



**University of East Anglia
School of Education and Lifelong Learning**

**A Lesson Study of Internet Usage to
Enhance the Development of English
Language Teaching in a Libyan University**

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ABSTRACT

The research discussed in this thesis is based upon a programme of study in a Libyan university, which focused on the use of the Internet in the classroom in order to enhance English language teaching and learning. In the last few decades, information and communication technology (ICT) has strongly influenced society as well as education as it has become a part of daily life, offering access to a world of knowledge. This thesis describes, through a single case study, how three teachers at the University of Benghazi collaborated in the use of a 'Lesson Study' approach, in order to engage a group of English as Foreign Language (EFL) students in an e-learning teaching programme. The Lesson Study approach is a technique in Action Research whereby teachers work collaboratively to improve their pedagogy by observing the teaching as well as the learning as they teach students. This study explores university rationales for using ICT, by means of a case study in which myself, teachers and school managers were engaged in a pilot project which implemented ICT in teaching.

My interest in researching this topic started while working at the University of Benghazi as an EFL teacher, as described above. In this role, I had an interest in contributing to the improvement of teaching practices in Libya in general and the University of Benghazi in particular. I began to do this by improving my own pedagogical practices and by creating opportunities for developing practice within the department. The study was prompted by a set of concerns that emerged as a result of my own English language teaching practice at my university. I found that even though students were happy to learn English, they could not practise the language in authentic situations, because in Libya English is not generally spoken outside the classroom. I discuss a curriculum initiative devised to tackle these concerns, directed towards engaging students to learn in a technology-based, collaborative, cognitively demanding and intercultural way.

The broad aim of the study was to investigate how Libyan students' current English literacy practices might be enhanced by using the Internet and E-learning strategies and how the Internet may be used as a medium to further assist the students' English learning development. Through an extensive and in-depth use of literature, drawing on journals, articles, books and previous research studies, this thesis also explores some of the possibilities of the Internet in developing differing styles of classroom pedagogy and the

implications of incorporating the Internet into existing programme design and curriculum. It also reports on the way in which Lesson Study was used as a professional development strategy in a new setting and to discuss its effectiveness in research.

In terms of the methodology, interview data was combined with questionnaire data and analysed. Support was found for a preparative rationale, a pedagogical rationale and a motivational rationale among teachers and students. Some limitations in this study needed to be bridged in order to build a widely supported vision and policy plan on conducting this thesis. The significant findings from this study include the observation that the lesson studies process contributed to bringing about change in teacher pedagogy. The major issues highlighted by these findings include the need to make changes to teacher practice and the way that the Lesson Study programme, as an Action Research model, impacted directly and positively upon teacher pedagogy, with an observed increase in student motivation for learning. These findings therefore have implications for the teachers of Higher Education in Libya if they are going to make sustainable pedagogical changes that will positively impact on student learning and outcomes.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AR.....	Action Research
CBI.....	Content-Based Instruction
CALL I.....	Computer Assisted Language Learning I
CALL II.....	Computer Assisted Language Learning II
CLT.....	Communicative Language Teaching
DSL.....	Digital Subscriber Line
EFL.....	English as a Foreign Language
ELT.....	English Language Teaching
HE.....	Higher Education
ICT.....	Information and Communication Technology
ISDN.....	International Subscriber Dialling Network
L1.....	First Language
L2.....	Second Language
LCE.....	Learner-Centred Education
LS.....	Lesson Study
SCE.....	Student-Centred Education
T1.....	Teacher One
T2.....	Teacher Two
TEFL.....	Teaching of English as Foreign Language
WALS.....	World Association of Lesson Studies
ZPD.....	Zone of Proximal Development

CHAPTER ONE

RATIONALE FOR THE RESEARCH

1.0 Introduction

Libya is among many developing countries which in recent years has given special consideration to educational change. This has now become a further priority for the country since the revolution of February 2011. This thesis is based upon a programme of lesson studies in a Libyan university looking at the use of the Internet in the classroom in order to enhance English language teaching and learning.

Although the Internet has been available in Libya since 1999, in most educational settings, Internet-based teaching and learning has not been widely implemented. The development and use of Internet-based technologies in teaching and learning is increasingly likely to become a significant resource in universities once the (currently on-going) war in the country comes to an end. This thesis discusses a single case study, the research process for which began prior to the 2011 Libyan revolution but which draws its conclusions during this time of on-going political instability and civil war. This thesis describes how two teachers and myself at the University of Benghazi collaborated in the use of a Lesson Study approach, in order to engage a group of English as Foreign Language (EFL) students in an e-learning teaching programme.

My interest in this topic began when, as a teacher of EFL at the University of Benghazi, I felt that the students generally lacked exposure to an authentic English learning environment and also to materials and opportunities for engaging with this language outside of the classroom. The textbooks that we typically used in classes sometimes failed to provide realistic or relevant models of English language usage in contexts recognisable to the students. It seemed to me that, in such traditionally taught English classrooms, the students might have little motivation to learn and use good English. Therefore, a principal aim of the research was to seek ways to enhance the teaching and learning of English by providing students with a more meaningful and relevant learning environment which incorporated the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

Whilst the teachers involved in the study were all in broad agreement with this overall aim at the outset of the study, we were also conscious that we had varying levels of experience and confidence as regards integrating Internet-based technologies into our classrooms and teaching. Therefore, this research further aimed to explore the ways that we as teachers might be able to work together to use Internet-based technologies and resources in order to design learning activities which might motivate and engage our first year EFL students. This required us to first consider our own individual and collective pedagogical approaches and ask how we might adapt these to incorporate additional technological teaching resources.

The attitudes of our students towards the use of ICT in the learning of English are also explored in this study. The insights thus provided gave a cultural context for understanding the role of Internet-based technologies in the learning experiences of students and may inform the pedagogy of the teachers as a whole in a rapidly changing educational environment.

1.1 Inspiration for this study and professional background

I have been a member of staff at the University of Benghazi since 2006, teaching English there. Hence it is appropriate for me to share some autobiographical details in order to clarify the research context, and to describe how I came to be interested in the integration of Internet-based technologies in teaching and learning experiences. The main idea of using ICT to enhance the development of English teaching and learning arose from my experience of studying the two modules of my Master's degree at Newcastle University in computer assisted language learning I and II and in English language teaching (CALL I and CALL II). The development of my own English language teaching and training was as follows.

After finishing a Master's degree in 2005 in the UK, I worked as an EFL teacher for a number of years in Libya, teaching General English to undergraduates from different departments across a number of faculties. I went on to focus on the teaching of grammar in the English department. During my teaching career in the Libyan Higher Education sector, I became aware of certain shortcomings within the language teaching and educational development context, since I was also responsible for teaching English in various courses outside the university. I found that although students were happy to learn English, they could not practise the language in authentic social situations because it is not generally spoken outside the classroom. A staff meeting to discuss the addition of a new 20-credit module for post-

graduate students prompted me to suggest the introduction of ICT and CALL. Although members of staff showed a very positive attitude to this suggestion, they claimed that they needed further research to demonstrate how the use of ICT could enhance the teaching and learning of English in the Libyan context. As a department we did not have any experts in this area. It was at this point that I realised that this could become the focus of my doctoral study.

Thus, the use of ICT in English language teaching and learning, having been an interest of mine for some time, became a focus in my teaching practice. In the course of my work, I had been able to observe teachers' classroom interaction with their students and had established professional collaborative relationships with the department staff before the research began. My on-going interactions with the teachers had further motivated me to learn more about the role of Internet-based technologies in English language teaching and learning. We discussed the possible implications of Internet-based technologies for teaching and learning practices and the challenges that teachers might experience in correspondingly modifying their pedagogies. At the time I was teaching General English, and though my teaching was not closely related to the use of the Internet, the possibilities of using it to enhance the teaching of English remained an interest of mine. Exploring this possibility was therefore my first aim.

I also wondered why Libyan teachers and students were not using the Internet in their teaching and learning of English. I pursued this question by contributing to research on the use of ICT in the teaching of English in my university. I hoped to be able to help the students in many of the problem areas in their practice of spoken English, but my main focus was on teaching students to practise English in realistic and relevant ways. I was fully determined to develop and improve students' abilities to practise their English both accurately and fluently and to become confident English learners.

In the process of teaching grammar, I had found that students often tended to learn English 'word for word' and to memorise the rules of individual English grammatical constructions. Because they were unable to make use of these rules in situations and interactions beyond the classroom, they were unable to remember unfamiliar words, and they had difficulty developing an extensive English vocabulary.

A staff meeting reflecting on the achievement of students further inspired me to search for answers and start a project for integrating the use of ICT into my teaching. The head of department and the members of the teaching faculty agreed that they would happily add such a programme to the post-graduate students' curriculum because the existing course did not seem adequate for helping these students to become fluent English speakers.

My first concern in developing this programme was to introduce a set of ICT activities which could be very flexible. Furthermore, I hoped to see how we, as teachers, could adopt these ICT activities in the teaching of General English. Conducting this research required me to put my own practice as a teacher under scrutiny. I also observed the teaching of other teachers who felt sufficiently comfortable with the idea of working together in this way in order to integrate the use of Internet-based technologies.

The findings of this research challenged my perceptions of what learning is and realigned my understanding of the interest in and need for participation that students feel during their learning in a technology-saturated environment. All the teachers involved in this research were impressed by the way that our lesson-studies approach enabled us to share a reflective and developmental process that rapidly encouraged progress towards the overall aims of the project.

1.2 Introduction to the study

My interest in researching this topic started while working in the University of Benghazi as an EFL teacher, as described above. In this role, I had an interest in contributing to the improvement of teaching practices in Libya in general and the University of Benghazi in particular. I began to do this by improving my own pedagogical practices and by creating opportunities for developing practice within the department.

The study discussed in this thesis set out to address some major concerns of mine over the English language teaching practice of the time at my university. It also attempted to create a curriculum initiative directed towards engaging students to learn in a technology-based, collaborative, cognitively demanding and intercultural way. The study therefore, originally sought to explore ways of enhancing the teaching and learning of English by providing

students with a more authentic and meaningful learning environment; it used the Internet in an approach that blended with the existing curriculum.

Changing classroom teaching to take advantage of the opportunities offered by some new approach or technology requires us to identify which principles of lesson design will capitalise on the new opportunities while minimising their disadvantages. This is a challenge that deserves more than a 'trial and error' approach. Consequently, I chose to use 'Lesson Study' as a teaching approach for both professional development and research. This thesis reports on two issues: the potential for using Lesson Study as a fresh strategy for research and the educational adaptation required for using Lesson Study for professional development in an online context. As discussed below, using Lesson Study for careful analysis of the presentation of a lesson has been established as an effective method in the professional development of teachers. Though the use of Lesson Study as a type of Action Research to improve teaching within a school or university is widespread, this approach is new to Libyan university teachers and their teaching environment. So it needed some adaptation.

At the heart of the study was the design of lessons which would exploit the Internet's images and video capabilities. The lessons were designed to promote student learning while helping teachers develop new teaching approaches using new technology which they could build into their daily teaching. The focus of the professional development was for teachers to work cooperatively to develop models for teaching that take advantage of technology for pedagogical as well as functional purposes.

According to Lagrange and Monaghan (2009), the assumption that new technology skills and associated teaching approaches can easily be transferred to teachers through professional development programmes has not been borne out in practice. They explain that the availability of technology challenges the teacher because when technology is available, their teaching practices in 'traditional' settings can no longer be routinely applied. We therefore wanted to consider how to optimise pedagogical value from such technologies through studying lesson design and engaging teachers in the process of Lesson Study. There was also the issue of the students accepting the new technology as a classroom tool, which the teachers at Benghazi University felt would be a challenge they would face when the teaching began.

1.3 Creating a curriculum initiative

Introducing an innovative teaching approach into a Libyan university context proved to be a great challenge. This was in part due to the differences between the principles and the practices of these innovations, alongside the social, historical and cultural assumptions which prevail in this context. This challenge may also have resulted from the lack of interest shown by some teachers who strongly believe in the efficacy and correctness of their traditional teaching approaches. This struggle, which is perhaps inevitable, could occur in any context where the implementation of a proposed approach requires a change in teachers' perceptions about teaching and learning and a consequent shift a teacher-centred to learner-centred instructional approach.

Teachers' instructional approaches are often guided by underlying conceptions of teaching and learning that they carry with them (Bruner, 1996; Marton & Booth, 1997; Peterson & Irving, 2008), and their misconceptions or poor understanding of innovations may also affect the way they implement them in classrooms. Therefore, developing teachers' knowledge and understanding of curriculum innovations, training them effectively and providing them with sufficient support and guidance has to be carefully considered before introducing these innovations into a given institution. Teachers' perceptions of curriculum innovations can be understood through investigations that explore their thoughts about and experiences of these innovations (Marton, 1981; 1986). Under investigation in this study were the conceptions of the use of ICT in English language teaching and learning, of learner-centred education approaches, and of the Lesson Study teaching approach, which were introduced by the government for the first time into Libyan Universities through an English language curriculum innovation.

1.4 The aims of the study

The broad aim of this study is to explore some of the ways in which the Internet and e-learning can contribute to Libyan students' English language development. Additional aims were:

- To investigate how Libyan students' current English literacy practices might be enhanced by using the Internet and e-learning strategies

- To explore some of the possibilities of the Internet in developing differing styles of classroom pedagogy and the implications of incorporating the Internet into the existing teaching programme design and curriculum.
- To report on the way in which Lesson Study was used as a professional development strategy in a new setting and to discuss its effectiveness in research.

The study therefore explores the different conceptions of various teaching approaches held by a sample of Libyan EFL teachers, in relation to the implementation of a curriculum innovation in English language teaching in the University of Benghazi. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used as the means of investigation and analysis. Data for the first phase of the research were collected through 32 questionnaires completed by Libyan EFL students randomly selected from the English language department. The data for the second phase were later collected through semi-structured interviews conducted with 4 students from the cohort of 32 participants from the first phase. These participants also took part in the ICT teaching programme.

Research Questions:

1. What are the Libyan students' current ICT practices and attitudes towards using it?
2. What is the potential for incorporating the use of ICT in the learning environment of English language teaching?
3. What are teachers' and students' perspectives on the use of ICT in English language teaching and learning?
 - a) What are the pedagogical implications of using ICT blended within an EFL learning environment in a Libyan university?
 - b) What are the factors which currently govern teachers' pedagogical practices? And how would these need to change in order to incorporate an extensive use of ICT in teaching practice
 - c) What are the costs and the benefits of such a programme from the point of view of EFL teachers and learners?
 - d) What cultural and other factors currently support or limit the students' use of ICT?

1.5 Significance and potential contribution of the research

This research contributes to the practice of teaching and learning English. It tests the value of a range of Internet-based activities which may contribute to the learning of English. Whilst based on the needs of students at the University of Benghazi in Libya, the outcomes may assist other teachers of English in improving and changing their language teaching pedagogy. Using Lesson Study procedures (plan, act, observe and reflect) not only enhanced the students' practices in learning English, but also helped us as a group of EFL teachers participating in this programme to improve our language teaching pedagogy. Brown suggests that the consequences of research should resonate with teachers' experience, be interpreted into practical classroom strategies and be distributed through teachers' networks (2005, p. 395).

The procedures of Action Research can help both researchers and teachers to benefit in such a situation. This research contributes to the field of EFL teaching in the ways outlined below:

- It has provided me with a model for improving my own ELT practices. The teaching practices in my EFL classes at Benghazi University had formerly been focused on a form of teaching in which students only rarely had opportunities to actively use the English language. This research project provided me with insights into setting up classrooms where students could engage in meaningful learning tasks and where English could thus be used for learning purposes.
- The research identifies the kinds of change in teaching practice which are necessary in order to effectively draw upon the Internet as a pedagogical resource. These changes include departing from a formal, textbook-based syllabus and shifting towards the use of online contexts, together with a new balance between teacher-centred and student-centred education.
- This research also contributes to the practice of teaching and learning English by testing the value of a range of activities that may encourage this. Whilst based on the needs of students at the University of Benghazi, the outcomes may assist other teachers of English in improving their language teaching. Using Lesson Study as an Action Research procedure which included the steps of planning, action, observation, reflection and revision, not only enhanced students' English learning, but also helped me to improve my language teaching pedagogy.

- Another contribution is to have explored the implications of Internet use, both in the Libyan EFL context and in broader EFL contexts. The results of the study are of potential value not only in assisting me to further develop English programmes that incorporate Internet use, but also in providing a practical starting point for other teachers of English to do the same.
- This research could play a small part in reforming Libyan education methods, in that it could be used as an example showing how to incorporate more student participation and student-centred education approaches that challenge ‘traditional’ teacher-student relations, where students listen passively while the teacher gives instruction. It is hoped that some of the incidents in the project that are related here may be relevant to other teachers if they wish to adapt these approaches to their own situations.

1.6 Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the terms below have been defined as follows.

Approach. When used in connection with teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language, the term 'approach' refers to the broad set of ideas, values and assumptions associated with an underlying educational philosophy. When applied to research activities, the same term refers to the philosophical values, ideas and attitudes underpinning the design and Implementation of action research and lesson studies.

Method. In relation with the EFL pedagogical approaches, a number of teaching methods are mentioned in this thesis. *Methods* here refer to the strategic planning and classroom interventions or activities implemented by teachers to support and facilitate student learning. When used in the context of research the term *methods* refers to the planning and activities associated with design and implementation of Action Research (AR) and lesson Study (LS), which were carried out by the researcher in order to gather insights relevant to the central research questions.

Activities refer to tasks and actions, in a teaching process, undertaken around a specific purpose. Activities can be used to understand the interaction between teacher and students or among students themselves. As such, there can be teacher-centred or student-centred activities. These help, in EFL classrooms, to understand how language is used and for what purposes.

Strategy refers to the plans and techniques that I and the teachers implemented to achieve particular goals.

Skill refers to abilities targeted by teaching activities. In EFL classrooms, these generally include listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

Application refers to computer applications used in the classrooms for the purpose of teaching and learning. This term is used interchangeably with ICT.

Computer-based, in this study, refers to the use of computers as an integrated mode of teaching and learning. In general it refers to a situation where activities are conducted by teachers and students via computers.

1.7 Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis consists of seven 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 describes the structure of the education system in Libya and the university's English language syllabus.

Chapter Three offers a detailed description and critical analysis of the existing research on the philosophy of learner-centred education. It also traces the rationale for implementing this approach for language teaching and learning.

Chapter Four covers the methodology and explains the approach of the investigation and the instruments of data collection employed in this study. The objectives of the study and the possible implications of Lesson Study as an Action Research approach are also discussed. The chapter also describes the research design and the process of piloting the participant's questionnaire. It explains how access to the university was obtained and describes the two phases of data collection. Phase 1 aimed to investigate students' perceptions and attitudes towards the use of ICT in their learning of English. Phase 2 aimed

to examine the possibility of using ICT in enhancing EFL teaching and the students' English learning and overall English language development by means of a newly-created program which required the use of the Internet in various ways in order to complete the assigned collaborative tasks. The programme that was implemented, the justification for using it, the Lesson Study cycles and the teaching program, data collection, data analysis, collaborators and research cycles are also discussed in the chapter.

Chapter five presents and analyses the data from Phase 1.

Chapter six presents and analyses the data from Phase 2. It also presents in detail the classroom events during the three cycles; this includes a description of all the classroom activities.

Chapter seven brings the findings of the research together for discussion and interpretation. It lists the contributions of the study and points out its limitations. It also suggests further areas for possible research related to the issue investigated in this study. In addition, it outlines the conclusions and the final thoughts drawn from this research.

Chapter Eight is the final chapter of this study. In this chapter, I conclude the study by analysing each chapter and how the aims of this study have been achieved. Besides, I highlight what could have been done in order to make this study more insightful.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LIBYAN CONTEXT

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter I give a brief historical overview to show the development of the educational system in Libya as it stood at the outset of my period of study, giving special importance to the teaching of English as a foreign language. I further introduce the specific context of Benghazi University where this study was conducted. I outline the objectives of educational policy in Libya as a developing country and describe the impact of these on its educational system. I present a case for the changes in all stages and levels of the education system that were underway at the time. In this respect I also focus, in particular, on the teaching and learning of English as foreign language (EFL).

2.1 A Historical overview



Figure 1. Map of Libya

Since the revolution which began on the 17th February 2011, the official name for the 'Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya' has been Libya. In terms of area size, Libya is one of the largest countries in Africa. It is situated in North Africa between Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria. It shares a southern border with Chad, Niger and Sudan and has long borders on the Mediterranean Sea, with a vast portion of the country being covered by the Sahara Desert (see Figure 1.1). Libya has a population of about 5.5 million and an area of approximately 1,760 square kilometres – approximately twice the size of France and Germany put together. Libya is a major oil producer with significant resources and is one of the biggest North African oil suppliers to Europe.

In the 7th century AD, Libya was conquered by the Arabs who brought with them the Islamic religion, culture and Arabic language, which has influenced political, economic and social life in the whole of North Africa. In the mid-16th century, Libya was annexed to the Islamic Ottoman Empire until its Italian colonisation in 1911 (Wikipedia, 2012), which was met with resistance from the Libyans. Libyan education suffered badly during the Italian colonisation, because Italy did not seek to develop education as other colonial powers had done (for instance, the French in Algeria) (Metz, 1987). During the Italian annexation of Libya, there was a complete neglect of education for Arabs which prevented the development of professional and technical training, creating a shortage of teachers, skilled workers, technicians and administrators (US Library of Congress, 1987).

Although Libya is one of the North African countries colonised by European powers, unlike some others, it did not inherit a legacy of any European language. Therefore, the role and status of foreign languages there have been very limited compared to those of English or French in neighbouring countries. Consequently, English is spoken in Egypt, Jordan and Nigeria as a post-colonial language and sometimes as an official second language, whereas English in Libya remains a foreign language.

2.2 Background to the teaching of English in Libya

From 1954 (following the Anglo-Libyan friendship treaty), English was taught from primary Year 5 (age 10) up to completion of secondary education. Following the Libyan Cultural Revolution of 1973, English Language Teaching (ELT) was pulled back to year 7. This was the case until English was withdrawn altogether from the school curricula between 1986 and 1992, following an 'Arabisation' campaign in the aftermath of the American air raid and

subsequent US sanctions on Libya (Wright, 2010). The result of this compulsory withdrawal of English was far-reaching, not only for students, but also for the current generation of English language teachers.

In 1986, new pupils in year 7 did not have English language classes at all, and those who were moving on to secondary education had no further opportunities to improve their existing English. Therefore, apart from a lucky few who could pay for private language tuition, a whole generation of undergraduates entered higher education in 1992 with hardly any knowledge of English. I was one of this category of students. Furthermore, from 1986 to 1992, teachers of English were unable to find jobs and many were obliged to take on different positions, such as teaching history or geography. A profitable private market for English Language Teaching (ELT) began to emerge. In this, public-sector teachers competed for part-time positions to supplement their low earnings.

From 1999 English resumed its status in Libya as an international language following improvements in Libya's relationship with Western countries and the suspension, in 1999, of the United Nations embargo. This led to a change in educational requirements, in that the Libyan government reconsidered its ELT policy. A new English syllabus was introduced for secondary schools and since 2003/4 English has been taught at primary level from year 5. The new ELT proposals coincided with the introduction of new curricula for information and communication technologies (ICT) from year 5, as one was being designed to develop pupils' achievements and learning outcomes in English and the other for achieving the same objectives in computer literacy.

According to Abou-Jaafar (2003), the objectives of the Libyan education system in terms of ICT bring out the importance of developing new ways to advance technical and professional development and support individual capacities through ICT. There is an obvious need to use technology with appropriate skills and sufficient pedagogic support until learners feel able to interact and develop independently. Thus, for ELT, the Ministry of Education provided the policy and implementation framework for English teaching and learning by encouraging every student to study the language and to be able to effectively communicate in it; as this framework includes within it the development of teaching practices incorporating the appropriate use of technology, ELT is thus closely connected to ICT in the Libyan context.

2.3 Education system in Libya

Education is a right for all Libyan citizens, and it is compulsory for both sexes from the ages of six to sixteen. The education system in Libya has taken two forms, public and private. Public education is run by the Ministry of Education and is free at all levels, from primary school to university. The Minister of Education is responsible for building schools, employing teachers and supplying schools and universities with books and students' syllabuses. In private education, schools are run by their own administrative staff and students pay to join the system. Schools in public education accept learners from the age of six, whereas schools in the private education system have more flexibility and may accept students from the age of five. Private education, is considered a new concept in Libyan society. It began in the mid-1990s and has been encouraged by the Educational Authority. In both systems, students may select which course(s) they want to follow. Most Libyan parents choose the public education system because it is free of charge and most families have, on average, six children at school, while only a few choose private education for their children. These few can pay for education and/or would like it to start a little earlier, believing that learning at private schools is much better than at public schools.

Higher education in Libya includes universities, higher institutes and higher technical and vocational centres. Courses last for three years in some centres or institutes and for six years in some university faculties (The Libyan National Commission for Education, Culture and Science, 2001, p. 16). Higher education follows an overall plan adjusted to the present and future needs of Libyan society. It is considered central for development in all spheres of life and is aimed at reconstructing social and economic life in line with globalisation and modernity. University education aims ultimately at providing the society with experts and specialists in different disciplines, i.e. teachers, lawyers, engineers, researchers and experimenters. Post graduate studies became available in Libya during the latter part of the last decade and now include MA (Master's) degrees and PhD (doctoral) degrees. Many MA and PhD graduates have joined the teaching staff at higher institutes and universities to address the shortage of faculty members and to replace foreign staff.

2.4 The status of English as a foreign language in Libya

In light of the recent global spread of English as the dominant language for international commerce, Libya is one of many developing countries whose economies require increasing

numbers of English speakers. English is now considered a 'global language' (Crystal, 1997). One criterion for a language to be considered 'global', according to Crystal's (1997) assertion, is that the language is used in a number of countries, serving sometimes as a first language, sometimes as a second or official language and sometimes as a foreign language. In these functions, English can be considered to have been a global language since the 19th century. Burt-Griffler and Samimy (1999, p. 419) use another measure of the global character of English in terms of the number of people who speak it as a first or second language. It is estimated at the time that there are 400 million speakers of English as a first language and more than double this number of speakers of English as a second language.

According to Kachru and Nelson (2001, p. 13), English is also used in more countries throughout the world than any other language: "[N]o other language even comes close to English in terms of the extent of its usage." Kachru and Nelson (2001) divide the English speakers throughout the world into three groups, represented by three concentric circles: Inner Circle, Outer Circle and Expanding Circle. The Inner Circle refers to native speakers, namely, British, American, Canadian, Irish and Australasian people who use English as their first or native language. The Outer Circle represents users from formerly colonised countries, such as India, Pakistan, South Africa, Nigeria and Zambia, where English serves as an official language in parts of education, governance and the media. In this sense, English is used as a second language. The Expanding Circle consists of countries where English is used by non-native speakers as a foreign language for international communication and includes, for example, Russia, Japan, China, Libya and Jordan. In these countries English has varying functions and is widely studied as a school subject (Kachru & Nelson, 1996; 2001).

The global nature of English has spread through the three concentric circles in different ways. Its spread in the Inner Circle has involved the migrations of native speakers from the British Isles to the United States of America, Canada and New Zealand. The spread of English in the Outer Circle occurred in colonial contexts in Asia and Africa where English was used in a new socio-cultural context. The spread of English into the Expanding circle has occurred because of the spread of mass media and the impact of advances in science and technology, commerce and various forms of knowledge and information (Kachru & Nelson, 1996; Warschaure, 2002).

English has in this way become a lingua franca – a common language – adopted for communication between speakers of different native languages (Crystal, 1997; Harmer, 2001; Kachru & Nelson, 1996; Warschaure, 2000; 2002a).

Warschaure (2002) explains that,

The intersection of language with international networks and globalisation is perhaps most evident. Put simply, global trade, distribution, marketing, media and communication could not take place without a lingua franca. These processes of globalisation over the last thirty years have propelled English from being an international language...to becoming a truly global one, spoken and used more broadly than probably any other language in world history (p. 64).

English is, then, used by a wide range of speakers for many purposes. First, English is used as a language for international business communication. In this period of globalisation, the market has become a global one where people conduct business with others worldwide. Second, English is a dominant official language used as a means of contact between governmental institutions and agencies such as the United Nations, the European Union, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Crystal, 1997).

Crystal (1997, p. 81) also points out that although languages other than English are used for communication at meetings of the European Union, English is used as an intermediary language or “interlingua” to facilitate controversial communications in which translating between languages is difficult or confusing. English is also used globally in education as a medium for academic conferences; in international tourism and air traffic control; and in entertainment, advertising, media and popular culture (Crystal, 1997; Harmer, 2001; Kachru & Nelson, 1996). In addition, many textbooks and educational materials used worldwide are published in English.

The main focus of the present study is on English use in the Expanding Circle site of Libya, where English has now become the foreign language of first choice. Currently, English is regarded as the first (the most important) foreign language in Libya and the Libyan Ministry of Education has clearly stated that Libyan people’s capacity to deal with globalisation needs to improve and that English skills are a crucial part of this. Moreover, English is starting to be used as the medium of instruction in a limited number of international educational institutions and in some international programmes offered by both the Libyan State and private universities. English is also beginning to be used in Libya to gain access to recreation

and entertainment through media such as newspapers, magazines, movies and some TV programmes. In addition, English is used to gain access to knowledge and information through computer-mediated communication including email, chat and the resources of the World Wide Web.

Studies have suggested that the largest proportion of the information available on the Internet is in English (Graddol, 1997). Thus, knowledge of English and competence in its use are considered to be crucial for students wishing to communicate across the world. Such communicative ability is also regarded as an important instrument for researching in English and for reading and evaluating information critically. Therefore the purpose of learning English is not limited to communication; it helps learners to gain knowledge and ideas beyond its learning and to take part in global information sharing. As a result of the range of important roles played by English at both global and local levels, I would suggest that Libya is currently recognising that knowledge of and competence in English are no longer a luxury but a necessity.

2.5 The English Language Syllabus in Libyan universities

Sawani (2009) shows that there is no fixed curriculum in teaching English at the university level in Libya for example, the head of the English department at the individual university is responsible for preparing the general English materials to be taught in other faculties, such as economics, engineering and science. The English department is also responsible for creating course outlines for its teachers, who are then free to choose whichever they like. This means there is no systemic teaching and therefore no standardisation at higher education level, even among teachers in the same department. In other words, while the English curricula at the school level are entirely organised and evaluated by the education authority, there are no fixed or pre-arranged curricula for university students to follow, in English departments most of all, which are led by persons and not by policy.

However, Latiwish (2003, p. 19) observes that a new generation of teachers has started to use well-known curricula and materials, such as those of the Headway series, the Cutting Edge, both published by OUP, in order to teach general English to non-English specialists. This new generation believes in the importance of adequate materials in the teaching and learning processes.

2.6 Background to the case under study: The teaching of English at Benghazi University

Benghazi University, where the study took place, is located in the east of Libya on the western side of Benghazi city. Initially established in 1955, it has a long educational history and is the oldest university in Libya. The nucleus of the university is the Faculty of Arts and Education, which at the time of writing housed 31 students, 6 professors and 9 administrative staff members. The University of Benghazi has been affected by the wider educational and political context, such as the suspension of English teaching and learning in Libya for a while, then changes to the syllabuses and the encouragement to enhance teaching methods at all educational institutions, including institutions of higher education.

English teaching and learning in the university's department of English Language and Literature aims to prepare students with a knowledge of English and the culture of English speaking countries and to gain competence in communication through the macro skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. It is considered that Libyan graduates should have sufficient proficiency in English to enter the workforce and be able to contribute to Libya's participation in the world marketplace. The Libyan state, Libyan educators, administrators and linguists have thus acknowledged the significant role of English and the global market demand for Libyan graduates who are well-equipped with English competencies. From my own experience as an English language teacher at the University of Benghazi, teachers are aware of the important roles of English in the changing world and are also required to be able to keep up with rapid changes, such as the Internet and information technology, and to consider the impact and possibilities of this technology with regard to English language teaching. It has also been suggested that learning English in Libyan classroom settings is inadequate for these aims – students need to learn and practise English in settings beyond the classroom via the use of electronic and multimedia resources.

I am concerned about English language teaching, both in respect of my own teaching and in respect of English language teaching generally at my university. My particular concern is the apparent imbalance between the roles of the teacher and the students in the classroom, where the teacher dominates the classroom while students seem to be peripheral. I have also observed that students lack opportunities to use English for purposeful or credible reasons for communication and also lack exposure to the English language outside the classroom.

Typically the same teaching practices are followed day after day until the end of the semester. I often felt that the students in my class were pursuing a very limited range of activities. They sometimes appeared to be bored and to be lacking in personal motivation to learn English. I observed that when some students did not want to listen to me explaining a topic, they would find some distraction or talk with their peers. I have realised that students lack opportunities to use English for genuine communicative reasons and that they do not have a strong motivation to read English. For this reason they do not voluntarily find or choose texts to read by themselves. In examining my own teaching practices, I realised that these symptoms could be changed by encouraging students to actively engage in meaningful learning tasks. Students' active roles could be developed and this could enhance students' English abilities and enable them to develop more positive attitudes.

The English language syllabus in Benghazi University

In the department of English at the university, most classrooms are teacher-centred, with the teacher's table facing the students' desks. Typically, the teacher dominates the classroom while students sit in rows, listening and doing what the teacher requires. However, classrooms are sometimes reorganised to suit small-group or pair-work activities.

Listening skills

Most students at the University of Benghazi are not exposed to socially relevant English outside of the classroom. This is due to an EFL context where English is taught as an academic subject rather than for use in society. Even if some English TV programmes were available in Libya, this type of input would be understandable only to the most advanced students. Listening tasks which are important to students' level include, for instance, listening to sentences, practising pronunciation, or listening to dialogues. Opportunities to practise listening to conversations, listening to texts and completing tasks such as multiple choice exercises, were very limited at the university level.

Speaking skills

Because Benghazi City does not have foreign visitors who speak English as mother tongue, there are few opportunities for students to practise speaking English outside the classroom. Consequently, students rely on classroom opportunities only to develop their speaking skills. It is notable that when Libyan students are given the chance to speak freely in contexts outside the classroom they often do so and are less shy and feel confident. This fact was

clear to me when I interviewed the students as a researcher and not as a teacher and from my experience as a student myself. Therefore, student participation may be said to depend on the teaching methods employed by the teacher.

The most common speaking tasks that students undertake in class with other students or with the teacher are those relevant to everyday situations, such as greeting, introducing themselves, apologising, making requests, asking for permission. In order to talk in English, students need the teacher to teach, guide and introduce them to language features and vocabulary. This is the common practice in Libyan university classrooms too.

Reading skills

A crucial part of the syllabus from the university's point of view is that the first year students are required to read and interpret English texts to enhance their understanding. Some difficulties experienced by students generally relate to a lack of background knowledge, lack of vocabulary and unfamiliarity with some of the grammatical constructions they encounter in the texts that they read. This is why the teacher focuses on these aspects before the students begin the reading tasks. Usually, when the students face unknown words, they turn to an English-Arabic dictionary, write the meaning in Arabic under each unknown word, and carry on reading and looking up the meaning of the next unknown word and so on until they finish the sentence or paragraph. This is time consuming. Another difficulty, which is rather common among Benghazi University students, is that when a word has many different meanings and students do not know which meaning fits the context in which they have found it. The reading materials themselves are nearly always selected and prepared by teachers.

Writing skills

The writing tasks which students can control are based on themes that are relevant to them and their context. For example, they are often asked to write about their family and about themselves, about their country and home town, describing places, objects, and people, giving instructions such as a formula or for making something, comparing things or places. Such writing tasks are completed in writing models provided by the teacher.

It can be concluded that these students usually learn English under the supervision and guidance of teachers; hence, teachers need to design learning tasks and teach relevant aspects of language (e.g. vocabulary, grammar and cultural features) and essential skills (e.g. speaking, reading). That is, students are accustomed to teacher-centred learning instead of

being independent learners. For example, in reading classes, students look for texts which are prepared by the teachers but are not required to search for texts elsewhere.

Again, it may be stressed that these Libyan students are learning English as a foreign language which they encounter almost entirely in the classroom. Such students rarely have any reason to use English to communicate. As a member of staff I find that a major challenge in Libyan ELT is providing students with authentic situations demanding English; that is, with a reason beyond the requirements of passing an examination in a compulsory subject in their university course. This issue should be taken into account when developing the teaching programme for research in Phase Two.

2.7 Staff at Benghazi University

For the purposes of this research, staff within this university are divided into two groups. *Group A* includes members of staff who have been teaching at the university for more than 18 years and who could be considered as old group members of staff. Recently, from about 1999, the Libyan Authority of Higher Education sent a hundred students to study abroad, which has produced *Group B* members of staff (Latiwish, 2003, p. 25), in other words, staff who have spent a period of time studying for a post graduate qualification. As a consequence of the political and cultural context and its influence on teachers' development, most *Group A* teachers use their own methods of teaching and administration and their own choice of teaching materials. Some of them maintain their old perspective of teacher-centred teaching while ignoring the use of modern teaching facilities and resources such as PowerPoint, Internet and emails. This way of teaching reflects a traditional belief of how teaching and learning should be, as their beliefs and perspectives would not have changed or developed (Latiwish, 2003).

A further group of teachers (Group B) has been identified by Latiwish (2003, pp. 26-27) who also points out that the majority of Group B teachers were taught by Group A teachers during their undergraduate studies. Then, after the re-opening to the West in 1999, many of these students got a chance to complete their MAs/PhDs abroad. Those teachers have therefore experienced different educational context and approach to learning compared to how they learnt at their undergraduate university. According to Latiwish (2003), those teachers face difficulties in relating their new knowledge and abilities to introduce and implement new methods with their students.

I am interested in investigating the challenges in applying Internet-based as new method of teaching and what I have learned in the UK with the first year students. In the light of the fact that most current Libyan university students are encountering new developments such as expanding Internet access, Internet-based information and learning resources, they will require well-skilled teachers to support and facilitate their learning. This fact has encouraged me, as a member of the Group B of teachers, to work with those colleagues who are interested in developing both their teaching and ICT skills. By interacting with modern teaching methods and technology and working collaboratively, we may be able to make a contribution to the development of EFL teaching in the Libyan Higher Education (HE) context.

2.8 An overview of ICT provision

In 2004, private Internet connection in Libya was comparatively slow. Dial-up speeds were reasonably fast for text-based downloads, but rather slow for graphics or video. Commercial Internet connections used an ISDN (International Subscriber Dialling Network), which provided up to 10 times the speed of ordinary telephone lines. In 2005, Libyan Telecommunications and Technology introduced higher Internet speeds using Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) technology. DSL is a broadband method of Internet access that uses standard phone lines to send data at speeds of up to 7 Mbps (Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005). Since 2005, this commercial broadband service has been fully functional and available to private and public users. For the wider public, including students and teachers, access to the Internet is mostly available via public Internet cafes, or “café nets”, as Libyans call them. These cafés normally stay open till late (12 midnight) and charge one Dinar per hour (equivalent to about 40 pence).

2.9 The possibility of using the Internet and e-learning for TEFL in Libya

The global nature of the English language has been enhanced and stimulated by the growth and functioning of the Internet. This development is due to the fact that most Internet hosts are based in English-speaking countries, the United States in particular, and that websites and communication through the Internet are mostly in English (Graddol, 2001; Teeler & Gray, 2000). In 1997, Graddol (2000, p. 50) noted, “English was the medium for 80% of the

information stored in the world's computers..." Since that time the picture has gradually changed and a more recent estimate made by UNESCO in 2008 put it closer to 40%. However, the figures still suggest that the greatest proportion of web-based information is in English.

There is no doubt that the Internet is the source of a wide range of information for formal and informal learning alike. As McConnell remarks (2000, p. 70), the Internet offers learners access to vast resources of knowledge, which will contribute as much to their 'self and professional development as ...their academic learning'. For development purposes, the vastness and flexibility of the Internet have enabled it to be extensively used as both a learning environment and a gateway to information resources (McPherson & Nunes, 2004). Since the Internet has been made available to the public, students and teachers in Libya can tap into millions of websites. Nowadays, mobile computer technology can also be used whenever and wherever there is a wireless Internet connection, thus enabling users to be even more flexible in their learning and networking than if they were fixed to one geographical location (Price, 2007).

The main advantage of using the Internet for teachers and students is that people can use it individually or collaboratively, "free from the constraints of time and distance" (Jennings, 1995, p. 104). In addition to satisfying the individual's needs and ensuring a good pace of learning, the Internet facilitates teacher interaction via e-mail or discussion forums, through which they can raise important issues about "things that matter most for them, day or night, at the touch of a keyboard" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1989, p. 72).

The factors that generally limit the use of computer technology in education in Libya also impact on its use in English language teaching. Although research on using the Internet in English language teaching in Libya is very limited, I consider that there will be both constraints and new possibilities within this field. For Libya, as for many other countries, it is argued that the Internet could become a powerful tool for facilitating the teaching and learning of English (Tinio, 2003).

2.10 Learner- centred education approach in the Libyan education system

The introduction of a new learner-centred education in the English language curriculum in Libyan universities enforced a shift in the teachers' instructional approach from teacher-centred classes to learner-centred ones (Orafi & Borg, 2009; Saleh, 2002). The main aim of introducing this approach was to “enhance students' communication skills” (Orafi & Borg, 2009, p. 251). To this end, the English textbooks include various on-line activities and learning tasks which have been primarily designed to be performed through independent work, pair work and group work, role-play, problem-solving and language games. The appropriate implementation of these activities calls for students to be deeply engaged and actively participating and for teachers to adopt the role of facilitator (Phillips et al., 2008).

However, even when learner-centred education is introduced into a curriculum, personal and local research at Libyan universities has revealed that the instructional approaches of most Libyan EFL teachers are still teacher-centred (Ahmad, 2004; Alhmali, 2007; Ali, 2008; Dalala, 2006; Orafi & Borg, 2009; Saleh, 2002). As a teacher of English as a foreign language (EFL) in a Libyan university and as a researcher, I was conscious that Libyan EFL teachers were neither involved in the process of designing any curriculum nor were offered any training to develop our teaching.

Learner-centred education involves shifting the role of the teacher from a knowledge-transmitter to a facilitator of students' learning and the role of the student from a passive recipient of knowledge to an active participant in the learning process. It also involves accommodating 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 met the following comment from 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, p. 2).

The role of language teachers in such a classroom is to help and encourage students to develop their skills, but without giving up their own traditional role as sources of information, advice and knowledge (Jones, 2007, p. 25). Learner-centred classes have been used in this study in the sense that the participants in them are encouraged to learn independently.

The Internet may therefore provide a powerful resource for Libyan students learning English, particularly in contexts where they have little chance to be exposed to English and to communicate in English. The Internet provides authentic English-language learning contexts, cultures, texts, materials and activities. It may provide a motivating and exciting learning atmosphere which can encourage students' independence and offer them opportunities to use English for a variety of purposes. The Internet presents new processes of reading, where readers can encounter multiple modes of interactivity, such as writing, images, sound and video files, as well as electronic links to other information. Furthermore, the Internet can provide authentic and purposeful interaction and communication between students and native speakers or non-native speakers of English through e-mailing, newsgroups, mailing lists and chat rooms. In these ways, the Internet may be said to enhance English Language learning in accordance with the principles of meaningful interaction in communicative language teaching (Warschauer, 2001), which I consider in more depth in a later section.

CHAPTER THREE

THE LITERATURE REVIEW

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter I review the theoretical and research literature relating to teaching of English as foreign language and the use of ICT in the teaching of English in higher education. I also give an overview of some key pedagogical theories in relation to EFL teaching in Libyan HE. In the course of developing my research project I became increasingly aware of the value of effective ICT in language teaching in the EFL classroom. In the light of my underlying hope, which was to be able to make recommendations to the Ministry of Education in Libya about improving EFL teaching by the use of ICT, the focus of my study shifted to a review of EFL pedagogy, and, in particular, those aspects of EFL pedagogy of relevance to teaching in Libya. I have therefore undertaken a broader review than was originally planned, encompassing theories of language teaching and learning, theories of language and ICT in the EFL classroom, as these issues emerged from the data.

The scope of my project means that I cannot review here the relevant literature from all of these areas in any great depth, so I have limited my review to an overview of material that is relevant to the issues of pedagogy and the use of ICT in higher education that have arisen in the context of my study and my particular aims. My review of the literature is therefore structured in the following way:

- Section one presents the literature focusing on the use of the educational theory of EFL and its pedagogy in higher education.
- Section two reviews the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in higher education in Libya. This is also referred to in section 2 as ‘e-learning’.

3.1 Theory and Pedagogy

This section discusses theories and concepts and key teaching approaches in teaching EFL. The main concept discussed is Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), while the

approaches include: the Grammar Translation Method; Direct Method; Audiolingual Method; Communicative Language Teaching; and Learner-Centred Education. As previously noted, the style of classroom teaching within the Department of English at the University of Benghazi was traditional, with the teacher's table facing the students' desks. The current English language syllabus of this university was based on a traditional educational philosophy which supported a subject- and teacher-centred view (Gusbi, 1984). This kind of teaching syllabus has been criticised for concentrating too heavily upon the memorisation of isolated vocabulary, the learning and application of grammatical structures and on translating and understanding texts (Nunan, 1988; Orafi & Borg, 2009). Therefore, traditional methods such as the Grammar-Translation Method, Direct Method and Audiolingual Method (Gusbi, 1984) had been used to present the content of textbooks and to achieve the objectives of their teaching syllabus at university level.

The main methods of language teaching used by EFL teachers in the Libyan HE context are the Grammar Translation Method, the Direct Method, and the Audio-Lingual Method. Some of the teachers may also blend these methods within their own teaching style. Local research on ELT has revealed that these methods are widely used by Libyan EFL teachers coupled with an extensive amount of the students' native language (Arabic) (Aldabbus, 2008; Ali, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009; Saleh, 2002). Saleh (2002) examined the classroom behaviours of ten Libyan EFL teachers from different colleges in the region where the study was based. This study aimed to investigate teachers' control over classroom practices, the language of instruction and presentation (English/Arabic) and the most common interaction patterns in English classes. Its findings reveal that teacher-centred instruction and teacher-led activities were the most common practices of these teachers and that translation was the main strategy of presentation, with a clear dominance of teacher's talk. The main conclusion drawn by Saleh is that the classroom strategies and activities observed in all the classrooms were clearly teacher-centred and not communicatively-based.

Ali (2008) investigated the oral correction techniques used by sixty-five EFL school teachers in the same region. Findings of this study show that teachers are influenced by the old teaching methods and the techniques they had learnt when they were students. Even when the teachers had a positive attitude towards more communicative activities, it was not translated into classroom practices. Some of the teachers participated in communicative activities in a teacher-fronted question-and-answer session, and more experienced teachers

mixed different techniques, and were able to inspire students to build their self-confidence by establishing the meaning of communication rather than focusing solely on grammatical accuracy. These findings provided useful insights into Libyan EFL teachers' pedagogical styles in the implementation of the syllabus. The current research has been conducted to investigate this issue from another perspective, in order to integrate the use of ICT activities within the teaching syllabus in order to enhance the students' learning.

3.1.1 Theory of Teaching English as a foreign Language

3.1.1.1 The Grammar Translation Method

Burns (1996) specified that the Grammar Translation Method has its historical origins in the teaching of Latin, which was once the main language in universities and public services. Knowledge of Latin was required for the study of the Bible and for academic purposes such as the study of religion and philosophy, medical treatises and law documents. In Latin studies, the focus was inevitably on the study of written texts.

Knowledge of Latin distinguished 'educated people' from ordinary folks. Study of the canon of classical texts from well-known ancient authors like Ovid and Cicero was considered morally and aesthetically edifying and superior to anything which study of modern languages could afford (Burns, 1996, pp. 291-292).

Therefore the Grammar Translation Method is the oldest and most commonly used method of language teaching in educational settings, and the description clarifies how it became established in the Libyan educational context.

Harvey (1985) points out that this method allows for learning a foreign language through the constant rapid translation of sentences from the target language into the learner's first language and vice versa. Brown (2000) summarises some of the major features of the Grammar Translation Method as follows:

Classes are taught in the mother tongue with little active use of the target language, much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words, long elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given, Grammar provides the rules for putting words together, and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of words; less attention is paid to the content of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis, Often the only drills are exercises in

translating disconnected sentences from the target language into the mother tongue (pp. 15-17).

Richards *et al* (2002) observes that, with Grammar Translation Method, learners are required to learn the grammar rules and vocabulary of the target language. It is deductively taught, where learners are provided with grammar rules and examples, told to memorise them and then asked to apply the rules to other examples (p. 176). Sanz (2004) shows that the Grammar Translation Method provides learners with explicit information before or during exposure to second language (L2) input, by means of either grammatical explanation or negative evidence in the form of corrective feedback. However, this approach has produced a number of students who are grammatically capable but communicatively incompetent (pp. 40-41).

Reza *et al.* (2007) state that in many countries, including Libya, the Grammar Translation Method is still considered the best way of teaching and learning English, because it is aligned with the existing culture of learning in Libya, which is teacher-centred. Latiwish (2003) describes EFL in Libya as consisting of mastering grammatical rules and vocabulary. He indicates that many English language curriculums and associated coursebooks are designed to encourage doing so by memorisation. Many Libyan teachers are also influenced by particular beliefs of learning as it takes place in traditional Libyan classrooms, where teachers have more control over students' interaction and contributions (pp. 37-38). Hence, the grammar translation techniques are widely used in the Libyan EFL context by EFL teachers who will themselves have learnt English in this way, as this is the way many Libyan EFL teachers are taught. This makes it likely that the teachers will use methods such as the Grammar Translation method – from their experience as students – and thus have less teacher-student interaction (which is a characteristic of such methods) in their lessons.

3.1.1.2 Direct Method

Although the Grammar Translation Method is the most frequently used method in Libyan Universities, research suggests that it is not uncommon to find methods such as the Direct Method used in classrooms. Butzkamm (2003) points out that The Direct Method which refrains from using learners' native language and just uses target language, was established in Germany and France at the end of the 19th century (Butzkamm, 2003). Numerous researchers and scholars demonstrate that the direct method is used irregularly in the Libyan context. This is perhaps surprising as the following description of its features shows that it requires some confidence in language proficiency.

It focuses on the centrality of spoken language, i.e. a native-like pronunciation, focus on question-answer patterns and seeing the teacher as the point of reference for accuracy (Nunan, 2004, p. 265).

Lindsay et al. (2006) mention that

Direct Method was an important step forward - the use of the target language as the language of instruction underpins a lot of teaching today. Its aims are only speaking, reading, understanding and having good pronunciation. The learners are encouraged to speak, but not forced; writing is postponed as much as possible (p. 17).

Larsen-Freeman (2000) lists some commonly used actions that are closely associated with the Direct Method:

- *Reading aloud, in which students take turns to read sections of a passage, play, or dialogue aloud.*
- *Question and answer exercises, in which students are asked questions and answer in full sentences only in the target language, so that they practise new words and grammatical structures.*
- *Conversation practice, in which the teacher asks the students a number of questions in the target language, which the students have to understand to be able to answer correctly.*
- *Getting students to self-correct, by supply an answer different from what a student has said and asking him/her to choose between the two (pp. 30-32).*

However, Richards and Rodgers (2014) argue that the Direct Method must involve teachers who are native speakers, since it depends on the teacher's skill rather than on a textbook. It avoids using the students' language, which can result in a waste of time in conveying new concepts. It also overlooks teaching grammar, focusing instead on vocabulary acquisition (p. 48).

Suleiman (2003) believes that while the Direct Method is widely seen as effective, it is rarely used by many Arabic teachers of EFL because it involves the exclusive use of the target language between teachers and their students. Some teachers of EFL still prefer to use their first language (Arabic) within their classrooms, which tends to lead to less practice of the target language and less interaction within classrooms. In this case, students may be mere passive receivers of their teachers' directions and the teachers' own performance of using the target language. This may vary in quality because many Arab EFL teachers have

themselves been taught by the Grammar Translation Method, which may have stunted their speaking skills (p. 44).

Latiwish (2003) found that some Libyan teachers try to encourage their students towards further use of the target language during their classes, in particular during specialist lessons (advanced level-English department) as part of their compulsory work. However Sawani (2009, pp. 16-18) asserts that the Direct Method is rarely applied in Libyan universities, as a result of several factors:

- Most EFL classes in Libyan universities contain very large numbers of students, which limits or reduces the application of such a method.
- The students themselves are used to receiving information, memorising it and preparing themselves for exams rather than using a discovery (interactive) learning method.
- Most of the teachers' selected materials are based on grammatical constructions and structures rather than classrooms activities that would involve students in classroom interaction.
- Many Libyan students, mostly females, prefer to be silent and shy away from any audible or practical activities. In other words, Libyan EFL culture and style of teaching and learning is influenced by traditional Libyan ways of teaching and learning English, such as the Grammar-Translation Method or its concepts, where teachers are the central source of information; students are used to having the help of their first Language (L1) in most of their EFL classes.

3.1.1.3 Audio-lingual Method

The Audio-lingual Method, according to Brown et al. (1998), is based on the “philosophies of behavioural psychology” (p. 229). It adapted many of the principles of the Direct Method, in part as a reaction to the lack of speaking skills in the grammar translation method. While incorporating many of the features of the earlier Direct Method, it added the notion of teaching ‘linguistic patterns’ in combination with ‘habit forming’. As Nunan (2004) explains, the “Audiolingual Method was, in fact, the first approach which could be said to have developed a ‘technology’ of teaching, using language laboratories, and based on ‘scientific’ principles” (p. 229).

Audio-Lingual teaching methods combine structural linguistics and behaviourist theories. Its theoretical basis – behaviourism – interprets language learning in terms of ‘stimulus’ and ‘response’, ‘operant conditioning’ and ‘reinforcement’, with a regard for successful ‘error-free learning’ (Liu & Shi, 2007). It presumes that learning a language involves mastering the elements or building blocks of the language and learning the rules by which these elements are connected, from phoneme to morpheme to word to phrase to sentence. As such, it is distinguished by its separation of the skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – and the primacy of audio-lingual over visual skills. Dialogue is the chief means of presenting the language and certain practice techniques, such as ‘patterns’, ‘drills’ and ‘mimicry’, are central to the method. Listening and speaking are the focus, through the use of tape recordings, and language laboratory drills are offered in practice (Liu & Shi, 2007, pp. 70-71). Spolsky (1989) argues that this method does not develop the ability to carry on unplanned conversations, a goal it had not originally projected (p. 289).

Freeman et al. (2000, 45-50) describe in detail some common or typical techniques associated with the Audio-lingual Method:

- *Dialogue memorisation, where students memorise an opening dialogue using imitation and applied role-playing.*
- *Backward Build-up (Expansion Drill) where the teacher breaks a line into several parts and students repeat each part starting at the end of the sentence and ‘expanding’ backwards through the sentence, adding each part in sequence.*
- *Repetition drill where students repeat the teacher’s model as ‘quickly’ and ‘accurately’ as possible.*
- *‘Chain drill’ where students ask and answer each other one by one in a circular chain around the classroom.*
- *‘Transformation drill’, where the teacher provides a sentence that must be turned into something else, for example a question to be turned into a statement or an active sentence to be turned into a negative statement and so on.*
- *‘Question and Answer drill’, where students should answer or ask questions very quickly.*
- *‘Completing the dialogue’, where selected words are erased from a line in the dialogue and students must find and insert them.*

Hadley (2000) argues that “some drawbacks of the Audio-lingual Method [are that it] failed to deliver what it had promised: bilingual speakers at the end of the instruction. It also did not take into account the students’ various learning styles and preferences” (pp. 77-78).

The Audio-lingual Method is widely used in EFL teaching in Libya. Imssalem (2001), based on the research she has conducted on EFL teaching methods in Libya, states that many EFL teachers and even students tend to prefer learning through drilling, memorising and repeating practical activities, such as grammatical patterns, long words and even memorising long paragraphs read-aloud (p. 46). Sawani (2009) also reveals that the Audio-lingual Method supports some Libyan teachers' attitudes towards learning. Many teachers of larger groups of students prefer drilling in most of the activities that they provide – even reading and grammar patterns (pp. 21-2). However, Latiwish (2003) wonders whether some members of the new generation who are aware of the criticism of such methods may try to modify or integrate some aspects of the Audio-lingual Method such as drilling and memorisation, which are part of the Libyan learning style, with other more modern methods such as Communicative Language Teaching (p. 40).

3.1.1.4 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) builds on a pedagogical approach to teaching language and incorporates notions of acquisition and motivation. Communicative language teaching originated in the late 1960s as part of a reaction against structural approaches and situational language teaching in the United Kingdom and against audio-lingual methods in the United States. The existing methods were considered to provide few opportunities for learners to use language for communication, instead focusing upon mastery of structure. The communicative approach focuses on the concept of 'communicative competence' (Hedge, 2000) and may be said to be product of educators and linguists who were dissatisfied with both the Audio-lingual Method and the Grammar Translation Method (Lindsay, 2006, p. 21).

Richards & Rogers (1986) argue that "Communicative Language Teaching is best considered as an approach rather than a method" (p. 50). Within a methodology, a distinction is often made between methods and approaches, in which the former are held to be fixed teaching systems with prescribed techniques and practices, whereas the latter represent language teaching philosophies that can be interpreted and applied in a variety of different ways in the classroom (Rogers, 2001, pp. 9-10).

Widdowson (1990) indicates that

The communicative approach concentrates on getting learners to do things with language, to express concepts and to carry out communicative acts of various kinds. The content of a language course is now defined not in terms of forms, words and sentence patterns, but in terms of concepts, or notions, which such forms are used to express, and the communicative functions which they are used to perform (p. 159).

The principal objective of CLT is to allow learners to develop communicative competence in order to use the target language in communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The communicative approach highlights communication as the goal of learners and aims to provide the best means of achieving this goal (Pica, 2000), which is achieved by tasks requiring students to share information and negotiate meaning. Such activities typically include problem-solving tasks, role-plays, simulations and games (Johnson & Morrow, 1981) and usually exclude the use of the students' first language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). In the communicative approach, students are expected to play active roles through 'negotiation for meaning'. Therefore, students in the communicative classroom are expected to interact primarily with each other, not the teacher (Richards & Rogers, 2014). Students are anticipated to have opportunities to express ideas and opinions, to take risks and to experiment with the new language.

The communicative approach also emphasises the use of authentic learning materials to promote students' communication. Richards and Rodgers (2001) classify such materials as texts, tasks and 'realia' (p. 168). Texts can include other resources such as recipes or stories from popular fiction which are used for the purpose of teaching, though in this research they are limited to the textbooks which are designed to support communicative language teaching and which include such authentic or simplified materials as learners would be expected to meet beyond the classroom. Authentic tasks are those, as indicated above, which replicate or simulate the kinds of communication required beyond the classroom. 'Realia', or authentic materials, refer to signs, magazines, newspapers, advertisements, graphic resources, graphs, charts and various audio and video resources. CLT not only encourages the use of these but also stresses the practice of using visual aids, cue cards and power-point displays. Language teachers in the old-fashioned ways of teaching used to use chalk, talk, blackboards and pictures. Influenced by the principles of CLT, teachers have adopted more refined Hi-Tech techniques in their classrooms.

The five features of CLT outlined by Nunan (1991, p. 279) underpin good practice in developing the learner's language competence. The five features are:

- *An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.*
- *The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.*
- *The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language but also on the learning management process.*
- *An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributory elements to classroom learning.*
- *An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom.*

These features are based on the impression that the learner is the central focus of the language teaching and learning processes, conferring importance on the students' needs and interests. The basic pedagogical principle of CLT is that the positive acquisition of the target language on the part of the learners depends on the amount of interaction and negotiation of meaning that they engage in. In this way, the integration of language input and output contributes to the language development system of the learners (Beale, 2002, p. 15).

The range of types of exercise and activity compatible with a communicative approach is linked to the constructivist theory of learning. According to George (1999, pp. 16-7),

Constructivism is basically a theory - based on observation and scientific study about 'how people learn', which holds that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world, through experiencing things and reflecting on these experiences. This new evidence is then linked to prior knowledge; thus, the mental representations are subjective.

Furthermore, in the communicative approach the emphasis is on a learner-centred approach to language learning (p. 22). Lantolf (2000) explains that both teachers and learners must interact with sources of knowledge in a social setting, in the sense that they should take an active part in reconstructing the knowledge within their own minds (pp. 12-3).

With regards to its relevance to the Libyan context, Imssalem (2001) argues that the problem with this kind of language teaching is that it is an approach, not a method, in that "methods are fixed teaching systems whereas approaches form the theory and leave the teaching system to the creativity and innovation of the teacher" (p. 41). CLT does not provide sufficient guidance to the teacher and in countries such as Libya, where teachers and students of EFL are influenced by traditional methods of teaching and learning, its use may be limited.

Sawani (2009) agrees that applying such a method is probably not easy in the Libyan teaching and learning context for various reasons. Firstly, as has been discussed, most EFL teachers use older methods such as grammar-translation. Teacher training programmes fail to introduce teachers to the latest techniques and theories of EFL teaching. Secondly, as has already been suggested, students' cultural background does not support the communicative approach (p. 23). In other words, implementing this approach in Libya may involve a number of challenges for both teachers and students of EFL. Nonetheless, there is evidence that in privately run courses, a new generation of teachers is adopting the communication approach (Orafi, 2009, pp. 245-6).

Latiwish (2003) also describes a new generation of teachers who are trying to shift their learners' expectations from teacher-centred to student-centred classes. This shift, he indicated, can be clearly seen in many private English courses in Libya as well as in some university classes (p. 46). Based on these observations, the current research examines the changes that may be taking place in the pedagogical approaches of Libyan HE EFL teachers. The research discussed above suggests that they may be growing more used to a learned-centred approach, blended with the use of ICT in learning English language.

Content-Based Instruction (CBI) is a part of CLT and is an approach used for second language teaching and suggests that language can be viewed as a tool to improve knowledge about particular content or information rather than as an end in itself (Brinton et al., 1989; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards & Rogers, 2014). The use of content which is relevant and of specific interest to learners is assumed to increase their motivation to access the information and therefore enhance effective learning. Important principles here are that learners have a purpose which is meaningful to them for learning a language and that teaching should take into account students' existing knowledge and experience of the subject matter. Brinton, Snow and Wesche (1989) suggest that language should involve meaningful chunks at the level of wider discourses which are relevant and of interest to learners.

The teacher in CBI is described by Breen and Candlin (2001) as having a number of functions: to facilitate communication amongst students using a wide range of activities and texts and to organise resources and be an involved participant sharing responsibility for learning and teaching with the students. Within this idea comes the 'learner-centred' approach (Hedge, 2000), about which the following sub-section elaborates.

The situation in Libya regarding the status of English as a ‘global language’ which is located in the outer ‘expanding circle’ of usage (Crystal, 1996) has already been discussed in an earlier chapter. From this perspective, where English may not routinely be encountered in everyday life, the value of creating such methods of learning is clear: linking these methods to teaching and learning with Internet-based activities and the development of ICT skills makes further sense, since there is such a wealth of information available on the Internet in English.

3.1.2 Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

Vygotsky 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 a social, cultural and historical context, since any learning that a learner encounters in educational institutions always has a previous history (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 84). Vygotsky highlighted the significant role of social interaction in the learning process, stating that relating the learner’s past experiences to what is learnt in classrooms will lead him/her to construct knowledge independently. Teachers or more capable peers help and guide less able students in solving problems or performing challenging tasks, through the idea of the ‘Zone of Proximal Development’ (ZPD), 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, p. 86). He continues that the teacher should explain, inform, inquire, correct and motivate students to explain and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding (ibid).

The idea of EFL students’ imitating teachers can be a useful strategy for certain activities and learning tasks in student-centred language classes. Jones (2007) admits the value of “teacher-led, repeat after me practice” in student-centred language classrooms and believes that this practice helps students to “get their tongues around new phrases and expressions so that they can say them easily and comfortably” (p. 23). Consequently, he recommends EFL student-centred teachers to employ this kind of practice.

Vygotsky's (1978) concept of ZPD is also relevant to the application of Salmon's (2002) 5-stage model of ICT learning. Salmon uses this idea in the 'scaffolded' (Bruner, 1985) approach to creating tasks and activities which build on previous learning and support the gradual extension of skills. Mercer (1994) judges that the relationship between teachers and learners is an important factor in determining ZPD tasks, suggesting that the ZPD for a learner could change in different settings and with different teachers (p. 102).

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 to self-construct knowledge and on the value of cooperation and interaction between teachers and students and among students suggest a constructivist view (DeVries, 2000, pp. 188-9). It implies Vygotsky's belief in the possibility of thinking about the TCA (behaviourist) and the LCA (constructivist) approaches as balancing one another, rather than being polarized. If teachers see this, they may integrate the strategies and practices of both these approaches in their classrooms.

Bruner (1985) and his associates coined the term 'scaffolding' as a metaphor for the kind of teaching support which builds on existing skills, guiding and supporting the extension of these skills and is designed with opportunities for modification to suit learners progressing at differing rates and with differing support needs (Hammond & Gibbons, 2001; van Lier, 1996; 2004). Bruner (1996) also believes in the importance of the role of the teacher in the learning process, but stressed that the teacher should not monopolise the role, but should let learners "scaffold" for each other as well (p: 21). In the specific case of e-learning, this kind of support may be particularly significant; a number of writers have identified the potential for e-learners to feel isolated or invisible at times (McConnell, 2000; Pincas, 2004; Salmon, 2002).

However, providing students with more scaffolding than they need may impact negatively on their learning. Al-dabbus (2008) reports that the concept of 'scaffolding' was "routinely incorrectly 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 most effective. Fleming and Stevens (1998) suggest 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 self-reliant and self-regulated learning.

Freire (1973) discouraged the notion of what he calls ‘assistencialism’ in teaching and learning, because it would produce more adaptable learners and would enable teachers to practise more manipulation over students. However, teachers’ careful selection of learning tasks in the light of their good understanding of students’ cognitive abilities is an essential condition for enhancing students’ involvement in problem-solving tasks and for encouraging their active learning. It is possible to use the Vygotskian ‘Zone of Proximal Development’ as a model for explaining the role of facilitator in a learner-centred classroom. For example, in a foreign language classroom, this idea can be used for distinguishing between the language tasks and challenging situations that students can perform independently from those that they can perform with assistance from teachers or more able peers. This accentuates the significant role of the teacher in the learning process and the importance of employing cooperative learning approaches in the classroom.

Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010), instead, believe that “authentic, inquiry learning strategies balanced with direct instruction and cooperative learning are important methods in a learner-centred classroom” (p. 135). Kozma recommends (2008) changing the pedagogies appropriate to ICT learning in the following ways: “Pervasive technologies and social networks are used to support knowledge production and knowledge sharing by students and teachers. Networks are used to help students and teachers build knowledge communities” and “Teaching consists of challenging students to build on their knowledge and explore new topics. Collaborative projects and investigations involve searching for information, collecting and analysing data, generating knowledge products and communicating with outside professionals and audiences to share results” (p. 16).

Thus, the idea of ‘learner-centred’ approaches to teaching underlines the collaboration and participation of learners through the whole process of designing course content and selecting learning procedures (Hedge, 2000). Learners are motivated to take responsibility for their learning. However, the teacher needs to ensure that effective strategies for learning and for monitoring learning are chosen. This approach is endorsed by Nunan & Lamb (2001) who assert that “In an ideal learning-centred framework, not only will decisions about what to learn and how to learn be made with reference to the learners, but the learners themselves will be involved in the decision making processes” (p. 28).

3.1.3 The role of the teacher in English teaching classrooms

Teachers and students can work together effectively in supportive relationships to achieve good results in learning EFL. But, as Cullingford (1995) declares, “it is always possible to accumulate information, but how do we acquire wisdom?” (p. 1). With regard to the teacher’s role in English language teaching, studies have investigated the effects of different teacher roles on learning. In a learner-centred approach the teacher’s role is not to fill the students’ minds with information but to inspire them to discover how to use this knowledge in appropriate situations. Different techniques are considered effective in this regard. For example, the teacher may change the lesson activities and involve the students in acting out a task, giving a prize to those who participate in classroom activities. Some teachers are always more active than others, maybe because they like their career and they have more experience that allows them to distinguish when to change from one teaching method to another and thus make the lesson more interesting to the class. Such change within the teaching pedagogy can be related to the aim of the lesson which focuses on learning and practice. In this regard, Gore et al. (2004) argue that not all graduates of teacher education programmes become great teachers, but all can at least be well prepared to improve their teaching and seek suitable ways to encourage students to learn (p. 357).

Harrison et al. (2006) state:

Teachers must never stop learning if teacher education is to be a dynamic process. The learning process for teachers must be about their practice, must be built on experiences derived from their practice (p1055)

Teachers need to vary their teaching pedagogy and their use of effective teaching practice in the teaching of a foreign language and this can be learned by practice and experience. Robert and Stevens (2004) stress that teachers become aware, clear and conscious regarding various elements that enhance students’ learning and react positively to their learning mistakes (p. 670). They add that all these elements are based on so-called practical knowledge which is developed over many years of teaching (ibid). However, Wilson (2000) argues that teachers should organise their thinking about what is happening in the classroom in order to gain deeper insight into the learning process, to maximise the usefulness of the learning experiences and to inspire students to share their experience (p. 303).

Edge (1993), Gettinger (1993) and Larsen-Freeman (2000) advise teachers to be sensitive to students' needs and expectations and to adopt an encouraging technique. For instance teachers could change the activities and give the students more time to conduct these activities to enhance their learning by correcting their task by themselves. One of the teacher's roles is to encourage students to practise their language with no shyness, because if the students are not comfortable, or not motivated, they are unlikely to achieve their aims. However the teachers who know their students' needs and interests find great success in developing better learning in ways that encourage it. Rivers (1981) believes we should encourage

... the ... behaviour factors which are involved in expression exchange in a new language [and] can be developed only in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, where students feel at ease with the teacher and with each other (p. 227)

Doff (1997) argues that by creating a productive working environment in the classroom and creating good relationships with the students in class and also recognising that the students have different needs and interests, the teacher can enhance the students' learning of the language. The teacher could create a positive learning atmosphere with the students by introducing different activities such as greeting, introducing themselves or playing some games that help the students to use the new language. Crookes and Chaudron (1991) stress that there are aspects of attitude and approach which may affect the classroom learning environment, for example the enthusiasm and happiness that teachers can show during the teaching (p. 63). Therefore, the teachers should not ignore the classroom environment but should be aware of how the classroom is affected by the teacher's attitude and also by her or his behaviour, such as how he or she introduces the lesson, the way he or she starts the activities or how he or she maintains discipline and how much he or she uses the English language in the classroom (Doff, 1997; Macaro, 1997).

3.1.4 Learner-centred education

Lambert and McCombs (1998) define learner-centred teaching as "the application of learner-centred psychological principles in practice - in the programmes, policies and people that support learning for all" (p. 9). From a psychological perspective, learner-centred concepts in classroom practice are based on the belief that learning is a psychological process occurring in the heads and hearts of individual learners who should be offered the

opportunity to make decisions about what, how and when to learn (Rogers, 1969). This approach highlights that, because learning is an important aspect of a student's life, the accountability for directing it should be in the hands of the student her/himself. Encouraging and motivating learners to attain their goals and to realise their full potential is seen as a significant aim of education. The development and application of learner-centred education (LCE) also draws on the philosophy and democratic ideas of Dewey, who made a significant contribution to the application of these ideas in educational contexts.

An important principle of this approach is concerned with providing students with caring, trust and support in the classroom. Therefore, it is important for the teachers to promote positive feelings about students' learning and respect the value of every student's ability to direct his/her own learning (Brumfit, 1982; Jacobs et al, 2006; Nunan, 1999; Rico, 2008; Tudor, 1996). Classrooms in any case have a substantial role to play in creating a good learning atmosphere for promoting students' learning. They should be places where ideas, facts and feelings can be openly expressed and where students' creativity can be encouraged. Schmuck and Schmuck (1974) advise that emotions and intellect should be given equal attention in schools and suggest striking a balance between students' personal interests and general learning goals. Brandes and Ginnis (1986) highlight that schools should be characterised by an "all-pervading air of positive cooperation and trust" (p. 181). Rico (2008) suggests that creating this atmosphere in schools would require teachers' adoption of a methodology which involves their understanding and consideration of students' affective factors (p. 56).

The importance of communication and interaction between the learner and his/her surroundings for constructing knowledge is emphasised by Rousseau (1911). He describes nature as a source of knowledge available for everyone and suggests that If your pupil "learns nothing from you, he will learn from others" (p. 82). This presumes that learning occurs not only in formal settings inside classrooms, but from nature, from other students and from one's surroundings (independent learning/cooperative learning/experiential learning). Rousseau's interest in shifting the focus of classroom instructional approaches to be more on learning and less on teaching, in order to offer active and participatory roles for learners in constructing their knowledge, has modern resonance with what is called today, learner-centred education. Rousseau's ideas had led earlier scholars to criticise the traditional approaches of teaching and learning, to call for more humanistic approaches to be adopted

(Rogers, 1969) and for more democratic ideas to be incorporated into education (Dewey, 1916).

3.1.5 The role of teachers in Learner-Centred Education

The pedagogical role of the teacher in Learner-Centred Education (LCE), where more responsibility for independent learning lies with the learners, continues to be that of facilitating the learning process and providing appropriate support for learning strategies (Salmon, 2002a). As Pincas (2004) emphasizes, it is a role that we cannot overlook: s/he acts as the facilitator and manager of learning, promoting independence and supporting the shared building of knowledge, hereafter becoming a provider of knowledge in managing the learning process. Herington *et al* (2000) also emphasise that, in spite of the dissatisfaction with traditional teacher-centred methods, online teaching, planned to be individually assessed, has recently relocated to the field of ICT and is adapting comfortably to the new technology (p. 1). The critical argument here is that, no matter how learner-centred online pedagogy is, the teacher's role in online learning models remains central and online teachers continue to have an important part to play in organising and managing teaching as a 'system' of learning and in supporting independent and collaborative learning processes (Eisenstadt & Vincent, 1998, p. 25).

One significant aspect of a teacher's role in online courses is to facilitate learning, by supporting the new ways of acquiring knowledge through discussion rather than the mere presentation of material (Hiltz et al., 2007). Furthermore the role of an online teacher is to help participants identify learning goals, design intelligent content, set achievable tasks and facilitate learning in independent and collaborative contexts, in which participants are encouraged to reflect on the content by independent study and then cooperate with each other to co-construct meanings and engage in assimilating tasks and projects (Kearsley, 2000). Providing structured and timely feedback is also critical, mainly in distance online environments where learners are more susceptible to the lack of social interaction (Hiltz et al., 2007). Salmon (2002a) sums up the role of online tutors:

They know how to welcome and support learners into the online world and to build effective online groups. They know how to build gradually on the processes of exchanging information and how to turn this into knowledge sharing and ultimately into knowledge construction. They

know when to take part as a tutor, when as a peer and when to stay silent (p. 5).

3.1.6 The Libyan government's encouragement of changes to pedagogy

The Libyan Educational Authority's Report (2008) criticises Libyan teachers' traditional teaching system for its focus on memorisation. This report describes these approaches as not being effective for twenty-first century Libyan students. It argues that teachers are needed who use the methods of thinking and analysis, towards the building of a full logical pedagogical model. The report emphasises the need for changing the traditional role of teacher from a specialist and the sole source of knowledge into an assistant and a director, transforming the student into an active learner and even training him/her in the skills of thinking and analysis, and practice. The report explains that the change in the role of teacher should be accompanied by a change in the role of educational institutions from centres of indoctrination and conversation to centres of cultural and scientific thinking and mediation, which has an immediate impact on the social surroundings (Libyan Educational Authority 2008, p. 28).

The report wants the syllabus developed for Libyan institutes to support the pursuit of humanistic objectives of education. This syllabus should support democratic public values as a way of life, by explaining the concept of democratic values and translating them into procedural processes in the everyday lives of students and society. Item 12 of section c (pp. 6-7) of the Libyan Educational Authority (2008) states that the syllabus should be allied with the students' environment. Item 13 considers the different ages of learners and the disparities in their individual profiles and patterns of learning. It proposes that opportunities should be provided for achieving excellence, creativity and innovation and conceiving education as the prelude to a practical life. This suggests that any syllabus development in Libya should include all those who are concerned with the learning and teaching processes.

3.2 The use of ICT in Higher Education

Kozma, (2008) gives several reasons for investing in ICT in education, namely, supporting economic growth by developing human capital, promoting social development by sharing knowledge, advancing educational reform through shifting pedagogies and supporting educational management. Although Internet-based technology holds great potential for facilitating foreign language teaching and learning, such potential can only be realized when

this technology is actually used by the teachers and learners. The ways in which the English language learners and teachers can make use of the technology will ultimately determine the effectiveness of this new approach in the teaching and learning of EFL. Therefore, a good understanding of the ways that teachers and the learners could make use of Internet-based resources is of great significance for both theoretical and practical purposes. This section examines the relevant literature on the potential uses of technology in ELT.

The term e-learning originally described the use of ICT mainly in HE settings, but it is now used to refer to Internet-based learning activities which have been wholly or partly incorporated into all levels of formal and non-formal education as course and curricular content (Tinio, 2003). Although distinctions are sometimes made between the ideas of e-learning and Internet-based learning (Al Khatib, 2003), for the purposes of this review I use the terms interchangeably. The term ‘blended learning’ is used to describe a situation where ICT is used in conjunction with more traditional classroom-based activities.

New generations of computer software, such as ‘Blackboard’ now facilitate online learning through interactive learning environments combine learning and assessment materials and offer options for support and collaboration through communication with peers and teachers. Andrews and Haythornthwaite (2007) emphasise the possibilities for e-learning in the creation of communities of learning where knowledge can be generated, co-constructed and presented as well as acquired. This involves engaging in a process of dialogue with other learners and teachers, where “students and faculty communicate and work together to build and share knowledge” (Hiltz et al., 2007, p. 57). The idea of constructing and sharing knowledge accords with Vygotsky’s (1978) constructivist propositions of learning. I return to this theory of pedagogy in the next section.

A number of models or frameworks for theorising the conditions of e-learning have evolved, three of which are presented here. Salmon (2002) offers a 5 stage model based upon one used by the Open University Business School for use in distance learning. Salmon talks about the need to create supportive ‘scaffolding’ (Bruner & Sherwood, 1975; Wood et al., 1976), which helps to create and maintain the motivation of learners who might otherwise feel isolated in connection with online interactive learning environments. This model stresses the need to build upon the student’s previous experiences through creating structured exercises in order to motivate them to extend their range of skills (see Figure 3.1).

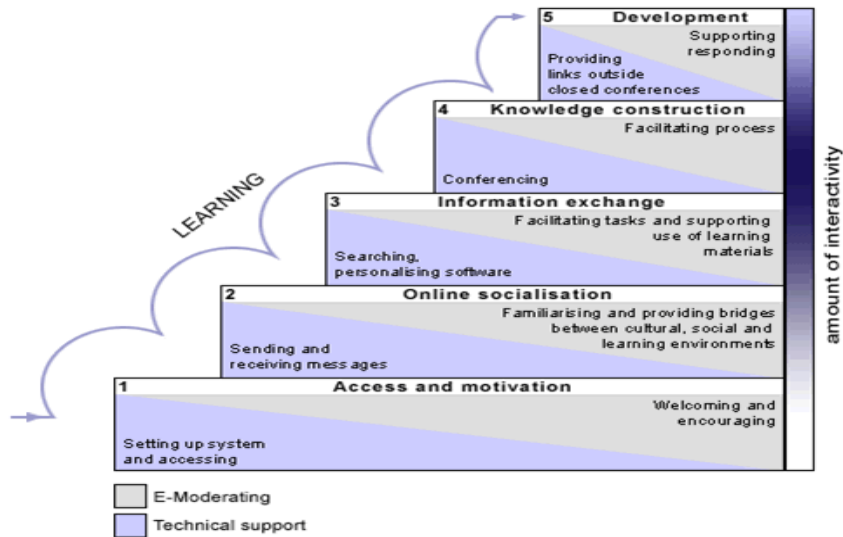


Figure 2. Salmon's 5 stage model

Garrison and Anderson (2003) suggest a framework for creating a Community of Inquiry the best form of support for learners when using online technology. In this model, the area of 'cognitive presence' refers to the ability of students to construct meaning through communications with peers and teachers. 'Social presence' refers to the opportunities for students to present their personality and character in the community, thus making the interactions more personally meaningful. The area of 'teaching presence' refers to the involvement of teachers in the selection of material, the content and style (climate) of which may encourage learners to create meaningful and educational experiences within this context (see Figure 3.2).

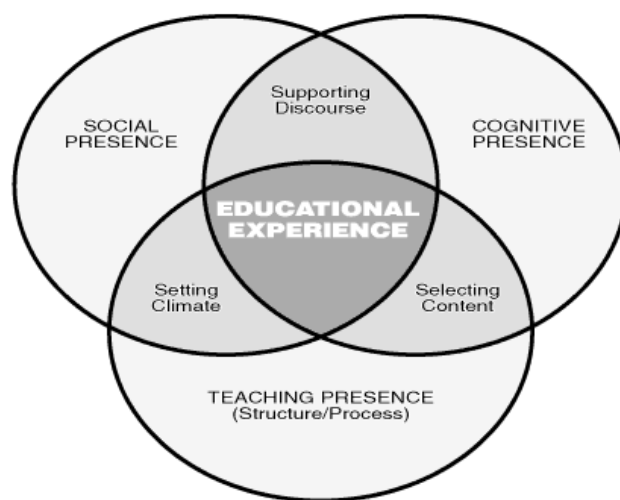


Figure 3. Garrison & Anderson: Community of Inquiry Model

Laurillard's (2007) conversational model suggests a process in which teachers and learners are involved in the development of ideas and actions through practice and reflective stages as shown in (Figure 3.3). The model was developed from research in HE settings and may assume a level of existing skills in ICT on the part of learners rather than offering a framework for the development of specific skills or subject content. Support structures for learners new to the use of ICT or who are new to its use in class are not as clearly factored into this model as they are in Salmon's (2002) stepwise 'scaffolded' system. However as a model for collaborative learning and development with adult learners, it has features in common with Action Research (AR) and is therefore of interest to me here. One of my concerns is for the teachers involved with my study to fully participate in revising teaching practices which build upon existing pedagogical theory and practice.

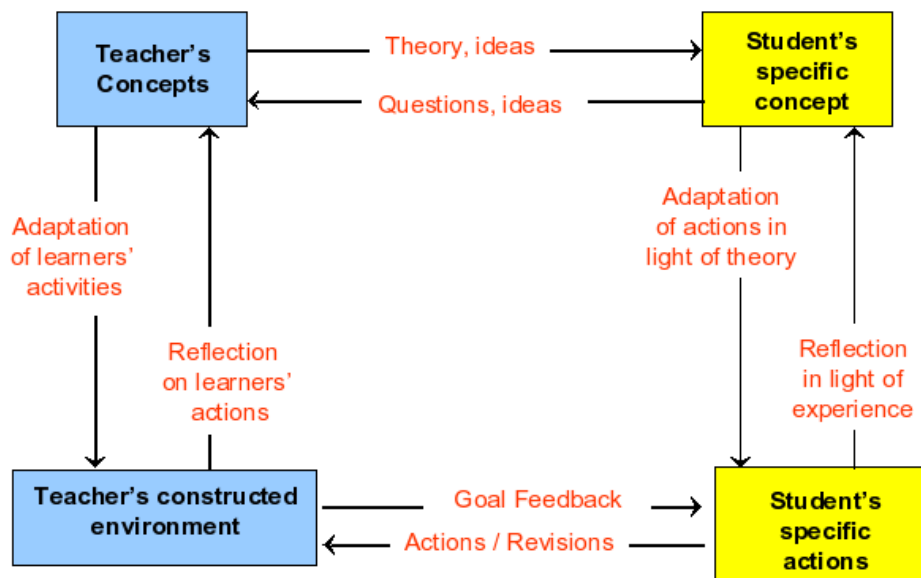


Figure 4. Laurillard's Conversational Framework

3.2.1 The use of ICT in Libyan Higher Education.

In general, the idea of creating communities of Internet-based learning (Daly & Pachler, 2007) has rapidly gained ground. In countries where access to resources can be limited, such as Libya, there are obvious advantages in utilising these Internet-based technologies in teaching. A wealth of educational material in every subject can now be accessed from anywhere at any time and by an unlimited number of people. This is particularly significant

for teaching in developing countries and even some in developed countries, if they have limited resources

Tinio (2003) points out that a defining feature of ICTs is their ability to transcend time and space. This feature makes possible 'asynchronous learning'- not only can members of e-learning communities maintain close dialogue over long distances, but this style of learning is also continuous even when time delays are inevitable (see also Jennings, 1995). In addition the time delays which are often an aspect of web-based dialogue can offer more time for reflection on learning and for constructing responses, thus potentially facilitating a deeper consideration of the material (Lapadat, 2002). Education programmes should empower learners by equipping them with the latest ICT skills, incorporating distance learning and online learning techniques, so that they can rely on themselves as independent self-directed learners. However, the supply of online learning technologies may not necessarily lead to self-directed learning (Salmon, 2002).

Furthermore, as stated by Abou-Jaafar (2003), the Ministry of Education is concerned to "set education and training plans, provide teachers, trainers... to meet the training needs of different sectors and organize and execute educational programs in schools" (p. 16), which can include teacher training programmes. Moreover, laws and legislation have been adopted in order to regulate the educational system and to give the executive (the Secretaries of Education, Training and Scientific Research) the powers needed to develop education and to renew it through the development of educational programmes and teaching methods.

3.2.2 Interest and student motivation for using ICT for EFL

According to Dornyei (1994), motivation is an important factor of language learning achievement, as it includes the desire to learn the language as well as positive attitudes towards doing so. Two kinds of motivation are discussed in the literature: extrinsic motivation, which stems from a desire for an external reward and intrinsic motivation, which consists of learning for personal reasons as an end in itself (Harmer, 1991). Brown (2001) claims that intrinsic motivation is often low in EFL settings, where English may seem irrelevant to the students' daily lives. The motivation to learn English in these cases is extrinsic: studying it is required to pass a test or it is a compulsory part of the school

curriculum. Additionally, EFL teachers often have large classes with fewer teaching hours, which affects student motivation and makes learning English a challenge (Rose, 1999).

Macaro (1997) refers to students' motivation as a vital part in learning a second language, suggesting that they should see it as useful for their future, not as something vague or aimless. Cooperation with their teachers creates a positive atmosphere in which to practise a new language in the classroom. Motivation also provides students with enjoyment and immediate success in developing their learning and coping with the teacher's strategies in error correction. To improve students' motivation to learn English, teachers need to use essentially motivating techniques, such as make students perceive English as significant and useful in their future life, playing down the role of tests, presenting them with reasonable challenges and appealing to their genuine interests (Brown, 2001). These techniques must use what students are interested in and give them choice in how they engage in activities. The teacher is more likely to inspire them to respond favourably to activities and therefore, by providing them, the teacher can help them to direct their own learning, pursue their preferred learning style, or talk about any topic they want (Krieger, 2005, p. 10). There is no doubt that these techniques can be applied in any teaching situation, but from an EFL perspective, a teacher may need to work harder to stimulate students' intrinsic motivation. According to Brown (2001), if learners have the chance or desire to learn for its own sake, in the case of EFL, to become competent users of a new language, they will have a higher success rate in terms of long-term learning than if they are driven by external rewards only.

Students are of course individually different in many ways; including their reserves of motivation, emotion, understanding, personality and ways of learning. In class, the teacher may find a good, average or low achieving students who may each need a different strategy of support to enhance their motivation and to motivate their students to learn, a teacher should set them a good example and get along well with them. Understanding their students' interests, learning styles, language levels and creating an environment where students can express their own opinions makes learning a foreign language enjoyable, which helps motivate students to learn. Successful communication using the target language should help students to express their own feelings and opinions in English (Moiinvaziri, 2002).

Leu (2002a) notes that some teachers and learners are basically motivated to learn with Internet-based technologies. McCombs (2000) goes further, observing that choice and control over the syllabus content serves to motivate learners to complete meaningful tasks.

Learning experiences in class that allow the learners to select their own topic for research or ways to organise and present their research encourages this self-regulated learning and maintains enthusiasm among learners. Supporting this finding, Malloy and Gambrell (2006) report that Internet-based technologies can motivate struggling readers as they use the Internet to explore subjects of personal interest. This motivation leads to enjoyment and success; both important factors in EFL settings acquisition.

McDonough (2002) argues that learners must be seen as an essential resource of the teaching operation - in fact the learner is the essential component in the teaching and learning process (p. 8). Therefore, students have an important role in determining the success of what happens inside the classroom. If the learner recognises that the purpose of coming to the university and attending language lessons is to develop and extend their skills, they may be encouraged to see that they may make mistakes in the process of language learning but can be supported in the classroom and go on to something better. This is a very important point which increases the learners' positive attitude and motivation with regard to learning a new language; it should encourage teachers to support their students in practising their developing skills as necessary.

3.2.3 The teacher's role within the Internet-based classroom

According to Durrant & Green (2000), the role of the teacher in the EFL classroom continues to undergo great change as educational institutes attempt to generate more flexible views of learning. The teacher's role is critical in learning a second language; it lies in providing students with the motivation to use language accurately and appropriately. Many researchers emphasize understand the importance of this aspect of a teacher's role: to motivate students in learning the target language (Cook, 2001; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Ur, 1996). The way a teacher treats students is considered an important elements in successful learning and closely related to the students' second language attainment. The teacher should have the capability to manage all the elements in the classroom to assist learning the target language. As Donald and Kneale (2001) state,

Good language tutors gear their speech to the ability level of the class; maintain discussion at an appropriate intellectual level; broaden and enrich students' vocabulary and knowledge of structures by deliberately using a wide and varied range of words, phrases and

registers; and strike a balance between correcting mistakes and encouraging communication (pp. 18-19).

Similarly, Zion and Slezak (2005) argue that

The teacher must guide, focus, challenge, encourage and motivate student learning and they believe that teaching and learning involve complex role changes for teachers and students (p. 876).

Santagta (2005) reports that the teacher's role is crucial in shaping the student's reaction towards language learning (p. 493). For example, if a teacher encourages a student to get involved in activities and does not put him/her under stress, this may encourage other students to participate in the communication. This role becomes more important in the digital age where computers appear to be able to replace almost any traditional function. However, unlike computers and other digital technologies, teachers can think and it is through a teacher's careful reflection and decision-making in designing teaching/learning experiences that students will be able to meaningfully participate in their communities (Valmont & Wepner, 2000). Teaching materials today should combine a traditional pedagogical approach with the demands of new technology emerging from Internet-based technologies (Semali, 2001). Teachers can shift their pedagogies to meet the requirements of teaching with Internet-based technologies.

Breen and Candlin (2001) identify a variety of roles for the teacher in CLT, as follows.

1. Facilitating the communicative process amongst all students in the classroom, using a range of activities and texts.
2. Playing the role of an interdependent participant who shares responsibility for learning and teaching with students.
3. Having a further role as an organiser of resources, a resource in her/himself and a guide to classroom procedures and activities.
4. Having the additional role of a researcher who contributes appropriate knowledge and abilities and who draws upon her/his experience of the nature of learning.

Richards and Rodgers (2014) recommend that other roles of the teacher are those of needs analyst and group process manager. To be a needs analyst, the teacher determines and responds to learners' language needs. To be manager, the teacher organises the classroom to be a setting that maximises communication.

To sum up, teachers, both in class and in online-based courses, play a significant role in being able to motivate their students and enhance their learning. The role of the teacher will always be the key to success because teachers can take advantage of such facilities, become a helping hand when needed or provide the necessary space for a learner to follow an interesting approach in learning (Valmont & Wepner, 2000).

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

4.0 Introduction

The preliminary discussions for this project took place in the department of English at Benghazi University during the Winter semester of 2012 and relevant permissions were given for it. A pilot study was then conducted during February 2012. I have identified the design of the whole project as an example of a Case Study approach and its overall method is one of Action Research (AR) for the Lesson Study process. I describe how this study fits within these paradigms in more detail below in this chapter. I will also describe how, within the overarching AR mode of investigation, the Lesson Study approach became central to the design of this project. A questionnaire was created during the initial pilot study in order to answer some of my preliminary questions. At the end of the project some follow-up interviews were conducted by a teacher who had not participated in the study with a selection of the students who had been involved in it.

4.1 Rationale for research design

The rationale behind this research design aimed to take advantage of the teaching resources that digital technology could provide, such as lesson activities, Internet-based case studies, games and videos, whilst at the same time enhancing student interest and engagement by the integration of these resources. The lessons would therefore be designed to promote student learning through enhanced motivation and applied language use and also to help the teachers to develop new teaching approaches which could integrate the new technology. The hope was that a Lesson Study approach would function as a form of professional development for all the staff involved with the project, including myself, as well as providing me with the opportunity to collect data for my research. It would also give the students who volunteered to participate in the programme a chance to change and enhance their learning and practise their English with experienced EFL teachers – even though the teachers were not yet experienced with the blended use of ICT in their teaching. The group of teachers who agreed to collaborate in the project would be encouraged to work cooperatively in order to develop

their pedagogical practices to include the new technologies and to create models for teaching that would take advantage of ICT for pedagogical as well as functional purposes (Pierce & Stacey, 2010).

This study further attempted to address some major concerns that had been identified in the English language teaching practice at the University of Benghazi in Libya, as discussed in Chapter 2. I hoped to be able to create a curriculum-led initiative directed towards engaging students in learning English using technology-based teaching resources with a collaborative, cognitively demanding and intercultural style. The study therefore sought to explore ways of enhancing the teaching and learning of English by providing students with a more relevant and meaningful learning environment by using the Internet in a 'blended' approach. The data were obtained by using both quantitative and qualitative methods and therefore the approach could be described as a mixed-methods one. However, most of the individual methods of the data collection and analysis followed a qualitative approach. The quantitative research approach collects data in form of figures or numbers that are then analysed by a specific analytical tool for numerical data that translates the research outcomes into descriptive statistics (Cohen et al., 2009).

Qualitative research predominantly collects data in the form of words rather than figures and seeks to provide a verbal description of phenomena in some depth (Mcmillan & Schumacher, 1997). This suggests that the data obtained in this manner are usually presented in the form of narratives. The narrative data are then analysed to generate research findings. A qualitative approach of research aims to "capture the richness and complexity of behaviour that occurs in natural settings from the participants' perspective" (Mcmillan & Schumacher, 1997, p. 46). My Action Research design placed the research focus in the natural setting of the English Department of Benghazi University and would entail the collaboration with me of two members of the English teaching staff and the engagement of students in this context. I wanted to hear the views of my teaching colleagues as the project progressed and to record the behaviours and attitudes of the students. Therefore, apart from the initial Pilot-Study Questionnaire which provided me with some baseline data, my general approach to this research has been qualitative.

As stated, the overarching design of this study is an Action Research, in particular using a Lesson Study approach. However, because the research was conducted at a particular setting and in an identified institution in one city in Libya, the research can also be seen as a Case

Study. The methods of collecting data for a case study include observations, interviews, questionnaire and reflective meetings with teachers and students (Cohen et al., 2009). The data for the current research also fell into these categories. In the following section I report on the use of the Lesson Study approach as a professional development strategy in a new setting and discuss its effectiveness for this research.

4.2 Objectives of the Study

The broad aims of this study have already been described in Chapter One. Specifically, the study aimed to investigate how the Libyan students' current English practices might be enhanced by using the Internet and e-learning strategies and how the Internet may be used as a medium to further assist the students' English development. Therefore, the research was initially designed to explore the following questions:

Initial Research Questions:

1. What are the Libyan students' current ICT practices and attitudes towards using it?
2. What is the potential for incorporating the use of ICT in the learning environment of English language teaching?
3. What are teachers' and students' perspectives on the use of ICT in English language teaching and learning?
 - a) What are the pedagogical implications of using ICT blended within an EFL learning environment in a Libyan university?
 - b) What are the factors which currently govern teachers' pedagogical practices? And how would these need to change in order to incorporate an extensive use of ICT in teaching practice
 - c) What are the costs and the benefits of such a programme from the point of view of EFL teachers and learners?
 - d) What cultural and other factors currently support or limit the students' use of ICT?

4.3 Action Research

The present study takes an overarching Action Research approach to study classroom practices and the use of the Internet and e-learning strategies to enhance the development of English language teaching in Benghazi University. There are a number of reasons for using the principles of Action Research (AR) to guide and inform my research design and methodology. There are varying conceptions of Action Research and it has been adopted for many different purposes; however, there is a general view that Action Research is a method of inquiry that has the potential to create improvements in a given social practice (Goodnough, 2010). It is a systematic inquiry into some aspect of practice conducted through cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting; and includes the direct involvement of those responsible for the practice, “with widening participation...to include others affected by the practice” (Grundy, 1982, p. 23).

Action Research is often considered to be practitioner research, practitioner-based and practitioner-led. Action Research is always done by practitioners in a particular social situation; the researcher is also within the situation and so will influence what is happening (McNiff et al., 2003). The researcher’s perspective therefore is different from that of an external researcher who stands outside the situation and records observations about it, checking his or her interpretations subsequently with the research participants. A common form of Action Research is seen when teachers study their own classroom problems and issues and reflect on their own practice (Creswell, 2002). The current Action Research endeavour involved teachers in a collaborative practical research project in which three teachers sought to improve both students’ learning and their own professional performance. Action Research can foster changes in educational practice, enhance a democratic approach to education, empower individual participants through collaboration on projects, enable teachers and co-educators to become learners who aim to bridge a gap between practice and their vision for education. It may also encourage educators to become reflective practitioners who are flexible in adapting new ideas to improve practice or some aspect of a curriculum (Creswell, 2002).

According to Usher (1989), there is an interplay between understanding and change. He notes that “Understanding is oriented by the interest in change and the change itself increases

understanding” (p. 125). This suggests a ‘reflection on action’, meaning that researchers seek to improve and change their own educational practice through practical actions and reflection upon the effects of these actions. Therefore, reflection is a very important aspect of Action Research (Ebbutt, 1985; Usher, 1989). Reflection focuses more on the outcomes of an action and considers how it may be revised. This suggests that Action Research tries to understand the practical reflections of experienced practitioners, in order to improve understanding and encourage changes in their own practice (Schon, 1983; Usher, 1989).

In this research project as a researcher (and also as teacher), I collaborated with two other teachers from the English department at the same university, who also became participant researchers. Together we observed each other’s teaching sessions and reflected upon our own and each other’s thinking and pedagogical styles as well as the students’ responses to each lesson. Together in planning meetings we also discussed the activities undertaken and the online teaching and learning materials that we could use for each subsequent cycle. According to Wallace (1998), Action Research is a process of systematic collection and analysis of data in order to make changes and improvements or solve problems within a particular practice (p. 1). Nunan (1992) indicates that Action Research has been a paradigm of research which has become increasingly significant in language education (p. 17). Warrican (2006) views the heart of Action Research as the promotion of collaboration between the researcher-innovator and his or her clients (students/colleagues) (p. 2).

According to Elliott (2004),

Action Research is viewed as a systematic form of action. Action Research involves the study of teachers as agents of change and the way their intentions to effect changes can be done by gathering multiple perspectives on the situation in question. Such representations can be also used as resources to inform their understanding of particular aspects of the situation they face as educational agents, together with educational researchers. Action Research resolves the theory-practice problem by theorising from the standpoint of the educational agent as an active agent in changing educational situations (pp. 11-12).

Furthermore Elliott (1995) summarises the main features of Action Research in the following points:

- *It has a developmental aim which embodies a professional ideal and which all those who participate are committed to put into practice.*
- *It focuses on changing practice to make it more consistent with the developmental aim.*
- *In identifying and explaining the inconsistencies between aspiration and practice. It problematises the assumptions and beliefs (theories) which tacitly underpin professional practice.*
- *It involves professional practitioners in a process of generating and testing new forms of action for realising their aspirations and thereby enables them to reconstruct the theories which guide their practice.*
- *It is a developmental process characterised by reflexivity on the part of the practitioner. From an Action Research perspective, professional practice is a form of research and vice-versa (p. 10).*

Action Research is always conducted when the researcher is within the situation and can therefore influence what is happening as well as being influenced by whatever emerges. The researcher's perspective is therefore different from that of an external researcher, for instance an ethnographer, who stands outside the situation and records observations about it, checking his or her interpretations with participants (McNiff et al., 2003). Elliott (1988) summarises this outsider-insider distinction in the following way: "The outsider as critical theorist. The insider as self-reflective practitioner" (p. 161). Action Research has been said to help a researcher to bridge the gap between theory and practice (McNiff et al., 2003; Elliott, 1995).

Action Research is widely used in language teaching but also as an approach for external innovators who seek to effect educational change (Warrican, 2006, p. 1). Nunan (1991) posits that the classroom could become a laboratory for experimenting with, contesting and evaluating the materials and classroom tasks in a teacher's own context and situation (p. 62). Elyildirim and Ashton (2006) support the idea that Action Research can improve the current teaching situation in terms of boosting teachers' professional development, teacher training and presenting to an institution evidence of the need for change (p. 4). Action Research is designed to bring change for the better and all those participating in the study will benefit as potential stakeholders (Dick & Swepson, 1997). The present research contributed in promoting student-centred learning by using ICT to support and enhance classroom pedagogy in EFL learning. Teachers encouraged the students to be independent learners by referring them to specific and well-resourced Internet sites and links (BBC education section and the British Council) for their English Language learning.

Stenhouse (1975) notes that teachers can be viewed as professionals who are capable of being in charge of their own practice. He writes that teachers can demonstrate:

- *The commitment to systematic questioning of one's teaching as a basis for development; the commitment and the skills to study one's own teaching;*
- *The concern to question and to test theory in practice by the use of those skills (p. 144).*

The use of Action Research is considered to be appropriate for several purposes in education. These include school-based curriculum development, professional development strategies, system planning and policy development (Beverly, 1993, p. 1).

All of the above indications and purposes were relevant to this study and to developing my professional teaching practice as well as contributing to the development of Teaching of English as Foreign Language (TEFL) in Benghazi University. As a result of taking part in this project, I have become a systematic and critical thinker. It has enabled me and my fellow teachers to reflect on both expected and unexpected outcomes of our lesson planning, as well as the deeper cultural issues and situations that were experienced during the study. Action Research provides teachers with the opportunity to gain knowledge and skill in various research methods and their application and to become more aware of the options and possibilities for change also believed that teachers participating in Action Research become more critical of their own practice (Beverly, 1993, p. 2).

According to Nunan (1991), "one way of encouraging teachers to develop research skills is to get them to adopt an Action Research orientation to their classroom" (p. 63). This study has contributed immensely to the development of the research skills of both the participating teachers and to mine. It has provided us with the impetus to conduct further classroom-based research to enhance the use of pedagogy for students' learning. Given that teamwork, collective participation and collaboration (Burns, 1999; Kemmis & Mc Taggart, 1988; Wallace, 1998) are essential aspects of Action Research, through genuine collaboration, my research colleagues and I were able to work closely with other staff at the university. Through effective collaboration, the teachers, the students and I developed our knowledge and understanding. As research participants, we worked together to improve educational practice and achieve the aims and objectives of the present research.

Teachers are considered to be able to learn effectively and change behaviour while having

personal engagement with the practical concern identified as the focus of the research, designing the study, taking action, collecting evidence, formulating conclusions and feeding outcomes back to practice (Brown 2005, p. 397). This action may enable teachers to discover and engage with other relevant research literature. According to Edge (2003) Action Research is viewed as a rigorous investigation which sets out to improve the quality of experience and outcome available to participants in a given situation, while also enhancing their ability to articulate an understanding of what they have learned, thus increasing their potential to develop steadily in this and other situations, in contributing to the sources of knowledge that others may use (p. 39). This view and those mentioned previously concerning the use of Action Research in the educational setting convinced me that this was the appropriate method to use in making my contribution, if any.

4.4 Introducing 'Lesson Study' as a form of Action Research

This section provides a brief history and description of Lesson Study as a form of Action Research. It reviews some of what has been discussed about Lesson Study to date and it identifies some of the gaps in current knowledge. According to Cajkler et al. (2014) and Tsui and Law (2007), Lesson Study is a systematic approach that involves a classroom-based, collaborative mode of professional learning or sharing of knowledge among practitioners. The origins of this approach is believed to have come from Japan, where it was used in the 1960s as a tool for pedagogical study and for enhancing practitioner skills in the teaching practices at educational establishments. Several years later, the success of Lesson Study as an approach to studying educational methods was published in book form and in the educational and social science literature across the world (National Association for the Study of Educational Methods, 2011). In 2006, the World Association of Lesson Studies (WALS) had been established.

Since Lesson Study is categorised as a science of educational method, it is therefore recommended by educators as an essential approach which can contribute to enhancing teaching practice and generating opportunities for pedagogical study. The purpose of Lesson Study by educators or teachers is to promote the professional vocation of the teacher and develop practical abilities in teaching and also to make teaching practice an object of Lesson Study and develop professional ability through this means (Inagaki & Sato, 1996; National Association for the Study of Educational Methods, 2011). According to Tsui and Law

(2007),

Lesson Study is a systematic investigation of classroom pedagogy conducted collectively by a group of teachers rather than by individuals, with the aim of improving the quality of teaching and learning (p. 1294).

Therefore, it is a cycle that involves a small group of professional teachers in collaborative learning by planning a research lesson. One of them teaches, while the other colleagues observe focusing mainly on the learning and participation of selected case learners or students in the class (Dudley, 2013).

Simply, Lesson Study consists of a series of cycles which requires the co-researchers to plan a lesson, teach it, observe each other and then discuss and evaluate the lesson. The evaluated and revised lesson can then be used for a further planning phase and the teaching of another cycle to a selected group of students. The lessons which are systematically analysed and evaluated by the participating teachers are called ‘research lessons’ (Cajkler et al., 2014). The cycle of inquiry or approach of Lesson Study is reported to be consistent with Action Research procedures (Noffke, 1997). Therefore, I also take the view that the Lesson Study approach that I have adopted here qualifies to be considered as a form of Action Research. The major feature distinguishing Lesson Study from other approaches of professional learning is that it focuses on the observation of students’ learning during a lesson as a key element in the development of classroom pedagogy rather than focusing on the teacher’s performance (Dudley, 2014). The teachers seek to improve their knowledge and effectiveness by engaging in collaborative knowledge and theory-building, thus facilitating possible changes in the curriculum goals and in the culture of instruction. Therefore, the teachers involved in a Lesson Study programme not only develop students’ learning but also find that their own pedagogical and teamwork skills are enhanced.

4.5 Improving Teaching through Lesson Study

This research presents a model, based on the practice of Lesson Study, for building pedagogical knowledge and improving teaching. In Lesson Study a small group of teachers jointly designed, taught, studied and refined a single ‘research lesson’. I considered how teachers could conduct Lesson Study in their own classrooms. We jointly explored how the practice of Lesson Study could create multiple pathways for improving our teaching and

how the knowledge that we gained might help to advance the practice of teaching EFL in the University of Benghazi. Changing classroom teaching practices in order to benefit from the opportunities offered by some new approach such as Lesson Study or e-learning technology requires the initial identification of some principles of lesson design in order to benefit from possible advantages while minimising disadvantages. This is a challenge that deserves more consideration and elaboration and it was an important focus for the group of teachers involved in this study in all our planning and review meetings.

This research project therefore reflects upon two main aspects:

- The potential of using ICT to enhance English language teaching and learning.
- Introducing the Lesson Study approach as a fresh strategy for research and developing the cultural adaptation needed for professional development in Libya's teaching and learning context.

As subsequent chapters elaborate, the use of Lesson Study for the careful analysis of the presentation of a lesson has been established as an effective method for the professional development of teachers. However this approach is completely new to Libyan universities and needed some explanation and adaptation. Similarly, whilst the use of Lesson Study as a type of formal research to improve teaching within a school or university is widespread in some countries, it too is a new idea in Libya.

One methodological task of the research was the design of lessons that could take advantage of a technology that is capable of showing images and videos. The lessons were designed to enhance student engagement and motivation for learning and also to help teachers develop new teaching approaches with new technology which they could build into their daily teaching. The focus of the professional development was for teachers to work co-operatively to develop models for teaching that take advantage of technology for pedagogical as well as functional purposes (Pierce & Stacey, 2010).

Lagrange and Monaghan (2009) comment that it had been assumed that new technology skills and associated teaching approaches could easily be transferred to teachers through professional development programmes, but in practice this has had limited success. They explained that the availability of technology challenges the teacher because it stops their teaching practices in 'traditional' settings from being routinely applied when technology is available. In addition technology introduces a new range of uncertainties to the Libyan

classroom. Many teachers are concerned about students following unexpected solution strategies, or fear that teachers and students may be confronted by unexpected technical difficulties (Lagrange & Monaghan, 2009). We therefore wanted to consider how to gain pedagogical value from such new technologies through studying lesson design and engaging both teachers and students in the process of Lesson Study.

In the sections that follow, I briefly discuss Lesson Study and our adaptation of it to the specific Libyan cultural context and for wider purposes as a research strategy. During his key note address at the Annual Conference of the World Association of Lesson Studies in Brunei, Elliott (2010) highlighted Lawrence Stenhouse's concept (1975) of the 'teacher as researcher' and noted that

There can be no pedagogy without casting teaching as an experimental science, as a form of Action Research, in which pedagogical theories are appropriated, tested and further developed as a source of pedagogical principles in the course of practice work in classrooms and schools (pp.11-2).

Lesson studies as a form of Action Research within a classroom setting can offer support, as Elliott (2010) argued, because they involve teachers collaboratively investigating their own practice to generate and share knowledge about teaching. The Lesson Study approach was specifically designed as a means of improving teaching in Benghazi University by enabling teachers to build and share their knowledge of teaching and learning (Lewis, 2009, p. 142).

Introducing the concept of Lesson Study to developing countries such as Libya is regarded as one of its current challenges (Ling & Marton, 2012). Nevertheless it has much to offer to such a context in terms of building teaching skills and educational capacity. Therefore one of my primary tasks was to set out the principles and process of Lesson Study in cooperation with my colleagues. In addition to understanding the basics of Lesson Study and engaging in three Lesson Study cycles, both teachers and students learned about Lesson Study variations. They worked together in implementing Lesson Study during their lessons and to solve problems related to this implementation (see Chapter Six). Lesson Study groups decided whether to revise the field-tested lesson and teach it again or simply to apply what they had learned to another lesson.

An essential concern that arose was: How can we, as teachers, improve the students' learning by using the Lesson Study approach? Working co-operatively with this essential concern,

my colleagues and I took the tools of Lesson Study technique and used it as an intervention in the workplace culture of the classrooms that I studied. Dudley (2012) noted that

Lesson Study (LS) works successfully in a system that expects teachers and school leaders to improve professional knowledge and practice through the systematic use of collaborative inquiry based teaching and learning approaches such as LS (p. 98)

The group of teachers, including me, involved in this study from the English department at the university, explored new teaching strategies involving the Internet whilst encouraging and supporting each other in developing a reflective approach as we analysed and solved problems as they arose in our own classroom situations.

A Lesson Study consists of a cycle of at least three research lessons that are jointly planned, taught, observed and analysed by two or more teachers. Three proved to be a good number for the purpose of this project, because as each teacher was able to plan and then deliver a lesson and the group could jointly reflect and build on what they learned from each one. The Figure 4:1 below summarises one of the examples of the cycle of Lesson Study as illustrated by Dudley (2012).

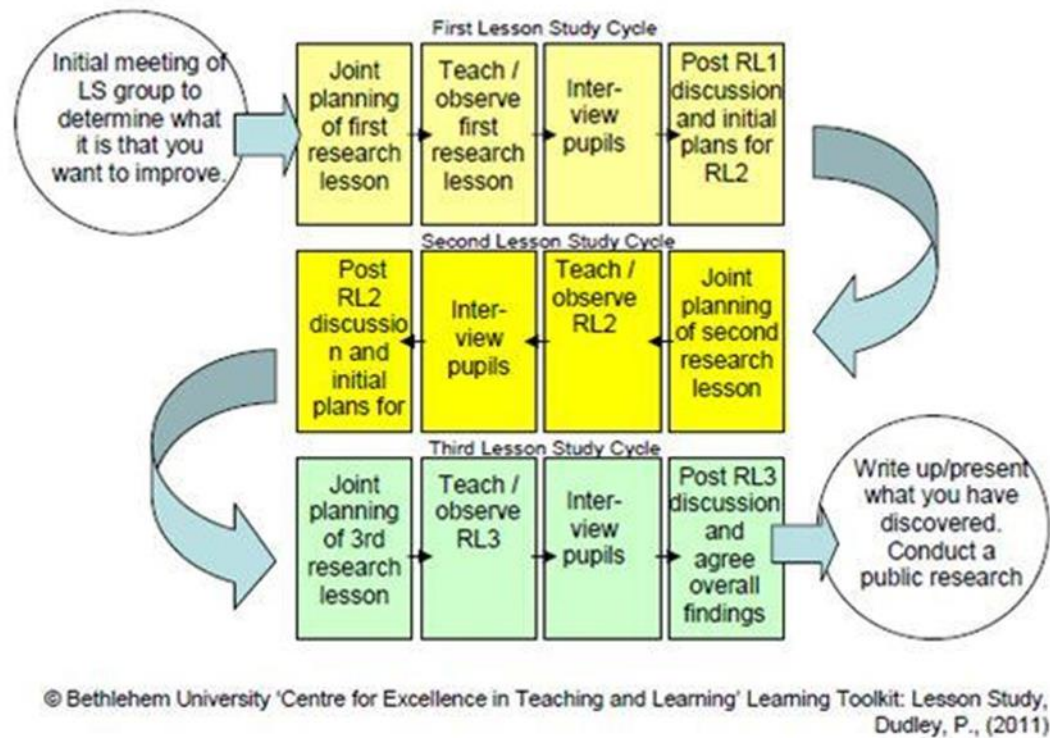


Figure 5. Lesson Study cycles (adapted from Dudley (2012))

As a researcher and teacher and intent upon on encouraging my colleagues to consider how we might reform our teaching pedagogy, my task in this project was clearly not an easy one. I also hoped to engage with the students' fundamental attitudes and beliefs about using technology on their learning which could potentially bring me into cultural conflict with prevailing attitudes. At the outset I too held some basic assumptions about what my colleagues' attitudes and beliefs might be that could prevent them from changing their teaching styles. I suspected that they would struggle to see what a different way of teaching English, incorporating the use of the Internet, would look like. I was afraid that, even if they did have some sense of what this different way of teaching might be, they still might not value it. I suspected that the teachers' lack of understanding of the basics of ICT use as a resource for teaching English language would be the main obstacle for them - and I hoped that overcoming this would enable them to see its benefits and perhaps realise how inadequate the previous teaching and learning methods had been for students.

4.6 The research design

4.6.1 The Case Study

The broad design of my research is one of a situated single ‘case study’; this concept of ‘case study’ requires some clarification and definition. Originally I felt that the case study approach was the most appropriate research design for my study. In proposing to learn more about this, I had to turn to the literature on case studies, defined as “... a study of singularity conducted in depth in natural settings” (Bassey, 1999, p. 47). Hamel and Fortin (1993) define a case study as an in-depth investigation of the case under consideration in which a researcher can employ different methods of data collection. Cresswell (1998) provides a similar definition, in which a case study is “an exploration of a ‘bounded system’ or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context” (p. 16). According to Cohen et al (2000), a case study provides:

a unique example of real people in real situations enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by representing them with abstract theories or principles...Case studies can penetrate situations in ways that are not always susceptible to numerical analysis (p. 181)

Kemmis (1976) identifies two broad types of case study. The first concerns an issue or hypothesis situated within a bounded system as an instance of similar systems (considered as a ‘class’); the second involves an in-depth study of the bounded system itself. My study falls into the first category since I am investigating a particular issue within the bounded system of the university (HE institutions in Libya being a similar class of cases).

Case studies do not have to adhere to particular methodologies, e.g. qualitative or quantitative paradigms. Rather, case methodology is characterised by an interest in the particularities of a case or cases, not by the methods employed (Stake, 1994). A case study approach is, thus, highly appropriate for use when the research aims to gather in-depth data from participants over a period of time. A case study may also be defined as a qualitative research approach that enables the researcher to gather in-depth insight and understanding of the study participants (Creswell, 1998). Creswell also describes a case study as a qualitative method of research that develops an in-depth analysis of a single case or multiple

cases. Thus, one may argue that the phrase ‘in case studies involving multiple cases’ suggests the possibility of accessing multiple sources of data, using various methods such as observation and interviewing. Creswell’s definition is further noted by Stake (1995) who defines a case study as displaying “interest in individual cases, not the method of enquiry used” (p. 437). Bogdan and Biklen, (2007) also note that “a case study is a detailed examination of one setting, or a single subject, a single depository of documents, or one particular event” (p. 29). According to Stake (1995), it is “the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances” (p. xi).

Case study research allows for the exploration and understanding of complex issues. It can be considered a robust research method in particular when a holistic, in-depth investigation is required. Recognised as a tool in many social science studies, the role of the case study in research has become prominent with regard to education (Gulsecen & Kubat, 2006). For the purposes of my study, where the complex background issues already outlined will necessarily play a part in and interact with the development and possible outcomes of the planned research, a case-study approach was therefore the most appropriate since it allowed me to contextualise the focus of the study.

As Stenhouse (1979) states in his paper on the study of samples and study of cases, behind all descriptive case study of the kind we are discussing there lies another and extremely serious problem that is access to data in terms of the rights of subjects who are studied. Stenhouse believes that

this should be an easier problem in a professional field like education than in a personal and private field, but a great deal of work needs to be done to make good that belief. In particular perhaps the theory and discussion which emerges from such work needs to be fully accessible to teachers. It is absurd that educational research should make itself less accessible to teachers than political history is to politicians (p.11)

Since the above definitions of a case study are consistent with my research approach, I believe this study may be called a case study. It looks at the classroom practices and the use of the Internet and e-learning strategies to enhance the development of English language teaching in Benghazi University, focused on students of a particular year or class at this university. The historical significance of this particular year and of the whole four-year period in which my study took place in the context

of the situation in Libya must be highlighted here. The educational, cultural and political setting that existed at the outset of the project is no longer in place. My case study became one which was situated at a time of revolution and subsequently of a war which still continues at the time of writing, I will return to the significance of this in a later chapter.

4.6.2 Research Methods

If I may summarise the research methods and the main principles governing the gathering and use of the data within this research, they took a number of different modes and each method of data collection and analysis was selected to suit the context of the study and the nature of the information required. Therefore, the data for this study derived from five different sources:

- Questionnaires for the students
- Interviews with students,
- Interviews with teachers,
- Classroom observations
- Collaborative work and
- Reflections on the teaching programme.

The pilot study which was conducted is described in a later section; a pilot was used to gain baseline information and to test and refine the methods outlined above. The set of ethical principles governing these methods of data gathering and the use of data are set out in a later section.

King (1987) explains that while research methodology can be adapted to suit the topic under exploration, it is the research purpose and questions that dictate the design and implementation of the methods. Cohen et al. (2000) echo the importance of fitness for purpose in the research methodology:

Though researchers might advocate and adhere to a specific research tradition, it is sensibly wise to consider 'fitness for purpose' as the 'guiding principle' because different research paradigms are suitable for different research purposes and questions (p.115)

4.6.3 Triangulation

Triangulation is the process of establishing the truthfulness of an event or result by cross-checking with other sources (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). Cohen et al. (2000) note that triangulation technique is an

...attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness or complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint, and in so doing, making use of both quantitative and qualitative data (p. 112).

According to Elliott (2003), triangulation refers to collecting data from three perspectives. In the context of the present study the Action Research triangulation techniques were often employed to collect pedagogical data from three points of view: the teachers, the students and my own as an observer. Triangulation involves both data collection and analysis about the situation from the point of view of the people occupying different roles and positions within it.

Further Elliott (2003) states that the analysis of triangulation data need not be an isolated activity on the part of the practitioners undertaking the research. Support can be provided through at least three kinds of discussion about the data which are applied elsewhere in a study (as in the present case).

- *With an outsider who cannot be associated with the system of social roles that are directly imposed on the situation, e.g. with a higher education based teacher educator or educational researcher.*
- *With a group of fellow practitioners undertaking Action Research in different classrooms and organisational and social settings from the one in which the data to be analysed were collected.*
- *With other participants in the situation whose understandings and experiences are evidenced in the data (Elliot, 2003, p. 2).*

In support of between-method triangulation, Bell (1999) asserts that “interviews can also be used to add extra power to the basic questionnaire method” (p. 135). Also he stresses that interviews can generate rich material and “can often put flesh on the bones of questionnaire responses” which enhances the breadth and scope of research (p. 135).

As triangulation is regarded as a test of ‘trustworthiness’ (Hopkins, 1993, p. 152), it seemed

an effective way to reinforce the credibility of the research findings. For this reason, a degree of triangulation is suggested in this project by the application of both quantitative and qualitative measures within the study. “Each data source gives information of a different type which usually serves to complement and provide a check on the others” (Hopkins, 1993, p. 155). Additionally, some post-programme interviews were conducted by teachers who had not been involved in the study with some of the students who had been. Hence, while objectivity was important in the treatment of reliable questionnaire data, it was the role of the complementary interview data that provided methodological triangulation and thus strengthened the internal validity of this research.

4.6.4 A mixed method approach to data collection

As already noted, this study used a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection (a mixed-methods approach) within the overall design of the Action Research project. A mixed-methods approach is not uncommon in the context of educational research and, as Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) emphasise, whatever the research, “it is possible for either qualitative methods or quantitative methods, or both to serve our purposes” (p. 15). The goal of mixed methods research is to draw from the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative styles in a single research study (Johnson & Onwegbuzie, 2004, p. 14). Therefore this ‘complementary position’ (Brannen, 1992, p. 12) adopts multiple research methods and is employed to reach the aims of the study and to address different aspects of the research problem. The present study included the use of a questionnaire and interviews to generate a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data.

4.6.5 Research participants

In practical terms, it was necessary to consider how Libyan EFL teachers and students interact with and responded to, development-oriented support in an Internet-based context. Hence, I needed to create for them the conditions under which they might experience Internet-based development support and, in order to provide this, I thought an initial pilot study was appropriate as an aspect of research methodology.

4.6.5.1 Students

The students were the first year students enrolled in the English language department at Benghazi University from January 2011. Students generally enter the university with six

years of English learning already: 3 years at preparatory level and 3 years at secondary level. Most of the first year students can be ranked as pre-intermediate learners of English. I selected this group of students because they had not yet studied English extensively at higher education level and most of them had little knowledge of Internet skills. However, I noticed that they are now starting to take a keen interest in the use of the Internet and ICT because of the war situation in Libya where the Internet was the only source of communication and news in Arabic (see the data collection, phase 1). Moreover, it was because of the war that all the educational institutes were suspended from February 2011 to January 2012.

4.6.5.2 Teachers

For the purpose of this inquiry, my colleagues who were teachers in the English language department at Benghazi University collaborated as research participants in this study. In order to protect the anonymity of the participants and conduct an ethically faultless study, the teachers were assured that they would be given pseudonyms. Hence, the names below are pseudonyms.

- (T1) Ms Amal, holder of a Master's degree from a UK university.
- (T2) Ms Rima, holder of a Master's degree from Benghazi University.

Both the teachers had over three years' experience of teaching English in higher education and had both sufficient ICT skills to implement the new ICT learning and teaching objective in their university and high motivation to introduce this new teaching approach within the English language department.

4.7 The Pilot Study and Field work

The broad aim of the research was to investigate the potential role of the Internet in enhancing students' English literacy and overall English skills. There is little information available on the current use of the Internet in Libya, in particular at the University of Benghazi. Because of this it was essential to investigate students' current Internet practice before being able to incorporate Internet facilities into my own teaching. This preliminary phase then shaped and informed the teaching programme, which allowed me to investigate the role of the Internet in enhancing teaching and learning English language at this university. Therefore, I divided the research fieldwork into three phases - the preliminary, the core and the feedback phases.

Piloting is a preliminary step for the main study undertaken in order to check its validity and reliability and to test and modify possible design features. All data-gathering instruments should be piloted to check that all their questions and instructions are clear and also to enable the researcher to remove any items which do not yield usable data. Having considered the importance of piloting and bearing in mind the issue of time limitations, I decided to allocate the first week of my fieldwork to the pilot phase. Thus, in January 2012, I travelled to Libya and carried out the piloting with my questionnaire and interview questions so as to test their validity and reliability.

The piloting project involved the first year students at the English Department of Benghazi College for teachers. I had chosen this college for piloting because the level of the students' English is the same as the level of the participants in my main study. In addition, the college had the practical advantage of being located in my hometown. My choice was also encouraged by the fact that I have good relationships with its head teacher as well as a large number of its staff. I was equipped with formal approval to visit the College and this guaranteed me easy access to the College site and made it easy to approach the people there. A further advantage of piloting was to familiarise myself with using the interview and questionnaire questions and gain some experience in the method of interviewing. Indeed, as an inexperienced interviewer, I needed to try out my interview questions to check how my participants would respond to them and consider how they might be refined accordingly before embarking on the main interviews.

4.8 Ethical Considerations

Driscoll & Brizee (2008) make clear that research carried out in a university setting will usually require Institutional Board Approval (p. 1). This means that, in addition to gaining all the relevant permissions within my own university, my research project needed to be approved by an ethics review committee at the University of East Anglia to make sure that my proposals would not violate any ethical stipulations. The overarching principles for ethical consideration listed by the British Educational Research Association (2011) include the researcher's responsibilities to the participants; to the sponsors of the research; to the community of educational researchers; and to the educational policy-makers and the general public (p. 2). Within these broad considerations the following issues are highlighted:

- information and consent to participate

- openness
- right to withdraw
- privacy/anonymity

These four are identified as ethically important for the participants in research. In this respect, in order to prepare for the pilot study and preliminary phase, I developed a questionnaire and an interview protocol which I submitted along with a detailed plan of my project to the Research Ethics Committee of the School of Education and Lifelong Learning, Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of East Anglia. The following key considerations were included in this proposal (see Appendices 2 to 5).

- All the questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations and teaching programme was to take place at the English language department at Benghazi University. I obtained permission from the president of the University of Benghazi and also from the deans of faculties and heads of the English Language departments before collecting any data (see the attached documents).
- I would provide an Arabic version of the information sheet to be handed to the Heads of English Language departments, before starting the fieldwork.
- Some teaching materials were taken from different learning websites such as BBC and The British Council, and their content do not include any personal voices.

4.8.1 Some principles governing my gathering and subsequent use of questionnaire and interview data

- I had discussions with the staff and students during the first term, informing them of the reasoning behind engaging in this research topic. At the same time I gave them the relevant information sheet explaining the aims and the purpose of the study. I encouraged a discussion of the information with them before inviting them to consider signing the consent form.
- The information sheet and consent form had been translated into Arabic for distribution to the students.
- I distributed the questionnaire to the students and assured them of confidentiality and anonymity during my reporting and analysis of the data.
- Students who had answered the questionnaire were asked if they would be interested in being further involved in the study through taking part in interviews.

- I explained the purpose of the interview to those taking part in advance.
- I assured each of them of anonymity at the level of my analysis and reporting of the data.
- I clarified that all participants (students and teachers) would continue to have the right to withdraw from the research at any time without needing to give any reason.
- I gave the interviewees the chance to edit the interview record and, to ensure participant control over the release of interview data, I gave them an opportunity to express any concerns about my use of data generated in the study.

4.8.2 Principles governing access to and use of the observational data

- With their written consent, I observed the teachers (my colleagues) taking part in this research study as they were teaching their classes.
- The teachers were guaranteed the right of access to all observational records that were made about their lessons.
- I ensured that the teachers had the right to comment on transcripts and other observational records of their lessons and took their comments into account when interpreting and analysing the observational data.
- I was given permission from the head of the department, the teachers and students to allow me to take some photos and videos of the class during the observations and the teaching programme. I managed to take some photos but I could not take any videos because one of the female students refused to allow videos of herself. To respect her confidentiality, I decided instead to make an audio tape recording.
- Teachers and students had the right, and were given the opportunity, to delete the visual representations of their participation in lessons from the recording.

4.9 The impact of the war on my field work and the research

The revolution of the 17th February 2011 and the war in Libya influenced the timing and implementation of my fieldwork in Benghazi, the place where the revolution first started, for all its schools and universities were closed for more than eight months. The fieldwork had therefore to be postponed until their work resumed. For instance, I planned to begin the first phase of the fieldwork in September 2011. In the event I started in January 2012, which was a major setback in data collection and field work. I had intended to do it before the war started but because of ongoing concerns for my personal safety I could not start the second

phase until September 2012.

During the teaching programme, the Internet part of the teaching programme was interrupted. We sometimes had to stop for 3 to 4 days and sometimes for 2 weeks because no electricity and Internet services were available in the city. The major cause of the interruptions was the disconnection of electricity and hence the Internet not only at the site of research but throughout Benghazi. The two-week break in the research was taken mainly to ensure the safety of the research participants as a result of sustained fighting between two militia factions around the university, where neither students nor staff were safe to remain. This was one of the main limitations on the research that could be done (see also Chapter 7 and 8, for discussing the Limitations of the study)

4.10 Core content and process of the Lesson Study in Benghazi University

4.10.1 Phase One

(Commenced January 2012, following the pilot study) Having gained the requisite permissions, I found on entering the university that the students were enthusiastic to participate in the research because of their interest in using the Internet for learning English. I discussed this point several times with the other teachers before and during the data collection. At the outset I gave information about the research and clarified the students' rights to withdraw from it at any time without giving any reason. In addition, I felt it would be helpful for the student and teacher participants to receive a letter from me giving them an opportunity to consider in advance the themes for discussion (see Appendices 3 and 4). I hoped that this would encourage them to contact me with any additional queries they might consider to be relevant to the research. I explained to the students that the new programme of teaching would not affect the normal assessment process in their class.

I reassured the students and teachers that when writing up the research, I would use pseudonyms and would keep confidential all the audio and interview observation notes which would be transcribed in such a way that the participants remained personally unidentifiable. Most importantly, I clearly informed the students and teachers that I would keep all information securely, using it only for the purpose of my research in accordance with the data protection act of 1998.

This preliminary stage of my inquiry lasted for three weeks and was aimed at discovering whether the students had used the Internet before, and if not, what factors caused them to hesitate. But if they had used it, what were they use the Internet? Did they use Arabic or English as the linguistic medium? Access to the Internet was also a question: whether the students were using the Internet mainly at the university campus or more widely. This first stage also enquired about students' beliefs - the way they valued the Internet in general and how they might view its usefulness in terms of helping them to learn English in particular, it also sought their views of the value of the Internet and its role in developing their English learning skills. The data collection of phase 1 was conducted as follows.

4.10.1.1 Questionnaires

I gave a brief talk before distributing the questionnaire about my research to students from two different classes. During this presentation I provided participant information sheets and suggested that anyone who was interested in volunteering to be interviewed could either speak to me in private after the presentation or contact me by email. The questionnaire was presented in both Arabic and English (see Appendix 4).

4.10.1.2 Interviews

The method of interviewing was selected as the second data gathering method for the study. Interviewing is one of the most popular data collection methods and is commonly used by researchers (Marshall & Rossman, 1999), since a researcher can collect information by asking people to talk, listening to them and interpreting what they say (Mason, 2002). Once the questionnaire was completed, eight of them agreed to take a further part in the study and in the end 4 interviews were conducted. These interviews proved to be highly successful and very interesting (see Appendix 5). The other interviews did not take place either because we were unable to arrange convenient times for interviews or because the students changed their minds about participating - which they were of course free to do.

The type of interview used was the 'semi-structured' variety (e.g. Seliger & Shohamy, 2001). This process is used to explore specific topics and to ask open-ended questions of the interviewee. I prepared an interview protocol beforehand, but I allowed the interviewees to stray from the topic at times and at other times I asked additional follow-up questions. I did not follow the given order of questions in order to allow a natural flow of conversation between the interviewees and myself.

From the interviews, I noticed that most participants found it difficult to understand some questions in English because Libyan students have differing levels of English language fluency. Thus, in order to obtain as much information as possible and to make the students comfortable it was better for some of them to explain the question in Arabic. Their lack of fluency was evidenced by their tendency to give short answers, or to ask me to clarify the questions. I informed each interviewee that the data they were about to reveal would be used for research purposes only, that every word they supplied would be kept confidential.

My familiarity with the setting, combined with the fact that I was known to staff, proved immensely valuable. It enabled me to undertake my first data collection with a great deal of confidence, a quality which I needed as a first-time researcher in the field. The fact that the student participants also know me as a member of staff within the English department brought social ease and trust into the setting and increased their willingness, and perhaps their enthusiasm, to be involved in this project. This also encouraged them to talk freely and fully and provide insightful information about many of the issues covered during the interviews. This encouraged me to consider these interviews not only as a means of conducting the research but also as a valuable source of information. Transcripts of these 4 interviews are noted in the analysis stage of this study.

4.10.2 Phase two

4.10.2.1 Initial meetings:

A Lesson Study approach considers the difficulty of teaching and learning in the context of a single class lesson. It gives teachers the chance to question, explore and reflect on every phase of the teaching and learning process as the project progresses. Lewis (2005) suggests that Lesson Study creates multiple “pathways for learning” that may lead to instructional improvement. According to her model, teachers’ thinking and practice may improve in multiple ways as a result of,

- *Increased knowledge of instruction*
- *Increased ability to observe students*
- *Stronger collegial networks*
- *Stronger motivation and sense of efficacy*
- *Improved quality of the available lesson plans (p. 115).*

Phase 2 of the Lesson Study process began with informal discussions (on 20th October 2012) with three members of the EFL teaching staff at the University of Benghazi who had all obtained a Master's degree in the teaching of English. Subsequent to this initial meeting, two of the teachers, teacher one, Ms. Amal (T1) and teacher two, Ms. Rima (T2) expressed an interest in joining the Lesson Studies teaching programme. The two teachers then requested further meetings to be arranged so that I could give them a more in-depth explanation about the function of Lesson Study, its potential benefits for curriculum development and its role in enhancing the teaching and learning process.

Although Ms Rima and Ms Amal were enthusiastic about taking part in this programme, the third teacher, Mr Ali (T3), was not able to continue participation. However, he apologised to me for his difficulty in taking part before the programme started. He had another position as an EFL teacher in a private language institute, which explains the heavy workload that prevented him from taking any further part in this programme. With the permission (see Appendices 2 to 4) of the head of department and the teachers themselves, I started the programme by observing the teachers in their regular teaching sessions for the first week of the semester, in order to gain an understanding of the methods of teaching that they were implementing at the time. After a week of observing the teachers, a post-lesson discussion meeting was planned in order to give an in-depth explanation, requested by the teachers, about the function of the Lesson Study programme. To enhance my professional development, I was also pleased to facilitate the programme, since it gave me a chance to reflect and give feedback from some of the observations I had made during the first two weeks (see Chapter Six for a detailed analysis).

The Internet is not a common medium for teaching in the Libyan higher education system, least of all the department of English. Therefore, the high interest that some teachers show regarding the implementation of this project is perhaps understandable. The EFL teachers requested more explanation about the way that the programme would proceed and its possible implementation in order to understand it more comprehensively. To this end, we arranged to have a follow-up meeting after I had observed the teachers in their regular sessions; this step was to enable me to understand the situation as it related to the EFL sessions. After the observations I met both teachers and explained in detail the proposed process for implementing the programme. I started by discussing Lesson Study in general terms. I explained that Lesson Study involves groups of teachers meeting regularly over a

period of time (ranging from several months to a year) to work on the design, implementation, testing and improvement of one or several lessons. Such lessons are called “research lessons” (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999).

Research lessons are actual classroom lessons, taught to a teacher’s own students and are (a) focused on a specific teacher-generated problem, goal, or vision of pedagogical practice; (b) carefully planned, usually in collaboration with one or more colleagues; (c) observed by other teachers; (d) recorded for analysis and reflection; and (e) discussed by Lesson Study group members, other colleagues, administrators and/or an invited commentator (Lewis & Tsuchida, 1998). The teachers showed their interest in these procedures and told me that having a shared responsibility with the researcher in developing the project would make them more willing to be involved in the study. Ms Rima, having agreed with the previous statement, went further, declaring an interest in the process of planning the lessons. The teachers agreed with me that this study should be confined to the students of the department of English. However, if this study were to be very successful, there would certainly be the possibility of adopting the same approach to the teaching of courses in General English across the university.

As a group, we discussed my reflections on what I had observed in the three 3-hour EFL classes before the implementation of the programme and also my reflections on the students and teachers during their normal classes. I made several key observations regarding the students’ struggle to engage in the lesson and with the work - they were a low ability class. We also discussed the use of available IT equipment and the teaching methods. The data from these observations enabled me to identify and observe for the study the low motivation that the students had and enabled all of us to make suggestions at the meeting on improvements to the EFL teaching programme. After all these meetings, both the teachers from the English department agreed to take part in the ICT-based Lesson Study programme and they both agreed to join me in the Lesson Study class. They also admitted that, it could be a struggle to engage some learners in their less able classes, so we decided on this as our main focus. Then we arranged another meeting to discuss our focus on the key area that we wanted to improve and worked towards the preparation of the Lesson Study cycles.

4.10.2.2 Preparation of the Lesson Study cycles

The planning of the Lesson Study cycles started during the second semester and lasted for

about three months. It aimed to further examine the potential of the Internet to enhance the English skills of EFL students and their English language development by the use of a design for a Lesson Study in an Action Research teaching programme, created initially by me but later on with the assistance of the two teachers. The lesson would call for the use of the Internet in various ways. After the meetings with both teachers, the discussion with regard to the observations became more interesting because the teachers themselves started to view the process of teaching the same curriculum but with different strategies and techniques. The aim was to improve the students' engagement before preparing the Lesson Study cycle. It did take us long to agree on what we felt would be a perfect lesson to motivate the more reluctant students, in view of the following points:

- Our enthusiasm as teachers
- Our expectations of what the students could achieve
- The chance of engaging in many short online activities.
- The number and variety of online resources

Between the three of us, we sought help from these key components to engage and enthuse students and planned the lesson collaboratively with them in mind.

First, before planning the lessons (see plans in the Appendix), I had to read about theories of language learning, teaching, Libyan education reform and the trends in these students' English syllabus of the four language skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. In developing the teaching cycles, I took into account implications from the findings of phase 1, which revealed the students' needs, interests and abilities. These teaching programmes were divided into three cycles. Each cycle detailed the environment, context, process and development of the Lesson Study programme through three successive cycles. In each cycle, I explored the learning experiences of the students and of the English language teachers who participated in this programme and described and evaluated the impact of the Internet-based component of English Language teaching.

In Phase Two, I wanted to explore the potential value of the Internet in enhancing students' English literacy and overall English skills. In this phase, I also aimed to assess the overall effectiveness of a teaching programme, including the students' assessment of the programme. After we chose suitable topics to teach and identified the goals of using ICT in this teaching, my colleagues and I decided to plan a series of lessons that aimed to achieve

these goals, first identifying the key lesson in this series, which then became the research focus. The teachers and I agreed that I would teach the first lesson for the first time in conjunction with the use of ICT in teaching English, while the other teachers observed the process of teaching. Having reviewed and reflected on the lesson, we revised it. We met after each lesson and decided collectively on the basis of our shared understandings arrived at during the process of ways in which the teaching of the lesson might be improved. These ‘improvements’ would then be tested by the teacher who taught the next lesson in the plan and thereby we would continue the cycle (Elliott, 2012).

The teaching syllabus used in this teaching programme

Students of the English Language department spend most of their study day studying English through sessions of listening, speaking, reading, writing and lab work. These students had joined the English department of their university in their first year. Although the university provides the teaching staff with the syllabus, which they all must follow, making their own decisions regarding teaching methods and materials, most teachers are given course outlines of their syllabuses by their departmental managers, who are usually chosen according to their superior’s personal preference rather than to any coherent system or philosophy. However, most members of staff in this university use teaching methods which are restricted to using teachers’ textbooks, which demonstrate all the steps and methodologies of teaching. The teaching materials (textbooks, teachers’ handbooks and CDs) are used under the supervision of the head of the English Language Department; they create the course outlines to meet the specific needs of the different university specialisms. Latiwish (2003) acknowledges that the new generation of teachers has started to use well-known syllabuses and materials, such as those of Headway or Oxford and Cutting Edge in their General English classes in the departments of English (p. 19). Of these two, this research used Cutting Edge as a textbook for the lessons planned for the students by the two teachers and me. An overview of what the textbook includes is given below.

“The Cutting Edge”

The textbook in Libya is a very important tool to the teachers and the learners. It enables them to achieve the aims of the programmes of learning and teaching process in a limited time. Thus, the Cutting Edge *starter* provides a complete teaching and learning package; consisting of a coursebook, a workbook for the students, a teacher’s Resource Book and

class cassettes/CDs for listening activities. According to the authors, Redston et al. (2002),

Cutting Edge is a multi-level general English course for adults and young adults, providing a solid foundation in grammar, vocabulary and skills ... the textbook is designed to consolidate and further develop understanding of the grammatical system, to increase the students' range of active vocabulary and extend their ability in the four language skills of reading listening speaking and writing' (p. 3).

The content of this course book for the first semester are as follows:

Table 1. The focuses of Modules 1, 2 and 3

MODULE	GRAMMAR	VOCABULARY	READING/ LISTENING	SPEAKING TASKS	WRITING
MODULE 1 NICE TO MEET YOU	Verb to be	Jobs-numbers: 1-20 The alphabet, How do spell?	Personal information- names	Question- request personal information	Focus on full stops-question mark
MODULE 2 AROUND THE WORLD	Be with I you Affirmative question and negative	Countries- nationalities Numbers: 21-100	Personal information	Talking about his-her friend And asking questions	Fill in a form
MODULE 3 IN A DIFFERENT COUNTRY	Be plural form.	Places, food and drink -Common adjectives	An email and a post card Eating and drinking around the wprld	Look at the coffee menu and make an order.	Write a post card

The Teaching of Cutting Edge

We discussed the issues related to the Lesson Study approach. As a group of teachers, we now had a basic pedagogical knowledge of Lesson Study and we had planned and implemented a newly introduced inquiry-based discovery model. The Lesson Study process has supported us as teachers to merge new science content with existing pedagogical knowledge – often a difficult task for us as teachers – and the participants were encouraged to develop and include higher-order thinking questions throughout their model lessons. The dispositions of the teachers for teaching inquiry based science were discussed and showed improvement with each peer lesson. The extent to which the lessons were interdisciplinary (i.e., ICT integrated into the English lesson) was considered and discussed. In Phase 2, each

teacher taught and observed her colleagues for the three-hour session. The group observed and assessed the lesson using positive feedback. The two teachers and I collectively decided to focus on the first three modules as our ‘research lesson’ and to see how far the Internet could be planned to integrate with other disciplines. The three cycles were attached to Module 1, Module 2 and Module 3.

The younger generation teachers believes in the importance of adequate materials for teaching and learning. The starting level of Cutting Edge is one of several titles that have been introduced for this syllabus. It is targeted at complete beginners or those who need to brush-up on the basics before moving on to the pre-intermediate level and gives them a good foundation in grammar and vocabulary, focusing on the development of the four key skills. Cutting Edge constantly recycles new language in the reading lists and practice exercises of each of its modules, which means that students will automatically revise much of what they have already covered whilst adding new material. Saleh (2002) describes the content of such textbooks as ‘communicative-oriented and student-centred’ (Saleh, 2002, p. 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 various disciplines in university departments. Redston et al. (2002) comment that

Whilst students are learning about a particular subject in the Course Book, they will also be practicing their English in various ways in the work book and ... authentic or simulated authentic materials have been used (p.3)

The notion of being learner-centred is implied in the different types of communicative activities repeated throughout the course books. Saleh (2002) states that “the idea of [being] student-centred is, first of all, embodied in the design of the new syllabus” (p. 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 syllabus also involves training students to evaluate themselves and their peers. Phillips et al. (2008) emphasise that students should be encouraged to recognize and correct errors in the written work of their partners and recommends teachers to vary their techniques of error correction and not to confirm or correct during oral activities (Phillips et al, 2008, p. 4). Below are some examples of these

communication activities which have been extracted from Cutting Edge (start level).

- Free communication... Ask your partner his/her his name.(3 – p. 7)
- Work in groups of two. Practise the conversations. (7b – p. 9)
- Exchange the information with other students. Ask and Answer with the other students (5 – p. 8)
- Read the conversation with a partner. Practise both roles.(4 – p. 110)
- Play the part game of completing the job words 1-10. (2 – p. 13).
- Role play - Real life with a partner. Practise both roles (activities P – p. 108)
- Listen and check your answer to the exercise ... self-assessment (7a – p. 15)
- Write a conversation practice with a partner (6 – p. 15)

Similar communication activities appear frequently in all students' book and work books of the Cutting Edge series. Reading, writing and listening sessions are also introduced in these syllabuses through asking students to engage in most of these activities by themselves. The members of staff are also provided with a 'Teacher's Book' to guide their teaching of the Cutting Edge textbooks. It give a thorough explanation of the steps and procedures which teachers should follow in teaching the different skills; the language and the terms used in these books seem to be easy for the teachers to understand.

The design of a syllabus demanded knowledge and skills combined for English language learning. To help students to attain the learning objective, I worked with my two colleagues. In planning the Lesson Study, we agreed to take 3 cycles of the Lesson Study programme into account. Each cycle of the Lesson Study consisted of planning, observing and reflecting. As with Action Research, the result of the reflection in the first cycle would be used in planning the following cycle of the Lesson Study.

The selection of online activities for the implementation of ICT in the Lesson Study teaching programme

After the selection of the textbook modules as research lesson, I discussed with the other teachers the selection of online teaching materials. We decided to use the British Council and BBC websites; they were chosen in order to create good opportunities for these Libyan students and build trust between them and the worldwide online providers, using the teaching material in support together with the Cutting Edge textbook. This aspect of the work is called

setting up cultural relations. The British Council and the BBC websites were chosen because their different programmes and services work over many countries spreading the English language, the arts, education and society (British Council, 2015).

The aim of the British Council's work in English language is to bring high quality language materials to every learner and teacher who wants them. In developing and post-conflict countries the Council teaches English and trains teachers through radio, online and TV broadcasts (British Council, 2015). It offers over three million United Kingdom (UK) examinations worldwide, helping people gain access to trusted qualifications to support their careers and study prospects. (ibid.) Their work in Education and Society helps transform national education systems, builds more inclusive and open societies and increases young people's opportunities. Their aim is to encourage international students to come and study in the UK and British students to experience life abroad. They bring schools around the world together so that young people and teachers from different countries can share with and learn from each other (ibid.)

They help increase audiences for international work in the UK and for UK work globally. They bring artists together and support the development of skills and policy in the arts and creative industries. Through this work they ensure that culture in its broadest sense plays a vital role in connecting with and understanding each other (www.britishcouncil.org). These websites help to create trust and lay foundations for prosperity around the world by learning English online with the help of this free website from the British Council with games, stories, listening activities and grammar exercises. The learners can search for their favourites or have a look at the site map to find out where everything is. The teachers could find many of listening, speaking, writing, reading and vocabulary activities and video content in Listen and Watch. They also have a Grammar section, practice materials to improve their students' level of English and also to vary their teaching of English language and search for interesting sites for language development. (ibid.)

After our discussion we found the British Council and BBC websites useful for improving different aspects of language skills. The teachers thought that the Internet was also useful for improving reading speeds, vocabulary and grammar. Ms. Amal and Ms Rima said that such these websites were very good. You can find grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, a lot of things for students and for us as teachers. And it helps the students to improve their language also for the students, accessing news articles to improve reading.

4.10.2.3 Research Cycles

There were three cycles in this study. The teachers and I followed the steps: plan, teach, observe, and reflect. After the teaching of each cycle and analysis of activities the teaching approach were revised to improve the teaching for the next cycle, we had a chance to plan the Internet activities at the stage when we prepared the cycles. Here the two teachers and I as researcher met and discussed the tentative plan, activities and materials before conducting activities in the classroom. To implement the three cycle process into my study, the teachers and I agreed that each cycle consisted of

- Pre-conference meetings.
- The teaching cycle
- Post- teaching meetings and
- Reflective meetings

The details of the initial meetings before collecting any data are described in Chapter Six.

We agreed to have common goals to achieve through the classroom activities. The goals refer to the existing syllabus defined by the course programme. We collaboratively planned and prepared the classroom activities. The materials to teach, techniques to implement and the evaluation system to use were discussed, bearing in mind the level of language and the low computer skills of the students in the class. The details of the three cycles and the activities processes are summarised below:

Cycle One

While I was teaching and using the Internet activities the two teachers were the observers. This stage was very important and had to be interpreted and applied to the activities under the main goal 'Enhancing students' learning in English by using of the Internet.' Providing a variety of materials and activities was one of the main factors intended to promote the students' learning. As a result, I decided to provide eight activities to be used as tools to this end. The course length, three hours per day for 12 weeks in a semester, provided sufficient time for these activities.

Whereas I delivered the teaching and managed the class, the other two teachers observed me in what is called a 'research lesson'. We used the observation sheet and voice recorder to

capture the on-going teaching and learning activity. After this, the teacher and I reflected on the teaching and learning activities and prepared the cycle two. Cycle one activities were as following:

Module: 1 Nice to meet you (a Self-Introduction unit)

- Activity 1: Self-Introduction
- Activity 2: Pronunciation
- Activity 3: Complete the Sentences
- Activity 4: How do you spell?
- Activity 5: Create an email account
- Activity 6: Real life
- Activity 7: What's your job?
- Activity 8: Jobs

Activity used for Cycles Two

The two teachers had the opportunity to plan the online activities in the goal-setting stage. I observed them and we discussed the tentative plan, activities and materials before conducting activities in the classroom. While Ms. Rima and Ms. Amal delivered the teaching and managed the class, I observed them and after this, the teachers and I reflected on the teaching and learning activities prepared for cycle three. Cycle two activities were as following:

Module 2: Around the world

- Activity 1: Countries
- Activity 2: Where are you from?
- Activity 3: Applications
- Activity 4: Writing
- Activity 5: Personal pronouns
- Activity 6: Subject pronouns
- Activity 7: Nationalities
- Activity 8: vocabulary
- Activity 9: Numbers Vocabulary

- Activity 10 Activity Ten: Application

Activity used for Cycles Three

In cycle three we motivated the students to be independent learners and the students were given a chance to select some of the online activities. The two teachers and I were observing their learning process. The activities that had been chosen by the students in this cycle allowed them to work independently and to increase their motivation to pursue the Lesson Study process. Cycle three activities were as following:

Module 3: In a different country

- Activity 1: Singular to plural change
- Activity 2: Plural and singular nouns
- Activity 3: Pronunciation
- Activity 4: Fishing Game
- Activity 5: The verb 'to be'
- Activity 6: Who are they?
- Activity 7: Application

4.11 The Data Analysis

Creswell (2012) notes that data analysis in a mixed method research presents some challenges on the handling of the two data sets in many studies. However, since my data from quantitative and qualitative approaches are complementary, I analysed them separately but related the findings at the interpretation and presentation stages. In analysing quantitative data collected during the phase one of this study by the questionnaires. Excel spreadsheets statistical analysis techniques were used and the results presented in terms of means, bar graphs and tables.

The qualitative data was coded, summarised and categorised into themes. The interpretation of the themes done alongside the quantitative results (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Also I analysed the data based on my research questions, which I used as directors. During the data analysis process sometimes I was confused about direction. It was difficult to create a focus

within the enormous amount of information I had collected during the phase two. In order to undertake a focused analysis I continually referred to my research questions. I developed a figure of the stages of analysis that allowed me to avoid moving away from the aim of the study. The data was analysed in different stages. Figure (4:2) shows the different stages that I went through when analysing the data. The analysis of this data collected from phase one and two were analysed in the data presenting and data analysis in the following chapters five and six.

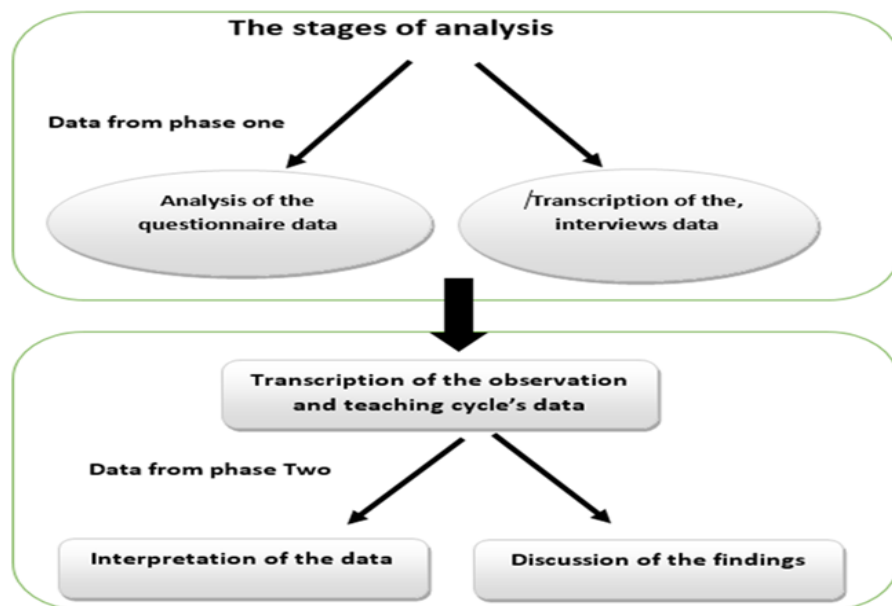


Figure 6. The stage of the data analysis

Also the teachers' and students' perspectives' on this programme were analysed. This point aims to investigate teachers' and students' overall perceptions and attitudes to the Lesson Study and the use of the Internet in this English teaching programme. Detailed feedback from both teachers' and students' point of view appears in the discussion in chapter seven to make sure that both teachers and students were highly motivated to implement the programme overall.

Variation Theory. During the course of data analysis, variation theory has been a prominent element of this study. Variation Theory of learning is a pedagogical theory concerned with the students' learning experience of a given phenomenon which comes as a result of discerning critical features and critical aspects of the object of learning – which is the content to be learnt and how it should be learned. It posits that learning takes place when the learner

becomes aware of other aspects of the concept other than what he or she already knows. Variation Theory stresses the capacity of students to see relevant structures built from the previously acquired knowledge as a scaffold. It asks teachers to assist learners to develop ways of coping with their difficulties and issues they encounter in the process of learning (Lo, 2012; Marton & Tsui, 2004). This theory also takes objects of learning as the point of departure and highlights some necessary conditions for learning that are related to dealing suitably with the object of learning. It thus has the potential to become a valuable source of principles for pedagogical design that are directly useful for practising teachers (Lo, 2012).

When analysing the ‘research lesson’, we, as teachers, identified elements of variation theory embedded to our pedagogy (see Chapters Five and Six). The objects of learning are the ends nurtured in the learners towards which the learning activities were directed and the way in which they were understood by learners. The latter referred to the subject matter upon which their capability was being developed or exercised, which in our case is the use of ICT in EFL teaching and learning. Given the different ways that individual students experienced the same phenomenon, Lo (2012) argue that teachers need to develop a pedagogy that caters for individual differences. The central task of such pedagogy would be, first, to find what these different ways of understanding are and, second, to consider how teaching should be structured to enable students to see what is being taught in the intended way, as discussed and applied to this study in Chapter Seven.

4.12 Conclusion

In summary, to enhance students’ learning of English, Lesson Study processes (plan, act, observe, and reflect) are the main features used in this study. Lesson Study is widely used in language learning and teaching for promoting both students’ and teachers’ development. There were three cycles in this research. In each cycle, students deliberately progressed in using language-learning strategies at their own pace through Lesson Study process. The two participating teachers and I developed our language teaching also. Students and teachers had the opportunity to exchange experiences together through a form of Action Research process. The teachers and I were able to acquire new knowledge from cycle 1 to further develop through cycle 2 and cycle 3. Therefore, students, teachers and I worked and learned together through the Lesson Study processes; we all progressed in both language learning

and teaching at our own pace. I can offer no more fitting conclusion to this chapter than the following extract from Elliott (1987).

Teacher Action Research is, concerned with the everyday practical problems experienced by teachers, rather than the 'theoretical problems' defined by pure researchers within a discipline of knowledge (p. 356)

This research is designed, conducted, and implemented by us, as teachers, to improve our teaching in our own classrooms, in which we establish expertise in syllabus development and reflective teaching.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTING THE DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

(PHASE ONE)

5.0 Introduction

This study uses both quantitative and qualitative data to present a profile of the students' Internet usage and to record their beliefs about the actual value of using the Internet as a way of their learning. This chapter presents the data collected during the first phase of the study. These came from the sample of 32 participants learning EFL and from teachers using traditional teaching methods in class. The preliminary fieldwork for my study took place at the University of Benghazi in January 2012. After obtaining permissions from Benghazi University and from the EFL course directors (see Appendices 1, 2 and 3) for entry and to hand out the information sheet and consent form, I visited morning sessions at 8:30 a.m. and afternoon sessions at 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. and distributed questionnaires amongst the 35 EFL students (see Appendix 4 for the questionnaire). 32 of the 35 Year 1 students (English majors) participated in this phase by filling out the questionnaires and returning the sheets to me. Since very little was known about these Libyan students' use of the Internet, such a survey was necessary to provide a basis from which we could progress towards developing a teaching programme that incorporated the Internet and fulfil the other purposes stated on previous pages.

As outlined in Chapter 4, this preliminary data collection method included a questionnaire survey and some semi-structured interviews (see Appendix 5 for the interview questions). The survey was of traditional classroom-based full-time students who study EFL from Sunday to Thursday up to six hours per day, using a variety of methods and materials to develop their skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

One drawback of using questionnaires is the potential for a poor response rate, but Dheram and Rani (2008) specifically mention that this can be remedied by going in person to classrooms and then asking the students to fill their questionnaires out while one waits. They note that this solves the problem of a low return rate by creating a "captive audience who

will generally feel obliged to fill out the questionnaire” (p. 10). This suggestion influenced my procedure for collecting questionnaire data from these students. I delivered the questionnaires in person to each of the classrooms and then waited while the students completed them. Most of the students in these classes had no chance to learn spoken English, since most lectures allowed too little discussion time to practise this.

As a lecturer who has worked extensively with English major students in this university, I was already quite familiar with their typical strengths and weaknesses regarding EFL. However, I wished to review the current situation, specifically in relation to the use of the Internet. I therefore commenced this preliminary phase with a Needs Analysis that was based on 32 questionnaire responses and 4 interviews with students, conducted in Arabic. There were also some discussions with my colleagues about the English language competencies of this cohort of students. This initial analysis, summarised in Table 4:2, provided a starting point for my research design and also highlighted the challenges that the participating students faced in learning English and in accessing the Internet. By linking the responses from the individual interviews with the data collected in the questionnaire, I gained a deeper understanding of the students' use of the Internet, the factors affecting this use and the students' beliefs about the value of the Internet for their learning.

This chapter falls into two sections. The first presents a profile of the students' Internet experience. The second section concerns the students' beliefs about the value of the Internet in general, its usefulness in helping them learn English in particular and its possible applications in English classes. Details about the data collection method and the analysis are given in Chapter 4. However, a summary of the data sources is provided in the following Table:

5.1 Sources of the Data in Phase One

Table 2. Sources of the Data

Types of Data	Quantity
Questionnaires	32
Individual interviews	4

The students in this phase were asked to give for their age, gender and details about their use of the Internet. The primary purpose of this enquiry was to gain insight into ICT education

from the EFL students' perspective and explore their experiences of this education. A secondary purpose was to encourage the EFL students to reflect more deeply on their own educational and language-based experiences, providing them with the opportunity to describe their language learning approaches.

To be able to carry out adequate statistical analysis, a minimum sample size of thirty is considered desirable (Cohen et al., 2000). A sample size of 32 is still too small for any significant statistical generalisations to be made about the target population of the EFL students in Benghazi University. Some student responses were written in Arabic and I translated them into English, while some of the raw data from the questionnaires were manually entered into an Excel spreadsheet.

5.2 Personal Background

According to Kagan (2005), biographical data that are particularly important should include name, age and personal interests. This information, as well as the research questions for this study, helped guide the questions of both the interview and the printed questionnaire answered by the student participants in the present study. This section describes the demographic data of the respondents. 35 students were asked to fill out the questionnaires. 32 of them returned these. In order to correlate the data, 4 of these 32 students were interviewed.

This section, called Personal Background, describes the demographic data of the respondents (shown below as Figure 5:1 and Table 5:2). They gave their personal details of age and gender and sometimes included their name. They knew that they could be anonymous if they wanted to and that those who gave their names might be contacted later; in the event, fifteen students who were happy to be contacted did so.

Gender: Figure 5:1 illustrates the gender distribution across the sample. I analysed these responses as shown in Figure 5:1. Among the 32 responses, the number from male students and from female students was approximately equal. There were 15 (47%) female respondents and 17 (53%) male respondents, chosen randomly.

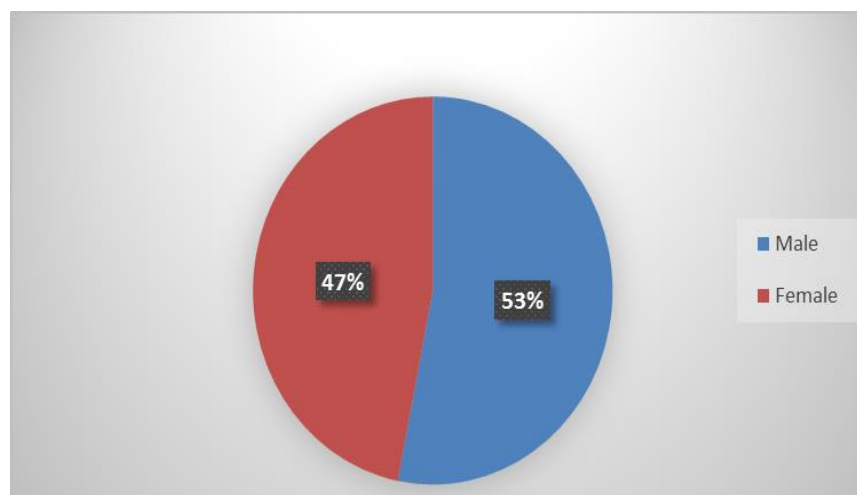


Figure 7. Gender Frequency

Age: As the following table shows, the age range of respondents in the sample was between 18 and 25 years, a wide range. The median age was 19 years.

Table 3. Participants' Age Groups

Age group	Frequency	Percent
Age 18 to 20	30	94%
Age 21 to 25	2	6%
Age 26 and over	none	–

The analysis of the remaining data in this phase was split into two parts. The first part related to the students' Internet experience, the second to their beliefs about the value of the Internet in general, its usefulness in helping them to learn English in particular and its applications for English classes. The data from the questionnaires and the interviews were analysed in order to address the two primary base-line research questions proposed in this study, namely:

- What are the current Internet practices of Libyan students?
- What are the students' beliefs about the value of the Internet in English Language learning?

5.3 The Students' Current Internet Experience

I summarised the students' patterns of Internet use. This summary includes an overview of their Internet use both before and during the data collection period for this research. The data were from 32 returned questionnaires from and 4 interviews with, first year English Language students. The discussion of students' Internet practices in this section is divided into the following themes:

- Access to the Internet and the choice of language.
- The purposes in using the Internet and the participants' Internet experience.

The civil war in Libya destroyed infrastructure. Internet facilities at this university became less available to the students. However, students and young people interested in the changing political and social situation began to use the Internet more in places such as Internet cafes, in order to get news not only of what was happening in Libya but also what the world thought about it.

5.3.1 Access to the Internet and Language Choice

5.3.1.1 Internet access

A major concern that appeared from the analysis of students' responses to the questionnaires and interviews was that they face some difficulties regarding their access to the Internet. From the interviews, it was understood that the university provided Internet access for students' use outside the class in the Computer Centre at the University library. Yet the analysis of questionnaires and interviews pointed out that there were problems with Internet access in the university which are reviewed in detail in Chapter 7. Figure 5:2 shows that nearly 25 students reported using the Internet at an Internet café outside the university and 10 of these 32 respondents also have the Internet at home; 2 of them students used the Internet at the University Library before the start of the maintenance work at the library (necessitated by war damage) and 1 of them reported no access to the Internet at all.

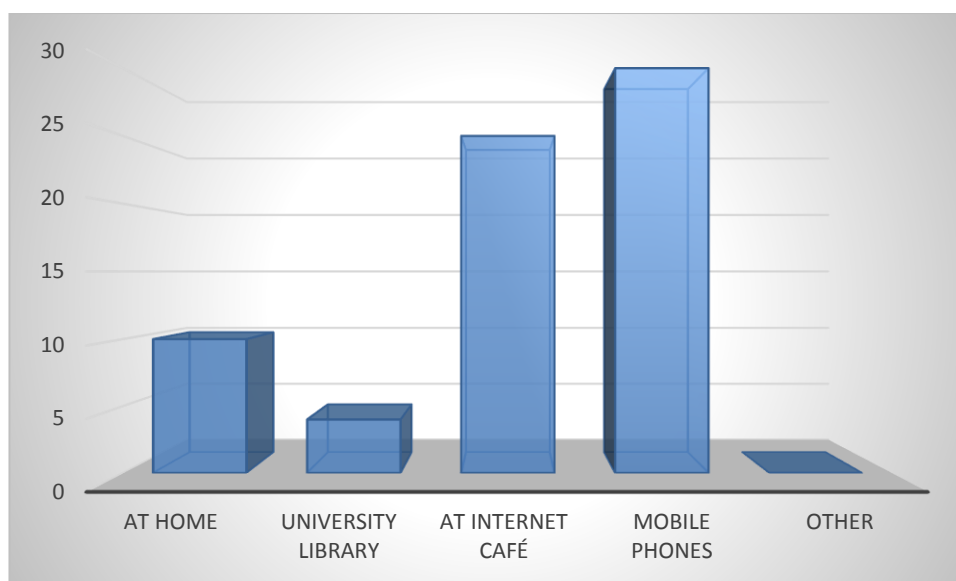


Figure 8. Internet Access

There were also other ways to access the Internet, as Figure 5:2 above shows; the most common of these was the mobile phone, which students used more frequently than any other method. However, I was able to understand from the students that they rarely used this method for study purposes, especially in the case of English. The use of mobile phones for Internet access was thus confined to Facebook, chatting and other non-academic pursuits, all of which used the medium of Arabic. Two of the students answered that the library computer centre was the main place for their Internet use. It seems that they used the library only because they had no other option.

The interview answers show that there was a number of reasons for the students not to use the library Centre for Internet Access. Most students confirmed that when they tried to use this centre they found too few computers with Internet access for the demand and that the speed of the connection was very slow. Another problem was the frequent failure of this connection. The library had only 40 computers for students of which many were out of order. A number of students complained that before the revolution in Libya this centre had not been open regularly for students to use in their free time between classes. In 2012, the year of my field work, the Internet access in the library building was completely unavailable due to maintenance work.

Some students made the following comments:

Student A: The speed of Internet connection in the library was very slow. Many students wanted to use the Internet there and there were not enough computers ... Then I stopped using it so I went to an Internet provider and I bought a router ... and paid more than 1000 Libyan dinars to get it and use it with my family members.

Student B: Internet service and the Computer Centre are not open for students at the moment so I usually go to the Internet café.

Student C: Since the middle of this semester the library hasn't been open because the Internet system, which used to be available for students until 5 pm, is in the process of maintenance.

Student D: Because there is no Internet service in the library this year, sometimes I use an Internet café because it's more convenient and the speed of connection is faster.

As mentioned above, some of the students preferred to use the Internet cafés in the city. It also became evident from the questionnaire analysis that some of the students have Internet at home. The students who chose to use Internet cafés talked to me about the expensiveness of doing so, because of which they could not stay long there for study or searching for information. Typically, at the beginning of the first semester, if they wanted to use the free university Internet access, they had to wait, because many students wanted to use it at the same time.

Student A: Also I do not like to use the University Internet Centre very much because the staff there always kept an eye on me, to check the webpages that I am searching on.

Another student also complained about the limited access time for using the Internet in the university before it closed for maintenance.

Student C: when I was using it in the University Computer Centre, it needed to be used during the daytime. So most of the time I didn't have enough time to go there... because I need to go to lectures too.

A female student also mentioned that:

I don't have enough time because I have to study hard and I have to go back home on time. My family does not allow me to remain at the university once I have finished my classes.

Because of the problems of access in the university, most of the students preferred to use the Internet elsewhere. Of the 25 students, 17, who were all males, indicated that they used Internet cafés as their first option. Significantly, the female students reported a preference for using the Internet at home. One of them wrote in Arabic on her questionnaire sheet:

If I want to go to the Internet café I have to go along with other members of my family to access it there.

This difference in responses is closely linked to the context of my research. Males in this context tend to have much more freedom than their female counterparts, in particular when it comes to using Internet cafés and being outdoors unchaperoned during times and in places that are considered to be exclusively in the male realm.

5.3.1.2 Language Choice

The participants were asked in the questionnaires about their use of English and Arabic on line and about the extent to which they switched between languages. Their responses were as follows (see Figure 5:3)

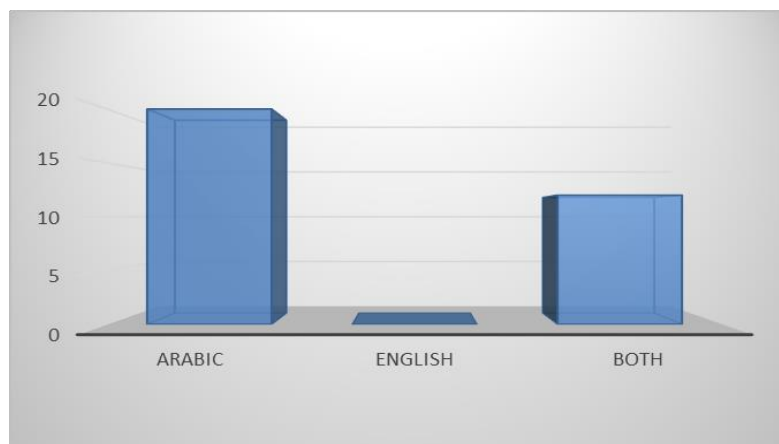


Figure 9. Language Choice

The responses show that none of the students was able to use English with confidence and without mixing it with Arabic. 12 students used both languages and 20 preferred Arabic. The interviewees' responses also indicated that their choice of language was closely related to their purpose in using it. Most of the Internet use in English occurred in relation to study, mainly for translation purposes using a dictionary. Internet use for purposes other than study was more likely to be undertaken in Arabic.

Student A: Like any one [else], I began using the Internet mainly to send e-mails to my friends who live in different countries and to try to contact them on Facebook. But I use Arabic when sending e-mails to my friend who's living in Egypt ... English language can't be read by most of my friends...I used the Internet in Arabic more than in English because I wasn't good enough at English...now as an English language student I use the Internet to search for information, both in Arabic and in English. For example, I look for some English music information or to practise some English ...but I do not have a recommended website [i.e. by teachers as a study resource]

Most students revealed that they felt discouraged from using the Internet because of the English language barrier - which was mainly related to comprehension issues. Their responses also indicated that, although some teachers encouraged students' use of English, they did not provide sufficient relevant support for them, with the result that students found many tasks involving Internet use difficult. The following response illustrates the students' unwillingness to use English for Internet tasks:

Student C: When I accessed English websites, I did not understand them.... I mainly use Arabic because I don't understand information in English. I once accessed an English website and could not read even one page because I didn't understand what I was reading... (laugh). I didn't have enough time to find the meaning of the unknown words from the dictionary because it wasted time ... also I have to pay for the service.

Student A: Sometimes I use English when sending e-mails to a Libyan cousin, who lives abroad... But not very often because reading his e-mails

*is so difficult ... I have to find some word meanings from a dictionary ...
His English is much better than mine.*

Despite the lack of prior support in learning English, comments from the students suggest that there is no pressure from teachers to encourage them to use Internet sites and engage with the new language or to motivate them to shift from Arabic to English.

Student A: I joined a private English language course in summer 2010. I started using search engines for information in English. Then I began translating them to Arabic to understand them if I need to use them for my study because I was requested [to do this] by the teacher, a native speaker - she was British. I had to search for information in English as well. When I found the right information, I copied it onto a flash drive and translated it into Arabic to understand ... then I rewrote it in English language again ... then I printed it out and presented it to the class...Sometimes that [British] teacher asked the students to submit assignments via e-mail if they could...I used both Arabic and English to search for information and then translated and submitted it to her... I use Arabic...I always access the same English websites because I have no idea about other different ones.

Student B: I started using the Internet and going to the Internet café ... It was at the beginning of the war...so I needed to read about what was happening to other people and [know] their opinions about what was happening in other cities of Libya. I have used Facebook but always in Arabic ... I accessed various web sites, such as Aglle Tripoli ... It reports all the news and what has happened in Tripoli.

Student D: I rarely accessed English web sites because I didn't understand what I was reading. I always used the Internet in Arabic. Then recently I began to use English in the first semester of this year of my study, because I need to translate some texts from English to Arabic.

This student also reported that

I used e-mail in Arabic and sometimes in English to contact my Libyan friend; her mum is English, lives outside Libya ... However, I preferred using Arabic because I felt it was easier than English.

The students' responses suggest that switching between Arabic and English is no small task. There is a great difference between the two languages. Thus most students use the Internet in Arabic. Most students who used the Internet for personal purposes were unenthusiastic about using English because of difficulties with the level of English needed for fluent reading and writing and the scarcity of encouragement from the teachers. As soon as they experienced difficulties with reading and practising their English, they gave up trying to use the Internet. This suggested to me that we needed to discuss the issue as group of collaborative teachers, to find a way to enable initial access to the Internet in Arabic which could then support and encourage students to develop the relevant technical skills to switch between Arabic and English. If teachers allowed students a free choice of language, students might be more encouraged to make better use of the Internet. The interviewees told me that some of teachers of English always tell them that there are many websites available for English practice, but never gave them the addresses [the url (uniform resource locator)] of these websites.

5.3.2 The Purposes of Using the Internet and the Participants' Internet Experiences

In the interviews, several students reported that they accessed the Internet regularly. Three of the four interviewed participants reported that they had not been heavy users of the Internet until the revolution started in Libya. One of them had begun only recently when he started his course at the university. One student who did have some prior experience said that he had begun using the Internet at high school. The interviewees began their Internet use at different places outside the school environment - at home or at an Internet café. The following comments by a student illustrate the ways in which most reported being introduced to the Internet.

Student A: The first time I used the Internet was in a computer class when I was on a private course on computer skills. I always asked a classmate sitting next to me to help me with the work. We had to send e-mails to the teacher also. One of my friends helped me with an application and in

sending my first e-mail. After that I tried to use it myself. Later the teacher requested the students to send e-mails to friends from different classes. This made me use the Internet...at first I rarely searched for information because I couldn't do it. Then ...we were requested to do a group [activity] on Facebook, searching for information about what had happened in the different cities of Libya and if I could not find what I want to know, I would ask my friends at the Internet café because I thought my friends could do it better than me.

The questionnaire responses show that, since some of the students had only very recently begun using the Internet, it is not surprising that they expressed an overall lack of confidence in their abilities. Even though some of the students had been introduced to the Internet, most of them had not become frequent users. 16 of the 32 students indicated that they used the Internet less than four hours a week; 4 used it between four to six hours a week and only 2 used it more than six hours a week.

The finding from the analysis of the questionnaires and interviews was that before the teaching programme period, most students made very little use of the Internet for study purposes. As mentioned earlier, the war influenced the students' and perhaps their teachers' use of the Internet quite profoundly. They began to make use of it for purposes other than academic study, such as communicating on social media for finding up-to-date news and to exchange views with others who were interested in the political and social changes in the country.

5.3.3 The use made of Internet applications by the participants

Students were asked about their reasons for using the Internet and about their experiences in doing so. Their responses regarding both their purposes and their Internet experience are illustrated in the following chart.

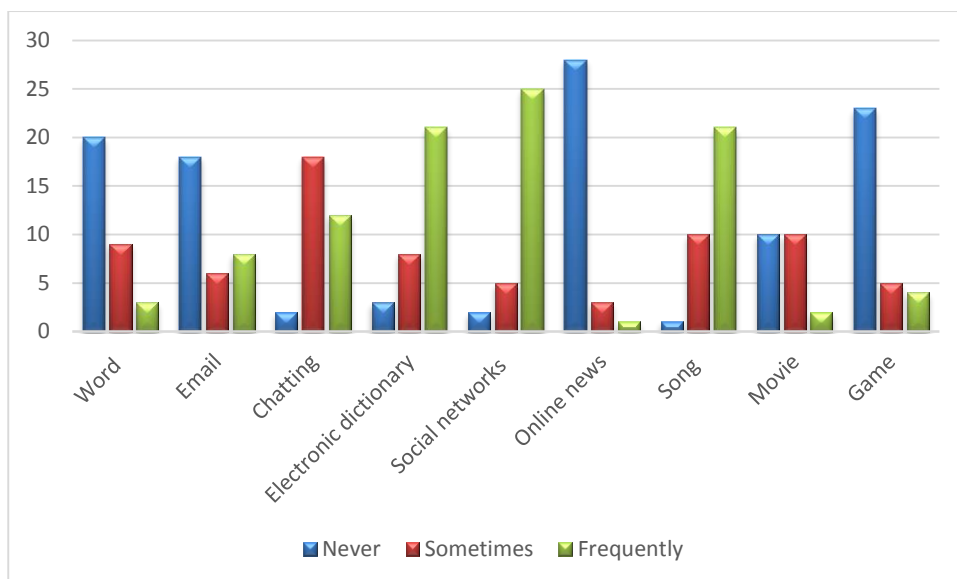


Figure 10. The uses of the Internet

As Figure 5:4 indicates, most of these 32 students used the Internet for more than one purpose. The range of purposes for which they mostly used it was relatively broad, but their most frequent use was not related to study purposes; it was for social networking, downloading songs, chatting and e-mails. As indicated earlier, Arabic was always the language used here. In addition, the students never use search engines to find additional information for any English topic, but some of them used online dictionaries.

Apart from its use for study purposes, a significant number of students (25) used social networks such as Facebook for personal use; 12 students did so frequently, while 18 sometimes visited chat rooms. Some used search engines to locate information of personal interest, most often related to entertainment (music and movies). A small number (5) of students also played online games. Only two of the students used Microsoft Word while 30 students did not, not being required to submit any assignments for English or for other subjects via e-mail. The following comments from students illustrate the ways in which they used the Internet to pursue their interests:

Student A: At this level [university] I do not use e-mail to submit any assignments in any English or Arabic subjects. Also ...at the university level I never search for information as requested by any English teachers. When I have free time I sometimes access English websites to practise

English, [or] for playing some computer games, though most of the time the English games need better English ... but I love playing games.

Student C: I use the Internet once a week - about an hour each time. I only use Facebook.

Student B: Mostly, I use it at an Internet café. I often use the Internet - about three to four days a week. I mainly search for information for some news about the war, in Arabic ... very recently, [I] used it to find some information about some Arabic subjects, but I do not use e-mail to submit any assignments or homework. I never play games on the Internet.

Student D: Sometimes...I use Google to search for information in English about grammar exercises. I always search for word meanings by using the English dictionary via my mobile phone.

A very small number of students said they searched the Internet to watch movies.

Student A: I have watched some English movies in order to learn some expressions they use. Mostly, I need to translate them into Arabic to understand them.

Student A: Sometimes I use the Internet to search for English songs that I am interested in and fond of ... When listening to the songs from cassettes, I can practise singing by looking at the lyrics ... in English, even though I do not understand the meaning. I rarely listen to Arabic music and mainly search for Western music and movies because I like the music so I know about many singers and movie stars.

Such comments suggested to me that the student's personal interest in using the Internet was mainly for entertainment and that this tool could offer great opportunities for more integrated use of the Internet for teachers of English as a foreign language. Further opportunities could perhaps be provided by chat rooms, as the following students' comments suggest:

Student D: I use the Internet when I am in the Internet café. I use chat rooms to chat in Arabic and to chat with ... I choose people of my own age - both boys and girls. I mainly discuss the revolution.

Student B: *I used the Internet during the suspension of my study because of the war, before I started this term at the university. I had a computer with Internet access at home. At first I didn't know how to use it very well. I used chat rooms all day every day. That was because we had just bought a computer and it was on my days off [when the university was shut because of the war] ...I was addicted to chatting....*

Student C: *I seldom use it [e-mail], but sometimes I use chat rooms to chat in Arabic. Later I changed to English... when I have better English... I will use the chat rooms more if I am provided with a free Internet service.*

The students who learned to use chat rooms had done so, even though this practice is not common in the Libyan cultural context or educational system. Moreover, during the previous regime young people were actually forbidden to use chat rooms. Predictably, the few students who did begin to use chat rooms became very enthusiastic about them. This type of Internet application is exciting and interesting for many teenagers and it emerged as having potential for English learning. In using this Internet application, students had a chance to communicate with people from other countries in their own contexts, rather than communicating with friends in simulated settings. However, if chat rooms were to become part of any English course subject, the students' English skills would improve. However, the idiomatic and abbreviated nature of the English (not always grammatically correct) that is typically used between chatters would need to be taken into account by teachers.

5.4 The Students Beliefs about the Value of the Internet on English Language learning

There are various studies of students' attitudes towards the use of ICT and media technology, in particular with regard to the Internet and computers in education. It is also widely accepted that students' attitudes to ICT and media technology are very important for their successful implementation in education, since a negative attitude to them could inhibit learning, whereas a positive one could make a student more receptive to the learning activities (Johnston, 1987a)

In this second part of the outcomes of phase 1 of my data collection, provided a group of students enrolled in EFL traditional classroom programmes, I summarised the students' responses about the value of the Internet and their beliefs about the Internet in general. These responses also indicated their perceptions of the prospect of using the Internet in practising English; the Internet's usefulness; and Internet applications that could be used to benefit English classes. In presenting this part also, I draw on data from the questionnaires and the interviews.

The results in Figure 5:5 show that students are positive towards ICT and feel strongly about the need to use it in language learning. The number of students (30) who said that they intended to use the Internet in the future is very high indeed; it is worth noting that these students consider the Internet the technology the most likely of all hi-tech media technologies to be used.

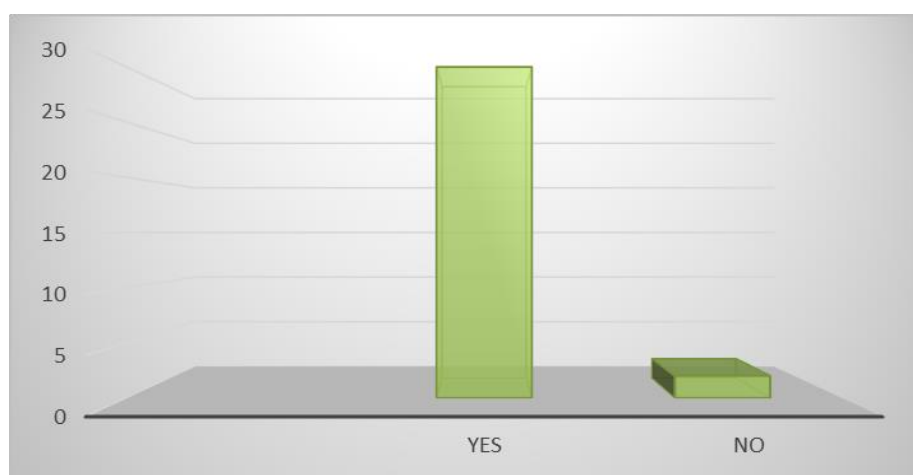


Figure 11. Students' attitudes towards ICT

An analysis of the questionnaires and the interviews revealed students' strong belief in the overall importance of the Internet. Most students (30 out of 32) viewed the Internet as a resource that could provide them with huge amounts of global information, had they been taught computer skills as a subject in their study timetable. They felt that the Internet was important not only to them as students studying English, but also, more broadly, for people in different countries to communicate with each other. Some of them believed that the Internet provided a great source for them to communicate with each other during the war, and learn about the situation in other cities. Moreover, they viewed the Internet as a means

of access to other cultures and as a source of entertainment. Their most common response about the value of the Internet was that it enabled them to keep up-to-date with world events.

Some students stated that they wanted to be taught the relevant computer skills for this and that these skills should be taught as a university subject. They also believed that they could quickly find much of the information that they needed for their specialism if the university could provide them with access to the Internet and that the time that they spent currently on finding information from books and going to the library could therefore be reduced. The following comments suggest this:

Student A: The Internet can be an extensive and convenient source of information. With the Internet we can find all the information that we need...even if we need a variety of information ... in future if the university provides us with Internet access I will not need to go to the library very often ... we can get more information [on the Internet] than in the library...the Internet offers a lot of information from everywhere in the world.

Student B: I think it's important to Libyan people in terms of the technology they need to learn to access the Internet ...The Internet assists people in searching for information as well as in learning about global cultures. As such, the Libyan people need to use the Internet. In the future, they should know about the Internet, otherwise they may not know many things - they will be unsophisticated. Everyone needs to learn more.

Student D: I think the Internet benefits Libyan people because of modern technological developments. Libyan people need to develop themselves and can help develop their country like other countries... it's important in terms of entertainment as well. To be up-to-date, we should use chat rooms because chatting helps us know more about other people

Student A: It's important for our country's national development...because of the global Internet, networks provide rapid access to information. Each country can be known worldwide.

Student C: *I believe that the Internet does not help us gain more knowledge and experience; it is a waste of time. It is not of importance to Libyan people to learn about international cultures.*

The Internet as entertainment: Apart from the value of the Internet as a source of information and rapid communication, a number of students (9) referred to its value as a source of entertainment and pleasure. They pointed out that the Internet is a great source of information about music, singers and movies and that it provides access to online games, chat rooms and online music. Their comments on the value of entertainment include the following:

Student A: *The Internet provides much information about entertainment, songs and so on. It has got everything, so we don't need to waste time finding [things] from other sources. We can find everything quickly from the Internet...chatting and playing online games give me pleasure... the Internet has an impact on me, I can't live without it... it's essential to have the Internet.*

Student D: *It's important in terms of entertainment as well. To be up-to-date, we should use chat rooms because chatting helps us know more about other people but not too much.*

It was clear that the students believe that ICT technology, the Internet in particular, is not generally available in education, but the students felt that they would be more likely to use it if such technology became more widely available for language learning.

Questionnaire and interview responses from phase 1 show that most of the participants were less frequent Internet users for study purposes and that only a very few of them tried to use the Internet for their study of English. When they do so, they tend to browse online dictionaries for quick translations from English to Arabic and thus switched to English as the browsing language only to meet translation requirements. They also used the Internet in Arabic to pursue their personal interests including general topics of interest, current affairs and problems in Libya. Some of them used the Internet to listen to music and to download ringtones to their mobile phones. All of them believed that the Internet could be a great learning resource, for learning English in particular.

Although most students were introduced to the Internet use very recently (since becoming adults), the timing coincided with their enrolment at the university; their responses indicated

that the Internet generally was not integrated into the learning experience of the subjects that they were studying nor used to send homework and assignments via e-mail, or to find additional information via search engines. Thus using the Internet was in the end for social rather than academic purposes.

Overall, the findings of the questionnaire for phase 1 were useful because they provided me with a clearer idea of the students' experience of Internet as a resource for learning that could be used as a starting point for developing the new teaching programmes through a process of Lesson Study. In summary, only a small number of students regularly accessed the Internet and this accessing was simply to follow up an area of interest or to access information or entertainment in English, most of all when this information was not readily available in Arabic. However, the relevant skills had not so far been encouraged by their teachers. In developing the following phase of the lesson studies programme, I needed to take into account the implications from the findings of phase 1, which revealed students' needs, interests and abilities.

CHAPTER SIX

PRESENTING THE DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

(PHASE TWO)
(Incorporating technology in the EFL classroom)

6.0 Introduction

In developing this new programme, I took into account implications from the findings of phase 1, which revealed students' needs, interests and abilities. I outline here the presentation of my data which is divided into three cycles. Each cycle details the environment, context, process and development of the Lesson Study programme through three successive cycles. In each cycle, I explore the learning experiences of the students and English language teachers who participated in this programme and describe and evaluate the impact of the Internet-based English Language teaching.

As previously discussed, this research was originally motivated by my concerns about my own English Language teaching practices - in particular regarding the four basic language skills: *Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking* and the teaching of grammar. As mentioned above, my personal concerns were mirrored by the Libyan government's educational reforms before the revolution, which required teachers to adopt learner-centred approaches; these concerns increased after the revolution and the war in Libya. I was led to hypothesis, in the light of the research literature and my own experience as a teacher, that the use of the Internet, because of its wealth of authentic and relevant material, could enhance English language learning, in EFL contexts in particular.

6.1 The Development of Lesson Study within the Teaching Programme

6.1.1 Introducing the Lesson Study

As discussed above, a Lesson Study is a professional learning experience that allows teachers to collaboratively examine their own practice (Lewis, 2002). Therefore, a further

purpose of this study was to examine what English teachers may learn about the practice of English teaching using Internet-based materials while participating in a Lesson Study programme. The Lesson Study process began with informal discussions when I came to collect data for phase 1 (in January 2012) with three members of the EFL teaching staff at the University of Benghazi, Ms. Amal, Ms. Rima and Mr. Ali, who all hold Master's degrees in the teaching of English. After this meeting, two of the teachers (Ms. Amal and Ms. Rima) expressed an interest in joining the lesson studies teaching programme and requested a further meeting so that I could give them a more in-depth explanation about the function of Lesson Study and its potential benefits for curriculum development and for enhancing the teaching and learning process.

Ms. Amal: I think the implementation of Lesson Study will improve our teaching. However, we need to have a good understanding of its process and implementation.

While Ms. Amal and Ms. Rima were enthusiastic about taking part in this programme, the third teacher apologised to me before the programme started:

Mr. Ali: I think the idea of the programme is interesting and the students will benefit from it, but, as far as I understand, it needs plenty of time for preparation and I am overloaded with work.'

Mr. Ali has another position as EFL teacher in a private language institute, which explains the heavy workload that prevented him from taking any further part in this programme.

With the permission of the head of department and the teachers themselves, I started the first process of the programme on 20th October 2012 by observing the teachers in their regular teaching classes for the first week of the semester, in order to gain an understanding of some methods of teaching that they were already implementing. Their teaching schedule of three days a week was as follows:

Table 4. The teaching schedule

Day	Time
Sunday	10:00am - 1:00pm
Tuesday	10:00am - 1:00pm
Thursday	02:00pm - 5:00pm

After observing the teachers in the first week, post-lesson discussion meetings were planned in order to give the in-depth explanation promised to the teachers about the function of the Lesson Study programme.

6.1.2 My reflections on what I had observed

I observed the two Libyan EFL teachers' classes to help me as a researcher understand what goes on in normal teaching before ICT is incorporated into the lessons (see Appendix 7 for the observation of the teaching class, in which I analysed the teaching aims and techniques that the teachers used and the response of the students). This observation report analyses my observations of the three 3-hour long EFL classes before the implementation of the programme and discusses my reflections on the students and teachers in their normal classes. I made several key observations regarding the use of available IT equipment and teaching methods. The data from these observations enabled me to identify strengths, weaknesses and suggest improvements to EFL teaching programmes. The data discussed in this section are drawn from my observation of three classes conducted by the target group of the research participants, both students and teachers.

The classroom setting

In the case, the classroom of the two teachers I observed contained 17 students sitting in rows and the teacher standing at the front. Figure 6:1 below showing the seating arrangement makes it clear that it is a teacher centred classroom.

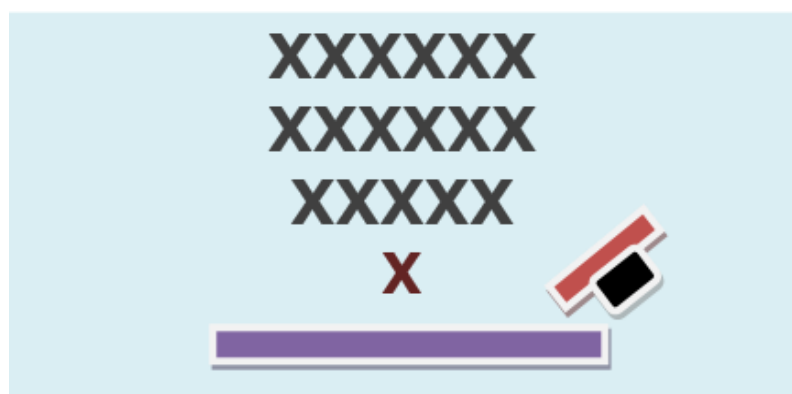


Figure 12. The classroom seating arrangement

The classroom was well equipped with ICT facilities for teachers, who could use the computer that linked to the data projector provided. However, I observed that even though ICT facilities were available in each classroom, the teachers did not use them and the computers were kept under dust sheets.

Reflections on the students

I observed that at the beginning of the teaching session the students were more active and seemed eager to learn English, but by the end they were disengaged. It appeared to me that the three-hour class was too long for them to spend learning with the traditional teaching method. I was hoping to see whether students practising the practical tasks of using English for IT purposes had more sustained engagement and better performance.

Reflections on the role of the teachers and their pedagogical methods

I observed the teachers' current method of teaching EFL, which revealed some of their thoughts and feelings and what they thought, how they felt, what they had done and what they already knew about teaching this subject. During the class the teachers concentrated on following the textbook and I noticed that the teachers were more engaged with the highly-motivated and better-performing students, thus adversely affecting the learning of students with lower levels of performance and motivation. Most of the activities were controlled by the teachers. After I introduced the programme, the discussion on these observations became more interesting as the teachers themselves started to view the process of teaching the same curriculum by applying different approach of teaching. This is analysed below in this chapter.

Follow-up meeting

This type of research adopts a qualitative approach in which opportunities are created for participants to express their opinions on the process under inquiry. Once the teachers had requested a follow-up meeting, I was pleased to organise this because it also gave me a chance to reflect and give feedback based on some of the observations I had made in the first two weeks. These observations were used to provide data about the events during the class and also to discuss, analyse and reflect by myself about their teaching in the classes before using the Internet class (see Appendix 7 for the observation schedule).

The two teachers showed a keen interest regarding the implementation of this programme, understandable given that the Internet is not a common medium for teaching in Libya's higher education system, least of all in the department of English. In response to the EFL teachers' request for more explanation about the process of the Lesson Study programme and its possible implementation, we arranged to have a follow-up meeting; this step also helped me to understand the situation as regards EFL teaching classes. I began the meeting by explaining in detail the proposed process of implementation for the programme. I started by describing the Lesson Study approach in general terms, saying that Lesson Study involves groups of teachers meeting regularly over a period of time (ranging from several months to a year) to work on the design, implementation, testing and improvement of one or several lessons. Such lessons are called "research lessons" (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999).

Research lessons are actual classroom lessons, taught with a teacher's own students and are (a) focused on a specific teacher-generated problem, goal, or vision of pedagogical practice, (b) carefully planned, usually in collaboration with one or more colleagues, (c) observed by other teachers, (d) analysed and reflected upon and (e) discussed by the Lesson Study group members, other colleagues and administrators (Lewis & Tsuchida, 1998). After this discussion, the teachers showed interest in these ideas and expressed the opinion that sharing the responsibility for developing the programme with me as a researcher would make them more willing to be involved in the study.

Ms. Amal: The idea of working collaboratively is brilliant. It makes me feel as if we are on the same wavelength and that you are not conducting your research to evaluate us or to judge our way of teaching.

Ms. Rima agreed with the previous statement and went on to explain why she was interested in the procedure of planning the lessons.

Ms. Rima: There are several websites that provide some activities to EFL learners, but sometimes I find myself unsure about which is the best to introduce to my class. Having the opportunity to prepare the materials together and work as a team is promising.

Even as the teachers engaged in discussing possible ways of conducting the study and how likely it was to be eventually implemented, they also had concerns regarding the students' attitudes to using Internet in their learning and the time factor.

With regard to the teachers' concern about students' attitudes, I assured them that in the first phase of the data collection, the participant students had shown interest in the use of the Internet in their EFL learning. For more details, see Chapter 5.

Magda: When I met the students in the first phase, they said they were looking forward to taking part in the research as it would introduce them to authentic materials that would help them practise their English. I have also told the students that they have the right to stop participating at will.

The teachers became more enthusiastic when they became aware of the students' positive response to using ICT and the Internet in their EFL course. The idea also appeared to attract interest from other students who were not part of this study once they heard about it from their friends on the EFL course.

Magda: In phase one when I was conducting an individual interview with one of the students, suddenly there was a knock on the door and a student from a different faculty came in and said that he had heard about the study and was wondering if he was allowed to take part in it.

The teachers agreed with my view that this study should be confined to the students of the department of English. However, if this study were to be very successful, there would certainly be the potential to adopt the approach in teaching general English courses across the university.

The other issue raised by the teachers was about the amount of time that might be spent by using unfamiliar technology. If the teachers and students are not used to computers and the Internet in their learning and teaching, applying such a medium of learning can indeed be time-consuming. The specific concern of the two Libyan teachers was around the preparation of these sessions:

Ms. Rima: I would like to ask you, Ms. Magda, how long it will take us to prepare for one lesson?

Ms. Amal: Yes, this is an important issue; some of the modules, especially the ones we have taught before, normally would not take long to prepare for. But

having the same module taught in a different way probably means that we need to prepare for it differently.

Magda: There is no doubt that the preparations for the first few lessons will take time, since we need to get the appropriate materials for each of the modules. We will have a preparation meeting where we plan the lessons together, choosing a topic for Lesson Study and designing activities to suit the topic in each module.

6.1.3 Preparations for the teaching cycles

As the teachers became familiar with the idea of the ICT-based teaching programme and its implementation, we moved collaboratively towards putting it into practice.

Meeting 1 (2 hours): Planning the process of teaching and strategies

At our first preparatory meeting, following my feedback on observed practices, the two teachers also contributed several suggestions regarding the research lesson design. They suggested that they could begin to teach their normal three-hour classes, focusing on a different skill set (one of the four basic language skills), whilst I also worked to design the programme outlines and planned the research lessons.

Ms. Amal: As you saw in our normal classes, we have to teach for three hours per EFL class and focus on the four basic skills. The textbook (Cutting Edge) is the main source in our teaching and we have to finish the modules selected for each term.

The implementation of the programme would allow teachers to go beyond the textbook, Ms. Rima felt.

Ms. Rima: I believe that by implementing this programme, we are not completely restricted by the textbook, even though it is still the main source in our teaching process. We are going to use a new method - the Internet - to enhance the students' learning.

As we discussed the cyclical process of the research lessons, the length of the class became an important issue, as the normal habit of taking a break of 15 minutes halfway through a

three-hour class did not appear to be ideal for the new approach. We felt that there would be better continuity if the students had the two hour theory session before the 15 minute break and came back refreshed for the hands-on one- hour session that would be a new experience for them.

Ms. Rima: So, having the Internet as a teaching tool means that the lesson plan needs to be changed to accommodate the new approach.

Magda: I think we need to design the Lesson Plan in the light of this. In my opinion, I think we can implement Internet use in the last hour of the class.

Ms. Amal: Do we need to teach one of the skills via the Internet?

Magda: I was thinking that in the first two hours, students could be introduced to the target skills of the lesson by you as their main teachers and then I could teach them for the last hour.

We agreed to change the way that we organised the teaching time so that two teachers would teach for two hours and I would teach the third hour, using the on-line activities to focus on certain key issues in each module, which meant that students would automatically revise much of what they had already covered.

In order to follow the Lesson Study approach so that we could all benefit equally from the process, we further agreed that our teaching roles would be switched later in the term. Thus, for instance, Ms. Amal and I would teach the first two hours while Ms. Rima observed the teaching process and in the third hour, Ms. Amal or Ms. Rima would teach through using ICT skills while I would observe the implementation of the Internet activities. Ms. Amal suggested that I would need to explain again to the students the nature and purpose of my research and the potential value of the Internet as a resource for developing their English literacy.

Ms. Amal: You told us that you have met some of the students before, but I think it will be helpful if you explain the programme once again and highlight the benefit they are likely to obtain, because they have now got an hour from the scheduled time which can be allocated for revising their new lesson.

The idea of having the Internet to revise what the students had learnt in the lesson appealed to all the teachers and we hoped that the students would have a similar reaction. As mentioned earlier, I had already met some of the students in the previous semester when I conducted the first phase of the data collection study and I had talked with them about their ideas regarding Internet-based learning (see Chapter 5 for the data from phase 1). However, I still agreed that it would be helpful for the group of students and the teachers if I did give a further explanatory introduction, since I would be observing classroom practices and would introduce the last hour in the lesson.

In this planning meeting we therefore outlined the process of the programme and we agreed upon the Lesson Study approach that we would implement. We also planned to have another meeting in which we would discuss the curriculum itself and the modules we would cover in the implementation period. The relationship between the cycles covers one module; for example, cycle 1 covers module 1 and the teaching lesson with its online activities and related online materials. The procedures of the programme are summarised in the following diagram.

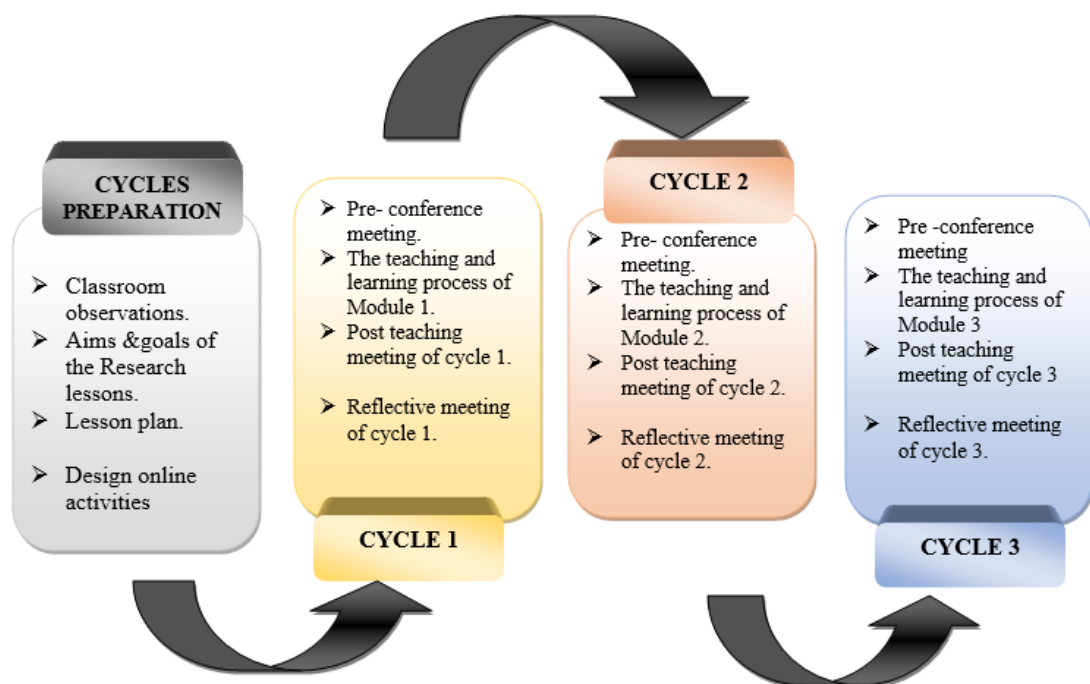


Figure 13. The Design of the Programme

Meeting 2: (2 hours) The syllabus design

A further meeting was arranged in order to study the existing syllabus design and to formulate the goals for the ICT input. Each session would start with a pre-lesson conference; we attempted to design an integrated learning environment - a classroom in which the use of the Internet would be blended with the curriculum text that was already being used. These curriculum texts have the title of 'CUTTING EDGE: Starter Level'. They are for complete beginners or those who need to brush-up on the basics before moving on to the pre-intermediate level; they give a good foundation in grammar and vocabulary and focus on the development of the four key skills. Cutting Edge constantly recycles new language in the reading listings and practice exercises of each module (Moor & Redston, 2002), which means that students automatically revise much of what they have already covered whilst adding new material. As mentioned earlier, this suggests that each cycle cuts across all the modules.

To further describe the cycles, we selected and revised three modules for the research lessons. These were Module 1: *Nice to meet you* (dealing with self-introductions), Module 2: *Around the world* (dealing with countries and nationalities) and Module 3: *In a different country* (dealing with ways to cope as a newcomer in an English-speaking country). We then wrote an instruction plan which included long-term goals, anticipated student thinking and responses, a data collection plan and a full rationale for the chosen approach. In the discussion we established some broad aims for the programme; these were to enable students to develop their English literacy skills, to enhance overall skills in communication in English, to enable students to use e-mail as a means of communication and to select suitable topics from the syllabus texts.

The first aim for the programme, however, was for the students to use ICT, We secured this by treating students as independent learners, thinking to the use of ICT and the classroom. This was a more student-centred mode of education. The first aim was for the students to increase their technical skills in ICT by learning how to use Internet basics such as opening websites and emails. We also began to focus on the implications for both the development of the ELT programmes in these classes and on the specific research on students' uses of the Internet in these programmes. These implications were formulated according to the following principles:

1. Internet study programmes need to be incorporated into regular subject programmes rather than remaining as individual sessions.
2. Students need early on in the course to be taught the necessary technical skills for using the Internet. In addition, the teachers of individual subjects who incorporate the use of the Internet need to be prepared to build in similar explicit teaching of the relevant ICT technical skills. Initial skills could be developed in Arabic so that students are not discouraged by the barrier that their difficulties with English comprehension might present.
3. English language programmes need to take account of students' own preferences and interest in the use of the Internet and to build on these to provide opportunities for the students to use English for learning purposes.
4. From the observation in the first week of teaching, I recognised that strategies for teaching and learning activities that the teachers were already using with their students, such as guessing word meanings and using the translation method (using Arabic to understand English) could usefully be incorporated in this teaching programme.
5. Opportunities and encouragement to switch between Arabic and English when accessing web sites are likely to support the students' learning of English, which I believed to be a very positive objective for students. I decided to include this teaching objective for students in their English language programmes which I recognized in the interviews in phase 1.
6. Students should be encouraged to talk about online activities and what they can learn from Internet-based teaching. They can do this in groups to support interactions amongst them and between them and the teacher as they engage in learning English.

In our discussions with teachers, we further clarified that the major aims of the course were to:

- Support participants through different stages of Internet-based development and
- Prepare them to act independently as online learners.

To achieve these aims, communicative teaching and learning online activities were identified and learning materials were prepared. Finally, appropriate procedures for programme evaluation, which included on-going student progression from cycle to cycle, were

developed in order to determine the extent to which the students achieved the aims and whether the programme was effective from both the teacher's and the students' perspectives, which we covered in our data discussions. In the account of the cycles I have explained in more detail how these implications were taken up in the development of a programme designed to integrate the use of the Internet in supporting students' English language learning.

At the end of the second meeting of the preparation cycle phase, we considered how we could serve the goals of improving students' learning and development in the existing study syllabus by identifying topics of interest as well as practicalities:

1. Arranging time for the teachers to meet for collaborative planning and discussion of the lessons and to choose a topic for a research Lesson Study from among a range of topics (pre meeting conference).
2. Focusing on our expectations about student learning based on developmental appropriateness and the syllabus used for the students in their learning development.
3. Simplifying online activities in the lesson in order to achieve the greatest possible depth of understanding and clarity in instruction.
4. Providing in the activities a supportive environment in individual study learning and across all groups of the class to increase the social comfort of the participants.
5. Developing a "philosophy of Lesson Study" among the students to increase participation and improve the professional outlook among participating teachers.
6. Providing encouraging incentives for the students participating in the Lesson Study programme to increase their motivation.
7. Writing the lessons plans for the research lesson and ensuring that the research lessons were well prepared before the teaching phase. It was important that as teachers we communicated and related well to the participating students to support the research lesson. Scheduling, selecting a suitable topic and related online activities were considered before starting the research Lesson Study.

The main ideas were initiated by me as teacher. The process of preparing the class focuses not only on the learning activities, but also deals with the teaching materials, online activities, observation sheet and other technical aspects. All preparations were shared and

we agreed to implement them in the learning research lesson. Having set these common goals, as a teaching team we collaboratively met to design the online teaching and learning activities to achieve the goals and learning objectives.

Meeting (3) (2 hours): The Overall Lesson Plan for research lessons and the online activities

The teachers had the opportunity to plan some of the activities at this goal-setting stage. We started by setting overall goals for each research lesson and by selecting topics in accordance with the goals previously set in the programme. Communicative teaching strategies and online learning activities were identified and learning materials were prepared.

The topics that we focused on were led by the textbook:

- Cycle 1 Module 1: Nice to meet you,
- Cycle 2 Module 2: Around the world
- Cycle 3 Module 3: In a different country

We also designed some points and tasks for some Internet skills to focus on in the research lessons, as follows:

- Introduction to ICT (Information and Communications Technology)
- Connecting to the Internet, Web applications and the www.
- Internet communication E-mail Task 1: Setting up new e-mail accounts in Yahoo. Using the new e-mail to send and receive messages from each other.
- Discussion groups, Task 2: Finding and joining a group to discuss a topic of interest. Using Internet Explorer.
- Internet navigation, Task 3: Introducing different links to navigate round a Website.
- Search engines and directories, Task 5: Using Google to search for English Language Learning activities.
- Exploring Windows Media, Task 6: Finding interesting links for the activities and materials related to the main topics of the teaching models.

The online programme instruction strategy followed Salmon's (2002a) five-stage model outlined in the Literature Review (Chapter3, above). According to Woodward's (1991) circle input approach, the online course addressed the nature of online learning and Internet-based

learning development. The online learning material was structured into three progressive study modules, each of which concluded with a common task (for all participants) and an associated exchange discussion (see Appendix 9 for the activities). A schedule for the online learning course is outlined in the table below.

Table 5. The schedule for the online course

Week	Module	Activity	Description
1-2	Module 1	Observing	Observing Ms. <u>Amal</u> and Ms. Rima
3-4-5	Module 1/2	E-mail invitations Access and motivation	Online socialisation. All participants encouraged to communicate using online tools
5-6-7	Module 2	Surfing the Internet and orientation in learning with ICT	Introducing the World Wide Web with learning activities accessed from sites
7-10	Module 3	Information exchange, development and Supported learning with ICT	Incorporating technology in the EFT classroom and using the Internet activities tasks
11-12	Module 3	Gaining independence in learning with ICT)	Incorporating technology in the EFT classroom and using the Internet activities tasks

Because the university's Internet connection was not reliable, I conducted the Internet based sessions at the Language Centre in this university, which has all the necessary equipment. I discussed my research interest with the Head Teacher of the Language Centre, Professor Ahmed, who felt that the university should encourage the use of the Internet for student learning as well as for teacher development:

***Professor Ahmed:** I really wish one day I will see the Internet used by students and teachers at our university, even though I can't guarantee it would all be educational.*

The programme, consisting of 12 weeks of three sessions a week, each lasting three hours, was developed to complement the existing course, as outlined above. Attendance was voluntary and the programme was implemented in the hour after a two-hour teaching session by one of the other teachers. The next section, divided into three parts, discusses each cycle in turn, with details regarding the environment, context, process and development of the research Lesson Study programme. For each cycle, I explore the learning experiences of the English teachers and student participants and describe and evaluate the impact of the Internet-based English language teaching programme.

6.1.4 Research Cycles Diagram

The Research Cycles Diagram below, Figure 6.3, shows that each cycle covers one module. Cycle 1 has eight activities, cycle 2 has nine and cycle three consists of seven activities, the activities being in each of the three cycles of data collection and analysis of this research. All participants (teachers - as teachers and as observers - and students), functioned according to what we had agreed: planning, acting, observing, reflecting and revising, as shown in this diagram. After the collection and analysis of data in each cycle, the activities and the teaching approach were revised to improve the programme for the next cycle. The procedures are illustrated below in Figure 6.3.

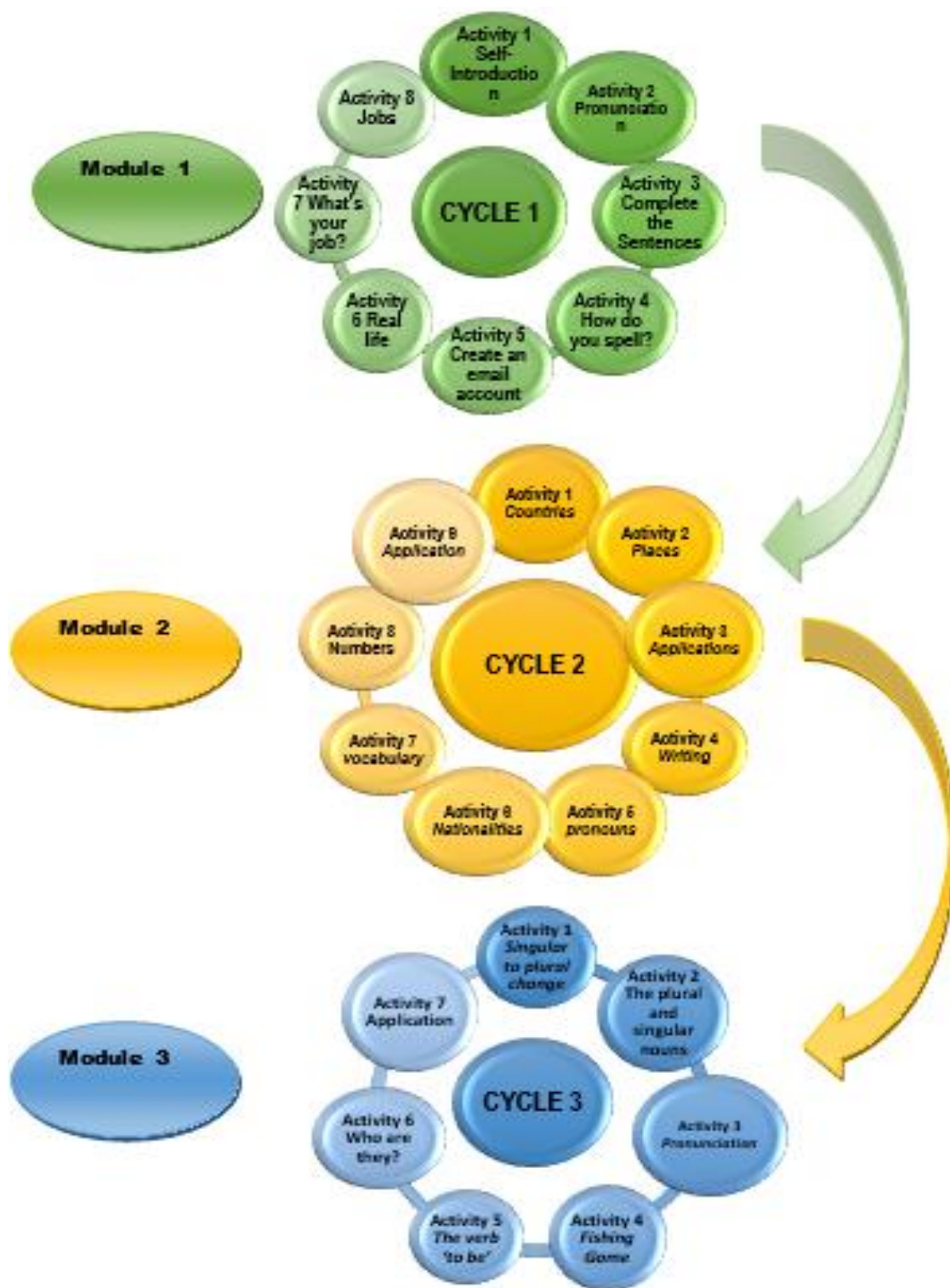


Figure 14. Research Cycles Diagram

6.2 CYCLE ONE

(Orientation in learning with ICT)

This discussion of cycle 1 is structured as follows: the sub-section called Pre meeting discusses the meeting which Ms. Amal and Ms. Rima and I had before the sessions with the students. This is followed by a description of the session, including the activities carried out with the students. This is followed by the observations made by the two teachers and me. The last sub-section deals with the meeting conducted after all these stages in order to take stock of all the previous activities in this cycle.

6.2.1 Pre-Conference meeting

This cycle covered three sessions per week in which the students were introduced to Module One; some of these activities took place in the first week and the rest in the second. In the three sessions my role in the first two hours was as an observer. In the last hour I was observed by Teacher 1 (Ms. Amal) and Teacher 2 (Ms. Rima), as I demonstrated the last activity. In the following sections of this chapter the activities of the three EFL classes, taught for three hours per class per week, are presented; the first two activities took place in the second session of the week while the remaining ones took place in the third EFL session.

6.2.2. The Teaching and Learning Process

Module 1 activities: Nice to meet you

Activity One: Self-Introduction

Since Ms. Amal was starting the very first module she adopted 'ice-breakers', exercises designed to put students at their ease and to help them to memorize each other's names and to learn about each other. The practice of such warm-ups at the beginning of each class is supported by Dornyei and Malderez (as cited in Dornyei, 2001, p. 138). Consisting of a set of group building strategies, the 'ice-breaking' self-introduction activity encourages students to get to know each other and to exchange information. The class began with Ms. Amal introducing herself.

*Ms. Amal: Hello, I am Mrs (...) and I am your English teacher.
(She then moved to the first student on her right).*

Ms. Amal: What is your name?

Student 1: My name is Ahmad.

Ms. Amal: Hello, Ahmad nice to meet you.

Ms. Amal then asked the class to imitate the example and practise in peer groups; some of the students opened the textbook in order to get help to practise the dialogue on Page 6 on the students' text book (see Appendix 9 for more details). As they did so, she started to move around the class listening to the students speaking to one another. With the help of their textbooks, students found the activity easy, so they practised task 2 on Page 7; then Ms. Amal started to introduce them to occupations, as follows:

Ms. Amal: I am Mrs (...). I am an English teacher

Student 2: I am Fatimah and I am a student

As the students continued with their introductions, Ms. Amal asked them to take a look at Page 8 of the Cutting Edge textbook, where they would see a list of occupations on focus 2 exercise 3. The students chose occupations from the list for practice in reading and speaking English. As Ms. Amal walked around the class, the students' voices became clearer than when they first began engaging with the dialogue.

Activity Two: Pronunciation

All the students had the chance by now to find out each other's names and some of them had actually found the names of some occupations. Ms. Amal then asked the students to find the pronunciation activity on Page 6 as she played a recording and asked the students to try to follow the conversation. She played the conversation twice and then asked the students to concentrate on the stress in each sentence. She played the conversation for a third time, stopping it at the end of each sentence. She asked the students to repeat the sentence and discussed the stress pattern of each one.

Ms. Amal: You see in the small box at the bottom right of Page 6 that there are orange dots above some words; they show you the main stress in the sentence.

Once they had listened to the recording and repeated the sentences, Ms. Amal asked them to turn to the exercise on Page 8 of the textbook and to complete it whilst they listened to the pronunciation of the job titles and occupations to complete the activity.

Ms. Amal: I will now ask you to listen carefully to each word and pay attention to the stress in each one. Then I will play the recording again and this time I want you to complete the conversation blanks in your book. (See Appendix 9 for this textbook exercise).

The students followed the teacher's instructions and wrote the words down for the first time. Once the recording had finished for the second time, the teacher asked the students to check each other's answers in small groups.

Activity Three: Complete the Sentences

When Ms. Amal finished this activity, it was Ms. Rima's turn to introduce the students to some reading and writing skills. Ms. Rima started by writing some sentences on the board where she underlined 'I', 'my', 'you' and 'your'. She used the same sentences that the students had been practising earlier with Ms. Amal; this was to keep building on and linking the students' newly learnt skills. Ms. Rima went on to explain the grammar roles of subject pronouns. On the board, she wrote "My name is (.....) I am an English teacher." Then she asked a male student his name:

Ms. Rima: What is your name?

Student: My name is Ali.

Ms. Rima: wrote in the board ("His name is Ali; he is a student").

Then she turned and asked a female student her name; the student just said her name without putting it in a sentence. Ms. Rima did not demand a full sentence at this stage. She wrote on the board: "Her name is Zainab; she is a student." Then she spoke to another student: "Your name is Ahmad; you are a student". She wrote this on the board.

Ms. Rima: In small groups of three or four, ask each other your names then report the answer to the rest as I did with your mates [pointing to the board] here.

The students worked in small groups as they imitated the examples on the board. When they were finished, Ms. Rima asked them to open their workbooks at Page 4 on which they had been asked to complete the first exercise individually. The exercise had images of four people and the students were asked to fill in the blanks with appropriate pronoun forms (He,

His, Him, She or her). Each image also had a set of sentences. One image had the blank in its sentence already filled in, as an example. The students had to fill in the blanks in the other three sentences (see exercise 9 on Page 9 of Module 1 on the students' book in the Appendix 9). Intermediate level students finished the exercise before their classmates.

Activity Four: Create an email account (online activity)

As the students finished the previous activity, it was my turn to start introducing them to the use of the Internet as an EFL learning tool. As previously described, the use of the Internet and related IT skills were integrated into the EFL syllabus in order to enhance students' engagement and motivation for learning by widening the relevance and range of applications of the student's use of English. This first session was the perfect opportunity to tell students a bit more about myself and to get to know something about them as well. This was also my first good opportunity to assess the students' English level and their confidence in using this language. I felt that it was important to encourage them to speak as much as possible with me, so we spent some more time getting to know each other.

In the third hour of the session, the students were introduced to using the Internet as part of their EFL learning process. To begin with, the students were acquainted with core Internet skills such as navigation and communication software. By the end of the session, the students were able to sign up for a new e-mail account, reactivate an old one, set up Messenger, use chat facilities, participate in group chat and discussion groups, navigate the web and search for particular pieces of information.

After the students created their email addresses, they exchanged these among themselves and with me, in order to build up an exchange group where students could send their assignments and other work to the teachers. Once they had created their email addresses, the students sent tester emails to each other in order to confirm that they had the correct addresses for their classmates and the teacher. Once these were confirmed, I set up a group list of student e-mails in my computer. I explained to the students how a sharing site or even a class Facebook site can be set up. Sharing sites set up specifically for classes have proved very useful; they allow for greater discussion and analysis of classroom activities between students and the teacher. I encouraged the students by sending some of their assignments as e-mails to enhance learning. This activity was the last one for that day and I was going to

see the students later on that week for their next EFL class. The following activities were introduced in this second class.

Activity Five: How do you spell?

Once the students finished the previous activity, Ms. Rima asked them to say the English alphabet out-loud and practise the Focus 3 in students' textbook on Page 10. Seeing that they were proficient at this exercise, she addressed one of the students:

Ms. Rima: Zainab, can you spell your name for me, please?

Zainab: Yes Ms. Z-A-I-N-B.

Ms. Rima nodded approvingly and then moved on to another student. After asking three more students, Ms. Rima asked the students to open their workbook at Page 6.

A student: Are we going to listen to Exercise 5?

Ms. Rima: No, we will do number 6. You need to listen carefully and write the letters in the correct places.

There were six pictures in this activity. The first one was an example in which some blanks had been filled but not all. Ms. Rima played the related recording once, while the students tried to write down the missing letters. Also she moved to practise them on numbers from 0 to 20 and she asked the students to listen any say the numbers regarding to the task4 on page 12.

Activity Six: Real life

When Ms. Rima had finished explaining the grammar part of this lesson as planned, Ms. Amal took over. She asked the students to open their textbooks at Page 13 and focus on real life task 5. Ms. Amal read the words in the box and then asked the students if they knew the meaning of all of them. Getting positive responses, she divided the class into pairs and then explained what the students should do:

Ms. Amal: Student A will point to a thing or a person in the class and Student B has to say what the thing is or who the person is. Then they will repeat the process with Student B pointing and Student A telling the class whom or what Student B pointed at.

The students went through the exercise. They then moved to the second part of the activity where they worked in pairs to write the correct phrase under the correct picture on match the phrases to the pictures task 6 on Page 13. After this, Ms. Amal played the recording and the students listened to the instructions. Ms. Amal then repeated the instructions and paused after each phrase in the recording to ask the students to repeat it.

Activity Seven: What's your job?

In the third session of the week, Ms. Rima taught the first hour while Ms. Amal and I observed her. After greeting the students, Ms. Rima drew up two columns on the board. She then explained that the English alphabet contains vowel and consonant letters. Above the two columns she drew conversation bubbles in which she clearly wrote the vowel letters, telling the students that all the remaining letters were consonants. Then she explained that in English when people talk about jobs they always use the article 'a' or 'an' to introduce an occupation. She asked the students to come up with job names and use the appropriate articles. She next wrote the word in the correct column. Once the students had showed their understanding of the use of the article under discussion, Ms. Rima asked them to open their textbooks at Page 8.

Ms. Rima: You can see that in Exercise 3 you are asked to write in the correct place the jobs which you have read in the first exercise. You can do that quickly and then move to task 5. I would like you to work in pairs. When one of you asks the question: "What's your job?" the other should answer. Then you need to switch roles, going through all the jobs that you have written down.

The students worked in groups and the classroom became alive with their conversations. The teacher gave them about five minutes to practise, before telling them that time was up. Having noticed a silent pair, she went to them:

Ms. Rima: Why aren't you practising?

The first student: She asked me and I asked her...

Ms. Rima: You can repeat asking the question and then have another answer; there are plenty of jobs written in the book and on the board. The more you practise, the better you will become at learning English.

I noticed that once the students and teachers started conducting the activities the teachers shifted to using Arabic and English together so that the students could easily understand the teachers and the activities.

Activity Eight: Online activities

In the first and second hour, the students had been introduced to some new grammar and vocabulary. In the third hour, the Internet was used in order to enhance and contextualise their previous learning by applying these skills to researching jobs in English on the web. I had decided to direct them to the website of the British Council, where I knew that many different jobs were being advertised. The site also had many learning activities. I asked the students to log on to it and I turned on the data projector. I then typed in the web address for the British Council (<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/grammar-vocabulary/vocabulary-exercises/jobs>) and asked the students to do the same.

Once they had the web page open, I explained the exercise to them: An instruction window would appear where the learners were asked to match job names to pictures (see Picture 6:1, A).

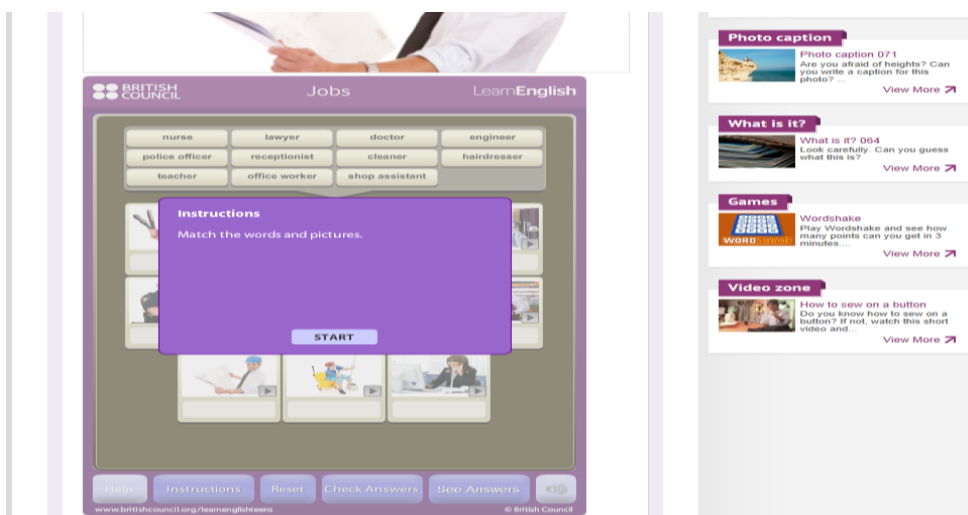


Figure 15. Instructions Window

As they pressed the start button, a window with nine pictures and nine job words appeared (see Picture 6:1, B). The instructions requested learners to drag the name of the job and drop it under the related picture. If they were not sure about the correct word, they had a chance to listen to the word again.

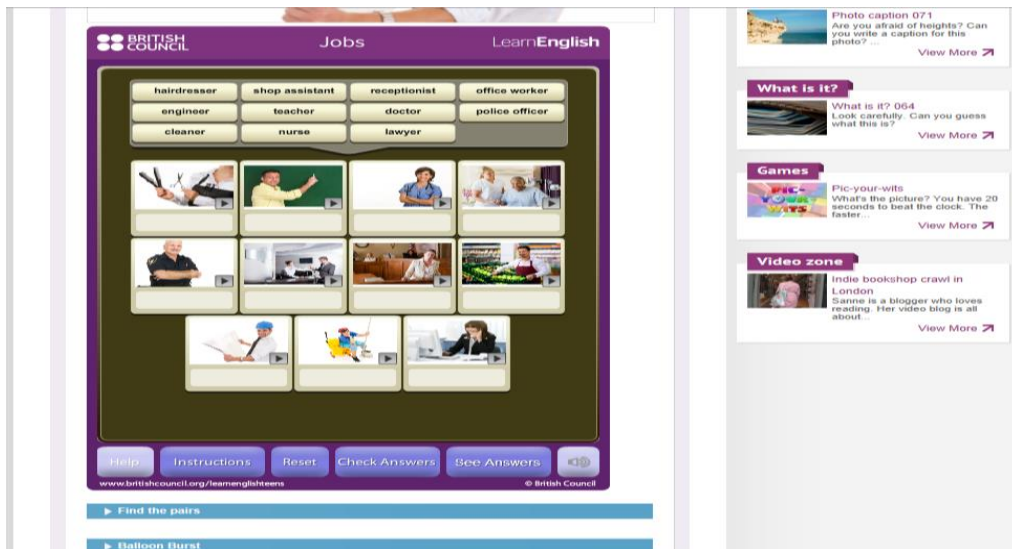


Figure 16. Jobs words and pictures

The students dragged and dropped the words to the boxes underneath the pictures. Once they had finished doing this for all the nine jobs, they either cleared the boxes of answers and redid the exercise (if they were not satisfied with their answers) or went ahead and checked their answers. One of the advantages of using this exercise was the site’s immediate feedback to the learner (see Pictures 6:1, C, and D).

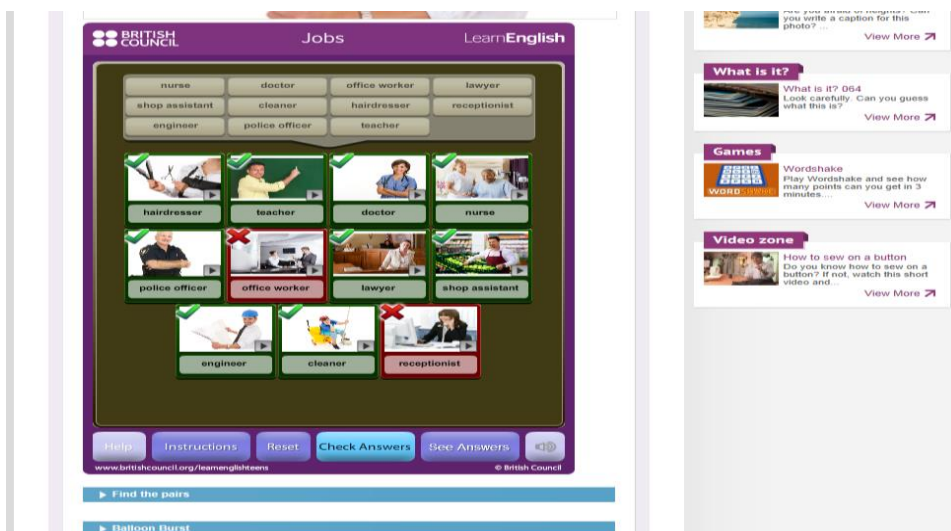


Figure 17. Feedback if all the questions were not answered correctly

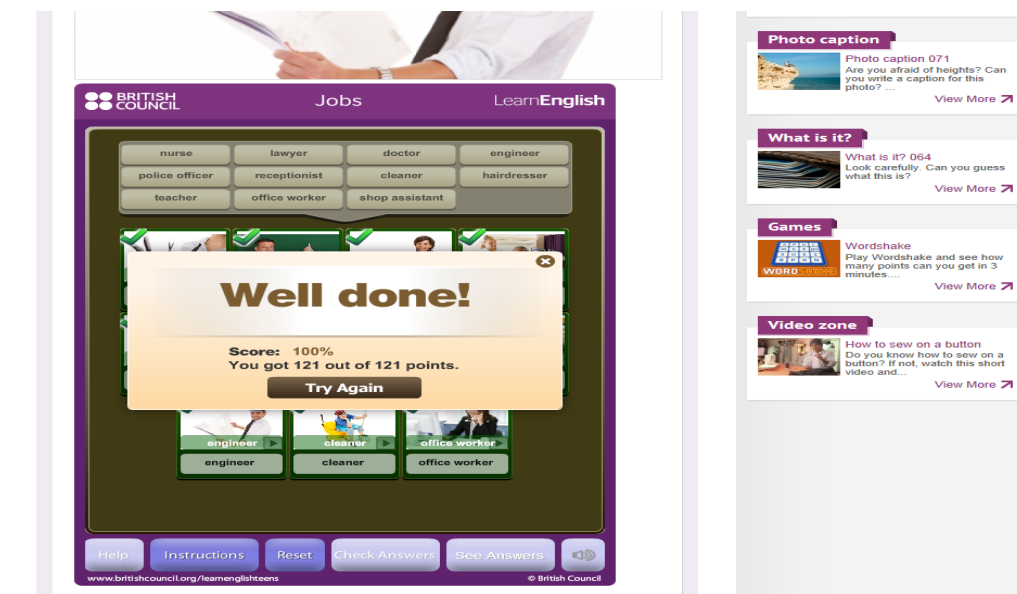


Figure 18. Feedback if all the questions were answered correctly

6.2.3. Post Teaching Meeting of Cycle One

The two teachers and I met after the research lesson in order to review how these activities had gone. The issues discussed in this meeting were based on our observations of each other and of the students in all three EFL classes in the first cycle of the programme's implementation. The observations made by the other teachers follow; each has one or more bullet points at the end as my summary of the main points of their observations. The summary of Ms. Amal and Ms. Rima's observation of me in the online activity as follow.

Observation 1

Ms. Amal: Ms. Magda started the last hour of the class by introducing the students to the Internet and the use of it in the learning and teaching process. In order to engage the students, she used the data projector for demonstrating the steps. As they turned on their computers, Mrs. Magda asked the students to open Explorer and type Yahoo in the 'title bar', guiding them through the process. The 17 students had created new e-mail accounts. Some of the students were more experienced in the use of the Internet than others and they showed their capability by browsing the Internet and dealing with the functions; for others, however, the process was more difficult.

Ms. Rima: As the first two hours of our first session finished, Ms. Amal and I went to observe Ms. Magda as she conducted the introduction session about using the Internet.

There were two students who were confident in using the Internet; Ms. Magda told them to create new accounts. One of them, a male student, said: 'Ms. Magda, I have a Hotmail account. Do I have to make a new one?' Ms. Magda told the student that the advantage of having a Yahoo account in this context was that his classmates and he would have the same kind of account, making it easier to do the exercises planned for the whole class. The students showed their willingness to use the Internet and as the instructions were clear, they managed to follow step by step. It was observed that:

- *There were different levels of experience of IT in the class*
- *Engaging with the technology seemed to enhance the motivation to apply the skills.*

Ms. Amal: *The students came into the classroom and switched on their computers. They retrieved what they had learnt from the last class. Two girls sitting next to each other were looking at a notebook in which one of them had taken notes of the previous class. As all the students managed to access their emails, Ms. Magda asked them to log on to Messenger, where they then started to chat with her. The beep sounds of the instant chats made me feel that the students were engaging with the new practice and that they were all concentrating on the screens in front of them. The only issue was that in their messages they used Arabic, apart from the basic 'hi, how are you?' from the students.*

Ms. Rima: *The students logged into their accounts and were encouraged by Ms. Magda to move to the next step. They seemed to know what they were doing and I had the impression that some of them had started to practise the new experience of logging into an email account and exploring it. The aim of this lesson was to build the students' confidence in using the Internet and as I saw Ms. Magda encouraging the students to send her messages and replying to them, I felt that the lesson had fulfilled its aim. The students appeared to enjoy the instant chat and the alert sounds gave teachers the feedback that the students were engaged in live conversation.*

Observation 2

Ms. Rima: In the third session of this week, after they had had their two hours with Ms. Amal and me, the students were ready to start the last hour with Ms. Magda. All of them were encouraged to try to use the Internet to enhance and apply their English learning. To start with, Ms. Magda asked them to log into their accounts; then she turned on the data projector. As we agreed in our meeting, Ms. Magda chose an exercise that related to the module; it focused on 'Jobs'. Ms. Magda said the name of the website clearly and then typed it in her computer connected to the data projector. The students were asked to open the same website. As they were doing so, a student raised her hand and said: "Ms. Magda, I have not got the same page as you have. There is an error in my web browser." Ms. Magda went to the student and checked the [url] that she had typed, finding some letters misplaced. The student then typed the address in correctly. Ms. Magda then explained to the student how to undertake the exercise and they all became fully engaged with the new experience. It was observed that:

- *Web URLs require accurate spelling.*
- *We as teachers need to be able to identify the problems that students have with a new medium and to offer support.*

6.2.4. Reflective Meeting of Cycle One

A formal reflective discussion meeting was arranged in which the other observers and I could share the data from each lesson and use them to illuminate student learning, subject content, lesson and module design and some broader issues. These broader issues were related to teaching-learning and the documentation of Cycle 1, in order to consolidate the discussion and carry it forward to the next lesson, with new questions for the next cycle of Lesson Study. The themes of our discussions included the teachers' observations regarding their own guidance and support in student learning, teaching resources, time issues and student capabilities inherent in the process of Lesson Study. The teachers also discussed anticipating some of the students' responses in the lesson, thus demonstrating that they were deeply and continually considering student thinking.

Ms. Rima stated that it is vital to see students' attitudes and reactions towards this teaching cycle and how we as teachers can motivate them in order to implement other cycles more effectively, both as a formative evaluation in order to keep developing the cycles as one succeeded another and later to evaluate the effectiveness of the process as a whole on the students, which will be our summative evaluation. We all agreed on this. As observers we each determined our own evaluation questions, thereby conceptualizing how they could check and monitor student thinking and learning for use in our formative and summative evaluations. The teachers observing the teaching of lessons, which they are also essentially a part of, were able to critically reflect on their own thinking and students' responses. At the end of this discussion about the actual online activities and materials used in cycle 1, we produced some specific action points, outlined below.

- **Clarity of the instructions**

One of the points that emerged from all our observations was related to the way in which we gave instructions to the students. For instance, sometimes I assumed that the students were able to follow my instructions and I gave them too many tasks to do at once. Also in 'Activity 5: What's your job?', Ms. Rima explained to the students what they needed to do for two exercises one after another, as a result of which some of the students did not have a clear understanding of the tasks. They stopped their conversation after they had all asked one another one question - but what they had been asked to do was to keep on asking each other questions and come up with different answers in Arabic.

- **Creating variations - reducing repetition**

Two issues that I discussed with the teachers were those that I had noticed from my observation of both of them. I noticed that they could have 'reduced repetition' by applying different methods of self-introduction. In the 'Introducing Yourself' activity, a number of introduction exercises were given, which were of the straightforward kind, such as: "*What is your name?*" and "*Where are you from?*" I suggested using alternative ways of using similar questions and answers. For instance, students could be asked to exchange the information among themselves and then introduce each other to the class. Because creating variation in the learning process will enhance students' learning approaches by using different teaching and learning strategies, giving a different learning object and focusing on the essential aspects of the learning may help students to learn more effectively.

6.3 CYCLE TWO

(Supported learning with ICT)

This section is structured as follows: the sub-section called pre-meeting discusses the meeting which Ms. Amal and Ms. Rima and I had before the sessions with the students. This is followed by a description of the session, including the activities done with the students. The observation made by the two teachers and me follow this. The last sub-section deals with the meeting conducted after all these stages in order to take stock of all the previous activities in the cycle.

6.3.1 Pre-Conference meeting

We held a reflective meeting in which the teachers reflected on the process of implementing the Lesson Study approach and the areas that we agreed to focus on in the second cycle; our priority was the students' learning and their engagement in the class. The aim of this cycle was to focus on the students' learning and to introduce them to a wider range of activities, bearing in mind that the instructions given must be clear to all of them. This meeting was the second of its kind in which the three of us met in order to plan the second module. We spent two hours discussing and agreeing upon the research lesson planning for the next cycle, cycle 2, dividing the activities and tasks between the three EFL classes for the week.

In the previous cycle we had agreed that at some point in our teaching, we had given unclear instructions which had an effect on the way in which students had responded to their tasks. This time we were determined to give clearer instructions and to ask the students before they started their tasks if they had fully understood what they were being asked to do. The teacher who would teach in the first hour would tell the class that they could ask a question in Arabic and ask for some clarification in Arabic if they were not sure about what the teacher had said.

As the aim of this research was to integrate the use of the Internet in the teaching and learning of EFL, we discussed the importance of also using the Internet in the preparation of materials outside the textbooks. We agreed that the use of the Internet in our teaching needed to be a collaborative task and not merely implemented in the third hour of each EFL class. Ms. Amal and Ms. Rima were now more motivated to use this opportunity and to start using the Internet themselves for preparing lessons and teaching them. This was because they had seen how

positively the students had responded to using the Internet to enhance their learning, a response which I had stimulated in the previous cycle.

In the second week of implementation, the students would be studying Module Two: 'Around the world'. We agreed that we would cover the most important aspects of the module in the two EFL sessions, but this time Ms. Amal and Ms. Rima would not limit their activity to what was presented in the textbook and the workbook, but rather, they would immediately start to use the Internet to bring new materials and activities into the classroom. The main areas of learning we were going to cover in this cycle are given below.

1. **Vocabulary:** In this module, students would be introduced to information about some other countries; they would listen to the new vocabulary on a tape-recorder and then repeat the new words.

2. **Grammar:** In this module the students would be introduced to pronouns. An online activity was agreed upon, which was taken from the British Council website <http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/grammar-vocabulary/grammar-videos/personal-pronouns-and-possessives> and this activity was to play a video to the students and ask them to listen to its dialogue. After they had identified in the video the pronouns introduced to them earlier, they would use them in a dialogue with me.

6.3.2 The Teaching and Learning Process

Module 2 activities: Around the world

Activity One: The Countries

In the first activity of this module, Ms. Amal started the first hour of the week by asking the students to open their textbook at Page 14 and 15; she turned on the data projector and a map of the world appeared on the projection screen as shown in the following picture.

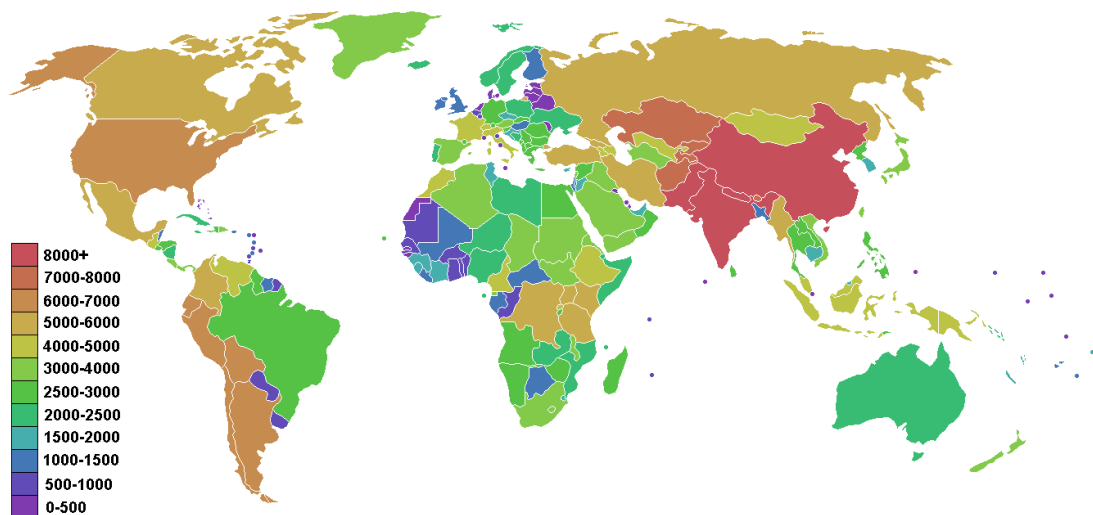


Figure 19. A map of the world

Rather than narrow the students to the countries numbered in the student textbook of the Cutting Edge, Ms. Amal asked them to work in pairs and write down the names of the countries that they knew. Ms. Amal then asked each pair to provide one name from their list. A student raised her hand.

Student: We are not sure if we have the correct name in English, we know some countries' names but only in Arabic.

Ms. Amal: That's absolutely fine; you can say the name in Arabic, point to its location and I will write it down on the board in English.

The students called out the names of several countries, some of which were not listed in the textbook. Soon the board was full of countries' names. (See appendix 9 for the text book exercise Page 14)

Activity Two: Where are you from?

In the first activity Ms. Amal targeted the students' speaking skills, encouraging them to familiarise themselves with the names of some countries in English. This was followed by a listening activity in which students listened to a conversation. Ms. Amal played the conversation three times. The first time, the students were expected to listen carefully to the conversation with their textbooks closed. In the second playing, the students were asked to open their textbook at Page 15 to do the listening activity. The students were asked to listen to the activity conversation (about where people came from) and then Ms. Amal asked them

to put the sentences of the conversation in order on exercise 6 on the same page. In this activity, Ms. Amal asked the students to listen again to the conversation and try to put it in order twice. Once they had finished, Ms. Amal replayed the conversation for a third time and asked the students working in pairs to check their answers with the textbook.

Activity three: Online Activity

This time Ms. Rima prepared the online activity for the students, asking them to go on to the grammar part of this teaching module, the students were supposed to be introduced to subject pronouns, as the teachers had agreed in the second pre-cycle meeting. Ms. Rima integrated the use of the Internet in her study playing a video from the British Council website which introduces pronouns through the dialogue in a video animation (see Pictures 6:3, A and B).

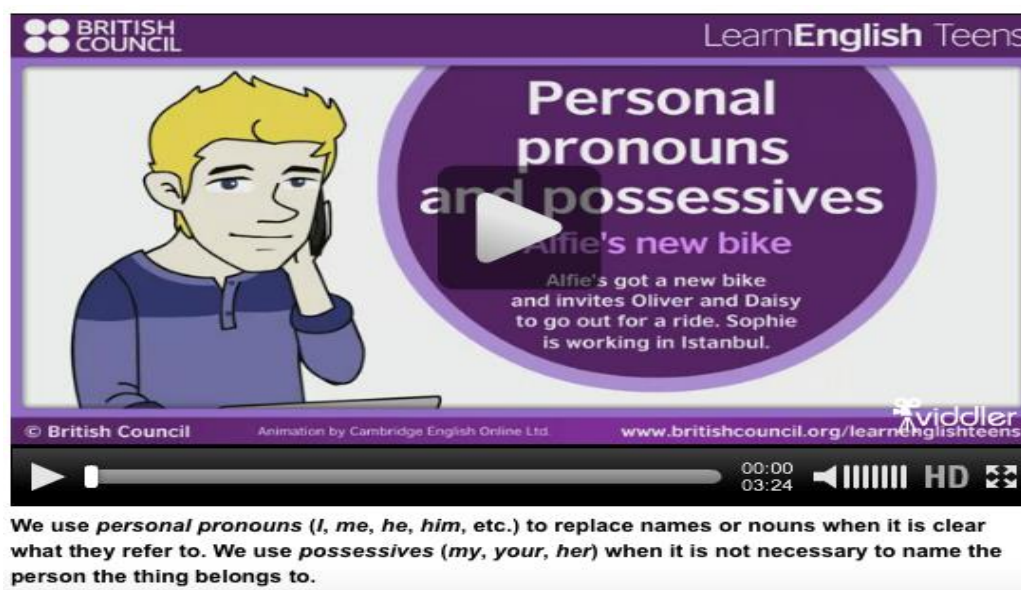


Figure 20. The dialogue in an animation video



We use **personal pronouns** (*I, me, he, him, etc.*) to replace names or nouns when it is clear what they refer to. We use **possessives** (*my, your, her*) when it is not necessary to name the person the thing belongs to.

Figure 21. The dialogue in an animation video

Ms. Rima paused the video several times and asked the students to concentrate on the words written in orange. As the students were watching the video for the last time, Ms. Rima started to write these subject pronouns on the white board.

Ms. Rima: *These words are called pronouns and they come before the verb: (I, You, She/he, It, We, They and You).*

In this activity Ms. Rima introduced the awareness through using the contrast pattern of the variation theory. Marton (2009, cited in Lo, 2012) describes the awareness brought about by experiencing the difference (variation) between two values as contrast. Because students can discern the critical features of an object more easily if they are able to contrast it with another object, Ms. Rima gave an example: “I am a teacher” and pointed out other teachers, saying “We are teachers”. She then gave the students practice on this in the activity.

Activity Four: Online Activity

In the last hour of class, Ms. Amal used an Internet activity. The students were introduced to personal pronouns for a second time and continued to use what they had learned so far. Ms. Amal asked them to open their computers and to write in the search box the URL for the website of the British Council, as she planned to work with the same video that Ms. Rima had already introduced. However, this time the students would not be sitting and watching;

they would be actively engaged in dialogue with Ms. Amal by retrieving what they had learned in the previous two hours and by applying their knowledge to answering the questions she posed. One of the students, Zainab, asked, ‘Teacher’, can we watch the video again? Or do we have to answer the questions straightaway?’ Ms. Amal replied ‘You can watch the video several times as long as you have your headphones on.’

As the video included subject pronouns and object pronouns, some of the students found it quite difficult to understand the questions; therefore, Ms. Amal was inclined to suggest an alternative activity. She wrote up the URL for the new website address in a Word document and then displayed it clearly using the data projector see the following Pictures 6:4, A and B for more details of this activity)

http://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/exercises/pronouns/personal_pronouns.htm

Use the correct personal pronouns. Watch the words in brackets.

[Toggle example](#)

- 1) is dreaming. (**George**)
- 2) is green. (**the blackboard**)
- 3) are on the wall. (**the posters**)
- 4) is running. (**the dog**)
- 5) are watching TV. (**my mother and I**)
- 6) are in the garden. (**the flowers**)
- 7) is riding his bike. (**Tom**)
- 8) is from Bristol. (**Victoria**)
- 9) has got a brother. (**Diana**)
- 10) Have got a computer, Mandy?

Figure 22. The use of the correct Personal pronouns Activities

There were ten blanks which the students were required to fill with the correct pronouns.

Student: Teacher, can you write the pronouns for us on the board, please?

Ms. Amal: I will tell you a better way. Can you see the lamp above the exercise?

If you press it you can have an explanation about pronouns. Just concentrate on the first column.

Personal pronouns		Possessive determiners	Possessive pronouns
as subject (nominative)	as object (accusative and dative)		
I	me	my	mine
you	you	your	yours
he	him	his	his
she	her	her	hers
it	it	its	its
we	us	our	ours
you	you	your	yours
they	them	their	theirs
We have some books.	The books are for us .	These are our books.	The books are ours .

Figure 23. Personal pronoun activity

Observation 1

In the second week and cycle of implementing the lesson plan project, I started the first EFL class by observing Ms. Amal. From the very beginning of the lesson, Ms. Amal was determined to reduce the use of the textbook and at once presented the world map to the learners. Without a list of countries, the students were not restricted in terms of numbers and they were free to name any familiar country shown in the map. As they discussed the countries, some students named them in Arabic and revealed their concerns regarding the names of the countries in English. It appeared that many others shared this concern, and Ms. Amal was able to assure them that the main objective was to share their knowledge and to identify some countries; if they did so by providing the Arabic names, she would write the English names on the board. Being aware that their answers in Arabic would be part of their learning, the students were motivated to take part in the activity.

When they had explored the countries' names in Arabic, the students moved to the second activity 2 (a listening task 3 on Page 16). Ms. Amal allowed enough time for them to listen, after which they worked individually to put the sentences of the conversation in order and then collaboratively as they checked their answers in pairs. One student asked Ms. Amal if they were not going to begin at Page 16. Ms. Amal smiled and told them that they had already covered all the information from this page and more, in the first activity whilst they were figuring out the countries' names.

Observation 2

As the last hour of this session approached, Ms. Rima asked the class to visit the British Council website and typed the web address clearly for the video she had already introduced them to. As they started to do the exercise, Ms. Rima noticed that it was a tricky exercise for them, considering the level of their English. Hence she immediately directed them to another website and to a different pronoun exercise on an educational website that we had discussed earlier in our meeting after teaching cycle 1. The students showed more motivation to do the second exercise. After completing it, two of them went back to the first one, since by then they were more confident about their learning.

Observation 3

Ms. Rima introduced the class to an informative video where the pronouns were clearly distinguished in the text by the colour of the lettering. The volume of information that the students were introduced to through the video was far greater than that presented in their textbooks. Having it presented in this medium via the video had captured the students' attention and allowed them to absorb it. Being aware of the informative content of the video, Ms. Rima paused it several times and allowed the students some time to take the information in. By then she had the key information written on the board and the students extracted the essential facts from the video.

When Ms. Amal took over for her third hour, she presented the same video to the class, giving them a further opportunity to practise their knowledge regarding pronouns. But she noticed that some of the students were struggling with the answers to the questions and quickly introduced them to another website. This flexible attitude gave the students some choice and element of responsibility in being able to choose the better of these two exercises according to their ability.

Activity Five: Subject pronouns and the verb 'to be

As mentioned above, we had agreed that I would do all the textbook activities and both teachers would conduct the online based learning activity. When I started the class by doing a quick revision of subject pronouns using the textbook only, I drew two big speech bubbles on the board. In one I wrote 'I' and in the other 'Are', while 'Am' was written above a cloud:

Ms. Magda: Can you remember from the video we watched on Sunday which pronouns go with which form of the verb 'to be'?

The students started to give the answer and I wrote each pronoun under the correct form of the verb 'to be'. When I finished I asked the class to form pairs and told them that I was going to give each student a flash card.

The activity related to Page 106 of the Cutting Edge Starter Resource bank (see Appendix 9). Taking turns, one of the students in each pair was to ask his/her partner a few questions that I had written on the board:

What is your name?

Where are you from?

Are you a/an (job)?

I asked the class to open their workbooks at Page 10 and to do the third exercise where they had to change affirmative sentences into their negative form. I read the first one; answered it and then went on to read the second one, inviting anyone to volunteer the answer and so I went till all five sentences were answered. I then asked them to work individually to answer Exercise 5, where they had to write 'am', 'is' or 'are' in the correct place. As they were working, I went around the class, making sure that the students understood their task.

Activity Six: Nationalities and the verb 'to be'

Ms. Amal asked the students to listen to the tape. She explained that it was the one that they had heard in the previous lesson and urged them to listen carefully. She also asked them to practise their pronunciation as they listened. She played it twice after this and asked the class to open their Workbook at Page 10 and do Exercise 4.

Ms. Amal: After you open your book, work in pairs and put the words in order to form a complete sentence on exercise 2 Page 10.

When the students had finished, Ms. Amal told them to listen again carefully to the tape and check their answers. In the first replay the students were allowed to listen and to check their answers; in the second replay, the teacher asked the class to practise their speaking and repeat each sentence after the voice on the tape.

Ms. Amal placed several coloured A4 cards on the teacher's desk on which various nationalities were written. She then asked the students to split into pairs and asked one person in each pair to read the sentence to the whole class while the other chose the correct nationality from the coloured A4 cards. The pairs took turns until they had completed the exercise.

Activity Seven: vocabulary

This activity was planned by Ms. Rima for the Internet-based activity of this class, she picked a game from a website called ESL Games World.

<http://www.eslgamesworld.com/members/games/ClassroomGames/Billionaire/Countries%20Nationalities%20Billionaire/play.html>

The game that she chose was Billionaire Countries and Nationalities Vocabulary Game. As the routine had been established in the previous sessions, she started by displaying the website address using the data projector. Then she opened the same page on my computer and told the students that they should type in their name in the box that appeared as the game started (see Picture 6:5 A and B).

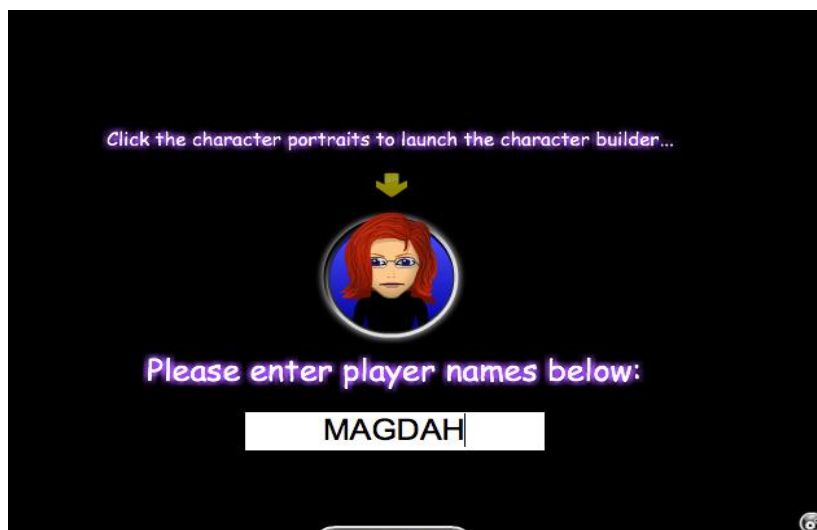


Figure 24. ESL Games World 1

Then she explained that the page would provide them with a sentence to complete and they should pick the correct answer to complete the sentence.



Figure 25. ESL Games World 2

They had 40 seconds to pick the correct answer. If they did not do so, their time for answering this question would have passed. Before they could move on to the next question a window would show this question to have been answered wrongly, then giving the correct answer (See Picture 6:5, C).

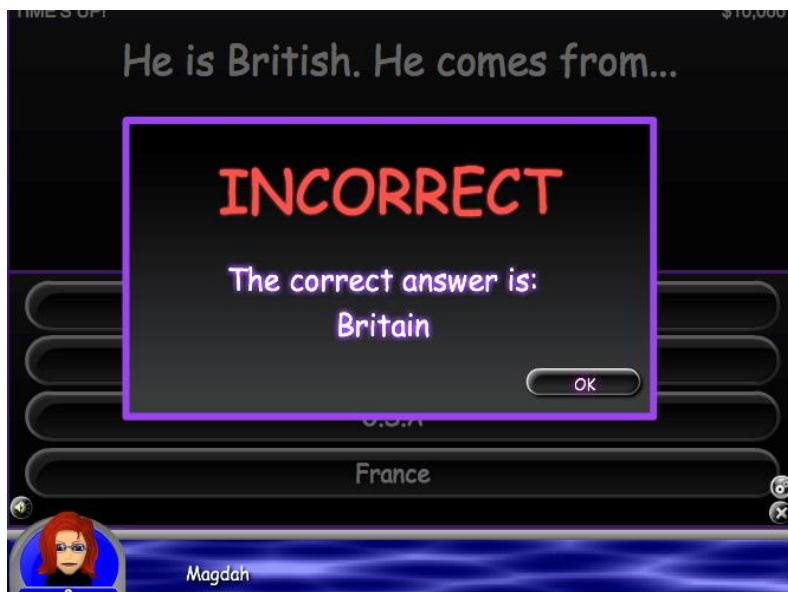


Figure 26. ESL Games World 3

If the question was answered correctly, a window would appear telling the students immediately that their answer was correct (See Picture 6:5,D).



Figure 27. ESL Games World 4

The game was, as she described, very helpful because it gave them the opportunity to get swift feedback in an entertaining way.

Observation 1

As we had agreed on adopting various teaching approaches, I quickly revised pronunciation with the class before presenting them with some flashcards. They were asked to work in pairs and ask each other questions. While they were doing so, I walked around the class and encouraged the students and answered some questions to help those students who found some names difficult to read.

In the third hour, I introduced the students to a website that Ms. Rima had suggested earlier in the activity. The exercise gave the learners a chance to practise the names of nationalities and provided them with immediate feedback on their answers. I noticed that some of the students immediately jotted down the correct answers, either in their notebooks or their workbooks, when they realised that they had made a mistake.

Observation 2

When they had been introduced to these nationalities, Ms. Amal targeted the students' speaking skills. For this, they were given two exercises to practise their speaking and listening. Ms. Amal did not restrict their learning to the limits of the syllabus textbook, but

creatively encouraged the students to work in pairs and present the correct answer using the colourful A4 flashcards.

In the last hour of this session, Ms. Amal introduced the students to an exercise on a website she had recommended. Ms. Amal had become more aware of the impact and value of collaborative work with colleagues and the benefit of this for our students' learning. She noticed that because the students were introducing the nationalities in different ways as the lesson proceeded, many of them managed to gain a good understanding about them. Some students were speedy in answering the questions and appeared to greatly enjoy the game.

Observation 3

As the lesson focused on nationalities, the activities that we teachers had planned revolved around this topic. Ms. Rima started by quickly revising the previous lesson. Then the students practised their speaking and listening skills through a role-play with flashcards that Ms. Rima distributed. After this, she moved on to more grammatical skills and asked the students to work on exercises that related the verb 'to be' to pronouns. She made sure that they had understood the functions of every pronoun. Ms. Amal played the same recording for the students and allowed them time to practise their pronunciation before moving on to some writing exercises in their books.

Activity Eight – Numbers

The focus of the session in the third week was learning the numbers up to 100 in English. The first time that Ms. Amal played the recording, she asked the students to pay attention to the pronunciation; she then asked them to open their student books at Page12 and to concentrate on the exercise, where nine numbers were written below various pictures. As she played the recording a second time, Ms. Amal allowed the students some time to repeat each number, after which she asked them to say the numbers individually.

Once students knew the numbers in sequence, her target in the first half hour, she moved to the following exercise. She told the class that in Part A of the second exercise, they would have to write in the missing numbers. In this exercise 10, the numbers were displayed in order from 20 to 29 with four answers already supplied (see module 2 appendix 9 for more details). With the help of the vocabulary book, the students were able to finish the task easily and then move on to the second part of the exercise, where they had to listen to the

pronunciation of seven numbers, as written in coloured spheres. To give the students more practice in their use of English numbers, she planned the second activity accordingly as a game of Bingo (The Bingo cards are shown on Page 108). Ms. Amal gave each student a bingo card and then asked them to read the numbers on their own card.

Ms. Amal: Now you have read your card, you should listen carefully; I am going to read some numbers from my Master bingo card. I will call out a number and then I will immediately cross it off my card. If you have the same number put a line through it.

The teacher explained that the first student who completed either a row or a column on the card would be the winner. The numbers could be checked against the Master bingo card if necessary. She started to pick numbers and read them aloud in a clear voice so that the students could begin engaging with the activity.

Ms. Amal: Who can tell me her/his number in English?

After a moment of hesitation three students raised their hands and gave their numbers. Ms. Amal encouraged them and, as the last one finished, she switched on the data projector and displayed 3 phone numbers. She played a tape and the students listened. When they finished, she asked them to work in pairs and take turns asking a question and answering it. The question was: What's your number? The answering student had to write the number down on a piece of paper and then read it to his/her partner before they swapped roles.

When they had finished, they opened their workbooks at Page 11, Exercise 7, where there were 8 arithmetic sentences. The students had to underline the one correct option out of three. The students worked individually until Ms. Amal asked them to give the answer in turn; then one student of the pair read the arithmetic sentence and gave the answer while the other wrote the number on the board.

Activity Nine: Online Activity

The focus in this activity, in relation to Activity Eight was to give more practice in numbers. Ms. Rima chose two games to introduce to the class: first, 'Pirate Waters'

<http://www.eslgamesplus.com/numbers-10-to-100-esl-vocabulary-interactive-board-game/>

In this game the students played with electronic dice and an animated ship moved on the screen accordingly. They then had to answer questions (see Pictures 6:6, A and B). The questions had numbers written clearly and the students had to pick one of the optional answers in words that corresponded to the number written in numerals.



Figure 28. The numbers activities 1

Answer options in words of the four provided numbers.

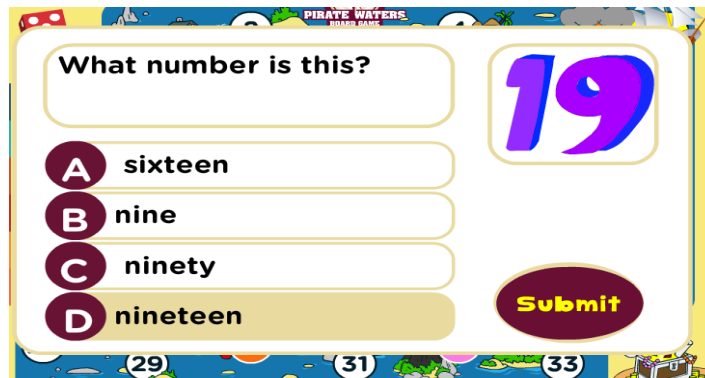


Figure 29. The numbers activities 2

The students were interested in playing this game. As anticipated, some students found this activity very easy and had completed it before their classmates. For other students, though it seemed easy at first, common mistakes occurred (e.g. confusing ‘sixteen’ with ‘sixty’) which meant they were sent back to their previous position on the map. For those who completed the task earlier, Ms. Rima introduced another activity, Crossword Puzzle, where they had to complete the puzzle by writing the numbers in words (see Pictures 6:7).

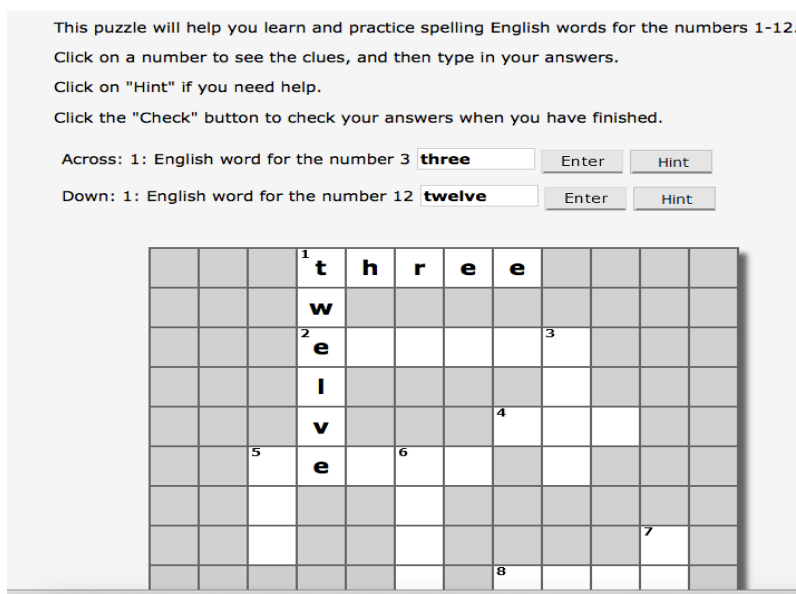


Figure 30. The Crossword Puzzle

6.3.3. Post Teaching Meeting of Cycle Two

All three teachers met after the research lesson in order to review the activities. The issues discussed in this meeting were based on our observations of each other and of the students in all three EFL classes in the second cycle of this programme.

Observation 1

Ms. Amal started the lesson by informing the students that in that class they would have to learn to count fluently up to one hundred. As some students opened their books, she politely asked them to close the books and concentrate on the tape. She informed them that in the first round she wanted them to listen carefully and in the second they would have to open their books and practise their pronunciation.

Next, Ms. Amal introduced the students to the Bingo game. The students who were not used to playing games in their traditional lessons were very excited and paid close attention as Ms. Amal explained the rules of the game in Arabic. She introduced the students to two online games and asked them to pick the one that they felt more comfortable with. Some of them started with the first game then moved to the second one, whilst others played the first game more than once.

Observation 2

Ms. Rima started her hour by asking the students direct personal questions regarding their phone numbers. She smiled as she told the class that the number need not be the correct ones, and this motivated many to take part. Then she displayed three phone numbers through the data show and played the recording. The students had the chance to work in pairs and practise repeating them until they were asked to work on their workbooks. In order to engage the students more in their learning process, the teacher let them work in pairs to alternately answer the questions and write them on the board.

When the students were introduced to two games for further practice, they became immersed in their work because of the play aspect of the interactive number game and this enhanced their learning. Some of the students asked Ms. Rima if they could choose another number game and try it out, to which she happily agreed. The students started to show more interest in taking an active role in their English learning.

Observation 3

The last class of the second cycle also focused on numbers. Ms. Amal organised intensive practice in numbers, not only through the recording but also by giving them a chance to practise the numbers through Bingo, which they enjoyed enormously. Ms. Rima focused more on the writing skills and gave the students a more active role in their learning when they worked either individually or in pairs. With the adoption of several different activities in the lessons, the students became more engaged and motivated to take charge of their own learning.

6.3.4 Reflective Meeting of Cycle Two

With two cycles completed, we three teachers felt much more confident than we had at the beginning of this cycle or cycle 1. We also felt more open about sharing our views, both critical and affirming, of the learning-teaching process that preceded our meeting. Particularly positive for us was the fact that the students showed a level of engagement and enjoyment that surpassed all our expectations as teachers trying out a new teaching method. We felt that the variety, range and emphases of the activities were the reason for this. We

also shared a concern about whether students had had enough time to practise many of these activities. We therefore decided to discuss the possibility of reducing the number of activities to allow more time for each of them. So in cycle 3 of the learning process, we decided to take the time factor into consideration; we also agreed that as students were now more motivated to engage in learning, in this third cycle, we would act more as motivators and facilitators than as teachers.

6.4 CYCLE THREE

(Gaining independence in learning with ICT)

This section discussing cycle 3 is structured as follows: the sub section called pre meeting discusses the meeting which Ms. Amal, Ms. Rima and I had before our classes. This is followed by a description of the session, including the activities done with the students. Our observations follow this and the last sub section deals with the meeting conducted after all these stages were completed in order to take account of all the previous activities in the cycle.

6.4.1 Pre-Conference meeting

In this meeting, Ms. Amal, Ms. Rima and I reflected on our teaching of the previous module, to help us teach, facilitate and motivate the students in model three of the third cycle. The teachers were more flexible and confident about sharing their views, pointing out that:

- There was a wide variety of activities
- Students became more engaged as the module study progressed
- The activities were related to different focuses - each class had a number of them.

The third point above prompted us to decide that in the third cycle we would have to consider reducing the number of activities and allowing the students sufficient time to practise each activity. From our experience of the previous cycles, we agreed that because these activities are the last ones in the teaching process cycles, we wanted to create a memorable event which would promote students' positive attitudes, motivate them to be more independent learners in using ICT and to make their own choices of how to use it in computer -based activities.

Aspects of the activities from cycle 2 were adapted and improved. The aim of this cycle would be to ensure that the students were able to work independently and carry out their own search for suitable educational EFL websites to support their learning in future. The use of Internet-based activities would not be restricted to one or two educational websites.

6.4.2 The Teaching and Learning Process

Module three activities: In a different country

Activity One: Singular to plural change

Ms. Rima started the new module by introducing the students to the objective of the first lesson, which focused on places and plural nouns. She then turned the data projector on to show a screen with two columns; in the first, four singular nouns with indefinite articles were written ('a taxi', 'a car', 'a bus and 'a city') and in the second, four other singular nouns with indefinite articles ('a man', 'a woman, 'a child' and 'a person') (see the Grammar task on Module 3 Page 22).

The teacher explained the rules for forming plurals, emphasising that:

1. *Most nouns are turned into the plural by adding an 's'.*
2. *Nouns ending with an 's' are turned into their plural form by adding 'es'.*
3. *With nouns ending in a 'y', the y changes to 'ies' in the plural form*
4. *Irregular plurals exist in English*

Having explained this grammar rule, and aware that separation as one of the patterns in variation theory, Ms. Rima took each noun and asked the students to change it into its plural form. As the students gave their answers, the plural forms appeared one by one in a larger font on the screen. After this, a bubble with 'is' written in it appeared beside the column with the singular nouns. Ms. Rima explained that a singular noun, when combined with the root verb 'to be', changes 'to be' to 'is'. A bubble with 'are' in it then appeared beside the column with the plural nouns and Ms. Rima explained that plural nouns, when combined with the root verb 'to be', change 'to be' to 'are'.

As Ms. Rima wanted the students to fully understand the concept of plurals and in particular be aware of the correct form of the verb 'to be' that corresponds to each, the second activity involved drilling this information as a mental habit by asking them to work individually and collaboratively in practising these constructions.

Activity two: The plural and singular nouns

I conducted this activity, which was again a textbook learning activity, where the students were asked to open their workbooks at Page 14 and work individually to answer the first exercise. It had seven pictures and they had to write down the correct word in the accompanying boxes. The pictures were all of single objects/entities. (see Module 3 in

Appendix 9). Then they moved to the second exercise, which presented them with eight singular nouns and asked to write them in their correct plural form. When they had finished, I asked them to check their answers in small groups. They were to ask me for clarification of any doubts. From their quick glances at the board, meanwhile, the students were ready to move to the third exercise where they had to complete sentences with 'is' or 'are'. I led the students through these two activities, aimed at introducing students to plural and singular nouns and the correct form of the verb 'to be'. The students could listen to the explanations and adequately practise the new knowledge.

Activity Three: Pronunciation

As the students were already aware of the existence of plural nouns in English, Ms. Amal started the second hour by playing the recording so that the students could hear the pronunciation of the list of plural forms on the pronunciation task on Page 23, after which she played it again and asked them to repeat after each item. Then the students listened to another exercise where they were asked to work in four groups, each of which had two A3 paper sheets - one yellow and the other blue, each showing seven incomplete sentences. The students then got four thin red rectangular sheets of paper on which 'is' was written in the middle and another similar set on which 'are' was written. They were asked to form small groups and make seven correct sentences. Once all the groups had finished, Ms. Amal played the recording and asked them to check their answers.

Activity Four: Online Activity

The Fishing Game. This class started by asking students to go on the BBC learning website (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/game/en16plur-game-plural-fishing>) and choose their own activity. One of them picked an activity, (see Pictures 6:8, A, B, C, D and E) First the learner/player chose a game; immediately, the game would provide some information about itself, after which the students would be taken to another screen where Ms. Amal and Ms. Rima were facilitators and motivators and I was the observer.



Figure 31. The Fishing Game 1

On the screen the students could choose one of the five rules for forming all the plural nouns or go with the sixth choice, where they could choose any of the five rules.



Figure 32. The Fishing Game 2

Once a rule was selected, a brief explanation would appear, with a clear example highlighted in a different font.



Figure 33. The Fishing Game 3

The learner could then go on to practise the rule, by 'fishing' the correct answer from the three answer options shown in the bottom of the pond on the screen.



Figure 34. The Fishing Game 4

At the end of the game, immediate feedback was given on the website, with clear indications of the correct and incorrect answers (see Picture (6:8, E)).

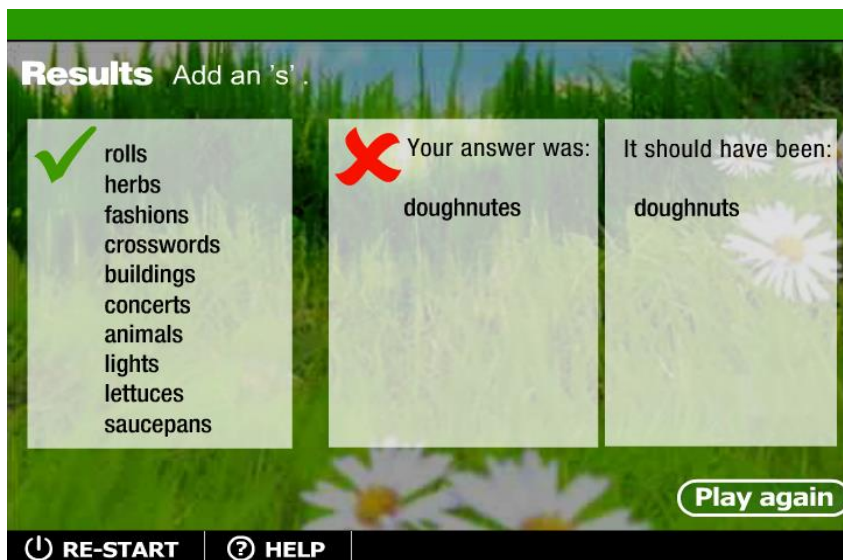


Figure 35. The Fishing Game 5

Observation 1

The focus of the session was to introduce the students to working independently and searching for a suitable educational EFL exercise to practise. The students searched for plural nouns. As Ms. Rima explained the rule, she ensured that the students' attention was concentrated on the screen in front of them rather than on their student books. Thus they paid sufficient attention to the explanation and when the time came for them to move to the chosen activity (a follow-up activity) they worked smoothly and were able to do their tasks.

As we had agreed to provide the students with more comprehensive activities in order to make sure that they grasped the information clearly, this student introduced the other students to a game by writing the right address on the whiteboard, followed by the other students - they enjoyed this immensely. The game had a big advantage in that it takes into account the learners' individual learning skills; this was obvious from their engagement.

Observation 2

The students had a chance to practise their listening and pronunciation. Ms. Amal put them in small groups and introduced the activity in a new way, whereby the students had the chance to practise their speaking and writing together. The collaborative work among the students brought to the surface the students' desire to help each other and explain things among themselves. As they were trying to complete the sentences in one of the groups, two members disagreed about the use of the correct form of the verb 'to be' and the third member

asked them to read the quick grammar summary at the end of their Students Book to make sure they had the correct answer. In the third hour, the students had a chance to test their own knowledge by choosing and carrying out their own online activities; they did an online plural noun exercise. Some of them managed to practise more than two rules and were hoping to go through all of them.

Observation 3

Ms. Rima used the data projector to explain the plural nouns and the fact that she had the correct form of the verb 'to be' appearing in bubbles ensured the required attention to the information from the students. This had an immediate impact on the next activity, when the students started to work on the exercises and were able to apply their knowledge. Ms. Amal gave students a chance to practise their speaking and, working in groups, they became more confident and actively engaged in learning.

Activity Five: the verb 'to be'

In the beginning of the second class of Focus 2 (Page 24) of module 3, Ms. Rima quickly revised the correct forms of plural and singular nouns and of the verb 'to be'. Then she moved to Task 1 on Focus 2 in the textbook. Ms. Rima asked the class to have their Student Books opened at Page 24, showing pictures of various people. She asked the students to look at the pictures and read the information provided about them (see Appendix 9). Then she asked the students to work individually to answer the following questions:

Where are they from?

Where are they now?

Who is on holidays?

Who is at a language school?

After this, she checked the answers with the whole class. Once she had finished Task 1, she moved to the next task. She started this task by explaining to the students some differences between formal and informal forms of words in English, by giving them different examples written on the whiteboard. She asked the students to focus on the image of an email on Page 24. She gave the students enough time (10 minutes) to read it, but the students asked for more time. She allowed five more minutes. She then asked the students to underline words/phrases of both the formal and the informal kind (are not, aren't, they are, they're, we

are, we're,) which they had encountered in reading. She asked them to do the exercise individually, after which she checked the answer with the whole class. She turned on the data projector and explained to them that she was going to write an informal email and send it to one of the students (she sent it to Mohamed). She sent him an email asking him to reply by email to her, as if to a friend, asking her how she was.

Activity Six: Who are they?

Ms. Amal asked them to move to Page 25 and look at Exercise 4 which held five sentences with two forms of the verb 'to be'. They were asked to work in pairs and circle the correct answer. As they revised their answers, Ms. Amal explained the contractions (isn't, aren't, they're, we're, he's...). Ms. Amal asked the class to work in pairs again. She handed each pair a worksheet (Teacher Resource Book, Page 112) where they saw an image of a couple who introduced themselves and gave basic information about themselves - where they were from, what they did, their jobs, their social status, their address and phone number. The students were asked to read the information and then complete seven related questions by using 'is', 'are', 'they' and 'their'. Once they had completed the questions and were about to move on to the third task, Ms. Amal asked each pair to read one question aloud to check the answers. Then she told the pair that one of them would ask the question while the other answered, after which they would swap roles.

Activity Seven Online Activities

The aim of this activity was to also encourage the abler students to work independently, searching for a suitable educational EFL website to support their own learning. As agreed in the pre-conference meeting, I did not restrict the choices to a specific website but let them browse the Internet to find the most appropriate interactive game to boost the students' learning. One of the student's choices as an online activity was the 'Turtle Diary' website, where two similar games focused on the verb 'to be'.

As we approached the Internet-based activities, the data projector was turned on and the website link to an activity that one of the students had chosen was clearly shown. As they chose their game, a window appeared in which the aim of the game was explained.

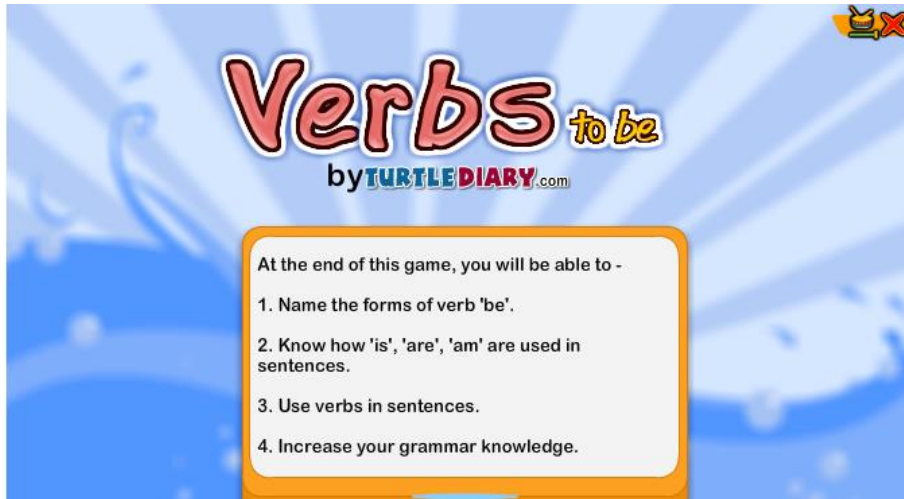


Figure 36. Verb 'to be' 1

As they clicked on the green button called 'Play', another window appeared, giving them the choice of having a lesson or playing a game.



Figure 37. Verb 'to be' 2

The first choice gave the learners a clear explanation of the grammar rule of the verb 'to be' written in a green font to distinguish it from other text (see pictures 6:9: A, B and C).

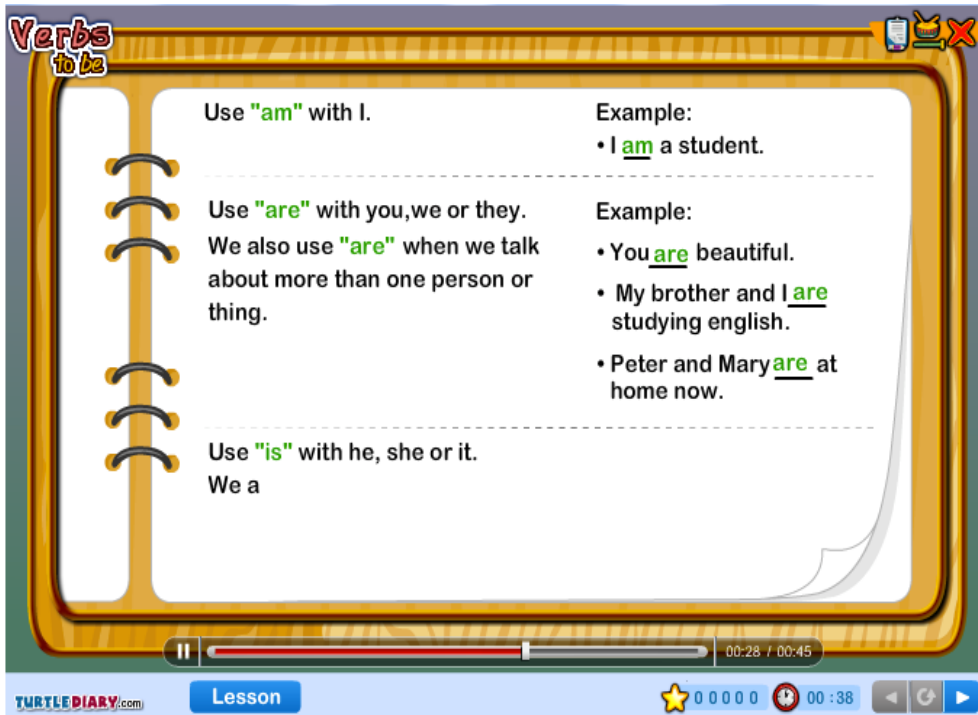


Figure 38. Verb 'to be' 3

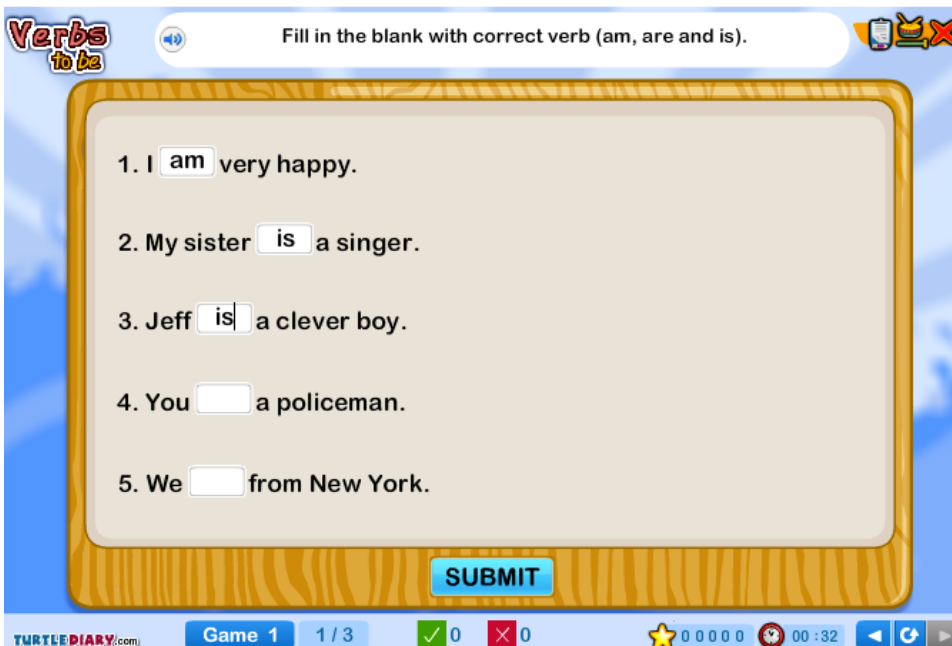


Figure 39. Verb 'to be' 4

Following the activity, a game started immediately, asking students to fill in the blanks. Once they had submitted their answers, immediate feedback appeared, so that they were able to assess their own learning (see picture 6:10, A and B)



Figure 40. Verb 'to be' 5

Another activity chosen by another student had been prepared in advance. This second activity was from the ESL Game Plus website. <http://www.eslgamesplus.com/verb-to-be-auxiliary-verb-am-is-are-esl-grammar-activity/> The game was called Sentence Monkey (see Pictures 6:11 A and B).

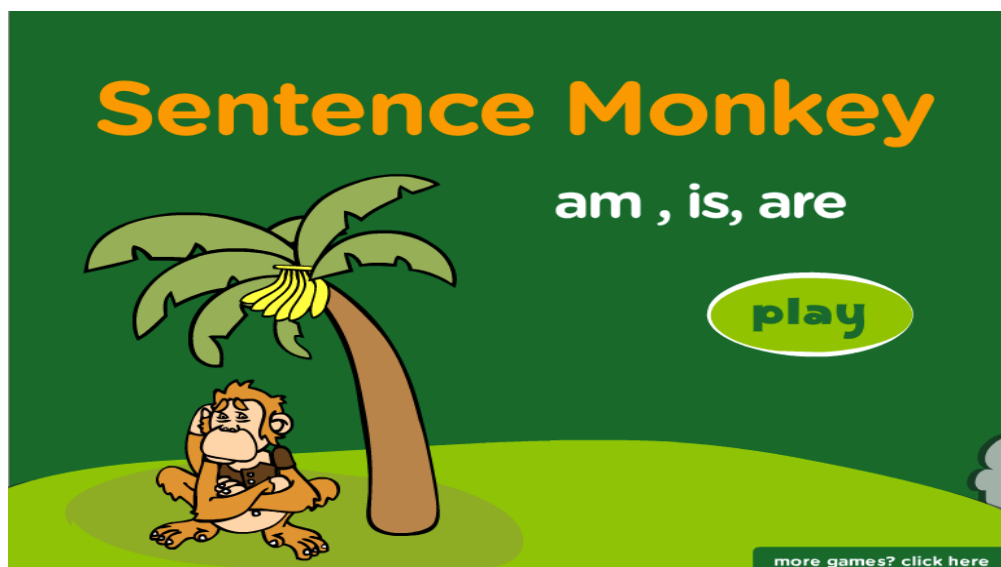


Figure 41. Verbs 1

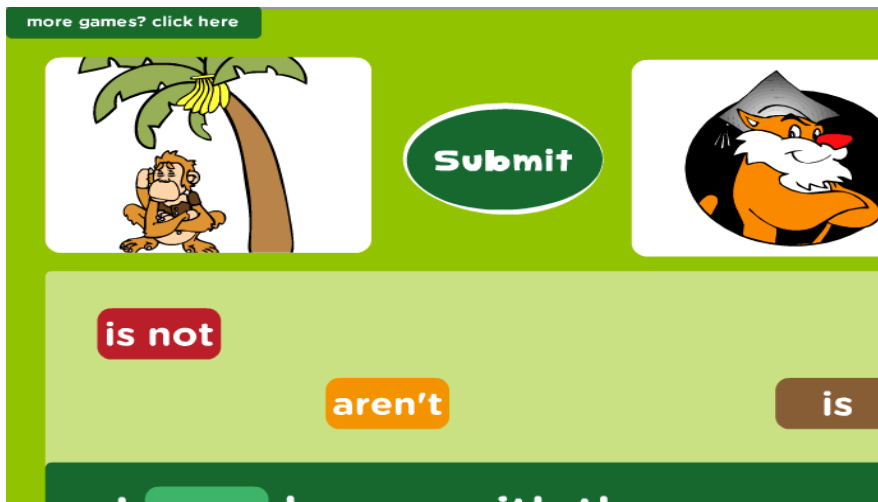


Figure 42. Verbs 2

Again the students were asked to supply the correct form of the verb in the blank. This game also had contracted forms such as ‘aren’t’. Feedback came immediately after each sentence; the monkey ate a banana if the answer was correct and got upset if the answer was wrong as shown in Picture (6:11, C).

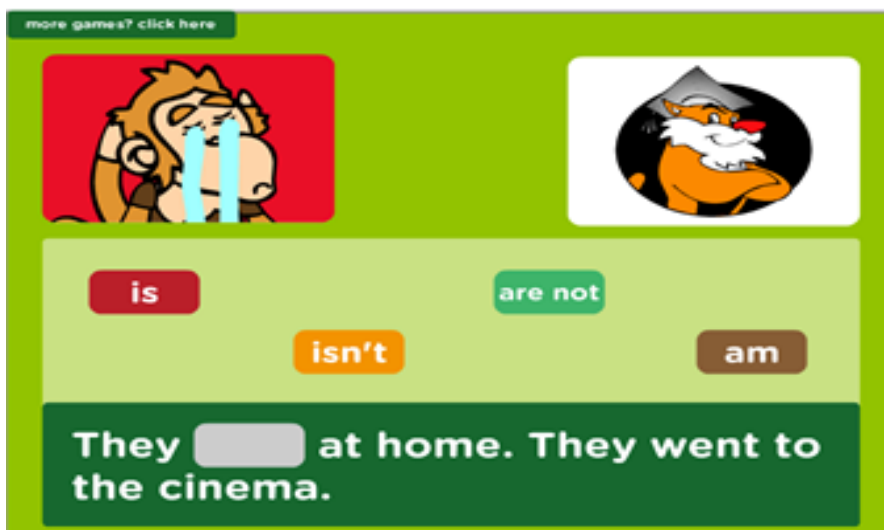


Figure 43. Verbs 3

Observation 1

Ms. Rima started the session by revising plural nouns. Then she moved to the email image given as an example. As suggested by Ms. Rima for the Internet-based activity of this session, Ms. Amal gave the students the homework of sending individual emails to each other, written in informal language.

Observation 2

Ms. Rima started the class by revising singular and plural nouns. Then she demonstrated the rules of the verb 'to be'. Ms. Rima used two activities in which she encouraged the learners to be more involved in the learning process. In the first activity she asked them to open their student books at Page 24, which had an image of an email. She asked them to underline certain words (are, they, we, we're, they're, aren't) in the text. She then highlighted the difference between formal and informal writing and speech. As she switched on the data projector, she described the second task, in which the students were required to exchange informally written emails with one another.

The students showed a great deal of interest as they put their books aside and started to log in to their email accounts. "Teacher, are we allowed to look at the book?" asked a female student. Ms. Rima replied that they could take ideas from it, but that she would like to read the students' own writing. In Ms. Magda's hour the students had more chance to practise their knowledge of the verb 'to be'. The game they were introduced to had a clear explanation of the rules for it.

Observation 3

The class was introduced to the verb 'to be'. In the second hour they had plenty of time to practise their speaking skills. They worked in pairs and Ms. Amal went around the class to make sure that each individual learner had obtained the required knowledge. The activity gave the students a good opportunity to practise and to take several roles. In the third hour, the students had a chance to strengthen their understanding of the verb 'to be' with role play, where they could choose their own online activities. This session started with another student introducing the first game to the class; here they could revise the grammar rules. As soon as some of the students finished, another student introduced another game to them. Through this cycle, the learning activities actively engaged the students. They were involved in the game and some of them played it more than once. It gave them immediate feedback and they were able to try again, to consolidate their understanding.

6.4.3. Post Teaching Meeting of Cycle Three

After going through all three cycles of the first Lesson Study, a meeting of the participant teachers was convened to reflect on the three cycles conducted so far. This meeting was

meant to help Ms. Amal, Ms. Rima and me to learn as educators about the future of using ICT for EFL in Libyan educational institutions. Therefore, the subjects discussed in this meeting went beyond a summary of the teaching and learning process of the preceding 12 weeks. The main concerns raised by the teachers ranged from the unavailability or scarcity of the necessary infrastructure to the lack of funding to support such an innovative venture. The teachers felt that while there might be goodwill from the faculty of the institutions towards their learning to teach in a new way, there would be no financial incentive for them to continue doing so. However, the positive note that we all took away from these meetings was the understanding that the students had enjoyed the sessions immensely and had demonstrated the learning that they had gained. This means that there is still room for optimism that Libyan institutions of education will be able to adopt such methods successfully if there comes a time when political will and the financial environment can support their implementation. All the issues discussed with teachers and students in relation to the three cycle of the learning and teaching online programme are discussed in the following chapter.

In summary, this study has focused on the way that a small group of Libyan HE teachers used ICT to support their English language teaching. The use of ICT in this way clearly holds great potential for facilitating foreign language learning and teaching. However, the implications of using this technology in foreign language learning and teaching has not been examined in the Libyan context and hence invites further examination. The previous chapter explored how several Internet-based activities could be used by English language learners to facilitate and enhance their English learning. To further this aim, the three EFL teachers, including myself, examined our teaching methods as well as the activities that we planned to use, in order to encourage the use of ICT in the teaching of English in class. This study, although small in scope, has produced some interesting observations which, it is hoped, will make a contribution to the future development of the Libyan educational system, using ICT teaching to assist teachers and students in their English Language teaching practice. Furthermore, this study has examined the contribution that the Lesson Study approach of Action Research can make towards enhancing teachers' ability to reflect on their pedagogical styles. It seems that this process of teaching and learning increases their capacity for benefiting from continuous professional development opportunities.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION OF THE DATA

7.0. Introduction

This chapter combines a discussion of the findings from the quantitative and qualitative data emerging from both the interviews and the questionnaire, which were gathered during phases 1 and 2 of the data collection. In conjunction with the information contained in Chapter Two (the context), including issues related to the research focus, the combined outcome of phases 1 and 2 as discussed in Chapters Five and Six shed more light on the experiences of Libyan EFL students and teachers in the implementation of ICT teaching and show how both groups have responded to the new Internet-based e-learning and the Lesson Study approach.

The study has considered the social and cultural factors that may have previously had a bearing on the participants' use of the Internet in their English language learning. In this chapter I discuss my reflections on these processes and the outcomes of this study; on the strength of these I then highlight some recommendations for the future development of Libyan higher education. The qualitative data presented here are again drawn from the students' responses during the teaching process and students' interviews as well as the teachers' observations and comments. The quantitative data, it will be recalled, have already been presented in Chapter Five.

The evaluation of the teaching programme included ongoing interviews with students and teachers which were developed in order to track how the students and the teachers engaged with the process and whether the programme could be considered effective in attaining its overall aims. At the end of the programme, in order to get some students' opinions on the whole programme, four students were interviewed by another member of staff in the department who had not been engaged in the teaching programme - as described earlier in Chapters Five and Six. This action was taken to get more detailed feedback from the students' perspective, since the students might give feedback on the new teaching programme more freely to another teacher with whom they felt able to give a more balanced view.

7.1 Perspectives of the teachers and students on English language teaching and learning with particular reference to the use of ICT

This section of the study discusses the perspectives and attitudes of the teachers and students regarding the use of ICT activities in English language learning and teaching, once the teaching programme ended. The discussion is based on interviews and informal conversations with the teachers and the students and is supported by other data observed during the teaching programme. After finishing all three cycles, the teachers and I discussed and reflected together on the events that had happened in the classes and then evaluated the outcomes of the students' attitudes, motivation and confidence with regard of using ICT. The time schedule for conducting data analysis on all the activities is shown in Chapter 6. This teaching programme was based upon introducing a set of existing ICT activities. Our aim as teachers was to see how we could incorporate and adapt these ICT activities – which proved to be very flexible - into our existing syllabus for the teaching of English in general and for practising the four English skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) with the use of Internet based e-learning. During the programme, the students were able to build upon their existing knowledge of English language construction and continue to improve their skills as they practised using them online. As teachers, we were aware that we could help students to discover that it could be more motivating and fun to learn English as a foreign language in this way

However, we were also conscious of the need not to fall behind on student achievement or on completing the assigned tasks by enjoying the activities for the sheer pleasure of using language or ICT. As mentioned above, the other perspectives presented in this section came from the students' opinions about the teaching programme, their technical knowledge after using the Internet and their reflections on learning English and gaining in competence, as well as other interesting issues obtained from these interviews. At the end of the teaching programme the students were given an opportunity to reflect on the online activities and the teaching approach that had been adopted by the teachers. To avoid bias, students were invited to take part in an interview with a teacher who was a member of staff within the English department but who had not been part of the programme. The interview was conducted without interference from us and all the participating students understood that they had a

right to speak freely and therefore could say what they thought of the teaching and the programme. In total, 17 students joined the programme; however the same four students who had agreed to be interviewed in phase 1 also volunteered to take part in another interview after phase 2. I decided to ask whether the same four students would be willing to give the final interviews because I was interested to know their final views and their feelings about the programme and about the teacher's role in their learning experiences. Based on the data collected from the questionnaire and interviews during the teaching programme, a number of issues arose, which have been categorized as follows.

7.1.1 Issue 1: The use of online material in relation to material from the text-book

One of the teachers interviewed raised the issue of the relationship between online materials and the textbook used by the teachers. The online materials that we selected took account of the textbook (the Cutting Edge) activities and at the end of each teaching session, we linked them to our existing subject so that teaching tasks were set alongside the appropriate activities. It was highlighted as important to ensure that students were working towards the same learning objectives in their use of online and textbook activities. Both students and teachers found that learning from two different sources did not create misunderstandings. Ms. Amal responded to this task by raising the issue of the portability of textbooks compared with ICT and gave a useful example of Internet-based language development:

I always preferred to use the course textbook because I could take it with me everywhere in class and outside, but I feel now that Internet is quick to use. You can find information quickly on line. For example, you can look for authentic language use by real people for instance in watching videos; they are good for improving vocabulary and listening. The website of the British Council is a very good example.

Ms. Rima responded to this issue by remarking that a laptop resolves the problem of transportability. She also agreed that video activities provide good examples of authentic language, but she noted that providing the students with e-learning Internet teaching web site link might have been more helpful to the participants.

Also Ms. Rima mentioned that:

Regarding the feedback on the activities selected by the students, I like the fact

that an action had happened by the end of each activity and they could view their task responses ... to view the task responses shows that the participants want to be associated with bounded learning.'

My response to this feedback from teachers was that it was very satisfying, because from the teacher's perspective I strongly support the idea of learning objectives through the use of textbooks enhanced by the use of ICT on the students' learning.

In general, the teachers were comfortable with using ICT in their teaching and they had no objection to integrating ICT into their lessons, although hitherto, in this university, the teachers had not been encouraged or expected to use ICT in their normal classes. The two teachers stressed that, before they became involved in this teaching programme their primary use of computers was not related to their teaching work. They explained that they used computers primarily for getting personal information. It was therefore during the lesson studies programme that they started to use it as an educational resource.

My two colleagues continued to express very positive attitudes to the use of ICT. Ms. Amal said that the

... use of computers in teaching was helpful. I have started to use computers in this programme to search for information related to the lessons that I was planning to teach and for teaching materials.

During the teaching programme my colleagues thought computers a good resource for both themselves and for students to get recent and relevant information quickly; it compared favourably in terms of the quantity and quality of available information with printed textbooks as sources.

Ms. Amal: The introduction of blended learning using both textbooks and ICT to learn from will enhance the teaching objectives for teachers by using both sources and it will allow teachers to use both sorts of learning materials in a variety of subject areas not limited to English language only. It will also benefit the students to use Internet e-learning for their reading tasks rather than textbooks only.

Ms. Rima: The teachers can use the Internet to make the lessons interesting.

Ms. Amal added,

... I am very glad that we are providing the students with suggestions of the latest technology ... it is very lucky for me because I know how to use the computer for my own benefit and that of my students...

She declared that the resources on the Internet provided the students with a variety of resources for learning and provided her with teaching materials that were easily accessible. In addition, she found that she was able to get the students' attention when she used ICT in her teaching; the use of videos, images and PowerPoint incorporating media programmes in particular allowed students to pay more attention and learn more efficiently.

The students' responses to the use of online material in relation to material from the textbook showed up in some observations that I had conducted in cycle 1. I had sometimes recognised that, when the students needed to read sentences in more detail in the online reading activity, they had needed to translate the text into Arabic in order to be able to understand it. The data collection from phase 1 showed that, for the students who used the Internet already by copying texts and translating on Google, translating reduced the amount of time they needed to spend on understanding the sentences and the grammar rules. This also would help them to reduce costs if they were using Internet cafés. Moreover, some students indicated that, although they could read the content in English, they fully understood it only when they read it translated into Arabic. Thus, the Internet was helping them in comprehending text.

They also commented that they found the pictures, animations and sound files contained in some of the activities attractive and motivating and that these non-linguistic features also helped them sometimes to guess the meanings of the sentences that they were reading. The students in the exit interviews said that they would like to talk about more than one activity and that they liked every activity because they could participate individually; they enjoyed working independently. However, the activities in cycle 3 were nominated as the most popular because the students had been given more opportunity to plan their own activities, do everything unaided by their teachers and afterwards share it with their friends, so that they were proud of themselves when they had finished the tasks.

Student A stated that the various activities taught him a great deal which he could apply to

his future studies:

Online activities are very good. It taught me a lot of vocabulary by providing various activities. I could take this knowledge to apply to my personal situation as I had practised it in the role-play in cycle 3.

The students whom I observed talking about online learning seemed to have a very good command of the appropriate vocabulary for problem-solving and practising the online activities. They used some vocabulary from a particular activity and integrated this language correctly in a different context. Students therefore had a chance to practise their English and increase their repertoire and the flexibility of their vocabulary. I also noticed during my observations of the students as they joined in the online activities, that many feelings were aroused. These included enjoyment, excitement and enthusiasm:

***Student A:** expressed excitement and enthusiasm to practise the English skills and showed me that he changed his style of learning.*

***Student B:** reported that in activities he had had fun while learning.*

***Student C:** said that he liked to participate in the online activity and the atmosphere was positive and full of interview.*

***Student D:** also reported that it was fun and teachers encouraged him to practise well. He liked to participate in the activity.*

Ms. Rima as observer also confirmed that students were keen to participate in the activities:

The atmosphere was filled with excitement. Students with different levels of ICT skills looked excited and enthusiastic ... the classroom was pleasant, easy and suitable for this kind of activity, which the students enjoyed. It was enjoyable and there were big smiles on the students' faces.

Students were aware of these pleasurable activities motivating them to learn and practise their English. For example, Student A said that the activity helped him to practise freely, that aspects of the online activity were interesting and added that

It was a great idea to join in this kind of activity. Particularly in cycle 3 ...It encouraged me to prepare my own activities. It was new to me to prepare and

present the activities in English and encouraged me to express myself.'

I confirmed that the key aspects of the activities had motivated students to learn and to participate in them. The students seemed to participate very well; this is a good example of learner-centred online-based activity. Students learn not only natural language usage, but also benefit from hearing interesting subject matter from their friends' presentations. It seems to me that this kind of activity is very informative as well as educational for students.

Nevertheless, some of the students at first had some negative feelings towards participating in the online activities, such as embarrassment and fear of making mistakes, as illustrated in the teachers' reflections below:

***Ms. Amal:** Participating in the activities, they began by feeling embarrassed to practise their English. Some students did not want to practise online; they reported that they felt confused over following the instructions for practising the activity because they couldn't remember all the steps or did not understand some of the words and sentences in the instructions.'*

***Ms. Rima:** Negative attitudes towards the online activities were evident among some students who did not like to compare themselves with others. When they saw others doing well, they were not brave enough to try themselves. As a teacher I tried to avoid speaking in English and spoke Arabic instead to these students to explain the instructions for the activities and to give them enough confidence to try it themselves.*

In the exit interviews, students said that in some of the tasks they had learned from making mistakes. For example, they had had to check their results with each other after each activity. The first time, they felt very nervous and worried about how to start such activities but in the second cycle they felt more relaxed and performed the activities more confidently than in the first cycle. They also realised that they could learn and develop more skills outside the classroom. It was challenging and exciting for them. The students clearly learned a great deal from each other and from other students' experiences. For example, Student C was uncomfortable about engaging in the ICT activities and did not want to talk to the teacher about mistakes that he had made. When the teacher asked him if he needed any help, he replied "No, thank you" but he tried to learn what was needed from watching other students instead.

7.1.2 Issue 2: Time and Cost

Time was another issue that was raised by the teachers in the post-programme interviews. Both teachers claimed that using new technology such as computers required more preparation time in order to get the information required for designing and teaching lessons, preparing PowerPoint work and e-learning Internet-based lesson plans and related material. Persuading the students to use the Internet during class (as a new teaching method) also takes up lesson time. However, using a whiteboard in the classroom for explanations to students involves even more time. Ms. Amal, claimed she in fact saved time by using PowerPoint for her presentation/teaching instead of writing on the whiteboard. Furthermore, when she used PowerPoint she realised that the students paid more attention to her teaching than when she wrote on the whiteboard. In addition, reading materials could be searched for immediately in one sitting from a variety of web pages and from different disciplines and she acknowledged the computer (Internet) as the “best resource” from which to search for information; it was also less time-consuming than standard teaching practices.

Ms. Rima also commented that using ICT saved time because it enabled her to get through far more exercises with the students than before and then enabled her to find further activities on the Internet straightaway. Although the teachers acknowledged that using computers could save time, they also pointed out that additional time had been spent in preparing the lessons, most of all when computers were involved – but using new materials and the need for back up should the technology fail, accounted for this. In this regard, Ms. Amal pointed out that more time had been spent on preparing computer-based activities because it was a completely a new approach. However, not being able to rely on having an Internet connection also meant extra preparation time, as Ms Amal explained:

I have had to prepare for any problem that may arise during the lesson. I had to prepare two types of activity just in case problems with the Internet occurred, such as the server breaking down, or a problem arising from a power cut caused by the war situation.

The warfare, which was especially fierce in Benghazi, caused many electricity cuts, which affected the continuity of the Internet more in day light when lessons are taught. We (as teachers involved with this programme) always needed to prepare more than one lesson plan if the Internet was involved and had to plan other activities from the textbooks but equally

related to the module. In addition we needed to check whether or not the planned activity would be suitable for the purpose intended. Overall, despite this, my colleagues had very positive attitudes to using ICT in the classroom. They had no problem integrating ICT activities into the classroom because the students were engaged and more interested and by the third cycle they had more of the language skills needed for these activities and so could begin to work more independently. The teachers noticed that some students who had better computer skills did very well in the activities, which consequently delighted us as teachers. In fact, for those students who already had some computer skills, the tasks were easier and quicker.

Even students whose computer skills were not as good as others were not discouraged from engaging in the ICT activities in class because everyone was interested in these activities.

Ms. Rima: I noticed that the students with fewer computer skills wanted to know a lot about these activities. I think they are better; for example, if I talk about a topic, they researched it very quickly and sometimes they came up with different webpages from the one I suggested.

Further to this, teachers also discussed a personal issue related to their social commitments: that they used their spare time to prepare lessons but that their 'spare' time was limited because of having to teach extra hours in different universities to supplement their low income. It is no wonder then that the two teachers complained of having no time to look at online materials. Shortage of spare time in relation to the perceived extra effort in this new situation was certainly an issue whereas, time or cost was not a critical issue when it came to Internet engagement. . Nonetheless, as they would spend more time in lesson preparation, teachers suggested they should be provided with extra lesson planning time and a rise in salary to reflect this. Both teachers acknowledged that more ICT courses would be useful for students so that they could cope with the advanced use of computers in education today. The teachers identified the students' need for training in computer skills, and expressed the hope that courses in computer skills would be organized by the English language department

7.1.3 Issue 3: Pedagogical shift from teacher-centred to learner- centred education

Teaching styles in Libya are still rooted in the traditional transmission approach, which is teacher-centred rather than learner-centred. Such a tradition has no strategy for promoting independent self-regulated learning in the education system. When asked to move towards

more learner-centred education, these teachers were initially concerned that the students would not be prepared or willing to direct their own learning. It is perhaps useful at this point to examine the teachers' perceptions of their role in the classroom. How the teachers understood their role is reflected in the way in which they behaved in the classroom as well as more explicitly from their comments.

At the beginning of the programme the teachers generally considered that their role was to guide the students in the classroom in their learning. The help that they gave the students can be interpreted as 'controlling guidance'. Their method was to instigate and control the activities and monitor the students all the time. This role was especially important because the activities involved ICT tasks that were completely new to most of the students and the method was also new to the teachers. This responsibility for guiding and helping students with the technology had to be combined with the objective of each lesson as defined in the syllabus, which was also central to the aim of this programme. The way that the teachers expressed themselves in planning and follow-up meetings demonstrated how committed they became to looking for chances in the programme to shift towards a more learner-centred style of education.

This emphasis on the enthusiasm of the teachers to offer scope for creativity may influence the students' continuing engagement with the activities in class and with the level of student learning facilitated thereby. In practice, this means that the teachers offered the students more time to work individually, or sometimes in pairs on activities on their own, with limited help from the teacher. For example, in cycle 3 the students were able to discuss the tasks and choose their activities. This was considered part of the shift towards a more learner-centred style of education. The teachers functioned in several ways, such as encouragers, helpers, observers and facilitators to enhance the students' performance in Internet based English learning. I also recognised that it was very useful for me to comprehend the salient theories of both language teaching and language learning, as discussed earlier in the literature review.

Ms. Rima liked the idea of her role during cycle 3 as a facilitator of the students' learning experience who did not get involved directly with their activities, notably when they were engrossed in pair discussions. She said,

When I taught before I was always involved with the students, in terms of taking part in teaching and in making decisions ... spoon-feeding them the

syllabus ... in fact it was providing fewer opportunities for the students to make their own choices and work independently.

However, she also found that allowing the students to work independently was a challenge because these students, like any in the Libyan education system in general, were not accustomed to working on their own. She felt that at the beginning of the teaching programme the students were not ready to be independent learners because they had no confidence to work on their own and the teacher was still viewed as their main source of information: they relied on the teacher to be at hand when they were doing their work. Towards the end of cycle 3 we started encouraging the students to shift to another style of learning with more emphasis on using their own initiative.

During the post-programme meeting we discussed as teachers how the students' independence and their ability to take charge of their learning were highly dependent on their level of language competence and their computer skills. Indeed, Ms. Amal and Ms. Rima considered language ability the most important factor for developing learner-centred education in the English language classes. Ms. Rima noticed that

At the beginning of the programme the students who were less confident about working independently were the ones who lacked some basic English skills.

She mentioned the way that the teaching programme had been managed and the methods we had used to help the students to become more confident to work on their own to complete the activities. The teachers recognised that ultimately it is beneficial for students to become independent learners. They found that they were able to cover the modules more quickly when the students were working on the activities independently. We soon realized that we had to take action as teachers to motivate the students in stages towards independent learning. For example, as I noted in the observation of activity 5 in cycle 2, Ms. Rima went on monitoring the students very closely and did not seem to allow them to work altogether on their own. She was especially supportive of the less skilled students at first.

Ms Rima did not interrupt what her students were doing but directed them by answering their questions in the course of the activities. The students worked closely with her on the content of the tasks when she walked around the class, because she explained that she was not yet confident enough to let the students work totally on their own. She did not want the students to become discouraged by their inability to use the technology or due to their low

language skills. However, she gradually allowed them to work more independently as they gained in confidence. She guided the students in the first part of the activities by explaining the task and testing their knowledge and understanding of what they should do by asking them questions before they began working on it. She then let her students work independently on the task only when she was satisfied with their answers and felt sure that she had given them clear enough instructions for them to try it on their own. For example, when she asked them to do the exercise in which they had to change affirmative sentences into their negative form, she read the first one, answered it and went on to read the second one. She asked who would like to answer it and proceeded down the exercise until all five sentences were answered. Then she asked them to work individually to answer the exercise where they had to write 'am', 'is' or 'are' in the correct place. As they were working, Ms. Rima went round the class, making sure that the students had understood their task.

By the end of the programme, both Ms. Amal and Ms. Rima thought that using ICT in their teaching would help the students to become more independent learners. They said that the role of the Internet in the TEFL classroom had given the students a chance to be independent and responsible for their own choice of activities to practise; the students, for their part, now see computers as tools to help them to be independent in several ways. For example, the use of ICT to encourage student-centred learning was demonstrated in more than one of the activities during cycle 3, in which the students searched for a specific activity on the Internet during applications activity 7 of the third cycle. The aim of this activity was to make sure that the students could begin working independently by searching for a suitable educational EFL website to support their learning. As agreed in the pre-meeting of cycle 3, we did not restrict the choices to a specific website but browsed the Internet to find the most appropriate interactive games to boost the students' learning opportunities. For instance, one of the students' targets for this activity was found on the 'Turtle Diary' website where there were two similar games which focused on the verb 'to be'.

Although at the beginning of this activity the students were given the space to work independently and were asked to search for a particular activity, they were not left to do this completely on their own because we were not totally confident of their ability to research until their choices had been checked and confirmed by their teachers. Ms. Amal stated that

Although I believed in the need to give the students the space to explore and learn independently, I felt that that they students needed guidance

before we allowed them to work quite unaided.

One of our aims as teachers was of course to encourage the students to be independent learners, but we could not let the students work totally without our support and guidance until cycle 3. When we were fairly sure that they could find what they needed from the website, they were able to choose which one was suitable and the teacher had only to observe them.

The students' view of the pedagogical shift from teacher-centred to learner-centred education was shaped mainly by the change in the teaching approach that the shift entailed. The main focus was on student interaction. We applied this approach to all the activities so as to motivate the students to learn as much as possible. From my observations, I found that students had more opportunity to practise their English and were more willing to participate in the activities than they had been in the past. In doing so, they obtained more knowledge of practising the language skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking and also of grammar when the use of ICT was implemented in their learning.

The students were also encouraged to interact with their teacher. In Activity 1: Self-Introduction in Cycle 1, some of the students were confident enough to practise speaking. This showed that students could act as negotiators and tried to discuss this action with the teacher. I found this also when I used Action Research procedures to encourage students' self-reflection, to understand their language learning and try to change for the better, in particular in Activity 5. Student A appreciated the support from the teachers for the weaker students in module 1 (cycle 2) and realized how the teachers had identified their weaknesses and found remedies in module 2 (cycle 2), which also motivated the students to develop their learning.

In every activity of cycle 3, the students had the opportunity to take part in the procedures, in planning and acting, observing, reflecting and revising. These procedures helped them to improve their linguistic competence, as Edge (2003) also found. In the planning stage, students worked out how they could participate in the activity and set their English goals. In the action stage, they followed their plans. In the observation stage, other students observed their performance in the activity. In the reflection stage, students commented on the strategies or techniques that had most encouraged them to communicate with each other.

In the cycle 3, students revised their processes to achieve their learning activities. Students

who achieved their task then had more self-confidence in English learning practice, particularly in communicating with the teachers and their friends. Whenever students could not reach their learning task, they worked with the teacher to solve their problems. This was a way to identify obstacles that were preventing them from communicating. While learning, students gradually reduced their dependence on the teacher and some of them developed further as autonomous learners. They started to reflect on their learning activities and tried to reach it through another language learning strategy. In the classroom culture, some students were brave enough to ask for help both from the teacher and from their friends. This meant that students' enhancement in language learning, above all in learning, increased. The atmosphere at the same time was positive because the teacher tried to give positive feedback to help students to reach their learning of English goals (Burton & Clennell, 2003, p. 1).

After identifying this issue discussed above, I had a meeting with Ms. Rima and Ms Amal in order to get some perspective on the issues. The first and second cycles of the Lesson Study differed in that the role of the teacher shifted from a more directive role in the first cycle to a facilitator's role in the second. The first cycle was a new experience for all the participants. It involved a shift in the teacher role from an instructional coach to a facilitator. In the reflective meeting of the first cycle, I confessed that I had frequently found it hard to maintain the focus of the cycle on instruction and on occasion had taken the instruction back towards the lesson plan step. When the cycle was going off on a different curve, I brought the focus back to the Lesson Study through interrupting, since we had to get back to the cycle process.

During the second cycle, I noted that it was easier to continue the sessions because the teachers were more familiar with the Lesson Study cycle and its components. This too was discussed during the first cycle and it was clear that more explanation was needed. The teaching became more like guiding and leading the students. The teachers also noted that not only was the planning of the lesson itself quicker in the second cycle, but also that their research lesson went better and also that they accomplished more in the same amount of time. As Ms Amal said,

...during the first cycle, we spent the first 3 hours identifying the problem and planning for the lesson, whereas in the second cycle, we were ready to start planning the lesson after last week of cycle 1 and discussing what kind of difficulty the students had in understanding the main structure.

The teachers easily navigated through the Lesson Study constituents in cycle 2, when the role of the teacher shifted to that of facilitator. We commented in the reflective meeting on the way that I saw my role during the sessions, which I restated for the sake of clarity. During the 12 weeks of the Lesson Study process, minor disagreements occurred between us as we collaborated and competed with different ideas for teaching.

Ms Rima explained that the selection of online activities meant that we always had to come up with an ultimate plan, (after asking) which one would work better, this one or that one. As teachers and facilitators, we ensured that all the chosen activities were suitable for the students and in checking for agreement, we always asked each other “What do you think? Do we all agree?” As researcher and teacher I managed the meetings and offered some resources related to the Lesson Study content. During the cycles, I guided the meetings according to the lesson plan, kept the focus on the instructional goals and ensured the participation of the teachers. Another role I took into consideration was time management and redirecting the focus to instruction. One of my main objectives as a researcher was to ensure that the Lesson Study cycle was being followed and that the teachers and students were engaging in a meaningful way of learning in order to surmount the obstacles discussed above.

7.1.4 Issue 4: About teaching of English as a foreign language

Another issue particularly relevant to the present research is the teaching of the four skills in English in general with a special focus on the concurrent handling of English grammar. My previous teaching in the English department had focused almost entirely on grammar and it was my dissatisfaction with my own previous teaching of this aspect of the language that had led me to undertake this research. Consequently, I was particularly interested in identifying what teaching strategies my colleagues used when teaching English grammar using the four skills.

The teachers indicated that they used a range of strategies. From my observation in phase 1, the two teachers most often sought information related to the Grammar Translation method, they mainly used grammar translation method to teach grammar, where the students learn grammatical rules and then apply them by translating sentences from or to English and Arabic. The teachers reported that teaching the four basic skills is important and that knowledge of grammar was an essential part of the English department’s examination. The

exam paper has a long section on grammar. Therefore I was interested to hear the teachers expressing their feelings on the use of ICT for teaching grammar in the four skills set. Ms. Amal explained that,

Before the ICT programme, I used different approaches for teaching grammar. I preferred to use the traditional way of teaching grammar where I am the informer and the students are the receivers and then they practise what I have taught. I provide the students with the grammar rules and then I explain and give examples... ..before they do an exercise.

Ms. Rima added.

It is essential for students to have understood a grammar rule before I continued with the rest of the grammar-related exercises. However, with the ICT I have applied a different approach. I integrated the grammar rule with more activities.

She emphasised that

The use of ICT activities helped the students' understanding because I felt that grammar should not be taught in isolation. English would be better understood if the students actively participated in it.

In the future ... I will not teach English in general to the students by using my previous traditional approach ... in which I gave notes on the whiteboard while explaining and then followed my explanations with exercises for the students to complete if the university finishes its maintenance work and provides the English department with all the promised facilities I will start to use ICT as a teaching aid to improve my teaching and the students' learning.

In relation to teaching English in general by using the ICT, she continued,

I have noticed that the way that the module is approached and conveyed by us as teachers to the students has made a difference to the students' learning.

Ms. Amal said that:

During the teaching programme it was essential for students to feel

comfortable, confident and self-motivated in order to learn. Learning happened when the students used the language; thus it was important to build up or to increase the students' motivation in order for them to use the language. In order for this to happen, I feel I was more flexible in my teaching, especially with the ICT activities. It can be seen that the students' feelings of confidence increased when they were comfortable with the situation and atmosphere in the classroom.

The two teachers commented that in the activities in cycle 3 the students created a situation that was relaxed, allowing them to find activities that suited them and that were related to the subjects given during the task:

We offered no suggestions while the students were interacting and we gave them the chance to express their ideas and thoughts even though they did not communicate in full English sentences.

Ms. Amal added

At the beginning of the teaching programme, we noticed that some of the students did not want to interact with anyone or to participate ...maybe they don't have that much confidence.

And, for example, in order to make them more comfortable ... we did not mind if they referred to any text with their own ideas, nor did we mind if they spoke Arabic at first to ask questions or share ideas.

About her teaching approaches as an English language teacher, Ms. Amal said

I notice that they ... have changed gradually, depending on the intended learning outcome, but also according to the students' English level and their computer skills... for example, when the course began, I retained a traditional teaching approach (so-called spoon-feeding - teacher-centred), whereas when there were more activities that increase students' confidence and motivation, in cycle 2, the students started to feel confident and preferred to work on their own.

Further to that, when the students were asked what they would choose if they had a chance

to do this course again – a question about their appreciation of English teaching in general, they answered as follows.

***Student A:** I would like to practise listening more by watching English movies before doing such a course and such tasks.*

***Student B:** I realized that practising English on the Internet was not too difficult, so I would like to use it more in the future than I did before, because it was very difficult to access it before the war.*

***Student C:** I would like to have prepared more activities and to have practised them more with friends.*

***Student D:** I felt that the teachers should prepare the tasks very early because they would have several tasks to conduct. Most of the students had a chance to be active in choosing and carrying out suitable activities and they said that they gained a lot of experience in doing this. Overall it is clear that students were very satisfied with the online content and the teaching process and wished for more opportunities of this kind.*

It may not be too difficult for us as teachers to develop our teaching step by step using traditional pedagogical approaches, but keeping the same level of students' interest and motivation can be very challenging. I found that I could do this more easily after the lesson studies programme had influenced my teaching style. Moreover, the students' comments about my teaching showed that their attitude towards language learning was positive because they thought that their English knowledge had been so much improved by the programme. I assumed that their confidence regarding language learning generally would probably increase as well. However, students in every course group do not have identical characteristics so as a teacher I have to plan, act, observe, reflect and revise my teaching to be appropriate as far as possible for the particular students in each course group.

7.1.5 Issue 5: the Lesson Study approach to develop English language teaching

The Lesson Study process started with the creation of Lesson Study teaching cycles and continued with the selection of Lesson Study modules, the development of lesson content and planning, teaching and reflecting. During the sessions, my colleagues and I observed

one another's teaching observation and shared our notes. This programme was intended to encourage the students to achieve the learning objectives of the EFL course. In this respect I worked with my colleagues to enhance the students' motivation to learn English.

With the use of the three Lesson Study cycles, this study found that teachers valued the Lesson Study approach, felt that Lesson Study positively impacted on their pedagogical practices and believed their participation in Lesson Study contributed to an increased learning of English in their classrooms. Specifically, the teachers valued collaborating with colleagues, sharing strategies and ideas, focusing and analysing students' online activities and planning and reflecting on their teaching practices. As evidenced by the student tasks, teacher observation and students' learning expanded some of their English language skills and the ability to seek and express ideas in English.

The implementation of the lesson studies teaching programme in Benghazi University was a great challenge for us as TEFL teachers who, like our students, had insufficient knowledge of Internet skills and who relied heavily upon traditional teaching methods (teacher-centred) in which teachers talk and the students receive – called the 'spoon-feeding' mode of teaching and learning (Jansen & Christie, 1999). This style of pedagogy was particularly evident with English language teachers, due to the shortage of training opportunities for teachers under the previous political regime.

As mentioned earlier, it was clear from the post-programme interview responses that the teachers generally agreed that the lesson studies approach had positively affected their pedagogical knowledge and skills.

Ms. Amal: The Lesson Study teaching programme has positively affected my approach to teaching EFL by allowing me to see English language teaching methods from a more skilled perspective than I had before I took part in this collaborative Lesson Study teaching programme.

I acquired different ways of teaching, for example, ways to share topic/content and design a lesson; different ways of thinking about the teaching process. The way that I think about it is necessarily the way that my students find it. Getting more than one way to teach and make the students find the correct answer ... allows students to experience different teaching/learning techniques.

Ms. Rima added

I have found this Lesson Study teaching programme very interesting. I have discovered how to do more English teaching activities and I am discovering more ways of doing the same activities ... there are things that I had also never really done by means of a computer and that I was not aware of, in terms of using it as teaching tool. These methods of using ICT that the students would use themselves... this development towards new ways of thinking about certain teaching pedagogy concepts ... took me to new ways of understanding how to do certain things - there is not just one way of doing them. By participating in the Lesson Studies programme I am also increasing my own knowledge of English. Lesson Study has certainly changed my learning of English and the way I will teach it.

Our understanding of the students' interest and engagement in the process of learning and in the subject that we were teaching was growing together, as we found we could use more than one way of teaching a particular topic. We were also developing new ways of thinking about the teaching and learning processes. We learned some new ways of arriving at the given objective of the lesson. We had never thought about these things before until we had to anticipate how students were going to learn things ... and become acutely aware of paying attention to the students' learning process and our role as teachers.

7.1.6 Issue 6: challenges and obstacles in implementing of the teaching programme at Benghazi University

One of the major challenges that we faced in terms of teaching and learning during cycle 1 was to manage the online teaching class. The challenge was the much greater when the subject matter was one which required an additional level of understanding. The activities in the traditional classroom setting usually tend to be the same: the teacher teaches and the students listen. Creative efforts were needed to modify this pattern and to introduce a new approach. Most suggestions from teachers had been focused on class management and activities, but it was also important to investigate the students' own interest in engaging with online activities. Although cycles 1 and 2 were led by us as teachers, I always emphasised the importance of focusing on the students' own interest and engagement in the research lesson. Therefore, finding activities that would involve their interest and active participation

was my priority.

The importance of student interest and participation was emphasized in the post-teaching meeting of cycle 2 in terms of ensuring that learning was properly embedded and rehearsed. Through the research lessons of cycle 3, the students were more actively involved in determining their learning activities. The students had space to select their own activities and to collaborate with their fellow-students. They engaged in activities and games and some of them chose to play them many times. These exercises gave them the chance to get immediate feedback about their skill level and they were able to try again to enhance their understanding and aptitude.

One of the biggest obstacles to implementing online learning from the perspective of the interviewed students was the provision of facilities. The provision of ICT infrastructure, technical support and instructional support was seen as less than satisfactory by many students. Even with an injection of government funding, this university does not yet have broadband Internet access in all classrooms, though the teachers can borrow notebooks to use in the classroom. The university has no IT technician to support the students in using the computers. The students tended to think that there was no help to be had in this regard from the department or the university. Generally, in this university context it is quite difficult for the departments to assign extra computers to help teachers with classes and the students by and large were not satisfied with the facilities. They thought that the teachers who tried to integrate the Internet in the curriculum were not supported by sufficient development in the university. In order to help teachers to use the Internet so as to improve teaching and learning, they should be given professional training that exposes them to more innovative ideas for using the technology. There are three main obstacles to the implementation of ICT in EFL, which are cultural barriers, technical problems with the equipment and the effect of the war on the process of the teaching programme.

7.1.6.1 The cultural barriers to the teaching of English using ICT in Libya.

In my previous teaching style, I would sometimes ask the students to do some tasks as a way of practising their English in front of the whole class. I wanted to see how they would perform their tasks, but having to present their work in front of the others might sometimes make them less confident in using the language - in particular there can be cultural issues about performance in mixed gender classes. During the lesson studies programme I noticed

that a few of the female students seemed much less positive towards the new teaching style and were shy in class in front of the male students, whereas the male students were quite positive about using ICT as a teaching and learning resource and this had a good effect on their language learning. This was because they had more cultural freedom to use the Internet in cafés or at home than the female students, who consequently had less knowledge and practice of Internet and ICT use, as noted above (see the data collection, phase 1 in Chapter 5). Although both male and female students had in the past used Internet and ICT in Arabic, the finding from analysing of phase 1 do show that there are significant gender differences in Internet use. As Chapter 5 discusses, the female students used Internet cafes less frequently than males due to cultural restrictions regarding the times and places at which women could be seen outside the home.

Nonetheless, seeing the effect of this new mode of teaching was encouraging for us and we were pleased to be able to reflect on the different learning styles of students. Following this, I learned to suggest ICT activities which were suitable for different students and solve some of the cultural barriers which might inhibit students' learning performance.

Zainab, a student, said:

[The teacher] looked at me like an inspector to see if I made a lot of mistakes ... it used to be a bad experience for me when I had to do something in front of the class. But in this programme the teacher did encourage me to practise the exercise again when I made mistakes. She always told me that making mistakes was no big deal and we could all learn from it. I liked that way of teaching.

This student was impressed about working with her teacher while doing the activity and finally she was very proud of herself and her friends in demonstrating that she could reach her goal. The students showed that providing them with the opportunity to practise their English at the same time as using the Internet motivated them to learn English and to have more confidence in their learning.

At this point, I recognised that students need much encouragement to learn a foreign language and that they could further develop their use of both language and ICT by themselves as their confidence increases. When they have more confidence, their language competence will increase until they can learn more rapidly, which in turn will help them to

feel more confident about using the English language in the classroom.

In Libya's educational culture, a teacher is at the centre of teaching and it is believed that everything the teacher said is correct. In this programme, these views have changed slightly. We tried to work together with students as a genuine endeavour, since we were all learning something new and trying a different way of teaching and learning. I believe that sometimes a teacher can learn new things from the students.

7.1.6.2 The technical problems with the equipment

In our teachers' meetings we discussed the teaching materials available on line and the use of online material in different activities, which we linked to the textbook at the end of each module. While we agreed about the potential of using ICT in teaching and learning in Libya, we also were aware of the possible obstacles that teachers might face and the barriers to the use of the Internet in general.

The unavailability of the Internet in teaching institutions in Libya is one of the major obstacles to its use as a teaching tool or for teachers' self-development. Ms. Amal said:

I guess that if ICT teaching tools had been available at universities or schools, at least some teachers would have used them and the others would have followed the process.

Even if the Internet is theoretically available, it is not always possible to access it. Sometimes the Internet would not be connected for several days, making it impossible for teachers to prepare work on ICT activities and for the students to proceed in their course syllabus. It is also somewhat expensive.

7.1.6.3 The effect of the war on the process of the teaching programme

One of the obvious impacts of the war is that electricity supply can be suspended during daylight hours, which directly affects teaching. In the case of this study lesson programme, the suspension of the Internet was very problematic given that I mainly relied on it for the content of the lesson. This led all of us to wait for hours and/or postpone the lesson for a few days. These obstacles occurred after the revolution of February 17, 2011.

During my teaching sessions, I also faced several problems that interrupted the progress of

my fieldwork. The security circumstances in Benghazi created most of the field work problems. From time to time the fighting and shooting between the militiamen prevented me from reaching the class I was to teach. It was extremely risky even to walk around.

7.2 Towards a university policy on the introduction of ICT in teaching and learning

Recommendations that follow from this study were discussed in the teachers' meetings. We agreed that programmes for English Language teaching and learning that used ICT should be strongly encouraged by the university in order to give all students the chance to use the Internet as a resource for data on all subjects as soon as possible after they enrolled. To apply such programmes, the university would need to take advantage of students' generally positive attitude to Internet use. After the revolution, the war and the ongoing disruption, it was hoped that the teachers would be able to begin integrating the Internet in both English and Arabic in their classes and it was recommended that this should start in the first year of study.

Specific recommendations are as follows:

- With regards to university policy, instruction in the use of the Internet should be incorporated into the teaching curriculum so that students can be taught the necessary technical skills for use of the Internet early in their university career. The teachers would then be able to incorporate the use of the Internet into their preparation and teaching resources, helping them to build the students' skills in English and the relevant Internet technical skills.
- English language teachers should consider studying their students' preferences in using the Internet and to build upon these to provide opportunities and platforms that the students could use for learning purposes as well as activities relevant to their wider interests.
- Teachers' should encourage students to access web sites in order to practise their English as they provide great opportunities for learning and this needs to be built into the teachers' pedagogical approaches in the future.
- Students also need to be encouraged to talk about what they have read and practised

on the Internet. They can do this in groups to support interaction between themselves and with the teacher as they learn English. This practice helps to keep students engaged with each other and with the teacher as well as learning on line.

- After the war, the university should make it their priority to ensure that students will have access to computers and the Internet.

7.3. Looking at the Lesson Study data from the Variation

Theory perspective

Now I will consider my data using the interpretative framework of Variation Theory. Although Variation Theory was not part of my initial design, I have used it here as a means of interpreting and explaining what happened during our LS programme to make it successful. If I am able to do this I can claim that at least elements of the theory are tacitly embedded in our practice.

The Variation Theory of teaching is concerned with the students' teaching and learning experience viewed through a lens created as a result of identifying certain critical features and aspects of the objects of learning – specifically the content of what is to be learned and how it may be learned. Variation Theory suggests that teaching and learning will most effectively take place when the teachers become aware of other possible aspects of and approaches towards teaching the content than those they already know. Variation Theory stresses the capacity of teachers to use relevant structures which have been built upon previously acquired knowledge and asks that teachers assist learners in developing alternative ways of seeing and approaching a given object of learning, so that the latter can solve problems which incorporate any new issues encountered in the process of tackling that object of learning. (Lo, 2012; Marton & Tsui, 2004).

Marton, Beaty and DallAlba (1993) argue that if teachers encourage learners to see learning as a task, then once the task is accomplished it will be forgotten; that is, students will study and revise for examinations and then forget it all. However, if teachers encourage learners to build relevant structures and see learning arising from the object of learning, they will be able to engage deeply with it.

The major illustration of the implementation of Variation Theory is in Hong Kong,

particularly in the areas of teaching English, Mandarin, Maths and Science where the theory draws in particular on English Lesson Studies. Teachers plan the same lesson together and then modify it as each in turn teaches it through cycles of peer observation and post lesson conferences. Elliott (2004), in his article, evaluates one of the Learning Studies projects and has gathered convincing evidence of the positive impact of the process on teachers' and students' learning. This impact must be viewed in context. It is a context in which the government of Hong Kong (HK) has launched a curriculum reform process that requires teachers to take responsibility for designing learning experiences for their students at the school level within a curriculum framework that classifies the objects of learning (content) in terms of Key Learning Areas (KLAs). These are often broader in scope than the traditional school subjects, thereby enabling teachers to develop programmes that link objects of learning in ways that are different from their positioning in subject-based learning. It is in this curriculum change context that the renaming of Lesson Studies as Learning Studies becomes significant. The HK curriculum framework presupposes and indeed articulates pedagogical aims that focus on the development of new kinds of capabilities in students - such as generic thinking skills - and the active learning processes, such as project work, associated with them. Whereas Lesson Study may focus on designing better ways of realizing the customary pedagogical goals, Learning Study is focused on realizing new kinds of pedagogical goals.

Since 2003 a total of 29 learning studies have been carried out in Hong Kong in different subject areas in two project schools. Of these 27 had a complete dataset of pre- tests and post- tests. In 24 out of the 27 learning studies, the research lessons had a positive effect on the performance of the whole group. In particular, in 25 out of 27 studies, the low score group showed greater progress than the high score group in terms of actual gain in scores between the post -test and pre- test. This shows that the differences in the understanding of specific objects of learning between the low score and high score groups had become smaller.

The main component of the elements of Variation Theory is connected with the central concept of the *object of learning*. The object of learning refers to what students experience as learners and how they experience and learn it. What is to be learned, concerned with the content or the skill of the intended concept, is referred to as the 'direct object of learning' or specific aspect of the object of learning. How students go about their learning is referred to as the 'indirect object of learning' and is concerned with the development of the student's

capabilities to explain the concept in new situations, which in our case is the use of ICT in learning (Lo, 2012),

From a Variation Theory perspective, learning is always '*learning about new techniques of teaching and learning*', which in our case would refer to the use of ICT in English language teaching. In our LS context, this 'something' was therefore the teaching of EFL through the use of ICT and became the '*object of learning*'. An object of learning consists of many features. Such features have to be discerned by the learner if the complexity of a phenomenon can be understood.

The four main components of variation theory are:

1. Lived object of learning 1 (the data from phase 1 questionnaire)
2. Intended object of learning (the preparation)
3. Enacted object of learning (the teaching)
4. Lived object of learning 2 (the feedback-outcome of the teaching)

So can I apply the four main components of the variation theory to my study? In the present research, the data collection from phase 1 allowed me to gather the baseline information from the questionnaire and interviews. These were important because they provided me with a clearer idea of what the students thought about the introduction of the use of ICT in teaching and learning; this can therefore be seen as the *lived object of learning 1*.

Further to that *the intended object of learning*, the preparation stage, was carried out during the cycle preparation phase in Chapter Six. In my analysis of the class preparation I intended to apply the variation theory object of learning during the preparation of the classroom teaching because an Internet study programme needs to be implemented in regular subject programmes rather than remain as an individual teaching source. During the preparation of the class my main concerns were that students need to be taught the necessary technical skills for using ICT and Internet teaching and that the teachers of individual subjects need to prepare to incorporate the use of the Internet in their teaching. My main responsibility was to make sure that both teachers and students were prepared to build initial technical skills in order to use the ICT.

As discussed in Chapter 6, the *enacted object of learning*, the teaching stage, was carried out in three successful cycles, each consisting of a pre-conference meeting, focus on the teaching

cycle, and focus on the research lesson and a post teaching meeting and finally a reflective meeting. This successful cycle, in particular the reflective meeting with teachers and students, would help me to gather feedback about the *lived objective of learning 2* and the overall components of the variation theory that I would apply in my data analysis and learning cycles in Chapter 6.

The reasons for using the object of learning framework is that it is a dynamic. Both teachers and students learn in the process of interacting with one another; hence teachers can modify the object of learning in the process of learning to suit a given situation. For the object of learning to be discerned, students must focus on a critical feature and critical aspect of the object of learning (Elliott, 2012; Lo, 2012; Pang et al., 2006).

A critical feature of the object of learning that the students can focus on is the special value of the dimension of variation. The critical aspect is a dimension of variation which contains the critical feature as its subset, but the critical features and critical aspects are not mutually exclusive and are discerned together in the learning process (Lo, 2012; Pang, 2008). The critical features of the object of learning are identified through in-depth understanding of the subject, sharing of experiences among the teachers, checking the relevant literature and involving students so as to get their opinions. For EFL students, this is obviously a long and extensive process based on continuous experiences of different kinds and in different contexts.

The focus of this section is on the way in which patterns of variation, based on variation theory (Lo, 2012; Lo & Marton, 2012), are found to extend and foster the EFL teachers' teaching and development. The framework of variation theory for language teaching methods emphasises the perspective of the learner and here it is a useful one in terms of helping students to discover and use ICT for their English language-learning strategies. The purpose of this section therefore is to elaborate on the tacit use of patterns of variation designed by variation theory and the way in which they can help develop ELT practice.

Patterns of Variation Theory (Lo, 2012; Pang, 2008) are: Contrast, Separation, Generalisation, and Fusion. For the critical features to be discerned, students must experience the above patterns of variation in teaching which I also briefly touched upon in the teaching and learning process in cycle 2 of my data analysis in Chapter 6. The teacher introduced an awareness of the '*contrast pattern*' of the variation theory (Marton, 2009, cited

in Lo, 2012). Where she identified it, the students could distinguish the critical features of an object more easily because they were able to contrast it with another object. The teacher explained this by saying, “I am a teacher” and pointing out other teachers (Ms Magda and Ms Amal), saying “We are teachers”. She practised this point with the students clarifying the differences.

Moreover, a recognition of the use of the pattern of variation in my data analysis was possible in Activity 1 of cycle 3, where the teacher conducted an activity on the use of grammar. This grammar rule was taught by the awareness of using *separation* as a pattern of variation theory. The teacher took each noun and asked the students to change it into its plural form. As the students gave their answers, the plural forms appeared one by one in a larger font on the screen. After this, a bubble with ‘is’ written in it appeared beside the column with the singular nouns. The teacher explained that a singular noun, when combined with the root verb ‘to be’ changes ‘to be’ to ‘is’. A bubble with ‘are’ in it then appeared beside the column with the plural nouns and the teacher explained that plural nouns, when combined with the root verb ‘to be’ change the ‘to be’ to ‘are’. From this example I can identify that elements of variation theory were applied in the teaching and learning process. These experiences that students undergo by varying some aspects of the object of learning while letting others remain invariant are the result of conditions of learning created by the teacher.

Variation Theory asserts that there can be no learning without discernment and there can be no discernment without experiencing variation. In contrasting the features, students are able to separate the value of the feature which is critical for the intended object of learning. *Generalisation* as a pattern of variation occurs when out-of-focus features are separated. At times teachers need to simultaneously vary some aspects so as to discern the next object of the learning; this process is referred to as fusion (Lo, 2012). These features of Variation Theory provide the conceptual framework necessary to monitor the pedagogical process of learning. It is this framework that is adopted by the learning study as a research methodology for analysing learning achievement.

An example of the use made of patterns of variation in our study is that when both teachers found that their students were not motivated to read in English while using ICT (online reading exercises) because they were anxious about too many unknown words in a new language in the reading passage. Having to stop reading and check the meaning of these unfamiliar words using an online dictionary killed the students’ interest in reading.

Therefore my suggestion to the teachers was to teach the students how to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words by picking out contextual clues with the help of transitional words such as *otherwise, but, therefore, so, that*. The teachers then showed students a passage with a few unfamiliar words and asked if they could understand the general idea of the passage, but the students gave up when they came across new words. So the teacher then asked the students what they should do when they met unfamiliar words. Most students said that they would check the meaning on the online dictionary or ask their teacher. However I suggested to the teachers that they should promise to tell students how to get the gist of a passage without seeking help from other sources, which would also motivate them to read more. The students showed a keen interest. Both Ms Amal and Ms Rima taught the research lesson. Afterwards, the teachers showed the students the same passage and asked them about its meaning. All the students answered the questions correctly. The teachers asked them why they could not understand the passage at first but could do so by the end. The students surmised that they had guessed the meaning of unfamiliar words by their context and the transitional words. This example illustrates the use that the teachers made of variation to bring out contrast and of other patterns of variation to let the students understand that they could not grasp the passage at first because they had not made use of the context and transitional words to guess the meaning of the new words. After they had learnt this strategy, they could understand the passage without checking the dictionary or seeking other help. Thus, the students not only learned this strategy, but were also motivated to apply it in their reading (Generalisation pattern) and in other lessons, in particular during online reading activities. The reading passage was kept invariant while the strategies used to find the meaning of new words were varied. The students were thus able to experience the difference in their understanding of the passage brought about by the two patterns of variation.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS

8.0 Introduction

This project sought to explore how Internet-based language resources might be used to enhance the development of English language teaching at Benghazi University. To this end, the study implemented a Lesson Study programme and also as a mode of professional development for the group of three participating teachers, including me, from this university. The three of us established three cycles of Lesson Study and we collaboratively examined the processes of pedagogical change that we observed as we went through the programme. During the Lesson Study cycles, we engaged in collaborative discussions which focused on problem analysis and on ways of enhancing the students' learning of English through integrating this technology. We developed lesson plans accordingly. We reflected on our practice through observing each other as we taught and by considering the students' experiences of learning. Data were collected before and during the programme using the following methods: questionnaire, participant interviews, observations, teaching and reflective discussion. The types of changes that we observed in our practice, the impact on classroom environment, on student learning and achievement and the reflections we made on what we had valued from the Lesson Study process also formed part of the data, recorded as field notes and transcriptions of our meetings.

Using ICT in the teaching and learning programme offers great opportunities for HE in many developing countries, enabling them to improve their teaching and learning. When I began this study, the University of Benghazi in Libya already had a basic ICT capacity: access to the Internet, computers, video, and audio and technology facilities which could form the basis for implementing e-learning. However, these facilities were not being used to their full potential and the traditional style of teaching and learning did not seem to support the further implementation of ICT as observed and explained in the data analysis in Chapter Five

I support the argument that universities in developing countries will create better opportunities for students if they adopt e-learning technologies and take advantage of Internet-based resources in order to improve their teaching and learning. Pedagogical, cultural, technical and cost implications will need to be considered for each specific

technology when integrating ICTs into an HE teaching programme. Several advantages of such integration were identified in the current study. However, despite the positive effects of integrating the use of e-learning into the syllabus which were observed by us as English language teacher , Benghazi University still faces many challenges in undertaking such a process, according to the findings from this study.

These findings were based on a small sample within a single case study. The duration of the Lesson Study programme was relatively short and it did not have the scope to follow students through any formal assessments of their language skills. The research also took place during a particular period of dramatic change in Libya's history therefore, it is possible that a similar research project, if it were conducted elsewhere in the world, in another Arabic country or in other cultural contexts, might produce different findings.

The different pedagogical styles which emerged from our use of the Lesson Study approach when teaching English in this way are probably a reflection of the differences in cultural backgrounds as much as in teacher training. The conclusion from the findings suggests that the Lesson Study approach and process has greatly facilitated and supported some rapid changes in teacher pedagogy.

Teachers reported changes in the following areas:

- They became more focused in their planning
- They gave more attention to the process of student learning
- They perceived themselves as facilitators and motivators of independent learners
- They felt an increase in their own confidence and motivation
- They were able to reflect collaboratively on their practices

Furthermore, the study highlighted an impact on student learning, specifically in the targeted learning and practising of their English. Students demonstrated changes in the following areas:

- Motivation to become more familiar with and skilled in the use of ICT.
- Enhanced motivation to engage in the learning; they felt that the learning was more relevant to their world.
- Enhanced confidence that they could become more independent learners.

- Collaborative reinforcement of formal learning through engaging in Internet-based communications, activities and games.

The major issues highlighted by these findings include these changes observed in teaching practices and our continuing professional development. The Lesson Study programme, as an Action Research process of inquiry, impacted directly and positively upon teacher pedagogy as well as offering a framework in which to investigate the integration of e-learning into the EFL syllabus. A further key finding was an observed increase in the students' motivation for learning English; they could view it as a relevant and authentic medium for accessing information on the Internet. These findings therefore have implications for the teachers of higher education in Libya if they are to make the sustainable pedagogical changes that will positively impact on student learning and outcomes.

8.1. Change of teaching pedagogy.

Although the principal focus of the study was on the integration of ICT into the EFL teaching programme, one of the surprising findings for me was the rapid and powerful shifts in attitude facilitated by the Lesson Study process and practices amongst us as teachers. Studies have shown that making change and sustaining change is difficult, in particular when change is being forced by external authorities and not collaboratively agreed upon (Wilms, 2008). Yet, when certain conditions are in place, change can occur. Consistent with the research on the impact that a Lesson Study process has on teacher practices, this study also found that teachers were able to change their teaching practices through the supportive experience of the Lesson Study process, which in turn impacted upon students' learning (Ermeling, 2012; Fernandez, 2005; Wilms, 2003).

By consistently engaging in collaboration, revising by practising more and reflecting on their own and each other's teaching, the teachers' pedagogy changed and developed (Ermeling, 2012; Lewis et al., 2009; Stigler & Hieber, 1999). Saunders and Goldenberg (2005) state that "teachers' work- indeed, the work in which we all engage - cannot be seen in isolation" (p. 147). One of the benefits of Lesson Study is that the collaboration occurs with a network of teachers who are able to share best practices with each other, observe student learning collectively and celebrate gains together. The findings regarding changes to teacher practices included growth in instructional capacity, focused planning, attention to student learning, a shift of role into facilitators of learning and reflection on practice. I feel that these

improvements in teacher pedagogy could not have been achieved without the collaborative and supportive process of Lesson Study.

Research has also shown that when teachers engage in group learning and their students begin to show progress, the teachers move away from disapproving of the students for not understanding their teaching to a more responsible and persevering attitude of “you haven’t taught it until they’ve learned” (Gallimore & Ermeling, 2010). At the beginning of this programme, I spent two weeks observing my colleagues and then we started planning a lesson together. We found that by the beginning of the second cycle, the students’ level of engagement with learning and their English skills had already improved. The evidence for this was seen when teachers reported at the end of cycle 2 that their instructions in English were now being more easily understood by students and applied to the latter’s English language learning, which showed both evidence of student learning and of the clarity of the teachers’ instructions. Teachers were not satisfied when the students failed to understand the instructions given and it was clear that, as the lesson planning and teacher instructions improved, their students’ achievement, confidence and learning also improved.

These initial achievements, which were collectively experienced by teachers and students, continued to motivate the students in participating and engaging in the Lesson Study programme and led the teachers to modify and refine their practice. Post-teaching and reflective meetings were both critical to changing our classroom teaching practices. All three teachers were required to engage in a post-teaching reflective meeting after every Lesson Study class, in which we could articulate what we felt the students gained from this collaboration and where they had struggled with the on-line learning activities. We were able to look at our teaching processes openly and honestly and acknowledge where the students had needed some additional support to their learning or elsewhere. For example, after the first lesson, Ms Amal reported

I need some more work on my activities. I should’ve chosen a different task for the students to better suit their ability. Another easier activity such as a video would have been more effective and would have helped also with their understanding

During the subsequent Lesson Study class, this teacher shared her experience with the students and thus added a video activity to the process of enhancing the lesson. This reflective practice translated into changes not only in this particular teacher's pedagogy, but in all of us. The process also impacted on us as observers and therefore we could make changes to our own practices. It seems to me that this form of Lesson Study is therefore a very efficient as well as an effective means of professional development for teachers. This was for me the surprising aspect of the current research, for I had not realised that the project design would reveal such a useful method of skill sharing and professional development, which at the same time was an effective mode of qualitative inquiry.

Researchers have discussed some of the challenges of conducting Lesson Study, which include not being able to find the time within a whole departmental curriculum for engaging in it (Chokshi & Fernandez, 2004, p. 521). Some teachers also preferred to keep their "classroom practices private" (Lewis & Perry, 2009, p. 387). Lesson Study brings teaching out into the open for scrutiny and discussion, which may be considered a risk to some teachers (Fernandez, 2002; Hiebert et al., 2002) who may fear being criticised.

However, the collaborative nature of the Lesson Study can provide a safe space where the barriers which may have existed in the past can gradually be removed. As teachers were able to build a trusting attitude towards the process, focusing on the teaching and not on the teacher, the teachers in this study were able to share honestly their information about what worked or did not work in their teaching.

8.2. The Effect of Lesson Study on the students' learning

The findings from this study are consistent with the existing literature on Lesson Study, which asserts that when teachers collaborate and engage in reflective meetings to improve their teaching, the students' learning also improves (Saunders et al., 2009; Saunders & Goldenberg, 2005). Student achievement improved. In the 12 weeks of observed classes, substantial development was seen in their students' achievement. Data from their students' outcomes in each activities indicated significant progress, not only in the targeted aims from the Lesson Study, but also in students' overall confidence and attitude to the learning of English.

At the beginning of the Lesson Study process, classroom observation data reported that the students had little confidence about completing the online activities that had been set. Furthermore, when comparing the progress in achievement in the students' enthusiasm at every stage, we could see in cycle 3 how the students were more enthusiastic and better able to choose their own Internet-based activities. The two other teachers used the online resources and materials outside the ordinary syllabus (*The Cutting Edge*) and collaborated on best practices to support their teaching. We devised data-driven Internet-based lesson plans for teaching, rather than relying solely on the curriculum. The findings related to student learning showed that teachers associate their participation in the Lesson Study process with the requirements in their students' learning. When I asked the two teachers whether they would participate in a Lesson Study teaching programme in the future, they told me that now that they had seen some outcomes and knew that our students are improving, they were looking forward to something that was going to work.

During the teaching programme the positive attitudes and contributions of students, as well as the clear progress made in the development of their English language skills, suggests significant implications regarding the Lesson Study process. The teachers observed the impact that Lesson Study had on their students' learning, motivation and achievement and expressed their desire to continue Lesson Study in the future. The results from this study confirm what other research has indicated when Lesson Study has been implemented with students who are '*academically marginal*' (Wilms, 2003). The classroom culture which was developed during the programme was one of student-teacher collaboration which gradually moved towards greater confidence in the students through the method of independent learning. This was helped by having the focus on different activities and on developing ICT skills along with language ones and the generally supportive attitudes of teachers who were engaged in a more learner-centred pedagogy

The students' command of English language also improved. A formative evaluation of the activities component was embedded in order to keep the development of the cycle in the programme within each stage of the cycle. As teachers we talked about the students' work after each class and after the second research lesson, the teachers consistently commented that their students' English and computer skills had improved. We were finding that the students began creating alternative opportunities to practise their English during class as well as meeting the requirements of the lessons that the teachers had prepared. The teachers even

reported that they felt that the students seemed more motivated to engage in the activities because they knew their teachers would be sharing teaching notes with other teachers in the post-Lesson Study meetings.

This research can report that there is an identified need for sustainable and consistent professional development for teachers during their teaching careers, in order to integrate syllabus and pedagogic changes to their teaching and to contribute to the improvements in the teaching of students (Pappano, 2010; Salmonowicz, 2010). With this Lesson Study programme, teachers commented that this model of professional development had strengthened their individual and collective efficiency and confidence. The teachers liked the professional development meetings that we attended, in which we shared the topics of syllabus design and they found that the Lesson Study process facilitated and maintained the expectations which are embedded in the model in this study. Follow-up, pre- and post-lesson meetings are significantly different in this process, as noted by Ms Rima, who said that it was about time that we had the opportunity to engage in professional development since we were responsible for our teaching. The teachers' comments during the programme were that the Lesson Study programme had brought them together to formulate engaging lessons, increasing both teacher confidence and student motivation.

As a researcher, I also observed the students becoming more engaged during their lesson delivery; teachers also became more enthusiastic in their lesson planning and tried to enhance student learning. I appreciated the willingness of my colleagues to share their classroom practices with me as researcher and to observe and analyse their teaching practice so openly with me. I was also very grateful for their assistance in implementing the proposed integration of ICT into EFL teaching at the university. In this case, the Lesson Study approach served as an effective professional development model which enhanced both teacher development and students' Internet-based learning. On completion of the present study, I now aim to create a consistent professional development model, such as Lesson Study, in which teachers can engage in small groups and focus intently on an aspect of teaching in order to improve student learning and develop their practices. This group of teachers, who came to believe in the Lesson Study approach, could continue to build their knowledge as educators and begin to make observable and sustainable changes to our pedagogy, building educational knowledge and eventually positively affecting the students' learning experience and outcomes.

To conclude, the Lesson Study proved to be a process that was beneficial for the teachers and students. In investigating the use of online activities for teaching English classes at the University of Benghazi, the Lesson Study benefited the teachers' professional development, building curriculum teaching, learning activities and classroom administration. At the end of a discussion with my colleagues, we wondered whether the Lesson Study approach has a significant part to play in the future education system in Libya. The overall response to this was positive. I think we may need to find the most effective methods to make the Lesson Study a regular process in our particular cultural setting.

In terms of the Libyan educational reform, because Lesson Study takes a new approach, it will require deep understanding of what it is, why it has been useful to the Libyan teachers in this study and how it may be further adapted to suit our unique setting. Along with some local and unforeseen challenges when conducting this particular Lesson Study, the key to future success in such a Lesson Study process here should take into account the planning and the common work between teachers and syllabus designers in this university to offer suitable conditions for the Lesson Study process. The following quotation from a Japanese teacher in Lewis' (2000) *The Core of Japanese Professional Development* is apt here:

Research lessons are very meaningful for teachers because when they study and conduct demonstration lessons, they think hard and in a fundamental way about several critical issues, for example, "What is the basic goal of this lesson in this textbook?," "How does this particular lesson relate to my students' learning and progress in this school year?," "How does this lesson relate to other curriculum areas?" Thus, it is very beneficial to teachers. Unless they think about all these things, teachers can't conduct research lessons. That is the purpose or significance of research lessons. Even if teachers do not think hard about the lessons they teach daily from the textbook, for research lessons, they should really rethink the fundamental issues. What's a successful research lesson? It's not so much what happens in the research lesson itself that makes it successful or unsuccessful. It is what you learned working with your colleagues on the way there (p.34).

Lewis then goes on to discuss the issues that come up after a research lesson and how these lessons are a continuing process

The research lesson is not over yet; it's not a one-time lesson, but gives me a chance to continue consulting with other teachers. Other teachers can provide me with concrete suggestions and advice because they have seen at least one lesson I conducted. We teachers can better connect with each other in this way (p.34.)

Research lessons help you see your teaching from various points of view ... A lesson is like a swiftly flowing river; when you're teaching you must make judgments instantly. When you do a research lesson, your colleagues write down your words and the students' words. Your real profile as a teacher is revealed to you for the first time.'

8.3. Implications for an Online Teaching Programme

This research indicates the importance of not only offering e- learning and teaching programmes to improve the EFL learning of Libyan students, but also to help them understand how they can use some ICT skills to adapt the programme for the sake of learning more effectively. The outcomes of this research also indicate that there is a significant relationship between EFL learning motivation and the effectiveness of collaborative teaching, as practised by the teachers teaching EFL. In addition, the interview participants responded that they wished to learn EFL in all subjects by using online programmes. This leads me to conclude that the Lesson Study approach could be an added teaching approach to online programmes that would attract the students and benefit their learning.

In the case of EFL students who participated in my study, those who were from Benghazi University liked to study EFL in an online classroom. Among these students, the most likely to continue with an online program next year are those who have participated in a formal, organized classroom programme this year. This is not surprising: but it is important to note that those EFL students who are already satisfied with their online programme could recommend it to other university students who have been looking for something of the kind, having already witnessed it in action. These students could also promote the online learning programmes to EFL students who may also be likely to enrol on an EFL programme.

A successful implementation of online programmes should also be praised for its effect on motivational factors as shown in this study. The factors here examined begin with the motivation that students had for choosing to learn EFL on line. The study revealed that most

of the students who contributed an opinion were more motivated to practise their English after their experience of the revolution. They hoped that access to the use of ICT would become easier and more convenient for users. As described in Chapter Five, this factor is also closely linked to the usefulness of online communications through media such as Facebook and other social networks, which makes its users more effectively active online learners.

Another specific and significant observation made in the study was when the students engaged in online learning activities. This question suggests that the promotional material on website pages for students' communications should emphasize the convenience for them of taking classes in an online classroom. It should also be emphasized that beyond this room students would have technology options available for communicating with their friends and engaging in extra online activities in their own time in order to increase their IT and learning skills, giving them more confidence as independent learners. The online EFL programmes would be beneficial to the students who wish to learn on their own, without a teacher's instruction, and who can find the type of online programme that is better for students who know how to operate the Internet. An informal online learning relationship could also be developed and maintained through e-mail exchanges or by chatting online and this type of informal relationship could be useful for both the group of students favouring teachers and those favouring EFL training online.

In addition, the design of the online programme could allow for easy-to-use technology, such as a portable lap-top computer with Internet access. Teachers for the online teaching programs in EFL should at least have private conversations with the students in order to judge their proficiency in online communication. In this regard, the facilities and usability of the online materials and IT equipment would help to ensure that the EFL students have access to their online learning materials. Successful EFL programmes should consider the importance of teachers engaging in personal communication with their students, perhaps by incorporating technology with online communication options, such as using Facebook or Twitter, etc.

The current EFL students could be introduced to new EFL students and, along with their teachers, could participate in the online programmes practising their English, as well as interacting in class. For the EFL students who wish to undertake online EFL programmes, an important factor to consider is the development of clearer instructions and references for

the new students attempting to use these programmes. Online programmes should display phone numbers for reaching the instructor or technical support, in case it is a problem for students to follow the posted class online.

8.4. Limitations

While this study provides data to suggest the positive impact of Lesson Study at Benghazi University, several limitations should be considered. The first limitation is the sample size. Given that the study was voluntary and required participants to dedicate hours of their time after class for 12 weeks, two teachers from this university were able to participate in this study. Initially three teachers planned to be involved with me in the programme, but one teacher decided to opt out of the study after the first meeting. I recognize that the findings may not apply to all teachers at other universities. However, in terms of collaboration, the participating teachers had never before worked on collaborating with each other in teaching their classes. This therefore may be some indication that the collaboration and benefits might be similar if this study was conducted at another university.

The study was conducted at Benghazi University, because I am a member of its teaching staff and it was relatively easy for me to conduct the research with a small group of participants. I was able to obtain detailed data and developed a relationship of trust with all participants. The composition of the study participants involved both the students and the teachers, which I feel strengthens its force.

Another limitation was the duration of the study. It was conducted through three cycles, lasting 12 weeks. Ideally, lesson studies should occur throughout the teaching year. If the study had begun at the beginning of the year, it might have produced other detailed responses in terms of teacher capacity and student achievement - which could have included more formal assessments of their learning.

Finally, the major limitations during the fieldwork for this study were imposed by the conditions of the revolution in Libya. During that time I had to stop my fieldwork many times over, sometimes for a few days or few weeks for the safety of the students and teachers as well as my own, since many protests were being held in the city. Moreover, after six months of my fieldwork, when I had managed to finish my first two data collection phases, intense conflict broke out and all the functioning of the education system of Libya, including its

university, was brought to an end (see Appendix 9). Since that time, the militia fighters have destroyed the buildings of the university where the research was conducted; at the time of writing, the conflict continues and the buildings have yet to be reconstructed.

Magda: *Since the revolution of 2011 the old Libyan educational infrastructure has been largely brought down as a result of internal warfare. One day this war will be over and we will have the task of rebuilding what has been destroyed. Then the seeds of a new education system can be planted - and what we have learned as a result of my research can be a part of that new growth. The beginning*

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APPENDICES

Appendix (1): The Access

Dear, Dr. Dean of the Faculty of Arts, and
Dr. Head of English Department-University of Benghazi,

I am the researcher Magda El abbar a PH.D students at University of East Anglia-United Kingdom.

I am conducting a study entitled:

An action research study of internet usage to enhance the development of English Language Teaching in a Libya University


This study attempts to explore how the internet can enhance the development of English language teaching in a Libyan university. A particular focus is to investigate how the Libyan students' current English literacy practices can be enhanced by using the Internet and how the Internet may further assist students' English literacy development. This research also attempts to discover the possibility of the Internet and the implications of incorporating it into programme design by the researcher.

However, I have chosen The English Language Department at University of Benghazi to be the case study of this research. I would be very grateful if you kindly authorize me to conduct this study.

Note: see the attached document from the supervisor of this research Prof. John Elliott, which was sent to the Libyan Embassy in London.

Thank you for your cooperation

*The researcher,
Magda elabbar*

Head of English Department-University of Benghazi. 

Dean of the Faculty of Arts 

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

السيد الدكتور - عميد كلية الآداب
السيد الدكتور رئيس قسم اللغة الإنجليزية - جامعة بنغازي

بعد التحية

انا الباحثة، ماجدة عبدالرحمن موسى العبار المبتعثة من جامعة بنغازي للدراسة في جامعة
إيسر انجلترا - المملكة المتحدة.
أقوم بأجراء دراسة تحت عنوان:

An action research study of internet usage to enhance the development of English Language Teaching in a Libyan University

دراسة بحث عملي عن استخدام الإنترنت لتعزيز تطوير تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في إحدى
الجامعات الليبية

هذه الدراسة محاولة علمية لاستكشاف كيفية يمكن أن تعزز شبكة الإنترنت في تطوير تدريس
وتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية في إحدى الجامعات الليبية. التركيز بصحة خاصة كيفية يمكن للطلاب
الليبيين تحسين مهارات اللغة الإنجليزية الحالية (current English literacy practices) باستخدام
الإنترنت وماهي الآثار المترتبة على إدراج استخدام شبكة الإنترنت في تصميم برنامج تعليمي
معد من قبل الباحثة.

وعلمية لقد اخترت قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة بنغازي ليكون مكان الدراسة (دراسة حالة -
case study) لذا الرجاء التكرم بالسماح بأجراء هذه الدراسة على طلبة السنة الأولى في قسم
اللغة الإنجليزية - جامعة بنغازي.

ملاحظة: مرفقة رسالة البروفيسور جون إليت مشرف الدراسة الموجهة الى السفارة الليبية في
لندن.

لکم جزیل الشکر و التقدير

الباحثة ماجدة عبدالرحمن العبار

.....
عميد كلية الآداب في جامعة بنغازي

.....
رئيس قسم اللغة الإنجليزية

Appendix (2): The Information Sheet

Participant's Information sheet

The title of the study: An action research study of internet usage to enhance the development of English Language Teaching in a Libya University

Dear participant:

You are invited to participant in this study; *please* take time to read the following information to be aware of the reason for doing this research. *Please* do not hesitate to ask any questions about this study.

You have been chosen to take part in this study because you are either a first year student who enrolled in the English language department at Benghazi University or a member of the academic staff within this department.

A brief summary of the study:

This study attempts to explore how the internet can enhance the development of English language teaching in a Libyan university.

A particular focus is to investigate how the Libyan students' current English literacy practices can be enhanced by using the Internet and how the Internet may further assist students' English literacy development. This research also attempts to discover the possibility of the Internet and the implications of incorporating it into programme design.

Brief outline of the study:

This study is to last for one year, including two periods of field work. The first period will be in the beginning of January 2012 and lasts for two to three weeks it will include questionnaire and interviews.

The second period will start on April 2012 last for about two months. An action research teaching program will be created by the researcher which required the use of the internet in various ways, interviews, and post questionnaire.

If you decide to participate in this research, I will be very grateful if you sign the consent form. All given information will be treated confidently and the individual's names will not be identified.

Please note:

- The only other person who will see my 'raw data' is my academic supervisor in England.
- I will destroy any confidential data immediately following the successful completion of my PHD, unless the interviewees have given me permission to use the data for the propose of further research.
- If you have any concerns about the way I am conducting my research, please contact:

Prof. John Elliott, Centre for Applied Research in Education
School of Education and Lifelong Learning
University of East Anglia
Norwich NR4 7TJ - UK
E-mail: john.Elliott @uea.ac.uk
+44 (0)1603 592859

*The researcher,
Magda elabbar*

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix (3): The Consent Form

Consent form

The title of the study: An action research study of internet usage to enhance the development of English Language Teaching in a Libya University

Name of the researcher: Magda Elabbar

Contact information:

Email : M.El-Abbar@uea.ac.uk

School of Education and Lifelong Learning

University of East Anglia

Norwich

NR4 7TJ

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/edu>

Please, put (√) in the box:

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reasons.
3. I understand that the information I give is confidential and my identity is protected. Also all the information I give is used for educational and academic purposes only.
4. I agree to take part in the above study.
5. I am willing to (please tick appropriate):
 - Participate in this research for the first and the second semester for this year.
 - Be interviewed by the researcher.

- Have my interview recorded.
- To be observed in the class.
- To have some photographs or video recordings in the class during the observations of teaching
- Allow some lessons to be recorded videoed

The information I provide:

- Could be used by other researchers as long as my name is removed.
- Could be used by the researcher for another project.
- Can only to be used in this study.

For any complaints, please contact the Head of the School;

Dr. Nalini Boodhoo

Tel +44 1603 592620

E-mail: n.boodhoo@uea.ac.uk

Name of Participant	Date	Signature
.....
Name of Researcher	Date	Signature
.....

Appendix (4): The Questionnaire

The questionnaire for the preliminary phase:

This study attempts to explore how the internet can enhance the development of English language teaching in this university. Also to investigate how the Libyan students' current English literacy practices can be enhanced by using the Internet and how the Internet may further assist students' English literacy development.

Name.....

1. Gender: Male () Female ()
2. Age: 19-21 () over 21 ()
3. Do you use the internet on English language learning? Yes () No ()

4. If NO why you do not use the internet?

.....
.....

5. If YES why do you use the Internet?

.....
.....

6. In what language do you use the internet?

- Arabic ()
- English ()
- Both ()
- Others (please specify)

7. Where do you use the internet?

- In the library of the university ()
- At home ()

- At an internet cafe ()
- Others (please specify)

8. How do you use the internet?

- E-mail ()
- Chat room ()
- Search engines ()
- Others (please specify)

9. How would you describe yourself as an internet user?

- Often ()
- Sometimes ()
- Never ()

10. Do you think the internet could help you learn English?

- Yes ()
- No ()
- If so, how?

.....
.....
.....

The end of questionnaire
Thank you for you cooperation

Appendix (5): Interview Questions

Interview questions for the preliminary phase:

1. Can you tell me when you first used the internet?
When?
Where?
Why?
How long?
How often?.....
In what language
2. Do you use the internet often-tell me about this?
3. What do you use the internet for- can you tell me about this?
4. How important do you think the internet is
 - To you
 - To Libyan people
 - To the people in the other countries
5. Do you think the internet can help you learn English? How
6. Do you think it could be used to help students in their English classes?
How?
7. Would you use the internet more if you have more access?
8. Do you have computer at home?

Appendix (6): The Observation Schedule (A)

(Class A) Teaching ONLY

Subject	Learning Focus	Teacher/ Observer
What this lesson is aiming to teach		
What teaching technique is lesson aiming to develop? We are improving...		
Class A : Success criterion for this focus		
Stage of lesson sequence	How you hope the students will respond	How they are observed to respond
Stage ... (approximate time)		Patterns /issues
Stage ... (approximate time)		
Final stage ... (approximate time)		
What were they able to do? What progress have they made and how do?		

Appendix (7): The Observation Schedule (B)

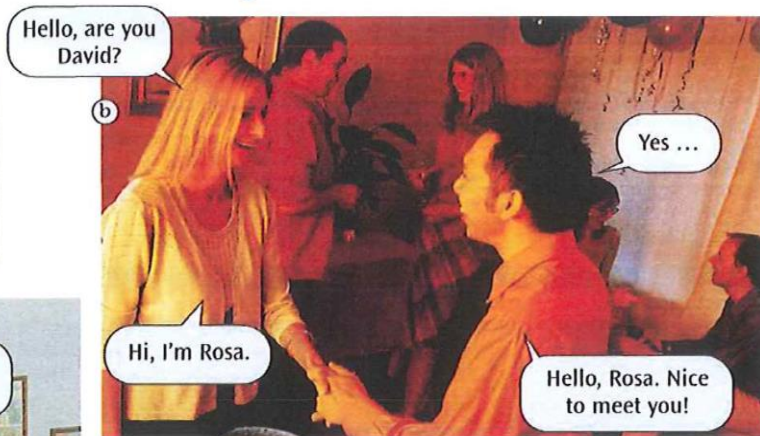
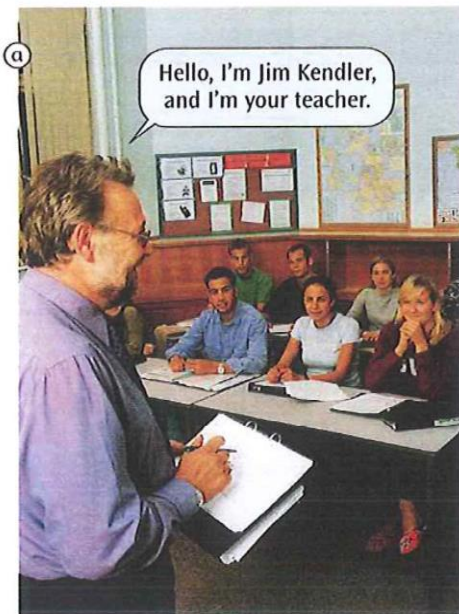
(Class A) Teaching and using IT				
Subject	Learning Focus	Teacher/ Observer		
<p>What this research lesson is aiming to teach</p> <hr/> <p>What teaching technique is the research lesson aiming to develop? <i>We are improving...</i></p>				
<p>Current attainment and success criteria Describe what you are looking for from them by end of lesson in the identified aspect</p>		<p>Class A Success criterion for this focus</p>		
<p>Stage of lesson sequence</p>	<p>How you hope case pupil(s) will respond</p>	<p>How they are observed to respond</p>	<p>Patterns /issues</p>	
<p>Stage -- (approximate time)</p>				
<p>Stage -- (approximate time)</p>				
<p>Final stage -- (approximate time)</p>				
<p>What were they able to do? What progress have they made and how do?</p>				

cycle one **module 1**

Nice to meet you

Activity 1

- ▶ Grammar: *I/my, you/your, he/his, she/her, a/an*
- ▶ Vocabulary: jobs; the alphabet; *How do you spell ... ?*; numbers 0-20
- ▶ Real life: *hello and goodbye*; classroom language



Focus 1

Names and introductions

1 [1.1] Look at the pictures and listen.

Grammar

I, my, you, your

I	I'm Rosa.	My name's Ebru.
you	Are you David?	What's your name?

▶ *Language summary 1A, page 113.*

Activity 2

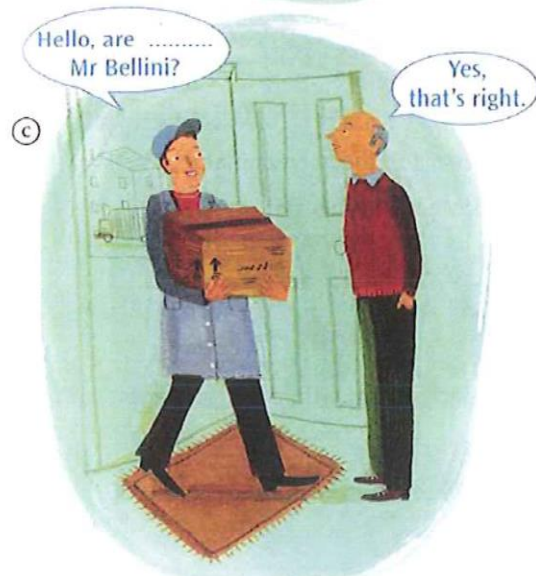
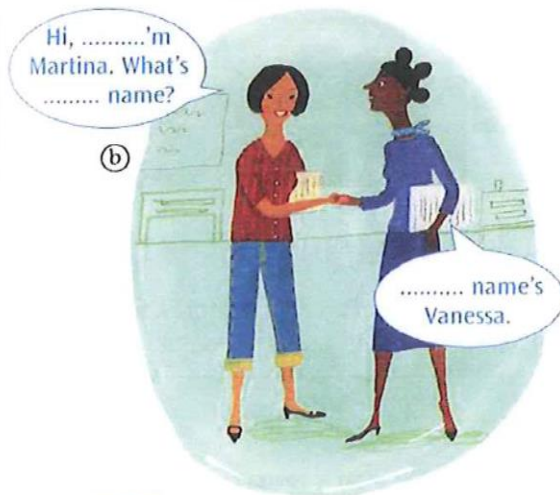
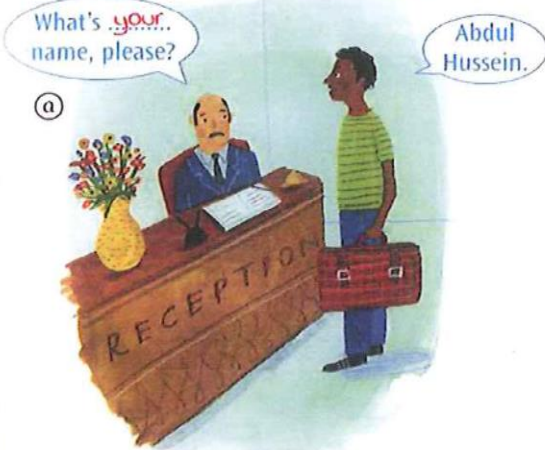
Pronunciation

1 [1.2] Listen and practise.

I'm a student.
 What's your name?
 My name's Ebru.
 Nice to meet you.

Activity 1

2 Complete the conversations with *I, my, you, or your*.



3 a) [1.3] Listen and check.

b) Repeat the conversations. Practise with a partner.

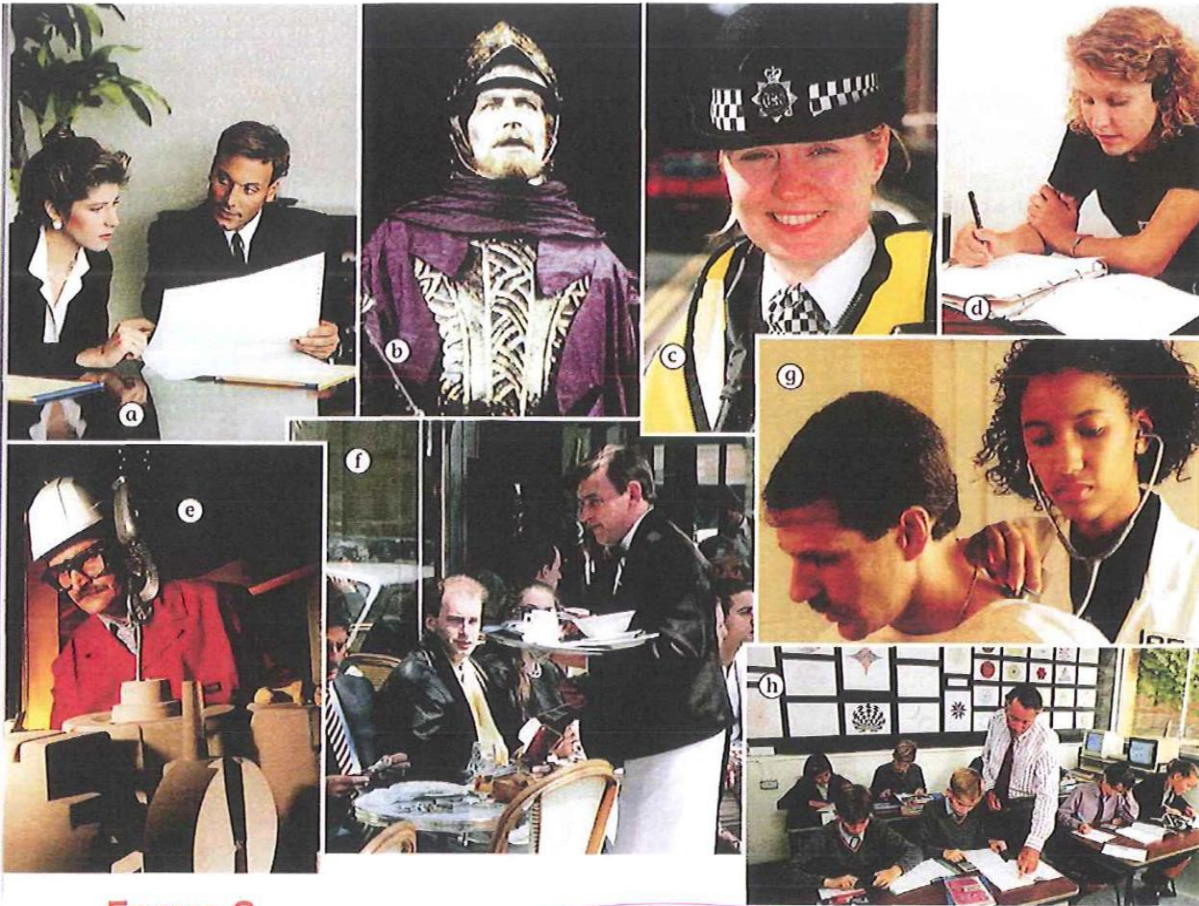
Speaking task

1 Practise saying your name in English.

2 Introduce yourself to other students in the class.

Hi, my name's Petra.

Hello, I'm Sunan.



Focus 2

Vocabulary: jobs; a/an

1 Match the jobs with the pictures a-h.

teacher student
waiter doctor actor
police officer engineer
businessman/businesswoman

▶ Vocabulary book page 3.

Example: picture b - actor

Pronunciation

1 [1.4] Listen to the jobs.
Notice the stress.

teacher student

2 Listen again and repeat.

2 [1.5] Listen. Who is speaking?

Example: I - doctor

8

3 [1.6] Listen and complete: **Activity 1**

- a) I'm a waiter c) I'm
b) I'm d) I'm

Grammar

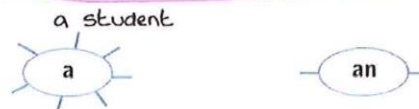
Jobs + a/an

a + consonant (b, c, d, ...)
I'm a doctor.

an + vowel (a, e, i, o, u)
I'm an actor.

▶ Language summary 1B, page 113.

4 Write the jobs in Exercise 1 in the correct place.



Activity 7

5 What's your job? Ask and answer with other students.



module 1

cycle one -- Activity 3

Names and introductions

1 a) Complete the sentences with *I, my, you* or *your*.



1 Hello, ...! 'm Roy Magee.



2 A: Are Teresa Daley?



3 Hello. What's name?



4 A: Hello, name's Frank.

B: Hi, 'm Paola. Nice to meet

b) Listen and check.

Vocabulary: jobs; a/an

2 Write the letters and a or an.

a) a waiter

b) _ d_c_t_r

c) _ s_t_d_nt

d) _ a_t_r

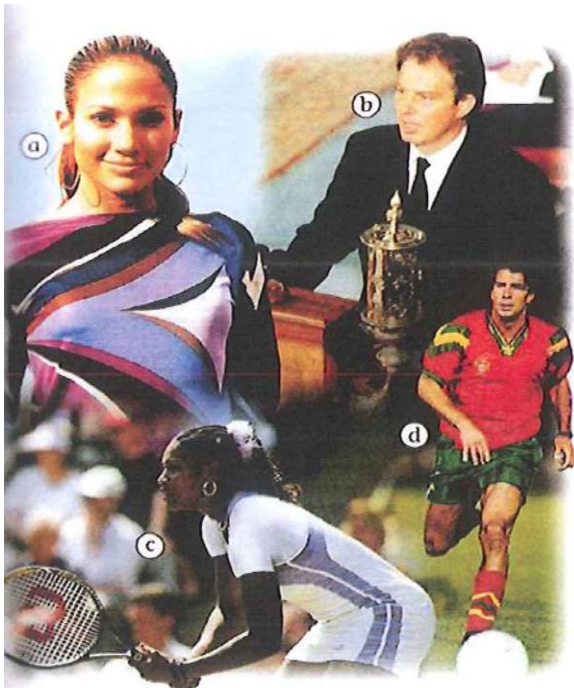
e) _ b_s_n_ssm_n

f) _ _n_g_n_r

g) _ p_l_c_ _ff_c_r

h) _ t_ch_r

4



he/she/his/her

6 [1.7] Match the sentences with the pictures. Listen and check.
 ► Vocabulary book page 3.

- 1 His name's Tony Blair. He's a politician. picture b
- 2 Her name's Serena Williams. She's a tennis player.
- 3 His name's Luis Figo. He's a footballer.
- 4 Her name's Jennifer Lopez. She's a singer and an actress.

Grammar

He/she/his/her

She's a singer. Her name's Jennifer Lopez.
 He's a footballer. His name's Luis Figo.

► Language summary 1A, page 113.

7 a) [1.8] Listen to the questions and answers. Listen again and repeat.

What's his name? What's his job?
 What's her name? What's her job?

b) Point to the pictures. Ask and answer in pairs.

Reading

8 Match A and B.

A	B
full name	Tony
first name	Blair
surname	Anthony Charles Lynton Blair

9 Complete the questions with his or her.

Activity 3

a What's his full name?



Tom Cruise

b What's first name?



President Putin

c What's surname?



Madonna

d What's full name?



Tiger Woods

10 Match questions a-d with answers 1-4.

- 1 His first name is Vladimir. His full name is Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin.
- 2 Her surname is Ciccone. Her full name is Madonna Louise Veronica Ciccone.
- 3 His full name is Thomas Cruise Mapother IV.
- 4 His first name is not really Tiger. His full name is Eldrick Woods.

Focus 3

Activity 5

The alphabet; *How do you spell ...?*

1 [1.9] Listen and say the alphabet.



2 [1.10] Listen and say the missing letters.

3 Say these:



4 a) [1.11] Listen and answer the questions you hear.

b) Choose five more English words. Ask your partner the spelling.

How do you spell 'hello'?

h-e-l-l-o

Speaking task

1 [1.12] Listen and complete the questions.



- a) What's your ?
- b) And your first name?
- c) What's your , please?
- d) And do you that, please?

2 Ask the full names of four students in your class. Complete the gaps below.

Full name:

Full name:

First name:

Surname:

First name:

Surname:

Pronunciation

5 Listen and say these words and phrases.

- a) I
- b) I'm
- c) hi!
- d) fine
- e) nice
- f) my

The alphabet; How do you spell...?

cycle one..
Activity 5

6 Write the names of the famous people. Listen and check.

a)



NEIL ARMSTRONG

b)



_AT__R__NE__ET__-__ON__

c)



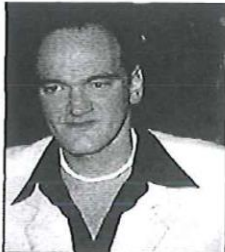
_U__I__T__I__O__E

d)



_OD__ _OST__

e)



_UE__T__N__T__R__N__I__N__

f)

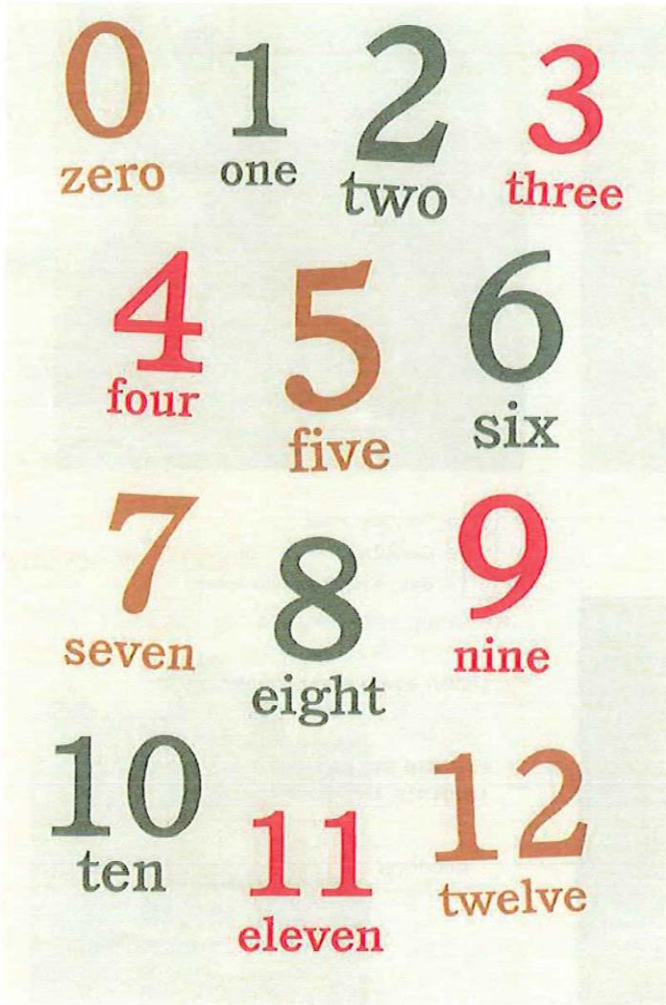


_E__N__S__C__Y

Focus 4 Activity 5

Numbers 0–20

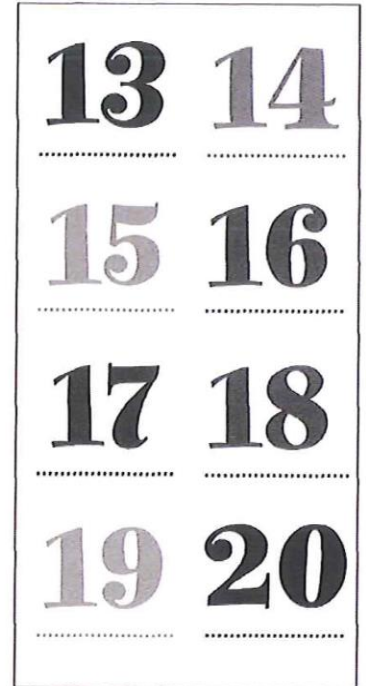
- 1 [1.14] Listen and say the numbers.
▶ Vocabulary book page 4.



- 2 Write a number. Your partner says it.

- 3 a) Match the words with the numbers.

eighteen fifteen fourteen
nineteen seventeen
sixteen thirteen twenty



- b) [1.15] Listen and check. Say the words.

- 4 Turn to pages 108, 110 and 112, and play bingo!



Do you remember?

Real life

Activity 6

Classroom language

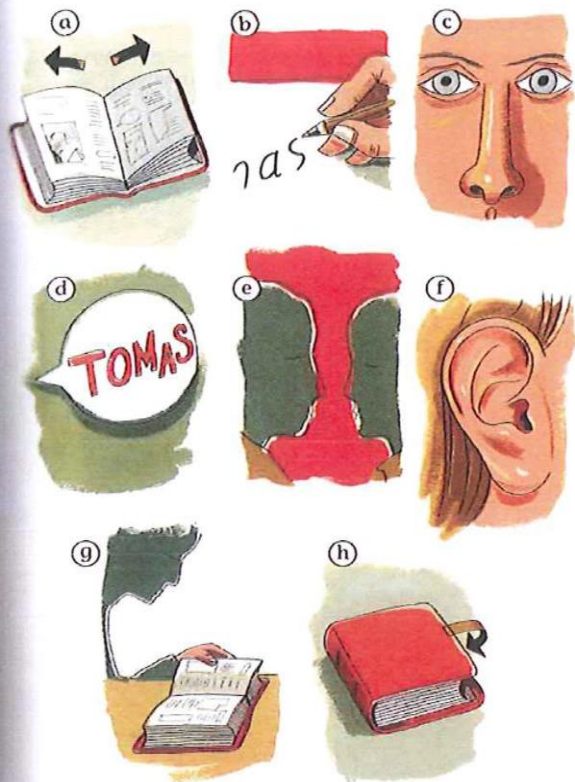
5 Point to these things in your classroom.

a student a pen your teacher your book
a picture in your book page 6 in your book

6 Match the phrases to the pictures.

listen say your name write your name
open your book a close your book
look read your book work in pairs

▶ Vocabulary book page 5.



7 [1.16] Listen and follow the instructions.

8 Work in pairs. Give five instructions to your partner. Your partner does what you say.

▶ Language summary, page 113

▶ Vocabulary book, pages 2–6

1 Put the words in the correct order.

- a) full/your/name/What's ?
What's your full name?
- b) you/are/How ?
- c) job/his/What's ?
- d) How/spell/do/'Antonia'/you ?
- e) surname/her/What's ?

2 Complete the job words 1–10 and find the extra job!



3 Write the answers. You have two minutes!

- a) one + seven - three = five
- b) three + four + six =
- c) twenty - seventeen + nine =
- d) four + eight - five =
- e) fifteen - nine - two =
- f) nineteen - eleven + four =

4 Put these words in the gaps. Then practise the conversation.

Nice ~~Hello~~ Hi thanks How
meet well fine this

STEFAN: a) Hello, Marta.

MARTA: b), Stefan! c) are you?

STEFAN: I'm d), e) And you?

MARTA: I'm very f), thanks.

STEFAN: Marta, g) is Annette.

ANNETTE: Hello, Marta. h) to meet you.

MARTA: Nice to i) you.

cycle two.. **module 2**

Around the world

- ▶ Grammar: *be* with *I, you, he, she* and *it*
- ▶ Vocabulary: countries and nationalities; numbers 21–100; *How old ...?*
- ▶ Real life: phone numbers; filling in a form

be with *I* and *you*

3 Where are you from? Say your country in English. Ask other students.

Where are you from?

I'm from France.

Activity 1 Focus 1

Vocabulary: countries

1 a) Match the country with the number.

Great Britain Brazil Poland
France Italy Russia
Spain Japan Turkey
the USA

▶ Vocabulary Book page 7.

Example: 1 – the USA

b) [2.1] Listen and check.

Pronunciation

[2.2] Listen and repeat.

Brazil Turkey Italy

2 Say a number. Your partner says the country.

What's number 1?

The USA.

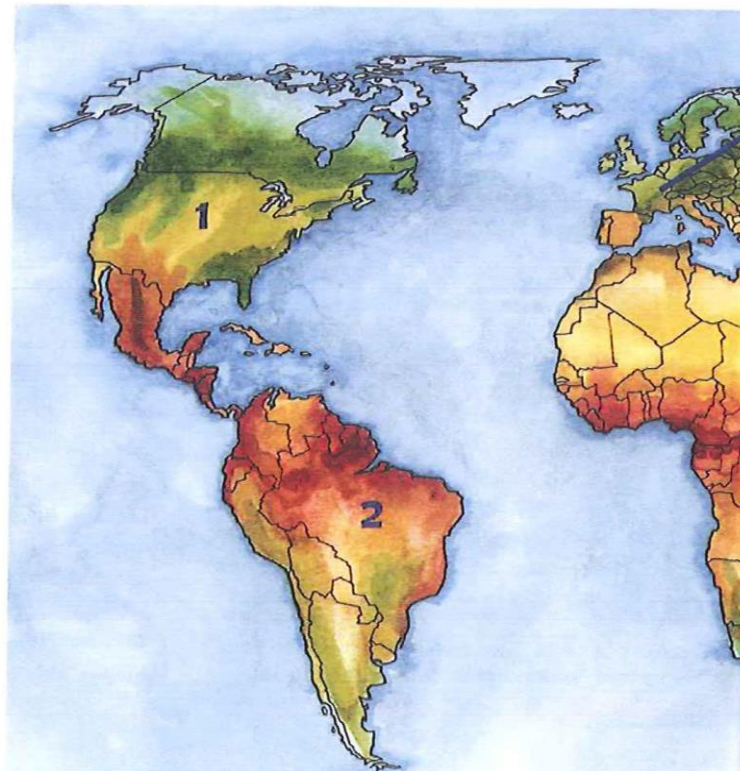
Grammar

be with *I* and *you*

question: Where are you from? Are you from Italy?

answer: I'm from France.
(= I am)

▶ Language summary 2, page 113.



Listening

Activity 2

4 [2.3] Listen to the conversation.
Where are the people from?

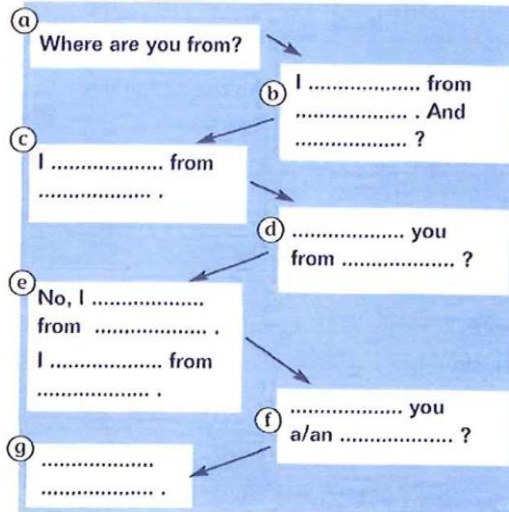
5 a) Put the conversation in order.

- a) 1 Where are you from?
- b) 4 Are you a student?
- c) 5 I'm from Russia.
- d) 2 I'm from São Paulo, in Brazil. And you?
- e) 3 No, I'm not from Moscow, I'm from St Petersburg.
- f) 6 Are you from Moscow?
- g) 7 Yes, I'm at St Petersburg University.

b) Listen and check. Practise the conversation.



6 Write a conversation. Practise with a partner.



Grammar

be: negative

I I'm not from Moscow.
(= am not)

you You aren't from Great Britain.
(= are not)

► Language summary 2, page 113.

7 a) Are these sentences true (T) or false (F) for you?

- a) I'm from Great Britain.
- b) I'm from a small country.
- c) I'm a doctor.
- d) I'm from a big city.
- e) I'm a student.
- f) I'm from the capital city of my country.
- g) I'm from New York.
- h) I'm an English teacher.

b) Correct the wrong sentences.

Example: I'm not from Great Britain, I'm from Poland.


Focus 2

Nationalities; *be* with *he, she* and *it*

- 1 Match the country with the nationality.
▶ Vocabulary book page 8.

Country	Nationality
Great Britain	French
France	American
the USA	Japanese
Japan	British
Italy	Russian
Russia	Italian

- 2 Do the quiz.

- 3  [2.4] Listen and check your answers.

Activity 4

Grammar

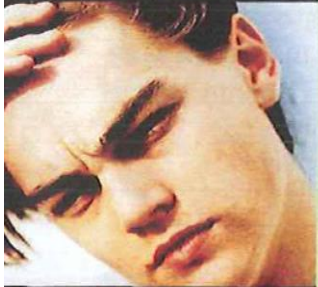
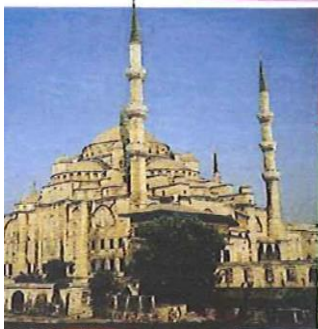
be: *he/she/it*

+	-
He's American. (= is)	He isn't Italian. (= is not)
She's a tennis player.	She isn't a singer.
It's in Istanbul.	It isn't in Cairo.

▶ Language summary 2, page 113.

- 4 Write *is*'s or *isn't* in the spaces.

- a) Leonardo DiCaprio Italian, he American.
 b) The Blue Mosque in Istanbul. It in Cairo.
 c) Anna Kournikova a singer, she a tennis player.



Quiz

1) The Blue Mosque's in:

- a) Cairo.
 b) Istanbul.
 c) Baghdad.

2) Leonardo DiCaprio is:

- a) British.
 b) Italian.
 c) American.

3) Anna Kournikova is:

- a) a singer.
 b) an actress.
 c) a tennis player.

4) Rivaldo is from:

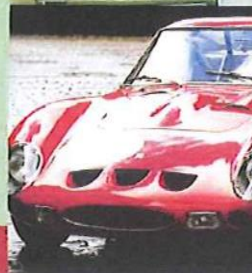
- a) Brazil.
 b) Italy.
 c) Spain.

5) Sony is:

- a) a Japanese company.
 b) a British company.
 c) an American company.

6) A Ferrari is:

- a) an American car.
 b) a Spanish car.
 c) an Italian car.



be with I and you

cycle two
Activity 5

2 a) Put the words in order.



- Adam: name's / Hello. / Adam / My / .
1 *Hello. My name's Adam.*
- Francesca: Francesca. / I'm / you / Nice / to meet
2 *I'm*
- Adam: are / from / ? / you / Where
3
- Francesca: Italy / from / I'm / .
4
- Adam: Rome / you / Are / from / ?
5
- Francesca: I'm / Milan / No, / from / .
6
- Francesca: you / student / a / Are / ?
7
- Adam: I'm / teacher / No, / your / .
8

b) Listen and check.

Negatives

3 Make the sentences negative.

- a) I'm from the United States.
I'm not from the United States.
- b) You're from London.
.....
- c) You're a teacher.
.....
- d) I'm a teacher.
.....
- e) I'm from a big country.
.....
- f) You're from Russia.
.....

Nationalities

cycle two
Activity 6

4 a) Complete the sentences.

- 1 He's from Britain. He's *British* .
- 2 She's from the United States. She's
- 3 He's from Japan. He's
- 4 She's from France. She's
- 5 He's from Italy. He's
- 6 She's from Turkey. She's
- 7 She's from Russia. She's
- 8 He's from Spain. He's

b) Listen and check.

is/are/am

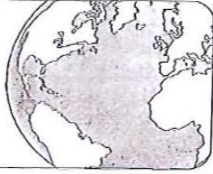



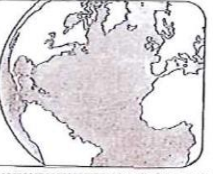




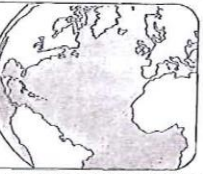




5 Write *am*, *are* or *is*.

- a) How old *is* Ben?
- b) I late?
- c) your name Angela Zeller?
- d) you from Japan?
- e) Where I?
- f) you married?
- g) Where she from?
- h) Carmen from Spain?

2A **Where are you from?**

*cycle two
Activity 5*

Countries; to be with I and you

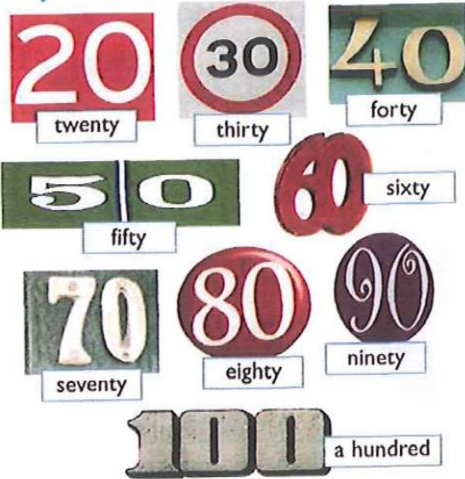
<p>Gerard France waiter</p> 	<p>Wendy Great Britain police officer</p> 
<p>Luis Italy businessman</p> 	<p>Satoko Japan waitress</p> 
<p>Marek Poland actor</p> 	<p>Olga Russia doctor</p> 
<p>Francisco Spain politician</p> 	<p>Silvina Brazil actress</p> 
<p>Ali Turkey student</p> 	<p>Carmela the USA businesswoman</p> 
<p>Peter Australia engineer</p> 	<p>Sukora Thailand singer</p> 
<p>Karl Germany footballer</p> 	<p>Mufana Egypt teacher</p> 

Focus 3

Activity 8

Numbers 21-100

1 [2.7] Say the numbers.



2 a) Write the missing numbers.

Vocabulary book page 9.

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| 20 twenty | 25 |
| 21 twenty-one | 26 |
| 22 twenty-two | 27 |
| 23 <u>twenty-three</u> | 28 |
| 24 | 29 twenty-nine |

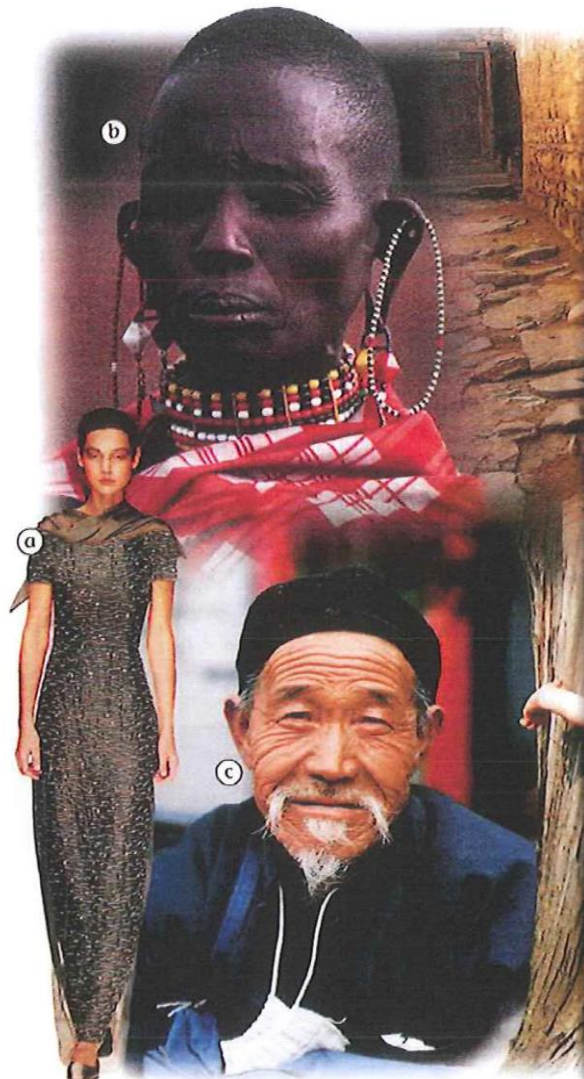
b) [2.8] Listen and check. Practise saying the numbers.

c) Say these numbers.



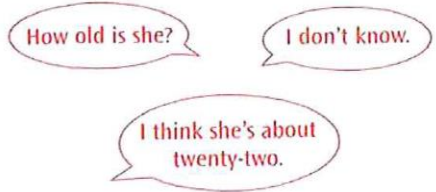
3 [2.9] Listen and write the numbers you hear.

4 Say a number. Your partner says the next three numbers.



Ages

5 How old are the people in the photos?



- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| she's fifty-nine | he's forty-eight | she's fifteen |
| he's twenty-two | she's thirty-eight | he's two |
| he's forty-seven | she's fifty-five | he's six |
| he's ninety-two | she's twenty | she's thirty-three |

Questions

6 Make these sentences questions.

- a) James is married.
Is James married?.....
- b) You're from Australia.
.....
- c) Budapest is in Hungary.
.....
- d) You are 18.
.....
- e) Your name is Claudia.
.....
- f) He's French.
.....
- g) It's a Japanese car.
.....
- h) Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland.
.....

Numbers 21-100

7 Underline the correct answer.

- a) $11 + 11 =$ twelve twenty-two thirty-two
- b) $86 - 63 =$ twenty-three thirty-three forty-three
- c) $8 \times 8 =$ forty-eight fifty-six sixty-four
- d) $100 - 11 =$ seventy-nine eighty-nine ninety-nine
- e) $9 \times 3 =$ seventeen twenty-seven thirty-seven
- f) $36 + 22 =$ fifty-two fifty-six fifty-eight
- g) $13 \times 6 =$ seventy-two seventy-eight eighty-four
- h) $30 \times 3 =$ sixty eighty ninety

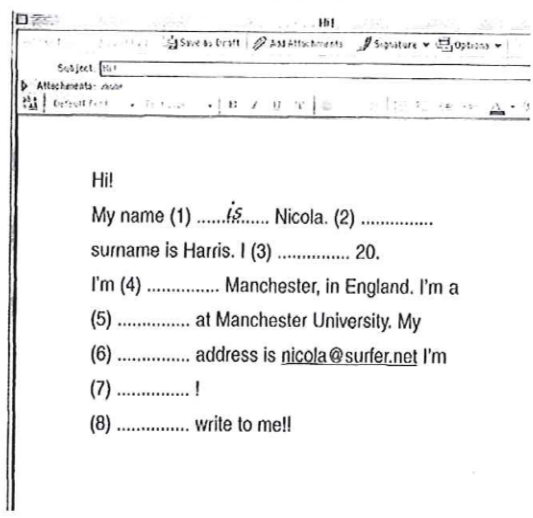
cycle two Activity 8

Improve your writing

Writing about yourself

8 a) Read about Nicola. Fill the gaps with one word from the box.

is single My from Please
'm email student



b) Write an email about yourself.

Pronunciation

9 Listen and say these words and phrases.

- a) he
- b) he's
- c) she
- d) she's
- e) meet
- f) nice to meet you
- g) please
- h) three
- i) see
- j) see you later

2B

Bingo!

*cycle two
Activity 8*

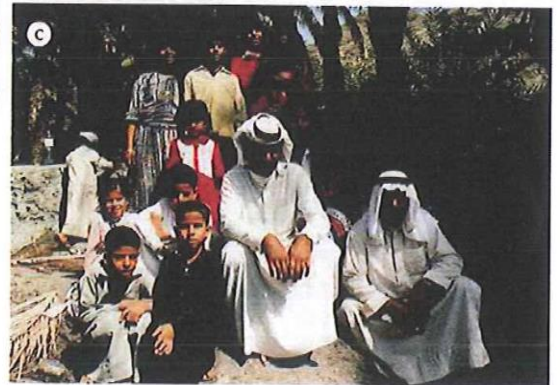
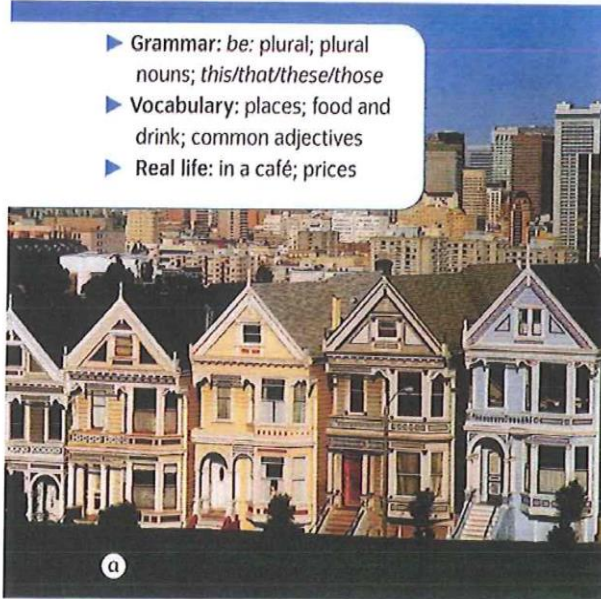
Numbers 1-100

<p>Bingo Card A</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>1</td><td>6</td><td>9</td><td>14</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>37</td></tr> <tr><td>43</td><td>47</td><td>51</td><td>54</td><td>58</td></tr> <tr><td>68</td><td>69</td><td>70</td><td>74</td><td>80</td></tr> <tr><td>81</td><td>85</td><td>88</td><td>91</td><td>98</td></tr> </table>	1	6	9	14	16	24	25	29	30	37	43	47	51	54	58	68	69	70	74	80	81	85	88	91	98	<p>Bingo Card B</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>9</td><td>12</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>23</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>33</td><td>40</td></tr> <tr><td>41</td><td>45</td><td>52</td><td>57</td><td>59</td></tr> <tr><td>61</td><td>64</td><td>67</td><td>70</td><td>75</td></tr> <tr><td>83</td><td>87</td><td>91</td><td>99</td><td>100</td></tr> </table>	3	4	9	12	19	23	28	29	33	40	41	45	52	57	59	61	64	67	70	75	83	87	91	99	100																																																										
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cycle three module 3

In a different country

- ▶ Grammar: be: plural; plural nouns; *this/that/these/those*
- ▶ Vocabulary: places; food and drink; common adjectives
- ▶ Real life: in a café; prices



Focus 1

Vocabulary: places; plural nouns

1 Look at the pictures. Which countries are they?

Example: a - the USA, I think.

2 Find these things in the pictures.

a man a bus a house a woman
a taxi a child a shop a car

▶ Vocabulary book page 12.

3 Answer the questions. You have two minutes!

- 1 How many taxis are there in picture b? *two*
- 2 How many shops are there in picture e?
- 3 How many buses are there in picture d?
- 4 How many houses are there in picture a?
- 5 How many people are there in picture c?

Grammar

Singular nouns

a taxi + s

a car + s

Look!

a bus + es

a city → ies

Irregular nouns

a man

a woman

a child

a person

Plural nouns

two taxis

twenty cars

four buses

two cities

two men

three women

five children

fifty people

▶ Language summary 3B, page 114.

module 3

Vocabulary: nouns

Cycle three
Activity 2

1 Write the words.



a) a ~~man~~



b) a



c) a



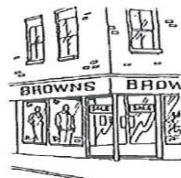
d) a



e) a



f) a



g) a

Plural nouns

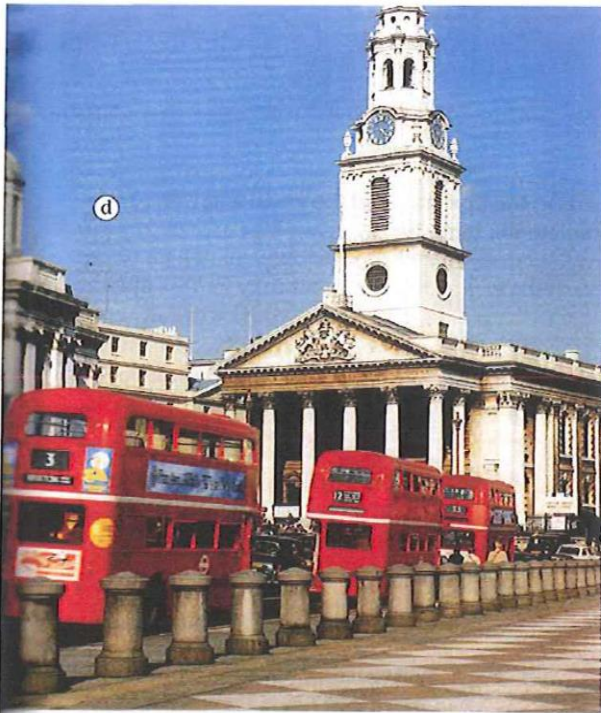
2 Write the plurals.

- | | | | |
|-----------|---------------|------------|-------|
| a) taxi | <i>taxis.</i> | e) city | |
| b) bus | | f) man | |
| c) child | | g) woman | |
| d) person | | h) country | |

be: plural

3 Complete the sentences with *is* or *are*.

- Glasgow and Edinburgh *are* cities in Scotland.
- your name Thomas?
- Her children ten and six years old.
- New Delhi the capital of India.
- Taxis expensive in my city.
- Where your car?



Activity 3

Pronunciation

1 [3.1] Listen and practise the singular and plural nouns.

4 Write the plurals.

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| a) shop - shops | f) businessman |
| b) country | g) house |
| c) actress | h) company |
| d) businesswoman | i) address |
| e) teacher | |

be: plural

5 Find three false sentences.

- a) The Pyramids are in Turkey. *false*
- b) New York taxis are yellow.
- c) The Eiffel Tower is in Rome.
- d) London buses are red.
- e) The Hilton is an expensive hotel.
- f) New York and London are capital cities.

Grammar

be: plural form

The Pyramids are in Egypt.

London buses are red.

Washington and London are capital cities.

► Language summary 3A, page 114.

6 a) Make true sentences from boxes a, b and c.

Paris and Madrid are capital cities.

<p>a) Paris and Madrid Warsaw Egypt and Oman São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro Ferraris Scotland Sydney and Melbourne</p>	<p>b) is are</p>	<p>c) in Australia expensive cars capital cities Brazilian cities a cold country hot countries in Poland</p>
--	----------------------	--

b) [3.2] Listen and check.

7 Write two true sentences and two false sentences. Say them to your partner.

Tokyo and Beijing are capital cities.

True.

England's a hot country.

False!

Activity 5

Focus 2

Reading and vocabulary

1 Look at the pictures and read about the people.

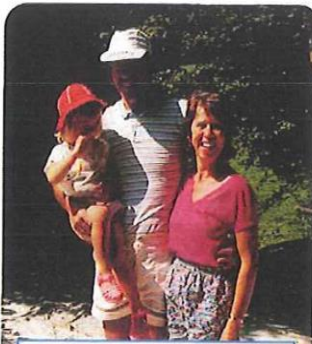
- a) Where are they from?
- b) Where are they now?
- c) Who is - on holiday?
 - at a language school?

2 Check the words in the box and read the email and the postcard. Complete the table. ▶ Vocabulary book page 13.

= fantastic, very good = not very good
 = good/nice = awful!

	Helen, Stewart and Amy	Renata and Claudia
rooms		
food		
weather		
other people		

3 Are Helen, Stewart and Amy happy in Alicante? Are Renata and Claudia happy in Oxford?



Helen, Stewart and Amy are from Scotland. They are on holiday in Spain.

Hi!
 We're here in Spain, in Alicante! The weather is fantastic and we're really happy with our hotel. Our rooms are nice, and the food is very good. Only one problem - the other Scottish people in the hotel are awful!

David and Kathleen Spencer,
 14, Burlington Avenue,
 Edinburgh,
 Scotland
 UK

See you soon,
 Love Helen, Stewart and Amy
 XXXXX



Renata and Claudia are from Brazil. They are language students at the Europa School in Oxford.

Message

From: Renata
 To: Rachel and Max
 Sent: Renata and Claudia
 Subject: Hello

Hi Rachel and Max,
 How are you? We're here - IN ENGLAND!!! We're at the Europa School in Oxford. The school's fantastic - the teachers are very good and the other students are nice. They're from all over the world - Japan, Poland, Russia, Italy ... everywhere! We're really happy here, but we aren't very happy with our rooms - they're expensive and they aren't very big. The weather's good, but the food is AWFUL!!!
 See you soon!

Love Renata and Claudia XXXXXXXXX

3A What are their names?

be with plural forms

cycle three
Activity 6

Worksheet A

1 Read about the four people.

A

Hello. Our names are Miguel and Carola, and we're from Granada, in Spain. It's a beautiful city, and it's very hot. I'm a businessman, and Carola's an English teacher. We're 25 years old, and we're married. Our address is 34, Camino de Ronda and our phone number is 958 65 43 27. See you!



B

Hi! Our names are a) and We're from b) , in It's a big city, and it's very expensive. I'm c) , and George is He's d) years old and I'm , and e) we're /we aren't married. Our address is f) , and our phone number is g) Have a nice day!



2 Complete the questions using 's, are, they and their.

- a What names?
- b Where from?
- c What jobs?
- d How old ?
- e married?
- f What address?
- g What phone number?

3 Ask your partner the questions and complete text B.

Worksheet B

*Cycle three
Activity 6*

1 Read about the four people.

A

Hi! Our names are Hilary and George. We're from San Francisco, in the USA. It's a big city, and it's very expensive. I'm a doctor, and George is an engineer. He's 54 years old and I'm 50, and we're married. Our address is 1627, Sea Drive, San Francisco, and our phone number is 0044 456 7612. Have a nice day!



B

Hello. Our names are a) and , and we're from b) , in It's a beautiful city, and it's very hot. I'm c) , and Carola's We're d) years old, and e) *we're / we aren't* married. Our address is f) and our phone number is g) See you!



2 Complete the questions using 's, are, they and their.

- a What names?
- b Where from?
- c What jobs?
- d How old ?
- e married?
- f What address?
- g What phone number?

3 Ask your partner the questions and complete text B.

Appendix (9): University of Benghazi in Fire

