

Systemic Challenges Facing English Language Departments in Libyan Higher Education: Teaching Staff Perceptions

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التحديات المتعلقة بالنظام التعليمي لأقسام اللغة الإنجليزية بمؤسسات التعليم العالي بليبيا: آراء أعضاء هيئة التدريس

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Abstract:

This study investigates the effectiveness of the educational system of English Language departments (ELDs) in Libyan higher education institutions. The data were collected through an online survey that solicited the perspectives of 71 teaching staff members (TSMs) at Libyan universities and higher institutes. The survey gathered both quantitative and qualitative responses on issues concerning curriculum, teaching methodologies, time allotted for classes, assessment, quality assurance, resources, and administrative structures. The findings from participant responses reveal a strong consensus on noteworthy challenges regarding outdated curricula, ineffective assessment systems, scarcity of teaching resources and technology, limited time for teaching and learning, and lack of teacher development programs. These results, clearly reflected in the existing literature on ELT in Libyan universities, stress the need for comprehensive, systemic reform that takes faculty perspectives into consideration. It suggests implementing top-down changes in the structural system and incorporating bottom-up reforms by training staff members, modernizing the curriculum, increasing the time allotted for basic-skill courses, and integrating technology to enhance the educational quality and the student learning outcomes within ELDs.

Keywords: English Language Department, Teaching Staff Member, Educational System, Libyan Higher Education.

المخلص:

تستقصي هذه الدراسة فعالية النظام التعليمي بأقسام اللغة الإنجليزية في مؤسسات التعليم العالي الليبية. تم جمع البيانات من خلال استبيان إلكتروني استطلع آراء 71 عضو هيئة تدريس في الجامعات الليبية والمعاهد العليا. جمع الاستبيان إجابات كمية ونوعية حول قضايا تتعلق بالمناهج الدراسية، وطرائق التدريس، والوقت المخصص للمحاضرات، والتقييم، وضمان الجودة، والموارد، والهياكل الإدارية، تكشف النتائج المستمدة من إجابات المشاركين عن إجماع كبير حول تحديات جوهرية تتعلق بالمناهج الدراسية القديمة، وأنظمة التقييم غير الفعالة، وقلة موارد التدريس والتكنولوجيا، ومحدودية الوقت المخصص للتعليم والتعلم، ونقص برامج تطوير المعلمين. تؤكد هذه النتائج، التي تنعكس بوضوح في الدراسات السابقة حول تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية في الجامعات الليبية، على الحاجة إلى إصلاح شامل ومنهجي يأخذ آراء أعضاء هيئة التدريس في الاعتبار.

تقترح الدراسة إجراء تغييرات بنهج تنازلي (من الأعلى الى الاسفل) في النظام التعليمي، ودمج إصلاحات بنهج تصاعدي (من الاسفل الى العلى) من خلال تدريب أعضاء هيئة التدريس، وتحديث المناهج الدراسية، وزيادة الوقت المخصص لمقررات المهارات الأساسية، ودمج التكنولوجيا بهدف تحسين جودة التعليم ومخرجات أقسام اللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: قسم اللغة الانجليزية، عضو هيئة تدريس، النظام التعليمي، التعليم العالي الليبي.

Introduction:

English Language Teaching (ELT) in Libyan higher education is essential for academic and professional success. However, the educational system's effectiveness is hindered, according to existing research, by some systemic obstacles. The literature in the ELT field underscores issues such as outdated curricula (Bagigni, 2016), teacher-centered teaching methods and lack of resources (Abushafa, 2014), difficulties in integrating modern technologies (Daboba, 2025) and an inefficient quality assurance system. All these challenges together negatively affect student learning outcomes and educational quality.

While these issues are discussed by several research studies in the Libyan context, there is still an urgent need to consider the perspectives of those who form a core component of the higher education system, the teaching staff themselves. Their classroom, and in some cases, administrative, experience plays an essential role in understanding and addressing these challenges.

To bridge this gap, this study investigates the effectiveness of the educational system of EL departments by gathering insights from TSMs. The study employed a mixed-methods research design and elicited responses from 71 teaching staff members, seeking to answer two questions: What challenges do teaching staff members perceive as hindering the effectiveness of the educational system of English language departments in Libyan higher education institutions? What solutions do teaching staff members propose to address these challenges and achieve high-quality learning outcomes?

By shedding light on the perspectives of a vital segment within the educational system—TSMs—this research provides evidence-based conclusions recommending a comprehensive reform of the educational structure. It aims to inform policymakers and educators to take actions that could help in raising the standards and improving the quality of the educational system of EL departments in Libyan higher education institutions.

Literature Review:

Research on English Language Teaching (ELT) in Libyan higher education highlights notable systemic challenges that affect the educational quality within EL departments. The challenges include adopting outdated curricula, a lack of resources and educational technology, a scarcity of teacher training programs, and inefficiency of assessment systems. In this literature review, a collection of study findings is combined to put forward a conception of the difficulties encountered in ELT in Libyan higher education institutions.

According to Gray (2016), English language departments at Libyan universities face a number of significant obstacles. The author highlights the absence of a well-defined management structure and management training, in addition to inefficient admission policies lacking entry tests that lead to accepting large numbers of students with low English proficiency. Moreover, scarcity of resources such as books, journals, and Information Communication Technology (ICT) equipment, along with a lack of academic staff development programs for improving pedagogical skills, are other obstacles that impact the departments' educational quality. Gray also shed light on the lack of an effective quality assurance system to monitor the design and teaching standards of the EL departments, besides ineffective assessment systems that are mainly based on discrete item testing, with a tendency to pass all students. Lastly, the writer indicates that the absence of an educational research culture due to the absence of training and incentives is an additional issue that should be addressed for the sake of the programs' academic development.

Challenges related to the educational system of the English Language departments at Libyan universities were also underscored by Athwadi (2019), who investigated obstacles to implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in two Libyan universities. Athawadi identifies factors hindering the implementation of CLT, including teachers' lack of knowledge and teaching skills, together with the absence of teacher training programs. The author also emphasizes the shortage of teaching resources, such as audiovisual aids, as another significant challenge for CLT practice in the two universities. Another systemic drawback that Althawadi highlights is large class size, which limits students' opportunities to participate in the class and the teacher's ability to monitor their learning progress. He also stresses that the educational system's focus on test-oriented teaching conflicts with CLT, an issue that makes test performance a priority over language proficiency for students.

In this regard, Al-Dradi (2015) also confirms that English language programs, especially at Tripoli University, require essential reforms. The author identifies three main issues, including old curricula and

teaching methods that do not meet the requirements of modern language learning, a lack of appropriate educational resources, especially technology, and the lack of periodic program evaluations, which hinders continuous improvement. Collectively, as the author states, these three factors contribute to the decline in students' language proficiency levels.

In this respect, a research study conducted by Esgaiar (2019) evaluating the English Language program at Zawia University shows clear gaps in syllabus design and material delivery. The program's curriculum mainly focuses on grammar, reading, and writing on the account of oral communication, a systemic flaw that is evident in a syllabus analysis that shows weak improvement in oral skills over four years. These outdated methods, added to large class and cultural barrier issues, hinder communicative language teaching. However, as the researcher points out, the program has qualified lecturers, which enhances the possibility for improvement if modern practices are adopted.

The issue of using traditional teaching methods is also confirmed in a research study conducted on difficulties in teaching grammar at Libyan universities by Fitori (2019), who found that teachers do not often adhere to prescribed curricula, adopting outdated methods to teach grammar that may not align with current teaching practices. This resistance to change underscores that effective professional development is critically needed in the program.

In this context, Abushina (2017) presents a remarkable insight and a prospective solution in a study on teacher training at a Libyan university. His research showed that an intervention in pedagogy by implementing active learning considerably enhanced teachers' understanding of second language acquisition and student engagement, improving the learning environment overall. This suggests that a bottom-up approach to reform through targeted teacher training can have a positive impact on improving educational value in the Libyan setting.

However, applying modern teaching methods is often obstructed by limited access to technology in the Libyan educational environment. Herein, Salem (2019) identifies institutional factors, including restricted access to technology and absence of training, as notable challenges to using technology in teaching English. This confirms the lack-of-resource obstacle referred to by Gray and Aldradi. Coping with these challenges is a necessity, according to El Abbar (2016), who suggests, in her research study on Internet usage in teaching, that Libyan higher education must have a strong commitment to integrating technology in teaching so that it can make a sustainable pedagogical change, which is crucial for improving student learning outcomes and educational quality in general.

In conclusion, the literature used in this study reveals that ELT programs at Libyan higher education institutions need a comprehensive reform in terms of adopting modern curricula and methodologies, training teachers and providing resources, using educational technology and assessment systems to improve student learning outcomes and raise the standards of the educational system within ELDs.

Material and Method:

To analyze the data collected for this study, I used the mixed-method (qualitative and quantitative) research approach. Mixed-method research is defined as "research in which the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study or program of inquiry" (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007, p. 4).

Participants:

To investigate the obstacles encountered within ELDs at Libyan higher education institutions, I recruited 71 TSMs who work within the concerned departments to participate in an online survey designed to capture their perceptions regarding the issue being studied.

Data Collection Process:

The data of this study were collected through an online survey comprising twenty-four questions: three multiple-choice, three free-response, and eighteen Likert-scale items. The survey included three types of questions, corresponding to the three categories introduced by Dorneyi (2007): factual, behavioral, and attitudinal questions.

Data Analysis:

The different types of the survey open-ended and closed-ended questions produced data with a qualitative and quantitative nature, requiring different analysis tools. For analyzing qualitative data, I applied categorizing, a tool introduced by Burns (2010), who states that qualitative data are primarily coded through the inductive coding process (emic or insider approach). In this process, categorizing is based on viewing data from the participants' angle and analyzing their views as they naturally occur, which is different from deductive coding, where data are assigned to prearranged categories based on theory and literature. Categorizing was used to analyze responses for open-ended questions in the survey. For coding quantitative data, I applied what Burns calls Numerical Scales (Nominal Scale and Ordinal Scale). In Nominal Scale, values are used as labels or names; they have no numerical value or order. I used this scale to analyze responses for multiple-choice questions in my survey. In the Ordinal

Scale, on the other hand, values indicate relative position or rank order, but the intervals between the values are not equal or known. I used this scale to analyze responses for Likert-scale questions.

Triangulation:

For the purpose of increasing the validity of this research, its findings were compared with the literature review about the relevant topic to see if they align with each other. Furthermore, the quantitative data were contrasted with the qualitative data and discussed together to see if they converge on the same conclusions about the systemic challenges.

Ethics:

Ethical considerations were taken into account while conducting this research study. I abided by important principles of ethical research, such as respect for intellectual property, by appropriately citing the works of other authors. The participants were fully informed about the nature and purpose of the research, their anonymity and confidentiality, and voluntary participation through an informed consent before agreeing to take part in the survey. Moreover, the data were collected, analyzed, and reported with honesty and accuracy.

Results and Discussion:

This section of the research presents and discusses the findings of the survey, which investigated 71 TSMs' perceptions about the systemic challenges and their potential solutions within ELDs in Libyan higher education institutions. The data, interpreted according to a mixed-method research design, were categorized under three main headings, namely, Profile of Respondents, Systemic Challenges, and Proposed Solutions.

Profile of Respondents:

The data collected for this study reveal that the respondents are qualified, experienced TSMs, a fact that reinforces the importance of taking their opinions about EL education into consideration.

Qualifications:

The responses indicate that 87.3% of the participants hold a Master's degree and 12.7% hold a PhD degree from national and international universities, suggesting that the participants are highly qualified instructors with different educational backgrounds (Q1).

Experience:

Over 60% of the survey participants have a teaching experience exceeding 7 years, and more than 35% have over 10 years of experience (Q3). This suggests that the respondents are not novice teachers but experienced professionals who are fully aware of the educational process and the system's issues within their departments.

Academic Rank:

The analysis of this study data reveals that more than 80% of the TSMs are assistant lecturers and lecturers: assistant Lecturers (38%), Lecturers (42.3%), Assistant Professors (11.3%), Associate Professors (4.2%), and Professors (4.2%) (Q2).

Degree Origins:

The qualitative responses to Q4 ("Where did you earn your degree/s?") indicate that the TSMs earned degrees from national and international institutions in the UK, Malaysia, USA, Australia, and others. This means, as mentioned earlier, that the instructors have different educational backgrounds due to their exposure to different educational systems, which likely contributes to the diversity of opinions and enriches responses on the issue of the educational system within the English language departments in Libyan higher education institutions. This aligns with Abushina's [1] suggestion that teachers trained on modern teaching methods can make a difference in terms of change within English language departments.

Systemic Challenges:

The survey results reflect the challenges introduced by some scholars in the literature review of this study. TSMs' responses highlighted issues related to departments' structure, curriculum, teaching methodologies and assessment, resources, and administrative barriers.

Dissatisfaction with Learning Outcomes and Need for Restructuring:

A significant majority of respondents (64.2% combined) are either unsure, disagree, or strongly disagree that most students at their departments graduate with satisfactory learning outcomes (Q5, see Table 1). This dissatisfaction is endorsed by an overwhelming majority of 84.5% of the participants, who (strongly agree/agree) that the educational system within ELDs needs to be restructured to achieve high-quality learning outcomes (see Figure 1, Q6). This finding supports the claims by Gray (2016) and Al-Dradi (2015) that the EL departments in Libyan universities require essential reforms.

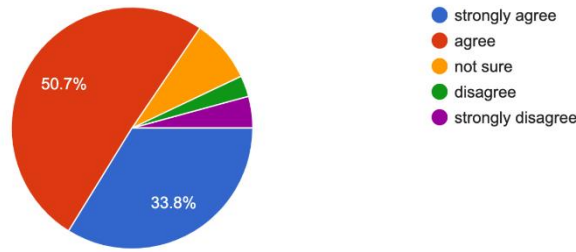


Figure (1): Staff perceptions on restructuring ELD educational system

Curriculum and Course Design Issues:

The data shows a gap between the curriculum and students' actual levels, in addition to the insufficiency of time allotted for basic-skill courses.

Student Level and Curriculum. 50% of the survey participants agree that "course contents are beyond the actual level of the students" (Q15, see Table 1). This quantitative result is clearly supported by open-ended responses such as "There is a big gap between students' English language level and curricula" and "The curriculum is above the students' level" (Q23).

Skill Development. The data reveals strong consensus on the insufficiency of time allotted for basic-skill courses, where 82.8% of the respondents agree or strongly agree that a two-hour class per week for each basic-skill course is insufficient (see Figure 2, Q9).

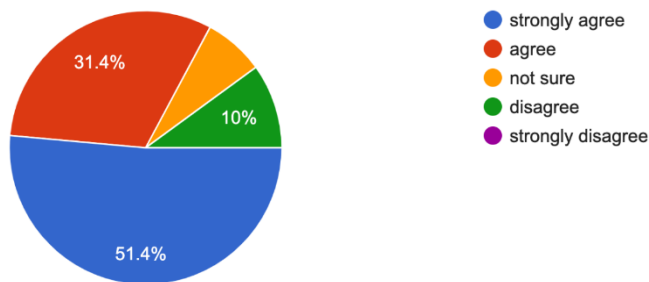


Figure (2): Perceptions on insufficiency of time allotted for basic-skill courses

There is an overwhelming consensus on providing intensive basic-English-skill courses, both before students commence studying their major courses in the department (100% agree/strongly agree, as shown in Figure 3, Q10) and during major course study (87.1% agree/strongly agree, Q11, see Table 1).

This aligns with Esgaiar's (2018) findings that revealed curriculum weakness in oral communication and skill integration. Qualitative responses reinforce the idea of basic skills courses by suggestions such as "focus on developing basic skills" and "intensive courses in language skills" (Q24).

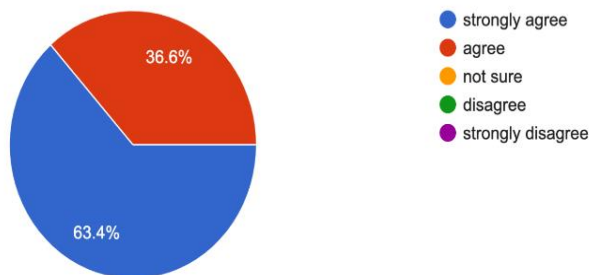


Figure (3): Staff perceptions on establishing intensive courses within ELDs

Teaching Methodologies and Assessment:

The survey data identifies teaching methods and assessment as challenges faced at Libyan EL departments.

Outdated Teaching Methods. 73.3% of the respondents agree that teaching methods are ineffective and need to be reviewed (Q16, see Table 1). Moreover, 72.8% agree that the system emphasizes rote learning over skill development (Q17, see Table 1). This confirms Fitori's (2019) findings on adopting outdated methods to teach grammar and Althawadi's (2019) identified obstacles to implementing CLT, including lack of teaching skills and focus on test-oriented teaching.

Flawed Assessment. 80.3% agree that failure to implement formative assessment within their ELDs is one of the main challenges that needs to be addressed (Q18, see Table 1). Furthermore, 64.8% believe that the grading and distributing points policy does not motivate students or reflect their true achievement (Q19, see Table 1). This quantitatively supports Gray's (2016) critique of "ineffective assessment systems" that are mainly based on discrete item testing, with a tendency to pass all students.

Lack of Resources and Infrastructure:

Lack of resources and infrastructure is a major issue that the survey participants agree upon more than any other challenge.

Technology and Facilities. According to the responses, lack of modern teaching materials and technology is considered a main challenge by 91.4% of the respondents (see Figure 4, Q20). The qualitative data (Q23) confirms the lack of resources issue with statements such as "Lack of facilities," "Lack of material syllabus," "Facilities are not available such as library and laboratories," "Lack of resources," "Lack of incorporating technology in classroom." This finding supports similar obstacles highlighted by Gray (2016), who stressed scarcity of resources in EL departments such as books, journals, and ICT equipment; Althawadi (2019), who emphasized shortage of teaching resources, such as audiovisual aids; and Salem (2019), who identified restricted access to technology as an institutional factor that impedes using technology in teaching English within Libyan ELDs.

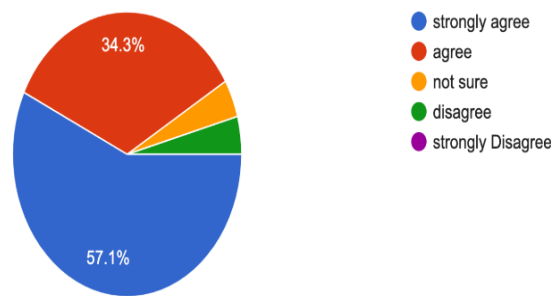


Figure (4): Perceptions on Lack of Modern Teaching Materials and Technologies

Support Systems. There is strong support for the idea of establishing co-curricular activities in the EL departments (87.3% agree/strongly agree; see Figure 5, Q12) and tutoring centers run by teaching assistants (90.2% agree/strongly agree, Q13, see Table 1) to compensate for lack of practice and help students improve their English skills.

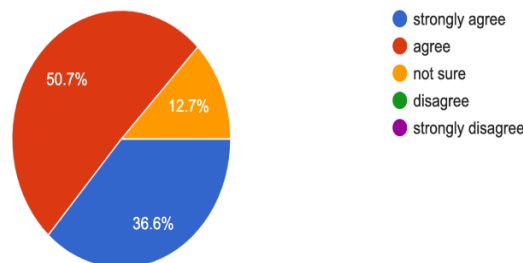


Figure (5): Staff perceptions on establishing co-curricular activities within ELDs

Administrative and Systemic Barriers:

The data of this study underscore a lack of coordination in terms of curriculum and students' learning and an absence of an effective quality assurance role within EL departments.

Unified Curriculum. 74.7% agree that the lack of a unified curriculum is one of the major challenges experienced by EL departments at Libyan universities (Q14, see Table 1). Qualitative responses refer to this issue in statements such as “A nonunified syllabus causes issues” and “There is no clear syllabus for all the courses” (Q23).

Cooperation and quality assurance. 80.3% agree that there is a lack of close cooperation and communication among faculty members regarding their students’ learning (Q21, see Table 1), and 78.9% agree on the absence of an active quality assurance role in monitoring the educational process in EL departments (see Figure 6, Q22). These numbers clearly reflect Gray’s (2016) assertion of the “absence of a well-defined management structure” and “lack of an effective quality assurance system.”

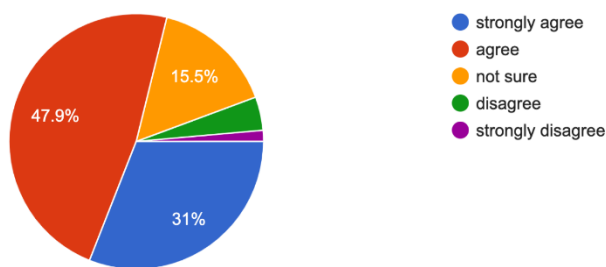


Figure (6): Staff perceptions on absence of quality assurance role within ELDs

Table (1): TSMs' Responses to Likert-Scale Questions (from 5 to 22) about Systemic Challenges within their ELDs. SA=Strongly agree, A=Agree, U=Unsure, D=Disagree, and SD=Strongly disagree.

Question Summary	SA	A	U	D	SD
5. Learning outcomes of most ELD graduates are satisfactory.	1.4%	31.4%	31.4%	22.9%	12.9%
6. ELD educational system should be restructured.	33.8%	50.7%	8.5%	2.3%	4.7%
7. General education courses should be eliminated from ELD curricula.	22.5%	35.2%	11.3%	21.1%	9.9%
8. Some major courses should be eliminated from ELD curricula.	9.9%	54.9%	11.3%	21.1%	2.8%
9. A two-hour class a week for each basic-English-skill course is insufficient.	51.4%	31.4%	7.1%	10%	0%
10. ELD educational system should include intensive courses of basic English skills that students take before major courses.	63.4%	36.6%	0%	0%	0%
11. ELD educational system should include intensive courses of basic English skills students take during their study in ELD.	35.7%	51.4%	7.1%	4.4%	1.4%
12. ELD educational system should include co-curricular activities.	36.6%	50.7%	12.7%	0%	0%
13. There should be a tutoring center in the ELD	43.7%	46.5%	8.5%	1.3%	0%
14. Lack of unified curriculum within ELD is a main challenge.	32.4%	42.3%	19.7%	5.6%	0%
15. Course contents are beyond the actual level of the students.	20%	30%	17.1%	30%	2.9%
16. Some instructors’ teaching methods are ineffective.	26.8%	46.5%	23.9%	2.8%	0%
17. In the ELD where I teach, limited effort is directed towards developing skills; emphasis is given to rote learning.	15.7%	57.1%	15.7%	11.4%	0%
18. Failure to implement formative assessment is a main challenge.	32.4%	47.9%	12.7%	7%	0%
19. Policy for grading and distributing points does not convey the actual level of students nor encourage them to work harder.	22.5%	42.3%	18.3%	15.5%	1.4%
20. Lack of modern teaching materials & technology is a main challenge.	57.1%	34.3%	4.3%	4.3%	0%

21. Lack of close cooperation & communication among faculty members regarding students' learning is a main challenge.	36.6%	43.7%	15.5%	2.8%	1.4%
22. Absence of an active quality assurance role in monitoring the educational process within ELD is a main challenge.	31%	47.9%	15.5%	4.2%	1.4%

Proposed Solutions:

The qualitative data collected from responses to Q24, "What other solutions do you suggest that can lead to high-quality learning outcomes?" in addition to quantitative data collected from questions 10, 11, 12, and 13, provide the TSMs' viewpoints regarding desired reforms needed within ELDs, categorized in the following key themes:

Teacher Development:

There is a tendency among respondents towards establishing teacher training programs to enhance the educational value within EL departments. This was evident in responses such as "The instructors have to be given courses to improve their teaching styles," "in service teacher training," "Intensive courses to teachers," "Workshops and training programs for teachers," "More teacher training and professional development programs for teachers are needed," and "providing more chances for teacher development". These responses coincide with Abushina's [1] suggestion of a bottom-up approach to reform through targeted teacher training and Althawadi's (2019) identified need for teacher training programs.

Curriculum Reform:

In terms of curriculum, participants' views include "Rethinking of syllabus and curriculum," "Unifying each syllabus," "Course integration," "Focusing on creating and developing course syllabus and materials that suit the needs of the job market," "The curriculum should be convenient for the students' level," and "evaluation of the curricula should be done regularly." This addresses the issues raised by Al-Dradi (2015), who identified three factors leading to students' low proficiency levels, including old curricula and teaching methods that do not meet the requirements of modern language learning, and Esgaiar (2018), who criticizes the English program's curriculum at Zawia University, which overlooked oral communication, leading to weak improvement in oral skills among the students over four years of study.

Assessment Improvement:

The survey participants proposed developing an assessment system to produce higher-quality learning outcomes. The recommendations include: "the assessment system must be reviewed and changed in order to suit the 21st century ways of assessment," "Edit the assessment criteria," and "Assessment should be inclusive as it should include not only midterm and final examinations but also presentations, mini projects, and assignments." These proposals align with Gray's (2016) conclusions that challenge the effectiveness of the assessment systems within EL departments at Libyan universities, which are reliant on discrete-item testing.

Integration of Technology:

A critical demand emphasized by the survey participants is integrating technology in ELT. This is reflected in responses such as: "Using more Technology in teaching," "Providing more technological support", "Involving technology", and "Technology must be available". The participants' call should be linked to restricted access to technology as an institutional obstacle to using technology in teaching that was noted by Salem [10], and implementing pedagogical change by commitment to integrating technology in teaching that was raised by El Abbar (2016).

Resource Provision:

The participants consistently highlighted the need for "language labs," "data shows," "smart boards," "language centers," "libraries," and "modern technological tools" to enhance the quality of education within ELDs. As mentioned earlier, the Libyan university departments' need for resources was underscored by a number of scholars such as Gray (2016), Althawadi (2019), and Salem (2019), confirming the alignment of this survey insights with other conclusions drawn from research studies conducted in the Libyan educational context.

Student Support Systems:

Regarding proposed solutions for ELDs' systemic challenges, quantitative data decisively support three structural reforms: establishing intensive courses, co-curricular activities, and tutoring centers. The participants overwhelmingly endorsed the idea of establishing intensive courses within ELDs, where 100% agreed that students should take intensive English courses before they start their major studies (Q10), and 87.1% supported taking such courses during their studies (Q11). Qualitative responses backed this suggestion, calling to "focus on developing basic skills" and "intensive courses

in language skills" (Q24). Moreover, 87.3% agreed that the educational system should include co-curricular activities (Q12), and 90.2% supported establishing tutoring centers in EL departments (Q13). These findings reflect that teaching staff recognize the importance of structured supplementary support, represented in intensive courses, tutoring centers, and co-curricular activities, as essential for reform and quality improvement within ELDs. This stance addresses the practice needs identified in the literature of this study by Esgaiar (2018) and Gray (2016), representing practical bottom-up structural reforms that can lead to higher-quality educational outcomes.

Other Structural Changes:

Proposals introduced by participants for improving the educational system within EL departments include departmental and instructional suggestions such as: "There should be a clear strategic goals for the study plan in the department," "implementing CLT," "We should focus on developing basic skills," "intensive courses in language skills," "I recommend prioritizing basic skills and allocating additional time to them," "adopting new teaching methods," and "managing class size". These qualitative suggestions by the participants clearly target the structural and methodological challenges quantified in the survey.

Conclusion:

The mixed-methods analysis of the data demonstrates that the teaching staff perceptions align with the findings introduced in the literature review of this study. The quantitative data confirms the existence of systemic issues related to curriculum, methodology, assessment, resources, and administration. The qualitative data stresses the systemic failures, providing deeper explanations and proposing solutions. The alignment of the survey and the literature findings creates a solid argument for the urgent need for comprehensive reform that targets EL departments in Libya. The qualified, experienced, and internationally trained teaching staff did not only reveal the system's weaknesses but also proposed noteworthy solutions focused on teacher development, curricular and assessment modernization, technological integration, and support systems and resource provision. This study thereby concludes that a top-down reform of the entire system is critically needed, seriously taking into account bottom-up faculty knowledge and viewpoints, to achieve high-quality educational outcomes within English language departments in Libyan higher education institutions.

Limitations of the Study:

Although this study provided valuable insights, it has some limitations that should be acknowledged and reflected in the recommendations. One of the limitations is the sample size of 71 teaching staff members, which is adequate but may not represent the whole population of EL teaching staff within all Libyan higher education institutions. Another limitation is the study focus, where it captured the perspectives of only teaching staff members, excluding those of other stakeholders such as students, curriculum designers, and ministry officials. Moreover, the study should have considered regional variations and institutional differences (universities vs. higher institutes) or disparities between urban and rural educational settings. Finally, the study relied on a single data collection instrument, a survey, which could have been enhanced by interviews for deeper understanding of the systemic challenges within EL departments.

Recommendations for future research:

Based on the above-mentioned limitations, the following recommendations should be considered for future research. The first proposed recommendation is using larger samples that represent different regions, institutions, and educational settings to gain more generalizable findings. Recruiting other stakeholders within the educational system, such as students and policymakers, is also recommended for future research to discuss the issue from multiple perspectives. Furthermore, surveys should be combined with interviews or other data collection tools to deepen and triangulate insights in subsequent research studies on the effectiveness of EL departments' educational systems.

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