

## Libyan University Students' Attitude Towards Literature in EFL Classroom: A Comparison Between Private and Public Universities

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اتجاهات طلبة الجامعات الليبية نحو الأدب في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية: مقارنة بين الجامعات الخاصة والحكومية

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### Abstract:

The research investigates Libyan university students' perspectives about teaching literature in English as a foreign language class between students enrolled in public institutions and private universities. Data collection for the study employed an online survey distributed to 80 students equally divided between public and private institutes. Students displayed a positive attitude towards literature based on the study findings ( $M = 3.59$ ,  $SD = 0.823$ ). Despite minimal differences in scores ( $M = 3.72$  for public vs  $M = 3.46$  for private students), no statistical significance was detected ( $t = 1.409$ ,  $p = 0.163$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). The analysis of relationships showed no meaningful connection ( $r = -0.010$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) that existed between what kind of university students attended and their attitudes toward literature so institutional variations did not cause significant differences in student perceptions. Results show that educational methods and educational content planning together with student engagement sustains learning of EFL literature and provide guidance to enhance education practices across Libyan universities.

**Keywords:** Attitude, English literature, EFL, Libyan students.

### المخلص

يستقصي هذا البحث وجهات نظر طلاب الجامعات الليبية بشأن تدريس الأدب في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، مع مقارنة بين الطلاب المسجلين في المؤسسات العامة والجامعات الخاصة. تم جمع البيانات من خلال استبيان إلكتروني وُزِع على 80 طالبًا مقسمين بالتساوي بين المؤسسات العامة والخاصة. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة اتجاهًا إيجابيًا نحو الأدب لدى الطلاب، حيث بلغ المتوسط الحسابي ( $M = 3.59$ ) والانحراف المعياري ( $SD = 0.823$ ). رغم وجود فروق طفيفة في النتائج بين طلاب الجامعات العامة ( $M = 3.72$ ) وطلاب الجامعات الخاصة ( $M = 3.46$ )، إلا أن هذا الفرق لم يكن ذو دلالة إحصائية ( $t = 1.409$ ,  $p = 0.163$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). كما لم تكشف تحليلات العلاقات عن أي ارتباط معنوي ( $r = -0.010$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) بين نوع الجامعة التي التحق بها الطلاب واتجاهاتهم نحو الأدب، مما يشير إلى أن الاختلافات المؤسسية لم تؤثر بشكل كبير على تصورات الطلاب. تؤكد النتائج أن أساليب التدريس والتخطيط لمحتوى المناهج التعليمية، إلى جانب تفاعل الطلاب، تلعب دورًا محوريًا في تعزيز تعلم الأدب في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، كما تقدم الدراسة توجيهات لتحسين الممارسات التعليمية في الجامعات الليبية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الاتجاهات، الأدب الإنجليزي، اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL)، الطلاب الليبيون.

## **Introduction**

English Foreign Language (EFL) education uses literature in its core scope to support student development of language mastery combined with analytical and cultural literacy. Libyan educational institutions with both public and private status teach English literature to their students but their responses and interest in class materials vary due to existing institutional structures and teaching methods and learning space conditions [19]; [14]. The learning experience of Libyan EFL students encounters obstacles due to their anxiety about language use together with insufficient English learning opportunities beyond class and problems with academic writing according to research by Aldarasi (2020), Al-Mokhtar (2022) and Hadia (2020).

Academic research has extensively investigated how effective EFL instruction is when based on literature. Research splits about the benefits of literature since some scientists show it helps students improve critical thinking but others show students face issues with reading comprehension and cultural understanding (Boufarrag, 2021; Karash, 2020). The use of Arabic during EFL classrooms continues to present challenges to teaching fluency because some instructors believe it benefits comprehension yet other teachers believe the practice obstructs fluent learning (Yahmed 2021, Algatroni 2021) and L1 interference remains prominent in EFL instruction.

Research which examines student feelings about literature for EFL education in Libyan public and private universities remains minimally available. Student perception analysis depends on institutional factors which require investigation to advance educational pedagogy and student learning dynamics (Mohamed, 2023; Aboualya, 2020). This study examines Libyan university students' perception of literature as a learning tool in the EFL classroom while evaluating if students from public and private sectors differ in their attitudes.

Research outcomes will enhance the comprehension of literary components in Libyan EFL education while providing teachers with improved teaching methods and selection of compelling instructional materials according to Allafi (2023) and Burka (2020). The research investigates the multiple barriers that Libyan students encounter when learning English within their Arabic language environment according to Aljoundi (2022) and Ezzreg (2023).

## **Literature Review**

### **The Role of Literature in EFL Learning**

As an integral part of foreign language education literature gives students multiple avenues to grow their reading skills together with writing and speaking capabilities and critical thinking competence (Mohamed 2023). Literary text exposure enables students to experience native language practice and facilitates better cultural education and analytical capabilities according to Boufarrag (2021). The level of student involvement with literature depends notably on instructional methods as well as educational structure and systemic backing according to Karash (2020). Student motivation together with linguistic proficiency improves when teachers apply interactive and student-driven teaching strategies according to Allafi (2023).

### **Challenges in Teaching Literature in Libyan EFL Classrooms**

The adoption of literature-based learning faces numerous barriers which prevent its successful inclusion in Libyan EFL education programs. Language anxiety experienced by students acts as a barrier that stops them from properly analyzing and interpreting literary texts (Aldarasi, 2020). The pedagogical methods based on rote learning prevent students from engaging in critical exchanges about literature so the subject becomes less interesting (El Mezughi, 2021). The integration of English as a foreign language faces various obstacles because students receive minimal English education outside classes and lack proper teaching resources and use few communicative language approaches in their instruction (Burka, 2020).

First language (L1) maintains significant influence as a major factor in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom. Research literature has created a dilemma about the utility of Arabic help language support for students since experts differ about its positive impact on English reading abilities (Yahmed, 2021). According to Algatroni (2021) Libyan students display specific attitudes toward Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Libyan dialects that affect their English learning and their literary involvement.

### **Institutional Differences: Public vs. Private Universities**

The learning experiences of students at educational institutions together with their attitudes toward literature develop under institutional influence. Libyan public universities maintain big classes together with limited funding along with traditional educational approaches yet private universities deliver smaller teaching groups and adjustable academic plans (Mohamed 2023). Research findings indicate that students' literary perception remains mostly unaffected by institution type since their motivational factors stem from teaching approaches and individual interest (Ezzreg, 2023).

Alternative assessments along with communicative teaching strategies represent research-based approaches for boosting literature engagement levels in Libyan higher education establishments (Alghazzali, 2024). A number of researchers suggest that educational methodologies which focus on student interaction through group discussions and project assignments enhance student appreciation for literature (Aboualya, 2020). Educational beliefs of teachers and their instructional practices strongly determine how students participate with literary texts while learning literature (Allafi, 2023).

### **Improving Literature Instruction in Libyan EFL Classrooms**

Multiple strategies exist that aim to solve the problems which arise when delivering literature-based EFL instruction. The combination of student-directed teaching structures with multimedia content and texts selected from local cultures is suggested for developing an accessible and interesting literary learning experience (Boufarrag, 2021). Teacher training in critical pedagogy paired with communicative teaching methods can improve the results of literature instruction according to Idris & Al Shilabi (2021). Research indicates that implementing alternative assessments can bridge the gap between traditional exams because they fail to evaluate student appreciation and analytical abilities (Al-Mokhtar, 2022). Literature appreciation improves through project-based evaluations which combine literary discussions with creative writing projects (Aljoundi, 2022).

### **Research Questions**

- What is the students' attitude level towards English literature for both public and private universities?
- Is there any correlational relationship between public university students' attitude and private students' attitude?
- Is there any attitude difference between public university students and private students?

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

This study adopts a quantitative research approach. It involves a sample of 80 English literature students from both public and private universities in Libya. The questionnaire used in this study was adapted from Ali (2023) to suit the research objectives.

#### **Data Collection**

Data were collected from 80 English literature students enrolled in public and private universities in Libya. To ensure balanced representation, 40 students were selected from one public university and 40 from private university. Participants were chosen through random selection to achieve equitable demographics across both types of educational institutions. A Google Forms questionnaire, created by the researcher, was utilized to gather responses from each university.

#### **Data Analysis**

The analysis of Libyan university students' literature-related beliefs in EFL classrooms utilized Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The researchers analyzed the data through descriptive statistics as well as correlation analysis and independent t-test analysis to measure differences based on private and public university affiliations of the students.

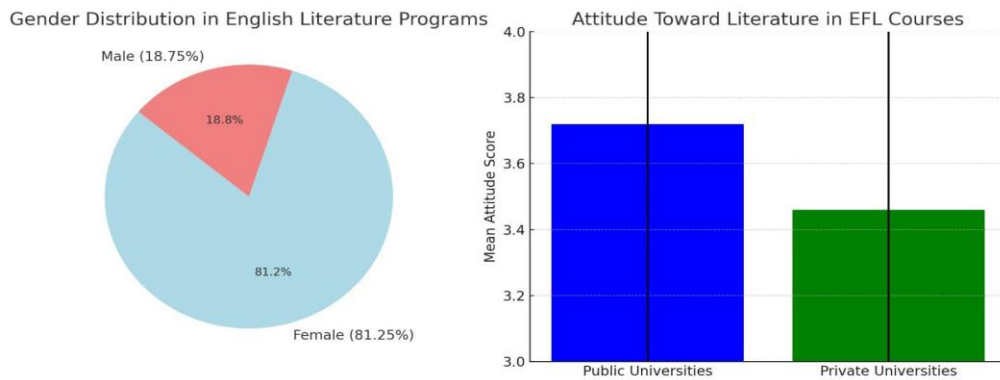
### **Findings**

#### **Descriptive Statistics**

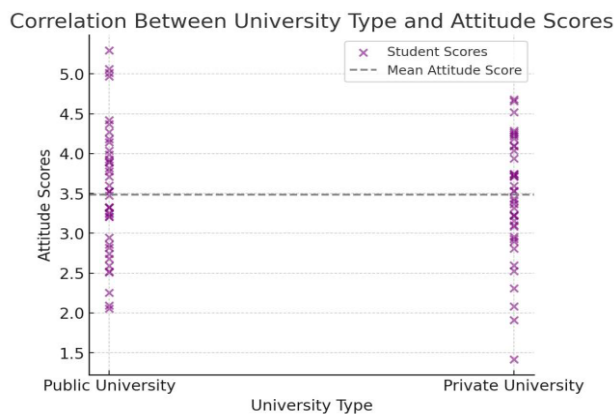
The study utilized descriptive statistics for summarizing the essential research variables. There were eighty students in the study sample being split into equal groups of forty who studied at respective public institutions and forty who spent their education at private universities. The research showed that female students outnumbered male students in the English literature programs since 65 female respondents (81.25%) outnumbered the 15 male respondents (18.75%). As figure 1 The evaluation of student sentiments showed that students generally had favorable views about literature lessons in their EFL courses with a 3.59 rating (SD = 0.823). The mean attitude scores for public university students reached 3.72 (SD = 0.851) whereas private university students had an average score of 3.46 (SD = 0.783). Public university students demonstrated marginally more positive attitude toward literature compared to students attending private universities.

#### **Correlation Analysis**

The research team performed a Pearson correlation evaluation to study how university classification affects student assessment scores on attitude. A statistical test produced a -0.010-correlation value with  $p > 0.05$  which confirmed that university type (public or private) showed no relationship to literature attitude scores of students. As Figure 2 The data shows that university type made no impact on students' attitude regardless of their public or private academic affiliations.



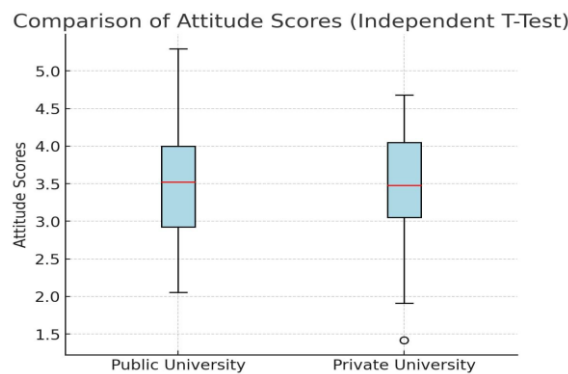
**Figure 1:** descriptive analysis.



**Figure 2:** Correlation between university type and attitude scores.

### Independent T-Test Analysis

The statistical significance of differences between attitude scores between students from public and private institutions was evaluated by performing an independent t-test. The observed difference between groups did not reach statistical significance according to the  $t = 1.409$  result and  $p = 0.163$  value which exceeded the  $p > 0.05$  threshold. A small variation in mean scores did not affect how both public and private university students perceived literature in their EFL classes as figure 3.



**Figure 3:** Independent T-test.

### Summary of Findings

- Students from public universities had a positive attitude rate ( $M = 3.72$ ) which exceeded the positive attitude rate ( $M = 3.46$ ) of their private university counterparts.
- Students' perceptions toward EFL literature exhibited no connection with their choice of university type based on their education system ( $r = -0.010$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ).
- A significant difference between public and private university students' attitudes about literature teaching in the EFL classroom did not exist according to the results of the independent t-test analysis ( $p = 0.163$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ).

Students who attend public higher education institutions show a minimal preference toward literature but Libyan university students in both public and private institutions demonstrate similarly positive attitudes.

### **Discussion**

The research establishes key understanding about Libyan university student opinions about literature instruction within EFL contexts and the similarities and differences based on their university affiliation. Public university students demonstrated a higher positive attitude toward literature with a mean score of 3.72 when compared to private university students who obtained a mean score of 3.46 yet the difference between their attitudes was not statistically significant ( $p = 0.163$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). Both university types contain student populations that maintain similar views regarding literature according to research by Khilafat and Reddy (2022).

The research reveals that Libyan EFL students show a general positive attitude toward literature as reported by Milad and Mohammadzadeh (2021). A study at Sirte University showed Libyan EFL students like combining literature activities with interactive learning to develop their language skills according to their research on oral corrective feedback. In his study Alghazzali (2024) examines alternative assessment approaches for Libyan EFL classrooms to determine their effects on student involvement with literature and language education.

Student attitude towards literature is independent of university type because their relationship does not generate measurable statistical significance ( $r = -0.010$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). Research findings from Hadoud (2020) already established that teacher pedagogical practices together with classroom environments affect student engagement more powerfully than institutional elements.

When instructors implement critical thinking in combination with cultural elements into their literature teaching their students experience enhanced motivation alongside improved understanding of EFL learning according to Bilban (2024).

The gender breakdown of English literature students revealed that women constituted 81.25% of all students whereas men accounted for 18.75% of enrollment. The research demonstrates Libyan female students typically choose humanities and language studies for participation as Orafi et al. (2021) discuss in their study of English teaching influences in Libya. Gender-based preferences between academic disciplines seem to affect how Libyan EFL students perceive literature within their educational environment. Teaching methodologies together with curriculum design and out-of-classroom English language exposure form external elements which shape how students view literature (Elshegmani, 2023).

Research shows that English coursebook materials together with instructional strategies produce major effects on students' language proficiency and engagement levels (Tawir & Baharum, 2024). The analysis by Onaiba and Abugharsa (2024) targeted hidden cultural content in Libyan EFL books which demonstrated the importance of culture-based resources for student enjoyment with reading materials. The research output in this study corresponds directly to existing studies exploring interactive learning with collaborative approaches. A research study by Almanafi and Alghatani (2020) established that Libyan EFL students had positive reactions to working together in pairs hence social interactions contribute significantly to students' perceptions regarding language and literature education. According to Al-shareef (2022) listening strategies play a vital role in language comprehension because they help students develop more positive attitudes toward EFL education.

### **Conclusion**

The research investigated Libyan university students' perception of literature use in English as a foreign language instruction while analyzing differences between students enrolled in public versus private institutions. Student attitudes towards literature averaged at  $M = 3.72$  for public university participants while private university students scored at  $M = 3.46$ . Students' perception toward literature revealed no significant connection to their university type since the results obtained no statistical significance ( $t = 1.409$ ,  $p = 0.163$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). The correlation statistics validate that educational institution type shows no significant relationship with how students feel about literature ( $r = -0.010$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ).

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