (pp: 229-232). In this respect, Pilly (2002) stressed the need for accounting for individuals’ variations to enhance the proper implementation of this approach (p: 100). Kasanda et al (2005) considered students’ perception of their teachers as elders who should be respected and whose sayings should not be questioned as another possible challenge for implementing the LCA (p: 1819).

Although all the above constraints can seriously hinder the implementation of the LCA anywhere, Guthrie (1990) pointed out four major problems which could be more influential in developing countries:

- teachers may have insufficient time to innovate;
- classroom facilities may not be appropriate for some teaching styles;
- examinations may emphasise learning inconsistent with the innovation; and
- education ministries may be unable to provide appropriate organisational support, particularly during extension phases (Guthrie,1990: 225).

These complex challenges and difficulties led Tudor (1993) to describe learner-centred teaching as “anything but not an easy option” (p: 29) and Sablonniere et al (2009) to describe the task of shifting from the TCA into the LCA as “daunting” (p: 633). By the

same token, Yeung (2009) questioned the possibility of applying the LCA in Hong Kong (p: 377).

### **3.3.5 Overcoming the Barriers**

Proper and effective implementation of the CLCA in schools requires the provision of appropriate conditions for overcoming the aforementioned challenges and difficulties.

A first step which can be taken in order to plan for overcoming these obstacles and challenges is analysing the curriculum development strategy through which the CLCA has been introduced into schools (see 7.1). This may lead to identify the priorities which need to be given more attention. Morris (1986) suggested three variables for analysing the strategies of curriculum development which he had employed for analysing four curriculum changes in Hong Kong secondary schools. These variables included “the decision-making groups, the linkages between superordinate and subordinate groups, and the nature of the resources provided” (p: 171). These factors may be employed for evaluating and analysing educational reforms and curriculum development programmes in any context.

Carless (2003) investigated the factors which had an impact on three Hong Kong EFL teachers’ implementation of communicative tasks in three primary schools through employing classroom observation, focused interviews and attitude scale. These factors included: ‘teacher beliefs’, ‘teacher understanding’, ‘the syllabus time available’, ‘the textbook and the topic’, ‘preparation and the available resources’; and ‘ the language proficiency of students’. He discovered that these factors had a great influence on the participant teachers’ implementation of the innovation. Surprisingly, he reported that none of these teachers highlighted the impact of examinations on their instructional approaches or students’ learning (pp: 485-498). These factors can be used as a

framework for analysing EFL teachers' implementation of communicative innovations. Therefore, these factors were considered for analysing the curriculum innovation in Libyan secondary schools. Nevertheless, more factors related to the Libyan context were also considered in this process (see Chapter 7).

The advocates of the LCA anticipated resistance and challenges for this approach therefore they offered some guidelines for overcoming these challenges. Gibbs (1981) recommended introducing this approach in a safe manner, providing learner-centred study materials and clarifying the aims of adopting this approach to students (pp: 88-91). Marshall (1998) suggested helping students develop critical skills for evaluating their learning and enhancing their confidence in their "critical thinking and integrating abilities" (p: 457). Weimer (2002) proposed introducing this approach gradually, providing teachers and students with constant support and clear guidance and develop teachers' understanding of this approach (pp: 184-201). Nunan (1995) suggested closing the gap between learning and instruction by moving towards the LCA through four stages including 'awareness', 'involvement', 'intervention', 'creation' and 'transcendence' (p: 138). Maclellan (2008) proposed integrating "motivational constructs such as goal orientation, volition, interest and attribution into pedagogical practices" (p: 411) and emphasised that both teachers and students "need to be explicit about their perspective goal orientation" (p: 418).

Providing teachers with sufficient guidance and support for overcoming the aforementioned challenges is a significant issue for consideration (Rogers, 1969). This support and guidance can be provided through many sources such as educational authorities, headteachers, colleagues and parents. In a FL setting, inspectors can be an important source for this support and guidance. The following sub-section explains how

inspectors can either promote or hinder teachers' implementation of curriculum innovations.

### **3.3.5.1 Role of the Inspector**

Responsibility for evaluating teachers' performance in Libya is assigned to inspectors (often experienced in a subject field) who make visits to schools to observe teachers' actual teaching in order to write reports of evaluation about them (see 2.5). Richards (2001) defined inspection as "involving observing work in schools, collecting evidence from a variety of other sources and reporting judgements" (p: 656). The notion of subjective judgement embodied within external inspection associates it with teachers' stress and negative attitudes about this process which may not lead to develop teachers' performance. Therefore, developing teachers' self-assessment and schools' self-evaluation have been offered as alternative strategies to external inspection (Webb et al, 1998).

England (1973) pointed out the main reasons for the criticism of some Teacher Organisations in Queensland and Victoria to the inspectorial system. These reasons are reported in this section as they are similar to the situation in the Libyan context:

- inspection is unprofessional because it implies that teachers are not to be trusted without the threat of regular assessment;
- the teacher is encouraged to base his work on what he thinks will please the inspector, not the needs of students;
- the validity, reliability, effectiveness, and fairness of inspectorial assessments are questionable;
- a teacher can not fully confide in an inspector for advisory purposes when he knows that the inspector is also his assessor (England, 1973: 44).

Webb et al (1998) reported the findings of a wider comparative project which investigated two processes of curriculum change in primary schools in England and

Finland during the period 1994-1997. Two opposite policies of inspection were used in these two contexts. In England, external accountability was imposed on schools through the OFSTED. In Finland, the national inspection system was abandoned and school self-evaluation was promoted. The inspection system used in England had an impact on the policies and procedures rather than on classroom practice. Although schools' self-evaluation was in its early attempts, the ownership of the evaluation process by teachers, together with inputs from parental feedback and pupil self-assessment had contributed to produce positive changes on classroom practice (Webb et al, 1998: 539).

Teachers' views about the process of inspection represent a significant factor for leading them to change their classroom practices. Chapman (2001) investigated five UK comprehensive secondary school teachers' perceptions, responses and intentions to change their classroom practice as a result of the inspection process. This study revealed that teachers who viewed the inspection process as a useful tool for improving their performance had positive interactions with inspectors and perceived the feedback they received as beneficial. Therefore, it is important for the inspectors to provide appropriate feedback for developing teachers' work quality. However, the complexity of the relationship between teachers and inspectors can have a strong influence on teachers' positive or negative perceptions of this process (p:71). Later in 2002, Chapman investigated the views of 10 UK secondary school teachers of the OFSTED as a mechanism for improving secondary schools in challenging contexts. He concluded by emphasising the importance of balancing between internal and external elements of inspection and the application of pressure and support. Chapman (2002) suggested that an inspection system should consider:

- Context specificity. The inspection process must be flexible enough to support improvement in schools at different stages of development, exhibiting diverse

cultural typologies, structures and perhaps most importantly differential capacities of change;

- Change of all levels. The inspection process must identify meaningful areas for change at all levels within schools. Appropriate levels must then be used to facilitate the changes with the aid of specialised local knowledge;
- Post-inspection relationship. In order to generate sustainable improvements the inspection process must provide post-inspection support to facilitate the change process (Chapman, 2002: 270).

Leshem and Bar-Hama (2007) believed that it is important to involve the teachers in constructing a comprehensive view of inspection through providing them with explicit criteria for effective teaching to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to use these criteria as guidelines for self-improvement (p: 257). Richards (2001) suggested the embodiment of the inspection judgements with clearly articulated aims, values and concepts and the reinterpretation of school inspection as a “basis for dialogue between inspectors, those who employ them and those whose work is inspected by them” (p: 665). A realisation of this aim requires putting the teacher at the centre of the supervision process by adopting an approach of ‘teacher-centred supervision’ for learner-centred teachers (Paris & Gespass, 2001).

Weimer (2002) suggested teachers’ self-reflection on their own practices as a good strategy for improving their teaching (p: 193). However, she pointed out two barriers which could affect teachers’ evaluation of their own practices. One of these barriers related to teachers’ inability for identifying appropriate external standards for evaluating their practices. The second barrier related to teachers’ lack of understanding of descriptive or diagnostic aspects and details for evaluating themselves (Weimer, 2002: 193-196). Kleinhenz and Ingvarson (2004) suggested teachers’ and schools’ development of their own criteria for evaluating teachers’ performance in order to

account for the complexity of their professional knowledge and practice (p: 31). Angelides et al (2006) believed that teachers' ability for analysing their practices critically would lead them to identify the factors and the barriers which might affect their implementation of curriculum innovation (p: 520).

Beatty (2000) designed an intervention programme for a professional study group to investigate 'professional' growth as an individually reflective and authenticity collaborative phenomenon'. Seven secondary school teachers participated in this study and formed with the researcher an eight-experience group. The results of this study supported the idea that involving teachers in focus groups to reflect collaboratively on their practice can be an effective tool for enhancing their professional growth.

The role of inspector and inspectors' and teachers' conceptions of the inspection process represent neglected areas of research in Libya (Abdulali, 1986). Abdulali (1986) analysed relevant governmental documents and compared the role of inspector in Libya with the role of inspector in Egypt and England. Although the approach of investigation used in this study did not provide empirical evidence to support its findings, it offered useful insights about the role of inspector in the Libyan educational system. Some of these insights were implied in the following conclusions:

- The goals of school supervision included contributing to the development of the educational process and 'help the teachers grow professionally' (p:48);
- Only one evaluation type was used by Libyan inspectors;
- The need for changing the role of inspectors to be more participatory and constructive;
- The importance of inspectors' possession of certain competencies and knowledge about supervision in order to be able to play their new role;
- The invalidity of the policy of assigning inspectors (see 2.4.4);

- The significance of involving teachers and students in the process of evaluating the teachers 'teacher's self evaluation' (p: 143).

Abdulali (1986) designed a training programme for developing Libyan inspectors' understanding of their new role in the learning process. Libyan EFL inspectors' development of the skills and areas of knowledge suggested in this programme may promote their role in the process of implementing the curriculum innovation. Abdulali (1986) suggested that the training programme for Libyan inspectors should focus on:

- 1- Supervision and instruction.
- 2- Curriculum theories and development.
- 3- Methods of teaching.
- 4- School administration.
- 5- Educational psychology.
- 6- Research methods.
- 7- Human relation skills.
- 8- Communication skills
- 9- Educational measurement and evaluation (Abdulali, 1986: 149).

The nature of inspectors' tasks in Libya offers them an important role in leading teachers to apply educational innovations in classrooms successfully and effectively. As the inspectors have a regular contact with teachers, they can provide them with necessary support and guidance for enhancing their implementation of educational innovations. However, the inspectors should be ready to offer this help and guidance through an acceptance and supportive manner. This may develop inspector-teacher relationship based on mutual respect and understanding. This relationship will encourage the teachers to report to the inspectors the difficulties they encounter or their concerns about their role in this process. The inspectors' proper supervision and



guidance requires their full understanding of the innovation in order to be able to respond to teachers' questions and concerns. However, lack of this knowledge or understanding may lead the inspectors to perceive teachers' questions and inquiries as a source of tension or embarrassment. The teacher-inspector relationship can be also affected by the rigid regulations and instructions imposed on inspectors by their employers which determine the criteria of teacher evaluation. The standardised annual teacher's assessment form imposed on Libyan inspectors by the GPCE represents a clear example of these rigid regulations (see appendix7).

### **3.6 Summary of Literature Review**

The humanistic ideas of Carl Rogers (1969; 1983) and the democratic ideas of John Dewey (1910; 1916) seem to be the most influential on the development of the CLCA. These scholars shared the same belief about the importance of changing the traditional perspective about teaching and learning. They criticised the teaching instructional approaches based on this perspective for not leading to the development of the learner's personality as a whole or to the creation of self-reliant learners. They believed that learning should be seen as a psychological and sociological process rather than as an intellectual and mechanical process for transmitting knowledge. Nevertheless, Rogers (1969;1983) was more concerned with the consideration of the learner's affective and emotional factors and their impact on enhancing his/her motivation to learn whereas Dewey (1910;1916) emphasised the development of the learner's critical thinking and his/her ability for making independent decisions.

Facilitation has been offered as an alternative for traditional instructional approaches. The introduction of this notion has made a profound impact on the nature and the shape of the teaching/learning process. Its implementation implies a dramatic change in the

roles played by teachers, students, textbooks, headteachers, inspectors, educational authorities and parents. Many developing countries have reformed their educational systems through adapting this notion. However, the relevant research indicates the limited success or the failure of most of these attempts (see table 3.1). Different reasons have been reported to be responsible for this phenomenon (see 3.3.4).

There is a common belief in the literature on this approach to attribute its failure for TEFL in developing countries to the rejection of the Western ideas which are embodied within this approach. This belief led some researchers in these contexts to argue for its inappropriateness for developing countries and to consider it as appropriate for developed countries only (Guthrie, 1990; Jansen, 2009) (see 3.3.2). Others (Guthrie, 1990: 232; O'Sullivan, 2004: 600) invited researchers from developing countries to investigate the appropriateness of this approach for their contexts. However, the research review which has been carried out in this study indicated the possibility of the successful implementation of this approach for TEFL in developing countries (Matsau, 2007) as well as its potential failure in some developed countries (see 3.3.3.2). This suggests that other reasons could be responsible for this phenomenon.

The research on implementing the CLCA for ELT in developing countries (see table 3.1) seems to focus on investigating teachers' beliefs about this approach (Orafi & Borg, 2009), the extent of its implementation in classrooms (Al-Nouh, 2008) and the most influential challenges encountered by teachers and students in this process (Yilmaz, 2009) ( see 3.3.2). Exploring EFL teachers' understanding of the underlying philosophy of learner-centredness represents a serious gap in this research. Therefore, this phenomenographical investigation has been carried out as an attempt to address this

issue through exploring the variation in the conceptions of a sample of Libyan EFL teachers in Libyan secondary schools of this approach.

## **Chapter IV: Research Methodology**

### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter explains the methods of research and the instruments of data collection used in this study. Research methodology encompasses the investigation approaches and methods used to collect data for “inferences and interpretation, for explanation and prediction” (Cohen et al 2000: 44).

Research approaches are mainly divided into three paradigms; quantitative, qualitative and mixed (Cohen et al, 2007; Denscombe, 2008; Brymn, 2008; Creswell, 2008; Berg, 2009). The selection of research approaches and methods of data collection are often influenced by the nature of inquiry, the nature of population, the nature of hypotheses and variables and by the research questions (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Cohen et al 2007; Bryman, 2008; Creswell, 2008; Berg, 2009). However, Denscombe (2008) argued that this selection is often guided by “career interest, funding opportunities, training and personal skills rather than a purely “rational” choice based on the respective merits of the available alternatives” (p: 280)

A mixed approach employing quantitative and qualitative research methods was used as the means of investigation in this study. Creswell (2008) defines ‘mixed methods designs’ as “procedures for collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study...” (p: 62). The selection of this mixed approach was based on “pragmatism and a practice-driven need to mix methods” (Denscombe, 2008: 80) and “practical value for dealing with a specific research problem” (ibid). This

mixed approach offers the opportunity for elaboration, clarification, explanation and confirmation of data (Jang et al, 2008: 221). Moreover, the flexibility of this approach and the variety of its research methods could lead to better understanding of the issue under investigation (Bryman, 2008: 24). ‘Triangulation’ is closely related to mixed research approaches as it involves using two or more methods for data collection (Cohen et al 2007: 241). However, Bryman (2008) argued that combining quantitative and qualitative research approaches may not be possible due to their different epistemological assumptions (p: 21). Nevertheless, this combination was useful for identifying and investigating the teachers’ different conceptions of the CLCA. It was possible through this approach for the teachers to reflect on their own experiences of implementing the CLCA for teaching the new English curriculum in Libyan secondary schools and to report their concerns and the difficulties they encountered in this process. They were also able to express their views about the suitability of this approach for TEFL within their own context. This mixed approach yielded sufficient data for answering the following research questions:

- Q1- What are the different conceptions of the CLCA held by Libyan EFL secondary school teachers in the Western region?
- Q2- What difficulties do Libyan EFL secondary school teachers encounter in implementing the CLCA for teaching the new English language curriculum?
- Q3-What criteria do Libyan English language inspectors use for evaluating teachers’ performance and what influence might these criteria have on teachers’ conceptions and implementation of the CLCA?
- Q4-Do Libyan EFL secondary school teachers and inspectors find the CLCA appropriate for TEFL within their context?

A review of the literature about research methodology indicates that ‘phenomenography’ has been widely used for investigating conceptions of teaching and learning (Marton, 1981; Marton, 1986; Bowden, 1996; Marton & Booth, 1997; Booth, 1997; Sandberg, 1997; Richardson 1999; Boulton-Lewis et al, 2001; Akerlind, 2005; Trigwell et al, 2005; Marton & Pong, 2005; Akerlind, 2008; Harris, 2008; Howell, 2008; Newton & Newton, 2009). Marton and Pong (2005) referred to ‘conceptions’ as the “basic unit of description in phenomenographic research” (p: 336). Akerlind (2008) emphasised the usefulness of phenomenography for exploring whether teachers hold teacher-centred or student-centred conceptions of teaching (p: 634). Trigwell et al (2005) believed that teachers’ reflection on their teaching approaches in phenomenographic researches would lead to raise their “awareness of their thinking and practice” (p: 350). Therefore, Akerlind (2005) reported that many doctoral theses have been carried out by adopting this approach of investigation (p: 328).

As ‘phenomenography’ is a relatively new qualitative research approach for investigating educational problems in the Libyan context, offering a detailed account about this approach to explain its terms in this chapter will be beneficial. These details are also given to account for Bowden’s (1996) criticism of most published articles which reported phenomenographic research results for not providing details about their research methodology (p: 51).

#### **4.1 Phenomenography**

Phenomenography is an empirical research approach was developed in the 1970s by a research group in the Department of Education, University of Gothenburg, Sweden (Marton, 1981; Marton, 1986; Akerlind, 2008; Harris, 2008). Marton and his colleagues were inspired by the belief that “a careful account of the different ways people think

about phenomena may help uncover conditions that facilitate the transition from one way of thinking to a qualitatively better perception of reality” (Marton, 1986: 146). Therefore, they developed phenomenography to answer certain questions about teaching and learning and to account for the limitations of the dominant quantitative methods in educational research (Marton, 1986; Sandberg, 1997; Marton & Booth, 1997).

Marton (1996) explained that phenomenography is different from other qualitative approaches through focusing on conceptions held by groups rather than by individuals. He attributed this to the interest of this approach in discovering the “qualitatively different ways of experiencing the phenomenon in question, regardless of whether the differences are differences between or within individuals” (pp: 182-183). The description reached by phenomenographers is often based on the ‘collective’ rather than on the ‘individual’ level (Marton & Booth, 1997: 114) and gives indications about the range of conceptions held by the population under study (Marton & Booth, 1997; Akerlind, 2005; Harris, 2008). This investigation may explain how conceptions can be translated into practice because “if people experience a certain situation in the same way, they will deal with it in the same way as well” (Marton & Booth, 1997:126). Another difference between phenomenography and other traditional research approaches may lie in the way of analysing the data. The analysis of phenomenographic data is often “dialectical” as the researcher develops the meanings in the process of bringing quotes together and comparing them (Marton, 1986:155). In other words, the categories of description reached by phenomenographers always emerge from their data. However, this feature is also related to ‘grounded theory’ (Cohen et al, 2007: 491-492). Marton (1986) argued that phenomenography is not “an off spring of phenomenology” (p: 152). He explained the difference between the two approaches

which lies in the focus of phenomenology “on the essence of experience” and of phenomenography on characterising “the varieties of experience” (p: 153). Webb (1997) added another difference between these two approaches related to the focus of phenomenography on the ‘second order’ or the conceptual thoughts of people (p: 199).

#### **4.1.1 Objectives of Phenomenography**

Marton (1980) explained that ‘phenomenography’ aims to “find and systemize forms of thought in terms of which people interpret aspects of reality- aspects which are socially significant and which are at least supposed to be shared by the members of a particular kind of society” (p: 180). Libyan EFL teachers who work in secondary schools in a large region in the West of Libya represent the society in this study (see 5.1) and the CLCA represents the shared aspect of reality.

According to Marton and Booth (1997) phenomenographers often seek the “totality (at least, that subset of the totality that is pertinent and accessible for the sort of people being studied) of ways in which people experience or are capable of experiencing the object of interest” (p: 121). Marton (1981) explained that phenomenography is not concerned with the phenomenon as it appears in the world rather than in peoples’ conceptions of a phenomenon (p: 178). Marton (1981) and Marton and Booth (1997) emphasised that phenomenographers should be aware that it is not enough to report their participants’ different conceptions of the phenomenon under investigation as they have to look for their underlying meanings and the relationship between these conceptions. This can offer a clear picture of their participants’ understanding of the phenomenon as they always ask questions related to the ‘*Second-Order Perspective*’ not about the ‘*First-Order Perspective*’ (Marton, 1981, 1986; Marton & Booth, 1997). However, Akerlind (2005) pointed out that phenomenographers’ interest in forming a

hierarchical relationship between the categories of description should not lead them to ignore the data which “does not appear to form a logical relationship between categories” as “the structure of an outcome space need not always take the form of a linear hierarchy of inclusiveness; branching structures or hierarchies are also a possibility” (p: 329).

Marton (1981) and Marton and Booth (1997) explained the distinction between these two perspectives through which people can see the world. Researchers who seek information about a certain phenomenon and making statements about it always ask questions which address the ‘*First-Order Perspective*’. However, those researchers who are interested in exploring individuals’ ideas or experiences of a certain phenomenon always address the ‘*Second-Order Perspective*’ (Marton, 1981; Marton, 1986; Marton & Booth, 1997). Marton (1981) claimed that addressing the second-order perspective would enable researchers to develop comprehensive descriptions which could not be derived through addressing the first-order perspective (p: 178). Therefore, Marton and Booth (1997) emphasised that the ‘*Second-Order Perspective*’ “has to be explicitly adopted when research problems are being posed, when material is being gathered and when analysis is being done” (p: 121). The orientation towards the ‘*Second-Order Perspective*’ was adopted since formulating the issue under investigation in this study (exploring how do Libyan EFL teachers conceptualise the CLCA in relation to their implementation of this approach for teaching a new English language curriculum in Libyan secondary schools) until the stage of discussing and interpreting the results reached.

#### **4.1.2 Outcome Space**



A successful phenomenographic investigation of peoples' understanding of an aspect of reality may provide a good description of a number of different conceptions and identify the distribution of these conceptions over the participants. Marton (1981) explained that a carefully-designed phenomenographic research often arrives at two different kinds of results. The first result is qualitative by identifying "what are the conceptions held?" and the second is quantitative by identifying "how many people hold these different conceptions?" (p:195). Moreover, Marton (1986) emphasised that even the "mistaken conceptions of reality" should be reported (p: 145). The different conceptions identified are sorted together in a form of a hierarchy of categories of description and the variations in these conceptions represent the '*Outcome Space*'. See Figure (1).

Marton and Booth (1997) explained some criteria for the quality of a set of methodologically grounded descriptive categories:

- The individual categories should each stand in clear relation to the phenomenon of the investigation so that each category tells us something distinct about a particular way of experiencing a phenomenon
- The categories have to stand in a logical relationship with one another, a relationship that is frequently hierarchal
- The system should be parsimonious, which is to say that as few categories should be explicated as is feasible and reasonable, for capturing the critical variation in the data (Marton & Booth, 1997:125).

However, as the categories of description reached in any phenomenographic research are always driven by the researchers' aims, these categories can be neither final nor complete. Researchers should admit that their emerged categories of description are only related to the participants from whom they collect their data (Marton & Booth,

1997: 123-136) (see 6.1). Therefore, it may not be possible to generalise the results of phenomenographic researches.

## **4.2 Research Methods**

Research methods refer to the “techniques and procedures used in the process of data gathering” (Cohen et al 2000: 44).

Phenomenographers can use different methods of data collection such as interviews, written responses, observations, focus groups, drawings, artefacts, video filming and historical documents (Marton, 1986; Marton & Booth, 1997; Harris, 2008). However, it is important for phenomenographers to offer participants an opportunity for giving open-ended responses in order to identify their conceptions (Marton, 1981, 1986). Therefore, semi-structured interview represents the most common method for phenomenographers because it generates richer data through leading the interviewees to express their conceptual thoughts of the issue under investigation and to reflect on their experiences of it (Marton, 1986; Marton & Booth, 1997; Akerlind, 2005; Harris, 2008). The interview schedule should include open-ended questions to elicit information relevant to the research questions through allowing the interviewees to “choose the dimensions of questions they want to answer” (Marton, 1986: 154) and “to answer in any manner they see fit, letting them express their thoughts and ideas in their own manner” (Gass & Mackey, 2007: 151) (see 5.4.1.2).

Gay and Airasian (2003) and Gass and Mackey (2007) believe that it is possible to combine qualitative and quantitative research methods in the same study. They suggested following the administration of a questionnaire (quantitative) with a small number of detailed interviews (qualitative) to clarify ideas and obtain more explanations

and interpretations. The conceptions of the CLCA sought to be explored in this study could be better identified through asking questions (written or verbal) which can lead the teachers to reflect on their experiences and understanding of this approach. Therefore, these two tools were used for collecting the data for the first phase of this research.

#### **4.2.1 Teachers' Questionnaire**

Gass and Mackey (2007) defined questionnaires as “ written instruments that present all participants with the same series of questions or statements, which the participants then react to either through providing written answers , marking Likert-style judgements or selecting options from a series of statements” (p: 148).

This study aims to explore conceptions of the CLCA held by a random sample of Libyan EFL secondary school teachers (see 5.2.2.3), to identify the difficulties they encounter in implementing this approach and to investigate their views about its appropriateness for TEFL within their own context. The questionnaire was appropriate for collecting data for these issues because it allows for asking all the teachers the same questions (Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003; Cohen et al, 2007; Gass & Mackey, 2007)

Questionnaires can be administered in several ways including self-administration; post, face-to-face interview, telephone, internet, group administered or house-hold-drop off survey (Bell, 1993; Aldridge & Levine, 2001; Gay & Airasian, 2003; Cohen et al 2007; Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003). Although distributing questionnaires through e-mails is currently the most popular method, applying this method in this study was not possible due to the lack of internet facilities for the majority of the teachers. This factor was also influential on determining the sample size of this study (see. 5.2.2.3). A larger number of teachers could be included if internet facilities were more popular and

accessible for the teachers. Applying a self-administration method for distributing the questionnaire was also not possible because the selected schools were scattered across six big cities (see 5.2.2.1). The researcher's personal contact with the teachers would require visiting these schools many times. This was very difficult due to factors of time, transportation and arrangement. Although the lack of direct contact between the researcher and the teachers did not offer the opportunity for providing them with relevant information and explanations about the nature and the aims of the study, these issues were clearly explained in the covering letter of the questionnaire (see appendix 2). Cohen et al (2007) recommended including this covering letter with questionnaires (p: 223). The characteristics suggested by Rodeghier (1996: 40) were considered in designing this covering letter.

#### **4.2.1.1 Construction of Teachers' Questionnaire**

Selecting and organising items of questionnaires are critical issues of their construction. Bryman (2008) suggested gearing questionnaire items or questions to answer research questions (p: 239). There are different approaches for asking questions ranging from close-ended to open-ended (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003; Cohen et al 2007; Bryman, 2008).

A questionnaire composed of open and close-ended questions was constructed to be administered among a hundred Libyan EFL teachers randomly selected from twenty secondary schools (see 5.5.1 & 5.2.2.3). Gass and Mackey (2007) suggested that "questionnaires need not be solely closed or open-ended but they can blend different question types depending on the purpose of the research..." (p: 153).

The literature about the CLCA was reviewed before constructing this questionnaire. This literature includes many measurements, questionnaires and checklists which were

designed to describe the basic principles and practices of traditional teacher-centred and communicative learner-centred classrooms. Some of these resources are listed in the following page in a chronological order:

- Knowles (1975: 60-63)
- Rogers (1983: 185-189);
- Nunan (1988: 98/9);
- Cuban (1993: 7/291-293);
- Tudor (1993: 24-29);
- Karavas-Doukas (1996: 197-199);
- Tudor (1996 :161-195);
- Nunan (1999: 7) ;
- Li (1998 : Appendix) ;
- Weimer (2002 :8-17) ;
- Hawkey (2006: 245) ;
- Matsau (2007: Appendix: 169-183).

A self-constructed questionnaire has been specifically designed for this study (see appendix 1). Two considerations were taken into account in constructing this questionnaire. The first was related to the specific nature of this study which integrates the concept of 'communication' with the concept of 'learner-centeredness' into the concept of the 'CLCA' and its implications for TEFL in non-Western contexts. Most of the resources mentioned earlier did not address the idea of integrating these two notions except Karavas-Doukas (1996:190), who used the same term 'CLCA' for investigating the attitudes of fourteen Greek EFL teachers towards the Communicative Approach (henceforth, CA). The second issue was related to using a simple language for designing

the items of the questionnaire as it would be completed by non-native English language teachers (Akle, 2005) (see 2.4.3). All the statements of the questionnaire were either designed or modified with reference to the explanations and instructions given for Libyan EFL secondary school teachers in the *TeacherBooks* (see, e.g., Blacknell & Harrison, 1999; Philips et al, 2008:) and textbooks (see 2.4.1). The following resources were also used as guidelines for constructing the questionnaire:

- Rogers' description of the basic principles of the TCA and the LCA approaches (1983:185-189) (see 3.1.1);
- Cuban's observable measurements of the classrooms of the two approaches (Cuban (1993: 6-7);
- Karavas-Doukas's attitudinal questionnaire (Karavas-Doukas, 1996: 197-198) (see statements 1, 2,3 4, 17, 18, 19,20);
- and Weimer's five key changes to practice (see Weimer, 2002: 8-17).

The teacher's questionnaire consists of four sections. It starts with a demographic section for gathering factual information about the teachers including sex, total years of teaching English, place of graduation and number of students in classrooms.

The second section of the questionnaire includes the main open-ended question '*What does the CLCA mean to you?*' Asking every participant teacher this question aimed to explore how this approach was conceptualised by a random sample of Libyan EFL secondary school teachers (see.5.2.2.3). Cohen et al (2007) recommended the use of open-ended questions to obtain explanatory information such as opinions, understanding or "an honest, personal comment from the respondent" (p: 330). Gass and Mackey (2007) believe that this "potentially resulting in less predictable and more insightful data" (p: 151). This question could lead the teachers to express the meanings

and interpretations they assigned to the CLCA as it has been designed to address the *Second-order Perspective* (Marton, 1981/198)

A thorough understanding of the teachers' conceptions of the CLCA requires an investigation of their conceptions of its main principles and practices. The third section of the questionnaire was designed to get information about this issue. It was not possible to investigate the teachers' understanding of all these principles and practices through open-ended questions as this would make the questionnaire too long which might discourage the teachers to complete it. Therefore, the basic principles and practices of the CLCA and their equivalents of the TCA were itemised in a Likert scale with five options ranging from 'strongly disagree' (SD) 'disagree' (D), 'uncertain' (U), 'agree' (A) and 'strongly agree' (SA). Larson-Hall (2010) described this form as "typical" (p: 395) and its layout was described by Cohen et al (2007) as "economical of space" (p: 331). Moreover, the data provided through this scale "can be easily quantified and analysed" (Gass & Mackey, 2007: 152). This design could offer the teachers the opportunity for selecting the statements which match their conceptual thoughts and views about the two approaches. The option 'uncertain' was included to account for those teachers who might not be sure about their understanding of the main principles and practices embodied within these statements (Orafi & Borg, 2009). This section includes thirty closed-items which describe the main principles and practices of the CLCA and the TCA. The odd statements were designed to describe the CLCA whereas the even ones were designed to describe the TCA. These statements were not constructed as opposite to each other but as different statements describing certain distinctive features of the two approaches. This would allow the teachers to agree with the odd and the even statements for the same principle or practice if they would think of the two approaches as complementary rather than as two different extremes. This was

also considered in analysing the responses of the teachers for these statements (see 7.2.1 & 7.2.2). These statements were mainly designed to encourage the teachers to reflect on their actual experience in order to identify their views about shifting their instructional approach to be learner-centred.

The thirty statements of the questionnaire were designed to describe the following aspects:

- role of teacher (statements, 1,2,3,4);
- role of student :(statements, 5,6,7,8);
- teacher-student relationship (statements, 9,10);
- classroom talk (statements, 11,12);
- classroom arrangement (statements, 13,14);
- role of school (statements, 15,16)
- pair and group work (statements, 17-18, 19,20);
- role-play (statements, 21,22);
- games (statements, 23,24);
- problem-solving ( statements,25,26);
- assessment (statements, 27,28);
- content of language materials (statements, 29,30).

The data provided through this section was beneficial for identifying the teachers' understanding of the main principles and practices of the CLCA and their views about the changes which they thought as necessary for their proper implementation of this approach. Nevertheless, to account for any limitations which might associate with the teachers' responses to these statements, most of the issues raised in this section were thoroughly investigated during the interviews. The interview schedule was specifically



designed to investigate the teachers' understanding of these issues (see 5.4.1.2.1, Q.2). Moreover, analysing the teachers' responses for these statements was supported with selected quotes from the interviews as appropriate (see 6.2). Analysing the teachers' conceptions of the CLCA in the light of understanding their views about its main principles and practices offered clearer understanding of their conceptions of this approach (see 7.2, 7.2.1 & 7.2.2).

Section four of the questionnaire was concerned with gathering information about the teachers' training for implementing the new curriculum. This section was also concerned with teachers' conceptions of their implementation of the new methodology for teaching the new English textbooks and with identifying the difficulties they encountered in this process. A list consisted of certain difficulties elicited from the research on implementing communicative approaches for ELT in similar contexts (Li, 1998; Nunan, 2003; Nonkukhetkhong et al, 2006; Orafi & Borg, 2009) (see Li, 1998: 686-695) was included in this section and the teachers were asked to tick those difficulties which they themselves had experienced. Moreover, a space was provided for the teachers to add any relevant difficulties. This section ends with a question asking the teachers to express their views about the appropriateness of this approach for TEFL within their own context. This question was intentionally placed in this position. Leading the teachers to express their views about the CLCA after reporting about the training they had received, about their classroom practices and about the difficulties they had encountered would enable them to relate their views to their actual experiences. This offered interesting data for the fourth research question (see 1.4, 6.4).

In the last part, the teachers were asked if they would be interested in participating in the follow-up interviews. A statement of thanking for participation terminated the

questionnaire (Dornyei, 2003; Gass & Mackey, 2007). A plain paper was attached to the questionnaires to offer the teachers enough space for reporting any concerns, complaints or comments related to the issue of the research.

Phenomenographers should explain in details the ways in which they deal with all the issues related to their researches (Marton, 1981/1986). The following sub-section explains validity and reliability issues for constructing this questionnaire.

#### **4.2.1.2 Validity and Reliability of Teachers' Questionnaire**

Different types of validity checks can be used by researchers to account for the validity of their research methods. Although all types of validity can significantly contribute in the success of any research, content validity was more relevant and important for this questionnaire. Construct (content) validity implies that the instrument used should cover the topic under investigation fairly and comprehensively (Gass & Mackey, 2007: 4).

A good strategy for accounting for content (construct) validity of questionnaires can be achieved through other academics' reflection on their contents and structures (Crowl, 1996; Cohen et al 2000; Gay & Airasian 2003; Gass & Mackey, 2007; Bryman, 2008). Academics' views on the teachers' questionnaire of this study were obtained from the two supervisors who guided this research. This questionnaire was also reviewed by another two academics of the School of Education at Durham University during an annual research review (Gay & Airasian, 2003, Bryman, 2008). Experts' views were obtained from seven Libyan colleagues. Several discussions were held with these colleagues and many valuable comments were given and considered. The translated version of the questionnaire was revised by two academics from the translation department in 7th of April University. Another member of the academic staff from the Arabic department in the same university was consulted about the language of this

version. The Arabic version of the questionnaire was revised according to the comments of these academics (see appendix. 14).

#### **4.2.1.2.1 Piloting the Teacher's Questionnaire**

Piloting research instruments is another significant procedure for increasing its validity and reliability (Aldridge & Levine, 2001; Gay & Airasian, 2003; Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003; Bell, 2005; Cohen et al 2007; Bryman, 2008).

Cohen et al (2007) emphasised the importance of piloting questionnaires and refining their contents (p: 158).The questionnaire of this study was tried out in a pilot study before it was distributed for the teachers. As the questionnaire was designed to explore teachers' conceptions of the CLCA, much attention was given to its content validity during the pilot study. The process of piloting this questionnaire started as soon as the approval of the Department's Research Ethics and Data-Protection Sub-Committee of Durham University was granted (see appendix 17). Four different groups of people were involved in piloting the questionnaire of this study. These groups included:

- some colleagues (Wilkinson & Birmingham ,2003: 19);
- some experts (Cohen et al, 2007: 342);
- a sample set of the participants of the main study (Wilkinson & Birmingham , 2003: 19; Cohen et al ,2007: 342);
- and a small number of respondents who are comparable to members of the target population (Bryman,2008: 248).

These groups will be referred to as group (A, B, C, D) respectively. All the participants in the pilot study were asked to answer a list of questions suggested by Bell (2005) after they had completed the questionnaires. These questions were informative and useful for

providing the necessary feedback about the length, the clarity, the sensitivity, the comprehensiveness and the layout of the questionnaire. These questions included:

*1-How long did it take you to complete?*

*2-Were the instructions clear?*

*3-Were any of the items or the questions unclear or ambiguous? If, so, will you say which and why?*

*4-Did you object to answering any of the questions?*

*5-In your opinion, has any major topic been omitted?*

*6-Was the layout of the questionnaire clear/attractive?*

*7- Any comments? (Bell, 2005: 147-148).*

The questionnaire was completed by ten teachers who were teaching in four schools in the region (Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003; Cohen et al, 2007; Gass & Mackey, 2007). A friend of the researcher conducted the process of piloting the questionnaire among these teachers. He explained to the teachers the nature of the research and the purpose of the pilot study and encouraged them to answer the list of questions. They were given the researcher's contact details for any further explanations and were informed that the charge of the telephone calls would be paid by the researcher. Useful feedback was gained through revising and examining the answers and the comments of these teachers.

However, the dependence on this group has been criticised by Bryman (2008) who believes that this could affect the representativeness of any subsequent samples, especially if probability sampling is to be employed for selecting the sample of the main study. Therefore, he suggests piloting questionnaires among a small set of respondents who are comparable to the members of the target population (p: 248). This questionnaire was piloted among ten EFL teachers selected from three secondary schools in the nearest region to the region of the study namely 'Zaiwa'. The researcher depended on another friend who was working as an EFL teacher in this region for

distributing and collecting the questionnaires. The participants were informed about the purpose of the questionnaire and were encouraged to complete it and to answer the list of questions. These teachers were also asked about the time they spent in completing the English version comparing with the Arabic version and about which version they found clearer and easier to complete.

Eight Libyan colleagues who were studying for their MA and PhD degrees in the UK by the time of piloting the questionnaire were also involved in this process. As some of these colleagues had already conducted research in similar schools by using similar methods of research, they were asked about their personal experience and about the specific ethical issues related to the culture of the Libyan context. The teaching experience of these colleagues ranged from 2 years to 27 years in TEFL and therefore their views represented both the views of experienced and less experienced teachers. Moreover, some of these colleagues were considered as experts and their views were treated accordingly.

Aldridge and Levine (2001) criticised depending on colleagues for piloting questionnaires as they would not be representative to the target population (p: 91). Cohen et al (2007) suggested seeking views from experts on questionnaires (p: 342) and Gay and Airasian (2003) suggested reviewers' examination of the completion of questionnaires to determine its content validity (p: 288). Experts' views on this questionnaire were obtained from the two supervisors who guided this research.

The questionnaire was revised according to the comments provided by the participants in the pilot study.

#### 4.2.1.2.1.1 Benefits Gained from Piloting the Teacher's Questionnaire

An examination of the participants' comments and completed questionnaires yielded many benefits.

As question 1 in Bell's (2005) list (see 4.2.1.2.1) was concerned with the time spent in completing the questionnaire, an amount of time ranged between twenty to forty minutes was reported by the participants. Regarding the participants' feedback on the English and Arabic versions, most of the participants declared that the Arabic version was clearer and easier. Accordingly, a decision for distributing an Arabic version with the English one was confirmed. This was seen desirable and helpful by group (C) and group (D). Gass and Mackey (2007) recommended researchers in FL contexts to administer questionnaires in the participants' native language (p: 162).

All the participants emphasised that the covering letter was useful for their understanding of the aims and the instructions of the questionnaire. Therefore, the participants of the main study were strongly recommended to read this covering letter before completing their questionnaires.

The following suggestions were recommended for rewording some items of the questionnaire:

(1)- The question about the total years of experience in section I has been changed to its present form (see appendix 1), instead of its previous form which provided only two categories (*less than 10 years / more than ten years*).

(2)- Question number 5 of section III has been changed to its present form, instead of its previous one '*Do you think that the communicative learner-centred approach is effective for teaching English as a foreign language?*', as it was seen by one of the supervisors as a leading question. No sensitive questions in the questionnaire were

reported by the participants as they did not raise any objections for answering any of the questions of the questionnaire. All the participants reported that the questionnaire was comprehensive and that it fairly covered all the aspects of the issue under investigation in the study. In this regard, the answers of group (B) to question (5) of the list were considered as content validity was a significant issue for this research (see 4.2.1.3).

As the appearance and the layout of the questionnaire could have a significant impact on leading the participants to complete it (Dornyei, 2003:19; Bell, 2005:144), all the participants liked the appearance and the layout of the questionnaire. The guidelines suggested by Bell (2005) were considered for designing the appearance of the questionnaire (pp: 144-145). One of the supervisors suggested reducing the covering letter to one page (see appendix 2), instead of two.

Some colleagues from group (A) reported about the difficulty they had encountered in interviewing their female participants individually and in obtaining their consent for recording the interviews (Ali, 2008: 268). Accounting for this issue, a statement was written in the questionnaire to notify the female teachers about the possibility for anyone of their close relatives (father, mother, husband, brother or sister) to attend the interview. Another statement was also written in the questionnaire to notify both male and female teachers that recording the interviews would be based on their approval. One of the colleagues of group (A) reported about his experience when many of his participants refused to participate in the interview because they were not confident about their ability to communicate in English during the course of the interview. Moreover, it was thought that conducting the interviews in FL teachers' native language would enable them to express their conceptions, ideas and concerns more fluently, more clearly and more confidentially (Orafi & Borg, 2009: 246). Offering FL participants the

opportunity to use the language they like was emphasised by Gass and Mackey (2007: 135). Therefore, a statement was also added indicating the possibility of conducting the interview in Arabic. These statements were concerned with increasing the number of volunteers for participating in the interview (see 5.4.2).

#### **4.2.2 Inspector's Questionnaire**

The decision for involving the 10 regional English language inspectors in this study was based on the analysis of the data obtained during the first phase of this research. This analysis indicated that the majority of the teachers (83%) had encountered challenges and difficulties in implementing the CLCA for teaching the new English language textbooks in Libyan secondary schools. It also indicates that 73% of the teachers had not received any training on implementing the new teaching methodology and that 79% of them had not been provided with sufficient support or guidance. Therefore, it was important to investigate the views and opinions of the regional English language inspectors who were responsible for providing these teachers with training, guidance and assistance. Another reason was related to the opportunity for these inspectors to make regular visits to secondary schools in order to observe and monitor the members of the target population during their actual teaching (see 2.4.4, 5.1). This opportunity enables the inspectors to reflect on these teachers' actual implementation of the CLCA and to report about the difficulties they were encountering in this process. This data would enable the researcher to compare between the teachers' and the inspectors' views. Moreover, the inspectors' observation of the teaching methods used by these teachers for teaching the previous textbooks and the methods they used for teaching the new textbooks would enable them to report about any changes made on the teachers' instructional approaches. This data would be also useful for investigating how these teachers' conceptions of the CLCA were translated into practice. In addition, these



inspectors were treated as experts in the subject therefore identifying their views about the appropriateness of the CLCA for the Libyan context would provide valuable data for the fourth research question (see 1.4).

An open-ended questionnaire was designed to investigate the inspectors' views about the process of changing the English language curriculum in Libyan secondary schools and the teachers' implementation of this curriculum. The usefulness of using open-ended questionnaires for this purpose was emphasised by Gass and Mackey (2007: 148). Dornyei (2003) also suggested the possibility of devising a questionnaire which is "entirely made-up of truly open-ended items" for collecting 'qualitative and exploratory' data (Dornyei, 2003: 14). Gass and Mackey (2007) recommended that "in qualitative research that is relatively unstructured at the outset; it may become appropriate to ask open-ended questions" (p: 153). Cohen et al (2007) described the open-ended questionnaire as "a window of opportunity for the respondent to shed light on an issue or course" (p: 331). Open-ended questionnaires offer respondents the opportunity for writing free accounts in their own words and for explaining their responses in more details. Cohen et al (2007) explained that open-ended questions in questionnaires could "catch the authenticity, richness, depth of response and candour" which they consider as the "hallmarks of qualitative data" (p: 330).

However, Dornyei (2003) considered the respondents' brief engagement with the topic as a limitation for this kind of questionnaires (p: 14). Cohen et al (2007) pointed out the difficulty of comparing between the respondents' answers, the longer time these questionnaires need to be completed and the possibility of leading to irrelevant and redundant information as disadvantages for this type of questionnaires. Nevertheless, they recommended using it for seeking explanatory information, views or opinions. The

open-ended questionnaire was a useful tool for exploring the inspectors' views and opinions about the CLCA.

#### **4.2.2.1 Construction of the Inspectors' Questionnaire**

The inspectors' questionnaire was constructed in the light of analysing the data of the teachers' questionnaire (see chapter 6). A careful investigation of the teachers' responses in the questionnaires and their statements in the interviews revealed that there were issues which needed more depth and understanding. The nature of these issues, the researcher's personal experience and the information included in the report of the coordinator of the English language inspectors of the region (see appendix 8) indicated that the inspectors would be a good source for providing data relevant to these issues.

The annual teacher's assessment form used by Libyan EFL inspectors for evaluating Libyan EFL teachers was also used as a guide for constructing this questionnaire. This form includes the criteria upon which the inspectors' evaluation of the teachers' performance should be based (see appendix 7). The report of the Coordinator of the language inspectors of the region was also beneficial for this process as it included the guidelines and the nature of the tasks and responsibilities of the language inspectors in the region. This report also includes relevant information about current issues related to TEFL in Libya (see appendix 8).

A questionnaire consisted of eleven open-ended questions was constructed to investigate the views of the English language inspectors about the teachers' implementation of the CLCA. These open-ended questions offered the inspectors the opportunity to report their views and understanding about these issues in details (Cohen et al, 2007: 330). This questionnaire includes the following questions:

Q1) - What tasks and responsibilities are assigned to you as a language inspector?

- Q2) - What role has been assigned to you as a language inspector in the process of developing the 2000 English language curriculum?
- Q3) – What aspects of teachers’ performance do you focus on in evaluating the quality of their teaching?
- Q4) – What changes have you noticed on the methodology used by the teachers for teaching the new textbooks from that they used to implement for teaching the previous textbooks?
- Q5) – What influential difficulties do you think have affected the teachers’ proper implementation of the new methodology for teaching the new textbooks?
- Q6) - What kind of support have you offered for the teachers to help them overcome these difficulties?
- Q7) - How would you describe the relationship between you and the teachers you supervise?
- Q8) - What constraints or pressures do you think have impacted this relationship?
- Q9) - To what extent do you think that the change of the curriculum has succeeded in achieving its objectives so far (as explained in the Teacher’s Book)?
- Q10) - How do you think the implementation of this new curriculum can be improved?
- Q11)- What do you think about the suitability of the methodology of the CLCA as embodied within the instructions given to the teachers in the introductory chapter of the Teacher’s Books for TEFL within the Libyan context?

The inspectors were asked to add any comments or concerns in a space provided at the end of the questionnaire (see appendix 4).

This questionnaire was checked for content validity by the two supervisors who guided this research and by other two academics from the School of Education during an

annual research review. This questionnaire was revised by a colleague who worked as a language inspector in the region until 2007. This inspector was studying in the UK by the time this questionnaire was being constructed. He completed the questionnaire and provided useful information. The supervisors and the language inspector reported that the questionnaire was appropriate for its purpose.

#### **4.2.3 Semi-Structured Interview**

Interviewing is an important qualitative data collection method which can be effectively used for exploring and describing educational problems and practices. Gay and Airasian (2003) defined the interview as “a purposeful interaction between two or more people focused on one person trying to get information from the other person” (p: 209). Berg (2009) defined interviewing as a “conversation with a purpose” (p: 101). Gass and Mackey (2007) described interviews as “another survey-based method of eliciting L2 data” (p: 148).

Interviews may come in three different forms namely, structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Bell, 2005; Berg, 2009). Berg (2009) explained that the main difference between these forms is related to “the rigidity with regard to presentational structure” (p: 104) and pointed out the lack of consensus about the best way for conducting interviews (p: 101).

Semi-structured interviews are widely used in educational research. They are described to be in half way between the completely structured and completely unstructured interview. A semi-structured interview involves designing a set of key questions to be asked during each interview (see appendix 5.4.2.1). Nevertheless, it is possible for the respondents to answer at some length in their own words. Berg (2009) explained that semi-structured interviews allow interviewers to “probe far beyond the answers to their

prepared standardized questions” (p: 107). Another advantage of this type of interviews is related to the interviewer’s ability for controlling the interview. It is also possible for the interviewee to have some freedom for developing the interview (Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003; Bryman, 2008; Berg, 2009).

A semi-structured interview was used in this study for eliciting information about the teachers’ conceptions of the CLCA. An interview schedule was developed with reference to the research questions in order to guide the interview (Marton, 1986; Marton & Booth, 1997) (see 5.4.2.1). The questions were designed to elicit information for confirming the data which was gathered through the questionnaire and to explain those new emerged issues. All the questions of this interview schedule were open-ended in order to probe deeply into the teachers’ ideas and conceptions (Cohen et al, 2000: 275).

It is a common practice for researches to record their interviews as this offers the opportunity for listening to the interviewees’ utterances many times. However, it is possible that some interviewees might not agree or be comfortable with recording their interviews (Bell, 2005: 165). In this situation, Bell (2005) suggested using a shorthand system as an alternative method for recording (p: 165). Chappelle and Duff (2003) believed that participants’ beliefs and attitudes can be recorded through note-taking (p: 174).

The theoretical information provided in this chapter was used as guidelines for the practical design of this research.

## Chapter V: Research Design

### 5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, detailed explanations of the steps, procedures and strategies used in organising and conducting this research are introduced.

Research design represents the structure that guides the execution of research and procedures of data analysis. Creswell (2008) defined it as “the specific procedures involved in the last three steps of research process: data collection, data analysis, and report writing” (p: 59). Bryman (2008) explains that it encompasses the methods used for analysing data and for reporting research findings and conclusions.

Different types of research design are commonly used in educational research. These approaches include ‘experimental design’, ‘cross-sectional’ or ‘survey design’, ‘longitudinal design’, ‘case study design’ and ‘comparative design’ (Wiersma, 1986; Bryman, 2008). Creswell (2008) believes that the selection from these designs depends on the research methodology; quantitative, qualitative or combined. A good selection requires identifying the problem, selecting the sample, designing of measurements and accounting for accessibility issues (Cohen et al 2007; Bryman, 2008).

A survey approach is often used for collecting data from a relatively large sample (Cohen et al 2000; Gay & Airasian, 2003). According to Cohen et al (2007), a descriptive survey research can be classified as ‘longitudinal’, ‘cross-sectional’ and ‘trend’ or ‘prediction’ studies (p: 205). Cross-sectional designs are seen as more practical than longitudinal for doctoral dissertation research (Wiersma, 1986; Cohen et al 2007). Aldridge and Levine (2001) described cross-sectional survey as a single

‘stand-alone’ study in which researchers collect their data at one stage to produce a ‘snapshot’ of a population at a specific time. It is a useful design for researchers who seek “comparing the different values on key variables possessed by groups of cases; rather than possessed by any particular case” (p: 31).

This study aims to explore variations in conceptions of the CLCA held by a sample of Libyan EFL secondary school teachers in the Westren region, investigate their views and understanding of the basic principles and practices of this approach, identify the difficulties they encounter in implementing it and investigate their views about its appropriateness for TEFL within their context. A random sample was involved in this research to collect sufficient data about these issues (see 5.2.2.3). Therefore, a cross-sectional design was appropriate for this purpose because it:

- allows for collecting data at one point in time(Wiersma, 1996; Cohen et al 2007);
- offers the chance for asking the teachers the same questions (Bell, 2005);
- allows for simultaneous collection of both quantitative and qualitative data (Aldridge & Levine, 2001); and
- allows for using the questionnaire and semi-structured interview as research methods (Gay & Airasian, 2003).

Sample selection is a significant issue for research design (Cohhen et al, 2007; Bryman, 2008). Gay and Airasian (2003) suggested defining the population as a first step for sample selection (p: 102).

## **5.1 Population**

Educational research is often conducted to study two types of population referred to as wider and target population. The wider population refers to the larger group of people

who share the phenomenon under investigation. The target population is a subset of the wider population and refers to the group that researchers would ideally like to generalise their results (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Bell, 2005; Larson-Hall, 2010). Larson-Hall (2010) coined the term “intended population” and considers “all ESL learners in a country” as an example of this type in a second language setting (p: 398).

In this study, the wider population refers to all EFL teachers who teach English language in Libyan secondary schools. The target population refers to the sub-set which includes three hundred and thirty-four EFL teachers who were teaching English classes in secondary schools in the region from whom the sample involved in this study was randomly selected. This type of population is sometimes referred to as ‘accessible population’ (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Bell, 2005) (See 5.2.2.2 & 5.2.2.3).

Information was gathered on the nature of the population under investigation in this study to guide the process of sample selection (see 2.4.3, 5.2.2.2, 5.2.2.3). The number of schools (see appendix 12) and the number of teachers (7% males and 93% females) in the region were identified during a meeting held with the Coordinator of Secondary Education in the region in his office on Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup>, October 2008. Another meeting was held in the office of the Inspection of the Committee of Education of the region with two English language inspectors (experts) who were in charge of the coordination among the English language inspectors of the region. One of these inspectors was the co-ordinator who wrote the report for the researcher (see appendix 8). During an informal conversation with these two inspectors, general issues related to TEFL in Libyan secondary schools were discussed and the issue of introducing the new English textbooks was the focus of this discussion. They were informally asked about their role in developing the quality of ELT in Libyan secondary schools. They provided valuable



information about the conditions in which the members of the target population were working. A list of the names of all EFL teachers who were teaching in the secondary schools in the region was obtained during this meeting. These two inspectors seemed to be aware of the significance of carrying out research on the conditions of TEFL in the Libyan context and were enthusiastic for offering full support and assistance for researchers in this field. This inspired the researcher to involve the language inspectors of the region in the second phase of the research (see 5.4.2.3).

It is useful in this stage to remind the reader that this study aims to

- identify the reasons behind the failure of Libyan EFL secondary school teachers to change their classroom instructional approach to be aligned with the objectives and the methodology embodied within the new English language curriculum;
- highlight the importance of the involvement of Libyan EFL teachers in planning for curriculum design and development;
- and to investigate the appropriateness of the CLCA for the Libyan context.

It was important to obtain information about these issues from the teachers who were teaching the new English textbooks in Libyan secondary schools. Considerations for time, money and accessibility were influential on determining the sample size of this study (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Bell, 2005; Bryman, 2008). An access to all the members of the target population who were teaching in forty-three schools scattered across six cities in the region was not possible (see table 5.1).

## **5.2 Sampling Procedures**

There are two main methods of sampling, probability (also known as random sample) and non-probability (also known as non-random or purposive sample). Probability

sampling implies that every member of the wider population has an equal chance of being selected in the sample as the selection is completely out of the researcher's control. In non-probability sampling, the researcher often intentionally decides either to include or exclude a particular subset or section of the wider population (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Cohen et al 2007, Bryman, 2008). These two sampling strategies were employed in this study (see 5.2.2.1, 5.2.2.2, 5.4.1.2.2).

### **5.2.1 Sample Size**

Sample size has been defined by Larson-Hall (2010) as “the number of participants in a study” (p: 401). It is mostly agreed that larger samples would be more representative and therefore would give greater reliability for research results. This can enhance the possibility for generalising research results which may not be achieved through involving a small sample (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Cohen et al 2007; Aldridge & Levine, 2001; Bryman, 2008).

However, Crowl (1996) argued that larger samples should not necessarily be seen as better than smaller ones in terms of representativeness and suggested paying more attention to the methods for selecting samples. Cohen et al (2007) believed that the members of large samples would not share identical features with each other or with the wider population. Bryman (2008) emphasised the honesty for reporting all the issues related to the research design and execution rather than dependence on large samples. Crowl (1996) and Bryman (2008) considered obtaining high response rates from smaller samples as more practical than involving larger samples. Sample size can be also influenced by the type and purpose of research, nature of population, size of population and methods of data analysis (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Cohen et al 2000).

However, the numbers and percentage suggested by Cohen et al (2007) and Gay and Airasian (2003) have been widely accepted as appropriate criteria for deciding sample size. Cohen et al (2007) proposed thirty participants as a minimum for researchers who intend to apply statistical analysis on their data (p: 101). Gary Airasian (2003) suggested 10% to 20% of the population for descriptive research (p: 112).

Considerations for the method of questionnaire administration, time, cost and accessibility were influential factors for the decision about the sample size in this study (see 4.2.1, 5.4.1). Nevertheless, the number of the teachers who composed the sample of the survey questionnaire (100 teachers) represents (29.9 %) of the target population (see 5.1) which exceeds the number suggested by Cohen et al (2007). Moreover, this number would make it easier for the researcher to work out the percentages manually while analysing the qualitative data.

## **5.2.2 Samples of the Study**

The sample has been defined by Larson-Hall (2010) as “the actual people... who participate in the experiment” (p: 401). The following subsections explain the samples of this study.

### **5.2.2.1. Region (Shabia)**

This study took place in a large region (Shabia) in the West of Libya namely Al-Nikhat Al-Akhams. The word ‘shabia’ (equivalent to ‘region’) refers to the official term used for naming administrative geographical divisions in Libya. These divisions often cover large areas of land and encompass a number of cities. This Shabia (region) encompasses six big cities (see table 5.1). Each city has its own administrative sub-division. There

are a total of forty-three secondary schools in this region (see appendix 12). The number and the location of these schools vary from one city to another as shown in table 5.1.

**Table 5.1: Secondary Schools in the Region**

City	Schools	Urban	Rural
Sabratha	12	5	7
Agelat	13	5	8
Zwara	4	4	-
Jumail	8	2	6
Regdaleen	4	2	2
Zultan	2	1	1
Total	43	19	24

Accessibility was a significant issue for consideration in selecting the sample of this study (Cohen et al, 2000; Bell, 2005; Bryman, 2008). As the researcher worked as an EFL teacher in some secondary schools in this region for more than 20 years, it was expected that many of his colleagues and friends would be available in these schools for providing support and assistance. Fortunately, nine of these colleagues were working as headteachers in these schools. It was also possible to meet some of the teachers who were taught by the researcher during his work as a lecturer in some of the English departments in the colleges of arts and teacher training in the region. Moreover, the position held by the researcher's elder brother as a head of a district educational office in one of the cities in the region (see appendix 23) was another significant source of support. These factors were beneficial for increasing the response rate of the questionnaire (see 5.4.1) and for encouraging some teachers to volunteer to participate in the interview (see 5.4.2.2) (Crowl, 1996; Rodeghier, 1996). Another reason for selecting this region was related to its combination of both rural and urban aspects of life. The geographical distribution of the six cities in this region and the location of secondary schools in these cities allowed for classifying them according to this criterion. School location (rural, urban) could have an influence on teachers'

conceptions and practices of the CLCA therefore it was considered as a variable in this study (see 5.2.2.2). Independent variable has been defined by Larson-Hall (2010) as “the variable the researcher thinks will influence outcomes” (p: 394). The classrooms of urban schools were more crowded than those of rural schools (see 5.2.2.3).

### **5.2.2.2 Schools**

Twenty schools were purposefully selected to be involved in this study. This number represents 46% of the total number of schools in the region (see appendix 12). The number of schools involved was different from one city to another in accordance to the total number of schools in each city (see table 5.2). Eight of these schools were either located in the centre or very close to the centre in the cities. These schools are referred to in the study as urban schools. The other twelve schools were located in villages far from the centre- and referred to as rural schools. The number of teachers and students in urban schools was larger than in rural schools. During an informal conversation with some headteachers of secondary schools in the region, differences in the availability of teaching facilities were reported between rural and urban schools. The nearer to the centre the schools were, the better facilities they had. This claim was later investigated during the interviews with the teachers. The number of students and the availability of teaching facilities in these schools could affect the teachers’ ability for translating their conceptions of the CLCA into practice. Therefore, school location was treated as an independent variable in this study.

**Table 5.2: Sample of Schools**

City	Schools		Total
	Urban	Rural	
Sabratha	2	3	5
Agelat	2	4	6
Zwara	2	-	2
Jumail	1	3	4
Regdaleen	1		2
Zultan	-	1	1
Total	8	12	20

### 5.2.2.3. Teachers

The sample of the teachers involved in this survey questionnaire

consisted of a hundred EFL teachers randomly selected from twenty secondary schools in the region. Fifty-two teachers (52%) were selected from the rural schools and the other forty-eight (48%) were selected from the urban ones (see 5.2.2). This difference was related to the number of rural and urban schools in the region (see table 5.1). The list of teachers' names in each school was taken from the official record of daily attendance. Then, these names were put in a large envelope and the required number was randomly selected. The majority of the sample teachers were female 91%. This was not surprising as 93% of the target population were females (see 5.1). In many schools, there were no male teachers (see 2.4).

EFL teachers of Libyan secondary schools consist of either those who graduate from colleges of arts or those who graduate from colleges of teacher training (these were previously called higher institutions for teacher training) (see 2.4). The sample of this study composed of forty teachers (40%) who graduated from colleges of teacher training and sixty teachers (60%) who graduated from colleges of arts. The difference in the curriculum of these colleges could have an influence on their graduates' conceptions of the CLCA (see 2.4). Therefore, the teachers' place of graduation was treated as an independent variable in this study.

Teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning are often formed in relation to their practical teaching experiences (Marton, 1981, 1986). Therefore, the teachers' total years

of teaching English in secondary schools represented the third independent variable in this study. The teachers' experience ranged between 2 to more than 28 years. In the process of analysing the data, the teachers were divided into two groups. Those teachers whose teaching experience ranged from 1 to 10 years were labelled as group 'A' and referred to as 'less experienced'; and those who had a teaching experience more than 10 years were labelled as group 'B' and referred to as 'experienced teachers'. This classification was related to the date of introducing the new English textbooks into Libyan secondary schools in 2000. This means that the members of group 'A' had only the experience of teaching the new textbooks (communicative-oriented) whereas the members of group 'B' had the experience of teaching both the new and the previous textbooks (grammar and content-oriented). Table 5.3 shows the total years of the participants' teaching experience

**Table 5.3: Teachers' Experience**

Teaching Experience	Teachers	%
1-5	34	34%
5-10	30	30%
11-15	12	12%
15-20	6	6%
+ 21	18	18%

The number of students in the classrooms of these teachers ranged between 13 to 22 in the rural schools and 28 to 34 in the urban schools.

#### **5.2.2.4 Inspectors**

The total number of the English language inspectors who were working in the intermediate (secondary) education department of the Office of Inspection in the region during the stage of data collection for this study was only ten inspectors. They were all

involved in this study as each one of them was responsible for supervising and evaluating a certain number of the members of the target population (see 5.1, 2.5).

### **5.3 Accessibility and Ethical Considerations**

Educational research usually involves using human beings as subjects and institutions as places where they meet their participants therefore it is important to account for protecting and respecting individuals (Cohen et al 2000: 56) and as well as sites (Creswell, 2008: 179).

As conducting research in schools can cause disturbance or disruption to their systems or plans, gaining the official approval for entering schools or for meeting their teaching staff members could be an obstacle encounter any researcher (Cohen et al, 2000; Aldridge & Levine, 2001; Gay& Airasian, 2003; Creswell, 2008). This issue should be considered by researchers when they select their contexts, research methods and participants (see 5.2.2.1). It is also important that individuals should give their informed consent before they are involved in data collection (Cohen et al, 2000; Creswell, 2008; Cowl, 1996; Bryman, 2008).

Accounting for accessibility was an influential factor for applying a purposive method for selecting the region of this study (see 5.2.2.1). This selection allowed for accessing the schools and the teachers easily. Nevertheless, formal procedures were followed to legalise this process. This process started in the UK when the approval of the Department's Research Ethics and Data-Protection Sub-Committee of Durham University was obtained (see appendix 17). This Sub-Committee had complete power to tell the researcher what he could do and what he could not in regard to ethical considerations (Bell, 2005: 47). Then, the supervisor who guided this study issued a letter stating the time for data collection and the level of schools involve (see appendix



9). This letter was sent to the sponsor of this research (The People's Bureau of the Great Socialist Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Cultural Affairs in London) (Bell, 2005: 167) (see appendix 9). The sponsor issued another letter which was addressed to the office of the Intermediate (Secondary) Education of the region (see appendix 10) urging the authorities in this office to offer their help and support for the researcher. These two letters were beneficial for legalising the process of gaining the permission to enter the selected schools and to meet the teachers. This study was sponsored by the Libyan Ministry of Higher Education therefore gaining the official approval to enter the schools was smoothly and easily processed. A meeting was held with the general co-ordinator of Secondary Education in the region to whom the two letters (supervisor and sponsor's letters) were handed with full explanation about the purpose of the study (Creswell, 2008: 179) (see 5.1). Then, he issued a formal letter which was officially sent to the headteachers of secondary schools in the region. These headteachers were asked through this letter to cooperate with the researcher and to encourage the teachers in their schools to participate in this study (see appendix 11). This letter also includes a statement for urging the headteachers to encourage the teachers (male and female) to participate in the interview (see appendix 11).

After gaining the official approval to enter the schools, the second step was getting the informed consent of the teachers themselves before starting the first stage of data collection (Crowl, 1996; Gay & Airasian, 2003; Creswell, 2008). All the teachers signed their informed consent form (see appendix 3) before they completed the questionnaires (Bryman, 2008). The following ethical issues which were emphasised by Cohen et al (2000) for encouraging individuals to participate in research were stressed in this form:

- their consent to participate;

- their right to withdraw at any time or not to complete particular items in the questionnaire;
- the benefit they may get from the research, the guarantees that the research will cause them no harm;
- the guarantees of confidentiality;
- and the anonymity and non-traceability of the research (Cohen et al 2000: 245-246).

The teachers were asked through statements acknowledging their effort and appreciating the value of the data they would provide to be as honest and accurate as possible (Gay& Airasian, 2003: 86) (see appendices 1& 2).

#### **5.4 Data Collection**

This section offers detailed explanations about the procedures followed in collecting the data for this study. It presents the way and the tools by which the data was collected during the three stages of the research. Sandberg (1997) believed that this explanation could significantly help in accounting for the validity and reliability of phenomenographic research (p: 209).

##### **5.4.1 Data Collection: Stage I**

Collecting the data for the first stage of this study was carried out in Libya between October 2008 and December 2008 (see appendix 9). By this time, teachers in Libya were just returned to schools for starting the first semester of the new school year. This time was ideal for enhancing the teachers' participation. Teachers in Libya are usually less busy at the beginning of the semester than in the middle or in the end of it because their tasks of marking students' assignments or examination sheets were not due yet. This could allow the teachers to fit in times for completing the questionnaires and for

participating in the interviews. The productivity of appropriate timing was emphasised by Cohen et al (2007: 223).

Distributing the questionnaire started immediately after the permission for entering the schools was formally obtained from the Committee of Education of the region on 29<sup>th</sup>, October 2008 (see appendix 11). A formal meeting was individually held with all the headteachers of all the schools involved. The formal permission letter for conducting the study in the secondary schools in the region was delivered to schools through the mail service of the Committee of Education in the region (Shabia). All the headteachers were helpful, supportive and cooperative. In each school, full explanations about the nature and the aims of the study were provided to the headteacher and to one of the teachers who was nominated to distribute and collect the questionnaires. Enough copies of both versions of the questionnaire (English and Arabic) were left with these volunteers to offer them in accordance to their colleagues' choice. These volunteers were asked to recommend their colleagues to read the covering letter in order to understand the nature and the aims of the research. The headteachers and those volunteered teachers were also informed about the nature of the second method of data collection (interviews) and were asked to encourage at least one teacher from each school to participate in the interview. The teachers were allowed to take the questionnaires to their homes as this would offer them more time and "may possibly lead to more data" (Gass & Mackey, 2007: 161). Although dates were determined for collecting the questionnaires, some delay was experienced about these dates. Many phone calls were made to the headteachers and the nominated teachers urging them to encourage the teachers to complete the remaining questionnaires (Crowl, 1996; Cohen et al, 2007). This follow-up procedure was very beneficial as by Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup>, November 2008, all the questionnaires were returned complete.

Rodeghier (1996) believed that with more effort researchers can achieve higher response rates of their questionnaires (p: 39). The high response rate (100%) in this study indicates that good timing and purposive selection of contexts where it is possible for researchers to depend on people they know in administering questionnaires can significantly increase the response rate of their participants. Achieving this high rate could be also related to the researcher's good relationship with many of the stakeholders in the region (see 1.1). The great influence of 'interpersonal connections' in Arabic countries was noted by Hutchings et al (2010: 75). Cohen et al (2007) believed that the researcher's status and prestige can be an influential factor for persuading the participants to return their questionnaires (p: 224). The copies returned consisted of seventy-six Arabic versions and twenty-four English versions (see 5.2.2.1).

However, certain difficulties were encountered in the process of distributing the questionnaires among the teachers. As the schools involved in this study were scattered over a wide area of land, reaching some of them was very difficult. In many cases, guides were employed to get to some rural schools. Nevertheless, despite the difficulties encountered and the time spent in processing the questionnaires, depending on this method allowed for including a large number of teachers. It was a moment of relief when the data provided in the questionnaires was examined (see 7.5).

#### **5.4.2 Data Collection: Stage II**

A preliminary analysis of the data provided in the questionnaires revealed that certain issues needed further investigation and explanations. For example, there was inconsistency in the teachers' responses to the closed-items of the questionnaire. This could indicate either their lack of understanding of the principles of the CLCA (Karavas-Doukas, 1996: 193) or their interest in combining the principles of the two

approaches in their instructional approach in classrooms (Rogers, 1983:185). (See 3.1.2.1.1).The teachers did not provide enough examples of their practical experiences with the CLCA in classrooms nor did they explain the kind of training which would be useful for developing their ability for implementing the curriculum innovation. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were conducted with twenty teachers from those who participated in the survey questionnaire to elicit information about these issues and to probe deeply in their conceptions and ideas about the CLCA.

#### **5.4.2.1 Interview Schedule**

In order to guide the interview to yield the data related to the research questions and to explain those issues which were not fully explained in the questionnaires, the following interview schedule was developed:

- (1)- In the light of your experience of TEFL, could you please explain what does the ‘communicative learner-centred approach’ mean to you?
- (2)- What changes do you think are necessary for your instructional approach and classroom practices to be consistent with the CLCA?
- (3)- What difficulties have you encountered in implementing the CLCA for teaching the new English textbooks?
- (4)- According to your understanding of this approach, what do you think about its advantages and disadvantages?
- (5)- What do you think about the appropriateness of the CLCA for TEFL in the Libyan Context?
- (6)- If you think that I missed anything important, please feel free to add any comments you like.

This schedule was pre-tested to account for any undesirable effects that might associate with it and to eliminate any weaknesses (Bell, 2005: 165).

#### **5.4.2.1.1 Piloting the Interview Schedule**

Researchers can enhance the reliability of their interviews through piloting their interview schedules (Silverman, 1993; cited in Cohen et al, 2007: 151). Berg (2009) suggested two steps for pre-testing interview schedules. The first step involves a critical examination of the schedule by people familiar with the topic under investigation. The second step involves conducting several practice interviews (p: 119).

These steps were followed for pre-testing the interview schedule of this study. Firstly, this schedule was critically examined and then approved by the supervisors who guided this research. Secondly, five semi-structured interviews were conducted with five teachers before conducting the main interviews. These interviews were conducted in Arabic as preferred by the teachers. Attention was given to the clarity of the questions and the length of the interviews. The three teachers who were teaching the new English textbooks in three different schools of the region reported that the questions of the interview were clear. These interviews were analysed for purposes of productivity, validity and reliability. As one of these interviews was tape-recorded and the other two were managed through note-taking, it was possible to compare between the data obtained through the two methods. Due to the realisation of the difficulty of asking questions and writing notes at the same time, a decision was made for involving an assistant for taking notes during the main interviews (see 5.4.2.2.3). Two semi-structured interviews were also held with two EFL teachers who were teaching the same level and textbooks in two secondary schools in another region, namely, Al-Zawia (the nearest region to the region of the study). These two teachers were asked to give

their comments and feedback about the clarity of the questions and the length of the interviews.

Additional different questions were asked during the course of the interviews for each volunteer. These questions were generated from the interviewees' responses to the questions of the interview schedule. Therefore, the length of the interviews ranged between 20 to 40 minutes.

#### **5.4.2.2 Interview Sample**

Researchers may select their samples from volunteers (Cohen et al, 2000; Bell, 2005; Gay & Airasian, 2003; Bryman, 2008). In some cases, volunteer sampling can be the only option available for researchers (Cohen et al, 2007: 116). An example of this situation could be for a male researcher who conducts a research in an Islamic conservative society and intends to involve female participants. The regulations of Islam prohibit females' sitting with or talking individually to a non-close relative male. Rees and Althakhri (2008) noted that Islam has a great influence on people's beliefs, behaviours and practices in Arab countries (p: 127). Female teachers in these contexts are often not free to give their consent to participate in the interview even if they wish to. The married female teachers have to get the permission from their husbands and those unmarried ones have to get the permission from their parents and brothers. In both cases, getting this permission is very unlikely. The dominance of men over women in Arab families was noticed by Metcalfe (2008: 90) and by Rees and Althakhri (2008: 130). Hence, dependence on volunteer sampling in these contexts can be 'inevitable' as suggested by Morrison (2006) in (Cohen et al, 2007:116).

This issue influenced the process of selecting the interview sample in this study. As Libyan society is Islamic and conservative, it was not possible for the researcher to

interview the female teachers individually. The majority of the teachers who participated in the survey questionnaire were females (91%) therefore applying a probability sampling method was not possible. Group interview was not an option for the researcher as it would not lead to identify the variations in the teachers' conceptions of this approach. Cohen et al (2007) considered 'group think' as a disadvantage of group interview because it "discouraging individuals who hold a different view from speaking out in front of the other group members" (Cohen et al, 2007: 373). Therefore, volunteer sampling was applied for selecting the interview sample of this study (Cohen et al, 2007: 116).

The interview sample of this study consisted of twenty volunteers who expressed their interest to participate in the interview through their questionnaires (see appendix 1). There was an interest to involve all the thirty-one teachers who volunteered to participate in the interview but this was not possible due to considerations of time, accessibility and arrangement. Twenty teachers were purposefully selected from these volunteers. Newton and Newton (2009) believed that phenomenographical investigations require "interviews with between 12 and 20 people" (p: 50). It was possible to identify the volunteers' questionnaires in order to examine the information they provided. Therefore, those teachers who provided richer data in their questionnaires were selected as they would be able to explain their conceptions of the CLCA and to reflect on their practical experiences of implementing it in their classrooms. Moreover, these teachers' knowledge and experiences of this approach would enable them to explain and justify their views about its appropriateness for TEFL in Libyan secondary schools. The independent variables of this study were also considered in the selection of this sample (see table 5.4). The characteristics of the interview sample are shown in table (5.4).



**Table 5.4: Interview Sample**

Experience		College of Graduation		School Location	
Less Experienced	Experienced	Arts	Teacher Training	Urban	Rural
13	7	9	11	8	12

However, Cohen et al (2007) argue that depending on volunteers will not allow for generalising research results and stressed that this issue should be mentioned in the reports (p: 116).

#### **5.4.2.3 Conducting the Interviews**

The volunteers for participating in the interview were asked to provide their contact details, the place where they prefer the interview to be held and the appropriate time for conducting it. Nine of them provided their personal contact details in their questionnaires (see appendix 1); the others preferred to be contacted through their headteachers. The first step in conducting the interviews was contacting all the volunteers to arrange for the time and the place for each interview as recommended by Limerick et al, 1996 cited in Cohen et al (2007: 152). It was difficult to fit in the times that suit all the interviewees as conflict in their options was experienced. After many contacts, a ten-day plan was finally made showing the name of the interviewee, the place and the time of the interview (see appendix 24a). This technique was very systematic.

On the day of the interview, the interviewees' questionnaires were examined before starting the interviews and the statements and the ideas which needed further investigation were marked. This technique was useful for focusing the interviews on these issues to gather additional data. The interviewees were sometimes reminded with their responses in the questionnaire for further clarification and explanation (see appendix 26).

Careful attention was given to the interview ethical issues which were suggested by Cohen et al (2000: 292). At the beginning of each interview, the researcher introduced himself to the interviewee in a friendly manner (this was not followed with the teachers to whom the researcher was known) in order to establish an atmosphere of trust and acceptance with him/her. Then, the interviewee was reminded with the nature and the aims of the study and was reassured that the data he/she would provide would be anonymous and would be dealt with confidentially. All of interviewees were reminded with their right to withdraw or stop the interview at anytime (Berg, 2009). The interviewees were asked about their permission to record the interviews. Only eight teachers (5 males and 3 females) permitted recording their interviews (see appendix 24b). The researcher had to contact the fathers of these three female teachers to get their permission for recording the interviews of their daughters. Although these fathers had a friendly relationship with the researcher, they reluctantly agreed under certain conditions. The female teachers' disapproval of recording their interviews was related to social considerations (Metcalf, 2006, 2008). (See 5.4.1.2.2). The interviewees were also asked about the language (English/Arabic) they preferred to speak during the interview (Gass & Mackey, 2007: 135). Of the first six interviewees, three teachers were confident enough to conduct their interviews in English. However, it happened many times that these teachers failed to express their ideas fluently or clearly in English. In these situations, they were encouraged to use Arabic to express what they could not express in English. Learning from this experience, the rest of the interviewees were encouraged to conduct their interviews in Arabic. The twelve interviews of those teachers who did not agree to record their interviews were managed by short hand note-taking (Chapelle & Duff, 2003; Bell, 2005; Cohen et al, 2007). Accounting for the difficulty of asking and writing down notes at the same time which the researcher had

experienced during piloting the interview schedule (see 5.4.1.2.1.1), the researcher depended on his niece (his sister's daughter) who was a member of the target population as a researcher-assistant to write down the teachers' responses. Her presence helped also for accounting for the sensitivity of interviewing the female teachers individually. Pettigrew (1981) and Starr (1982) cited in Ardener (1984) reported about their fieldwork difficult experiences in societies characterised by sex segregation and recommended depending on helpers from both genders (p: 125). Although the researcher-assistant was strongly recommended to write down as much information as she could, the interviewees were asked at the end of the interview to read the written account of their interviews in order to examine their responses for any missing or inaccurate data (Bell, 2005). Through this way, it was possible to write down comprehensive summaries of the interviews (Cohen et al, 2007).

All the interviews started with some demographic questions about qualifications, place of graduation, school location and teaching experience. This helped for developing a degree of rapport between the researcher and the interviewees (Berg, 2009: 113). Then, more important questions related to the teachers' understanding of the CLCA were asked with reference to the interview schedule (see 5.4.1.2.1). Although different open-ended questions were asked to the interviewees, all of these questions were geared to elicit information relevant to the research question "*What does the CLCA mean to you?*" All of the interviewees were also asked to give some examples about their implementation of this approach in their classrooms. These examples offered significant data because they reflected the teachers' actual experience of the CLCA. The changes brought with this approach and their impact on the teachers' classroom instructional approach and practices were also discussed during the interviews. The teachers were encouraged to explain all the difficulties of implementation which they had reported in

their questionnaires and to add any relevant difficulties. The teachers' answers for this question provided additional data for the second research question (see 1.4). Then, the teachers' views about the appropriateness of this new approach for their context were further investigated during the interviews. They were prompted to explain the views which they had expressed in their questionnaires. (see.1.3.2). This data was used for confirming the information provided through the questionnaires. At the end of the interview, the teachers were requested to add any comments relevant to the study. The teachers were reminded that they could withdraw from the research even after conducting the interviews (Berg, 2009: 87). A statement of thanking and appreciation for the teachers' participation and cooperation ended all the interviews.

Seventeen interviews were conducted in Arabic and three interviews in English. The accounts of the interviews which were conducted in Arabic were translated. However, it is not claimed that this translation was a transparent process as it might have involved small changes or minor shifts in meaning (see appendix 26). Nevertheless, careful attention was given to retain the original Arabic meaning and sense as far as possible. A colleague from the Arabic language department in a college for teacher training in 7<sup>th</sup> of April University was consulted during the translation process (see 4.2.1.2).

All the interviews were numbered, dated and labelled to the interviewees' details (see appendix 25). The transcriptions of the recorded interviews and the written summaries of the other interviews were translated (see appendices 26 & 27). These translated versions were later grouped together according to the interviewees' teaching experience, place of graduation and school location. This method was useful for analysing the data provided in these interviews and for identifying the differences in the teachers' conceptions according to these variables (see 6.1). Later, each account of

these interviews was labelled to the interviewee's questionnaire as the data provided through the two instruments were analysed interactively (Berg, 2009: 6) (see 6.1 /appendix 24c).

### **5.4.3 Data Collection: Stage III**

During this stage of data collection, a questionnaire was distributed among ten English language inspectors who were supervising the EFL secondary school teachers in the region (see 5.1). This questionnaire was piloted before it was distributed among these inspectors (see 4.2.2.1).

A friend of the researcher who was working as an inspector in the same inspection office of secondary education in the region distributed the questionnaires among the inspectors. They were asked to read the covering letter which explains the aims of the study (see appendix 5) before signing their consent forms (see appendix 6). They were given the option for answering the questions either in English or in Arabic as a translated copy of the questions was provided with each questionnaire (see appendix 4). These inspectors were also informed about the possibility of contacting the researcher for any further explanations by arranging for free international calls. As there were regular joint meetings for the inspectors of secondary education in the region, these questionnaires were handed to the inspectors during one of these meetings and were collected during the following meeting. All the inspectors returned their questionnaires complete. Then, examining and analysing the data provided in these questionnaires started immediately.

### **5.4.4 Reflection on the Research Methodology**

Cohen et al (2007) emphasised the importance of 'reflexivity' in researches (p: 469). Conducting this phenomenographical research in an Islamic conservative society resulted in experiencing some contextual challenges which influenced the way it was executed. It is useful to report these issues so that the reader can understand their influence on this research. Other researchers from the Libyan context or from similar contexts may consider these issues when they design their researches.

Employing phenomenography as an approach of investigation and analysis in this study has successfully led to the exploration of the participant teachers' conceptions of the CLCA. However, depending on inter-judge reliability for validating the outcome space necessitates the availability of co-judges who should be familiar with the topic of the research. These co-judges should agree to examine the data in order to be able to make reliable judgements. This may not be practical because it would not be always possible to find co-judges who would agree to undertake this task. Therefore, carrying out phenomenographic researches by teams rather than by individuals may account for this problem through examining each other's outcome space. This contradicts with Akerlind (2005) who claimed that "high quality phenomenographic doctoral research can be accomplished as an individual researcher working on one's own" (Akerlind, 2005: 328) (see Bowden, 1996: 60-62).

Phenomenography is classified as a qualitative research approach with semi-structured interview as the most common method for data collection. However, it was possible in this phenomenographical investigation to employ a mixed approach (quantitative & qualitative). The questionnaire was useful for collecting data (qualitative & quantitative) from a considerably large number of participants. This is not a common practice in phenomenography. The semi-structured interviews (qualitative) were useful for

confirming and elaborating the ideas and information obtained from the questionnaires. As both instruments were employed for eliciting data related to teachers' conceptions and practices of the CLCA, it was useful to follow a mixed approach for analysing both types of data. This offers empirical evidence for the possibility of employing a mixed approach of data collection and analysis in phenomenographic researches.

Male researchers who intend to carry out phenomenographic researches in Islamic conservative societies (e.g. Libya) and whose samples involve female participants have to be aware that depending on qualitative research methods of data collection such as interviews or classroom observation may not be possible in these contexts. Female participants in these contexts are not free to give their consent for participating in interviews or for allowing male researchers to observe them in classrooms due to social and religious considerations (see 5.4.2.2). However, when employing interviews is essential as in the case of phenomenographic researches (Marton, 1981; 1986), phenomenographers have to practice short-hand note-taking or have to depend on a researcher-assistant who should be familiar with the topic under investigation (see 5.4.2.3).

Open-ended questionnaires seem to be a productive alternative method for data collection in these contexts. The strong social ties among the members of Libyan society can increase the response rate of questionnaires. However, the poor service of mail, the high cost of telephone calls and the poor internet facilities which currently exist in this context necessitates the dependence on self-administration or 'household drop-off survey' for administering the questionnaire. These two ways often require more time and effort for handing-in and collecting questionnaires.

A purposive selection of research contexts (regions/schools) can ease the process of obtaining the official permission for accessing research sites. Through this selection, it may be also possible for researchers to receive significant support and assistance for excuting their researches.



## Chapter VI: Data Presentation and Analysis

### 6.0 Introduction

Data analysis has been defined by Cohen et al (2007) as the “reduction of copious amounts of written data to manageable and comprehensible proportions” (p:475).The data presented in this section was gathered through a survey questionnaire completed by a hundred Libyan EFL teachers and through semi-structured interviews conducted with twenty volunteers from this cohort. As both instruments were designed to elicit information related to teachers’ conceptions and implementation of the CLCA, both quantitative and qualitative data have been presented, analysed and discussed in an interactive way (Marton, 1986). Cohen et al (2007) suggested presenting “all the relevant data from various data streams (interviews, observations, questionnaires etc.) in order “to provide a collective answer to the research questions” (p: 448).They described this approach as “very useful” for presenting and organising data because it “returns the reader to the driving concerns of the research” (p: 468).This mixed approach enables the reader to see the connection between the research questions and the data (Jang et al, 2008: 223).

The presentation of the data in the following sections based on themes generated with reference to the research questions. The first section presents and analyses the teachers’ answers to the open-ended question ‘*What does the CLCA mean to you?*’ in the questionnaires and from further explanations given during the interviews. This data is relevant to the first research question (see 1.4). This section also explains how these answers were jointly analysed and what conceptions emerged from this process (Marton, 1981, 1986).

## 6.1 Teachers' Conceptions and Misconceptions of the CLCA

The analysis of teachers' responses to the question *-what does the CLCA mean to you?* - was conducted using the phenomenographical approach described by Marton (1981-1986) and Marton and Booth (1997). According to Uljens (1996) and Harris (2008) the first step in this process is 'bracketing' which means approaching and analysing the empirical data 'very open-mindedly' and without any pre-conceived ideas on the conceptions of this approach. The researcher tried faithfully to describe and interpret the data from the teachers' perspectives and tried not to judge it against his pre-conceived ideas or knowledge about the CLCA (Harris, 2008: 63). The researcher consciously tried to suspend his personal knowledge and understanding of this approach in order to elicit and identify the teachers' conceptions (Uljens, 1996: 122). However, this knowledge guided the process of defining the categories of description which composed the outcome space of this phenomenographical investigation (Akerlind, 2005:323). Accordingly, this outcome space reflects both the data provided by the teachers and the researcher's interpretation of it (Akerlind, 2005: 329).

The second step was a "kind of selection based on criteria of relevance" (Marton, 1986: 154). After several readings of the data, many statements were marked as relevant to the research question *-What are the different conceptions of the CLCA held by some Libyan EFL teachers at secondary schools?-* (Marton, 1986: 154). This process narrowed down the data related to the teachers' conceptions of the CLCA into selected statements from the questionnaires and utterances from the interviews (Marton, 1986: 155). These statements and utterances formed the "data pool" upon which the next step of analysis was based (ibid).

During this phase of analysis, attention was shifted from the statements of the individual subjects to the meanings embodied in these statements (Marton, 1986: 155). Interpreting this data was managed by means of “an interactive procedure” between the individual questionnaire and the pool of meaning to which it belonged (ibid). It was noted that some teachers expressed more than one relevant statement and sometimes more than one meaning in the same statement (Harris, 2008: 61). For example, one of the teachers conceptualised the CLCA as the approach which

*offers the opportunity for students to guide and control their learning” and at the same time, she described it as the approach which “manages the teaching and the learning process through open communication and interaction between the teacher and students and among students themselves (Q1)*

In these cases, the statements were marked as relevant but were labelled separately (independent learning / communication and interaction). Therefore, the total number of the holders of the conceptions of the CLCA shown on Figure (1) exceeds the total number of the teachers who participated in this study. Uljens (1996) considered this variation as “good evidence that the subject’s understanding is determined by the context and that the expressed understanding is a reconstruction of one’s original experience” (p: 120).

The selected statements were arranged and rearranged and were narrowed into categories. The different responses were grouped under distinct headings of conceptions to form the categories of description of the CLCA.

The data revealed an overlap between the teachers’ ideas and some unclear ideas were reported as well (see 6.1.1.2). The conceptions and misconceptions which emerged from the questionnaires were further investigated during the interviews as the questions of the interviews were devised to elicit clarification and more explanations for the ideas

and the conceptions reported in the questionnaires (see.5.4.2.1). This mixed approach of data analysis offered the opportunity for moving back and forth between the data of questionnaires and the data of interviews (Jang et al, 2008: 223). No new conceptions emerged during the interviews as all the interviewees retained the same meanings they reported in their questionnaires. This could be due to the short time between administering the questionnaire and conducting the interviews. However, more explanations and examples were provided during these interviews.

In order to find out whether the variables of school location, place of graduation or teaching experience had a significant effect on the teachers' conceptions of the CLCA, the teachers' definitions of this approach in the questionnaires and during the interviews were carefully read together according to these variables. However, none of these variables had significant effect on the teachers' conceptions of this approach. Therefore, the fourteen categories of description which composed the *outcome space* of this phenomenographic investigation were developed from the whole sample regardless of these variables. Basically, phenomenography is more interested in the conceptions held by groups rather than by individuals (Akerlind, 2005: 323) (see 4.1.2). Uljens (1996) suggested that as the same participant "may express two different conceptions about the same thing during one interview", it is not "crucial to point out which empirical subjects represent the respective category of description" (p: 120).

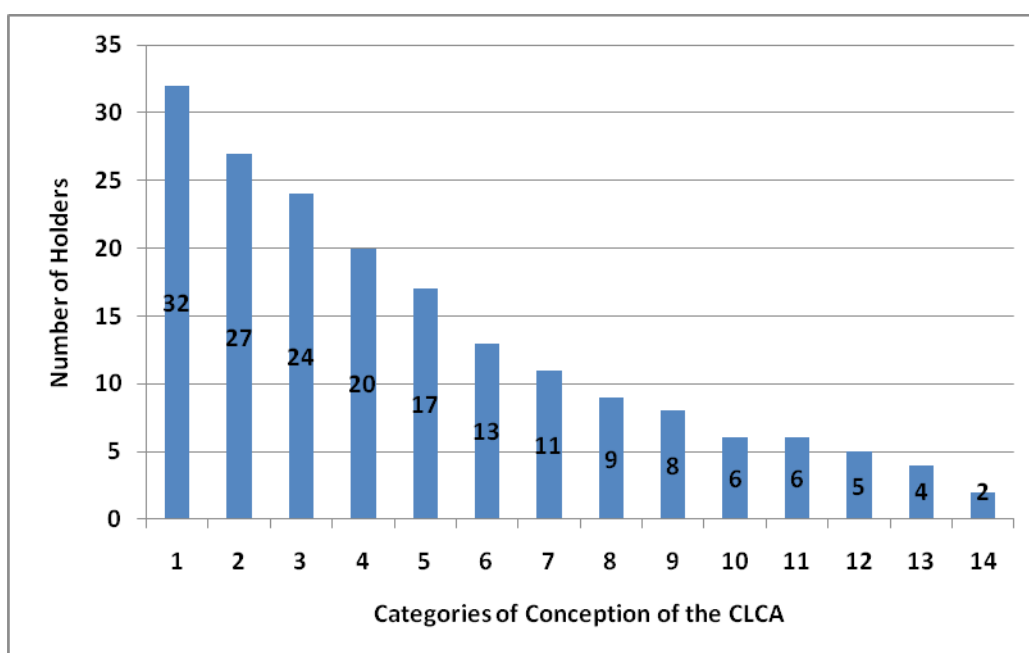
The definitions of the categories of descriptions given to the conceptions were tested against the data several times and were adjusted accordingly (Marton, 1986: 155). To account for the content validity of these categories, they were presented in a research seminar at the School of Education in Durham University on May 19<sup>th</sup> 2009 (Akerlind, 2005: 330). These categories were also revised by a colleague who was

carrying out a research in the same region on EFL secondary school teachers' implementation of self-assessment (Marton, 1986: 148). Finally, these categories were revised by the two supervisors who guided this research before presenting them as the '*Outcome Space*' of this phenomenographical investigation (Marton, 1981, 1986).

This '*Outcome Space*' consisted of the fourteen categories of description which emerged from the process of analysing the data provided by the teachers (Marton, 1981, 1986). These categories represent the different interpretations of the CLCA held by the teachers. Marton (1981) explained that phenomenographers often "arrive in consequence at two different kinds of results, the categories of description and the distribution of subjects over them. The first result is qualitative "*What are the conceptions held?*" and the second is quantitative "*How many people hold these different conceptions?*" (P: 195). The same method was followed for analysing the teachers' statements and utterances about the CLCA. The conceptions and misconceptions emerged from the data with the number of the holders of the conceptions or misconceptions are shown in Figure 1. A brief description of each category is illustrated by some quoted statements (Marton, 1986; Uljens, 1996).

Figure 1 shows the categories of description which formed the '*Outcome Space*' with the number of the holders of each category.

*Figure 1 Teachers' Conceptions and Misconceptions of the CLCA*



The numbers from 1 to 14 shown on this figure refer to the following conceptions:

- 1- Student-centred learning (32 teachers)
- 2- Independent learning (27 teachers)
- 3- Facilitation (24 teachers)
- 4- Active learning (20 teachers)
- 5- Communication and interaction (17 teachers)
- 6- Learner's responsibility (13 teachers)
- 7- Cooperative learning (11 teachers)
- 8- Motivation (9 teachers)
- 9- Accounting for students' needs and interests (8 teachers)
- 10- Free learning (6 teachers)
- 11- Empowering students and disempowering teachers (6 teachers)
- 12- New way of teaching (5 teachers)
- 13- Lack of discipline (4 teachers)
- 14- An approach which can not be implemented (2 teachers)

However, it is not claimed that these categories are final or complete. They only represent variations in the conceptions or misconceptions of the CLCA elicited from the statements and the utterances reported by the teachers (Marton & Booth, 1997:128). Nevertheless, these categories could offer significant insights about how this approach is conceptualised by all Libyan EFL secondary school teachers (Akerlind, 2005: 328). More detailed explanations about the meanings embodied within these conceptions are provided in the following sub-sections. These conceptions and misconceptions will be thoroughly discussed in chapter seven (see 7.2.1, 7.2.2)

### **6.1.1 Conceptions**

Some of the conceptions shown on Figure (1) indicate the teachers' understanding of some basic principles of the philosophy of the CLCA. These conceptions include the following categories:

- *Student-Centred Learning*

Thirty-two teachers conceptualised the CLCA as a teaching approach which focuses the learning process on the learner. These teachers believed that students should be at the core of the learning process. One of these teachers wrote in her questionnaire '*the CLCA is the approach which puts the student at the centre of the learning process*' (Q2). This teacher later confirmed her conception during the interview by emphasising that '*the core of the learning process should be the student who should be involved in all the stages of the learning process*' (Q3). Another teacher wrote

*now the centre of the learning process should be the learner. We as EFL teachers have to involve the students in all the issues related to their learning. .... (Q4)*

A clear description of this category was offered by one of the interviewees who said

*As far as I understand, it is a new approach based on certain principles different from the traditional approaches. These principles include placing the student at the centre of the learning process, offering him/her the opportunity for making choices, for participating actively during the lessons. It requires conducting these lessons in a friendly atmosphere between teacher and students (Q5)*

The above quotation provides a clear example of how some of the teachers tended to embody more than one meaning for the CLCA in the same utterance or statement. In this quotation, the teacher conceptualised the CLCA in terms of considering the learner as the centre of the learning process, offering students more freedom for making choice, encouraging students' active learning and building a good rapport between teachers and students.

- *Student-Independent Learning*

Twenty seven teachers conceptualised the CLCA in terms of helping students to depend on themselves in their learning. One of the interviewees explained this conception “...it is based on the principle that students should learn by themselves. I believe that what students learn by themselves will be more effective than what is provided by teachers”

(Q6). Another teacher added

*I think it means encouraging students to participate in all activities and to help them depend on themselves in learning. Students should not depend on the teacher in everything. Students should help each other in doing exercises and learning tasks (Q7)*

The holders of the above conception interpreted the CLCA with regard to the active role students should play in the learning process and to students' ability for learning independently. Independent learning in terms of their understanding seems to be limited to students' mutual support when they do not depend on teachers in performing pair or group work tasks and activities.



- *Facilitation*

Twenty-four teachers defined the CLCA as the approach of facilitation in which the role of teacher is to facilitate students' learning. They believed that teachers should facilitate students' independent learning and should not practice any control over it. Nine of these teachers criticised some of their colleagues' over reliance on traditional approaches of instruction such as explanations and giving presentations. These teachers referred to the difference in the level of their students' motivation and active participation as a result of their adaptation of facilitation as an approach of instruction in their classrooms. One of these teachers wrote "*it is the approach which is based on teacher's facilitation of students' learning*" (Q8). This notion was explained by one of the interviewees

*For many years, I used to implement some classic teaching methods like the Grammar Translation Method and the Audio-lingual Method. When I was implementing these methods, I used to concentrate on certain aspects of grammar rather than on students' use of language. But when I started implementing the CLCA, I changed my role to become a facilitator of my students' active use of language and my students are now more active and interested (Q9)*

Another teacher added "*within the CLCA, the teacher no longer plays a major role in the classroom. He should become a guide and a facilitator of students' learning*" (Q10)

It seems to be clear for these teachers that their implementation of the CLCA requires changing their traditional approach of instruction with an approach of facilitation.

- *Active Learning*

Twenty teachers interpreted the CLCA as students' active learning. These teachers believed that active learning could be realised by encouraging and promoting students' active participation. They suggested that teachers could enhance students' active

participation through implementing some communicative learner-centred activities such as working in pairs or in groups. One of the teachers said “*the CLCA means students’ active participation in the learning process. It is based on engaging students in performing learning activities*”(Q11). Another teacher stated “*it implies an active role for the learner*” (Q12). Another teacher wrote “*it means students’ active learning*” (Q 13). Another teacher referred to the change in the learner’s role from a passive recipient of information to an active participant in the learning process and wrote “*students are no longer passive recipients of information. They should be actively engaged in the learning process*” (Q14.)

Active learning is a concept closely related to the CLCA. Therefore, this conception may indicate these teachers’ understanding of the positive impact of leading students to become active participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients of information.

- *Communication and Interaction*

Seventeen teachers perceived the CLCA as the approach which enhances communication and interaction inside classrooms. They explained that implementing this approach could offer more opportunities for communication and interaction between teachers and students and among students themselves. One of these teachers said “*implementing this approach for language teaching means students’ learning through communication with each other and with their teacher*” (Q15.) Another teacher wrote “*it means teaching through interaction between teacher and students and among students*” (Q16). Another teacher added “*I think it means teaching English through communication and interaction*” (Q17).

The teachers who held this conception linked the CLCA with its communicative nature. They believed that through involving students in more communicative activities, their active participation could be enhanced and their ability for using English language for communication could be developed.

- *Learner's Responsibility*

Thirteen teachers conceptualised the CLCA as learner's responsibility for his/her own learning. They explained that implementing this approach requires encouraging and offering students the opportunity to be responsible for their learning by involving them in making all the decisions related to this issue. They believed that this would result in students' enjoyment of positive feelings of ownership, self-esteem and self-realisation. One of these teachers wrote "*this approach means students taking control of their own learning*" (Q18). This conception was emphasised by one of the interviewees who said "*once the students are given this opportunity - the teacher meant the opportunity for undertaking the responsibility for their own learning- they will be very eager to undertake it. I think everyone prefers to make his/her own decisions rather than having others decide for him*" (Q19). Another teacher stated "*we should involve students in making all the decisions about the learning process*" (Q20)

- *Cooperative Learning*

Eleven teachers perceived the CLCA in terms of conducting the learning process through cooperation between the teacher and students and among students themselves. They believed that teacher-student cooperation could be realised when teachers take part in implementing classroom activities with students. They explained that the teacher could act as a co-communicator in role-play or as a partner in problem-solving activities. Student-student cooperation could be enhanced by encouraging students to

work together for performing learning tasks inside classrooms. These teachers emphasised that establishing an appropriate climate for cooperative learning would require sharing the responsibility for the learning process between teachers and students in a cooperative manner. Phrases such as “*learning through cooperation*”, “*mutual cooperation*”, “*teacher-student cooperative learning*” and “*shared responsibility*” were reported in the questionnaires and during the interviews. One of the teachers explained ... “*it means that students learn cooperatively in pairs or in groups*” (Q21). Another teacher said “*encouraging students to work in pairs and in groups is the main feature of this approach*” (Q22).

- *Motivation*

The CLCA was conceptualised by nine teachers as an approach of motivation for learning. These teachers believed that successful learning occurs when students are motivated to learn. They considered this approach effective for enhancing students’ motivation as it offers them the right for expressing their ideas freely and for participating actively. These teachers explained that as students would enjoy the feeling of empowerment through this approach, they would be more interested and engaged in the learning process. One of them defined the CLCA “*it is an approach of motivation. It stands on the fundamental principle that effective learning occurs when students are motivated*” (Q23.) This teacher confirmed her conception during the interview and emphasised that “*it is the role of teacher to motivate students through appreciating their contributions, establishing good rapport with them and encouraging them for participating in all classroom activities*” (Q24). Another teacher wrote “*implementing this approach for teaching is mainly based on motivating students to learn*” (Q25). One of these teachers was asked during the interview to report on her experience of the CLCA and students’ motivation. She explained

*I was aware that the successful implementation of this approach requires motivating students to be adapted to their new roles. Therefore, I always encourage my students to participate during the lessons, highly appreciate their contributions and seriously consider their suggestions I always have good relationships with my students. This makes them interested, motivated and more active. They like my classes very much (Q26)*

These teachers' association between the CLCA and motivation led them to describe it as a motivation-based approach. Therefore, they stressed the significance of the association between implementing this approach with the teacher's ability for enhancing students' motivation and for promoting their active participation through accounting for their feelings of self-esteem and self-confidence through his/her positive feedback.

- *Accounting for Students' Needs and Interests*

Eight teachers interpreted the CLCA in terms of accounting for students' needs and interests through designing meaningful and relevant learning materials for them. They believed that this would enhance students' motivation to learn, increase their active participation and improve their achievement. One of these teachers described the CLCA as

*a new teaching approach which has many benefits for students. It is based on considering their needs and interests when learning programmes are developed (Q27).*

The holders of this conception related the CLCA to one of its main humanistic principles regarding accounting for learners' needs and interests.

For more detailed explanations and interpretations about these conceptions see (7.2.1).

### 6.1.2 Misconceptions

Teachers' misunderstanding of the CLCA was implied in their misconception of some of its principles and practices. As phenomenography is not only concerned with accurate conceptions but also with misconceptions (Marton, 1986: 145), it is important to report these misconceptions in this section. Identifying the teachers' misconceptions of the CLCA and their critical views about it may explain the reasons for their hesitation or resistance to implementing it (see 7.2.2).

- *Free Learning*

One of the teachers' misconceptions of the CLCA was related to their association of this approach with the notion of free learning. Six of the teachers conceptualised this approach in terms of offering students freedom to learn what they want, how they want and when they like. Therefore, they believed that implementing this approach would require allowing students to plan for their own learning without any interference from other parts. These teachers argued for the impossibility of implementing this approach in contexts where textbooks, methods of teaching, learning objectives and assessment criteria are externally decided. One of them said:

*This approach means freedom. It is based on offering students the freedom to decide for themselves what they want to learn, when they like to learn and how they prefer to learn. If any other part interferes in making these decisions, realising a true implementation of this approach is not possible (Q28)*

These teachers' misconception of the CLCA can be interpreted with reference to its strong version as described by Sowden (2007: 304) (see 3.3.1). Therefore, they emphasised the importance of the provision of the appropriate conditions which could lead to the successful implementation of this approach in Libyan schools (see 6.3.2.2 & 6.4).

- *Empowering Students and Disempowering Teachers*

An association of the CLCA with the notion of fragmenting the role of teacher by empowering students was another misconception emerged in six teachers' statements and utterances. These teachers expressed their lack of interest in implementing this approach because of their fear of losing the important role they were used to play during the learning process. One of these teachers was asked during the interview about her disagreement to implement this approach in her questionnaire. She explained

*I think implementing this approach implies minimising the role of the teacher and maximising the role of student. I do not think that an approach which minimises the role of the teacher is workable or productive in our schools (Q29).*

The same teacher added “*I cannot imagine a class in which the teacher has only a secondary role. I believe that teachers should play the main role, not a secondary one*” (Q29). Due to their belief that implementing this approach would result in losing or minimising their role in the learning process, these teachers argued for the unsuitability of this approach for the Libyan context. To emphasise this argument, one of the teachers said

*It is an incorrect concept. The teacher has a major role in the learning process. This approach is not workable in Libyan secondary schools where the role of the teacher is very important for explaining the content of these difficult textbooks (Q30).*

This argument indicates these teachers' dissatisfaction with the notion of this approach. This could affect the way they implement it for teaching the new textbooks in Libyan secondary schools (see 6.3.2 & 6.3.2.1).

- *A New Way of Teaching*

A lack of knowledge or understanding about the CLCA was reflected in the responses of five of the teachers to the question ‘*What does the CLCA mean to you?*’ These teachers did not provide clear definitions or explanations for this approach in their responses. However, they were aware that it was a new way of teaching which should be followed for teaching the new textbooks. One of these teachers wrote only this statement “*it is a new method of teaching we should follow for teaching the new textbooks*” (Q31). Another teacher clearly reported her lack of understanding of this approach and wrote “*it is a new method of teaching. It is not clear to me. I am sorry*” (Q32). A third teacher admitted that she had never heard of this approach before she received the questionnaire. She wrote “*it is my first time to hear of this approach through your questionnaire. It is completely new information for me*” (Q33).

This lack of knowledge or understanding would be reflected in these teachers’ implementation of the CLCA for teaching the new English textbooks in Libyan secondary schools (see 6.3.2 & 6.3.2.1).

- *Lack of Discipline*

Another misconception of the CLCA was implied in four teachers’ association between this approach and the image of undisciplined and noisy classrooms. These teachers believed that this approach implies limiting teacher’s control over the classroom and the learning process. They argued that there would be no way to manage disciplinary problems which would occur as a result of letting students free or giving them the responsibility over their learning. One of these teachers wrote

*It is the approach which brings problems of discipline to the classroom. If the teacher does not firmly control the classroom, the disruptive behaviour of students will spoil the whole process of teaching and learning (Q34)*



As this teacher was one of those who expressed their interest in the interview, she was intentionally selected to be interviewed for further understanding of her argument.

During the interview, this teacher explained

*Students are used to be strictly controlled. Therefore, if they feel that their teacher does not have any power or authority over them, they will spoil the whole learning and teaching process by their disruptive behaviour (Q35)*

This teacher reported an example of a classroom of one of her colleagues who faced this problem during her attempt to adopt a student-centred approach of instruction. She described this class

*The noise of students in her class would make it impossible for anyone to expect her presence inside it. I do not know how teaching and learning could go on in such a noisy and undisciplined classroom (Q36)*

This misconception may lead these teachers to justify their practice of authority and control over the learning process. They do not believe in the possibility of implementing the CLCA in disciplined and organised classrooms. This misconception could lead to their hesitation in implementing this approach or to its implementation in a modified style which maintains their authority and control.

- *An Approach which Can not be Implemented*

Two teachers were more pessimistic about the possibility of implementing this approach for teaching the new English curriculum in Libyan secondary schools. Therefore, they criticised the decision to introduce it into these schools. One of these teachers was interviewed to probe more deeply into his conception and to ask him to explain his argument. This experienced teacher (22 years of experience) was asked to explain why he was so pessimistic about the possibility of implementing this approach in Libyan secondary schools. He explained:

*I believe that teaching is only a process which is controlled and managed by the teacher. I do not believe in the argument for allowing students to share the teacher in directing and organising this process. Throughout the history of teaching and learning, the role of each was clearly defined and who can ignore the success achieved through this way of teaching so far (Q37)*

This misconception may provide an answer for why classrooms are often so hard to be converted into learner-centred. It would be very difficult for the teachers who hold this misconception to change their instructional approach and teaching practices to become student-centred.

For more detailed explanations and interpretations about these misconceptions (see 7.2.2).

## **6.2 Teachers' Views about and Understanding of the Principles and Practices of the CLCA and TCA**

In order to gain better understanding of the teachers' conceptions and misconceptions of the CLCA, a thorough analysis of their views and understanding of its principles and practices was conducted. This was achieved through examining and analysing these teachers' responses to the thirty closed-ended statements of the questionnaire which were designed to describe the main principles and practices of the CLCA and the TCA (see tables 6.1 & 6.2). This presentation shows the conceptions held by the teachers (qualitative) and the number of the teachers who held them (Marton, 1981: 195). As these issues were also investigated during the interviews, related quotes from the interviews are also provided as appropriate for validation.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for processing the quantitative data obtained from this section. This package is widely used in social

research (Cohen et al, 2007: 501; Larson-Hall, 2010: 7) and in the field of SL (Larson-Hall, 2010:7). Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages have been calculated based on the number of teachers who responded to each item. Paired-samples t-test was used to find out if there were statistically significant differences in teachers' views about the principles and practices of the CLCA and the TCA (see table 6.4). Larson-Hall (2010) explained that this test is used when "scores from the same group ... on two related measures are compared" (p: 242). In other words, it is used when the two mean scores to be compared come from the same participants (ibid).

### ***Keys for presentations***

1- *SD (strongly disagree) / D (Disagree) / U (Uncertain) / A (agree) / SA (strongly agree) /*

2- *Q. (Quotation) (For source of quotations see appendix 25)*

3-*The total number of the participant teachers is (100); therefore, the percentage (0/0) represents the same count*

### **6.2.1: Frequency of Responses**

In the following sub-sections, the frequency of the teachers' responses to the odd and even statements of the questionnaire are presented in tables (6.1 & 6.2) to show those principles (as expressed in the statements) which were mostly agreed on and those with less agreement percentage for each approach. Then, these will be compared to show teachers' overall average percent agree and strongly agree for the CLCA and TCA to identify the trend in the teachers' responses towards one of these two approaches (see table 6.3).

### **6.2.1.1 Odd (CLCA) Statements**

Table 6.1 presents the frequency of the teachers' responses to the odd statements of the questionnaire which describe the main principles and practices of the CLCA. These frequencies were calculated in order to find out whether these teachers were positive towards this approach. To make this interpretation and analysis easier, all responses for SD and D were combined and referred to as disagreed, responses for U were left unchanged and all responses for A and SA were also combined and referred to as agreed. All these are shown in the last three columns in table 6.1.

#### **6.2.1.1.1 Highest % Rated Odd (CLCA) Statements**

The statements with the highest % in table 6.1 refer to the main principles of the CLCA which were favoured by the teachers. For statement 9, *The teacher-student relationship should be based on openness, mutual respect, cooperation and understanding*, 98% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Just 1% rated it as strongly disagree or disagree and another 1% was uncertain. Overall the teachers were very positive towards this statement. Statement 15, *School is a social institution where students gain knowledge and learn about social norms, moral values and cooperative skills*, 97% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. No one of the teachers rated it as strongly disagree or disagree and just 3% of them were uncertain. Overall the teachers were very positive towards this statement. For statement 17, *Pair and Group work activities provide good opportunities for language practice; and thus improve students' communicative competence*, 96% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Two percent rated it as strongly disagree or disagree and another 2% of the teachers were uncertain. Overall the teachers were very positive towards this statement. Just like statement 17, 96% of the teachers rated statement 1, *The teacher's role is to facilitate and guide students' learning*, strongly

agree or agree. Just 1% rated it as strongly disagree or disagree and 3% of the teachers were uncertain. Overall the teachers were very positive towards this statement.

**Table 6.1: Frequency of Responses for Odd (CLCA) Statements**

No	Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA	SD/D	U	A/SA
		1	2	3	4	5	1,2	3	4,5
1	Teacher's role is to facilitate and guide students' learning.	0	1	3	35	61	1	3	96
3	The teacher should supplement the textbook with extra materials to satisfy students' different needs.	2	3	16	55	24	5	16	79
5	Students can undertake responsibility for their own learning.	0	18	28	30	24	18	28	54
7	Tasks and activities should be negotiated and selected to meet students' needs and to suit their abilities rather than imposed.	1	28	9	41	21	29	9	62
9	Teacher-student relationship should be based on openness, respect, cooperation and understanding.	0	1	1	12	86	1	1	98
11	Student talk should be equal if not greater than teacher's talk.	7	15	17	26	35	22	17	61
13	Classroom desks and chairs should be arranged in a way that students work in pairs, in small groups or individually. (E.g. semi-circle), modular or circle	2	7	6	46	39	9	6	85
15	The school is a social institution where students gain knowledge and learn about social norms, moral values and cooperative skills.	0	0	3	18	79	0	3	97
17	Pair and Group work activities provide good opportunities for language practice; and thus improve students' communicative competence.	1	1	2	24	72	2	2	96
19	Pair and group work activities help build up social co-operative relationships among students and between students and teachers.	1	17	1	39	42	18	1	81
21	Role-play activities offer good opportunities for students' practice of English in different life situations.	1	1	5	54	39	2	5	93
23	Games provide an enjoyable context for language practice and help in maintaining students' interest and involvement.	0	12	23	43	22	12	23	65
25	Problem solving activities enhance students' critical thinking skills and provide good opportunities for language practice.	0	3	25	55	17	3	25	72
27	Self and peer assessment help students identify their mistakes and reflect critically on their performance.	3	14	16	44	23	17	16	67
29	Language content should be authentic and designed to meet students' needs and interests.	1	3	8	45	43	4	8	88

For statement 21, *Role-play activities offer good opportunities for students' practice of English in different life situations*, 93% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed

with this statement. Just 2% rated it as strongly disagree or disagree and 5% of the teachers were uncertain. Overall the teachers were very positive towards this statement.

Teachers' higher percentage of agreement on these statements may indicate their understanding and acceptance of the principles and practices implied in these statements (see 7.1 & 7.2).

#### **6.2.1.1.2 Lowest % Rated Odd (CLCA) Statements**

The statements with the lowest percentages in table 6.1 refer to those principles of the CLCA which were less favoured by the teachers. For statement 5, *Students can undertake responsibility for their own learning*, only 54% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. 18% of the teachers rated it as strongly disagree or disagree and 28% of them were uncertain. Overall the teachers did not feel very positive towards this statement and over a quarter of them were uncertain. The next lowest percent was for statement 11, *Student talk should be equal if not greater than teacher's talk*, were 61% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. On the other hand, 22% of the teachers either strongly disagreed or disagreed and 17% were uncertain with this statement. These different views indicate that the issue of student talktime during English lessons is another area of tension among these teachers. The third lowest percent was for statement 7, *Tasks and activities should be negotiated and selected to meet students' needs and to suit their abilities rather than imposed on them*, were 62% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. However, 29% of the teachers either strongly disagreed or disagreed and 9% of them were uncertain. The fourth lowest percent was for statement 23, *Games provide an enjoyable context for language practice and for maintaining students' interest and involvement*, were 65% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with the

statement. 12% of the teachers either strongly disagreed or disagreed and 23% of them were uncertain.

The frequency of teachers' agreement on the aforementioned statements indicates that they were positive towards the principles and practices of the CLCA which implied in these statements but not as positive as to those principles which achieved higher frequency rates (see 6.2.1.1.1). Overall, the frequency of the teachers' responses to the odd statements indicates that they were not very negative towards any principle of the CLCA which implied in these statements (see table 6.1).

#### **6.2.1.2 Even (TCA) Statements**

Table 6.2 presents the frequency of the teachers' responses to the even statements of the questionnaire which imply the main principles and practices of the TCA. These frequencies were calculated in order to find out whether these teachers were positive towards this approach. Just like the odd statements, to make this interpretation and analysis easier, all responses for SD and D were combined, responses for U were left unchanged and all responses for A and SA were also combined. All these are shown on the last three columns in table 6.2.

##### **6.2.1.2.1 Highest % Rated Even (TCA) Statements**

The even statements which achieved the highest response percentage imply those principles and practices of the TCA which were favoured by the teachers. For statement 28, *Summative assessment enables teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses to treat them*, 83% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Ten percent of the teachers rated it as strongly disagree or disagree and 7% of them were uncertain. Overall the teachers were very positive towards this statement. Statement 20,

*Pair and group work activities take too long time comparing with other activities*, 75% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Eleven percent of the teachers rated it as strongly disagree or disagree and 14% of them were uncertain. Overall the teachers were very positive towards this statement as 75% of them rated it agreed or strongly agreed. For statement 22, *Role-play activities require sufficient training and special skills to be effectively implemented in classrooms*, 74% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Eighteen percent of the teachers rated it as strongly disagree or disagree and another 8% of them were uncertain. Overall the teachers were very positive towards this statement. For statement 10, *Formal relationship between teacher and student gives clear roles for both; so it provides better environment for effective learning*, 69% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. More than a quarter, 26% of the teachers rated it as strongly disagree or disagree and 5% of them were uncertain. Overall, the teachers were not as positive towards this statement compared to the last few statements. For statement 2, *Teacher's role is to transmit knowledge through explanations and giving examples*, 67% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. One third, 33% of the teachers rated it as strongly disagree or disagree and no one of them was uncertain. Just like statement 10, overall the teachers were not as positive towards this statement compared with the last few statements.

#### **6.2.1.2.2 Lowest % Rated Even (TCA) Statements**

The even statements with low percentage represent those principles or practices of the TCA which were less favoured by the teachers. Statement 18, *It is difficult for the teacher to monitor students' performance during pair and group work activities; so students may use their mother tongue for discussion*, had the lowest percent of the teachers who rated it



as agree or strongly agree, only 31% of the teachers. More than one half of the teachers (53%) rated it as strongly disagree or disagree and 16% of them were uncertain.

**Table 6.2 Frequency of Responses for Even (TCA) Statements**

No	Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA	SD/D	U	A/SA
		1	2	3	4	5	1,2	3	4,5
2	Teacher's role is to transmit knowledge through explanation giving examples.	8	25	0	19	48	33	0	67
4	Students have different needs so it is difficult for a teacher to provide materials to meet the needs of all students.	3	20	14	50	13	23	14	63
6	It is difficult to prepare and train students to take responsibility for their own learning	6	25	12	48	9	31	12	57
8	Tasks and activities should be selected by the teacher simply to consult all the students for their needs.	11	28	6	34	21	39	6	55
10	Formal relationship between teacher and student gives credit to both; so it provides better environment for effective learning.	6	20	5	19	50	26	5	69
12	Teacher talk should exceed student talk during language classes for instructing, explaining and giving feedback.	20	35	9	24	12	55	9	36
14	Classroom desks and chairs should be arranged into rows facing the board with a teacher's desk nearby	13	36	5	18	28	49	5	46
16	The school is a formal place where students gain knowledge for exams.	19	26	1	21	33	45	1	54
18	It is difficult for the teacher to monitor students' performance in pair and group work activities; so students may use their time for discussion.	12	41	16	21	10	53	16	31
20	Pair and group work activities take too long time compared to individual activities	1	10	14	39	36	11	14	75
22	Role-play activities require sufficient training and special resources to be effectively implemented in classrooms.	0	18	8	57	17	18	8	74
24	Games may lead to unsettle classroom discipline, so it is difficult to manage them in language classes	1	19	23	47	10	20	23	57
26	Problem solving activities require critical thinking skills and special training to make students get used to it.	0	18	39	35	8	18	39	43
28	Summative assessment enables teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses to treat them	1	9	7	54	29	10	7	83
30	Language content should be designed to meet pre-determined objectives usually set by course designers.	16	27	22	22	13	43	22	35

Overall, the teachers did not feel very positive towards statement 18 as over half of them disagreed. The next lowest percent was for statement 30, *Language content should be designed to meet pre-determined objectives usually set by course designers*, were only

35% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. A higher percent, 43%, of the teachers either strongly disagreed or disagreed and 22% of them were uncertain. Just like statement 18, the teachers did not feel very positive towards this statement. The third lowest percent was for statement 12, *Teacher talk should exceed student talk during language classes for instructing, explaining and giving feedback*, where just 36% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. A higher percent, 55% of the teachers either strongly disagreed or disagreed and 9% of them were uncertain. The teachers did not feel very positive towards this statement. The fourth lowest percent was for statement 26, *Problem solving activities require critical thinking skills and much training to make students get used to it*, where just 43% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Eighteen percent of the teachers either strongly disagreed or disagreed and 39% of them were uncertain. Again the teachers did not feel very positive towards this statement.

The teachers' low agreement with these statements is another indication for their tendency to favour the CLCA over the TCA.

### **6.2.1.3 Odd (CLCA) and Even (TCA) Statements**

The tables 6.1 & 6.2 show that there is a clear trend among the teachers to agree with the principles of one approach over another. The teachers seemed to be more positive towards some of the principles and practices of the CLCA. For the statements 1, 9, 15, 17, and 21 more than 90% of the teachers either rated it as agree or strongly agree, with 96%, 98%, 97%, 96% and 93% respectively. These are the highest percent for the CLCA statements. On the other hand, for the TCA statements, the highest percent are for statements 2, 10, 20, 22, and 28 with 67%, 69%, 75%, 74% and 83% respectively. The lowest percent for the CLCA are for statements 5, 7, 11, 23 and 27 with 54%, 62%, 61%, 65% and 67%

respectively. While the lowest percent for the TCA are for statements 12, 18, 26 and 30 with 36%, 31%, 43% and 35% respectively. The highest and lowest percent for the CLCA statements are far higher than the highest and lowest percent for the TCA statements. The average percentages agree or strongly agree for the CLCA and the TCA statements are 79.60% and 56.33% respectively (see table 6.3).

**Table 6.3 Overall Average Percent Agree and Strongly Agree for CLCA and TCA Statements**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Std. Error Mean</b>
Odd (CLCA)	15	79.60	15.122	3.905
Even (TCA)	15	56.33	15.796	4.079

There is strong evidence to suggest that the average percent agree and strongly agree for the CLCA statements of 79.60% is significantly different from the average percent agree and strongly agree for the TCA statements of 56.33% with a t value of 4.12 and a p value of 0.001 (<0.05). Overall, the teachers are more positive towards the principles and practices of CLCA than those of the TCA. Nevertheless, the average percentages agree and strongly agree for the statements of the TCA do not indicate that they were negative towards all the principles and practices of the TCA (see table 6.3). This can be further clarified through comparing the mean scores and the standard deviations of the teachers' responses to each couple of statements (see table 6.4).

### **6.2.2 Mean Score and Standard Deviation of Teachers' Overall Responses to Statements of the Questionnaire**

Table 6.4 shows the mean and the standard deviation of the teachers' responses to the statements of the questionnaire. The mean refers to "the average of a group of numbers" (Larson-Hall, 2010: 396). The standard deviation indicates "how tightly or how loosely

data are clustered around the mean” (Larson-Hall, 2010: 402).The stars (\*\*) which appear on the p-value column indicate a significant difference in the teachers’ responses to the couple of statements as the *p*-value is below (<0.05) (Larson-Hall, 2010: 121).

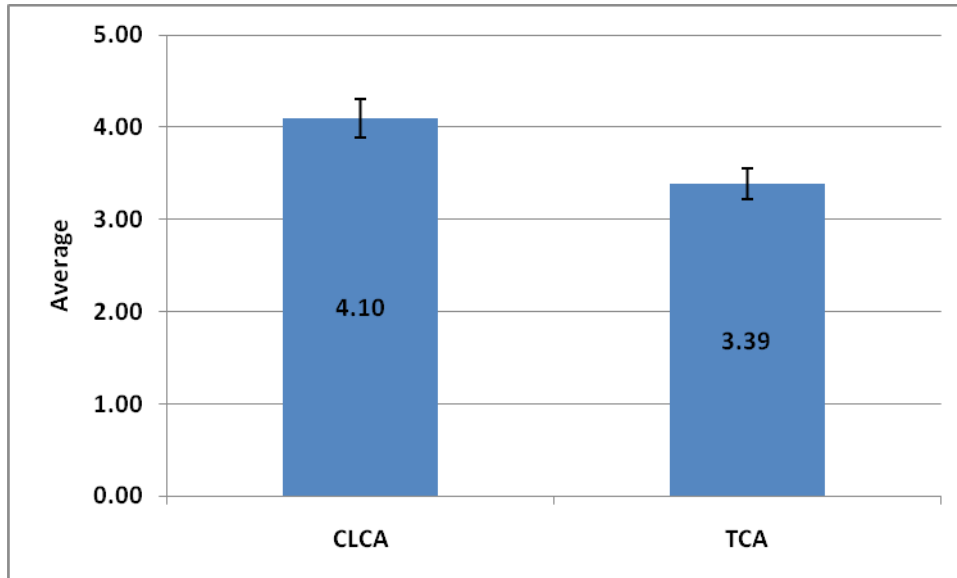
**Table 6.4 Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Teachers’ Overall Responses**

No	Learner-centred		No	Teacher-centred		Mean Difference	T. Test	P value
	Mean	St. Deviation		Mean	St. Deviation			
1			2					
3			4	3.50				
5			6	3.29				
7			8					
9			10					
11			12					
13			14	3.12				
15			16	3.23				
17			18	2.76	1.21			
19			20	3.99				
21			22	3.73				
23			24	3.46				
25			26	3.33				
27			28	4.01				
29			30	2.89	1.29			
<b>Av.</b>			<b>Av.</b>	<b>3.39</b>	0.59			

The grand average for the odd statements as shown in table 6.4 is 4.10 and that for the even statements is 3.39. The grand average of the odd statements is bigger and significantly different from the grand average of the even statements with a *p* value of 0.001 (<0.05). There is strong evidence that teachers are more positive about the CLCA principles than the principles of the TCA (see Figure 2). This is also in agreement with the percent analysis report earlier where 79.60% of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed with the CLCA statements and only 56.33% of them agreed or strongly agreed for the TCA statements (see table 6.3).

Overall, there is sufficient evidence to indicate that the teachers rated the CLCA statements higher than they rated the TCA statements. We can therefore conclude that

there is evidence beyond chance that the teachers are more positive towards the CLCA principles than the TCA principles (see Figure 2).



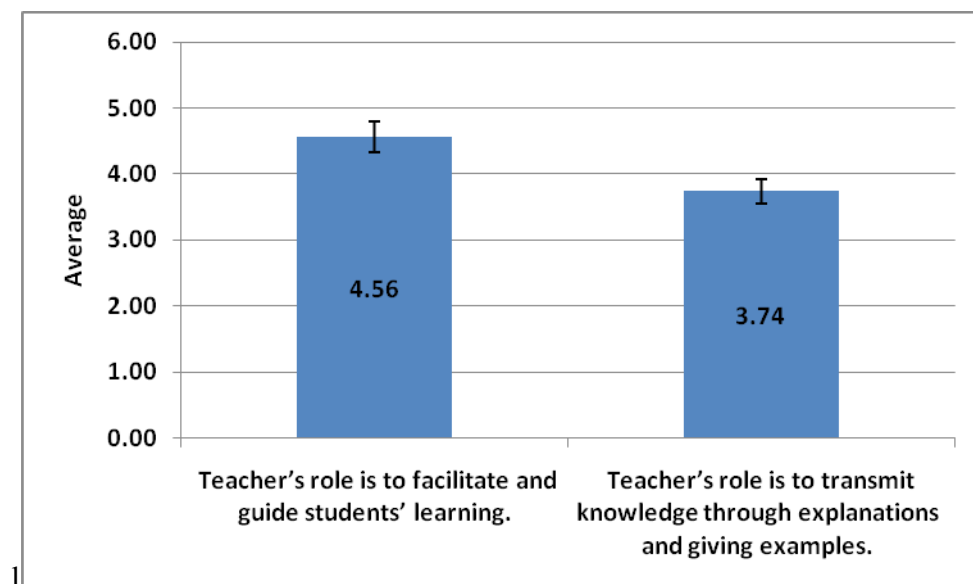
**Figure 2: Grand Average for CLCA and TCA statements**

### **6.2.2.1 Comparison between Teachers' Averages Rating to the Pairs of Individual Statements**

This sub-section compares the teachers' average rating for each couple of corresponding statements. This has been performed to show teachers' views towards the specific principle or practice implied in each statement in order to be able to explain and interpret their conceptions of the CLCA (see 1.3.1). These views will be analysed and interpreted interactively with their corresponding conceptions or misconceptions in chapter seven (see 7.2, 7.2.1 & 7.2.2).

#### **Statement 1 and 2 (Role of Teacher)**

The average rating given to statement 1, *The teacher's role is to facilitate and guide students' learning*, by the teachers is 4.56 while the average rating for statement 2, *Teacher's role is to transmit knowledge through explanations and giving examples*, is 3.74 (see Figure 3). The average for statement 1 is bigger and significantly different from the average of statement 2 with a t value of 4.78 and a p value of 0.001 (<0.05). There is strong evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that teachers are more positive towards statement 1 than statement 2. Moreover, from the frequency analysis, 96% of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed with statement 1 while the corresponding percent for statement 2 is 67% (see 6.1 & 6.2).

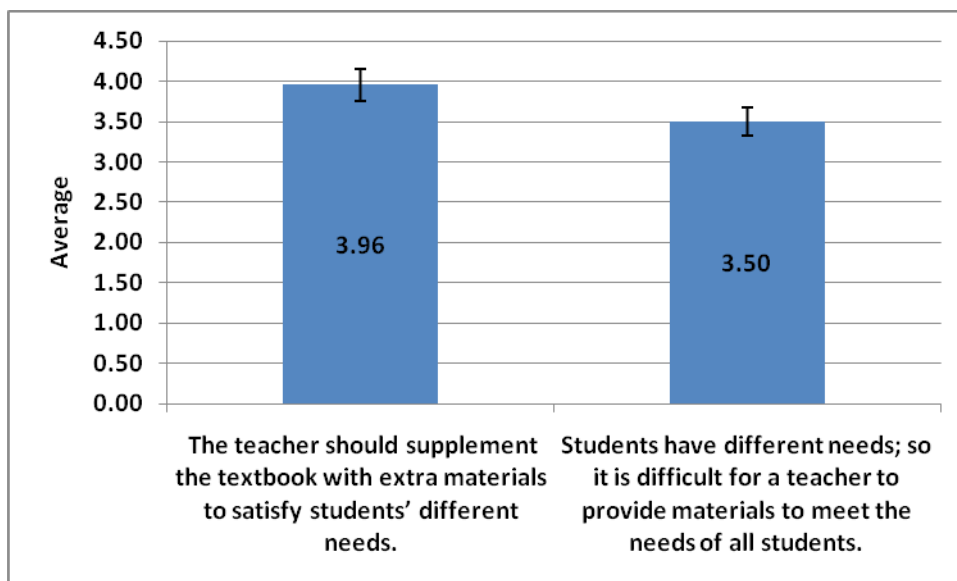


**Figure 3: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 1 and 2**

### **Statement 3 and 4 (Role of Teacher)**

Figure 6.2 shows that the average rating given to statement 3, *the teacher should supplement the textbook with extra materials to satisfy students' different needs*, by the teachers is 3.96 while the average rating for statement 4, *students have different needs; so it is difficult for a teacher to provide materials to meet the needs of all students*, is

3.50. The average for statement 3 is bigger and significantly different from the average of statement 4 with a t value of 3.23 and a p value of 0.002 ( $<0.05$ ). (see Figure 4). There is strong evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that the teachers are more positive towards statement 3 than statement 4. Furthermore, from the frequency analysis, 79% of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed with statement 3 while the corresponding percent for statement 4 is 63% (see tables 6.1 & 6.2).

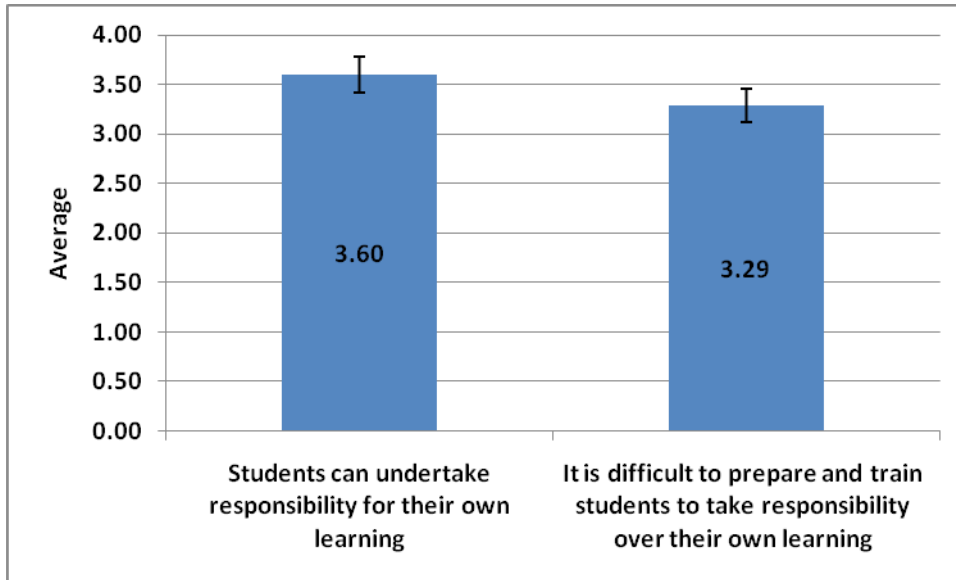


**Figure 4: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 3 and 4**

#### **Statement 5 and 6 (Role of Student)**

Figure 6.3 shows that the average rating given to statement 5, *Students can undertake responsibility for their own learning*, by the teachers is 3.60 while the average rating for statement 6, *It is difficult to prepare and train students to take responsibility over their own learning*, is 3.29. Even though the average for statement 5 is bigger, it is not significantly different from the average of statement 6 with a t value of 1.85 and a p value of 0.067 ( $>0.05$ ). See Figure 5 for details. There is not enough evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that the teachers are more positive towards statement 5 than

statement 6. In other words, the teachers have similar views on the two statements, which is between uncertain and agree. Moreover, only 54% of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed with statement 5 and the corresponding value for statement 6 is 57% (see table 6.1 & 6.2).



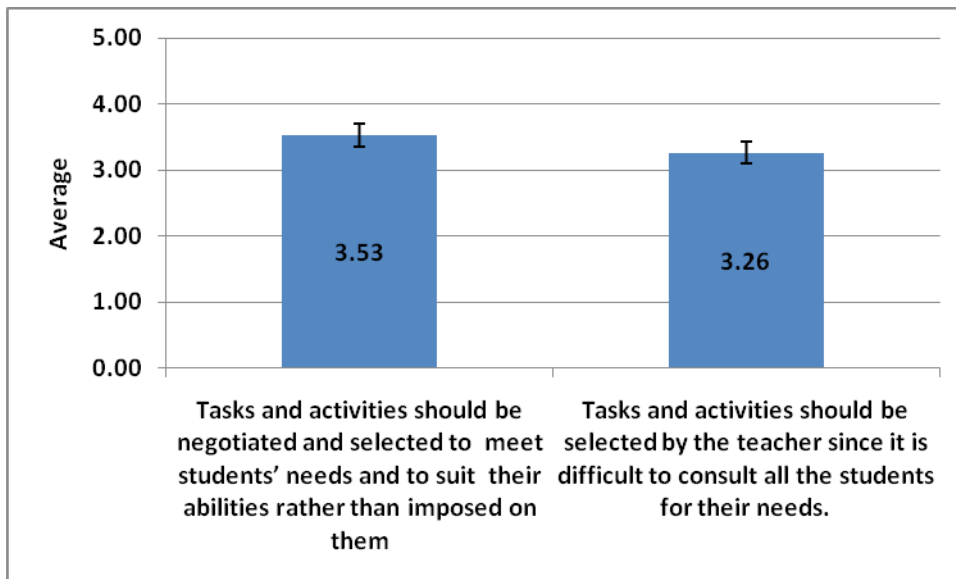
**Figure 5: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 5 and 6**

#### **Statement 7 and 8 (Role of Student)**

The average rating given to statement 7, *Tasks and activities should be negotiated and selected to meet students' needs and to suit their abilities rather than imposed on them*, by the teachers is 3.53 while the average rating for statement 8, *Tasks and activities should be selected by the teacher since it is difficult to consult all the students for their needs*, is 3.26. Even though the average for statement 7 is bigger, it is not significantly different from the average of statement 8 with a t value of 1.22 and a p value of 0.224 ( $>0.05$ ). (see Figure 6 for details). There is not enough evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that the teachers are more positive towards one statement than the other. In other words, the teachers have similar views on the two statements, which is between uncertain and agree as the average values are between 3=uncertain and 4=agree. From



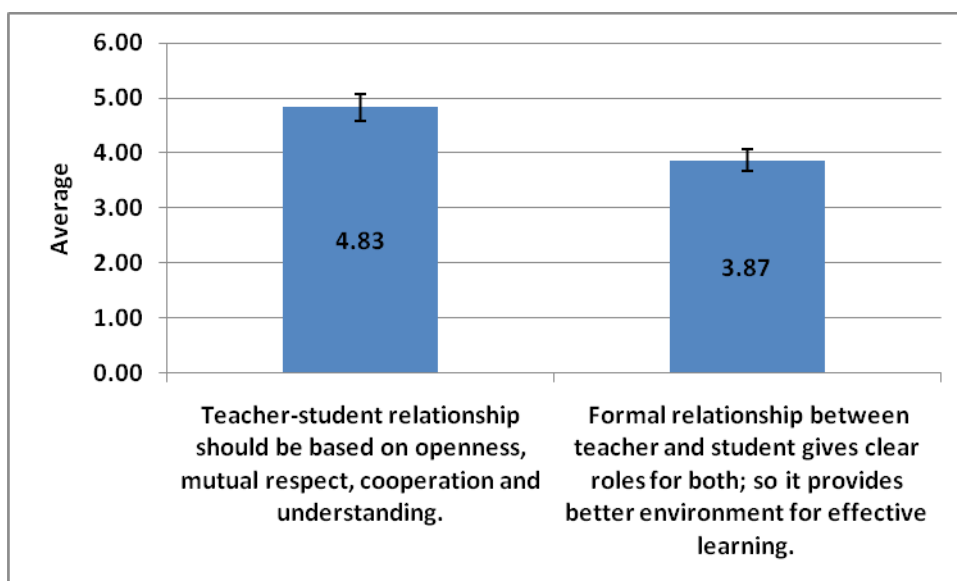
the frequency analysis, 62% of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed with statement 7 and the corresponding value for statement 8 is 55% (see tables 6.1 7 6.2).



**Figure 6: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 7 and 8**

### **Statement 9 and 10 (Teacher-Student Relationship)**

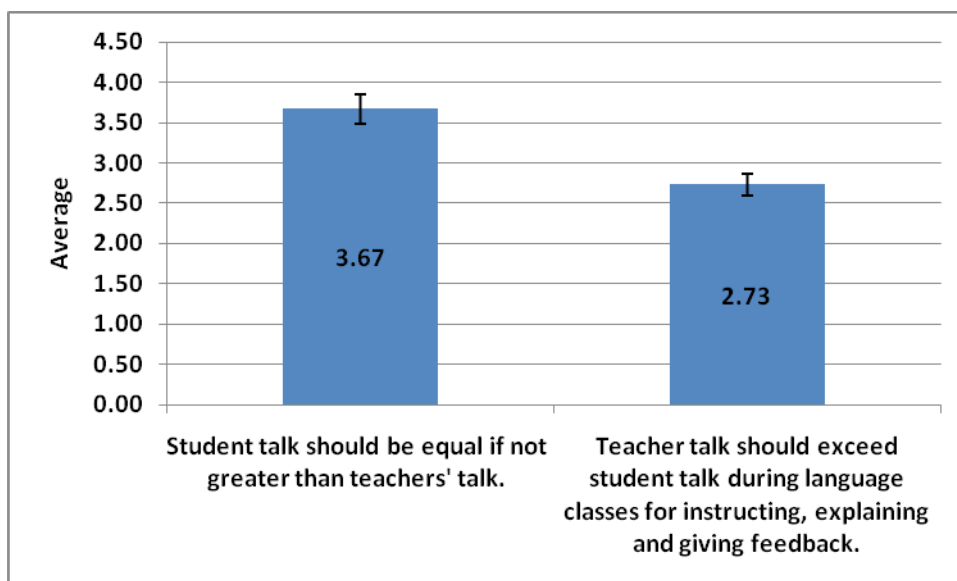
The average rating given to statement 9, *The teacher-student relationship should be based on openness, mutual respect, cooperation and understanding*, by the teachers is 4.83 while the average rating for statement 10, *A formal relationship between teacher and student gives clear roles for both; so it provides better environment for effective learning*, is 3.87. The average for statement 9 is bigger and significantly different from the average of statement 10 with a t value of 7.04 and a p value of 0.001 (<0.05). See Figure 7 for details. There is strong evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that the teachers are more positive towards statement 9 than statement 10. It is worth noting that statement 9 has the biggest average of all the 30 statements in the questionnaire. Furthermore, from the frequency analysis 98% of the teachers rated statement 9 agree or strongly agree while the corresponding percent for statement 10 is 69% (see tables 6.1 & 6.2).



**Figure 7: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 9 and 10**

#### **Statement 11 and 12 (Classroom Talk)**

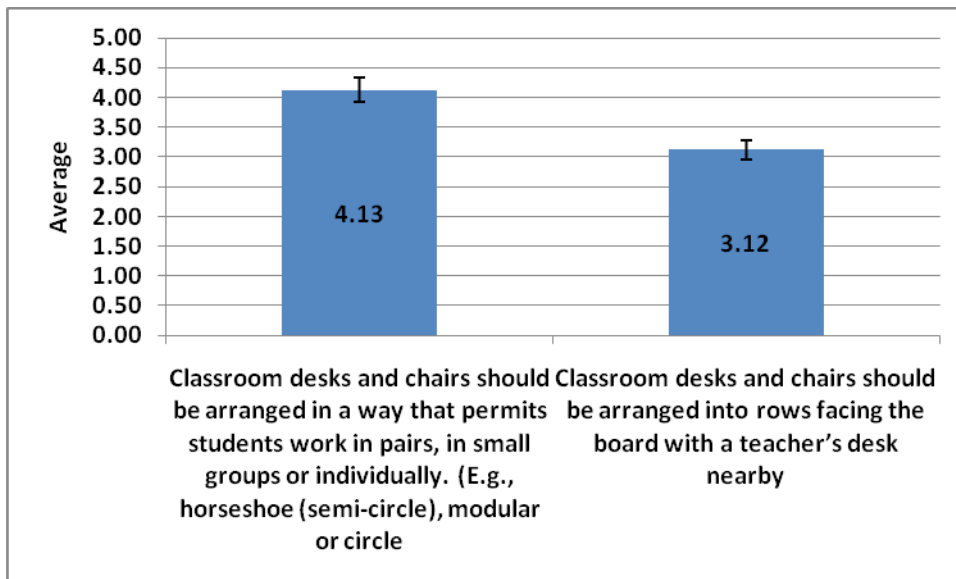
The average rating given for statement 11, *Student talk should be equal if not greater than teachers' talk*, by the teachers is 3.67 while the average rating for statement 12, *Teacher talk should exceed student talk during language classes for instructing, explaining and giving feedback*, is 2.73. The average for statement 11 is bigger and significantly different from the average of statement 12 with a t value of 3.93 and a p value of 0.001 ( $<0.05$ ). See Figure 8 for details. There is strong evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that the teachers are more positive towards statement 11 than statement 12. It is worth noting that statement 12 has the smallest average of all the 30 statements in the questionnaire. Furthermore, from the frequency analysis 61% of the teachers rated statement 11 agree or strongly agree while the corresponding percent for statement 12 is only 36% (see tables 6.1 & 6.2).



**Figure 8: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 11 and 12**

#### **Statement 13 and 14 (Classroom Arrangement)**

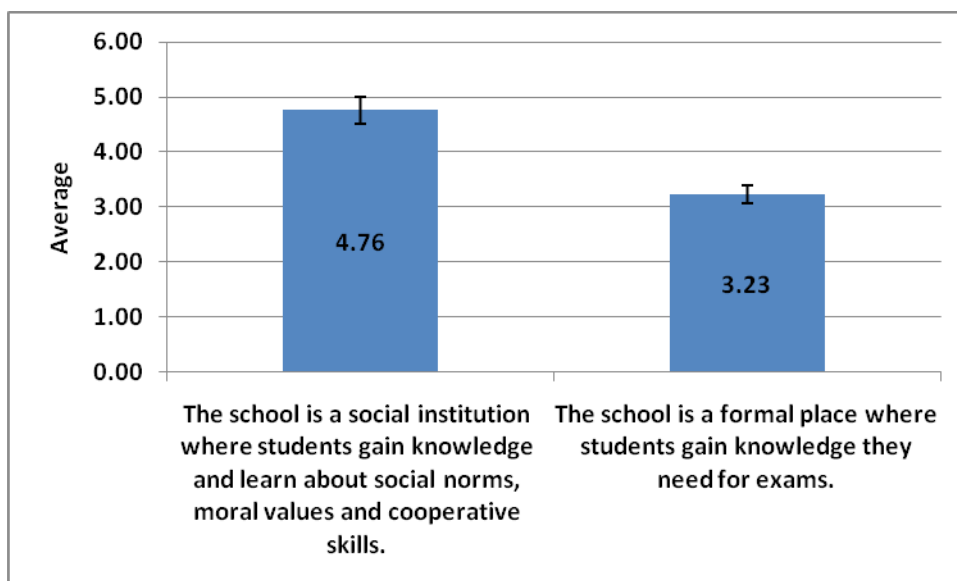
The average rating given to statement 13, *Classroom desks and chairs should be arranged in a way that permits students work in pairs, in small groups or individually. (E.g., horseshoe (semi-circle), modular or circle,* by the teachers is 4.13 while the average rating for statement 14, *Classroom desks and chairs should be arranged into rows facing the board with a teacher's desk nearby,* is 3.12. The average for statement 13 is bigger and significantly different from the average of statement 14 with a t value of 5.16 and a p value of 0.001 ( $<0.05$ ). See Figure 9 for details. There is strong evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that the teachers are more positive towards statement 13 than statement 14. Furthermore, from the frequency analysis 85% of the teachers rated statement 13 agree or strongly agree while the corresponding percent for statement 14 is only 46% (see tables 6.1 & 6.2).



**Figure 9: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 13 and 14**

#### **Statement 15 and 16 (Role of School)**

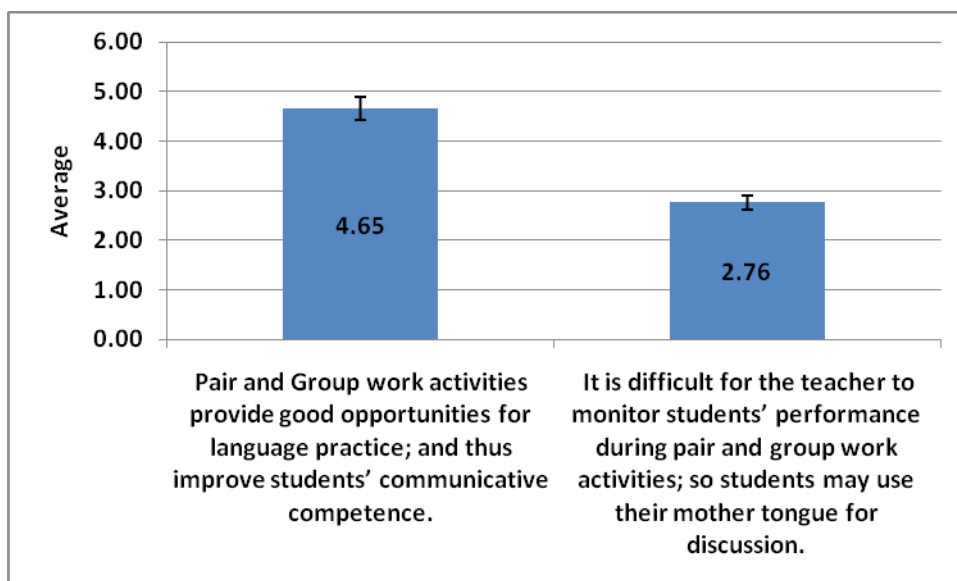
The average rating given for statement 15, *school is a social institution where students gain knowledge and learn about social norms, moral values and cooperative skills*, by the teachers is 4.76 while the average rating for statement 16, *school is a formal place where students gain knowledge they need for exams*, is 3.23. The average for statement 15 is bigger and significantly different from the average of statement 16 with a t value of 8.99 and a p value of 0.001 ( $<0.05$ ). See Figure 10 for details. There is strong evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that the teachers are more positive towards statement 15 than statement 16. Furthermore, from the frequency analysis 97% of the teachers rated statement 15 agree or strongly agree while the corresponding percent for statement 16 is only 54%. See tables (6.1 & 6.2).



**Figure 10: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 15 and 16**

### **Statement 17 and 18 (Pair & Group Work)**

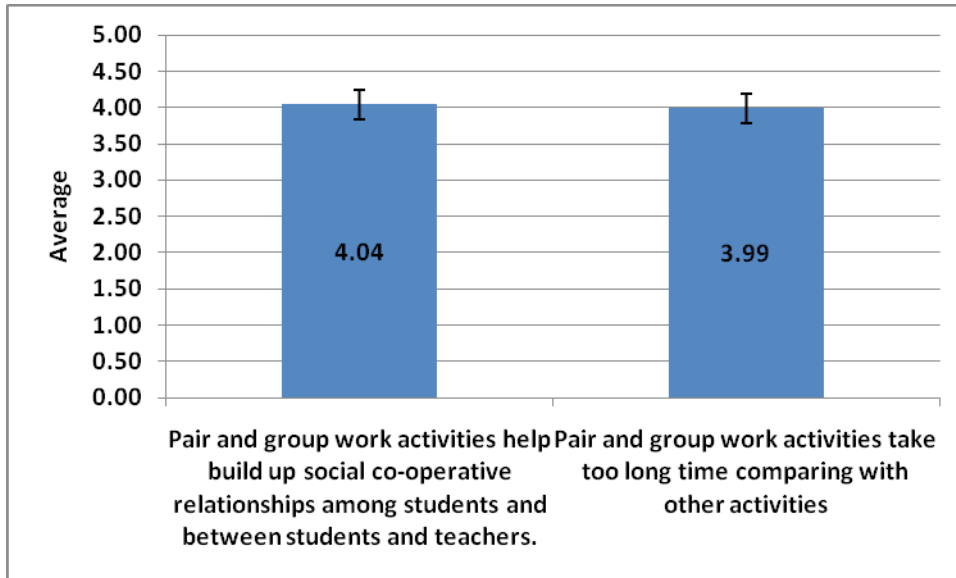
The average rating given to statement 17, *Pair and Group work activities provide good opportunities for language practice; and thus improve students' communicative competence*, by the teachers is 4.65 while the average rating for statement 18, *It is difficult for the teacher to monitor students' performance during pair and group work activities; so students may use their mother tongue for discussion*, is 2.76. The average for statement 17 is bigger and significantly different from the average of statement 18 with a t value of 12.98 and a p value of 0.001 ( $<0.05$ ). See Figure 11 for details. There is strong evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that the teachers are more positive towards statement 17 than statement 18. Furthermore, from the frequency analysis 96% of the teachers rated statement 17 agree or strongly agree while the corresponding percent for statement 18 is only 31% (see tables 6.1 & 6.2).



**Figure 11: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 17 and 18**

#### **Statement 19 and 20 (Pair & Group Work)**

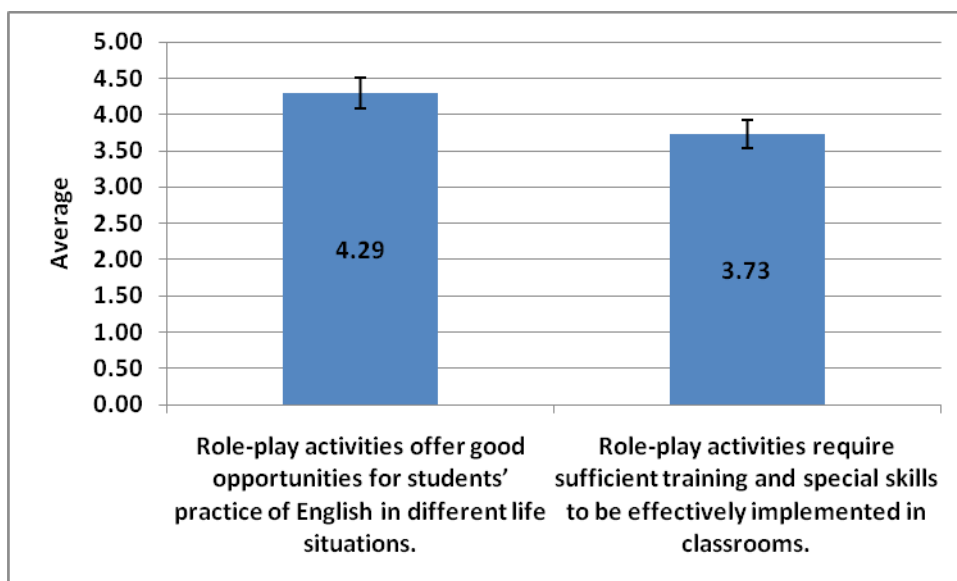
The average rating given for statement 19, *Pair and group work activities help build up social co-operative relationships among students and between students and teachers*, by the teachers is 4.04 while the average rating for statement 20, *Pair and group work activities take too long time comparing with other activities*, is 3.99. The average for statement 19 is slightly bigger than the average of statement 20. See Figure 12 for details. However there is no significant difference between the two averages with a t value of 0.32 and a p value of 0.748 ( $>0.05$ ). There is no evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that the teachers are more positive towards statement 19 than statement 20. In other words, the teachers are positive towards the two statements, as the averages are around 4=agree. Furthermore, from the frequency analysis 81% of the teachers rated statement 19 agree or strongly agree while the corresponding percent for statement 20 is 75%. See tables 6.1 and 6.2.



**Figure 12: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 19 and 20**

#### **Statement 21 and 22 (Role Play)**

The average rating given for statement 21, *Role-play activities offer good opportunities for students' practice of English in different life situations*, by the teachers is 4.29 while the average rating for statement 22, *Role-play activities require sufficient training and special skills to be effectively implemented in classrooms*, is 3.73. The average for statement 21 is bigger and significantly different from the average of statement 22 with a t value of 5.12 a p value of 0.001 ( $<0.05$ ). See Figure 13 for details. There is strong evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that the teachers are more positive towards statement 21 than statement 22. Furthermore, from the frequency analysis 93% of the teachers rated statement 21 agree or strongly agree while the corresponding percent for statement 22 is 74%. See tables 6.1 and 6.2.

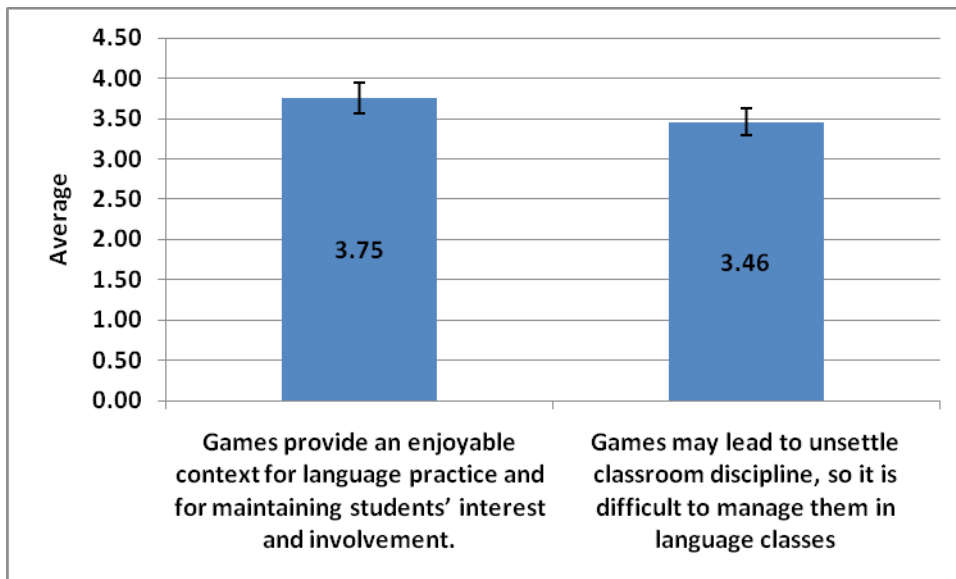


**Figure 13: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 21 and 22**

#### **Statement 23 and 24 (Games)**

The average rating given for statement 23, *Games provide an enjoyable context for language practice and for maintaining students' interest and involvement*, by the teachers is 3.75 while the average rating for statement 24, *Games may lead to unsettle classroom discipline, so it is difficult to manage them in language classes*, is 3.46. The average for statement 23 is bigger than the average of statement 24. However there is no significant difference between the two averages with a t value of 1.80 and a p value of 0.075 ( $>0.05$ ). See Figure 14 for details. There is no evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that the teachers are more positive towards statement 23 than statement 24. In other words, the teachers have the same view on the two statements, which is between uncertain and agree as the average values are between 3=uncertain and 4=agree. Furthermore, from the frequency analysis 65% of the teachers rated statement 23 agree or strongly agree while the corresponding percent for statement 24 is 57%. See tables 6.1 and 6.2.

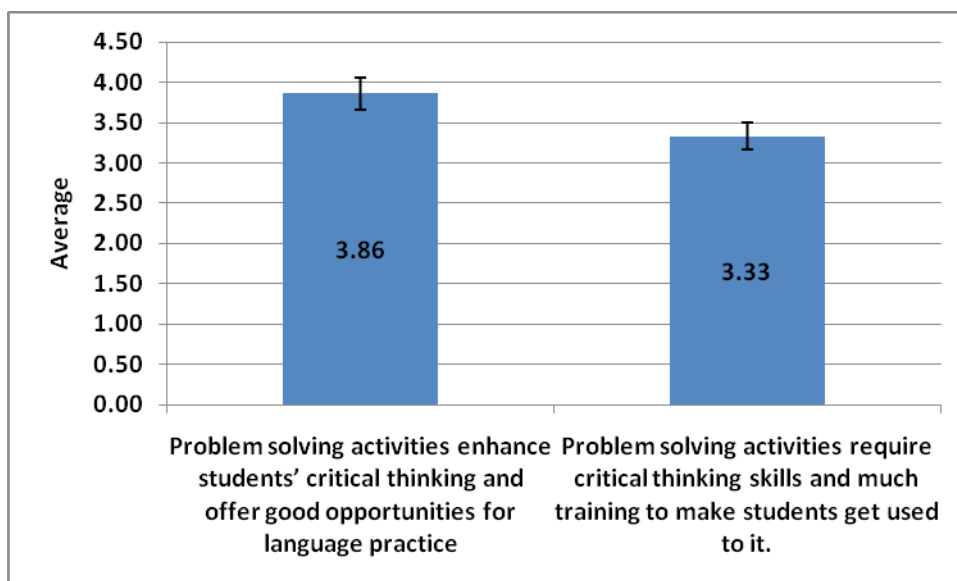




**Figure 14: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 23 and 24**

### **Statement 25 and 26 (Problem Solving)**

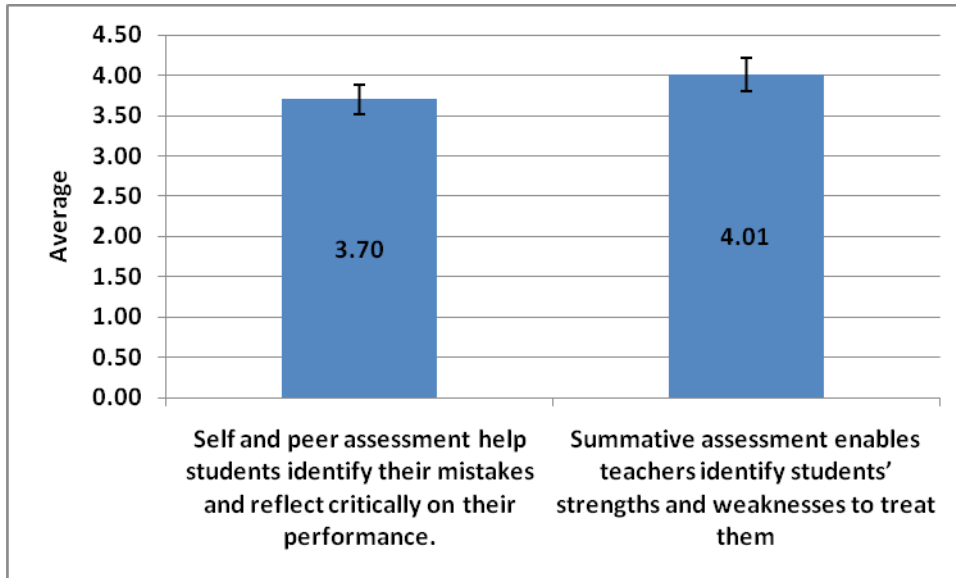
The average rating given for statement 25, *Problem solving activities enhance students' critical thinking and offer good opportunities for language practice*, by the teachers is 3.86 while the average rating for statement 26, *Problem solving activities require critical thinking skills and much training to make students get used to it*, is 3.33. The average for statement 25 is bigger and significantly different from the average of statement 26 with a t value of 4.68 and a p value of 0.001 ( $<0.05$ ). See Figure 15 for details. There is strong evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that teachers are more positive towards statement 25 than statement 26. Furthermore, from the frequency analysis 72% of the teachers rated statement 25 agree or strongly agree while the corresponding percent for statement 26 is only 43%. See tables 6.1 and 6.2.



**Figure 15: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 25 and 26**

#### **Statement 27 and 28 (Self & Peer Assessment)**

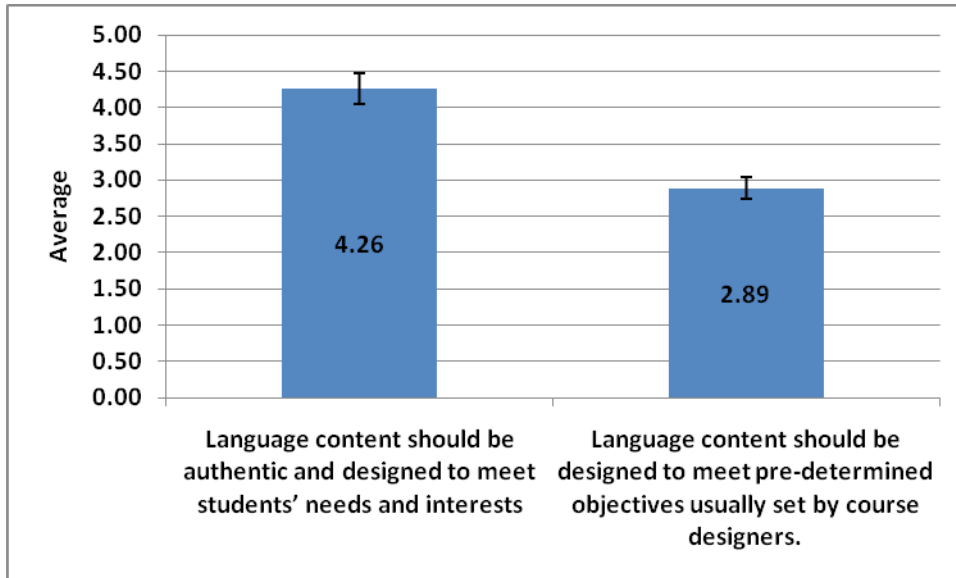
The average rating given for statement 27, *Self and peer assessment help students identify their mistakes and reflect critically on their performance*, by the teachers is 3.70 while the average rating for statement 28, *Summative assessment enables teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses to treat them*, is 4.01. The average for statement 27 is smaller than the average of statement 28. This is the only occasion when the average of the CLCA statement is smaller than the TCA statement. However, there is no significant difference between the two averages with a t value of -1.97 and a p value of 0.052 ( $>0.05$ ). See Figure 16 for details. There is no evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that the teachers are more positive towards statement 27 than statement 28. In other words, the teachers have similar views on the two statements, which is between uncertain and agree as the average values are between 3=uncertain and 4=agree. Furthermore, from the frequency analysis 67% of the teachers rated statement 27 agree or strongly agree while the corresponding percent for statement 28 is 83%. See tables 6.1 and 6.2.



**Figure 16: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 27 and 28**

**Statement 29 and 30 (Content of Language Materials)**

The average rating given for statement 29, *Language content should be authentic and designed to meet students' needs and interests*, by the teachers is 4.26 while the average rating for statement 30, *Language content should be designed to meet pre-determined objectives usually set by course designers*, is 2.89. The average for statement 29 is bigger and significantly different from the average of statement 30 with a t value of 8.67 and a p value of 0.001 (<0.05). See figure 17 for details. There is strong evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that the teachers are more positive towards statement 29 than statement 30. Furthermore, from the frequency analysis 88% of the teachers rated statement 29 agree or strongly agree while the corresponding percent for statement 30 is only 35%. See tables 6.1 and 6.2.



**Figure 17: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 29 and 30**

Generally, there is sufficient evidence to indicate that the teachers rated the CLCA statements higher than they rated the TCA statements. The averages from CLCA statements were greater each time except for statements 27 and 28 where the average for the TCA was bigger than for the CLCA. We can therefore conclude that there is evidence beyond chance that the teachers are more positive to the CLCA principles and practices than those of the TCA.

A significant indication can be drawn from examining the frequency in the teachers' response rates to the overall statements of the questionnaire is the tendency of many of the teachers to respond in the same manner to many couples of statements (see 6.2.1.1 & 6.2.1.2.1) despite the different perspectives they imply. This can be related either to the teachers' lack of understanding of the different underlying theories upon which these principles are based or to their preference of employing the two related principles or practices in classrooms as appropriate (for detailed interpretation see 7.2.2).

Now, it is worth examining the variables which might have influenced the teachers' responses to the statements of the questionnaire.

### **6.2.3 Effect Size of Independent Variables on Teachers' Responses to CLCA and TCA Statements**

Effect size "measures how much effect can be attributed to the influence of an independent variable on a dependent variable" (Larson-Hall, 2010: 395). The following sub-sections report the results of the t-test which was conducted to find out the impact of the independent variables (place of graduation, location of school and teaching experience) on the dependent variable (teachers' views and understanding of the basic principles and practices of the CLCA and TCA). Cohen et al (2007) explain that t-test is "useful for examining differences between ...the same group on either two variables or two occasions" (p: 546). Reporting such effect sizes was emphasised by Cohen et al (2007) and by Larson-Hall (2010); even if they are not statistically significant (Cohen et al, 2007: 550; Larson-Hall, 2010: 117). Cohen et al (2007) believe that "finding no difference can be as important as finding a difference" (p: 550). The results of this test are presented in tables because they are simple to read and economical in space.

#### **6.2.3.1 Effect Size of Place of Graduation**

Table 6.5 shows the means and the standard deviations in the responses of the teachers who graduated from colleges of Arts (60%) and those who graduated from Colleges of Teacher Training (40%).

**Table 6.5 Effect Size of Place of Graduation**

Statement	Teachers Training College	College of Arts	T value	P value
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)		
CLCA	4.05 (0.31)	4.14 (0.29)	-1.46	0.148
TCA	3.27 (0.61)	3.47 (0.57)	-1.65	0.103

**SD=Standard Deviation**

There is no significant difference between the two values with a t value of -1.46 and a p value of 0.148 (>0.05). Similarly, for the TCA statements, the corresponding averages are 3.27 and 3.47 respectively. Even though for the TCA statements the averages from teachers who are from the colleges of Arts is bigger than the averages from the teachers from Teachers Training Colleges, there is no significant difference with a t value of -1.65 and a p value of 0.103 (>0.05). There is no evidence to suggest that the teachers' place of graduation had an effect on how they rated either the CLCA or the TCA statements.

On one hand, the averages from both groups on the CLCA statements are around 4=agree, we can therefore conclude that the teachers were more positive towards the CLCA principles and practices. On the other hand, the averages from both groups on the TCA statements are around 3=uncertain, we can therefore conclude that the teachers were less positive towards the TCA principles. However, we can not conclude that the teachers were very negative towards the TCA as they responded strongly agree and agree for some of the even statements which imply the principles and practices of this approach (see 6.2.1.2.1/ table 6.2).

### **6.2.3.2 Effect Size of School Location**

Table 6.6 shows the means and the standard deviations in the overall responses of the teachers from rural schools (52%) and those from the urban schools (48%).

**Table 6.6 Effect Size of School Location**

Statement	Urban Schools	Rural Schools	T value	P value
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)		
CLCA	4.09 (0.33)	4.12 (0.27)	-0.50	0.622
TCA	3.40 (0.61)	3.39 (0.58)	0.08	0.933

The average value given to the CLCA statements by the teachers from urban schools is 4.09 while the average value given by the teachers from rural schools is 4.12. There is no significant difference between the two values with a t value of -0.50 and a p value of 0.622 ( $>0.05$ ). Similarly, for the TCA statements, the corresponding averages are 3.40 and 3.49 respectively. The averages are very similar and there is no significant difference with a t value of 0.08 and a p value of 0.933 ( $>0.05$ ). There is no evidence to suggest that school location had an effect on how the teachers rated either the CLCA or the TCA statements.

Just like the place of graduation, on one hand, the averages of responses of the teachers from urban and rural schools on the CLCA statements are around 4=agree, we can therefore conclude that the teachers were more positive towards the CLCA principles. On the other hand, the averages from both groups on the TCA statements are around 3=uncertain, we can therefore conclude that the teachers were less positive towards the TCA principles.

### 6.2.3.3 Effect Size of Teaching Experience

Table 6.7 shows the means and the standard deviations in the overall responses of (36%) of the teachers whose teaching experience was more than 10 years (experienced) and of those (64%) whose teaching experience ranged between 1 to 10 years 'less experienced'.

**Table 6.7 Effect Size of Teaching Experience**

Statement	More than 10 years	Less than 10 years	T value	p value
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)		
CLCA	4.11 (0.35)	4.10 (0.28)	0.15	0.884
TCA	3.15 (0.56)	3.53 (0.57)	-3.24	0.002

The average value given to the CLCA statements by the experienced teachers is 4.11 while the average value given by the less experienced teachers is 4.10. There is no significant difference between the two values with a t value of 0.15 and a p value of 0.933 ( $>0.05$ ). Similarly, for the TCA statements, the corresponding averages are 3.15 and 3.53 respectively. There is a significant difference with a t value of -3.24 and a p value of 0.002 ( $<0.05$ ). There is strong evidence to suggest that the teachers' experience had an effect on teachers' rating of the TCA statements but not on rating the CLCA statements. The less experienced teachers were more positive towards the even statements which imply the basic principles and practices of the TCA.

#### **6.2.4 Relevant Qualitative Data Gathered through the Interviews**

The teachers' views and understanding of the principles and practices of the CLCA were further investigated during the interviews. Question No. 2 of the interview schedule was designed to elicit information related to the teachers' understanding of the necessary changes for their instructional approach and classroom practices to be consistent with the principles of the CLCA (see 5.4.2.1). The changes reported by the teachers during the interviews are presented in a box in the following page. Cohen et al (2007) suggested 'tabulating' for presenting and analysing qualitative data and offered some examples of using this form for summarising interviews (see pp: 462-465).



**What changes do the teachers think necessary for their instructional approach and classroom practices to be consistent with the CLAC?**

- 18 teachers: role of the teacher should involve guide and facilitate students' learning. Teachers should provide students with assistance and feedback as appropriate. Teachers should not dominate classroom activities. But teachers still need to present and explain new information.
- 18 teachers: students should be encouraged to participate actively in carrying out learning tasks. They are not assumed to be as passive as they used to be.
- 17 teachers: desks and chairs in classrooms should be arranged in a way that permits managing group work properly and more interaction between students.
- 15 teachers: good relationships need to be established between teachers and students. Mutual respect and trust are necessary conditions for this relationship.
- 12 teachers: more attention should be given to students' engagement in carrying out communication activities. Communication should be the means of instruction in classrooms.
- 4 teachers: we should use authentic and meaningful language materials which respond to students' needs and interests.

The summary of the teachers' responses shown in the box above indicates that eighteen of the teachers were aware about the importance of changing their instructional approach from teaching into facilitation and of encouraging students to participate actively during language classes. This understanding seems to be related to their practices as they provided some relevant examples from their classrooms. One of these teachers reported about the change in his role and the role of his students by explaining:

*I used to do everything during my classes. I used to explain, give instructions while my students listen passively. Now, I minimise my role to be a guide and a facilitator. I encourage my students to do tasks by themselves. My students now do a lot of work during my English classes. They have become active (Q38).*

Another teacher explained

*I think the proper implementation of this approach entails changing both roles of my students and mine. I should guide and facilitate and they should practice and speak (Q39).*

Another physical feature of learner-centred classrooms which was perceived by seventeen of the interviewees as a necessary condition for the proper implementation of the CLCA was related to the arrangement of desks and chairs in classroom. These teachers criticised the current way in which the desks and chairs in their classrooms were arranged as it did not allow for managing group work and other communication activities properly. They urged for providing their classrooms with movable desks. They believed that these desks would allow them to compose students in a variety of groups. One of these teachers said

*If we want to teach the new textbooks in an appropriate way, our classrooms should be provided with movable desks and chairs. This will make it possible to manage communication activities (Q40).*

Fifteen teachers believed that establishing good relationships with their students is a necessary condition for the proper implementation of the CLCA. They thought that this relationship could create an atmosphere of warmth and trust in which everyone can be cared for. One of the teachers recommended

*It is very important for the teachers who want to apply this approach to start by building a good rapport with their students. They both should love each other. This relationship can enhance students' motivation to learn (Q41).*

Involving students in carrying out communication activities was emphasised by twelve teachers as a good strategy for implementing the CLCA. They stressed that more attention should be given to students' practice and use of English for

communication purposes. They considered this strategy as a good option for improving students' communication skills. One of these teachers said

*More opportunities should be given to students to practice English in different communication activities. This will improve their communication skills (Q42).*

Four teachers stressed the importance of selecting meaningful and authentic English language materials. They believed that these materials could meet students' learning needs and interests and could develop their communication skills. One of these teachers suggested that

*I believe that through using meaningful and authentic language materials, we offer students the opportunity to learn about how language is used in its real contexts. This may lead them to use the same language when encounter similar situations outside classrooms (Q43).*

Comparing the aforementioned comments with the teachers' responses to the related statements in their questionnaires (1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 13, 17, 19) (see 6.2.2.1) indicates a consistency in the data provided through the two tools about these issues. This can be seen as a reliable indication for the validity of the data gathered through the closed-ended items of the questionnaire (see appendix 1).

### **6.3 Training, Implementation and Difficulties**

In order to obtain a comprehensive answer for the second research question, the teachers were first asked to report whether they had received any training on implementing this approach or not. Then, they were asked to report if they had implemented any communicative learner-centred activities for teaching the new English language curriculum. Those teachers who answered 'Yes' to this question were later asked to report the activities which they had implemented (pair work, group work, role-

play, games, problem-solving). They were also asked to report if they encountered any difficulties during their implementation of these activities. Then, those who answered ‘Yes’ to this question were given the opportunity to report the difficulties they had encountered. The teachers’ responses to these questions are presented in separate tables. Cohen et al (2007) suggested summarising and analysing qualitative data through a quantitative paradigm (e.g. tables and numbers) (pp: 482-483).

### 6.3.1 Teachers’ Training

Table 6.8 shows the number of the teachers who had received training about the CLCA and the number of those who had not received any training.

**Table 6.8 Teachers’ Training**

Have you received any training about the CLCA?	YES		NO	
	Count	%	count	%
	27	27%	73	73%

The results shown in table 6.8 indicate that the majority of the teachers (73%) had not received any training about implementing the CLCA for teaching the new English textbooks of secondary schools. Only 27% of them reported that they had received some training. These teachers were asked to report when they had received this training. Table 6.9 presents their responses to this question.

**Table 6.9 Time of Training**

Time of Training	Count	%
Pre-Service	13	48.2%
In-Service	11	40.7%
Others	3	11.1%

The results shown in table 6.9 indicate that 48.2 % of the teachers had been trained on the CLCA before they joined schools for teaching and that 40.7 % of them had their

training while they were teaching in schools. The other 11.1% had received their training during the transition period between their graduation and start of teaching.

### 6.3.2 Teachers' Implementation of Communication Activities.

Table 6.10 shows the number of the teachers who implemented communicative learner-centred activities as a strategy for teaching the new English textbooks.

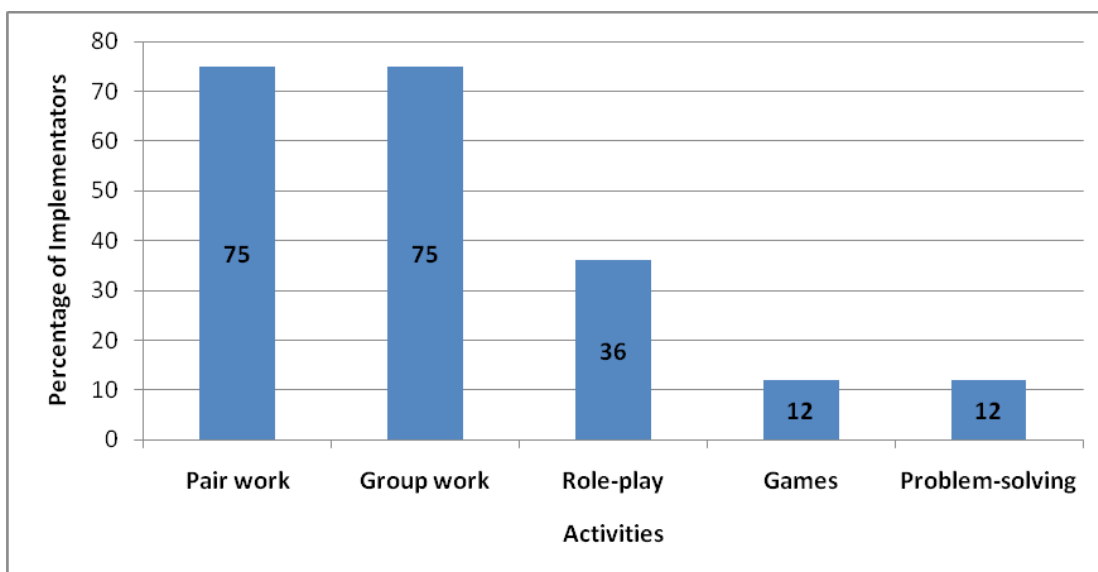
**Table 6.10 Teachers Implemented Communication Activities in Classrooms**

Do you implement any communicative learner-centred activities in your classroom?	Yes		No	
	Count	%	Count	%
	95	95%	5	5%

The results shown in the table above indicate that the majority of the teachers (95%) implemented communicative-learner-centred activities during their teaching of the new textbooks in Libyan secondary schools. Only five teachers reported that they did not implement any of these activities. This indicates that these activities represented a common feature of the English classes of these teachers.

#### 6.3.2.1 Communication Activities Implemented in Classrooms

To obtain data related to the teachers' actual classroom teaching experiences, the teachers were asked to report those communicative learner-centred activities which they had implemented. Five activities including pair work, group work, role-play, problem-solving and games were listed in the questionnaire. Moreover, they were also asked to add any relevant activities they might have implemented. Figure 18 shows the rank of the teachers' implementation of the communication activities.



**Figure 18: Communication Activities Implemented in Classrooms**

Figure 18 shows that 75% of the teachers had implemented pair and group work activities and that 36% of them had implemented role-play activities. It shows that games and problem solving activities were implemented by only 12% of the teachers.

The implementation of pair and group work activities was also confirmed by sixteen of the teachers during the interviews. One of the teachers said

*As most of the instructions given in students' textbooks and in Teacherbooks focus on implementing most of the activities through pair and group work, I try to follow these instructions as much as I can (Q44).*

Another teacher explained

*I follow the instructions of the guidebook in my teaching. These instructions suggest that most of the tasks and activities should be carried out through pair and group work (Q45).*

By referring back to the teachers' responses to the statements from 17 to 26 in tables 6.1 and 6.2 which are related to their views about implementing communicative learner-centred activities for ELT, a general indication can be understood that the majority of the teachers were aware of the value of these activities for this purpose. Therefore, 95% of them reported their implementation of these activities during their English classes

(see table 6.10). However, 83% of the teachers reported that their attempts to implement these activities were hindered by many difficulties (see table 6.11). These difficulties are shown in Figure 19. This may explain the inconsistency in the teachers' responses to the statements of the questionnaire which imply two different perspectives about these communication activities (see table 6.1 & 6.2). This may also explain the contradiction between the teachers' positive views about role play, games and problem solving activities and their practice of them in classrooms (see table 6.1 & Figure 18). More interpretations and explanations about teachers' implementation of these activities are discussed in chapter seven (see 7.3).

### 6.3.2.2 Difficulties of Implementation

Question No. 5 of the questionnaire was designed to elicit information about the difficulties which were encountered by the teachers during their implementation of the communication activities in classrooms (see appendix 1). Table 6.11 presents their responses to this question. For purposes of validation, this question was repeated in the interview schedule (see 5.4.2.1).

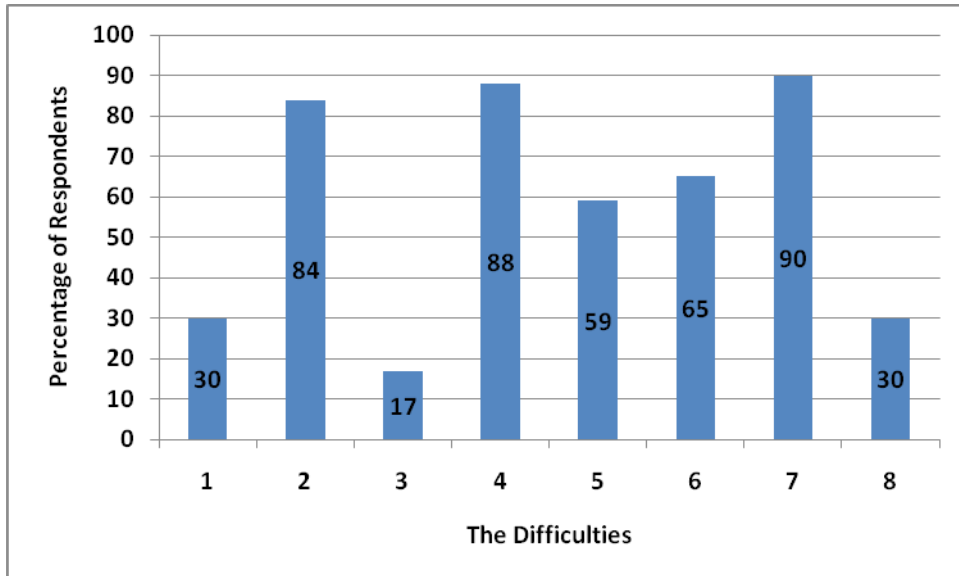
**Table 6.11 Teachers Encountered Difficulties**

Do you encounter any difficulties in implementing the communicative learner-centred activities in your classroom?	Yes		No	
	Count	%	Count	%
	83	83%	17	17%

The table above shows that 83% of the teachers had encountered certain difficulties in implementing the communicative learner-centred activities. Surprisingly, 17% of them claimed that they had not faced any difficulties. Some difficulties elicited from the literature (Li, 1998) were listed in the questionnaire and the teachers were asked to tick those difficulties which they had experienced. Moreover, enough space was left for them to add any relevant difficulties if not included in the list (see appendix 1).

For validation, this issue was further investigated during the interviews (see 5.4.2.1).

Figure (19) shows the difficulties and the number of teachers who reported them in the questionnaires.



**Figure 19 Difficulties Encountered by the Teachers**

The numbers from 1 to 8 shown on the figure above refers to the following difficulties:

- 1-Students need accuracy more than fluency (30%);
- 2-Students' low proficiency level (84%);
- 3- Teachers' hesitation to give up the authoritative role (17%);
- 4- Limited time (88%);
- 5- Mismatch between the objectives of the curriculum and the content of national examinations (59%);
- 6- Large classes (65%);
- 7- Lack of teaching facilities and resources (90%);
- 8- Students' resistance to classroom participation (30%).

The results shown on Figure (19) indicate that most of the teachers 90% encountered the problem of the lack of teaching facilities in their schools. Insufficiency of time was



reported by 88% of the teachers and the issue of students' low proficiency level by 84% of them. 65% of the teachers were concerned with the large numbers of students in their classrooms and 59% of them with the mismatch between the content of the national examination of secondary education with the objectives of the new curriculum. The latter issue was also raised strongly during the interviews by sixteen of the teachers. One of these teachers said

*Focusing the national examinations of secondary schools on grammar and reading leads students to paying more attention to these sections than communication skills. My students always ask me to teach them those sections which they think relevant to the content of exams. (Q46).*

To investigate the claims of these teachers, a content analysis of a sample of these examinations was conducted (see appendix 18). Cohen et al (2007) suggested employing content analysis for analysing educational documents (p: 97). There was an interest to examine two versions of listening and speaking tests of the national examination of secondary education as they measure students' ability for using English for communication. However, this was not possible as this examination did not include a session for testing students' listening skill. Analysing the content of a sample of the final examination of speaking skill named on the exam timetable as 'Conversation' revealed that it consisted of twenty-one true/false, twenty-four multiple choice and twenty-five matching questions) two-hour examination (see appendix 18). A thorough examination of the items of this sample indicates that it represents a traditional form of assessment which mainly focuses on students' memorisation of some idioms, phrases, English expressions, vocabulary meanings, definitions and grammatical rules. The conclusion drawn from this analysis supports the claim of 59% of the teachers about the mismatch between the content of this examination (see appendix 18) with the main

objective of introducing the curriculum innovation regarding developing students' communication skills (see 2.4.1)

Students' interest in learning grammatical rules was reported by 30% of the teachers. Seven teachers emphasised this issue during the interview and claimed that this orientation led their students to be less interested in developing their communication skills. One of these teachers complained

*My students are very interested in learning grammatical rules. They believe that their mastery and memorisation of these rules can lead them to pass their final examination. They always ask me to analyse samples of previous final examinations which were mainly grammar-oriented (Q47).*

Only 17% of the teachers admitted their hesitation to give up their authoritarian role in order to offer students more freedom and flexibility to implement these activities in unstructured or less structured way. Although none of the teachers explicitly expressed this tendency during the interviews, it was implied in their views about the students' ability for undertaking the responsibility for their learning. One of the twelve teachers who raised many arguments about the appropriateness of the CLCA for the Libyan context said

*No one can effectively manage the learning process except the teacher. I do not believe that students can be responsible for their own learning. This is why from the beginning of the interview I told you that the CLCA is a wrong concept (Q48).*

As the teachers were asked to add any problems or difficulties which they might have encountered but not included in the list provided in the questionnaire, more issues were emerged in the questionnaires and during the interviews. Table 6.12 presents these issues with the number of the questionnaires and the interviews in which they were reported. Presenting this qualitative data in this form was useful for reducing it (Cohen et al, 2007: 483) and for avoiding repetition.

**Table 6.12 Additional Difficulties and Challenges**

No.	Problem	Questionnaires	Interviews (out of 20)
1-	Lack or insufficient training	91%	20
2-	Prescribed Curriculum	84%	18
3-	Insufficient guidance from language inspectors	79%	18
4-	Accountability for inspectors' evaluation	68%	17
5-	Students' unfamiliarity with the new approach	43%	14
6-	Teachers' low proficiency levels	39%	12
7-	Lack of support	27%	8
8-	Low salary	12%	5

The table above shows that ninety-one teachers were concerned about their lack of training about implementing the new curriculum. They believed that this was an influential factor for their failure to change their instructional approach and classroom practices to be consistent with the new methodology. They seemed to be aware about the different methodology they should use for teaching the new textbooks. Therefore, they suggested involving them in training courses designed to provide them with model lessons of these textbooks. One of the teachers said

*I have not been trained on teaching these new textbooks. I could not understand many instructions and sections. We should be trained well for implementing this curriculum (Q49).*

Another teacher added

*Teaching these new textbooks requires following a new methodology different from the one we used to implement for teaching the previous textbooks. We need to understand this methodology before we start teaching the new textbooks (Q50).*

A critical complaint about training was raised during the interview with 9 teachers who graduated from the colleges of Arts (see table 5.3). These teachers complained that they had not been prepared for carrying out teaching tasks as their university education did not include any theoretical or practical modules about teaching or teaching methodology. One of these teachers said

*A major problem faced me and may be all other graduates from the colleges of Arts concerned with our lack of knowledge about teaching methodology. During*

*university, we have not studied any modules about these issues and we have not done any practical training or teaching (Q51).*

Another teacher added *“teaching is a new experience for me. During my university education, I have not been taught or trained about how to teach” (Q52).*

Eighty-four teachers were not satisfied with the notion of prescribing this curriculum innovation. They emphasised the importance of involving them in any process of curriculum development. They believed that they can provide significant feedback about students' needs and abilities in order to design appropriate and meaningful curricula for classrooms. One of the teachers complained

*I do not understand why we have not been involved in the process of designing this curriculum. I do not think that anyone can give information relevant to students' needs, interests and abilities better than teachers. We should be consulted before this curriculum has been introduced into schools. It is very clear that the content of the new textbooks is beyond the students' ability and may be the teachers as well (Q53).*

There was a consistency in the views of the seventy-nine teachers who pointed out the insufficient guidance and assistance they had received from their inspectors in the questionnaires with the views of the eighteen teachers who raised this complaint during the interviews. It should be noted that providing teachers with constant guidance and assistance is a main task for inspectors in the educational system in Libya (see 2.4.4 & appendix 8). However, all those teachers who raised this issue were not satisfied with the guidance and assistance they had received from these inspectors. One of these teachers wrote in her questionnaire *“when I get confused with any new methodological strategies of this approach, I do not find anyone to ask for help” (Q54).*

This teacher explained her complaint during the interview by saying

*According to my experience with all the inspectors who supervised me during my 12 years of teaching English in these schools, inspectors' main concern was only*

*to make judgements about my performance and conduct inside classrooms. None of them had asked me about the difficulties I face or the kind of assistance and guidance I need (Q55).*

Sixty-eight teachers were concerned with the effect of the inspectors' evaluation of their conduct on their career prospects. The seventeen teachers who raised this complaint during the interviews explained the impact of their accountability for inspection on their instructional approach inside classrooms. One of these teachers argued

*I give much attention to the inspector's evaluation of my performance because it has significant influence on my promotion and career prospects (Q56).*

Forty-three teachers considered the difficulty of their students' adaptation to their new roles as an influential impediment for implementing the new curriculum. They reported that their students were unable to participate actively in performing communication activities such as role-play, games or problem-solving. They attributed this to students' weak level of language proficiency. One of these teachers said

*I find it very difficult to engage my students in performing communication activities. Most of them are not interested in these activities. They lack confidence in their ability to participate in these activities (Q57).*

Thirty-nine teachers were concerned about the weak level of their proficiency levels. They believed that this did not help them for implementing the CLCA. These teachers were worried about their inability for using English language as a means of instruction during their English classes. One of these teachers said

*Not only students find it difficult to communicate in English. I myself face the same problem. I lack English vocabulary and expressions (Q58).*

Twenty-seven teachers complained about the lack of support or sympathy for what they do. They questioned the reason behind underestimating their efforts. They believed that

they undertake a significant role in the society which should be appreciated by all. One of the teachers wrote

*No one support us. No one appreciates what we do. No one gives attention to our concerns. We are always criticised for problems of education (Q59).*

Twelve of these teachers explicitly complained about their low salaries. They suggested that increasing their salaries would enhance their motivation to carry out their teaching tasks properly. One of these teachers said

*Our salaries should be increased. This can motivate us to give more attention to our teaching job instead of looking for extra part-time jobs in order to satisfy our family needs (Q60).*

Detailed discussions about these difficulties, their causes, their impact on teachers' implementation of the CLCA and their possible solutions are provided in chapter 7. See sections from 7.4 to 7.4.4.3.

#### **6.4 Teachers' Views about the Appropriateness of the CLCA for the Libyan Context**

A good understanding of the teachers' views about the suitability of the CLCA for TEFL within the Libyan context could be better realised after identifying their conceptions of this approach, reflecting on their experiences of its implementation and reporting the difficulties they had encountered in this process. Therefore, they were asked in the last section of the questionnaire to give their opinions about this issue. These views are briefly summarised in table 6.13 which shows the number of teachers who were positive or negative towards this notion.

**Table 6.13 Teachers' Views about the Appropriateness of the CLCA for the Libyan Context**

I find the CLCA appropriate for TEFL in the Libyan context	Yes		No	
	Count	%	Count	%

	88	88%	12	12%
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The results shown in table 6.13 indicate that the majority of the teachers (88%) were positive towards the notion of implementing the CLCA for TEFL within the Libyan context. Emphasising remarks for this view were frequently repeated by the teachers in the questionnaires and during the interviews. More advantages of this approach were also reported by the teachers when they were asked to explain their positive views about this approach. Generally, most of these advantages indicate that the teachers were concerned with the practical benefits which they thought would be gained by their students at the classroom level from implementing this approach. These advantages are summarised in the following box:

<p><b>Why do the teachers think that the CLCA is appropriate for TEFL in the Libyan context?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 teachers believed that it enhances students' active learning;</li> <li>• 12 teachers believed that it enhances students' motivation and interest to learn;</li> <li>• 9 teachers believed that it increases positive interaction and relationships between teacher and students;</li> <li>• 8 teachers believed that it offers more opportunities for students to practice the target language;</li> <li>• 5 teachers believed that it improves students' communication skills;</li> <li>• 3 teachers believed that it makes teacher's role less demanding as it mostly involves guiding and observing;</li> <li>• 2 teachers believed that it creates students who can depend on themselves.</li> </ul>
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Developing positive interaction and good relationships between teachers and students inside learner-centred classrooms was perceived by nine teachers as a significant advantage for this approach. Eight teachers believed that implementing this approach for language teaching would provide students with a variety of situations and activities for practicing English. Five teachers considered it as effective for developing students'

communication skills through involving them in working in pairs or in groups. Three teachers thought positively about this approach because they perceived their role in it as less demanding than their role in the TCA. Only two teachers pointed out the benefits which students could gain at the personal level from experiencing the CLCA in language classrooms. These two teachers believed that this experience would lead students to develop the necessary skills for becoming independent individuals who could make significant decisions related to their learning and other life affairs.

However, the majority of the teachers 88% who had positive views about the notion of implementing the CLCA for TEFL in the Libyan context recommended the provision of the necessary conditions for overcoming the problems of implementation as a first step (see Figure 19/ table 6.12).

The twelve teachers who did not think positively about the notion of implementing this approach for TEFL in the Libyan context reported different reasons to explain their views. Most of these reasons were related to the difficulties and challenges presented in Figure (19) and in Table (6.12). One of these teachers attributed his view to his satisfaction about the impossibility for providing the necessary conditions for implementing this approach in Libyan secondary schools. He said

*I do not think this approach can be implemented in our secondary schools. The demands brought by this approach are beyond our teachers and students. The current situation in our schools suggests that the TCA is more appropriate than the CLCA (Q61).*

However, it should be noted that none of these teachers expressed his/her lack of satisfaction about the humanistic and democratic principles of the CLCA. They all believed in the value of the theory of this approach but were concerned with the difficulty of implementing it in the Libyan context. Although the number of these



teachers was not large (12 teachers), their critical views are worthy to be discussed in details in chapter seven (see 7.5).

### **6.5 Data Analysis of Inspectors' Questionnaire**

The responses of the ten English language inspectors to the eleven open-ended questions of the inspector's questionnaire (see appendix 4) were analysed following a content analysis method of data analysis (Cohen et al, 2007; Berg, 2009).

Berg (2009) defined content analysis as a “careful, detailed, systematic examination and interpretation of a particular body of material in an effort to identify patterns, themes, biases and meanings” (p: 338). Cohen et al (2007) described this kind of analysis as the best procedure for reducing qualitative data and for coding and analysing open-ended questions on written questionnaires (pp: 475-476). At the beginning of this process, the detailed accounts provided by the language inspectors were extensively read and carefully examined in order to find information relevant to the research questions. Then, the statements which were found interesting and relevant were coded using concepts as a unit of coding. Berg (2009) explained that using the concept as a unit of analysis would lead towards more “latent than manifest content’ (p.349). Moreover, words and phrases were also sometimes marked (Cohen et al, 2007; Berg, 2009). To ensure the reliability of the coding units used in this process, a preliminary content analysis was applied on two of the questionnaires (Berg, 2009). This process indicated the integrity of the codes used.

The process of analysing the inspectors' answers to the questions started by grouping the answers of each question together in the light of the codes given to these answers (Cohen et al, 2007: 467). Coding refers to the process of “ascription of a category label to a piece of data; which either decided in advance or in response to the data that have

been collected” (Cohen et al, 2007: 480). Then, the answers with similar codes were grouped together whereas those with different codes were labelled separately. For example, some of the categories used for grouping the inspectors’ answers to question (1) were designed in the light of the tasks and responsibilities given to the inspectors in the standard Teacher’s Annual Evaluation Form (see appendix 7), some others were created to fit the new tasks and responsibilities emerged from the data (see 6.14). The application of this approach of content analysis for the written accounts provided by the language inspectors with the researcher’s reflection on this data have yielded the following findings:

### **6.5.1 Inspector’s Tasks and Responsibilities**

The English language inspectors who participated in this study were asked in question (1) about the major tasks and responsibilities assigned to them as a part of the education system in Libya. The different tasks and responsibilities which were reported by these inspectors are presented in Table 6.14. Tabulating is a form for organising and analysing qualitative data (see examples in Cohen et al, 2007: 463-465). Cohen et al (2007) believe that presenting qualitative data in this form has the advantage of being economical and useful for summarising (pp: 482-483). These tasks and responsibilities will be compared with the tasks and responsibilities outlined in the report of the coordinator of the English language inspectors of the region (see appendix 8). These inspectors’ understanding of their tasks and responsibilities will be also examined with reference to the teachers’ views about the actual role played by these inspectors (see 6.3.2.2).

**Table 6.14 Inspectors’ Tasks and Responsibilities**

No.	Task & Responsibility	Inspectors	Rank
1-	Evaluating teachers’ performance	10	1
2-	Providing teachers’ with support and guidance	8	2
3-	Evaluating the curriculum	3	3
4-	Evaluating conditions of schools and classrooms	1	4

Table 6.14 shows that all the inspectors considered ‘evaluating teachers’ performance’ as their main task. This task was reported at the beginning of their responses to question No.1. ‘Providing teachers with support and guidance’ was reported by eight of the inspectors as another major responsibility. Only three inspectors perceived ‘evaluating the curriculum’ among their tasks and responsibilities. One of these inspectors explained that their evaluation of the curriculum should include evaluating “*the textbooks, the teacher’s methodology and the assessment strategies used by teachers*” (Q62). Surprisingly, only one inspector believed that ‘evaluating the conditions of schools and classrooms’ is among his tasks and responsibilities. This inspector wrote

*When I visit schools, I focus not only on teachers’ performance, but also on the suitability of the conditions of schools and classrooms in which teachers work and students learn (Q63).*

Comparing the tasks presented above with those tasks outlined in the report of the Director of the English language inspectors of the region revealed that the language inspectors were not aware of their all tasks and responsibilities (see appendix 8). Although all the tasks and responsibilities reported by these inspectors were included in the report, some of the tasks outlined in the report were not reported by anyone of the inspectors. These tasks included:

- Participating in workshops concerned with planning for introducing new curricula into schools;
- Planning for in-service training courses for teachers and designing programmes for these courses;
- Providing teachers with detailed explanations about new teaching methodologies and approaches (see appendix 8).

The inspectors' lack of knowledge or understanding about these significant tasks indicates that they might have not practiced them. These inspectors' understanding and practice of these three tasks would lead them to have a say in making decisions about curriculum planning and development. For example, if these inspectors were actively involved in planning for introducing the new English curriculum in Libyan secondary schools, they would be able to provide teachers with clear guidance and sufficient support. However, this did not happen as all the inspectors answered 'No' when they were asked in question No 2 about their involvement in this process. Only one inspector wrote that he attended a one-day workshop to discuss the content of the new textbooks with two of the authors before these books were introduced into schools. However, this inspector pointed out that this workshop was held by the time the new textbooks were ready to be introduced in Libyan secondary schools. This indicates that the purpose of this workshop was not to listen to the inspectors' voice about planning for this new curriculum but could be to enhance their understanding of the changes and the new ideas brought with it.

There is a lack of consistency between the inspectors' perception of providing teachers with support and guidance as one of their main tasks with the claims of 79% of the teachers who reported that they had not received sufficient guidance or genuine support from these inspectors (see table 6.12). Although most of the inspectors (8 out of 10) considered providing teachers with support and guidance as one of their main tasks, the teachers claimed that this was not reflected in their actual practices. To gain more understanding about this issue, these inspectors were asked in question No.6 about the nature of support and guidance they offered for the teachers to overcome the challenges and the difficulties for implementing the CLCA for teaching the new English textbooks

(see 6.3.2.2). The inspectors reported different ways and strategies through which they thought that they had provided the teachers with support and guidance. For example, one of the inspectors wrote

*I always praise the effort teachers make and ask them to report any difficulties or challenges they encounter and help them to overcome these difficulties and challenges (Q64).*

Another inspector wrote

*I know that teachers need help and support especially to accept and implement their new role. I always make them feel that I am available to offer them this support and assistance. I often encourage the teachers to feel free to ask me questions (Q65).*

One of the inspectors pointed out that he was more concerned with helping the teachers for implementing more communicative learner-centred activities in their classrooms.

This inspector wrote

*As students are not familiar with the new communicative activities such as role play, language games and problem-solving, I always explain to the teachers the strategies through which they can enhance students' participation in these activities (Q66).*

This presentation indicates that different ways and strategies were followed by the inspectors in their attempts to provide the teachers with guidance and support. However, this claim was not confirmed by the majority of the teachers (79%) (See table 6.12). This may indicate that no clear guidance or support was offered by these inspectors for the teachers or that the support and guidance these inspectors thought they had offered were not explicit to the teachers (see 7.4.4.1).

### **6.5.2 Evaluation Criteria Used by the Inspectors**

To identify what criteria the inspectors were using for evaluating the teachers' performance, they were asked in question No.3 about these criteria. These inspectors reported about their focus on different aspects of teachers' performance for making their judgements.

Although there was a standard annual form for teacher's evaluation (see appendix 7) which all the inspectors of all subjects in Libyan basic and secondary schools are instructed to follow, the inspectors who participated in this study claimed that they were not bound to the criteria outlined in this form. The criteria which were reported by the inspectors are ranked in table 6.15 in accordance to the number of the inspectors who used them.

The results shown in table 6.15 indicate that eight of the inspectors used to give their attention to *teacher's use of English as a means of instruction* and *level of students' progress*. *Teachers' adherence to the pre-determined plan for syllabus distribution* ranked second as this criterion was reported by seven inspectors. *Teacher's relationship with inspectors*, *teacher's language proficiency* and *teacher's marking of students' homework* ranked third as they were reported by six of the inspectors. *Teaching methods and techniques* and *teacher's use of teaching aids and facilities* ranked fourth as they were reported by five inspectors. Four inspectors reported their focus on *teacher's relationship with other teachers* and so this criterion ranked fifth. *Students' participation* and *teacher's relationship with students* ranked sixth as these criteria were reported by three inspectors. Only two inspectors reported their focus on the *teacher's implementation of the new teaching methodology* therefore this criterion ranked last.

**Table 6.15: Evaluation Criteria Used by Language Inspectors**

Criterion	Rank	Inspectors
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Teacher's use of English as a means of instruction	1	8
Students' learning progress	1	8
Teacher's adherence to the pre-determined plan of syllabus distribution	2	7
Teacher's relationship with inspectors	3	6
Teacher's language proficiency	3	6
Teacher's follow-up of students' homework	3	6
Teaching methods and techniques	4	5
Teacher's use of teaching aids and facilities	4	5
Teacher's relationship with other teachers	5	4
Students' participation	6	3
Teacher's relationship with students	6	3
Teacher's implementation of the new teaching method	7	2

Comparing the criteria which were reported by the majority of the inspectors (see 6.15) with the criteria outlined in the annual teacher's assessment form (see appendix 7) reveals that all these inspectors were bound to the criteria outlined in this form. Exceptional criteria included *teacher's use of English*, *students' participation* and *teacher's implementation of the new methodology* which were reported by a small number of the inspectors (see table 6.15). In this regard, it should be noted that as this form was imposed on all the inspectors of all subjects in Libyan basic and secondary schools, it does not include a specific criterion for *teacher's use of English* which appeared first on the rank. A careful examination of this form reveals that it does not include any criteria concerned with teachers' consideration of the humanistic or democratic principles of the CLCA or with their encouragement of students' active participation inside classrooms. Most critically, it does not include any criteria for teachers' implementation of communicative learner-centred activities such as pair and group work.

Although teacher-student relationship is included in this form, a low grade (5 marks) is allocated for this aspect comparing with other criteria (see appendix 7). For example, the criterion of teacher's commitment to the pre-determined plan of content distribution

over the months of the year is given 22 grades (see appendix 7). Therefore, only three inspectors focused on teacher-student relationship in their evaluation of the teachers.

Those inspectors who reported their emphasis on some criteria which were not included in the annual teacher's assessment form provided some statements for explaining their rationale for using these criteria. For example, one of these inspectors wrote

*I consider teacher's implementation of the new methodology (CLCA) as the most important aspect upon which his/her performance and conduct should be evaluated (Q67).*

The other inspector wrote about his focus on teachers' various patterns of managing classroom interaction

*I consider students' active participation as a very important criterion. Therefore, I often give more attention to the different ways in which the teacher manages classroom interaction (Q68).*

Another inspector added

*I always encourage teachers to make interaction in their classrooms more open and more democratic and urge them not to dominate this interaction by their talk (Q69).*

If all the inspectors focus on these criteria for making their judgements about the teachers' performance, the teachers will give more attention to these aspects. However, imposing the standard form of evaluation on the inspectors (see appendix 8) does not offer this flexibility. The limitations of this form suggest that its validity needs to be questioned.

### **6.5.3 Changes Observed on Teachers' Instructional Approaches**

As the nature of their job requires making regular visits to schools and attending classes with teachers, the inspectors were able to describe what was actually happening in



classrooms during the English classes of secondary schools in the region. Therefore, they were asked in question No.4 about the changes they had observed on the teachers' instructional approaches and practices inside classrooms comparing with their previous ones. Different responses were provided about the extent and the nature of these changes. It should be noted that the ten inspectors who participated in this study were supervising all EFL secondary school teachers in the region who composed the target population of this study (see 5.1). This means that the data they provided about these teachers' instructional approaches and practices was not only based on their observation of those teachers who participated in this study or the schools from which the teachers were selected. It also related to their observation to all EFL teachers who were teaching the new English textbooks in the forty-three secondary schools in the region (see 5.2.2.1 & 5.2.2.2).

Eight inspectors reported that the majority of the teachers were trying to implement the new methodology of the CLCA for teaching the new English textbooks and that some changes were observed on their instructional approaches and practices. One of these inspectors wrote

*many teachers were doing less teaching and encourage more learning through employing pair and group work activities for presenting the content of textbooks (Q70).*

However, this inspector pointed out the difference in the extent of these teachers' dependence on presentations, explanations and giving instructions. He added that

*Some teachers still depend heavily on presenting the content of textbooks through whole class presentations and explanations. Some others display less dependence on these forms of instructions (Q71).*

Another inspector reported about some classrooms in which the teachers mixed teacher and learner-centred approaches of instruction. He explained that

*I observed some teachers who were conducting their lessons through a mixed approach of instruction. They seem to be confused between the traditional approach of instruction with facilitation. I could not describe these teachers as teacher-centred or student-centred (Q72).*

By contrast, two of the inspectors reported that they had not observed any changes in the methodology used by some of the teachers. One of these inspectors wrote

*Some teachers did not change their teaching methodology comparing with their traditional methodology of teacher-centred. These classrooms were still dominated by teachers' explanation and talk. The students in these classrooms were passive who in some occasions did not utter a word all the time I was present in the classroom (Q73).*

The other inspector pointed out the interest of the new teachers (less experienced) in playing a traditional approach of instruction and attributed that to their lack of knowledge or understanding about the new methodology. This inspector wrote

*I observed that the new teachers were confused and their methodology was not clear. Generally, they seemed to apply what they found easier and less demanding (Q74).*

Despite the inspectors' different views about the changes they had observed on teachers' instructional approaches and practices, there was a consensus among them about the existence of influential difficulties which have limited the attempts of the teachers to shift their instructional approach to be student-centred.

#### **6.5.4 Inspectors' Views about Difficulties and Challenges of Implementation**

The majority of the teachers (83%) reported that they had encountered many difficulties and challenges in their attempts to implement communicative learner-centred activities

(see 6.3.2.2 / Figure 19 & table 6.12). Therefore, it was important to ask the inspectors about these difficulties and challenges as their regular visits to these teachers' classrooms could enable them to provide information related to this issue. Moreover, these inspectors were assumed to be a major source for providing these teachers with support, assistance and guidance to overcome these difficulties and challenges. The difficulties and challenges reported by the inspectors are presented in table 6.16 and will be compared with those reported by the teachers.

**Table 6.16 Inspectors' Views about Problems of Implementation**

No.	Difficulty	Inspectors
1-	Lack of qualified teachers	10
2-	Textbooks are beyond teachers' ability	10
3-	Limited time	10
4-	Lack of teaching facilities	8
5-	Mismatch between the content of national examination and the objectives of the curriculum innovation	7
6-	Large classes	5
7-	Inconsistency between teacher education and training at university with the needs of secondary education	4
8-	Students are unable to adopt an active role	3

Table 6.16 shows that there is a consensus among the inspectors for considering the lack of qualified EFL teachers in Libyan secondary schools, teachers' inability for teaching the new textbooks and the limited time allocated for English classes as major challenges for the implementation of the CLCA. It also shows that the majority of these inspectors (8 inspectors) considered the lack of teaching and learning facilities in Libyan secondary schools as another major challenge. The mismatch between the content of national examinations of secondary education and the objectives of the curriculum innovation was considered by seven of the inspectors as another significant issue. Half of these inspectors expressed their concern about the large number of students in classrooms. Four inspectors raised another significant issue about the inconsistency between teacher education and training programmes for student teachers

at university with the needs of secondary school classrooms. Only three inspectors pointed out the difficulty of students' adaptation to the new active role in learner-centred language classrooms.

Comparing the difficulties and challenges reported by the language inspectors with those reported by the teachers (see Figure 19/ table 6.12) indicates that they both had similar perspectives about the influential difficulties and challenges for implementing the CLCA in Libyan secondary schools. However, there was a tension in their views about the difficulties caused by each of the two groups (teachers/inspectors) (see 7.3.2 & 7.4). Generally, this overall consistency confirms the existence of these difficulties and challenges.

#### **6.5.5 Inspector-Teacher Relationship**

A proper implementation of the CLCA in teaching the new English curriculum in Libyan secondary schools requires full cooperation between the teachers and the English language inspectors. This cooperation could be enhanced through establishing a good relationship between inspectors and teachers. Therefore, the inspectors were asked about the nature of their relationship with the teachers. The majority of the inspectors (8 out of 10) claimed that they had good and friendly relationship with the teachers. For example, one of the inspectors described his relationship with the teachers

*I believe that my work and the work of teachers are complementary. Therefore, I always make good and friendly relationships with them. We respect each other. We listen to each other. We share ideas in a democratic way. This makes the teachers welcome my visits (Q75).*

In contrast, two inspectors described their relationship with the teachers as being very formal. One of these inspectors wrote

*I visit the teachers only three or four times a year. These visits are not enough to establish a good relationship. Therefore, I often maintain a formal relationship with the teachers. They understand the nature of my job and we treat each other accordingly (Q76).*

Referring back to the comments of the 79% of the teachers about the support and guidance they were offered by these inspectors and about their relationship with them, these teachers expressed contradictory views with the inspectors' perception of this relationship (see 6.3.2.2). Although investigating the teachers' views about their relationship with the language inspectors was not a theme of focus during the first phase of the research, 79 % of the teachers had similar views to the inspector who described his relationship with the teachers as being very formal (see table 6.12).

As the teachers' views about their relationship with the inspectors were known when the inspector's questionnaire was constructed, the inspectors were asked if there were any pressures or constraints which might have affected this relationship. Nine of the inspectors reported that there were no pressures or constraints. However, one of them reported the existence of some religious and cultural constraints on establishing an informal relationship with female teachers. This inspector wrote

*As the majority of the EFL teachers in our schools are female, we as male inspectors can not establish an informal relationship with these female teachers. Establishing a good relationship implies continuous communication and contact even outside schools. This is not possible in our society (Q77).*

This contradiction between the inspectors' and teachers' views about the nature of their relationship indicates the existence of some tension in this relationship. This tension may lead to the teachers' hesitation or rejection to any supervision or guidance provided by the inspectors (see 7.4.4.2). Moreover, the religious and cultural factors prevailing in the Libyan society may not allow for establishing an informal relationship between

male inspectors and female EFL teachers. It should be noted that the majority of teachers in the secondary schools of the region are females and that all their inspectors are males (see 5.2.2.3 & 5.2.2.4).

### **6.5.6 Inspectors' Views about the Success of the Curriculum Innovation**

As inspectors in Libya are always seen as experts in their subject field, they were asked about their evaluation of the curriculum innovation in terms of achieving its objectives as outlined in *Teachers' Guide books* ( e.g. see Phillips et al, 2008: 1-6). The inspectors reported different views about the extent of the success of this innovation. Generally, all of them believed that it has not fully achieved its objectives. They attributed this failure to the existence of those difficulties and challenges mentioned earlier (see 6.6.4). Only three of the inspectors believed that the innovation has achieved some of its objectives. One of these inspectors considered the focus of some teachers on involving students in pair and group work activities inside classrooms as an indication of this success. This inspector wrote

*Some teachers started focusing on making students more active. I observed some teachers trying to present the content of textbooks through strategies which offered more opportunities for students' active participation such as pair and group work (Q78).*

Another inspector considered some teachers' treatment of their students with respect and confidence as another indication of this success. This inspector wrote

*I observed some teachers treating students with respect. During the classes of these teachers, students were often encouraged to ask questions, to offer proposals, to express their ideas and to report their concerns and feelings (Q79).*

The belief of the majority of the inspectors about the failure of the 2000 English language curriculum innovation in achieving its objectives suggests revising both the

curriculum and the preparations made for its implementation. Even those three inspectors who believed that some of the objectives of the innovation have been achieved, they seemed to make their judgements on some changes of teachers' behaviours and practices. However, they did not refer to any development of students' communicative competence. Teachers' confusion about what the proper implementation of this curriculum should involve can be clarified by referring back to their responses to the question about their implementation of the communicative learner-centred activities (see Table 6.10, Figure 18, 6.3.2 & 6.3.2.1). This contradiction between teachers' and inspectors' views about the success of the 2000 curriculum innovation indicates that the criteria of the success or the proper implementation of this innovation were not clearly set out when it was first introduced. This has resulted in the teachers' and inspectors' confusion about this issue.

### **6.5.7 Inspectors' Proposals for Promoting Teachers' Implementation of the Curriculum Innovation**

The inspectors were asked about the ways they thought could lead to develop the teachers' implementation of the curriculum innovation. Their different proposals are summarised below:

1-All the inspectors emphasised the need for training teachers for implementing the CLCA for teaching the new English textbooks in Libyan secondary schools. They suggested that the focus of these training programmes should be on fostering the teachers' understanding of their new role as facilitators. One of the inspectors suggested that these training programmes should focus on

*enhancing teachers' understanding of the principles of CLT and student-centred learning and on how they can be integrated for teaching the new English curriculum of Libyan secondary schools (Q80).*

Another inspector proposed

*analysing the new textbooks and providing models which explain how the communicative learner-centred activities included in these textbooks can be properly managed by teachers (Q81).*

Another concern was reported by five of the inspectors about the careful planning and length of these courses. One of these inspectors wrote “*these training programmes should continue for a longer period of time and should be run by experts in the field of teaching methodology*” (Q82). Another inspector recommended that these courses should be ‘*serious*’ (Q83).

2- Providing schools with facilities which can promote the teachers’ implementation of the new methodology was the inspectors’ second proposal. Two of the inspectors suggested providing schools with modern language laboratories which should be equipped with self-study materials. One of the inspectors reported about the availability of language computerised labs in some of the schools but he claimed that these facilities were not fully or appropriately used. This inspector wrote “*schools should be provided with language laboratories which should be usefully and properly used*” (Q84). Another inspector wrote that these teaching facilities “*should be available for teachers’ use since the beginning of school year*” (Q85). This proposal was also suggested by the coordinator of the English language inspectors of the region (see appendix 8).

3- Increasing the amount of time allocated for English classes was another proposal suggested by all the inspectors and by the coordinator of the English language inspectors of the region (see appendix 8). The insufficiency of time was considered by the majority of the teachers (88%) (See figure 19) as one of the impediments for their



proper implementation of communicative learner-centred activities in classroom (see 6.3.2.2).

4- Two inspectors emphasised the importance of the careful selection of the teachers who are assigned for teaching the new English curriculum and the need for motivating these teachers by offering them high salaries. One of these inspectors criticised the current criteria followed for selecting the secondary school teachers on basis of experience rather than competency. He wrote “*EFL teachers should be selected on basis of competency not of experience*” (Q86). According to the coordinator of the English language inspectors of the region, providing schools with qualified EFL teachers would require the good preparation of student teachers. This coordinator believed that the lack of harmony between university teacher education and training programmes with the methodology and the content of the new English curriculum has resulted in sending teachers to schools who lack knowledge, ability or understanding for carrying out their teaching tasks in these schools properly (see 2,4,3 & appendix 8).

#### **6.5.8 Inspector’ Views about the Appropriateness of the CLCA for the Libyan Context**

Question 11 was concerned with investigating the language inspectors’ views about the appropriateness of the CLCA for TEFL within the Libyan context. Different views have been reported about this issue by the inspectors. Generally, half of them (5 out of 10) were positive about this notion but the other half were not.

Those inspectors who believed that this approach is appropriate for their context explained some advantages of this approach such as offering sufficient opportunities for student’ practice of English through engaging them in performing the communicative learner-centred activities included in the textbooks (see 2.4.1). They believed that this

practice would lead to developing students' communication skills. One of these inspectors wrote

*I think it is appropriate for teaching English in our schools. If we are really concerned with developing our students' communication skills, we have to think positively about implementing this approach. Moreover, as Libyan society is developing, I think implementing this approach will help it to catch up. Yes. This approach is appropriate. (Q87).*

However, another inspector of this group pointed out the need for more time and sufficient training for both teachers and students in order to prepare them for implementing the new methodology. This inspector explained

*I think that the CLCA is a good methodology for TEFL in our context. However, the proper implementation of this methodology requires providing teachers and students with sufficient time, practice and training in order to get them ready for it (Q88).*

Another inspector associated between the suitability of the CLCA with its proper implementation and wrote “yes, this approach is appropriate for the Libyan context provided that it is implemented accurately and properly” (Q89).

The other group of the inspectors who believed that the CLCA is not appropriate for their context pointed out some reasons to explain their arguments. One of these inspectors wrote

*The proper implementation of this approach requires highly qualified and fluent teachers. Unfortunately, in our context, we do not have many teachers who have these qualities (Q90).*

Therefore, this inspector expressed his belief about the suitability of this approach for English-speaking contexts “the fluency of both teachers and students in English-speaking countries would ensure the proper implementation of this approach” (Q91).

Another inspector of this group considered Libyan students' over reliance on teachers as a reason for making this approach not appropriate for the Libyan context. He wrote

*From early stages of their education, our students used to view teachers as a main source of knowledge. Therefore, I think that leading these students to change their perceptions about the teacher as a facilitator is a very challenging issue about implementing this approach in Libyan secondary schools (Q92).*

Only one inspector referred to the existence of certain incompatible cultural and social values in the Libyan society with the principles of the CLCA. This inspector wrote

*In our society some cultural and social values are not compatible with the methodology of the CLCA. For example, Libyan children are brought up respecting the wisdom of elders and not questioning their decisions or advice. Therefore, teachers are often seen as elders whose sayings should not be questioned. This would not make the process of these children's adoption of the new role brought with this methodology an easy matter. These children will find it difficult to question or to argue with what their teachers say. I think students' failure to adapt themselves to their new roles weakens the likelihood of the success of this methodology in our context (Q93).*

Comparing the views of these inspectors with the views of the teachers about the appropriateness of the CLCA for the Libyan context indicates that this approach was more popular among the teachers than the inspectors (see 6.4). However, the teachers' accountability for the inspectors' evaluation seems to have a significant impact on their conceptions and practices of this approach. The consequences of this impact will be discussed in Chapter Seven (see 7.4.4).

## **6.6 Summary of Results**

- Libyan EFL secondary school teachers held different conceptions of the CLCA. Some of these conceptions indicate these teachers' understanding of some basic

principles and practices of this approach. Misconceptions indicate their lack of understanding of some others

- Teachers' classroom instructional approaches seem to be influenced by their conceptions of the CLCA.
- Place of graduation and school location did not have significant effect on teachers' views towards the principles and practices of the CLCA and TCA.
- There were no significant differences between the less experienced and experienced teachers' views and understanding of the principles and practices of the CLCA. However, the less experienced teachers were more positive towards the principles and practices of the TCA than the experienced teachers.
- Teachers had positive views about implementing communication activities, but they were unable to translate these views into classroom practices. Among other related reasons, teachers' low oral proficiency, teachers' accountability to inspection and teachers' and students' accountability to national examinations were most influential for this issue.
- Inspectors seem to be unable to provide teachers with clear guidance and sufficient assistance. Moreover, their emphasis on monitoring and evaluating teachers' performance resulted in clear tension in their relationship with teachers.
- The outdated annual form for teacher's evaluation currently used by Libyan English language inspectors is no longer valid.
- The form of examination currently used for evaluating students' oral skills can not lead to the development of their communication skills.
- Both teachers and inspectors were over-regulated by the instructions of the GPCE.

- Neither the teachers nor the inspectors or classrooms were well-prepared or equipped for receiving the innovation.
- The English textbooks currently taught in Libyan secondary schools seem to be beyond the capacity of both teachers and students.
- There seems to be a lack of harmony between teacher education and training at university with needs of secondary schools.
- The teachers were more positive towards the CLCA than the inspectors.
- Some social values and cultural specifications in the Libyan context seem to be incompatible with some of the basic principles of the CLCA. The influence of these elements may delay the process of converting Libyan secondary schools into an appropriate environment for the CLCA.

## **Chapter VII: Interpretation and Discussion**

### **7.0 Introduction**

The discussion in this chapter is presented with reference to the research questions (see 1.3) and considers the following areas: teachers' understanding and misunderstanding of the CLCA, their conceptions of its implementation, problems of implementation, the impact of the criteria of evaluation used by the inspectors on the teachers' conceptions and practices of this approach and reflection on the views of the teachers and the inspectors about its appropriateness for TEFL within the Libyan context. This discussion relates back to the theoretical foundations presented in the chapter of the literature review (see 3.1 & 3.2).

## **7.1 The Impact of the Top-Down Policy for Developing the Curriculum Innovation and its implementation**

This section offers a critical analysis of the policy of developing and introducing the new English curriculum in Libyan secondary schools.

The education system in Libya is centralised (see 2.1.1/appendix 23) therefore this curriculum innovation was developed through a top-down policy (Orafi & Borg, 2009: 245). The GPCE decided to change the English curriculum for Libyan secondary schools and assigned the task of designing this curriculum to a group of English authors from Garnet Publication (see e.g. Blacknell & Harrison, 1999; Phillips et al, 2008). This process has resulted in introducing the current English language curriculum which seems to be beyond the capacity of both teachers and students. Moreover, the philosophy of teaching and learning upon which this curriculum has been developed seems not to be clearly understood by the teachers or the inspectors. Habermas (1984) criticised this policy and suggested reviewing the way of conducting plans and actions (Habermas, 1984:84-87). Therefore, he offered his *Ideal Speech Situation* as a model for solving problems of communication related to the process of decision-making (Habermas, 1987: 392) (see 3.2.1). Although Rogers (1983) emphasised that “the decision-making power should be in the hands of students”, he believed that it is possible to involve “administrators, parents, members of the local government or community members” in this process (p: 189). Dewey (1903) also criticised this policy and emphasised that the educational system “should give the largest scope for the free play of intelligence in its teachers” (Dewey, 1903, cited in Garforth, 1966: 181). Yeung (2009) explained another negative consequence of this policy related to ‘deskilling teachers’ (p: 384).

The policy for developing and introducing the English curriculum in Libyan secondary schools and its speedy implementation without piloting has resulted in complicating this process. It seems that the curriculum planners and textbooks designers could not anticipate several potential problems and factors that could impede Libyan EFL secondary school teachers' successful implementation of this innovation (see 3.2.2 & 6.5.4). This could be related to the existence of certain characteristics within the Libyan context which are not compatible with the principles and practices of CLT and the LCA. See (2.3, 2.4.2., 2.4.3, 2.4.4, 2.5, 7.5). This indicates that the decision-makers on education in Libya have not learnt from the previous experiences in which this top-down policy for introducing educational innovations proved to be unsuccessful (Todd, 2006: 2; Rees & Althakhri, 2008: 130).

The findings of this study revealed that neither the teachers nor the inspectors who participated in this study were involved in the development of this curriculum. The teachers complained about treating them as mere implementers in this process and therefore did not seem to have a sense of ownership for it (Todd, 2006: 2). Carless (1997) emphasised that teachers' feeling of ownership for curriculum innovations can significantly enhance their success (p: 352).

However, it would be possible to account for most of these problems if the new curriculum was developed through a participatory approach involving teachers and inspector. The teachers thought that if they were involved in designing this curriculum they would be able to provide its planners and designers with useful information about students' language proficiency and about the current conditions in Libyan secondary schools. Timucin (2006) believed that engaging EFL teachers in any process of change

would “increase the chance of successful implementation of the innovation concerned” (p: 262). Similarly, the inspectors believed that if they were involved in this process, they would be able to provide useful information about teachers’ language competency and their ability for adapting communicative approaches for language teaching. Most importantly, these teachers and inspectors would be able to provide significant information about the social structure of Libyan society and its contextual and cultural particularities (see 7.5). Carless (1997) believed that developing curricula by depending on expatriates requires consideration for the culture and realities of local classroom contexts (p: 364). If this participatory approach for curriculum development was followed, the curriculum designers would be in a better position for developing an appropriate curriculum and therefore these problems of communication might not exist. Sharkey (2004) explained that teacher’s knowledge of the context could serve as a ‘critical mediator’ for curriculum development in three principal ways: “establishing trust in gaining access, articulating and defining needs and concerns , and identifying and critiquing political factors that affect teacher’s work” (p: 279). Todd (2006) emphasised that teachers should be involved in the stages of decision-making and implementation and should control the stage of continuation (p: 2). Generally, both the teachers and the inspectors highlighted the importance of their involvement in curriculum design and development as they would be able to provide significant information about the existing realities in schools.

One of the factors which seemed to be affected by introducing this curriculum innovation without involving neither the teachers nor the inspectors is related to the teachers’ understanding of the philosophy and the principles of the CLCA (Phillips et al, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009) (see 2.4.1).



## **7.2 Teachers' Understanding of Principles and Practices of the CLCA**

Exploring teachers' understanding of the philosophy and the basic principles and practices of the CLCA was one of the aims of this study (see 1.4). This understanding was investigated through analysing the fourteen conceptions which emerged from relevant data provided by the teachers (see Figure 1). The process of analysing these conceptions was carried out interactively with an examination of these teachers' understanding of the main principles and related practices of this approach as implied in their responses to the statements of the questionnaire and the additional data provided during the interviews (Jang et al, 2008: 223-229) (see appendix 1). This investigation revealed that some of the principles and practices of the CLCA seemed to be clear for the teachers but some others were neither understood nor agreed with by some of them (see 7.2.1, 7.2.2). This was also confirmed by relevant data provided by the language inspectors (see 6.5.3). The following sub-sections discuss these issues in details.

### **7.2.1 Areas of Understanding**

Some of the conceptions of the CLCA identified in this study implied the teachers' knowledge and understanding of some of the basic principles and practices of this approach. In most of the conceptions which indicate this knowledge and understanding, the CLCA was conceptualised as an approach in which the teacher acts as a facilitator of students' learning. These conceptions reflected their holders' belief that focusing the learning process on students would enhance their motivation and promote their autonomy (Roger, 1969).

The conception held by thirty-two teachers of the CLCA in terms of centring the learning process on the learner represents one of the principles of this approach which seems to be understood by these teachers (see 6.1.1). This was reflected in their emphasis on considering students as the core of the learning process and for involving

them in making decisions related to their own learning. However, analysing this conception with reference to Rogers' model of '*person-centred approach*', indicates that the holders of this conception seem to interpret the CLCA in terms of its strong version (Sowden, 2007: 304) (see 3.3.1 ). As the implementation of this strong version requires the existence of what Rogers (1983) described as the policy of '*person-centred*' (see 3.1.1), these teachers would not be able to translate their conceptions into practice in the Libyan context where the education system is complex and centralised (see 2.1.1/appendix 23). This makes the current policy of education in Libya reflect Rogers' (1983) description of the policy of 'conventional' teaching (see 3.1.1) which was also criticised by Dewey (1916) and Freire (1972, 1998). This indicates that the conceptions held by these teachers might not be formed from their practical experiences of this approach inside classrooms. This was reflected in the examples given by these teachers during the interviews which imply their focus on encouraging students to participate in communication activities, on establishing good relationships with them and on appreciating their contributions, ideas and suggestions. These practices do not reflect Sowden's description of the strong version of this approach (Sowden, 2007: 304) (see 3.3.1). This could be related to the fact that within the Libyan centralised system of education many decisions are made by the educational authorities at the top of the hierarchy (see 2.1.1/appendix 23). These teachers' failure to translate their conceptions of the CLCA in its strong version into practice suggests that the implementation of this strong version requires the establishment of compatible politics with it (see 3.1.1). However, this should not lead to the conclusion that Rogers' '*person-centred*' approach (Rogers, 1983) cannot be modified to fit the contexts with centralised educational systems. There seems to be a great potential for successful implementation of a weak

version of this approach in Libya which represents a clear example of these contexts (see 3.3.1). This argument will be developed throughout this chapter.

The interpretation of twenty-seven teachers of the CLCA as ‘independent learning’ represents another principle of this approach which seems to be understood by these teachers (see 6.1.1). The notion of independent learning is central in Rogers’ approach of ‘person-centred’ and in Dewey’s democratic ideas on education. Both of these scholars emphasised that the aim of education should be centred on creating independent learners. For Rogers (1969), this notion is a necessary condition for creating the ‘fully functioning person’ through “promoting personal growth and development” (pp: 279-280) (see 3.1, 3.1.1). Dewey (1916) believed that this notion should be a fundamental concept for progressive education as it would lead to promote individual’s personality as a whole (pp: 96-99) (see 3.2). Dewey’s and Rogers’ concepts of independent learning entail learners’ independence for making their own decisions about what to read, how to read, when to read and how to evaluate their learning (see 3.2). However, the conception of independent learning identified in this study seems to be limited to the notions of allowing and encouraging students to carry out communication activities independently and to do extra free reading outside classrooms. This was explained through the examples given during interviews conducted with four teachers who held this conception. These teachers’ conception of the notion of independent learning could be related to their practical experiences and the realities of their context specifications. This conception seems to be aligned with Sowden’s description of the weak version of the LCA (Sowden, 2007:304) (see 3.3.1). This context-based notion of independent learning may foster the teachers’ successful implementation of the weak version of the CLCA.

Twenty-four teachers were aware of the notion of changing their teaching approach from instruction to facilitation (see 6.1.1). In line with this awareness, the idea of changing the role of teacher from an instructor into a facilitator was agreed on by 96% of the teachers (see 6.2.1.1.1 / table 6.1). This notion was emphasised by Rousseau (1911), Dewey (1916), Rogers (1969) and by Weimer (2002). This notion was also emphasised in the *Learner-centred Psychological Principle* (2) (see appendix 13). Most importantly, the orientation towards this change was declared in the report of the GPCE about education in Libya (GPCE, 2008: 28) (see 2.6). However, the concept of facilitation identified in this study does not mean that the holders of this conception rejected the notion of the role of the teacher as a reliable source of knowledge or as an expert in his/her subject (see 6.2.1.2.1/ table 6.2). This indicates that the role of the teacher as a facilitator and as a knowledge transmitter seemed to be conceptualised by these teachers as two complementary roles for language teachers rather than two different ones. Although Rogers's conception of the role and the tasks of the facilitator (see 3.1.2.1) does not explicitly include any traditional tasks for the teacher similar to those presented in statement (2) (see table 6.2), he pointed out the possibility of thinking of facilitation and instruction as complementary approaches (Rogers, 1983: 185) (see 3.1.4). In contrast, this traditional role for the teacher was explicitly emphasised by Vygotsky (1978: 209) (see 3.2.2.1). The tendency of teachers and students to think about the LCA and the TCA as two complementary approaches was reported in the findings of Cuban (1993); Schuh (2004); Nonkuketkhong et al (2006) and Wohlfarth et al (2008) (see 3.3.2/table 3.1).

Offering students more time for talk during language classes was another principle emphasised by the majority of the teachers (see 6.2.2.1). The notion of increasing students' talktime in language classrooms is closely related to the role of facilitator.

Clifton (2006) suggested that a variety of flexible and free patterns of interaction should characterise facilitative classrooms (Clifton, 2006: 142) because the ‘inquiry’, ‘response’ feedback’ (IRF) which is related to the TCA would not allow for introducing other interactive approaches (Lyle, 2008: 222). As the role of facilitator in learner-centred language classrooms involves guiding and facilitating students’ independent learning, his/her talktime is assumed to be less than students’ talktime. Teachers’ agreement with statement 11 (see 6.2.2.1) which implies this notion might result from their awareness of the useful impact of increasing students’ talktime for developing their communication skills (Ellis, 2003: 319) (see 3.3.3). This could be also related to the frequent use of communication activities which entail students’ communication and interaction in the new textbooks of Libyan secondary schools (see 2.4.1). Teachers’ reaction to their past experiences in language classrooms in which they used to be given very little time to speak could also contribute to their positive views towards the notion of increasing student’s talktime. However, increasing students’ talktime should not lead to significantly decrease the teacher’s talktime. In certain stages of language classes such as presenting new information or teaching pronunciation sections, teacher’s talktime may exceed students’ talktime. The teacher represents an essential source of language input for students in FL language classes provided that he/she is able to provide them with right input. However, this provision requires FL teachers’ development of high level of language proficiency (Nunan, 2003: 607). The findings of this study indicate that the language proficiency of the teachers who participated in this study would not enable them to provide their students with rich and right language input or to correct students’ language output (see 6.3.2.2, 6.5.4, 7.4.2). This suggests that the situation in the language classrooms of these teachers could be very critical. Striking a wise balance for distributing the time of language classes between teacher and students

seems to be an ideal solution for this issue. Moreover, teachers' dependence on the cassettes which are provided with the textbooks (see 2.4.1) may save their students from receiving poor or incorrect input. A similar situation was reported by Nunan (2003) in Mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Vietnam (Nunan, 2003: 607)

Linking the concept of the CLCA with the notion of 'active learning' which was implied in the conceptions of twenty teachers is another indication of these teachers' understanding of one of the basic principles of the CLCA (see 6.1). The high average agreement rate given for statements 5 and 7 which imply an active role for the student in the learning process is another indication of this understanding (see figure 5 & 6). Both Dewey (1916) and Rogers (1969/1983) believed that learning is an active process and highlighted the importance of students' active participation in it. Roger (1969) explained that "effective learning is acquired through doing" and "is facilitated when the student participates responsibly in the learning process" (Rogers, 1969: 162). Dewey (1916) believed that learning is not "an affair of telling and being told, but an active and constructive process" (p: 38). Therefore, he described learning as a "continual reorganizing, reconstructing and transforming" process (p: 50) during which students should "learn to learn" (p: 45). There seems to be an agreement between Dewey (1916) and Rogers (1969) with the holders of this conception about the importance of learners' true engagement and active participation in the learning process. Dewey's and Rogers' conception of 'active learning' involves learner's self construction of knowledge from his/her own experience and from utilising past experiences in building new ones. However, the conception of active learning identified in this study seems to be limited to the active role students could play during their

performance of communication activities such as pair and group work, role-play, problem-solving and games inside classrooms (see 6.3.2.1).

Teachers' understanding of the CLCA was implied in their incorporation of some of the humanistic and democratic ideas in their conceptions of this approach. These teachers' association of this approach with notions of learner responsibility, cooperative learning, motivation and accounting for learners' needs and interests indicate their awareness of these relevant principles of the CLCA (see 6.1.1). This might reflect their understanding of the importance of conducting the learning process with a sense of positive cooperation among all those who are concerned with the learning process and the need of the provision of appropriate opportunities for promoting democratic communication and interaction among these parts. These conceptions might also indicate these teachers' awareness of the positive impact of accounting for students' needs and interests in designing learning programmes for enhancing their motivation and achievement. All these conceptions were embodied in the ideas of Rousseau (1911), Dewey (1916) and Rogers (1969/1983) (see 3.0, 3.1, 3. 2).

The CLCA was defined by seventeen teachers as an approach of communication and interaction. The holders of this conception tended to focus on the opportunity offered through this approach for developing different patterns of communication and interaction inside language classrooms rather than on the humanistic or the democratic ideas embodied within this approach. This interpretation implies the link between the LCA and CLT (see 3.3.2). The examples given by three of the teachers who held this conception during the interviews were related to their management of pair and group work activities. Rousseau (1911) interpreted the notion of learning through communication and interaction from a broader perspective to include the learning which

could result from interacting and communicating with the surroundings (pp: 19/82) (see 3.0). This conception seems to be also different from Dewey's (1916) conception of this notion as he believed that "all communication is educative" (p: 5), although he emphasised the importance of associating between communication and interaction through language with social experiences (see 3.2).

The need for arranging seats, desks and chairs of classrooms in a way that facilitates students' interaction and working in groups represents one of the principles which was emphasised by the teachers (see 6.2.1.1.1). It seems to be clear for these teachers that traditional arrangement of desks and chairs in rows facing a board (Cuban, 1993:7) does not promote students' communication and interaction. This was implied in the relatively low rating average they gave for statement 14 (see 6.2.21). Dewey (1910) believed that this arrangement could only fit classrooms where teachers' presentations and students' listening are to be fostered (pp: 31-32). The findings of this study indicate that most of the desks of classrooms in the secondary schools involved in this study were arranged in a traditional way (see 7.3.1.4). This could be the situation for all Libyan secondary school classrooms as all of them are furnished by the GPCE (see 2.1.1).

The majority of the teachers 97% seem to be aware that the effective implementation of the CLCA in Libyan secondary schools requires changing the perspectives of teachers, students, headteachers, inspectors, parents, educational authorities and the whole society for the role of school (see 6.2.1.1.1/table 6.1). These teachers believed that their implementation of the CLCA for teaching the new English curriculum could be fostered if their schools become learner-centred (Brandes & Ginnis, 1990). Converting schools to be learner-centred can create an appropriate environment for establishing humanistic and democratic relationships between teachers and other school community members (teachers, students, headteachers and inspectors) (Rogers, 1969; Dewey, 1916). Dewey



(1916) emphasised that school “must itself be a community life in all which that implies” (p: 358). According to Rogers (1983), this would require moving schools from their ‘traditional authoritarian stance’ through respecting and prizing students, understanding the meanings they associate with school experiences and treat them well (p: 191). Accounting for “leadership and organisational culture” was perceived by Dimmock and Walker (2004) as an essential element for designing schools to become learner-centred.

The teachers’ awareness of this issue led them to relate their headteachers’ current traditional practices to their perception of the role of school as a place for providing students with the knowledge they need for passing examinations (see 7.3.4.2). This overemphasis of headteachers on the academic role of school more than on its social role could be attributed to their accountability for the basis of measuring the success of their roles in these schools which are often based on the rate of students’ success in examinations. Measuring the success of schools in terms of this criterion may not lead to converting them into learner-centred institutions. Rallis (1995) emphasised that the success of learner-centred schools should be judged “by the quality of the experiences provided for the learner, the depth of the meanings the learners create out of the experiences, and the ability of the learners to communicate and act on their learning” (p: 226). Dimmock and Walker (2004) suggested that this judgement should be based on “the extent to which schools add value to their students” (p: 43). The intervention of the GPCE for regulating and directing schools, headteachers and inspectors could be another reason for this tendency (see appendix 7). This intervention makes secondary schools in Libya reflects Rogers’ (1983) description of schools which are “regulated from outside, state-designated curricula, federal and state laws, and bureaucratic regulations intrude on every classroom and every school activity” (pp: 11-12).

Surprisingly, this interference contradicts the perspective about the new role of schools which has been declared in the latest report of the GPCE (GPCE, 2008: 28) (see 2.6). Dewey (1916) believed that “schools require for their full efficiency more opportunity for co-joint activities in which those instructed take part, so that they may acquire a social sense of their own powers and the materials and appliances used” (p: 40).

### **7.2.2 Areas of Misunderstanding**

Teachers’ lack of understanding of the CLCA was reflected in the different interpretations implied in their fourteen conceptions and misconceptions of it (see 6.1 & Figure 1). This indicates these teachers’ confusion about the meaning of this approach. This confusion was also reflected in the teachers’ tendency to respond in a similar manner to some pairs of the statements of the questionnaire which imply different perspectives about the CLCA and TCA (Karavas-Doukas, 1996: 193) (see 6.2.2.1).

A critical misconception of the CLCA was apparent in six teachers’ conceptualisation of this approach in terms of empowering students and disempowering teachers. This misconception could be related to these teachers’ belief that implementing this approach would result in losing or affecting their authority or control over classrooms. Therefore, they tended to emphasise the notion of teacher’s leadership over classroom in their conception of this approach. The authoritarian perspective of these teachers might lead them to resist or reject any proposals for restructuring authority or relationships in classrooms which represent two major principles of the CLCA (Rogers, 1969). This perspective was also influential on the views of these teachers about the appropriateness of this approach for the Libyan context (see 6.4). Although Rogers and Freiberg (1994) and Thanli et al (2008) pointed out the difficulty of changing conceptions of teachers,

Weimer (2002) claimed that reassuring teachers about the important role they could play within the LCA would result in changing their conceptions and views about it.

Six teachers' association of the CLCA with the notion of students' free learning represents another area of lack of understanding (see 6.1.2). These teachers interpreted this approach in terms of offering students full freedom to make their own decisions about the learning process. Therefore, they believed that the interference of teachers or any other parts in this process represents a violation for one of the main principles of the CLCA regarding allowing learners to choose what, how and when to learn (Rogers, 1969; Brandes & Ginnis, 1986). This interpretation relates to the strong version of this approach as described by Sowden (2007:304) for which most of the attempts of its implementation have not been successful in many contexts (see table 3.1).

An enhancement of these teachers' understanding of the notion of freedom in student-centred learning as implied in Rogers' model may change their conceptions of this approach. Rogers and Freiberg (1994) addressed this misconception and emphasised that freedom in this approach "is not licence; it carries equal measures of responsibility and participation" (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994: 291) which allow students to move out voluntarily, freely, but responsibly (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994: 276). Joining freedom with responsibility would lead students in learner-centred classrooms to behave responsibly. Moreover, the facilitators in these classrooms should sometimes act as "referees" (Freiberg & Rogers, 1994: 291) who can interfere to prevent any actions which may affect their classroom management. This misconception was also addressed by Knowles (1975) who criticised the association between self-directed learning with "learning in isolation" as he believed that this learning "usually takes place in

association with various kinds of helpers, such as teachers, tutors, mentors, resource people, and peers” (Knowles, 1975: 18).

Another misconception of the CLCA was implied in four teachers’ association of this approach with the image of disordered classrooms which lack discipline. This misconception could be also attributed to these teachers’ misunderstanding of the notion of students’ ‘freedom to learn’ (Rogers.1969). This could also relate to their belief that unless teachers have full authority and control over classrooms, they would not be able to prevent any disciplinary problems or students’ disruptive behaviour. However, implementing the CLCA does not imply allowing misbehaving students to spoil the effort of teachers or other students. Facilitators who guide learner-centred classroom should be in charge of preventing the occurrence of these problems. Freire (1998) emphasised that “there are moments in which the teacher, as authority, talks to the learners, says what must be done, establishes limits without which the freedom of learners is lost in lawlessness” (p: 63). This implies that facilitators can set certain limits and regulations for controlling students’ acts and behaviours in order to keep their classes organised and well-disciplined. However, imposing these regulations or limits by teachers could convert classrooms into teacher-centred. Therefore, Freire (1998) suggested establishing these limits and regulations through negotiation between teachers and students (p: 60).

It is very likely that the active role of learners in learner-centred language classrooms will make them less quiet or orderly than teacher-centred ones. For example, students’ voices may be heard more than their teachers’ voices during pair or group work activities or group discussions in learner-centred classrooms (Ellis, 2003. 267). EFL teachers should understand that it is very common to hear some desirable noise during

their conduct of their classes through the CLCA and that their tolerance of this noise can be useful for promoting students' active participation. However, teachers should distinguish between what Carless described as 'off-task noise' and 'on-task noise' (Carless, 2002: 656) and between the noise which "foreshadowed disciplinary problems and the one which indicated high levels of involvement" (Carless, 2004:643). Jones (2007) suggested seating students "close together to encourage them to talk swiftly" (p: 11).

The failure of five teachers to provide any definitions or explanations for the CLCA indicates their lack of understanding of this approach. The CLCA was seen by these teachers as a new and unfamiliar method of teaching which has been brought through the new curriculum. These teachers might have not read the introduction chapters of their guidebooks which outline the main methodological instructions and practices of this approach. It is assumed that these teachers should follow these instructions. Although the handbooks provided for the teachers (e.g., Blacknell & Harrison, 1999; Phillips et al, 2008) do not offer a clear definition for this approach, the instructions given through these books imply its main principles and practices. Another indication could be also understood from the case of these teachers is that they might have not been provided with sufficient guidance or assistance from the language inspectors (see appendix 8). Hence, the claim of the language inspectors about providing these teachers with constant guidance and support needs to be questioned (see 6.5.1, 7.3.4.1, 7.4.4.1).

A lack of certainty or preference was implied in the responses of the teachers about which form of assessment they could use within the CLCA (see 2.2). This was reflected in the lack of any significant differences between their responses to statements 27 and

28 despite the different views about assessment they implied (see figure 6.16). This could indicate these teachers' lack of understanding of the principles of the CLCA regarding the assessment of students' learning or their uncertainty about which assessment strategies would be more effective (Karavas-Doukas, 1996: 193). This confusion led the teachers to agree more on statement 28 which favours summative forms of assessment (see 6.2.21). This tendency could be also attributed to these teachers' uncertainty or fear of losing their role in this process. The other group of teachers whose responses were positive towards the two statements could be interpreted in terms of their preference to integrate summative forms of assessment with peer and self-assessment (Karavas-Doukas, 1996: 193). However, the nation-wide examination system applied in Libyan secondary schools indicates that these teachers' statements and conceptions of peer and self-assessment could not be related to their practical experiences of these forms (see. 7.3.1.6).

The teachers' responses to statements 9 and 10 indicate their uncertainty about the nature of their relationship with students in the learner-centred classroom (see 6.2.2.1). Although these responses imply the teachers' desire to establish good relationships with students, their concern about control of classrooms was also implied in these responses. These teachers could be worried about students' misinterpretation or misuse of informal relationships which might lead to reduce their respect for them. However, these teachers should understand that they would "gain students' respect through speaking to them on their levels, instead of 'ten miles' above them" (Rogers, 1969: 111) and that the CLCA does not entail treating teachers and students equally (Freire, 1992: 116-117). These teachers' uncertainty about this issue could be attributed to the "confusing web of rules, limits and required objectives" (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994: 33) imposed by the GPCE on both Libyan teachers and students.

Another indication of teachers' lack of understanding of the CLCA was reflected in the frequency of the response '*uncertain*' for some statements of the questionnaire which describe some of the basic principles of this approach (see tables 6.1 & 6.2). This lack of understanding among the teachers about some of the basic principles of the CLCA and their uncertainty or confusion about others could have a serious impact on their conceptions and practices of the curriculum innovation (see 7.3).

From a phenomenographical perspective, the overall conceptions and misconceptions of the CLCA identified in this study would be reflected in their instructional approaches for teaching the new English textbooks (Marton, 1981, 1986). The following section discusses how these teachers' conceptions or misconceptions of the principles and the practices of the CLCA were reflected in their classroom instructional approaches.

### **7.3 Teachers' Conceptions of their Implementation of the CLCA**

Despite the different conceptions and misconceptions held by the teachers about the CLCA, their conceptions of its implementation seem to be limited to their application of communication activities for teaching the new English textbooks.

Instructional strategies such as pair and group work, role-plays, problem-solving and games which promote students' cooperative learning and foster their interaction inside classrooms should be a common characteristic of learner-centred language classrooms (Oxford, 1997: 443) (see 3.2.4). These activities are useful for developing students' communication skills (Wooden, 2001) and for directing them towards self-directed learning (Ellis, 2003; Regan, 2003). Therefore, they represent the core of instruction in the new English textbooks of Libyan secondary schools (Phillips et al, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009) (see 2.4.1). The brief analysis of the content of a sample of these textbooks

which has been conducted in this study revealed that most of the tasks and activities included in it have been designed to be carried out communicatively through employing pair and group work strategies. Clear instructions are given throughout teacher and coursebooks of the new curriculum for teachers and students on how to implement these tasks and activities communicatively and cooperatively (see, e.g., Blacknell & Harrison, 1999; Phillips et al, 2002; 2008) (see 2.4.1). Hence, a realisation of the objectives of this curriculum should involve teachers' implementation of these communicative strategies and activities (see 2.4.1).

The usefulness of employing these cooperative learning strategies and communication activities for TEFL was implied in the teachers' positive views about statements 17, 19, 21, 23 and 25 (see 6.2.2.1) and in the claim of 95% of them about their implementation of these activities (see 6.3.2). Moreover, the attempts of these teachers to implement these activities were observed and confirmed by eight of the language inspectors (see 6.5.3). However, analysing relevant data provided by these teachers indicate that not all the communication activities included in the textbooks were implemented by the teachers (see 6.3.2.1). Some of these activities were presented through teacher-led sessions and some others were ignored. It seems that only the tasks in which the teachers were explicitly instructed by the authors of the textbooks to employ pair work (*work in pairs*) or group work (*work in groups*) were effective enough to lead 75% of the teachers to follow these instructions. However, despite these clear instructions, the activities of role-play, problem-solving and games were not frequently implemented by the teachers (see 6.10). Libyan secondary school teachers' avoidance of implementation of these communication strategies and activities was reported by Orafi and Borg (2009: 247). EFL teachers' preference of group work more than other communication activities was reported by AL-Arishi (1994: 337-344). It should be noted that these



activities were not implied in the teachers' conceptions of pair and group work as they tended to label them separately in relation to the way they are presented in the new textbooks (see 2.4.1).

The findings of this study revealed a contradiction between the teachers' views and practices of role-play activities (see 6.2.1.1.1 & 6.3.2.1). Despite their positive views and the clear instructions they were given to allow students "have a choice about what they say and in what order" during these 'free' role-play activities (Phillips et al, 2008:5), only 36% of the teachers reported their implementation of these activities (see 6.3.2.1). This contradiction could be attributed to many factors. The teachers who participated in this study reported different reasons for their avoidance of implementing role-play activities such as insufficiency of time, large classes, and lack of teaching facilities. However, these factors seem to be mere excuses rather than serious impediments (see 7.3.1.4 & 7.3.1.5). Therefore, this discussion will be limited to the two reasons which could be serious enough to hinder the teachers' implementation of role-play activities.

The pure communicative nature of role-play activities could make the teachers lack confidence in their ability for responding to students' inquiries and demands during these activities. Despite the fact that these activities are often designed for students' free practice and independent learning in order to develop their "linguistic and social knowledge and their interactive skills" (Mitchell, 1988:64), the availability of the teacher as a recourse for providing students with support and assistance 'scaffolding' is very essential (Rogers, 1969; Vygotsky, 1978; Conelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010). Therefore, these teachers' thinking about the embarrassment they would feel about being unable to answer a question or to provide students with English vocabulary or

expressions to perform their roles could make the notion of these activities represent a serious source of threat and tension for these teachers. EFL teachers' deficiency in spoken English was also reported as a major problem for the successful implementation of the CA in China (Li, 1998) and in Iran (Eslami & Fatahi, 2008). Carless (2003) warned that EFL teachers' lack of confidence or proficiency would result in their avoidance of "attempting more open-ended task-based activities" (p: 498) and would make the process of implementing the communicative approaches for language teaching very difficult, if not impossible (Nunan, 2003:606). Butler (2004) who reported the same problem among different samples of EFL teachers in Korea, Japan and Taiwan emphasised the importance of tackling this problem as it could have a serious impact on "teachers' confidence, pedagogical skills, the content of their teaching, student motivation, and ultimately students' success in acquiring English" (p: 268). The weakness in speaking and listening skills of Libyan EFL secondary school teachers was reported by Akle (2005) (see 2.4.3). Interestingly, 39% of the teachers and all the inspectors who participated in this study were aware of this weakness (see table 6.12, 6.5.4 & 7.4.2). Similar findings were reported by Orafi and Borg (2009) who pointed out that this curriculum challenged Libyan EFL teachers' communicative ability (p: 251).

Another factor which could lead to teachers' avoidance of role-play activities can be related to students' lack of interest in participating in these communication activities. The proper implementation of role-play activities requires increasing students' talktime through their asking of questions, offering suggestions, requesting things, playing roles of other people, working together to solve problems and giving feedback on what might happen during their interactions (Brandes & Ginnis 1986; Mitchell, 1988; Freeman, 2000; Johnson, 2001; Rico, 2008). These demands will make only those students who

have appropriate levels of fluency able to be active participants in role-play activities (see 7.4.3). Unfortunately, 84% of the teachers and all the inspectors considered students' low level of oral proficiency as a major challenge for the successful implementation of the CLCA in Libyan secondary schools (see 6.3.2.2). This issue was also reported by Orafi and Borg (2009: 249).

Problem-solving activities are useful for engaging students in reflective and meaningful communication (Freire, 1974:46-54), for fostering students' directed and self-regulated learning (Rogers, 1969: 136) and are seen as "central to learning" (Black et al, 2006: 122). Nevertheless, there was a trend among the majority of the teachers (88%) to avoid implementing these activities. This avoidance might have resulted from the teachers' lack of understanding of the notion of student-centred learning (Loyens, 2008: 424) or from their misconception of the role of facilitator during these activities (Rogers, 1969: 137). See (7.2.1). Dewey (1910) pointed out another reason for teachers' avoidance of implementing the activities which could produce positive impact on developing students' critical thinking to the "domination of their minds by the idea that the most important thing is getting pupils to recite their lessons correctly" (p: 53).

Fostering teachers' implementation of these activities may be realised if as a part of their training they were able to develop an understanding of Dewey's and Rogers' concepts of problem-based learning (Dewey, 1916; Rogers, 1969) and its advantages for language teaching (Waters, 2006:319-325). Rogers (1969) suggested reassuring these teachers about the significant role they would play during these activities (pp: 136-137). It is also important to provide these teachers with a clear model which explains their role and shows them the appropriate stages for their intervention during these activities (Vygotsky, 1978: 86). These solutions could be promising as the teachers

reported positive views about these activities (see 6.2.2.1/ table 6.1). Teachers' adoption of this approach would have a positive impact on enhancing students' achievement (Singer & Moscovici, 2008: 1618).

A similar trend was identified in the teachers' avoidance of implementing games. Although direct instructions were given for the teachers and students in the new text and teacherbooks to implement games for certain communication tasks (see 2.4.1), 88% of the teachers reported that they did not implement games during their lessons. Nunan (1995) reported similar findings in which games were ranked 'very low' by EFL students and 'low' by teachers among other nine classroom activities for language learning (p: 141). However, this result contradicts with Freeman's (2000) claim about the frequent use of games in CLT classrooms (p: 133). This avoidance could be related to the teachers' association between the concept of implementing games with the image of undisciplined and unorganised classrooms. These teachers were not familiar with the notion of using games for ELT because it has been first brought to the Libyan context through the 2000 English language curriculum innovation (see Phillips et al, 2008: 4). Teachers' lack of understanding of how to monitor students' performance during these games or at what stage of lessons the introduction of these games would be more effective is another possible reason for this avoidance (Brandes & Ginnis, 1986: 42-43). These two possible reasons could be related to the teachers' lack or poor training on implementing the curriculum innovation (see 7.4.1.3).

Time and students' disinterest may be other two factors to consider (Rixon, 1986: 62). The implementation of games for ELT would require longer time than other communication activities, (Freeman, 2000). This could have led the teachers to save time by either conducting games through teacher-led sessions or to ignore them

completely. They thought it would be better to invest this time for covering the content of textbooks to prepare students for examinations and to please their inspectors (see 7.3.4). The teachers' belief about the impossibility of implementing these activities in large classes is another possible reason for this avoidance (Sarwar, 2001: 127) (see 7.4.1.5). Considerations of the following advantages of using games for language learning may encourage and lead these teachers to realise the value of the time their students would spend in performing language games inside classrooms. Language games can

- *improve students' cooperative skills (Brandes & Ginnis, 1986: 43);*
- *offer interesting opportunities for students to interact physically and mentally with one another (Rico, 2008: 240);*
- *offer an interesting model for presenting new language items and for training students for communicative use of language inside classrooms (Rixon, 1986: 63);and*
- games have features in common with real communicative activities therefore they can be employed as communication networks through which students practice the target language in social contexts (Freeman, 2000: 126/133)

Generally, the discussion about the teachers' conceptions and implementation of the communication activities indicates that it would not be expected that teachers who suffer serious weakness in spoken English would be able to help students for developing their communication skills. This situation limits the potential expectation of achieving the goal of introducing the curriculum innovation about developing students' communicative competence. Canale and Swain (1980) emphasised that "unless a (basic at least) communicative approach is adopted for the classroom, there is little reason to expect that students will acquire even basic communication skills in a second language"

(p, 1980: 15). Moreover, comparing the teachers' positive views about these activities as implied in their responses for the statements of the questionnaire (see table 6.2.2.1) with their responses about their implementation of these activities indicates a contradiction between their views and practices of these activities (see Figure 2). A similar contradiction was reported by Karavas-Doukas (1996) among fourteen Greek EFL teachers' beliefs towards the CA and their classroom practices, by Al-Nouh (2008) among 23 Kuwaiti EFL teachers (Al-Nouh, 2008) and by Orafi and Borg (2009) among three Libyan EFL teachers' beliefs and implementation of a communicative oriented-learner centred curriculum (Orafi & Borg, 2009). This contradiction indicates the existence of certain reasons or difficulties which could have hindered the teachers from translating their positive views into classroom practices. As teachers' beliefs often reflect their readiness for compatible actions (Cotterall, 1995: 195), these teachers' positive views towards the CLCA indicate their willingness to implement it. Therefore, providing them with clear guidance and sufficient support to overcome the problems they might encounter would enhance the success of the curriculum innovation. As identifying these challenges and difficulties is a significant preliminary step for understanding the kind of guidance and support these teachers would need in this stage, this was one of the aims of this study (see 1.3.1 & 1.4).

#### **7.4 Problems of Implementation**

An investigation of the difficulties which were reported by the participants (teachers & inspectors) in this study (see 6.3 & 6.5.4) indicates that they were related to teachers, students and inspectors. However, the most influential problems were related to the centralisation of the education system in Libya. These difficulties will be discussed in the following sub-sections in relation to their cause and proposals for overcoming each difficulty will be suggested.

#### **7.4.1 Difficulties Caused by the Educational System**

As education in Libya is managed by the GPCE (see 2.1.1 & appendix 23), the success or the failure of educational innovation depends to a large extent on its proper planning and management for these innovations. The following sub-sections discuss the implementation problems and difficulties which related to this system.

##### **7.4.1.1 Prescribed Textbooks**

Prescribing textbooks on teachers and students does not provide an appropriate environment for implementing the CLCA (Rogers, 1969: 5; Tudor, 1996: 229-232). This prescription does not offer any flexibility for teachers to develop learning activities or to select appropriate and meaningful materials to account for students' different needs and interests. Moreover, Freire (1972) warned that this prescription would lead to teachers' imposition of instructions and ideas on students (Freire, 1972: 58-59).

Although the authors of the English textbooks of Libyan secondary schools claimed that these books were specifically designed to meet the needs and interests of Libyan secondary school students (see 2.4.1), the majority of the teachers (88%) were not satisfied with the content of these books (6.2.2.1). This dissatisfaction could be related to the prescription of these textbooks on the teachers and students. However, despite this prescription it is possible for the teachers to implement a weak version of the CLCA (Sowden, 2007). Medgyes (1986) suggested that communicative EFL teachers should use "a wide stock of flexible and authentic supplementary materials" (p: 110). However, Libyan EFL teachers will not be able to apply this strategy because they are required to finish a pre-determined set of contents in due time. Nevertheless, these conditions should not lead these teachers to think that it is not possible for them to

implement the CLCA. Knowles (1975) reported about his successful experience of implementing the role of facilitator with self-directed learners during a 'content-oriented course' (p: 44). Dewey (1910) addressed this issue and suggested some strategies which can be used by teachers for changing the content of prescribed textbooks into reflective-inquiry contents. These strategies include:

- communicating the materials and its objectives to students;
- supplying the materials through a way of stimulus and flexibility, not with dogmatic finality and rigidity;
- presenting the materials in a form of a question relevant and vital to students' own experience;
- linking the materials of textbooks with what students have acquired in their 'out-of-school' experiences rather than with materials learnt from prior school lessons (Dewey,1910: 198-199).

Following these strategies may enable the teachers to convert the content of the prescribed textbooks into an inquiry-based content which can be presented through learner-centred instructions (Dewey, 1916; Rogers, 1969). Moreover, the textbooks of Libyan secondary schools include a variety of communicative activities and learning tasks which have been designed to be implemented through pair and group work activities (see 2.4.1). However, Libyan EFL teachers' ability for teaching these textbooks is another issue for consideration. The findings of this study have indicated that the content of these books seems to be beyond the ability of these teachers. Therefore, they were not only struggling to shift their conceptions and instructional approaches to be learner-centred but also for delivering the content of these textbooks properly.



#### **7.4.1.2 Lack of Piloting or Evaluation of the Curriculum Innovation**

Implementing teaching approaches which were developed for other contexts requires a thorough examination of their suitability for local contexts of application (Freire, 1998: 98). As the CLCA was originally developed in and for Western contexts (UK & USA) (Guthrie, 1990; Holliday, 1994; O’Sullivan, 2004; Jansen,2009), it was important to try its ideas, principles and practices which have been embodied within the new English curriculum before introducing it into Libyan secondary schools. Through this strategy, it was possible to identify the cultural and contextual differences between the Libyan context and the Western contexts (see 7.5) and to investigate the teachers’ understanding and ability for implementing the new ideas and practices of this curriculum (Holliday, 1994: 161; Weimer, 2002: 8-17).

It seems that the decision-makers of the GPCE were impressed by the fascinating theoretical ideas implied within the philosophy of the CLCA without giving much attention for the practicalities of these ideas with reference to the realities of the Libyan context. Moreover, the lack of systematic evaluation for this curriculum did not allow for discovering these issues. Therefore, Orafi and Borg (2009) recommended evaluating it systematically (Orafi & Borg, 2009: 252). Although evaluating this curriculum is beyond the scope of this study, its findings offer significant insights about its suitability for the current conditions and realities in Libyan secondary schools (see 7.5). Hence, further research can be carried out in the light of these insights to evaluate this curriculum. However, it is important to involve the teachers in this process as this could retain their feeling of control “over the continuation stage of the innovation” (Todd, 2006: 13).

#### **7.4.1.3 Insufficient Training**

Training teachers for implementing educational innovations is a necessary condition for enhancing their success. This training may develop teachers' understanding of the theoretical and practical assumptions of innovations (Kirkgoz, 2008: 1860).

The responsibility for preparing and training Libyan teachers is related to the GPCE (see 2.4.3). Although the focus on conducting in-service training for teachers has been emphasised in the latest report produced by this committee (see GPCE, 2008), the majority of the teachers (73%) reported that they had not received sufficient training for implementing the 2000 curriculum innovation (see 6.3.1). The inadequacy of training these teachers was also reported by Orafi and Borg (Orafi & Borg, 2009: 251).

Another significant issue about training was raised by those teachers who graduated from colleges of arts (see 6.3.2.2). These teachers complained that they did not receive any teaching training or practice modules during their university education (see 2.4.3). Brandt (2006) recommended language teachers' pre-service training and practice to enhance their understanding of the different roles played by teachers and students in language classrooms (p: 363). Harper and Jong (2009) proposed including 'high-quality field experiences and practicum teaching opportunities' in pre-service English language teacher preparation (p: 147). Sending these graduates to teach the new English curriculum in secondary schools without training or pre-service teaching practice seems to be a serious fault committed by the GPCE (see 2.1.1).

The teachers' lack of knowledge or understanding of the CLCA could be related to their lack of sufficient training (see 7.2.1). In Libya, experienced teachers used to implement the TCA (Saleh, 2002; GPCE, 2008; Al-dabbus, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009) which imply different principles and practices of those related to the CLCA. As the principles of the TCA could have been firmly internalised in the minds of these teachers, it would

be difficult for them to shift their conceptions and practices to become learner-centred without exposing them to systematic and longer periods of training about this philosophy. A shift from one approach in which the teacher acts as an information-giver with full control and authority over the classroom into a facilitator of students' learning requires a transitional period during which the changes implied in this process could be thoroughly explained for the teachers (Dewey, 1916; Rogers, 1969; Freire, 1972). Nunan (2003) reported that lack of provision for FL teachers of appropriate training was a major problem for implementing communicative approaches for language teaching in Mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam.

The teachers and the inspectors emphasised the importance of conducting in-service training as a part of their preparation for implementing the curriculum innovation (see 6.3.2.2 & 6.6.7). Rogers (1969) suggested exposing teachers to continuous training programmes to ensure the continuation of proposed changes (Rogers, 1969: 316-317). The positive views of the majority of the teachers (88%) about this approach and about its appropriateness for teaching the new English curriculum of Libyan secondary schools may enhance the success of these training programmes (see 6.13). However, it is important to conduct this training through a learner-centred approach of instruction. See (3.1.2.1.1).

#### **7.4.1.4 Limited Resources and Facilities**

Providing schools with teaching facilities and learning resources for students' independent learning is a significant factor for promoting the successful implementation of the CLCA. Rogers (1983) suggested that in many educational settings "it is not necessary to teach some students, but they do need resources to feed their interests" (p: 141).

Instructing the teachers to implement the CLCA in classrooms designed and equipped for teacher-centred instruction did not help them in implementing the communication activities (Harmer, 1998: 19). The proper implementation of these activities requires designing classrooms in a way that facilitates teachers' management of pair and group work and providing students with self-access learning materials (Cuban, 1993: 7). Establishing libraries and language centres in learner-centred schools can provide teachers and students with these resources and learning materials (Bordonaro, 2006; Sheerin, 1997; Harmer, 1998; Miller et al, 2007). Fleming and Stevens (2004) suggested "integrating ICT (information communication technology) with teaching rather than seeing it as a blot-on extra" (p: 180). The provision of these conditions can promote teachers' implementation of the curriculum innovation.

However, the teachers reported that the change in the curriculum was not associated with a parallel change in the arrangement of the seats and desks in their classrooms (see table 6.1/6.2.2). Dewey (1910) criticised the traditional arrangement of desks and chairs in classrooms and considers it as suitable for 'listening' which "marks the dependency of one mind upon another" (pp: 31-32). The existence of these conditions in Libyan secondary schools may not encourage the teachers to implement pair or group work activities.

The GPCE should have supplied the schools with the appropriate conditions for facilitating and promoting teachers' implementation of this curriculum innovation. The lack of significant differences in the conceptions of the teachers from urban and rural schools indicates that the shortage of teaching and learning facilities seems to be a common issue in Libyan secondary schools (see 6.2.3.2). Introducing this new curriculum into these schools without preparing them properly for receiving it may

indicate a lack of understanding of the appropriate physical conditions for arranging desks and chairs inside learner-centred classrooms (Dewey, 1910; Cuban, 1993). As the provision of Libyan schools with libraries and language centres requires a longer time, their provision with movable desks and chairs seems to be a feasible and urgent action has to be taken by the GPCE. Harmer (1998) and Jones (2007) suggested arranging language classes in circles, horseshoes or using separate tables to facilitate students' interaction. Nevertheless, even those teachers whose classes are poorly-equipped or traditionally-furnished can modify their instructional approach to incorporate some principles and practices of the CLCA. Fleming and Stevens (1998) emphasised that providing classrooms with teaching facilities should not be seen as a necessary condition for good and effective teaching (p: 110). Therefore, these teachers should not consider the poor conditions in their classrooms as an excuse for adopting a TCA of instruction. Rogers (1951) believed that teachers who have the concept of student-centeredness as a part of their 'personalities' make-up' should try to implement this approach even within these limitations and challenges (p: 22). In this situation, the teacher should offer "his special knowledge and experience clearly available to the students" (Rogers, 1969: 132) and spend "the majority of the preparation time in making resources available to students" (Rogers, 1983: 141). Jones (2007) pointed out the difficulty of moving furniture in traditional classrooms and suggested moving students instead of furniture in these classrooms through:

- *rearrange your students regularly if your class is composed of long rows, making sure that those in the middle sometimes sit on the outside;*
- *think creatively about seating arrangements to ensure students can speak comfortably (see Jones, 2007: 8).*

#### **7.4.1.5 Large Classes**

Large numbers of students in classrooms can lead teachers to depend on methods of ‘recitation and memorization’ (Dewey, 1910: 54). The average number of students in the classrooms of the teachers who participated in this study (see 5.2.2.3) seems not to be so large to lead them to depend on recitation and memorisation or to avoid implementing communicative learner-centred activities. Nevertheless, 65% of these teachers and five inspectors considered this factor as a serious impediment for their implementation of these activities in their classrooms (see 6.3.2.2). However, the largest number in these classrooms (34 students) can be properly arranged into 7 ‘moderate-sized groups’ (Cuban, 1993: 7) by placing five students in each group. This composition can offer an applicable way for managing group work properly. Moreover, this factor did not seem to have a significant effect on the rural and urban teachers’ conceptions of the CLCA despite the difference in the number of students in the classrooms of these teachers (see 5.2.2.2, 5.2.2.3 & 6.2.3.2).

A consideration of the benefits of implementing pair and group work activities even in large classes with teacher-led activities may encourage language teachers to engage students in more pair and group work activities. These activities offer valuable opportunities for language practice (Ellis, 2003: 267; Jones, 2007:7), for moving the ownership from teachers to students (Brandes & Ginnis, 1986: 27) and for developing students’ communication skills (see 2.4.1). Jones (2007) believed that “if students want to improve their speaking skills, there’s no substitute for pair and group work” (p: 40).

An incorporation of the implementation of pair and group work activities among the criteria used by the language inspectors may lead to the teachers’ consideration of this issue (see 7.4). Moreover, an enhancement of the teachers’ awareness of the positive impact of implementing these activities on developing students’ communicative

competence (Tudor, 1996; Macaro, 1997; Ellis, 2003) may encourage them to perceive these activities as essential practices for achieving this objective.

#### **7.4.1.6 Examinations**

Libyan EFL teachers' and students' accountability to examinations is another major issue for the successful implementation of the CLCA in Libyan secondary schools. This is due to the significant impact of the results of these examinations on students' further education and on teachers' job careers. Parents' high expectations of their children's achievement in these examinations can be another possible reason for this accountability (Boud, 1995: 177) (see 2.5). The examinations represented a source of tension and pressure for both teachers and students because their success is often judged in accordance to the results of these examinations. Therefore, much of the teachers' attention and effort was given to achieving this goal. However, this orientation may produce undesirable effect on teachers' implementation of the curriculum innovation (England, 1973:44; Rogers, 1983: 88). Accordingly, 30% of the teachers considered this issue as a reason for shifting their students' attention to focus on accuracy rather than fluency (see Figure 19/ 7.4.3). Rogers (1983) shared this belief with these teachers (p: 88).

Another issue related to examinations was reported by 59% of the teachers regarding the mismatch between the content of these examinations with the main objective of introducing the curriculum innovation (see Figure 19). The teachers criticised the examinations for focusing on testing students' memorisation of grammatical structures and language forms with very little attention given to measuring students' communication abilities. This was confirmed through a content analysis applied on a sample of these examinations (see appendix 18, 6.3.2.2). This could have led the

students to focus on learning grammatical structures and language forms than participating in communication activities (see 7.4.3). Consequently, the teachers' attention was shifted to teach the content of these examinations. Although this consideration for students' needs and interests can be positive as it accounts for one of the basic principles of the CLCA (Rogers, 1969), it cannot promote students' development of communication skills (see 2.4.1). Similar results were reported by Orafi & Borg (2009: 250) in Libya and by Al-Nouh (2008: 236) in Kuwait (see 3.3.3). This form of examination may lead neither the teachers nor the students to pay attention to the communication activities (see 3.3.3.1). Canale and Swain (1980) emphasised that "communicative testing must be devoted not to what the learner knows about the second language and about how to use it (competence) but also to what extent the learner is able to actually demonstrate this knowledge in a meaningful communicative situation (performance)" (p, 1980: 34). Choi (2008) warned that "preparing students for multiple-choice item exams is bound to deprive students of crucial opportunities to learn to acquire productive language skills" (p: 58).

As the assessment criteria for evaluating students' learning and the design of examinations in Libya are externally-made by the Examination Administration, one of the administrative divisions of the GPCE (see appendix 18), neither the teachers nor the students have a say about these criteria or examinations. This rigid system contradicts with the instructions of the authors of the textbooks about training students to assess themselves and their peers (Phillips et al, 2008:5). Therefore, none of the teachers who participated in this study reported any practices of peer or self-assessment in their classrooms; despite the positive views of many of them towards these forms (see table 6.1). The existence of this rigid system of assessment can not foster the teachers' adaptation of the role of facilitator or the students' development of their



independence, self-reliance or creativity. Rogers (1969) believed that external evaluation is “largely fruitless if the goal is creative work”...and emphasised that “independence, creativity, and self-reliance are all facilitated when self-criticism and self-evaluation are basic and evaluation by others is of secondary importance” (Rogers, 1969: 163). These teachers’ lack of reliance on these forms of assessment could be related to the rigid system of assessment in Libyan schools or to their past experiences in which they had “no exposure to classroom-based problems that have more than one right answer or solution bath” (Baron, 1998: 222).

The argument for implementing Rogers’ (1969) ideas about evaluation within the centralised system of education in Libya seems to be a very far-reaching goal. However, offering the teachers more flexibility for the criteria they use for evaluating students’ language learning may encourage them to incorporate self and peer assessment among their assessment strategies. The application of ‘moderated teacher assessment’ which integrates both formative and summative strategies seems to be appropriate during this stage (Fleming & Stevens, 1998: 51-52). Rogers (1983) believed that a major role in the process of evaluating students in learner-centred classrooms should be played by students themselves or by peers (Rogers, 1983: 88). The positive views of the teachers about self and peer assessment can be seen as an indication of their willingness to adopt these forms (see table 6.1). EFL teachers’ positive views about self-assessment were also reported by Oscarson (2009) (see 3.2.6.2.2). However, employing self or peer assessment in Libyan secondary schools could be only planned for as a long-term objective. Matching the content of the current national examination of secondary schools with the objectives of the new curriculum seems to be a feasible and urgent action has to be taken by the GPCE. This should entail giving accreditation for students’ oral performance. Students’ high accountability to examinations may lead them to give

more attention to developing their communication skills and to participate actively in communication activities (Chio, 2008: 58-59).

‘Performance-based student-centred assessment’ (Fleming & Stevens, 1998; Baron, 1998: 223) seems to be an ideal strategy for testing students’ speaking and listening skills in learner-centred language classrooms. Brown and Hudson (1998) also advocated language teachers’ reliance on this form of assessment because it entails students’ performance of different roles and authentic tasks (Brown & Hudson, 1998: 662). The engagement of students in performing these roles and tasks in a classroom guided by a facilitator concerned with developing students’ communicative competence may lead to the achievement of the objective of introducing the curriculum innovation (see 2.4.1). Canale and Swain (1980) emphasised that “integrative type tests must be used to measure ‘communicative competence’ (p: 34). However, reforming assessment strategies in Libyan secondary schools should take into account establishing a sense of trust among all educational stakeholders (Carless, 2008: 8).

However, the external examinations currently employed in Libyan secondary schools should not lead the teachers to teach the new English curriculum through the TCA. It is better to balance between teaching for these examinations and developing students’ communication skills. The findings of Geelan et al (2004) in Australia and William et al (2004) in the UK provided evidence for this possibility (Geelan et al, 2004: 459; William et al, 2004: 64). William et al (2004) concluded that teachers “do not ... have to choose between teaching well and getting good grades” (William et al, 2004: 64).

Another serious issue for consideration is parents’ high expectations of their children’s achievements in examinations. These expectations should take into account students’ limitations for language learning as the failure in the realisation of these expectations

can create a sense of tension in the relationship between parents and inspectors. This tension could be a direct result from the lack or limited communication between teachers and parents which was seen by Guo and Mohan (2008: 17) as a serious issue. The notion of parent-teacher communication is central in Dewey's concept of school as "community life" (Dewey, 1916: 358). Positive outcomes of parent-teacher communication during 'Parents' Night' about children's learning of English as a SL were reported by Guo and Mohan (Guo & Mohan, 2008). This is another situation where the Habermasian *Ideal Speech Situation* (1984) seems to be an appropriate model for communication between parents and teachers (see 3.2.1). The strong social ties among the members of Libyan society can promote successful parent-teacher communication.

#### **7.4.1.7 Teacher Education**

Teachers often tend to apply the same teaching method which they experience during their study in classrooms (Carless, 1998: 354 Baron, 1998:222).

The misconception of the less-experienced teachers who participated in this study of the CLCA indicates that they might have not experienced this approach during their preparation at university (see 6.5.3). Although by the time these less-experienced teachers were under preparation in university (see 2.4.3), the new English textbooks were being taught in Libyan secondary schools, the findings of this study revealed that they have not been prepared well for teaching them. This could be related to the lack of harmony between university education in Libya and the needs of secondary schools. This issue was reported by the coordinator of the English language inspectors of the region and by four language inspectors who participated in this study (see table 6.16).

This seems to have a significant impact on the less experienced teachers' conceptions and implementation of the CLCA as they seemed to lack confidence in their ability for implementing this approach which represented a new experience for them. This explains the tendency of these less experienced teachers to agree more with the even statements of the questionnaire which imply teacher-centred views than the experienced teachers (6.2.3.3). This lack of harmony was also reported by Ali (2008: 269-270) (see 2.4.2). The situation of these teachers suggests their need for sufficient support and clear guidance for developing their implementation of the curriculum innovation (see 6.3.2.2, 7.3.4.1). However, 79% of the teachers were disappointed about the assistance and guidance they had received during this process (see 6.3.2.2/table 6.12). This state of confusion may end with these teachers' loss of self-confidence. Therefore, the inspectors' delay or hesitation in providing these teachers with clear guidelines and sufficient support may result in increasing their disappointment about the role of inspectors and may create a sense of tension in their relationship with them.

This discussion explains the impact of teacher education and preparation on teachers' approaches to instruction in classrooms (Al-Hazmi, 2003; Wang & Ma, 2009). It seems that the introduction of the new English curriculum in Libyan secondary schools "widens the gap between the content of teacher education programs and the needs of the classroom" (Al-Hazmi, 2003: 342). Therefore, preparing Libyan student teachers for implementing the CLCA requires teaching and training them through this approach. The positive experiences which can be enjoyed by the student teachers from this kind of teaching and training may lead them to adopt a similar approach in their classrooms (Rogers, 1983; Marshall, 1998; Baron, 1998) (see 3.1.2.1.1). Rogers (1983) considered this kind of training as a condition for preparing teachers to be successful facilitators in learner-centred classrooms (p: 156) and emphasised the importance of providing

“person-centred experiences” for teacher educators (p: 191). Thanli et al (2008) suggested developing teacher education programmes through accounting for student teachers’ previous conceptions in programme design (p: 78).

The findings of this study suggest the need for developing teacher education programmes for EFL student teachers in Libyan universities (see appendix 21). The lack of significant differences in the conceptions of both the graduates of the colleges of Teacher Training and those of colleges of Arts about the CLCA indicates that the curriculum of both colleges were not effective for developing students teachers’ knowledge and understanding about this approach (see 6.2.3.1). The same need for this development in the universities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was reported by Al-Hazmi (2003: 345). It seems to be possible to apply the model designed by Wang and Ma (2009) for training EFL student teachers in Libya (Mang & Ma, 2009: 243-252) (see 3.1.2.1.1). This model can be developed by adding another module for explaining Rogers’ notion of facilitation and the learner-centred psychological principles (see 3.1.2/ 3.1.2.1/appendix 14).

#### **7.4.2 Difficulties Caused by Teachers**

EFL teachers’ implementation of the role of facilitator in language classrooms requires their possession of certain qualities and skills (see 3.1.2.1). Teachers who lack these qualities or skills will not be able to play this role effectively (Rogers, 1969; Rogers & Freiberg, 1994) (see 3.1.1.1).

Pizarro (2007) pointed out that “language proficiency is one of the greatest challenges L2 teachers have to face in the classroom” (p: 65). The findings of this study revealed that 39% of the teachers were worried about this issue and all the inspectors considered it as a major challenge for the successful implementation of the curriculum innovation

(see 5.4.1.1 & 5.4.1.2.3 & Table 6.24). This weakness was also confirmed by the findings of Akle (2005). The teachers and the inspectors were aware that the proper implementation of this curriculum requires teachers' possession of high levels of proficiency. They believed that this would enable them to provide students with assistance and guidance for carrying out the new tasks brought with the CLCA. Rogers (1969) believed that in learner-centred classrooms, teachers should regard themselves as "a flexible source to be utilized by the group" (p: 165). This notion seems to be very demanding on the teachers who used to prepare their lessons in advance and who did not use to encourage students' initiatives (Dewey, 1916; Rogers, 1969, Freire, 1972). Nunan (2003) reported that the level of English language proficiency of FL teachers in Mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Vietnam was not sufficient for providing language learners in these contexts with rich input for successful FL acquisition (p: 607). Al-Hazmi (2003) also reported that many EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia finish their teacher education in university with a lack of "essential English skills, especially the ability to speak the language" (p: 342).

Libyan EFL teachers in secondary schools should have sought their professional development even within the limited resources they had at hand. These teachers need to develop their fluency in English and to update their knowledge and understanding of innovations in ELT. Exchanging resources and information, consulting each other, conducting staff seminars and attending training courses which are sometimes held can be possible means through which these teachers can be developed professionally. Al-Hazmi (2003) suggested that EFL teachers need to look out "in this internet-driven, information technology age, for any chance for professional development" (Al-Hazmi, 2003: 344). Abrami et al (2004) believed that focusing on teachers' professional development could enhance their belief about their ability for

implementing educational innovations (p: 201).The low level of the teachers' oral proficiency seems to be responsible for leading them to convert the communicative activities of role-play, problem-solving and games into whole-class presentation or teacher-led sessions (Nunan, 2003: 606) (see 7.3). Canale and Swain (1980) emphasised that language teachers "must have a fairly high level of communicative competence" (p: 33) in order to be able to participate in meaningful communication with students.

Teaching a number of subjects of the curriculum of English departments in Libyan universities through Arabic seems to be an influential factor for the teachers' undeveloped speaking and listening skills (see appendix 21a & 21b). This could have affected the preparation of student teachers in two ways. Firstly, it could have limited the time of their exposure to English language in classrooms. Secondly, accountability for the examination of these subjects could have led the student teachers to give more attention to memorise the content of these subjects rather than investing this effort for developing their communication skills independently.

The GPCE can aid the teachers for developing themselves professionally through involving them in in-service training programmes. These training courses should be well-prepared and their facilitators should be carefully selected (Al-Hazmi, 2003: 342). 'Wang and Ma's (2009) model for teacher training can be used as a guide for designing these courses (see 3.1.2.1.1). It is also possible to provide the teachers with up-to-date publications and to establish well-equipped libraries and language centres in schools. This will offer the teachers the opportunity for utilising a variety of facilities for developing their proficiency levels. The English language inspectors can also help the teachers for developing themselves through providing them with advice and support during their supervision.

Unless these teachers' speaking and listening skills are developed, they will not be able to implement the communicative curriculum innovation effectively. Changing the medium of instruction of the subjects which are currently taught in Arabic in the English departments in Libyan universities (see appendix 21) is an urgent action has to be taken by the GPCE. This increases the time of student teachers' exposure to English language in classrooms which may lead to their development of communication skills (Ellis, 2003; Rico, 2008). Seeking these objectives at this stage is a necessary step for preparing Libyan student teachers for teaching this curriculum innovation.

#### **7.4.3 Difficulties Caused by Students**

*Person-centred education is threatening to the students. It is much easier to conform and complain than to take responsibility, make mistakes and live with the consequences (Rogers, 1983: 190).*

The CLCA emphasises the consideration of students as the core of the learning process and involves their participation in making decisions about all issues related to their learning. The realisation of this aim requires students' perception of themselves as active participants in the learning process and their teachers as facilitators of their learning (Rogers, 1969; Brandes & Ginnis, 1986; Marshall, 1998; Weimer, 2002).

Students in learner-centred language classrooms have to perform many challenging tasks and to undertake many responsibilities different from those they used to carry out in teacher-centred classrooms. This requires students' possession of certain qualities and special skills in order to be able to perform these tasks properly (Cotterall, 1995: 195) (see. 3.3.4). However, students' lack of these qualities or skills will also make the



role of facilitator more complex and demanding. EFL teachers often believe that students' low proficiency levels, lack of interest in participating in communication activities and lack of motivation for developing communicative competence as major challenges encounter their implementation of communicative approaches for ELT (Li, 1998:690). 84% of the teachers considered this issue as an impediment for their implementation of the curriculum innovation (see 6.3.2.2). Orafi and Borg (2009) also reported that the belief of three Libyan EFL teachers about their students' low proficiency level had a strong influence on their approach of instruction (Orafi & Borg, 2009: 249). Students who lack confidence in their communication skills may not be interested in participating in communication activities. These students may perceive these activities as a cause of embarrassment as they involve their speaking of English language with their teachers and classmates (Al-Arishi, 1994; Jones, 2007). This perception can lead these students to prefer the English classes which involve less communication and interaction (Weimer, 2002). Accuracy exercises such as grammar sections are often classified as teacher-centred activities and entail less communication for students (Peacock, 1998; Hawkey, 2006). Therefore, these exercises are often perceived by students who lack the ability for communicating in English as safer, less demanding or embarrassing (Weimer, 2002). Students' accountability to examinations is another reason for their interest in learning grammatical structures more than communication activities (see 7.4.1.6). 30% of the teachers reported this as an issue for implementing the CLCA (see figure 19). However, the students should understand that the CLCA is "as effective as grammatical approaches in developing grammatical competence and more effective than grammatical approaches in developing communicative competence" (Canale & Swain, 1980: 15). Students with low language

proficiency will be in desperate need for teachers' assistance and encouragement for participating in communication activities (Ko et al, 2003).

Students' past learning experiences with the TCA can be another reason for their lack of interest in participating in the communication activities (Rogers, 1983; Marshall, 1998). These experiences might be also accumulated during their current classes of other school subjects which seem to be taught through the TCA. It is important to adapt the CLCA by all school subjects in Libyan secondary schools because exposing students to different teaching styles could end with their confusion and lack of confidence (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994:209). A consistency in the instructional approaches used by all the teachers of the subjects of Libyan secondary schools seems to be a necessary condition for the successful implementation of the curriculum innovation. Therefore, an investigation of the approaches of instruction used by the teachers of other subjects in Libyan secondary schools may yield significant insights related to the implementation of the English language curriculum innovation (see 6.8).

However, a first step for changing the conceptions of Libyan secondary school students who have been "socialized to absorb information passively", should involve helping them to "acquire new strategies to critically evaluate what they were reading and hearing and to trust their own reflective powers, critical thinking, and integrating abilities" (Marshall, 1998: 457). McDevit (2004) considered this task as a critical challenge should be tackled by teachers in learner-centred classrooms. Starting the implementation of the CLCA at an early stage of education in Libya may lead to change students' conceptions of teaching and learning (Rogers, 1983: 190) and to integrate the concept of learner-centeredness as a part of younger students' 'personality-make up' (Rogers, 1951:22). Hence, they may perceive the notion of manipulation as a serious

violation for the principle of respecting the otherness and therefore may not develop desire for manipulating others or allowing others to manipulate them.

#### **7.4.4 Impact of the Assessment Criteria Used by the Language Inspectors on the Teachers' Conceptions and Practices of the CLCA**

Inspectors can significantly contribute to teachers' proper implementation of educational innovations. Inspectors' constructive feedback can induce desirable changes on teachers' conceptions and practices (Chapman, 2001:69).

Many responsibilities and tasks are often assigned to inspectors in Libya during the introduction of innovations into schools. This involves promoting teachers' implementation of curriculum innovations through providing them with sufficient support and guidance (see appendix 8/ 2.4.4). However, the results of this study have revealed that influential implementation problems were related to the inspectors' misunderstanding or failure in carrying out their role during this process. This failure could be related to the interference of the GPCE with the inspectors' job by imposing assessment criteria for evaluating teachers' performance (see appendix 7). Therefore, both the inspectors and the education system are seen as responsible for the following problems of implementation:

##### **7.4.4.1 Insufficient Support and Guidance**

There was a contradiction between the views of the teachers and the inspectors about the guidance and support offered by the inspectors for the teachers (see 6.5.1, table 6.12 & 6.14). This contradiction indicates that the support and the guidance the inspectors thought they had offered for the teachers were neither explicit nor satisfactory for the teachers. The inspectors' failure in providing the teachers with clear guidance and

sufficient support could be related to their lack of training about this curriculum. The inspectors themselves seemed to be not certain about their understanding of the curriculum innovation. Although Orafi and Borg (2009) pointed out that some Libyan EFL inspectors were trained by the publishers of the coursebooks (Orafi & Borg, 2009: 245), only one of the inspectors who participated in this study was involved in one-day workshop (see 6.5.1). Moreover, the negative views of those five inspectors about the appropriateness of the CLCA for TEFL within the Libyan context may lead them to hesitate for providing sufficient support or guidance for the teachers (see 6.5.8). The teachers were confused about shifting their conceptions and practices to be compatible with the instructions of the curriculum innovation (see 7.2.1) and needed someone who could guide them in this process (England, 1973). This guidance could be offered by those inspectors who had positive views about the CLCA but might not be offered by those who had negative views about it (see 6.5.8). These inspectors might not declare their negative views to the teachers explicitly but this belief can be reflected in the kind and extent of the guidance and support they would offer for the teachers.

Developing Libyan English language inspectors' understanding of the curriculum innovation will enable them to offer clear guidance and satisfactory support for the teachers. This can be achieved through conducting extensive in-service training programmes for these inspectors. It is possible to conduct these training programmes inside Libya or in countries which have experienced the LCA for many years such the UK or the USA (see table 3.1). The training programme designed by Abdulali (1986) can be used as a guide for developing these training programmes (Abdulali, 1986) (see 3.3.6.1). Discussing the considerations for the effective inspection system which were suggested by Chapman (2002: 270) can be a useful part of this training (see 3.3.5.1).

#### **7.4.4.2 Tension in Inspector-Teacher Relationship**

There was clear tension in the relationship between the language inspectors and the teachers (see 6.5.5 & 6.3.2.2). Teachers' accountability for inspection can be a possible reason for this tension. The teachers' dissatisfaction about the inspectors' support and guidance and the emphasis on evaluating their performance is another possible reason for this tension (see 6.3.2.2). This may lead the teachers to reject any recommendations or instructions given by the inspectors (Chapman, 2001). Teachers' perception of the inspection process in terms of mutual cooperation and understanding can significantly enhance their acceptance of inspectors' supervision. The language inspectors can lead the teachers to change their conceptions about the inspection process through establishing a democratic approach for offering their supervision. Habermasian *Ideal Speech Situation* seems to be an ideal model for communication between the inspectors and the teachers. However, establishing this model entails allowing the right for every participant to offer his/her own suggestions and to question those offered by others (see 3.2.1). A realisation of this condition in the Libyan context may not be possible as neither the teachers nor the inspectors are free to offer or reject proposals. It seems that the regulations imposed on both of them contribute in the development of this tension in their relationship. Therefore, unless these regulations are released or at least loosen, it may not be possible to establish democratic relationships between the English language teachers and the inspectors.

Another influential factor for establishing a good relationship between the teachers and the inspectors was related to the sensitivity of the notion of male-female relationship in the Libyan society (see 6.5.5). This sensitivity is related to social and religious considerations (see 7.5). As the majority of the English language teachers in the

secondary schools in the region are females (see 5.1 & 5.2.2.3), recruiting experienced female teachers to work as language inspectors can be a feasible solution for this issue. This may lead to more contact between them and other female teachers. However, home and childcare commitments and responsibilities of female teachers in Libya may not offer them sufficient time for undertaking the role of inspector properly (Hutchings et al, 2010: 71).

#### **7.4.4.3 Mismatch between Inspectors' Criteria of Evaluation with the Objectives of the Curriculum Innovation**

A comparison between the criteria which were reported by the language inspectors (see 6.5.1, table 6.15) with the criteria outlined in the *Standard Annual Teacher's Assessment Form* indicates that the inspectors were bound to the criteria outlined in this form (see appendix7). Imposing this form on the language inspectors did not offer them any flexibility for changing or modifying their criteria of evaluation. A thorough examination of the criteria outlined in this form (see appendix 7) indicates that they mainly focus on teachers' presentation of the content of textbooks (see 6.5.2). A significant issue about this form is its lack of any criteria relevant to the English language teachers' implementation of the CLCA inside classrooms or to their considerations of its humanistic or democratic principles. Therefore, only two inspectors reported their consideration of this issue for evaluating the teachers (see table 6.15).

The teachers were aware about the effect of the inspectors' evaluation of their performance on their future careers. Therefore, they were concerned with performing those actions which they thought would please their inspectors regardless their usefulness for developing students' learning (England, 1973:43-44).This involves their

coverage of the target content in the pre-determined due time and their marking of all students' written assignments. This orientation influenced their conceptions and practices of the CLCA. Black (2004) emphasised that "teachers need to be given some degree of ownership over the pedagogic strategies they use, particularly, in relation to 'pace' and progression through the curriculum" (p: 358). It is clear that the role played by the language inspectors has been significantly affected by the *Standard Annual Teacher's Assessment Form* (see appendix 7). Consequently, this role may not promote the teachers' implementation of the CLCA inside classrooms. Offering flexibility for the language inspectors may lead to their consideration of the humanistic and democratic principles of the CLCA.

Involving the teachers in evaluating their own performance seems to be compatible with the humanistic and democratic principles of the CLCA. Biggs (1999) and Weimer (2002) suggested encouraging teachers' self-evaluation and reflection on their performance to identify their strengths and to treat their weaknesses (p: 193) by providing them with a "framework to aid reflection" (Biggs, 1999: 60). Establishing teacher-centred supervision may lead the teachers to implement more student-centred practices (Paris & Gespass, 2001).

Changing the *Standard Annual Teacher's Assessment Form* (see appendix 7) which is currently used by the language inspectors is a necessary action has to be taken by the GPCE. A new form should be specifically designed for Libyan English language secondary school inspectors and should focus on teachers' considerations of the humanistic and democratic principles embodied within the notion of learner-centredness. This form should also focus on the teachers' implementation of the CLCA

for teaching the new textbooks. Thaine (2004) emphasised that “the revision of teaching assessment criteria should be an ongoing process” (p: 344).

It is clear that the current criteria used by the language inspectors and their related practices will not promote the teachers’ implementation of the curriculum innovation. It will be useful to apply a general revision for the policy of inspection in the Libyan educational system. This involves establishing new criteria for selecting language inspectors who will be capable for undertaking compatible roles with the changes taken place in this system.

### **7.5 Appropriateness of the CLCA for the Libyan Context**

The notion of learner-centeredness was originally developed in and for Western contexts which have certain distinctive cultural characteristics compatible with its basic principles (Holliday, 1994:102) (see 3.1, 3.2). Therefore, transferring this notion to non-Western contexts requires accounting for any incompatibility between its basic principles which were outlined by Rogers (1983) (see 3.1.1) with the prevailing cultural and social values in these contexts (Freire, 1998: 28). Nunan (1995) suggested that Western educational contexts should be seen as an “interesting working hypothesis to be investigated rather than firm conclusions to be embraced” (p: 147). Holliday (1994) considered full understanding of the prevailing practices in classrooms and their wider community as a necessary condition for developing an appropriate ELT methodology. Involving in the debate about the appropriateness of the LCA for developing countries was one of the aims for conducting this study (see 1.3.1). There was an interest to challenge the argument of Guthrie (1990) and Jansen (2009) about the appropriateness of the LCA for developed (Western) countries but not for developing countries (see 3.3.2).



The positive views of the majority of the participants about the CLCA (6.2.2.1/6.4 / table 6.13) indicate their disagreement with this argument (see 3.3.2). Similar positive views of EFL teachers about this approach were reported by Nonkukhetkhong et al (2006) in Thailand, by Al-Nouh (2008) in Kuwait and by Orafi and Borg (2009) in Libya (see 3.3.3.1). However, the positive views identified in this study could not be related to successful practical experiences of implementing this approach in language classrooms (see 7.3). These positive views could be related to the teachers' and inspectors' personal negative experiences with the TCA which they considered as a reason for the weakness of their communication skills (see 2.4.2). Hence, they thought of the CLCA as an appropriate ELT methodology for developing students' communication skills.

However, the teachers and the inspectors were in agreement with Guthrie (1990) and Jansen (2009) about the existence of certain influential difficulties and challenges which could impede teachers' proper implementation of this approach in developing countries (see table 6.12 & Figure 6.19). Similar difficulties and challenges were reported in the findings of recent research on implementing this approach in non-Western contexts (see Kirkgoz, 2008; Al-Nouh, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009) (see table 3.3 / table 3.1).

The findings of this study indicate that in Libya the cultural attitude towards the CLCA at the institutional level seems to be at variance with that at the personal level of teachers. While the teachers were positive about the implementation of this approach for TEFL (see 6.6.8), the current hierarchical structure of education system in Libya represents a traditional view about teaching and learning. Surprisingly, this centralisation contradicts with the aims of education in Libya, in general, (see 2.1) and those of introducing the English language curriculum innovation of 2000, in particular (see 2.4.1). These aims seem to be compatible with Dewey's conception of the aims of

progressive education and Rogers' conception of the aims of humanistic education (see 3.1). However, the current centralised educational system in Libya is similar to Dewey's conception of the politics which could not foster the application of his democratic ideas on education (see 2.1.1, 2.4.1, 2.4.2, appendix 23) and Rogers' description of the politics of traditional education (see 3.1.1).

As an Islamic, conservative and developing society, Libyan society is characterised by high respect for religious and social values. These values govern the behaviours of the members of this society and organise the relationship among them (Hutchins et al, 2010: 67). For an individual's behaviour to be religiously and socially accepted in this society, it should be bound to these values. Rees and Althakhri (2008) emphasised the impact of Islamic values on individuals' behaviours and practices in Arab countries (p: 127). As some of the incompatible contextual and cultural aspects of the Libyan context have been discussed earlier (see 7.1 & 7.4), the discussion in this sub-section will consider the two factors which seem to be influential on Libyan EFL teachers' conceptions and implementation of the CLCA at the context of the language classroom.

Youngsters' high respect for elders seems to be an influential issue for the effective implementation of the CLCA in Libya. Guthrie (1990) and Kasanda et al (2005) considered this issue as a reason for the inappropriateness of this approach for developing countries. Yeung (2009) questioned the possibility for its implementation in Hong Kong for the same reason (p.377). In Libya, children are brought up on the value of respecting elders to the extent of not questioning what they say (see 2.3). Therefore, these children often maintain the same status for teachers in classrooms as elders whose sayings should not be questioned (Ahmali, 2007: 173). This could be due to Libyan

students' awareness that their appropriate behaviours in schools are often judged in accordance to this value (how much respect do they give to school elders- headteachers and teachers?). This is not in line with the principle of the CLCA which emphasises the significance of students' making or at least participating in making decisions about their own learning (Rogers, 1969: 9). This can increase the difficulty of shifting students' conceptions of the role played by teachers and students in learner-centred classrooms. Nunan (1995) pointed out that the concept of autonomy would be problematic in non-Western contexts where this notion would be "unfamiliar or even alien one" (p: 144). This suggests that unless children in Libya are brought up on estimating the value of open negotiation and democratic communication since early ages, creating the appropriate culture for implementing what Sowden (2007) described as a strong version of the CLCA (p. 304) (see 3.3.1) in the Libyan context seems to be a far-reaching goal. Freire (1998) suggested getting children to this end through involving them in making decisions about their own issues (p: 97). However, this reality should not hinder the teachers from implementing Sowden's (2007) model of a weak version of the LCA for teaching the new curriculum of English language in secondary schools (see 3.3.1).

Another incompatible aspect of the culture in Libyan society with the CLCA related to the sensitivity of male-female contact. This contact is religiously prohibited and socially sensitive. Metcalfe (2006, 2008) observed this phenomenon in some Arab countries in the Middle East and attributed it to the effect of gender segregation in these contexts (p: 101). Due to this sensitivity, Libyan male and female students were studying in separate schools few years ago. However, as a direct influence of globalisation on changing many of the social and cultural values in Libyan society, this phenomenon no longer exists as classrooms of Libyan schools have now become mixed. Nevertheless, the notion of contact between males and females is still relatively sensitive. Consequently,

this would not make Libyan secondary schools a “community life” (Dewey, 1916: 358) which represents a central principle of CLCA. This sensitivity can not foster the implementation of communication activities such as pair and group work, role-play, problem-solving and games (see 2.4.1) which represent a fundamental pillar of the CLCA in language classrooms (see. 3.2.3.1). As the effective implementation of these activities requires composing students in various groups and involving them in performing learning tasks and activities interactively and cooperatively (see 3.2.3.1), the teachers in secondary schools would face the problem of the rejection of female students to work together with male students. Although the teachers can account for this problem by allowing students to select their group members, this would not allow them for composing students in random groups which could have a positive impact on the socio-cultural aspect of their learning (Livingstone & Lynch, 2000: 342) (see 3.2.3.1). This sensitivity can also affect the relationship between teachers and students. In Libya, both male and female teachers should be very careful about establishing their relationship with students from the opposite sex. This formality contradicts with the principle of the CLCA about building a good rapport between learner-centred teachers and their students (Brandes & Ginnis, 1986:20). Nguyen (2007) believed that “building teacher-student rapport is a key aspect of teaching” (p: 284) as this would create a stimulating learning atmosphere in classrooms (Amy & Tsui, 1996; Blair & Daly, 2005; McCombs & Miller, 2007). But teachers’ failure to establish a good rapport with students could be the ‘darker reason’ for not moving towards more facilitative teaching (Weimer, 2002). Building a democratic relationship between teachers and students requires teachers’ readiness to be approachable for students who should be responsive to this notion. The role of learner-centred teacher is not only limited to provide students with information but also to consider their emotions and affective factors (see 3.1.2.1).

A proper implementation of this role requires teachers' understanding of students' personal issues and concerns. However, this can not be realised through a formal relationship between teachers and students. Moreover, this implementation requires creating a sense of cooperation among school teachers (Simons, 1997: 38). This sense will provide students with a successful model of cooperation therefore they would appreciate the value of working together with their teachers and classmates. However, the sensitivity of male-female relationship in the Libyan context does not promote this sense of mutual cooperation among Libyan secondary school male and female teachers. Simons (1997) warned that the lack of co-operation among teachers would not create the atmosphere appropriate for active learning (p: 38).

The relationship between English language inspectors and teachers could be also affected by this sensitivity (see 7.4.4.2). It is only possible to build a formal relationship between inspectors and teachers from the opposite sex. This relationship will not create the appropriate environment for the inspectors to play the proper role in learner-centred schools.

This discussion explains the difficulty of the creation of an appropriate environment for implementing a strong version of the CLCA in Libyan secondary schools. This is due to specific cultural, religious and social values which are not compatible with some of the basic principles of this approach. However, it should be noted that many changes are now taking place within the Libyan society which may convert it to an appropriate environment for implementing a weak version of the CLCA during this stage (Sowden, 2007: 304) (see 1.1 & 3.3.2). Many notions which used to be religiously and culturally very sensitive have now become less sensitive. For example, Libyan male and female students are now studying in mixed classes and sometimes can be seen revising

lessons and performing assignments together. Children in Libya have now become less dependent on parents as the notion of elders' control of youngsters is gradually diminishing. In this regard, although it was expected that the teachers who participated in this study would be very sensitive about the issue of handing over the responsibility for the learning process to students, this concern was raised by only 17% of them (see Figure 19). This contradicts the common belief in the literature about relating teachers' resistance to implement this approach to their interest in maintaining their power and control over classrooms (Brandes & Ginnis, 1986; O'Neill, 1991; Cuban, 1993; Nunan, 1999; Garret & Shortall, 2002; Sowden, 2007). Moreover, the advances in technology have led the GPCE and EFL teachers in Libyan secondary schools to start the incorporation of technology into ELT. Fleming and Stevens (2004) pointed out the impact of technology on conceptions of teaching and learning and believed that employing it for language teaching would lead to promoting interaction between teacher and students (p: 181). This orientation has been emphasised in the report of the GPCE (2008) (see 2.4). Although the service and speed of internet in Libya are still not satisfactory and its charge is still relatively expensive, it is becoming increasingly popular in this country. This enhances the possibility of employing computer-assisted language learning (CALL) and electronic learning in Libyan schools which may promote students' independent language learning (Timucin, 2006:262). All these changes together can contribute to convert Libyan schools into an appropriate context for implementing the CLCA.

## **7.6 Contribution of the Research**

An exploration of conceptions of the CLCA held by a sample of Libyan EFL teachers which have never been explored before offers useful implications for ELT in Libya and may be in similar contexts.

The fourteen conceptions and misconceptions of the CLCA explored in this study (see 6.1, 6.1.1 & 6.1.2) add useful insights for the literature about non-Western EFL teachers' conceptualisation and experience of this approach. Curriculum designers for these contexts may use these insights for developing appropriate materials. An identification of the difficulties which hindered the teachers from implementing this approach properly offers an explanation about the most influential reasons for the failure of implementing it for TEFL in developing countries (see 3.3.3.2). This identification represents the initial step in the research for feasible and practical solutions to overcome these challenges. Hence, appropriate actions can be taken to revise the policies adopted in these contexts to fit their contextual conditions and particularities. Some suggestions and recommendations have been offered for developing the current conditions in Libya in order to create an appropriate environment for implementing the CLCA in secondary schools (see Chapter 7). Significant implications for designing effective programmes for teacher education and training for preparing Libyan EFL teachers to become real facilitators in language classrooms can be also drawn from the findings of this study. These implications may be applied in other developing countries where English is taught as a FL.

'Phenomenography' has been introduced through this study into the Libyan context as a new research approach for investigating educational problems. The knowledge which local researchers may gain from reading this thesis about phenomenography may encourage them to carry out more phenomenographical investigations for tackling relevant educational problems (see 7.7).

An employment of a questionnaire with open and close-ended items for eliciting phenomenographical data in this study is not a common practice for phenomenography.

This study provides empirical evidence for the possibility of integrating quantitative and qualitative research methods and analysis in phenomenographical investigations.

The outcome space of this study represents a form of ‘discovery’ (Marton, 1986: 148). This outcome space will be useful for other phenomenographers who seek exploring conceptions of the CLCA in other contexts for accounting for the validity and reliability of their findings (Marton, 1986: 148). Moreover, the tools used in this study (questionnaires & interview schedule) can be replicated in similar contexts (Gass & Mackey, 2007: 11).

### **7.7 Limitations of the Study**

Researchers should be honest in reporting all the issues of their researches including any limitations (Cohen et al, 2007: 116).

Teachers’ conceptions of the basic principles and practices of the CLCA explored in this study might have been influenced by the description given about these principles and practices in the statements of the questionnaire. It is possible that the agreement or disagreement of some teachers with these statements did not reflect their conceptual thoughts and understanding of these principles and practices. Therefore, it was not possible to develop an outcome space for representing their conceptions of these principles and practices. Although these issues were generally discussed during the interviews, consideration of time did not allow for including open-ended questions in the interview schedule for each principle or practice. It would be better if the teachers were asked to express their conceptions of each principle (e.g. role of teacher) or practice (e.g. pair/group work) in their own words and details.



Involving more teachers from secondary schools in other regions would have increased the possibility for generalising the results of this study (see 5.1). However, this was not possible due to the challenges explained in sections (5.2.2.1, 5.4.1).

Another issue which could have affected the validity of the data obtained from the interviews was related to the interview sample which involved some volunteers only (see 5.4.1, .5.4.2.2). Therefore, it was not possible to make any generalisations based on this data (Cohen et al, 2007: 116).

It was not possible to conduct direct interviews with the language inspectors (see 5.4.3). This limited the data provided by the inspectors to their responses to a predetermined set of questions. Conducting live interviews with the inspectors might have allowed for probing more deeply into their understanding of their role in the education system and their views about the teachers' conceptions of the CLCA.

The reader may think that it would be better if classroom observation was employed for collecting data about the teachers' actual classroom practices in classrooms. However, phenomenographical investigations are often concerned with exploring individuals' own conceptions of their own experiences rather than collecting observational information about these experiences. Hence, the researcher was interested in exploring how the teachers themselves were reporting about their experiences of implementing this approach. Moreover, observational data about this issue was provided by the language inspectors.

The researcher advocates the notion of implementing the CLCA for TEFL in Libyan secondary schools. This belief might have unconsciously influenced the interpretation of the findings of this study or the development of its conclusions.

## **7.8 Areas for Further Research**

The results of this study suggest further areas of research relevant to the issue of Libyan EFL secondary school teachers' conceptions of the CLCA and their implementation of the 2000 English language curriculum innovation.

The successful implementation of the CLCA is a complex process and involves true cooperation and active engagement among teachers, students, headteachers, inspectors, policy-makers and parents. A realisation of this sense of cooperation requires compatibility in the conceptions held by all of them about teaching and learning. However, any incompatibility in their conceptions can lead to disruption in the integrity of this process.

Exploring Libyan secondary school students' conceptions of the CLCA has emerged as an interesting issue for further research. Through this investigation it will be possible to understand how these students perceive their role in the learning process. These students' lack of understanding of their new tasks and responsibilities which have been brought through this approach can make the process of implementing the curriculum innovation more complex.

English language is taught among other subjects in Libyan secondary schools. Therefore, adapting the CLCA for teaching it with other subjects taught through the TCA may result in significant confusion for students. Moreover, the learner-centred language teacher will find him/herself as an alien among other teachers who held teacher-centred perspectives. A harmony in the conceptions of teaching and learning held by the teachers of all secondary school subjects can enhance the success of

implementing the CLCA in Libyan secondary schools. Therefore, an investigation of these teachers' conception of teaching and learning may provide useful insights about this process.

Headteachers play a significant role in creating an appropriate environment for implementing curriculum innovations in schools successfully. As their role is complementary to the role of teachers, any discrepancy in their conceptions of teaching and learning can affect the integrity of this process significantly. The learner-centred language teacher's adaptation of the role of facilitator can be promoted by a headteacher who held a learner-centred perspective but may be not promoted by a headteacher with a teacher-centred perspective. Hence, investigating Libyan secondary school headteachers' conceptions of the CLCA can partially answer the question about the failure of Libyan EFL secondary school teachers in implementing this approach successfully.

English language inspectors in Libya represent a significant source for providing EFL secondary school teachers with constant guidance and sufficient support to promote their implementation of curriculum innovations. However, this can be realised only if they both have compatible conceptions about the inspection process. Any incompatibility in their conceptions about this process can create a sense of tension in their relationship. Hence, it seems to be important to investigate how inspection is perceived by both the teachers and inspectors.

A change in Libyan EFL secondary school teachers' conceptions of the CLCA should be associated with a parallel change in their conceptions of assessment. These teachers' lack of understanding or knowledge about formative assessment strategies such as self and peer assessment can affect their implementation of this approach significantly.

Therefore, identifying these teachers' conceptions of assessment has emerged as another interesting issue for further research.

### **Chapter VIII: Conclusions and Final Thoughts**

This phenomenographical investigation explored variations in the conceptions of the communicative learner-centred approach held by a sample of Libyan English foreign language secondary school teachers in the Western region in relation to their implementation of a curriculum innovation in English language teaching.

Fourteen conceptions of the CLCA have been identified through this study. Some of these conceptions indicated the teachers' understanding of certain principles and practices of this approach. These conceptions included: student-centred learning, independent learning, facilitation, active learning, communication and interaction, learner's responsibility, cooperative learning, motivation and accounting for students' needs and interests. Some teachers' misconceptions of this approach indicated their confusion or lack of understanding about some of its basic principles and practices.

These misconceptions included: free learning, empowering students and disempowering teachers, a new way of teaching, lack of discipline and an approach which can not be implemented. The teachers' conceptions and misconceptions of this approach seemed to have a clear influence on their instructional approaches in classrooms which limited their successful implementation of the 2000 English language curriculum innovation in Libyan secondary schools.

Certain influential factors have been identified as responsible for this phenomenon (see 6.3.2.2). The centralisation of the education system in Libya had a major impact on the process of introducing the 2000 curriculum innovation in secondary schools, in particular, and English language teaching, in general. Introducing a curriculum innovation which embodies humanistic and democratic principles through a top-down policy which implies the imposition of ideas and regulations on schools teachers, students and inspectors could not lead to the realisation of these values in reality (see 7.1). The education system was responsible for serious problems which negatively affected the process of introducing the curriculum innovation into Libyan secondary schools. These problems included: prescribing textbooks on secondary schools, lack of piloting or evaluating of the curriculum innovation, insufficient training for teachers and inspectors for the curriculum innovation, a limitation in the resources and facilities provided for schools, composing English language classrooms of a large number of students, an imposition of external traditional forms of examinations on secondary schools and a lack of harmony between teacher education at university with the needs of these schools (see 7.4.1, 7.4.1.2, 7.4.1.3, 7.4.1.4, 7.4.1.5, 7.4.1.6, 7.4.1.7). It was also possible to identify some problems related to the teachers including their weak language proficiency, their lack of understanding of the CLCA, their lack of motivation for developing themselves professionally and their high accountability for national

examinations and the inspection process (see 7.4.2). Students' lack of understanding of their new role in the learner-centred language classroom, their high accountability for examinations, their lack of confidence about their communication skills, their traditional background and more critically their perception of themselves as passive recipients of knowledge were identified as challenges related to the students (see 7.4.3). Nevertheless, among all these challenges and difficulties, teachers' lack of understanding of the concept of learner-centredness and its main principles and practices, their weak level of language proficiency, teachers' and students' accountability for examination and teachers' accountability for inspection were identified as more influential on limiting the success of the teachers' implementation of the curriculum innovation.

The English language inspectors depended on different criteria for evaluating the teachers' performance. These criteria included: teachers' use of English as a means of instruction, students' learning progress, teachers' adherence to the pre-determined plan for syllabus distribution, teachers' relationship with inspectors, teachers' language proficiency, teachers' follow-up of students' homework, teaching methods and techniques, use of teaching aids and facilities, teachers' relationship with their colleagues, students' participation, teachers' relationship with students and teachers' implementation of the new teaching method (see 6.5.2). It was clear that these inspectors were bound to the criteria outlined in the annual teacher's assessment form (see appendix 7) which was imposed by the GPCD on all Libyan inspectors of basic and secondary schools regardless the subject they supervise. An examination of the criteria outlined in this report indicated their lack of any compatible criteria which can foster the teachers' implementation of the curriculum innovation. The imposition of this form restricted the criteria used by these inspectors which did not offer them any flexibility

for incorporating humanistic and democratic principles for evaluating the teachers' performance in learner-centred classrooms. Therefore, some implementation problems were related to the inspectors' failure to carry out their role in this process effectively. These problems included: their inability for providing teachers with sufficient support and constant guidance, a clear tension in their relationship with the teachers and an incompatibility between their criteria of evaluation with the objectives of introducing the curriculum innovation (see 7.4.4, 7.4.4.1, 7.4.4.2, 7.4.4.3). Most importantly, the teachers' accountability for the inspectors' evaluation had a negative impact on their conceptions and practices in classrooms. Hence, it was clear that the form currently used by the inspectors for evaluating the EFL teachers in secondary schools is no longer valid.

The CLCA seems to be appropriate for TEFL in the Libyan context. It is anticipated that this approach will prevail in all language classes in Libyan schools within the few forthcoming decades. Four related reasons may explain this anticipation. Firstly, the increasing political interest in democracy will require establishing a system of education which incorporates democratic and humanistic principles for curriculum development. The CLCA has a great potential for leading to the achievement of this goal. Secondly, the continuous impact of globalisation on eliminating those social and cultural values which are currently not compatible with the basic principles of this approach will gradually convert the Libyan context into an appropriate environment for its implementation. It seems to be clear that Western ideas and practices are increasingly accepted and adapted in the Libyan context. Thirdly, the positive views of the teachers about the effectiveness of this approach for developing students' communication skills will lead them to continue their attempts to implement it in language classrooms. Finally, the advances in technology and the increasing interest in its employment for

ELT in Libya will provide teachers and students with means and self-study materials for promoting independent learning.

However, at the present time, Libya seems not to be an appropriate context for the implementation of a strong version of the CLCA on both individual and state levels. It seems to be possible in this country to apply a context-based weak version of this approach. The implementation of this weak version for TEFL at this stage should involve the enhancement of students' active participation in communication learner-centred activities and the application of performance-based assessment for evaluating their listening and speaking skills.

The notion of the CLCA is theoretically attractive but the process of its implementation is complex and demanding. A successful implementation of this approach requires a change in the conceptions and practices of teachers, students, headteachers, inspectors, policy-makers and parents about teaching and learning. It also requires a good preparation for teachers, students, schools and classrooms. Nevertheless, a rejection of this approach in developing countries would lead to more harm than benefit. Humanism and democracy are universal concepts which should be realised in all educational settings. Concepts of bureaucracy and manipulation which are embodied within the TCA will not lead to the realisation of these values. By contrast, the humanistic and democratic foundations and principles of the CLCA could make it ideal for this aim.

It may be apt to end this thesis by citing Freire (1997) "it is imperative that we maintain hope even when the harshness of reality may suggest the opposite" (Freire, 1997:106). There is much to gain and little to lose in taking steps forward in the direction of



implementing the communicative learner-centred approach for teaching English in Libyan secondary schools and perhaps also in those of other developing countries.

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**Appendix 1: Teacher's Questionnaire**

**Section I: General and Demographic Information**

City: Sabratha  Ajelat  Zwara  Jmail  Regdaleen  Zultan

Place of graduation: College of Teachers Training  College of Arts  Others  please specify..... Male  Female

School..... Number of students in your class

Total years of teaching English 1-5  6-10  11-15  16-20  21+

**Section II: Teachers' understanding of the concept of the communicative learner-centred approach.**

**Q1-What does the 'Communicative Learner-Centred Approach' (CLCA) mean to you?**

.....  
 .....

**Section (III): Teachers' Views Towards the Key Changes Brought with the CLCA.**

**Key SD=Strongly Disagree/ D- Disagree/ U-Uncertain/A=Agree/SA=Strongly Agree**

Please put ( ✓ ) in the column that matches your opinion most.

No.	The statement	SD 1	D 2	U 3	A 4	SA 5
1	Teacher's role is to facilitate and guide students' learning.					

2	Teacher's role is to transmit knowledge through explanations and giving examples.					
3	The teacher should supplement the textbook with extra materials to satisfy students' different needs.					
4	Students have different needs; so it is difficult for a teacher to provide materials to meet the needs of all students.					
5	Students can undertake responsibility for their own learning					
6	It is difficult to prepare and train students to take responsibility over their own learning					
7	Tasks and activities should be negotiated and selected to meet students' needs and to suit their abilities rather than imposed on them					
8	Tasks and activities should be selected by the teacher since it is difficult to consult all the students for their needs.					
9	Teacher-student relationship should be based on openness, mutual respect, cooperation and understanding.					
10	Formal relationship between teacher and student gives clear roles for both; so it provides better environment for effective learning.					
<b>No.</b>	<b>The statement</b>	<b>SD</b> <b>1</b>	<b>D</b> <b>2</b>	<b>U</b> <b>3</b>	<b>A</b> <b>4</b>	<b>SA</b> <b>5</b>
11	Student talk should be equal if not greater than teacher 'talk.					
12	Teacher talk should exceed student talk during language classes for instructing, explaining and giving feedback.					
13	Classroom desks and chairs should be arranged in a way that permits students work in pairs, in small groups or individually. (E.g., horseshoe (semi-circle), modular or circle					
14	Classroom desks and chairs should be arranged into rows facing the board with a teacher's desk nearby					
15	The school is a social institution where students gain knowledge and learn about social norms, moral values and cooperative skills.					
16	The school is a formal place where students gain knowledge they need for exams.					
17	Pair and Group work activities provide good opportunities for language practice; and thus improve students' communicative competence.					
18	It is difficult for the teacher to monitor students' performance during pair and group work activities; so students may use their mother tongue for discussion.					
19	Pair and group work activities help build up social co-operative relationships among students and between students and teachers.					
20	Pair and group work activities take too long time comparing with other activities					

21	Role-play activities offer good opportunities for students' practice of English in different life situations.					
22	Role-play activities require sufficient training and special skills to be effectively implemented in classrooms.					
23	Games provide an enjoyable context for language practice and for maintaining students' interest and involvement.					
24	Games may lead to unsettle classroom discipline, so it is difficult to manage them in language classes					
25	Problem solving activities enhance students' critical thinking and offer good opportunities for language practice					
26	Problem solving activities require critical thinking skills and much training to make students get used to it.					
<b>No.</b>	<b>The statement</b>	<b>SD 1</b>	<b>D 2</b>	<b>U 3</b>	<b>A 4</b>	<b>SA 5</b>
27	Self and peer assessment help students identify their mistakes and reflect critically on their performance.					
28	Summative assessment enables teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses to treat them					
29	Language content should be authentic and designed to meet students' needs and interests					
30	Language content should be designed to meet pre-determined objectives usually set by course designers.					

**Section (IV): Teachers' implementation of communicative learner-centred activities in classrooms.**

**Q3- Have you received any training about the CLCA?**

Yes (If 'yes', please go to 3.1)

NO

3.1  Pre-service training courses  In-service training courses  others (please specify)

**Q4-Do you implement any communicative learner-centred activities in your classroom?**

Yes (If 'yes', please select from below)

No

Pair work  Group work  Role-play  Problem-solving  Games

Others (please specify)

**Q5- Do you encounter any difficulties in implementing these activities?**

Yes  (if yes, please go to 5.1)

No

5.1 Please tick ( ✓ ) the problems that you find relevant to your situation.

The students need accuracy rather than fluency.

The students' proficiency level is low.

You are not ready to give up your authoritative role.

Time is limited.

- Mismatch between the objectives of the curriculum and the content of the exams.
- Large classes.
- Lack of teaching facilities and resources.
- Students' resistance to classroom participation.

**5.2 Please, feel free to use the space below to report any other difficulties or constraints you encounter in implementing the communicative learner-centred activities in your class.**

.....

.....

.....

**Q6- What do you think of implementing the communicative learner-centred approach for teaching English as a foreign language in your context?**

.....

.....

.....

**7- Dear teacher, if you feel that something important has been forgotten, please feel free to add any comments you find useful for the study in the space provided below:**

.....

.....

.....

**Note: Please indicate if you are interested in participating in a semi-structured interview.**

**Please, read the following notes before you decide:**

- (a)- Recording the interview will be left to your decision.
- (b)- The language used in the interview will be left to your choice (Arabic, or English).
- (c)- Close relatives (father, mother, husband, brother, or sister) of female teachers can attend the interview.
- (d)- The interview will be between 30 to 45 minutes long.

Yes      **If (yes), please complete the information below**       No

**Name** .....

**City** ..... **school** .....

**Mobile phone:**..... **Telephone Number:**.....

**E-Mail address:**.....

**Dear teacher, would you like to be provided with a summary of the findings of the study?**

Yes      No

**If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the researcher:**

**Name:** Salama Embark Shiba

**Mobile phone:** (Libya) 0913740138 - 092 7740644      **OR**      (UK) +44-7795492812

**E. Mail Address:** salamaembark@yahoo.co.uk      **OR**      [s.s.shiba@durham.ac.uk](mailto:s.s.shiba@durham.ac.uk).

*Thank you for your participation*

## **Appendix 2: Covering Letter of Teacher's Questionnaire**

Dear teacher

My name is Salama Embark Shihiba. I am a research student at the School of Education at Durham University in the UK. I am conducting a research about Libyan EFL teachers' implementation of the new English curriculum of Libyan Secondary Schools.

I believe that the teacher is a main agent in implementing educational innovations and that his/her understanding and acceptance of the changes brought with these innovations is a major key for their success. Accordingly, I believe that you could provide valuable information for this study. I would, therefore, like to invite you to kindly participate in this study by responding to this questionnaire as fully as possible. Completing this questionnaire should approximately take thirty minutes. However, the data you provide will be of great value and will support this study to achieve the following aims.

- highlighting the significance of listening to your voice during introducing any educational innovations into schools;
- exploring how the CLCA is conceptualized by Libyan English foreign language (EFL) secondary school teachers;
- identifying the difficulties you encounter in implementing this approach in teaching the new English textbooks;
- identifying the criteria used by language inspectors for evaluating your performance and investigating the impact these criteria might have on your conceptions and practices of the CLCA;
- and understanding your belief about the appropriateness of this approach for your context .

**Dear teacher, it is important to know that:**

- Your participation is voluntarily; so you can withdraw at any time.



- An Arabic version of the questionnaire and this information letter are available and will be given to you upon your request.
- A brief summary of the findings of the study will be given to be if you are interested.
- Your information will be kept strictly confidential.
- If you need any more explanations, you can contact the researcher on the address provided at any time (please see last page f the questionnaire).

Dear teacher, I really hope to have all the items answered. **{Thank you for your Participation}**.

### **Appendix 3: Consent Form for the Teachers Involved in the Questionnaire**

I certify that I have been invited to participate in the research entitled ‘Exploring Libyan EFL Secondary School Teachers’ conceptions of the Communicative Learner-Centred Approach’, which in now being conducted in the School of Education at Durham University by: Salama Embark Saleh Shihiba (research student) and I certify that I am voluntarily giving my consent to participate in this study.

I also certify that:

- 1-I have received an information letter with the questionnaire.
- 2- I understand the aims of the research as they are explained in the information letter.
- 3- I have been informed that I can withdraw from this study at any time and that my withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way.
- 4-I have been informed that I can contact the researcher for any queries or complaints at any time by phone or e-mail
- 5-I have been informed that the information I may provide will be kept confidential.
- 6-I have been asked if I would like to receive a summary of the research findings.
- 7-I have been offered an Arabic version of both the questionnaire and the information letter.

Teacher’s name:

Signature:

Date:

**Appendix 4: Inspectors' Questionnaire**

Q1) - What tasks and responsibilities are assigned to you as a language inspector?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Q2) - What role have been assigned to you as a language inspector in the process of developing the 2000 English language curriculum?

.....  
.....  
.....

Q3) - What aspects of teachers' performance do you focus on in evaluating the quality of their teaching?

.....  
.....  
.....

Q4) - What changes have you noticed on the methodology used by the teachers for teaching the new textbooks from that they used to implement for teaching the previous textbooks?

.....  
.....  
.....

Q5) - What kind of support have you offered to the teachers to help them overcome these difficulties?

.....  
.....  
.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
Q6) - How would you describe the relationship between you and the teachers you supervise?

.....  
.....  
.....  
Q7)- How would you describe the relationship between you and the teachers you supervise?

.....  
.....  
.....  
Q8)- What constraints or pressures do you think have impacted this relationship?

.....  
.....  
.....  
Q9) - To what extent do you think that the change of the curriculum has succeeded in achieving its objectives so far (as explained in the Teacher's Book)?

.....  
.....  
.....  
Q10) - How do you think the implementation of this new curriculum can be improved?

.....  
.....  
.....  
Q11) - What do you think about the suitability of the methodology of the CLCA as embodied within the instructions given to the teachers in the introductory chapter of the Teacher's Books for TEFL within the Libyan context?

.....  
.....  
.....  
*Dear inspector, please add any information, comments, difficulties or concerns you feel important for implementing 'student-centred learning' in teaching the new English curriculum of Libyan secondary schools in the space below.*



### **Appendix 5: Covering Letter of Inspectors' Questionnaire**

Dear Inspector,

My name is Salama Embark Shihiba. I am a research student at the School of Education at Durham University in the UK. I am conducting a research about the implementation of the new English curriculum in Libyan Secondary Schools.

This study aims to investigate the secondary school EFL teachers' understanding of the new methodology (learner-centredness) which they are supposed to use in teaching the new English curriculum and to identify the difficulties they encounter in teaching the new textbooks. It also aims to identify the extent to which this new methodology is appropriate for the Libyan context.

I believe that the role of the language inspector in any act of curriculum change is very important and that you could provide valuable information for this study. I would, therefore, like to invite you to kindly participate in this study by responding to this questionnaire as fully as possible. Completing this questionnaire should approximately take thirty minutes. However, the data you provide will be of great value and will support this study to achieve its aims.

Dear inspector, it is important to remember that:

- you participation is voluntarily , so you can withdraw at any time you want ;
- you do not need to write your name or any other identifiable information, so your questionnaire is anonymous;
- your information will be kept strictly confidential;
- a brief summary of the results of the study will be given to you if you are interested;
- if you need any more explanations , you can use the following contact details :

Salama Embark Shiba. Tel. +44 7795492812. Please contact this number (0913858676) to arrange for a free international call.

E-mail address: [s.e.shiba@durham.ac.uk](mailto:s.e.shiba@durham.ac.uk) or [salamaembark@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:salamaembark@yahoo.co.uk)

### **Appendix 6: Consent Form for the Language Inspectors Involved in the Questionnaire**

I certify that I have been invited to participate in the research entitled 'Exploring Some Libyan EFL Secondary School Teachers' Conceptions of the Communicative Learner-Centred Approach', which is now being conducted at the School of Education of Durham University by: Salama Embark Saleh Shiba (research student) and I certify that I voluntarily gave my consent to participate in this study.

I also certify that:

- 1-I have received an information letter with the questionnaire.
- 2- I understand the aims of the research as they are explained in the information letter.
- 3- I have been informed that I can withdraw from this study at any time and that my withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way.
- 4-I have been informed that I can contact the researcher for any queries or complaints at any time by phone or e-mail
- 5-I have been informed that the information I may provide will be kept confidential.
- 6-I have been asked if I would like to receive a summary of the research findings.
- 7-I have been offered an Arabic version of both the questionnaire and the information letter.

Inspector's name:

Signature:

Date:

### Appendix 7: Annual Teacher's Assessment Form

The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya  
The General Committee of Education  
Psychological Inspection Administration  
Annual Teacher's Assessment Form

Psychological Inspection Office

School

Basic Popular Congress

Teacher's Name

Nationality

Qualification and Date of obtaining it

Specialization

Date of Employment

Teacher's Classes

Number of Weekly Classes

Date of Visit	Visited Classes	Lesson Topic	Attendants	Absentees	Comments

Visit Information	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	Mean of Marks	Comments
<b>Division of Content</b>						
<b>Teacher's Subject Competence</b> <b>{23 marks} divided as follows:</b>						
1-Lesson Planning and Documentation (8 marks)						
2- Observing Written Assignments (15 marks)						
<b>Syllabus Application and its Effect On Students' Progress {22 marks}:</b>						
1- Amount of syllabus covered (7marks)						
2- Students' achievement level (15 marks)						
<b>Use of Teaching Aids</b>						
<b>Behaviour and Personality and their Effect On Students' Assessment {10} marks</b>						
1-Appearance (5 marks)						
2-Teacher's relation with students (5 marks)						
<b>General Activity Related to the Subject {7 marks}</b>						
<b>Teacher's Cooperation with the Inspector {10 marks}</b>						
<b>Teaching Style and Methodology {18 marks}</b>						

<b>Total Marks</b>						
<b>Mean of Total Marks of Evaluation</b>						

General Notes: Evaluation Statement (Competency Report): Weak / Satisfactory/ Good/ Very Good/ Excellent

Name of Inspector:

Signature

Date

Guide of Evaluation

Mark	Less than 50	50 to 60	70 to 79	80 to 89	90 to 100
Average	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent

Accredited by the Head of the Inspection Office

Name:

Signature

Date

#### Appendix 8: Report of the Coordinator of the Language Inspectors of the Region

Written by Mr. El-Mabrouk El-Zawam, the Coordinator of the language inspectors of the Region

25/08/09

##### (1) Number of Inspectors in the Region

Level of Education	Number of Inspectors	Male	Female
Basic Education	14	14	0
Secondary Education	10	10	0

##### (2) Role of inspector in Libyan educational system

1. The inspector helps the teacher in understanding the syllabus he/she teaches.
2. The inspector participates in the workshops which discuss new curricula before introducing them into schools.
3. The inspector participates in carrying out some teaching tasks during in-service teachers training courses.
4. The inspector participates in planning for teachers in-service training courses and in designing the programmes for these courses.
5. The inspector acts as a psychological guide for the EFL teachers in teaching the subject by explaining the new teaching methodologies in the field.
6. The inspector has a major role in the assessment of the teachers through observing the teachers' performance during their visits (at least two visits for those teachers who have a good mastery of the subject and four or five visits for those teachers who face difficulties or lack confidence.
7. At the end of the year, the inspector submits his assessment report to the Committee of Education which praises the good teachers by giving them letters of gratitude or punishes those teachers who obtain 'weak' or 'satisfactory' reports by sending them letters of blame or sometimes postpone their promotions.
8. The inspector participates in designing the plans and the timetables of the English classes for the whole school year and in assigning the teachers to the classes. In this process, the role of the inspector is to give advice and assistance. However, he has the authority to change what he feels appropriate.



9. The inspector has a major role in the discussions about the curricula by reporting the advantages and the disadvantages of these curricula.

**(3)- Difficulties encountered by Libyan EFL teachers in teaching the new curriculum of secondary schools:**

Due to teachers' weak academic and professional level, most of them face difficulties in teaching the new English textbooks. For example:

- The teachers face difficulty in understanding the content of the Teacher's Book which is the guide for teaching any textbook.
- The teachers suffer from their lack of understanding of the terminology and the content of some specialized textbooks such as Medicine, Economics, Biology..., etc.
- The incompatibility between the curricula taught for teacher training or teacher education with the curricula they teach in schools makes it more difficult for the teachers to undertake the teaching tasks inside schools.
- The variety of the teaching materials of schools heavy burden the teachers increases the burden and the suffering of the teachers as they have to teach more than one syllabus with different and difficult contents.
- The difficulties the teachers encounter in teaching the materials of secondary schools are due to the fact that they are more difficult and complex than those materials used in teaching and preparing the teachers for teaching in these schools.

**(4) Inspectors' views about the new English curriculum of Secondary schools**

Generally, the EFL inspectors believe that the new curriculum is good and appropriate for providing the students with the skills they need to go further steadily and confidently in their academic and social life if they understand it well. However, achieving this objective requires:

1. Rehabilitating the teachers through long training and qualifying courses which should focus on analyzing the new curriculum and the appropriate methodology for teaching it
2. Encouraging the good EFL teachers and offering them even short-term courses in English-speaking countries to improve their English proficiency which would motivate them to conduct better teaching
3. Increase the time allocated to the English classes in the secondary school timetable
4. The inspectors are not happy with the many specializations of the new secondary education system and prefer the old system in which all these specializations were integrated into two sections (Literary and Scientific). With regard to the English specialization, the inspectors see that English skills and content of the new textbooks will be better if they presented in separate books (For example, Grammar Book, Phonetics Book...etc,
5. Finally, the inspectors are not happy with layout of the new textbooks and other issues such lack of writing accuracy, mixing of the colours and unclear writing.

Note (1): According to the writer of the report, the ideas he provided in this report reflect the general views of the 10 EFL inspectors of secondary schools in Shabiat Al-Nikhat Al-Khams as these ideas were elicited from their written reports and joint discussions

Note (2): The above report was translated by Salama Embark Shiba (the researcher) 02/07/0

## **Appendix: 9 Supervisor's Letter for Data Collection**

Durham University  
School of Education  
Direct Dial-in: (+44/0) 191 334 8334  
Email: Barbara. [Riddick@durham.ac.uk](mailto:Riddick@durham.ac.uk)  
Fax: (+44/0) 191 334 8311

Secretary: (+44/0) 191 334 8401  
Email: [Anita.Shepherd@durham.ac.uk](mailto:Anita.Shepherd@durham.ac.uk)  
Fax: (+44/0) 191 334 8311

7<sup>th</sup> August 2008

The People's Bureau of the Great Socialist Libyan Arab Jamahiriya  
Cultural Affairs  
London

To whom it may concern:

Re: Mr. Salama Embark Shiba (Student No. 000048195)

This is to certify that Salama Embark Shiba is fully registered as a full-time Ph.D. student at the School of Education, Durham University and will collect his data in Libyan Secondary Schools during the period from 15<sup>th</sup> September 2008 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information

Signed by  
Dr. B. Riddick  
Ph.D. Programme Director

School of Education  
Durham University

**Appendix: 10 Sponsor's Letter for Data Collection**  
(Translated)

The Great Socialist Peoples' Libyan Arab Jamahiriya  
Libyan Embassy- London  
Cultural Affairs

Date 12/09/2008  
Ref. 951/09/08

To  
The Head of Secondary Education Administration/ Shabiat Tripoli  
The Head of Secondary Education Administration/ Shabiat Al-Zawia  
The Head of Secondary Education Administration/ Shabiat Al-Nikhat Al-Khams

After greeting

The Libyan cultural Bureau in London certifies that the student: Salama Embark Shiba is on a PhD scholarship majoring in English Language teaching in the United Kingdom. This student wishes to conduct a field study in some Libyan secondary schools to collect some data relevant to his study. We would be very grateful if you kindly offer your assistance to the student to fulfill his data collection program.

We highly appreciate your cooperation with us

Approved and signed by  
Dr. Saad A. M. Mhemed  
Cultural Counsellor  
The Libyan People's Bureau-London

[Http://libyanembassy.org.uk/](http://libyanembassy.org.uk/)

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61-62 Ennismore Gardens, London SW7 1NH Tel: 020 7581 1442 Fax: 020 7581 2393

**Appendix: 11- A Letter Issued by the Director of Secondary Education of the Region to Secondary School Headteachers (Translated)**

The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya  
The General Committee of Shabiat Al-Nikhat Al-Khams  
People's Educational Committee

Date: 03/10/2008

Ref. 19/3898/76

To: the Headteachers of Secondary Schools

After greeting,

In accordance with the aim of encouraging the scientific research, we hope that you offer your cooperation to Mr. Salama Embark Saleh Shiba through providing him with the data and information required for conducting his field study. This will require your assistance in his distribution of the questionnaire and in conducting some interviews with some male and female teachers.

Thank you for your cooperation

Approved and signed by  
Ziaed Al-Koni Al-Najih  
Director of Secondary Education

Tel. (00218) 025 20432-025 20314

**Appendix 12: Number of Secondary Schools and students in the region**

No	Name of School	City	Sts
1-	Gurthabia School for Social Sciences and Languages	Sabratha	261
2-	7 <sup>th</sup> of October Secondary School for Basic and Economic Sciences	Sabratha	190
3-	Al-Karama School for Languages	Sabratha	434
4-	Al-Nahda Secondary School for Basic Sciences	Sabratha	214
5-	Alalaga Secondary School for Basic and Social Sciences	Sabratha	205
6-	Alalaga Secondary School for Engineering and Economic Sciences	Sabratha	245
7-	Sabratha Secondary School for Engineering	Sabratha	212
8-	Sabratha Secondary School for Basic Sciences and Languages	Sabratha	641
9-	Sabratha Secondary School for Life Sciences	Sabratha	487
10-	Tileel Secondary School for Economic Sciences	Sabratha	251
11-	Al-Wathika Al-Kadra Specialized Secondary School	Sabratha	304
12-	Al-Wadi Secondary School for Social and Basic Sciences	Sabratha	130
13-	Al-Jadida Secondary School for Life Sciences	Agelat	212
14-	Al-Jadida Secondary School for Basic and Economic Sciences	Agelat	154
15-	Al-Jadida Secondary School for Social Sciences	Agelat	306
16-	Al-Shbeika Secondary School for Languages	Agelat	382
17-	Al-Matmar Secondary School for Engineering Sciences	Agelat	122
18-	Ras Yousif Secondary School for Social Sciences and Languages	Agelat	205
19-	Jnan Atiya Specialized Secondary School	Agelat	285
20-	Agelat Secondary School for Life Sciences	Agelat	358
21-	Agelat Secondary School for Languages	Agelat	239
22-	Al-Entisar Secondary School for Basic Sciences	Agelat	190
23-	Al-Shaheed Ramadan Al-Sgaier Secondary School	Agelat	136
24-	Al-Salam Secondary School for Social Sciences	Agelat	135
25-	Kaleeg Al-Tahadi Secondary School for Engineering Sciences	Agelat	153
26-	Nosoor Al-Fateh Specialized Secondary School School	Al-Jmail	825
27-	Al-Nawadra Secondary School for Engineering and Economic Sciences	Al-Jmail	147
28-	Al-Amal Al-Akdar Secondary School for Basic Sciences and Languages	Al-Jmail	577
29-	Bin-Koldon Secondary School for Economic and Basic Sciences	Al-Jmail	328
30-	Al-Shaheed Al-Rwaimed Secondary School for Life Sciences and Languages	Al-Jmail	23
31-	Al-Shaheed Mohammed Al-Waier Secondary school for Basic Sciences	Al-Jmail	160
32-	Al-Shaheed Zaied Al-Tabeeb Specialized Secondary School	Al-Jmail	567
33-	Al-Kadisiya Secondary School for Basic Sciences and Languages	Al-Jmail	230
34-	Al-Thawra Al-Shabia Secondary School for Basic Sciences	Zwara	185
35-	Al-Nikhat Al-Khams Secondary School for Engineering Sciences	Zwara	319
36-	7 <sup>th</sup> of April Secondary School for Economic Sciences	Zwara	216
37-	Zwara Specialized Secondary School	Zwara	331
38-	Rigdaleen Secondary School for Engineering Sciences	Rigdaleen	214
39-	Al-Fateh Secondary School for Social Sciences and Languages	Rigdaleen	211
40-	Rigdaleen Secondary School for Economic Sciences	Rigdaleen	244
41-	Al-Naser Secondary School for Life and Basic Sciences	Rigdaleen	216
42-	Kaleej Al-Tahdi Specialized Secondary School	Zultan	179
43-	Zultan Specialized Secondary School	Zultan	179

Statistics of the Committee of Education of Shabiat Al-Nikhat Al-Khams (2008).

*Appendix 13: Original Version of the Learner-Centred Psychological Principles: Guidelines for School Redesign and Reform (Mid-Content Regional Educational Laboratory, 1993)*

**Metacognitive and Cognitive Factors**

**Principle 1**

***The nature of the learning process.*** Learning is a natural process of pursuing personally meaningful goals, and it is active, volitional, and internally mediated; it is a process of discovering and constructing meaning from information and experience, filtered through the learner’s unique perceptions, thoughts and feelings.

Students have a natural inclination to learn and pursue personally relevant learning goals. They are capable of assuming personal responsibility for learning-monitoring, checking for understanding, and becoming active, self-directed learners –in an environment that takes past learning into account, ties new learning to personal goals, and actively engages students in their own learning process. In meaningful life situations, even very young children naturally engage in self-directed learning activities to pursue personal goals. During the learning process, individual create their own meanings and interpretations on the basis of previously existing understandings and beliefs.

**Principle 2**

***Goals of the learning process.*** The learner seeks to create meaningful, coherent representations, of knowledge regardless of the quantity and quality of data available.

Learners generate integrated, commonsense representations and explanations for even poorly understood or communicated facts, concepts, principles, or theories. Learning processes operate holistically in the sense that internally consistent understandings emerge that may or may not be valid from an objective, externally oriented perspective. As learners internalize values and meanings within a discipline, however, they can refine their conceptions by filling in gaps, resolving inconsistencies, and revise prior conceptions.

**Principle 3**

***The construction of knowledge.*** The learner links new information with existing and future-oriented knowledge in unequally meaningful ways.

Given that background and experiences of individuals can differ dramatically, and given that the mind works to link information meaningfully and holistically, learners organize information in ways that are uniquely meaningful to them. A goal in formal education is to have all learners create shared understandings and conceptions regarding fundamental knowledge and skills that define and lead to valued learning outcomes. In these situations, teachers can assist learners in acquiring and integrating knowledge (e.g. , by teaching them strategies for constructing meaning, organizing content, accessing prior knowledge, relating new knowledge to general themes of principles, sorting or practicing what they have learned, and visualizing future uses for the knowledge).

**Principle 4**

***Higher order thinking.*** Higher-order strategies for “thinking about thinking” – for overseeing and monitoring mental operations- facilitate creative and critical thinking and the development of expertise.

During early to middle childhood, learners become capable of a metacognitive or executive level of thinking about their own thinking that includes self-awareness, self-inquiry or dialogue, self-monitoring and self-regulation of the processes and contents of thoughts, knowledge structures, and memories. Learners’ awareness of their personal agency or control over thinking and learning processes promotes higher levels of commitment, persistence, and involvement in learning. To foster this self-awareness of agency, learners need settings where their personal interests, values, and goals are respected and accommodated.

---

**Affective Factors**

**Principle 5**

***Motivational influences on learning.*** The depth and breadth of information processed, and what and how much is learned and remembered, are influenced by (a) self-awareness and beliefs about personal control, competence and ability; (b) clarity and saliency of personal values, interests

**and goals; (c) personal expectations for success or failure; (d) affect emotion, and personal states of mind; and (e) the resulting motivation to learn.**

The rich internal world of beliefs, goals, expectations, and feelings can enhance or interfere with learners' quality of thinking and information processing. The relationship among thoughts, mood, and behavior underlies individuals' psychological health, and ability to learn. Learners' interpretations or cognitive constructions of reality can impede positive motivation, learning and performance, as can negative thoughts and feelings. Conversely, positive learning experiences can help reverse negative thoughts and feelings and enhance student motivation to learn.

#### **Principle 6**

***Intrinsic motivation to learn.* Individuals are naturally curious and enjoy learning, but intense negative cognitions and emotions (e.g. , feeling insecure, worrying about failure, being self-conscious or shy, and fearing corporal punishment, ridicule, or stigmatizing labels) thwart this enthusiasm.**

Educators must support and develop students' natural curiosity or intrinsic motivation to learn, rather than "fixing them" or driving them by fear of corporal punishment or excessive punishments or any kind. Also, both positive interpersonal support and instruction in self-control strategies can offset factors that interfere with optimal learning- factors such as low self-awareness ; negative beliefs; lack of learning goals; negative expectations for success; and anxiety, insecurity, or pressure.

#### **Principle 7**

***Characteristics of motivation-enhancing learning.* Curiosity, creativity, and higher-order thinking are stimulated by relevant , authentic, learning tasks of optimal difficulty and novelty.**

Positive affect, creativity, and flexible and insightful thinking are promoted in contexts that learners perceive as personally relevant and meaningful. For example, students need opportunities to make choices in line with their interests and to have the freedom to change the course of learning in light of self-awareness, discovery, or insights. Projects that are comparable to real-world situations in complexity and duration elicit students' higher-order thinking skills and creativity. In addition, curiosity is enhanced when students can work on personally relevant learning tasks of optimal difficulty and novelty.

---

### **Developmental Factors**

#### **Principle 8**

***Developmental constraints and opportunities.* Individuals progress through stages of physical ,intellectual, emotional and social development that are a function of unique genetic and environmental factors.**

Children learn best when material is appropriate to their developmental level and is presented in an enjoyable and interesting way, while challenging their intellectual, emotional, physical, and social development. Unique environmental factors (e.g., the quality of language interactions between adult and child and parental involvement in child's schooling) can influence development in each area. An over emphasis on developmental readiness, however, may preclude learners from demonstrating that they are more capable intellectually than schools, teachers, or parents allow them to show. Awareness and understanding of developmental differences of children with special emotional, physical or intellectual disabilities as well as special abilities can greatly facilitate efforts to create optimal contexts for learning.

---

### **Personal and Social Factors**

#### **Principle 9**

***Social and cultural diversity.* Learning is facilitated by social interactions and communication with others in flexible , diverse (in age, culture, family background, , etc.).**

Learning is facilitated when the learner has an opportunity to interact with various students representing different cultural and family backgrounds, interests, and values. Learning settings that allow for and respect diversity encourage flexible thinking as well as social competence and moral



development. In such settings, individuals have an opportunity for perspective taking and reflective thinking, thereby leading to insights and breakthroughs to new knowledge.

#### **Principle 10**

***Social competence, self-esteem and learning.* Learning and self-esteem are heightened when individuals are in respectful and caring relationships with others who see their potential, genuinely appreciate their unique talents, and accept them as individuals.**

Quality personal relationships give the individual access to higher-order, healthier levels of thinking, feeling, and behaving. Teachers' (or other significant adults) states of mind, stability, trust, and caring are preconditions for establishing a sense of belonging, self-respect, self-acceptance, and positive climate for learning. Healthier levels of thinking are those that are less self-conscious, insecure, irrational, and self-deprecating. Self-esteem and learning are mutually reinforcing.

---

### **Individual Differences**

#### **Principle 11**

***Individual differences in learning.* Although basic principles for learning, motivation, and effective instruction apply to all learners (regardless of ethnicity, race, gender, physical ability, religion, or socioeconomic status), learners have different capabilities and preferences for learning mode and strategies. These differences are a function of environment (what is learned and communicated in different cultures or other social groups) and heredity (what occurs naturally as a function of genes).**

The same basic principles of learning, motivation and effective instruction apply to all learners. However, individuals are born with and develop unique capabilities and talents and have acquired through learning and social acculturation different preferences for how they like to learn and the pace at which they learn. Also, student differences and curricular and environmental conditions are key factors that greatly affect learning outcomes. Understanding and valuing cultural differences and the cultural context in which learners develop enhances the possibilities for designing and implementing learning environments that are optimal for all learners.

#### **Principle 12**

***Cognitive filters.* Personal beliefs, thoughts, and understanding resulting from prior learning and interpretations become the individual's basis for constructing reality and interpreting life experiences.**

Unique cognitive constructions form a basis for beliefs and attitudes about others. Individuals then operate out of these "separate realities" as if they were true for everyone, often leading to misunderstandings and conflict. Awareness and understanding of these phenomena allow greater choice in what one believes and more control over the degree to which one's beliefs influence actions and enable one to see and take into account others' points of view. The cognitive, emotional, and social development of a child and the way that child interprets life experiences are a product of prior schooling, home, culture, and community factors.

Lambert and McCombs (1998) added two principles

**Principle 13- Learning and diversity.** Learning is most effective when differences in learners' linguistic, and social background are taken into account.

**Principle 14- Standards and assessment.** Setting appropriately high and challenging standards and assessing the learner as well as learning progress-including diagnostic, process, and outcome assessment-are integral parts of the learning process.

## Appendix 14: Arabic Version of Teachers' Questionnaire

: عزيزي المعلم ، عزيزتي المعلمة  
،،،،، بعد التحية

" أنا الباحث سلامة مبارك صالح أقوم حالياً بإجراء بحث لنيل درجة الدكتوراه في مجال اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة  
بيربطانيا تحت عنوان " Durham  
: التعرف على مفهوم منهج التعلم الذي يقوم على أن المتعلم هو محور العملية التعليمية لدى معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية بليبيا "  
. وأشرف بتوجيه الدعوة اليك للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة من خلال أكمل هذا الاستبيان  
هذا الاستبيان قد يحتاج من وقتك الثمين إلى عشرين دقيقة تقريباً ولكن مشاركتك ستكون ذات قيمة عالية جداً وسؤدي بهذه الدراسة إلى تحقيق النتائج المرجوة  
منها والهادفة إلى تحسين مستوى اللغة الإنجليزية بليبيا  
المنهج الحديث لتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية يؤكد على ضرورة إشراك المتعلم في جميع القرارات المتعلقة بالعملية التعليمية وعلى ضرورة مراعاة احتياجاته  
ورغباته وقدراته ، كما يقوم أيضا على أن دور المعلم هو تسهيل عملية تعلم المتعلمين

### : أهداف البحث

- 1- التأكيد على ضرورة الاستماع لأراء المعلمين والمعلمات عند أحداث تغييرات في مناهج التدريس -
- 2- التعرف على مفهوم طريقة التدريس الحديثة التي تقوم على أساس أن المتعلم هو محور العملية التعليمية وعلى أرائهم في مدى نجاح تطبيق هذه الطريقة في -  
البلدان الغير ناطقة باللغة الإنجليزية  
3- التعرف على المشاكل التي تواجه المعلم في تطبيق هذا المنهج داخل الفصول الدراسية -

: عزيزي المعلم ، عزيزتي المعلمة

- من الضروري أن تعرف  
أنتك تستطيع الانسحاب من المشاركة في الدراسة في أي وقت -  
توجد نسخة مترجمة للغة العربية من هذا الاستبيان فإمكانك اختيار النسخة التي ترغب -  
يمكنك الحصول على ملخص نتائج البحث عند نهايته إذا كنت ترغب في ذلك -  
إذا كنت ترغب في أي توضيحات أخرى يمكنك الاتصال بالباحث في أي وقت نشاء -

. الباحث

### الجزء الأول : معلومات عامة

- المدينة : صيراته  العجيلات  زواره  الجميل  رقدالين  زلطن   
مكان التخرج : معهد/كلية إعداد المعلمين  كلية آداب  أخرى

المدرسة : .....

مجموع الطلاب في الفصل : .....

مجموع سنوات تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية

- فأكثر 20  6-20  1-15  6-10  1-5

### الجزء الثاني : مفهوم المنهج

س 1 : ما هو مفهومك لطريقة التدريس التي تعتمد على أساس أن المتعلم هو محور العملية التعليمية ؟

.....  
.....  
.....

الجزء الثالث : مفهوم المعلم من الطريقة الحديثة

س 2 : تأمل منك اختيار الجمل التي تتناسب مع وجهة نظرك

رقم	الجملة	غير موافق جدا 1	غير موافق 2	غير متأكد 3	موافق 4	موافق جدا 5
1	يتمثل دور المعلم في توجيه وتسهيل عملية التعلم من خلال التركيز على احتياجات ورغبات . والفروق الفردية للمتعلمين					
2	. يتمثل دور المعلم في نقل المعلومات للمتعلم من خلال الشرح والكتابة وإعطاء الأمثلة الكتاب المدرسي غير كاف لإشباع احتياجات ورغبات المتعلم ؛ لذا يجب على المعلم تقديم					
3	. مواضيع إضافية لتحقيق هذا الغرض يصعب على المعلم اختيار المواضيع التي تلائم وتسد احتياجات المتعلمين نظراً لتعدد					
4	. واختلافها يستطيع المتعلم تحمل مسؤولية عملية التعلم ؛ لذا يجب على المعلم إعطاء الفرص للمتعلم لتحمل					
5	هذه المسؤولية يصعب على المعلم إعداد وتدريب المتعلم على تحمل مسؤولية تعلمه لعدم تعوده على تحمل مثل					
6	هذه المسؤولية يتم اختيار الأنشطة والواجبات الدراسية بالتشاور بين المعلم والمتعلم لضمان تناسبها مع قدرات					
7	. المتعلم يقوم المعلم باختيار الأنشطة والواجبات دون إشراك المتعلم في هذا الاختيار					
8	. يجب أن تقوم العلاقة بين المعلم والمتعلم على مبادئ الاحترام المتبادل والتعاون والتفاهم يجب أن تقوم العلاقة بين المعلم والمتعلم على مبدأ احترام المتعلم للمعلم وعلى أساس تحديد دور					
9	. كل طرف بالعملية التعليمية يجب أن يكون الوقت الذي يقضيه المتعلم في التحدث داخل الفصل مساوياً أو أطول من الوقت الذي يتحدث فيه المعلم					
10	يجب أن ترتب المقاعد والكراسي داخل الفصل في صفوف متوازية لمواجهة السبورة وطاولة . الأستاذ					
11	يجب أن ترتب المقاعد والكراسي داخل الفصل بشكل يسمح للمتعلمين بالقيام بالأنشطة الثنائية . والجماعية					
12	المدرسة مؤسسة اجتماعية يكتسب المتعلم من خلالها المعرفة ، القيم الاجتماعية ، المعتقدات ، . مهارات التعاون والمبادئ الأخلاقية					
13	المدرسة مؤسسة تعليمية لتزويد المتعلم بالمعلومات والمعرفة التي يحتاجها لاجتياز الامتحانات توفر الأنشطة الثنائية والجماعية فرص مناسبة للمتعلم للتدريب على استخدام اللغة وتحسين الكفاءة					
14	. اللغوية يصعب على المعلم مراقبة كل المتعلمين أثناء أداء الأنشطة الثنائية والجماعية مما يسمح للمتعلمين باستخدام لغتهم الأصلية أثناء قيامهم بهذه الأنشطة مما يجعلها غير ذات جدوى					
15	الأنشطة الثنائية والجماعية شيقة ومفيدة لأنها تساعد على بناء علاقات تعاون بين المعلم والمتعلم . وفيما بين المتعلمين					
16	يتطلب ممارسة الأنشطة الثنائية والجماعية وقت أطول ومجهود أكبر من المعلم والمتعلم مقارنة بالأنشطة الأخرى					
17	أنشطة تبادل الأدوار توفر فرص جيدة للمتعلم للتدريب على استعمال اللغة في مواقف تعليمية . مختلفة					
18	تطبيق أنشطة تبادل الأدوار داخل الفصل يتطلب مهارات خاصة وتدريب كاف للمعلم والمتعلم . لضمان نجاح تطبيقها داخل الفصل					
19	تطبيق الألعاب في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية يوفر مناخ مناسب وممتع للمتعلمين ويحافظ على تشويقهم . ويزيد رغبتهم في التعلم					
20	تطبيق الألعاب داخل الفصل قد يؤدي إلى حدوث خلل في النظام داخل الفصل مما يجعل الاعتماد عليها في تعليم اللغة غير ذا جدوى					
21	تزيد أنشطة حل المشاكل قدرات المتعلم على التفكير النقدي وتوفر فرص جيدة لتعلم اللغة داخل الفصل .					
22	يصعب تعويد المتعلمين على تطبيق أنشطة حل المشاكل داخل الفصل لما تطلبه من مهارات . خاصة وتدريب كاف					
23	السماح للمتعلمين بتقييم أعمالهم وأعمال زملائهم داخل الفصل يمكنهم من التعرف على أخطائهم وانتقاد أدائه					
24	عملية التقييم الرسمية عن طريق المعلم تمكنه من التعرف على نواحي القوة والضعف لدى الطلاب ومعالجتها					
25	يجب أن يتم اختيار مفردات المنهج بما يحقق رغبات واحتياجات المتعلم من مواضيع استخدام اللغة الأصلية					
26	. يجب أن يتم اختيار مفردات المنهج بما يحقق الأهداف المحددة من مؤلفي المناهج					

الجزء الرابع : تطبيق المنهج الحديث في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية  
س 3 : هل تقيمت أي تدريب على تطبيق المنهج الحديث في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية ؟  
نعم  لا

( إذا كانت إجابتك ( نعم )  
قبل بداية العمل  أثناء العم

س 4 : أي من الأنشطة الآتية تقوم بتطبيقها داخل الفصل ؟

Pair work  Group work  Games  Role=Play  Problem-Solving

س 5 (أ) : هل تواجه أي صعوبات في تطبيق الأنشطة التي تم ذكرها في السؤال الرابع ؟

نعم  لا

إذا كانت إجابتك ( نعم ) نأمل منك تحديد المشاكل التي تواجهك داخل الفصل من القائمة التالية

- 1- المتعلم يحتاج إلى تعلم قواعد استخدام اللغة وليس الطلاقة في التحدث باللغة .
- 2- قدرة المتعلم اللغوية ضعيفة .
- 3- المعلم غير مستعد للتخلي عن دوره الرئيس داخل الفصل ورفضه مشاركة المتعلم في اتخاذ القرارات المتعلقة بالعملية التعليمية .
- 4- الوقت غير كاف لتطبيق هذه الأنشطة .
- 5- التركيز في الامتحانات على القواعد تجعل المتعلم لا يهتم كثيراً بهذه الأنشطة .
- 6- كثرة عدد المتعلمين في الفصل لا تساعد على تطبيق هذه الأنشطة .
- 7- عدم توفر الوسائل المساعدة لتطبيق هذه الأنشطة .
- 8- عدم رغبة المتعلمين في المشاركة في مثل هذه الأنشطة داخل الفصل .

س 5 (ب) : نأمل منك التكرم بإضافة أي مشاكل تواجهك داخل الفصل التي لم يتم ذكرها في السؤال الرابع

س 6 : ما هو رأيك في تطبيق المنهج الذي يقوم على مبدأ أن المتعلم هو محور العملية التعليمية في البلدان الغير ناطقة باللغة الإنجليزية ؟

س 7 : إذا كنت ترغب في إضافة أي معلومات مهمة للدراسة ، نأمل منك تدوين ذلك في الأسطر التالية

#### ملاحظات :

- 1- إذا كنت ترغب في إجراء مقابلة شخصية مع الباحث نأمل منك إكمال البيانات التالية مع العلم أن -  
أ- تسجيل المقابلة يتوقف على موافقتك  
ب- يمكنك اختيار لغة المقابلة ( عربي - إنجليزي )  
ج- يمكن للمعلمة اصطحاب أحد الأقارب أثناء المقابلة  
د- تستغرق المقابلة من ثلاثين إلى خمس وأربعين دقيقة  
هـ- وقت المقابلة اختياري

الاسم : .....

المدرسة : .....

رقم الهاتف المحمول : ..... رقم الهاتف الأرضي

عنوان البريد الإلكتروني : .....

الوقت المفضل لإجراء المقابلة : .....

المكان المفضل لإجراء المقابلة : .....

في حالة لديك أي استفسارات نأمل منك عدم التردد في الاتصال بالباحث -2

الاسم : سلامة مبارك صالح

رقم الهاتف المحمول ( ليبيا ) : 0913740138 - 0927740644

رقم الهاتف المحمول ( بريطانيا ) : 00447795492812

عنوان البريد الإلكتروني [salamaembark@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:salamaembark@yahoo.co.uk) OR [s.shiba@durham.ac.uk](mailto:s.shiba@durham.ac.uk)

Appendix: 15a. Criteria of the Division of Grades for Secondary Schools Students' Evaluation

(Translated)

*"In accordance with the efforts of the General People's Committee of Education and Scientific Research for developing and enhancing the learning process, to we made some modifications on the evaluation process as it is a significant part of the teaching and learning process.....; therefore, we hope that all teachers and inspectors follow the criteria of evaluation outlined in this document"*  
(Introduction of the document issued by Administration of Syllabi 2009/2010).

Division of the **English Language Subject** Marks according to the **TWO-TERM** Educational System for First and Second Year of Secondary Schools for Specializations of : Basic Sciences, Engineering Sciences, Life Sciences, Economic Sciences, Social Sciences and Languages (Arabic Language)  
School Year: 2009-2010

**Time Allocated: 4 Classes a Week**

Second Attempt	Two-Terms Total Marks	Term Total Marks	Mid-term final exam	Mid-term total classroom Marks	Classroom Assignments Marks			Maximum Mark
					Mid-term Exam	Classroom Activities	Average of written assignments	
112	160	80	56	24	8	8	8	160

• **Division of Classroom Activities Marks**

Written		Reading Comprehension	Oral	Classroom Activities	Total Marks
W.W		R.C	O.W	C.A	Total
N.B	W.B				
2.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1	8

**C.A = Classroom Activity**

**O.W = Oral**

**R.C = Reading Comprehension**

**W.W = Written Work**

**W.B = Workbook**

**N.B = Notebook**

**Notes:**

1. An evaluation is done during each term before and after the term-mid exam; then an average is calculated.
2. The student's final mark is calculated from the total marks he/she gets in the first and the second term.
3. It is required for the student to be counted successful sitting for the final exams of the two terms and achieving the following:
  - A- (40%) of the two required marks
  - B- (40%) of the required mark for the subject

**Administration of Syllabi**

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## Appendix: 15.b

Division of the grades of **English Language Subject** for **Final Year** of Secondary Schools for Specializations of: Basic Sciences, Engineering Sciences, Life Sciences, Economic Sciences, Social Sciences and Languages (Arabic Language)

School Year: 2009-2010

### Time Allocated: 4 Classes a Week

Second Attempt	Final Year Examination	Total Marks of the Two Sessions	Session Total Marks	Session Assignments Mark			Maximum Mark
				Session Final Exam	Classroom Activities	Average of written assignments	
112	112	48	24	8	*8	8	160

### • Division of Classroom Activities Marks

Written		Reading Comprehension	Oral	Classroom Activities	Total Marks
W.W		R.C	O.W	C.A	Total
N.B	W.B				
2.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1	8

**C.A = Classroom Activity**

**R.C = Reading Comprehension**

**W.B = Workbook**

**O.W = Oral**

**W.W = Written Work**

**N.B = Notebook**

### Notes:

4. An evaluation is done during each session; then an average calculated.
5. The student's final mark is calculated from the total marks he/she gets in the two sessions with final year examination.
6. It is required for the student to be counted successful sitting for the final examination and achieving the following:
  - A- (40%) of the required mark for the examination.
  - B- (40%) of the required mark for the subject

Administration of Syllabi

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Appendix: 15. C

Division of the **English Language Subject** grades according to the **TWO-TERM** Educational System for First and Second Year of Secondary Schools / Languages Specialization (English Language)

**School Year: 2009-2010**

**Subjects: Conversation, Pronunciation & Writing**

**Time Allocated: 4 Classes a Week**

Second Attempt	Two-Terms Total Marks	Term Total Marks	Mid-term final exam	Mid-term total classroom Marks	Classroom Assignments Marks			Maximum Mark
					Mid-term Exam	Classroom Activities	Average of written assignments	
56	80	40	28	12	4	4	4	80

• **Division of Classroom Activities Marks**

Written		Reading Comprehension	Oral	Classroom Activities	Total Marks
W.W		R.C	O.W	C.A	Total
N.B	W.B				
1	1	1	½	½	4

**C.A = Classroom Activity**

**R.C = Reading Comprehension**

**W.B = Workbook**

**O.W = Oral**

**W.W = Written Work**

**N.B = Notebook**

**Notes:**

7. An evaluation is done during each term before and after the term-mid exam; then an average is calculated.
8. The student's final mark is calculated from the total marks he/she gets in the first and the second term.
9. It is required for the student to be counted successful sitting for the final exams of the two terms and achieving the following:
  - A- (40%) of the two required marks
  - B- (50%) of the required mark for the subject

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Appendix: 15.D

Division of the grades of **English Language Subject** for **Third Year** of Secondary Schools for Specializations of: Basic Sciences, Engineering Sciences, Life Sciences, Economic Sciences, Social Sciences and Languages (Arabic Language)

School Year: 2009-2010

**Time Allocated: 4 Classes a Week**

Second Attempt	Final Year Examination	Total Marks of the Two Sessions	Session Total Marks	Session Assignments Mark			Maximum Mark
				Session Final Exam	Classroom Activities	Average of written assignments	
56	56	24	12	4	*4	4	80

• **Division of Classroom Activities Marks**

Written		Reading Comprehension	Oral	Classroom Activities	Total Marks
W.W		R.C	O.W	C.A	Total
N.B	W.B				
2	1	1	½	½	4

**C.A = Classroom Activity**

**O.W = Oral**

**R.C = Reading Comprehension**

**W.W = Written Work**

**W.B = Workbook**

**N.B = Notebook**

**Notes:**

10. An evaluation is done during each session; then an average calculated.
11. The student's final mark is calculated from the total marks he/she gets in the two sessions with final year examination.
12. It is required for the student to be counted successful sitting for the final examination and achieving the following:
  - A- (50%) of the required mark for the examination.
  - B- (50%) of the required mark for the subject

**Administration of Syllabi**

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Appendix 16: Summary of the Results of 1<sup>st</sup>-year English Department Students of Agelat  
College for Teacher Training / Spoken English

7<sup>th</sup> of April University  
Agelat Teachers Training College  
English Department

Agelat - Libya

A summary of Final Examination results of 1<sup>st</sup> year students of the English  
Department of Agelat Teacher Training College Date; 14/12/2009  
Subject: Conversation/Spoken English

Academic Year	Sts	First Attempt				Second Attempt			
		Pass		Fail		Pass		Fail	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
2003/2004	111	54	48.6	57	51.4	29	26.1	28	25.2
2004/2005	18	14	77.8	4	22.2	00	0%	4	22.2
2005/2006	35	24	68.6	11	31.4	3	8.6	8	22.9
2006/2007	63	45	71.4	18	28.6	2	3.2	16	25.4
2007/2008	113	57	50.4	56	49.6	5	4.4	51	45.1

Signed and approved by  
Dr. Raja D. Bhasker

Head of Department

Contact Tel; 00218237629501-00218237626383- 0021237626882  
Fax: 00218 23 7624035  
E. mail: email:info7@7aprilu.edu.ly  
Website : www.7aprilu.edu.ly

#### Appendix: 17 Ethical Approval

This email was sent to the researcher regarding the Ethical Approval

From: Smith J C  
To : Shiba. E S  
Cc : Riddick B; Howell B; Shepherd A.  
Subject: Ethical Approval for S. Shiba  
Sent: Tue 7/29/2008 3:37 pm

Dear Salama

I am pleased to inform you that your application for ethical approval has been granted by the School of Education Ethics Committee in respect of 'Exploring Libyan EFL Teachers' Conceptions of the Communicative Learner-Centred Approach.

May we take the opportunity to wish you good luck with your research.

Sheena Smith  
Durham University  
School of Education  
Tel: (0191) 334 8403  
Fax: (0191) 334 8311  
<http://www.durham.ac.uk/education>

Appendix 18: A sample of National Final Examinations for Libyan Secondary schools. Subject  
Conversation (Spoken English)  
The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya  
The General Committee of Education

A report of revising and approving an Examination Questions  
Conversation: English Specialization  
Examination Ref. 123-1530. First Session  
Date of Printing: 17/08/2008 14:04: 41  
Name of Typist: Maryem Al-Tawirgi  
(top secret)

---

**True & False Questions**

Q1-Demography is the study of human population

Q2- Road, airports and railroads all come under the heading of transport .  
B) False

A) True

Q3- It is good English to say “we have got a plane to catch” .

Q4- The native people of Japan are Japain.

Q5- William Kennedy created the first motion picture camera in 1988.

Q6- Many hands make for light work.

Q7- We do not use blond for anything yellow.

Q8- People only made comedies in the silent era.

Q9- In English it is said “like father like son”.

Q10- Keats was a literature student.

Q11- Absolutely can go with any kind of adjectives.

Q12- The Mona Lisa is unusual because it shows the model's profile.

Q13- Phrasal verb is another name for multi-word verb.

Q14- English is the main language spoken in Scotland.

Q15- A lot of people like detective stories.

Q 16- Scotland occupies about one-seventh of British Island.

Q17- Colours are divided into warm colours and cool colours.

Q18- A wedding is an occasion to get married.

Q19- A funeral is a religious ceremony.

Q20- Nephew, niece and cousin are relatives.

Q21- Pasteur, Louis invented the electrical power unit.

### **Multiple Choice Questions**

Q22- In formal language we say.....

A) Can I leave

B) May I leave

C) I want leave

D) All the above

Q23- It is good English to say I ..... him before.

A) have never seen

B) had never seen

C) didn't see

D) don't see

Q24- Cars, truck, lorries come under the heading

A) Facilities

B) Traffic

C) Vehicles

D) Machines

Q25- To say the same thing in a different way

A) in fact

B) in other words

C) by the way

D) in any case

Q26- The poem "To Autumn" was written by.....

A) William Thackeray

B) James Thiong

C) John Keats

D) Shakespear William 2

Q27- In English we say.....

A) "Ladies and Gentlemen"

B) "Men and Women"

C) "Women and gentlemen"

D) "Lady and Man"

Q28- The car .....last night.

A) have been stolen

B) is being stolen

C) has been stolen

D) was stolen

Q29- In English, "let your hair down" means

A) to have your hair cut

B) withdraw

C) don't bother

D) take care

Q30- In English "Don't burn the candle at both ends" means....

A) don't play with fires

B) keep your money

C) don't be in a hurry

D) don't what you can do

Q31- It is good English to say The doctor advised me .....

A) don't smoke

- B) not to smoke
- C) to not smoke
- D) never smoke

Q32- People vary in .....

- A) dealing with problems
- B) deal with problems
- C) dealt with problems
- D) deals with problems

Q33- It is popular in English to say. It takes off which means.....

- A) stop
- B) running very fast
- C) continue driving
- D) leaving the ground in a plane

Q34- In English, Synonyms are.....

- A) words which are different in form but similar in meaning
- B) words which are similar in form but different in meaning
- C) similar expressions
- D) none true

Q35- My friend is interested .....

- A) on
- B) about
- C) of
- D) in

Q36- In English we say I look forward to

- A) see you soon
- B) seeing you soon
- C) seen you soon
- D) seen

Q37- When you meet someone for the first time you say

- A) How do you do?

- B) How are you?
- C) How are you doing?
- D) Hi.

Q38- It is popular in English to say

- A) I'm waiting you
- B) I am waiting you
- C) I'm waiting for you
- D) I waiting you

Q39- TV-Radio,-Press come under the heading.....

- A) News
- B) Media
- C) Telecommunication
- D) Machines

Q40- Language used within friends is

- A) formal
- B) informal
- C) idiomatic
- D) all the above are true

Q41- If you invited someone to watch a programme on TV, but the light went out. What would you say to him?

- A) I'm sorry
- B) I'm unhappy
- C) I'm upset
- D) I'm afraid

Q42- If we study hard, we.....

- A) would succeed
- B) succeed
- C) succeeded
- D) been succeeded

Q43- It is good English to say "thank you for ....."

- A) be with me
- B) been with me
- C) being with me
- D) have been with me

Q44- The capital of Egypt is

- A) Muscat
- B) Alexandria
- C) Cairo
- D) Sirt

Q45- Africa is a .....

- A) country
- B) capital
- C) big continent
- D) big city

**Matching**

**Questions**

Q46- E	find out	A) clever
Q 47- C	put off	B) tough
Q48- A	Skilful give	C) in postpone
Q 49- B	put hard	B) for begin
Q58- E	look	C) up
Q50- B	start take	E) down discover
Q59- E		
Q60- D	turn	E) off

Q51- E	arrange	A) tion
Q 52- D	biolog	B) sion
Q53- A	communica	C) ful
Q54- C	harm	D) ist
Q55- B	discus	E) ment

Q61- B	The Super Globe	A) skiing ,skating
Q 62- C	The African Cup of Nations	B) hand ball
Q63- A	The Winter Olympics	C) football
Q64- E	The Boat Race	D) motor racing
Q65- D	The F1 World	E) rowing



### Summary of Questions

Q66- in C	A) legal
Q 67- im E	B) like
Q68- un D	C) complete
Q 69- dis B	D) usual
Q 70- il A	E) possible

True/False Questions	21
multiple Choice Questions	24
Matching Questions	25
Essay Questions	0
Total	70

Appendix: 19 Criteria for regulating secondary school students' admission for university education  
(Translated)

The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya  
The General People's Committee

Decree No. (333) 2009 for determining the criteria for regulating the admission process of the holders of the Secondary Education Certificate to the University And the process of regulating the admission process of the holders of basic education certificate to secondary education

The General People's Committee

6- The students who finished their secondary education for the Discipline of Languages should be admitted in the following colleges according to the following criteria:

A- Arabic Language Specialization can join the following colleges :

- 1- Colleges of Law: Students achieved (85%)
- 2- Colleges of Arts: Students achieved (75%)
- 3- Colleges of Education: Students achieved (65%)

B-English Language Specialization can join the following colleges:

- 1-Colleges of Education: Students achieved (75%)
- 2-Colleges of Arts: Students achieved (65%)

B- The holders of secondary education certificate can join higher vocational institutions according to their wishes regardless their average they scored; but their choice should go in line with their secondary education specializations. (Page 3).

Item (3)

The Ameen of the People's Committee of Education of the Shabiat (regions) should assign committees for ensuring that these criteria are strictly followed through making visits to schools . Thos who found committing violations should reported to the Ameen of the General Committee of Education. Half-monthly reports about the number of students admitted in schools should be written.. (Page 6).

Item (4)

This decree should be followed from its date of issue and concerned institutions should execute it. (Page 6).

Approved by the General People's Committee

Issued / 18-07-2009

## The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

## The General People's Committee

Decree No. (333) 2009 for determining the criteria for regulating the admission process of the holders of the Basic Education Certificate to secondary education specialization

The holders of basic education certificate should be admitted in secondary education according to the following criteria:

## 1- General Criteria

- a- the society needs for the different specializations;
- b- the intake capacity of secondary schools and the mid-vocational institutions;
- c- The geographical distribution of secondary schools and mid-vocational institutions;
- d- Students' average scores and wishes;
- e- Students over 17 years old should not be admitted in secondary schools;
- f- Students who achieved an excellent average (85%) can join any specialization regardless their ages.

## 2- General Criteria

## A- Life Sciences Specialization

- 1- The candidate should successfully pass Basic Education stage with at least very good average (75%).
- 2- The candidate should have achieved an excellent average (85%) in Biology and Chemistry

## B- Engineering Specialization

- 1- The candidate should successfully pass Basic Education stage.
- 2- The candidate should have achieved a 'good' average (65%) in 'Mathematics'.

## C- Basic Sciences

- 1- The candidate should successfully pass Basic Education stage.
- 2- The candidate should have achieved at least a 'good' average (65%) in Mathematics and Physics

## D- Economic Sciences

- 1- The candidate should successfully pass Basic Education stage with 'good' average (65%) or above.

## E- Social Sciences

- 1- The candidate should successfully pass Basic Education stage with an average score of 'very good' (75%)

## F- Languages Specialization

- 1- The candidate should successfully pass Basic Education stage.
- 2- The candidate should have received at least an average score of 'good' (65%) in Arabic Language for Arabic language specialization and at least an average score of 'good' (65%) in English for English specialization and in French for French specialization.

## G- Middle Training Centres

- 1- Students who wish to join the training programmes in these centres regardless their success average scores.
- 2- Those students who do not the required criteria for joining secondary schools

## H- Participatory secondary education

- 1- Students who successfully passed their secondary education can join any specialization of the institutions of participatory secondary education regardless the criteria issued for joining state education institutions. However, they do not have the right to transfer to state institutions. An

exception is placed on Life Sciences Specialization upon which the same admission criteria are applied. (Page 5).

*Approved by The General People's Committee  
Issued on: 18/07/20*

Appendix 21: Subjects Studied by English Department/ Students of Agelat College of Teacher Education/  
2009/2010

First Year		Second Year		Third Year		Fourth Year	
Subject	Language	Subject	Language	Subject	Language	Subject	Language
Reading	English	Reading	English	Reading	English	Reading	English
Writing	English	Writing	English	Writing	English	Grammar	English
Listening	English	Grammar	English	Grammar	English	Spoken	English
Lang. Lab.	English	Spoken	English	Spoken	English	Literature	English
Phonetics	English	Phonetics	English	Literature	English	Linguistics	English
Grammar	English	Literature	English	Teach Metd.	English	Inst. Strategy	English
Islamic Studies	Arabic	Curriculum	Arabic	Spl, Metd.	English	Teach. Prac.	English
Psycholog y	Arabic	Gen. Teach.	Arabic	Edcn. Orien	Arabic	Research Paper	English
Arabic	Arabic	Psycholog y	Arabic	Edcn. Psy.	Arabic	Teach. Brac.	Arabic
Intro Edcn	Arabic	Research Method	Arabic	Teach Aids	Arabic	Assess & Eval.	Arabic
Ideology	Arabic	Ideology	Arabic	Ideology	Arabic	Ideology	Arabic

Signed by  
Dr. Raja D. Bhasker  
Head of English Dept.

With Official Stamp of English Dept.

Appendix 22: Subjects Studied by English department Students of Sabratha's of College of Arts

7<sup>th</sup> of April University  
Sabratha College of Arts

Academic Year : 2009/2010

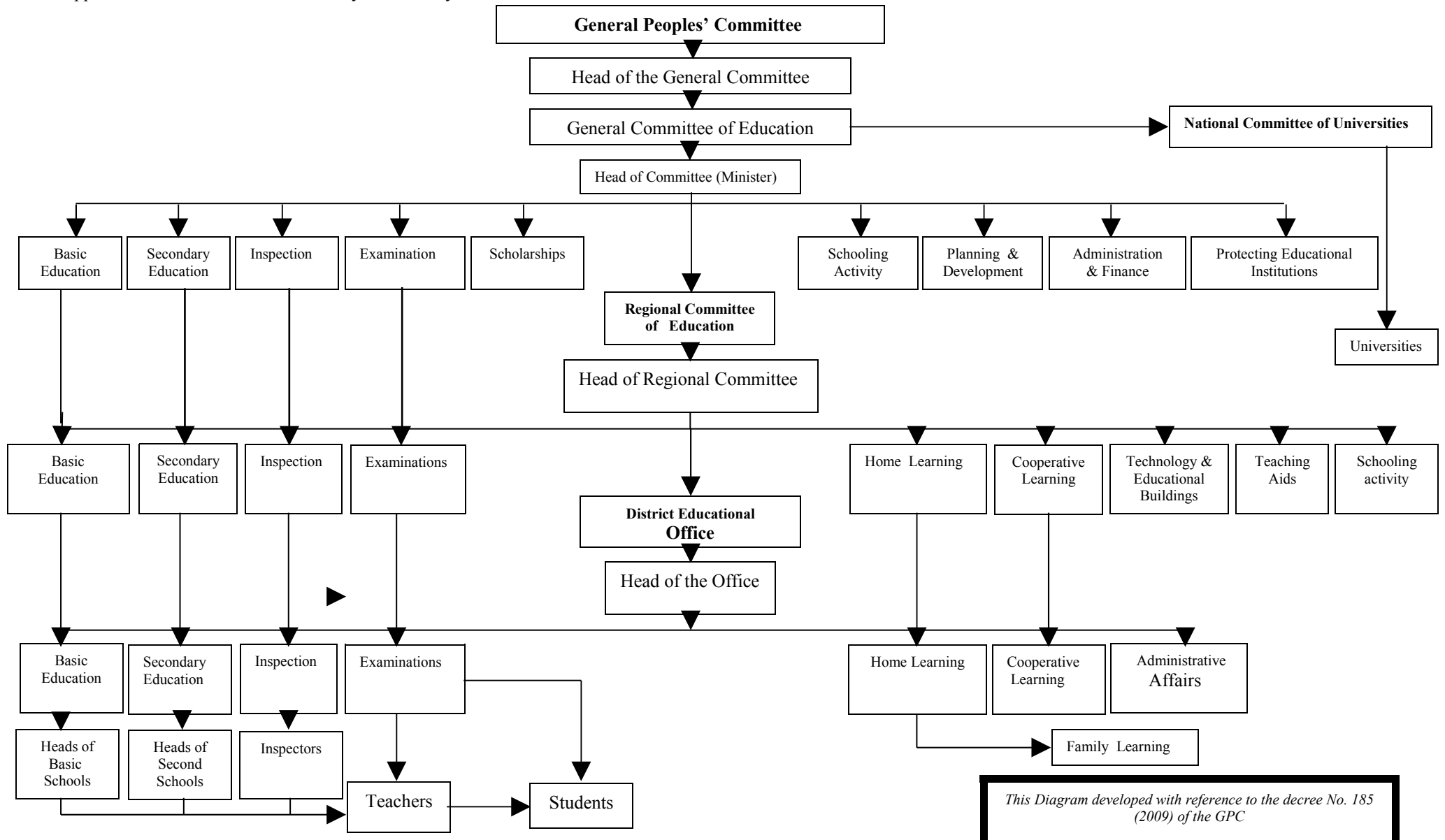
The Subjects Studied by English Department Students as requirements for BA in English

First Year		Second Year		Third Year		Fourth Year	
Subject	Language	Subject	Language	Subject	Language	Subject	Language
Reading	English	Reading	English	Reading	English	Drama	English
Listening	English	Writing	English	Conversation	English	Applied Linguistics	English
Conversation	English	Grammar	English	Grammar	English	Syntax	English
Literature	English	Conversation	English	Phonology	English	Morphology	English
Arabic	Arabic	Pronunciation	English	Literature	English	Writing	English
History	Arabic	Islamic Studies	English	Linguistics	English	Translation	English
Psychology	Arabic	National Education	Arabic	Translation	English	Research Paper	English
National Education	Arabic	Culture	Arabic	Novel	English	Arabic	Arabic
French	French	French	French	Drama	English	National Education	Arabic
				Research Methodology	English		
				Arabic	Arabic		
				National Education			

Provided by Dhia Gazi, the Head of the English Department (18/03/2010)



Appendix 23: Structure of Education System in Libya



**Appendix 24 a: Interviews Timetable**

Date	Time	School	Teacher's Name	Questionnaire No.	Interview No.
16/11	9:45				
16/11	11:45				
17/11	10:15				
17/11	12:20				
18/11	9:45				
18/11	12:30				
19/11	10:00				
19/11	13:00				
20/11	9:15				
20/11	11:30				
23/11	8:45				
23/11	11:00				
24/11	9:00				
24/11	11:20				
25/11	10:15				
25/11	12:45				
26/11	11:00				
26/11	12:15				

**24 b: Characteristics of Interviews and Interviewees**



Interview No.	Interviewee's Characteristics			Type of Interview	
	College of Graduation	School Location	Experience	Recording	Language
1	Arts	Urban	7 years	Recorded	English
2	Teacher Training	Rural	21 years	Recorded	English
3	Teacher Training	Rural	17 years	Note-Taking	English
4	Arts	Urban	5 years	Note-Taking	Arabic
5	Arts	Rural	4 years	Note-Taking	Arabic
6	Teacher Training	Urban	25 years	Note-Taking	Arabic
7	Arts	Rural	22 years	Note-taking	Arabic
8	Arts	Rural	8 years	Recorded	Arabic
9	Teacher Training	Urban	13 years	Recorded	Arabic
10	Teacher Training	Rural	3 years	Note-Taking	Arabic
11	Arts	Urban	6 years	Note-Taking	Arabic
12	Teacher Training	Rural	2 years	Recorded	Arabic
13	Arts	Rural	9 years	Recorded	Arabic
14	Teacher Training	Urban	6 years	Note-Taking	Arabic
15	Teacher Training	Rural	2 years	Note-Taking	Arabic
16	Arts	Rural	22 years	Recorded	Arabic
17	Teacher Training	Urban	4 years	Note-Taking	Arabic
18	Teacher Training	Rural	26 years	Note-Taking	Arabic
19	Teacher Training	Rural	8 years	Recorded	Arabic
20	Arts	Urban	2 years	Note-Taking	Arabic

#### 24c: Interviews and their Matching Questionnaire

Interview	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Questionnaire	1	3	9	11	17	2	2	3	3	40	44	49	54	56	59	62	65	67	76	87



58			84	4
59			85	8
60			86	10
61	17		87	2
			88	5
			89	3
			90	1
			91	6
			92	8
			93	2

#### Appendix 26: Translation of an interview transcript

Transcript Interview 7

School: Agelat Secondary school

Experience: 22 years

Date: Thursday 19/11/2008

Language Arabic

Note-Taking

*After a brief reminder about the aim of the study and after considering some ethical issues regarding the selection of the language of the interview and the possibility of recording the interview, we conducted the interview in this way:*

**Q1)** - Although you have answered this question in the questionnaire, could you please explain to me again “What does the CLCA mean to you?”

**T-** As I mentioned before, the CLCA is an approach for teaching and learning in which *students depend on themselves much more than on the teacher*. It is the approach in which the *student plays a major role in the learning process*, whereas the teacher’s role is to *help the students*, to

*facilitate their learning and to encourage them for active participation.* Students no longer *passive as before.*

Q2- Could you please give an example of how do you translate these ideas in your teaching instruction and classroom practice?

T- As the textbook contains many tasks designed to be performed by the students independently, *I always try to make students do these tasks by themselves individually, in pairs or in small groups.*

I always ask the students *to prepare the next lesson in advance at home and to highlight the difficult points they face.* In addition to that, the Homework textbook has been mainly designed to be done by *students' independently* where my role *is only to check students' answers and to explain the tasks they find difficult.*

Q3- As you had an experience in teaching the previous syllabus, did any change happen on the role you and your students play during the language classes?

T: Yes of course. My role and my students' role have been changed completely. *Before, I used to do almost everything.* I explain, instruct, organize, decide, talk, give feedback and prepare the exams and assess the students. *Students' role was only to take notes, memorize information which I ask them to memorize, wait for my instructions and behave accordingly.* They were very *passive.* *Now I do less work than before.* Sure *I still play a major role, but different.* I am now a *facilitator* of students' learning, a *monitor* of their performance and a *guide* of their learning. It is true that students now become *active participants*, but it is me who still select, organize, direct and *lead the whole process of learning.* I believe that students alone can go no where.

Q4) - Do you mean by this that students are unable to undertake the responsibility for their own learning?

T: *At this stage Yes.* In my questionnaire, I ticked "strongly disagree" on this statement. *I do not believe that our secondary school students are mature enough to lead and guide their learning by themselves.* The students can do some tasks by themselves, but not all tasks. *The teacher's guidance and direction is very necessary.* I insist that the *teacher should be always there* to lead the learning process successfully.

Q5) - In the light of your experience of teaching the new English curriculum, what difficulties have you encountered in implementing this new approach?

T: In fact, I face many problems I think I mentioned most of them in the questionnaire. Nevertheless, I can repeat again that unless *we are given more flexibility and more freedom for leading the learning process, I doubt that we will be able to implement this approach properly. Moreover, I do not think that we will be able to implement this approach in such classrooms in which the desks and chairs cannot be moved to allow for pair or group work.*

Q6) - Could you please, explain what do you mean by more flexibility and more freedom and on what issues?

T: Actually, *we are restricted by many factors. The policy of national examinations has led us to focus our teaching on the content of these examinations which are always content and grammar-based.* We are concerned also with covering all the units in a limited time. We are working under pressure. *We do this in order to meet students and parents' expectations.* I think that the successful implementation of this approach **depends greatly on involving the teachers in selecting the curriculum and on giving them more flexibility.**

Q7) - Comparing the CLCA with what you described in the questionnaire as "traditional teaching methods", could you please clarify the advantages and disadvantages of this new approach?

T: Thank you for reminding me with this point. By using the word “traditional” to describe the previous methods I used to do, *I did not use the word with a negative meaning. I just mean “old”. I myself was taught with these methods and for many aspects they were, and still, effective.* Regarding this new approach, I think that its advantages are more than its disadvantages. For example, it *makes students more active, trains them to be independent and leads to enhance students’ motivation.* However, this approach *requires highly qualified and well-trained teachers, availability of teaching facilities and first of all, active students who are ready to adapt to their new roles. One more condition, I think is the imposition of this national curriculum and this rigid system of national examination as reported on the difficulties in the questionnaire.* One more advantage I think of this approach is the *good relationship* between the teacher and his students. The daily interaction opens new channels of dialogue.

Q8) - Could you please explain how the implementation of the CLCA helped you in establishing good rapport with your students?

T: As I believe that *communication is a necessary component for language learning*, I always encourage my students to tell me about their ideas, concerns, difficulties and problems. As this approach offers enough space for such kind of communication, my *students feel secured and cared for when I listen to them.* This helps to enhance the relationship. Listening to students and encouraging them to ask, to comment and to complaint is very essential. I myself deal with my students *as a father, not merely a teacher.*

Q9)- But, you responded in the same manner to many of the statements which imply learner-centred and teacher-centred views. Could you please explain this?

T. Yes, I was aware of that. I agreed with most of the statements which imply learner-centred views because I believe that implementing these practices inside language classrooms can improve students’ communication skills, in particular, and their language learning, in general. On the other hand, I agreed with those statements which imply teacher-centred views because I believe that these principles and practices are more compatible with the realities of our schools. I like to be learner-centred but sometimes I can not because of the challenges I have already mentioned when you asked me about these challenges.

Q10)-Does this mean that you think this approach is not appropriate for the Libyan context?

T: I do not mean that. As far as I understand this approach, *it is a good approach and can work well in any context. I think this approach is particularly good for TEFL, as it offers many opportunities for communication between teachers and students and among students themselves.* But, *creating the proper conditions for implementing this approach in our context is the challenge.*

Q11)- Could you please check this transcript and if you feel that anything you said or you feel important is missing, add as much note as you like.

T: I just want to emphasise that *we need support and more training. Appreciating what we are doing* will motivate us to work harder and to feel more responsible. I wish you good luck with your research.

Thank you for your participation and your cooperation. The data you provided during this interview is of great value to my research.

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Appendix 27  
Inspector's Questionnaire 6

**Q1- What tasks and responsibilities are assigned to you as a language inspector?**

- a. *Evaluate the teachers/ 2- help the teachers to choose the appropriate teaching method/3- help the teachers overcome any difficulties/4-criticse syllabus/5-help in the process of arranging timetables and assigning certain teachers to certain classes.*

**Q2- What role has been assigned to you as a language inspector in the process of developing the 2000 English language curriculum?**

*In fact, I have not been involved in this process. I only attended a one-day workshop about the new textbooks of this curriculum. During this workshop, we discussed the ideas with two of the authors.*

**Q3- What aspects of teachers' performance do you focus on in evaluating the quality of their teaching?**

*I always give attention to the following areas:*

*1- Teacher's language competency/2- personality and effect of students' learning/3- classroom teaching techniques/4- following the plan of content distribution/5-teacher's interaction with students and collaboration with inspectors/6- implementation of extra activities/ 7-teacher's attention to writing skill.*

**Q4- What changes have you noticed on the methodology used by the teachers for teaching the new textbooks from that they used to implement for teaching the previous textbooks?**

*I observed some changes on teachers' methodologies comparing with their previous methods. The experienced teachers who have taught the previous syllabus were using both traditional and new teaching methods for teaching the new textbooks. Those teachers who have not taught the previous syllabus were confused. They were at a mess. They were using whatever they found easier for them. In addition, their poor mastery of English language made their situation worse. They applied the Grammar Translation Methods because it largely depends on translation (the mother tongue).*

**Q5- What influential difficulties do think have affected the teachers' proper implementation of the new methodology for teaching the new textbooks?**

*1- Teachers are not qualified for implementing the new methodology/2- the content of the textbooks is very far beyond the teachers' ability to understand it even in Arabic/3-the nature of the students' environment does not encourage discussion or exchange of ideas between higher and lower ranks even at the context of the family.*

**Q6- What kind of support have you offered to the teachers to help them overcome these difficulties?**

*I always try to help the teachers as much. I explain to the difficult sections of the textbooks. I explain to them the guidelines of the methodological instructions included in the teacher's book. And I encourage them to ask me any relevant questions.*

**Q7- How would you describe the relationship between you and the teachers you supervise?**

*Generally it is formal. It is similar to that relationship between tutor and his students or a head of school with his teaching staff members. My role is to make judgements on the quality of teachers' performance and this allows only for establishing formal relationships between us.*

**Q8- What constraints or pressures do you think have impacted this relationship?**

*I do not think that my relationship with most of the teachers has been affected by any factors or pressures. It is the nature of my job which shapes this relationship.*

**Q9- To what extent do you think that the change of the curriculum has succeeded in achieving its objectives so far (as explained in the Teacher's Book)?**

*I do not think that any of these objectives has been achieved so far. I have observed that the students are still unable to use English for communication and that the teachers still give little attention to develop students' communication skills.*

**Q10- How do you think the implementation of this new curriculum can be improved?**

*I think that implementing this curriculum is a complex process as many factors could influence this process. However, I think the following strategies can improve this process:*

- a. Providing time and effort for preparing teachers through long academic educational courses. The focus of these courses should be on the content of the textbooks.*
- b. Textbooks should be designed from the Arabic culture. This will make it easier for teachers and students.*
- c- Provide schools with teaching facilities and modern teaching aids*

**Q11- What do you think about the suitability of the methodology of the CLCA as embodied within the instructions given to the teachers in the introductory chapter of the Teacher's Books for TEFL within the Libyan context?**

*I think it is appropriate for teaching English in our schools. If we –English language teachers- are really concerned with improving our students' communication skills, we have to think positively about implementing this approach. Moreover, as Libyan society is developing, I think implementing this approach will help it to catch up. Yes. This approach is appropriate.*



