

**DIFFICULTIES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH
GRAMMAR IN LIBYAN UNIVERSITIES**

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Declaration

This submission is my own work and contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of the University or other institute of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text, in the United Kingdom or overseas.

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Abstract

This study explored the difficulties of English language grammar faced by Libyan university students in learning grammar as well as problems that teachers of grammar found when teaching grammar. It was conducted in Tripoli University, Zawia University and other Vocational Higher Educational Institutions. It began with an explanation of the related literature focusing on theories of second language learning and grammar teaching methodology, students' motivation in second language learning and its grammar and other factors that impact on this. The study then investigates the challenges that students and lecturers faced in learning grammar.

This research adopted a mixed methods approach. The rationale for this is related to the purpose of the study and research questions, and therefore, the study takes a philosophically pragmatic approach. Quantitative data were collected through survey questionnaires involving (224) participants at Tripoli University and Zawia University and were analysed using SPSS. Qualitative data were collected using semi-structured interviews involving 19 participants, supported by document analysis of 32 pieces of students' written work.

The findings revealed that most participants recognise that grammar is important in learning a foreign language, and that the low level of students' language competence at the outset of courses has impacted on learning grammar. It also showed that teachers ignored the teaching methods as stated in the curriculum but replaced these by applying those they had used in the past. The findings revealed that students lack positive motivation towards learning grammar. This research contributes to raising awareness regarding the importance of choosing appropriate pedagogies for the teaching and learning of grammar, expanding and enriching the literature in this field.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Introduction

As a university-level teacher of English as a foreign language (EFL) for thirteen years, the researcher has been concerned with how to improve and promote the learning of English grammar by university students. The majority of students whom the researcher taught at the university struggled hard to understand and use English grammar which made him wonder why university students (even those who had good English vocabulary) face difficulty in learning grammar. Several questions came to the researcher's head, including: Does the grammar instruction students receive in high school contribute to their grammar learning in university? Do students' perceptions of difficulty regarding grammar vary with their overall English language competence? Do teachers of grammar have the pedagogical knowledge of grammar teaching and teaching methodology? These questions induced and encouraged him to conduct this study, which is intended to explore grammatical difficulties at Libyan universities.

Before describing the study, background and history of the research context as well as a brief, introductory literature review relevant to the study will be provided.

Following Libya's independence in 1951, up until the mid-1980s, the English language enjoyed a significant status in Libya and was, generally speaking, the main foreign language learned (Hamed, 2014). However, as a result of political disagreements between Libya and both the UK and US in the 1980s, the Libyan government made a decision to ban teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). Private schools and foreign centres, such as the British Council and the American Cultural Institute, were also shut down (Hamed, 2014). This ban of English meant that a whole generation grew up with no exposure to English (Najeeb, 2012). After about a decade, the government realised the error of this decision and decided to re-incorporate the English language into the educational curriculum of primary and secondary schools, as well as universities. Since the 1990s, the country has also begun to flourish and the demand for learning English has increased (Giaber, 2014).

Najeeb (2012) reported that the so-called 'grammar-translation method' (GTM) was used for teaching English in Libya before English was banned as an academic subject. When English was reintroduced in the 1990s, the new English language syllabus was based on communicative language teaching (CLT). Using GTM, students were taught by translating texts from the second language into the first language, whereby grammar is taught deductively. Whereas CLT emphasises communicative activities using authentic materials, and grammar is taught inductively (Natsir, and Sanjaya, 2014). However, Ahmad (2004), Alhmali (2007), Ali (2008) and Orafi and Borg (2009) argued that teachers continued to use the grammar-translation method to teach the new communicative syllabus. Orafi and Borg (2009) pointed out the gap between what is intended in the curricula (both in the old and the new) and the actual status of teachers' practices and beliefs. The upshot of this was that both in secondary schools and universities, grammar was not being taught communicatively, indicating a mismatch between teaching methods and syllabi.

According to Emhamed & Krishnan (2011), cited in Najeeb, (2012), the resulting confusion in teaching methodology, where teachers make individual choices about how to teach, now means that students' English proficiency has deteriorated. This low English language proficiency has, in turn, impacted learners' weaknesses in English grammar (Suleiman et al., 1983). From 2000 to 2013, working as a university teacher of English language grammar, the researcher witnessed first-hand that students' performance in English did not improve and there were some persistent problems with learning English grammar.

The current study focuses on exploring the teaching methods followed by the university teachers in teaching English grammar in Libyan universities, and the difficulties and problems encountered by students in learning it. The questions raised here are how teachers teach grammar, and what methods or techniques are employed to help students learn English grammar. It is clear that the teachers themselves also encounter many problems teaching in higher education in Libya. It has been widely assumed that students' level of English in Libyan university is low (below the university standards) and may be insufficient for the requirements of higher education (Sawani, 2009).

1.2. Purpose of the study

This study aims to examine English language and English language grammar have been taught in Libyan Universities and in particular at the University of Tripoli and the University of Zawia, in order to identify the factors that have contributed to the decline in standards of students studying English in general and grammar in specific at the university level. It explores the difficulties and challenges that both teachers and students experience in teaching and learning grammar of English as a second or foreign language within an educational environment. Libya being a developing country, has been struggling to meet the growing demand for learning English as a second language since the reintroduction of studying English in the 1990s. Therefore the standard of English Language at university level continues a challenging prospect due to lack of quality resources, lack of qualified teachers and misuse of the appropriate teaching methodology.

In relation to, the current study attempts to provide a rationale for revamping the current way of English grammar is taught and the difficulties of learning it at Libyan Universities in the light of the new political change in Libya. However, the motivation behind investigating the difficulties of learning English language grammar at the University of Tripoli and the University of Zawia stems from the researcher's belief that a long-term plan for the English programme with fundamental changes should be undertaken to improve students' English language learning skills and teachers' awareness of the appropriate teaching methods. The need to build extensively in order to educate so many in a short time creates the classical dilemma of the quality versus the quantity of education, a common problem in many developing countries (Alhamali, 2007).

1.3. Statement of the problem

In Libyan universities, the concern of language teachers is to improve the students' achievement in learning English as a second language, especially grammar. Such a problem exists due to the low level of students in grammar. This research is an attempt to figure out the reason(s) behind that, and how the appropriate teaching method can help students to move forward in the learning process, to improve their language competence. It also seeks to

explore students' attitudes toward learning grammar in order to illuminate the recommendations.

1.4. Background to the research

1.4.1. English in Libya: Background

In this part the researcher is going to introduce the significance of English language learning in Libya; its place in the school curriculum and its status in tertiary education. The section describes the educational system in Libya since its independence and the changes to the system over the period of the last 50 years. Libya was given its independence on 24 December 1951 by the United Nations (Tamtam et al., 2011). At that time, 90% of the population were illiterate (non-educated), and there were no universities. Since that time, Libya has started improving the educational system after realising its importance for development (Najeeb, 2013).

Clark (2004) reported that the number of all students at all education levels throughout the country had highly increased from 34,000 in 1951 up to 360,000 in 1969. According to Tamtam et al. (2011: 743) "The constitutional declaration issued by the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) on 11 December 1969 " illustrated that "education is a right and a duty for all Libyan citizens, it is free and compulsory until the end of the preparatory level, and the State is responsible for building and establishing schools, institutes, universities and educational and cultural foundations" (World Data On Education 2007: 1). The Libyan educational system as clarified by Shihiba (2011), consists of five stages which are all free: the first stage is an optional pre-school which lasts for children aged four and five for developing and preparing them for schools. The second stage is compulsory and lasts for children aged from six to fifteen. This stage is divided into six years of primary followed by three years of preparatory. Pupils in year nine who successfully obtain the Basic Education Certificate can enrol in the next stage. The third stage is the secondary which is not compulsory. This stage lasted for three years during the second half of the last century up to 2005, and then in 2006 the General Peoples Committee of Education (GPCE) issued the decision No. 165 which changed secondary education into either four years in specialized secondary schools such as Basic Sciences, Engineering Sciences, Life Sciences, Social

Sciences, Economic Sciences and Languages or three years only in vocational training institutions. The fourth stage is University level in which students who complete secondary level can enrol. This level of study is also free (Shihiba, 2011).

Higher Education in Libya consists of the following sectors which are: university education, higher technical and vocational institutions and institutions for training. The first university was established in Benghazi, a city in the North East of Libya, on 15/ 12/ 1955. Two years later, a new branch of the university was opened in Tripoli. This university was named The University of Libya, then in 1973, the two universities were separated. In addition to these two main universities, some others were established in the 1960s and 1970s in different cities all over the country such as the University of Zawia, University of Khoms (Mergib), University of Musrata, University of Sebha. Currently, there are 14 state universities distributed around the country in addition to some private ones (Ministry of Education, Libya, 2012).

Now, the University of Tripoli, formally known as Al-Fateh University is the most important and largest institutions of higher education in Libya. It offers free education to more than 20,000 undergraduate students and postgraduate students. It employs around 3000 academic staff. This university was founded in 1957 as the faculty of science of the University of Libya. The faculty of Agriculture established in 1966 then the college of petroleum and minerals in 1972. The University of Libya was split into two independent universities in 1973. The colleges that were located in Tripoli joined the new University of Tripoli and the ones that are in Benghazi joined the new University of Benghazi formally known as Garyunis.

Since the beginning of the 1950s, the English language had been taught in Libya from primary to secondary schools up to 1973 when it was only introduced to preparatory schools and removed from the primary level. In 1986 for political reasons when the English language was banned from schools and universities, this led to both English and French departments at the universities being closed and both languages were gradually phased out from the university curricula by the government at the time to apparently stop western influences and corruption of the Libyan society. This ban of the English language from schools lasted six

years until 1992. This made a significant depression in the level of English language learning in the country.

Sawani (2009, p. 2) stated that "this was due to the cultural, political and economic factors which have deeply influenced the educational system at that time." As a result, the English proficiency of university students was negatively affected. This led to that teachers as well as students at that time were all deprived from learning any foreign language. when the Libyan government reintroduced learning a foreign language in the mid-1990s educationalists have realised the problem and decided to reincorporate English in the curriculum from preparatory level (year seven) to university studies. This, in turn, had led a detrimental impact on existing English language teachers who were hugely undermined by this decision having to teach geography or history instead of English. Sinosi (2010) indicated that the teacher in the Libyan context seems to have failed to link English language structure with the social meanings where the English language is used.

Therefore, some of those teachers preferred to carry on teaching geography and history when English was reinstated in schools again and they did not return to their original area of expertise which is teaching English. Gadour (2006) pointed out that this created an obstacle in the teaching and learning environment because many teachers have forgotten the English language. Only a few teachers left were able to teach English. To overcome this problem, programmes for training teachers of English were designed. These training workshops were a knee-jerk reaction to a massive shortage of qualified English teachers and were doomed to failure because they were ill-planned and lacked the qualified staff to train Libyan teachers. Introducing new teaching methods did not work as expected. Libyan teachers of English were accustomed to traditional chalk and talk methods and using materials that were only involved in the Libyan culture. Peterson and Coltrane (2003) stressed that the curriculum must include native materials to help learners get involved in true cultural experiences. These materials can be adopted from sources such as newspapers, magazines, websites, news programmes, lectures...etc.

Vandeawall (2006, pp., 40-41) argued that: "While educational development is still a priority for the government, the educational programmes in Libya suffer from limited and

changeable curricula, a lack of qualified teachers. Nonetheless, education is already free at all levels". This means that changes to the curriculum in secondary schools, and poor development activities have influenced the teachers' way of teaching and even their knowledge of dealing with such changeable materials. University lecturers teach and select materials for their subject without practical knowledge about how to design course material or how to transmit to students the English language skills which lead to graduates in English with a limited command of the language (ibid).

Most Arab countries teach the English language as part of their public education but these programmes have not produced high-quality results, outcomes and performances of learners' English language proficiency over the years (Arab World English Journal, 2012). However, very little research has been carried out in Libya particularly in Higher Education. Alawar (2006, pp. 26-28) stated that "As in many other countries, Higher Education (HE) in Libya has undergone a massive expansion over the last ten years or more." However, despite the significant expansion of education, a number of analysts argue that Higher Education institutions have increased in number at the expense of quality. The Libyan education system has faced considerable international and local pressures for change in recent years to meet the needs of undergraduate English language programmes. The four-year language students' graduates have in general poor linguistic ability and therefore unemployable. This is due to the low proficiency level in English of most of the students that are accepted into the English department without taking into consideration their level and whether or not they will be able to cope. They also do not have enough time to practise English; most of the graduates use Arabic even after becoming English language teachers. English language graduates lack communicative skills in English. Hence, a lack of foreign language competence is a fact within academic disciplines as in the society itself. In spite of this, Black (2007) pointed out that after years when foreign language teaching was banned, Libyans are now queuing up to learn English.

1.4.2. Libyan universities

The first university was established in Benghazi, a city in the North East of Libya, on 15/ 12/ 1955. Two years later, a new branch of the university was opened in Tripoli. This university

was named The University of Libya, then in 1973, the two universities were separated. In addition to these two main universities, some others were established in the 1960s and 1970s in different cities all over the country. Currently, there are 14 state universities distributed around the country (Ministry of Education, Libya, 2012). The proposed study will be about difficulties in teaching and learning the grammar of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Libyan universities.

1.4.3. The Status of EFL in Education in Libya

Since Libya's independence in 1951, the status of EFL has fluctuated. From 1951 and until the mid-1980s, the English language enjoyed a significant status in Libya and was considered to be the main foreign language in the country. Thus, the overall framework of the Libyan Ministry of Education was to provide English language training as a compulsory subject from elementary level through the preparatory and secondary levels to the tertiary level in all institutions (Hamed, 2014). But the worst period was between 1986 and 1993 when the teaching and use of the English language were actually banned by the government. As a result of political disagreement between Libya and both the United Kingdom and the USA in the 1980s, the Libyan government made a decision to stop and ban teaching and learning the English language completely and for English books, magazines and newspapers to be collected and burned in public squares. Private schools and foreign centres and schools such as the British Council and the American Cultural Institute were all shut down (Hamed, 2014). At that time, Libyan teachers of English were asked to teach different subjects such as history and geography or else look for different jobs. Native teachers and professors of English, especially those from the UK or US were notified that their contracts would not be renewed for the following school year (Najeeb & ElDokali, 2011).

After about a decade the government realized the error of this decision and decided to re-incorporate the English language into the curriculum. There were no native teachers of English and professors of English to take up teaching or research posts at Libyan universities. When the English language was reintroduced into educational programmes at all levels of study in the 1990s, Hamed (2014) pointed out that the quality of EFL teaching was poor. According to him, a big problem exists which is that both teachers and students of English

cannot find a satisfactory stock of books and other teaching resources. "There is also an unsatisfactory infrastructure related to language teaching industry ...in the field of information technology". Libyan graduates who were neither qualified nor well-prepared were asked to carry out the task of teaching English. These factors negatively affected the quality of teaching English as a foreign language (Hamed, 2014: 362). Since the mid-1990s, Libya has been striving to improve its education system and as part of these efforts, English has now been fully re-introduced, ranging from preparatory level (years seven to nine) to secondary school (primary schools did not have English courses) and university level (Orafi, 2008).

During this time, the country (in all sectors) has been progressing and becoming a destination for foreign companies, particularly from the West. This has meant the English language has become more important and needed. Since then many Libyan students chose to join and enrol in English language departments at university and the number of students studying English has significantly increased (Giaber, 2014a). English language classes keep growing and are even overcrowded (with 50 to 80 students in each class), and there continues to be a lack of qualified teachers (Giaber, 2014a). Suwaed (2011) pointed out that most Libyan university teachers have complete autonomy over the design of their own courses and tests and they are also responsible for selecting their own teaching materials. This subsequently affects the quality of English language teaching (ELT). Hamed (2014) listed the main problems as follows:

1. Most teachers are not well qualified.
2. There is a lack of satisfactory books, especially grammar books and other teaching resources.
3. There is unsatisfactory infrastructure in the field of ELT with regard to information technology (IT).

1.4.4. Methods, Curricula and Problems in English Language Teaching (ELT) in Libya

The system of ELT in Libyan schools in the 1950s involved a series of five set books called the 'Modern Readers', based on the 'grammar-translation method'. This emphasises the

acquisition of vocabulary by translating what is read. It also involves teaching grammatical rules and forms, while also translating these into the students' first language (L1) (Al Ghazali, 2006). In the mid-1960s, a new series of books was produced, namely 'English for Libya' and these were produced for different types of ELT at all school levels. They were basically designed for teaching the language through sentence structures and patterns, using the grammar-translation method, rather than vocabulary acquisition per se (Najeeb, 2013).

Until the 1980s, the grammar-translation method was used in schools and universities in Libya (Giaber, 2014a). "In the 1980s the focus of English language teaching in Libya was on grammar and reading comprehension. Lessons were characterized by oral drills (with a focus on correct grammar and pronunciation), memorization of vocabulary, and reading aloud" (Orafi & Borg, 2009, p., 244). After the reintroduction of ELT in the 1990s, English courses were based on the communicative language-teaching method, which focuses on meaning and language use in communicative contexts. In adopting such a method, learners should be able to use and interpret meaning in real-life communication (Orafi & Borg, 2009). Through this method, students should be given opportunities to engage in foreign language communication, while the role of the teacher is to facilitate, coordinate and prepare them for active learning through interactive and communicative activities, e.g. discussion and role play (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

As mentioned above a new English curriculum was adopted in basic and secondary education at the end of the 1990s. The main aim of introducing this curriculum was to "develop students' oral communication skills" (Orafi & Borg, 2009, p., 251). Thus, these new materials which included different communication activities and learning tasks should have been performed through both pair and/or teamwork, and through other different communicative activities (Shihiba, 2011).

According to the General People's Committee of Education (GPCE, 2009), secondary school students who study English as a general subject take four 45-minute classes a week, whereas those specialising in English take around 19 classes a week of 45 minutes each. However, after many years of implementing this curriculum, it was observed that most English language teachers in Libyan secondary schools were still the main agents in the teaching

process. In other words, English lessons were teacher-centred (Ahmad, 2004; Alhmali, 2007; Ali, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009). Orafi and Borg (2009) found that teachers generally failed to implement the changes embodied within the new curriculum. This is one of the possible reasons why Libyan high school graduates usually start their university education with undeveloped English communication skills (Shihiba, 2011).

1.4.5. Problems of Teaching English in the Libyan Universities

According to Giaber (2014a, p. 32), the absence of suitable modern teaching environments, such as language laboratories and interactive classrooms, together with a lack of specialised teacher training, has negatively affected the quality of English teaching and learning in Libya. Furthermore, Giaber (2014a) noted that teaching materials, especially grammar books, are in short supply and fail to meet the needs of universities. For example, most of the teaching materials used during the 1980s were still being used in the 1990s. Since 2000, Libyan universities have been suffering due to a lack of English language learning resources, especially grammar books, whereby most of the books used are written by Arabs, see Shawish and Grenat (2000), and have been prepared from the point of view of Arabic culture, language and context.

Although other books have become available, focusing on teaching grammar using a communicative approach, teachers have tended not to adopt the suggested teaching methods. Instead, English language teachers in Libya generally still write grammar forms and instructions on the board, applying grammar-translation methods (English Language Department at the University of Tripoli, 2014). Borg (1998, p. 11) reported similar outcomes, explaining that whenever teachers are not obliged to follow specific syllabuses or textbooks, i.e. when they are "free to decide on the shape and content of their lessons are encouraged to utilise the wide range of contemporary and less recent teaching materials available in the school's resource room". This is what generally applies to Libya, especially in the teaching of English and English grammar (Giaber, 2014b).

Even when teachers attempt to adopt a more communicative teaching methodology, there can be issues with responses of students who are at the core of the learning process (Shihiba, 2011). The communicative method requires them to perceive themselves and also to be

perceived as active participants in the classroom, with the teacher playing the role of facilitator (Weimer, 2002). However, students who lack proficiency or any interest in participating in communicative activities, or who remain unmotivated to develop communicative competence, cannot fully adopt such a role (Shihiba, 2011). In contrast, traditional grammar exercises, which are more teacher-centred, and involve students to a lesser degree (Peacock, 1998; Hawkey, 2006, cited in Shihiba, 2011), are often perceived by students as safer and less demanding or less embarrassing (Weimer, 2002).

Suwaed (2011) suggested that, because teachers are determined by their own participation as learners, they have the propensity to repeat their former teachers' old roles and methods of teaching grammar, which depend on the traditional grammar-translation method. This issue is exacerbated by the fact that many teachers are not well-trained in the latest methods and pedagogies for teaching grammar (Al-Jadidi, 2009). At the university level, teachers rely on their own knowledge and experience to design their courses and select appropriate teaching approaches (Suwaed, 2011).

To overcome the problems outlined above, Giaber (2014a) suggested reforming the teaching profession as a whole, with more training for teachers, especially in foreign language teaching methodology, through the integration of Libyan instructors' professional knowledge and experience with the recent theoretical and methodological developments in English language teaching. Orafi and Borg (2009) pointed out the gap between what is intended by Libyan curricula (both the old and the new) and teachers' actual practice and beliefs. They suggest that this gap should be analysed and assessed by curriculum designers to facilitate new curriculum implementation.

1.5. Professional Rationale for the Research

As a university teacher of grammar for thirteen years the researcher faced some problems in teaching grammar. In his experience, most students either did not like grammar or feared it. In other words, they thought they were not capable of understanding it. Large classes are also difficult to teach in addition to the lack of resources and facilities which are very important in the teaching process. Furthermore, due to the students' weaknesses in English language competence and their attitudes towards grammar and modes, he found it difficult to follow

certain teaching methods. He found it difficult to teach grammar explicitly, because students either did not like grammar or feared it. Also it seemed difficult to him to teach grammar implicitly due to students' weaknesses in English language competence. At the outset of the study, the researcher conducted a preliminary questionnaire with some English language grammar teachers from different universities in Tripoli and Zawia (located sixty kilometres west of Tripoli). The questions were open-ended. Most of the data collected referred to the low and variable levels of students in the language in general and in grammar in particular. Some of the participants stated that about 70% of the problems are due to students' English language competence in general. In the area of teaching methodology, the data showed that teachers found it difficult to follow certain approaches due to the diversity of students they taught. Libyan university students like other students of EFL consider learning grammar difficult. This was confirmed when the researcher administered a preliminary questionnaire with some English language students at the University of Tripoli. Most of the question were closed-ended and a few of them were open-ended. Most of the students' answers were negative. All applicants agreed that they should be taught by native speakers of English instead of the existing non-native speakers such as Indians or Arabs. Also, they agreed that receiving more practice is better than learning theoretical aspects in grammar. Students also expressed dissatisfaction with the methods used in the classroom; they did not think that teachers used suitable methods in the teaching process. In addition, they think that the teaching materials and facilities used are not helpful and that they are unable to find helpful grammar books. Finally, most of the participants thought that the whole environment and system needed to be reformed. Nonetheless, it seems that some of the issues faced by the researcher are not unique to his own context. It is believed that it is not an easy task to teach or learn English as a foreign language (EFL) in general and grammar in particular, and it seems more difficult when the learners are at the beginning stages (Pathan and Aldersi, 2014). Freeman (2001: 264) reported that teachers of English grammar may face two choices of how to teach grammar: inductively or deductively. However this does not mean that teachers of grammar use only one of these two approaches. She explained that the students' level of the knowledge of English in general and grammar in particular, and the type of the lesson to be taught may both play a role in shifting between the two approaches (Inductive and Deductive). Grammar has always played an important role in learning EFL and is a

major issue for both students and teachers (Al-Mekhlafi, 2011), and is considered as the backbone of the language. For many educated people it is believed that grammar of a language is difficult to be studied and understood. Elturki (2014) stated that grammar is one of the most difficult aspects of a foreign language to master. Giaber (2014b, p., 34) showed that "Ways of teaching grammar have always been a source of concern among teachers of English and have caused controversy among language teaching theoreticians". Arab students of English as well as their teachers also find English grammar difficult to learn or teach. There have been some research studies which have been conducted about learning and teaching English grammar for Arab speakers of English such as Al-Mekhlafi, (2011). He concluded that both teachers and students face serious problems in teaching and learning grammar in EFL; such as the use of grammatical terminology, transfer of grammatical knowledge into communicative language use and error correction. He then recommended ways of teaching grammar, such as the implicit method in some cases, however it is a less favoured method in some other different contexts. And he concluded that it is necessary to study the problems faced by teachers and students in specific contexts to find out and establish the proper method which suits the actual environment of the teaching process. Some linguists and researchers such as Freeman (2001), Giaber (2014a), Pachler (2014) and Dkhissi (2013) have suggested various approaches for teaching and learning grammar that will be dealt with in greater depth in section 3.5.

1.6. Justification of the Study (Rationale)

A little investigation and a few research studies, to the best of my knowledge, have been conducted to identify difficulties and problems faced by Libyan EFL teachers and learners in teaching and learning English grammar in Libyan universities. Identifying these problems and being aware of them will hopefully help teachers solve these problems and find out ways to overcome or at least cope with them, then provide successful grammar instruction. The foregoing literature, as well as the researcher's personal experience, show that teaching grammar in Libya is a critical issue and that grammar has been taught differently from teacher to teacher in Libyan universities; in other words, the ways grammar has been taught differ from teacher to teacher and from class to class in that teachers follow particular teaching methods randomly without taking into account their own or their students' potential

difficulties. They were sometimes unaware of the difficulties facing their students and may have chosen inappropriate methods in the teaching grammar process. In this proposed research the researcher is going to capture valuable insights and information about how university teachers and students in Libya observe and perceive difficulties of teaching and learning grammar. The study also examines Libyan teachers' implementation of the English grammar curriculum in general and the course syllabus (which is almost chosen by themselves) in specific and sheds light on how teachers' knowledge of grammar and beliefs and other contextual factors influence the way teachers interpret and implement the curriculum and syllabus. Borg (1998) reported that when teachers are not obliged to follow specific syllabuses or textbooks, they are "free to decide on the shape and content of their lessons and are encouraged to utilise the wide range of contemporary and less recent teaching materials available in the school's resource room" (Borg, 1998: 11). For the student's perspectives, the researcher had conducted a preliminary questionnaire (pilot) with English language students at the University of Tripoli. Most of the students' (who responded) answers were negative. Most of the respondents agreed that they should be taught by native speakers of English instead of the existed non-native speakers such as Indians or Arabs. Also, they agreed about receiving more practice is better than the theoretical aspects of grammar. Another very important answer is about the methods used in the classroom; the teachers, according to the questionnaire, do not use a suitable method or approach in the teaching process. In addition to that, they think that the teaching materials and facilities used are not much useful.

1.7. Aims and Objectives of the Study

This research attempts to achieve the following objectives: The first aim is to undertake a literature review of the most relevant and updated articles, books and latest studies in the field of teaching and learning English and in particular English grammar to foreign speakers of English, especially Arabic learners. This literature review will help in exploring the range of approaches and methods employed and thus establish the knowledge base to which this study is making a contribution. The second aim that this study aims to establish is to investigate how English language teachers and learners have been dealing with English grammar. This will involve the exploration of teaching methodologies, their experience of

difficulties from both the teacher and student perspective and the main reasons that lie behind these, including motivation and attitudes. It will also involve some analysis of students' competence in written English. This will be achieved through a series of survey questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The third aim is to find out a suitable way or ways to achieve better results which will help students as well as teachers of English facilitate the whole process of teaching and learning English grammar. In addition, it will seek to identify pertinent issues and ways of addressing them to avoid and/or overcome these difficulties and problems in future and to evaluate whether grammar is better taught inductively or deductively and implicitly or explicitly. Finally, the study aspires to assist in narrowing down and minimizing the gap of the incompatibility between Libyan students' learning needs and approaches to the teaching and learning of English grammar.

1.8. Research Questions

The general aim of the doctoral research is to enhance and develop an understanding of appropriate teaching methods, which will help Libyan university teachers and English learners teach and study grammar more confidently. The study seeks to explore the difficulties encountered by both teachers and students and the main reasons behind these in an endeavour to narrow the gap between Libyan students' learning needs and the approaches adopted for teaching English grammar. In order to achieve the aims of this study, the following research questions have been addressed:

1. What, according to lecturers and students, is the impact of the approaches taken by lecturers on students' learning and students' attitudes?
2. What are the perceived difficulties and problems facing Libyan university English language teachers and English language students in teaching and learning English grammar?
3. How do Libyan teachers of English teach grammar and how they deal with difficulties?
4. Based on the findings of the study, what are the recommended pedagogical approaches that meet the diversity of students' needs in learning grammar?

1.9. Research Design

Overview

The researcher made an acceptable general study of the topic and relevant studies in addition to a pilot questionnaire to gain a general view which will help the researcher in forming the main questionnaires. By then the researcher conducted two (closed-ended) survey questionnaires; one for teachers and one for students. The results and findings of these questionnaires helped in answering the first and partially the second research questions. Secondly, the researcher focused on studying the theoretical aspects of the research topic and the teaching methods used in teaching grammar at the university level taking into consideration the outcomes of the first part in order to look in depth at the strengths and weaknesses of the use of these theories. The researcher applied firstly a qualitative method in forms of interviews with both teachers and students, and secondly in forms of document analysis assessing some of students' work. The data collection and analysis helped the researcher to answer the second and the third research questions. Relying on all data analysis, the researcher finally wrote his comments and points of view about the topic in order to answer the fourth research question and to achieve the findings and the objectives of the study followed by a conclusion and recommendation for future studies. This study was organized into seven chapters as follows:

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction to the topic, the significance of the research and rationale for conducting the study. It includes a brief background to the thesis about the quality of teaching English language grammar, and the nature of the dilemma that this research addresses. In addition to outlining the structure of the thesis.

Chapter Two: Research background

This chapter provides an overview of the development of education in Libya. It also highlights the constraints and challenges of Higher education and students' attitude towards learning English. Furthermore, this chapter assesses briefly the economic socio-political environment which has a direct impact on the development of the higher education system.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

In this chapter, the researcher will critically review the literature on theories, concepts, strategies and techniques related to teaching English language in general and English grammar in particular. It highlights views of different researchers and scholars that dominate the debate of teaching English language as a second or a foreign language. It also identifies the gaps in the literature which this study aims to address.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology and Methods

This chapter discusses and justifies the ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions guiding the study. It further discusses the research methodology and methods that are appropriate for this study. It presents the methodological approach, outlining the mixed methods design and detailing the data collection and data analysis instruments. It highlights the study design, data collection instruments and analysis to explore and find out the teachers' and students' perspectives and perceptions regarding grammar teaching. This is followed by a description and justification of the study sample. It ends with the considering the reliability and trustworthiness of such methods of analysis employed to fulfil the objectives of the research presenting the ethical considerations and the study's limitations followed by a discussion of the challenges encountered throughout the study.

Chapter Five: Findings and Data Analysis of Questionnaire and Semi-structured Interviews

This chapter presents the findings and analysis of the research from the data collected from the survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews based on the teachers' and students' interviews and questionnaires with the aid of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The main concern of this chapter is to analyse the difficulties of teaching and learning English language grammar in terms of motivation, students' language competence, teaching methodology, teaching facilities and learning environment in the Libyan Higher Education context (University of Tripoli and University of Zawia) from both the student and lecturers' points of view.

Chapter Six: Results and analysis of Document analysis

This chapter presents the results and the findings obtained from the document analysis of students' written work (exams and compositions). The purpose of data analysis is to contribute to answering the fourth research question.

Chapter Seven: Discussion and Conclusions

In this chapter, the researcher triangulates the different data sets and the findings of these data analysis, compares them and finds the relationships between them or contradictions, if any. This chapter also provides the conclusions drawn from the discussion around the key issues that emerged from the research. Finally, it considers the limitations of the study, contribution to knowledge, recommendations and suggestions for further research in this area to set up effective quality methodology in teaching English language grammar.

Chapter Two: Research context

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will introduce background information on the Libyan educational context. This background includes some information about Libya in general; location, population and education in this country. This chapter presents a general view of the development of educational system in Libya with special emphasis on Libyan higher education specifically the English language programme at the University of Tripoli and the University of Zawia in relation to teaching grammar in these universities. The purpose is to gain a broader understanding of the research context. Although some studies have been conducted about teaching grammar in Libya, no one, to the best of my knowledge) dealt with much broader issue of English language grammar especially university level. The Libyan higher educational system is in need of reform and revision in order to reach the standards and compete with similar institutions around the world. Additionally, this background touches on some other aspects education including the main concern of this research, the use of English in higher education in Libya.

2.2. Libyan Educational Context: a Background

2.2.1. Geographical Background: Location and Population of Libya

Libya is an Arab African country in the centre of North Africa bordered by the Mediterranean Sea to the north, Egypt to the east, Sudan to the southeast, Republics of Niger and Chad to the south, and Algeria and Tunisia to the west (Tamtam et al, 2011). Libya is the third largest Arab country, fourth largest country in Africa (Ben Jaber, 2010 and Almansory, 1995) and the seventeenth among the countries of the world, and seven times the size of the United Kingdom (Ismae, *et al*, 1991 and Tamtam, et al 2011). It covers an area of almost 1.8 million square kilometres and also the 17th largest country in the world. The population of Libya according to (2015 census) is approximately 6.5 million, where the majority live mainly in the north west of the country than in the north east. The overall population density is approximately 3.5 persons in each square kilometre. The largest Libyan cities are Tripoli (The capital city), Benghazi, Al Zawia, Musrata, Darna (all are on the Mediterranean Sea) and Sabha in the south (Who, 2011). Libya is an Arabic Islamic developing country; a small

country in terms of population compared with most of the other countries in Africa or the Middle East. It has a Mediterranean Sea coast line of about 1.900 kilometres. The most prevalent ethnic groups within the country are either Arab or Berber in origins. The official language is Arabic and Islam is the religion of the state. Figure (1) shows the map of Libya that includes the main cities.



Figure (2.1) map of Libya

Although Libya is a large country, only 5 % of its territory is useful economically. Libya has narrow fertile lowlands along the Mediterranean coast, a vast expanse of arid and rocky plains and the rest of the country is desert which includes sand seas in the East and the South. In addition, there are three main mountains called The Western Mountain in the north west, The Green Mountain in the north east and The Tibesti' in the southern desert of Libya. Libya has no rivers apart from the two kilometre long and permanently flowing river (valley) called 'Wadi Kiam'. The climate in Libya is described as hot and dry in Summer and warm

and wet in Winter related to the Mediterranean Sea which is dominant in the coastal lowlands, where most of the population lives, and the Sahara Desert climate in the south which is described as very hot in Summer and extreme diurnal temperature ranges but warm and dry in Winter. Libya, in general, receives little rain where only 2% of the whole country receives enough rainfall for settled agriculture (Sharaf, 1995). However, Libya is considered a rich country in terms of natural resources of its oil and natural gas reserves, that dominate Libya's economy (Almansory, 1995).

2.2.2. Historical Background

Historically, Libya was influenced to various degrees by many consecutive, diverse nations and empires, such as the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Greeks, and Romans before the 7th century. From the 7th century to the 16th century it was influenced by various Islamic nations. Then Libya was ruled by Turkey from 1551 to 1912 then by the Italian colonization from 1912 to 1942. From the Second World War until the independence in 1951 it was under temporary British military rule (Clark, 2004) until the United Nations (UN) General Assembly passed a resolution affirming that Libya should gain its independence before 1952. On the 24th of December 1951, Libya got its independence and was named the United Kingdom of Libya, a constitutional monarchy under the first and last country's monarch named King Idris Senussi (1951 to 1969). King Senussi's 18 years of being the king of the country were deposed in a 1969 military coup, led by Colonel Muammar Gaddafi While the king was in Turkey for medical treatment. Gaddafi ruled Libya for 42 years and who was later expelled and killed in 2011 following the so-called Arab Spring Uprisings that overthrew the regimes of several Arab countries (Anderson 2011).

2.3. Educational system

2.3.1. Historical background

Being located in the centre of North Africa, Libya experienced various invasions and occupations throughout its history. For about 450 years, Libya was ruled by Turkey (Ottoman), and during this period of time, its education focused only on Qur'anic (religious) schools. The main goal of these schools was to teach the Quran, the Islamic studies and Arabic language. The relationship between education and religion continued to be strong under the Turkish Rule. After the Ottoman Empire, Italy occupied Libya from 1911 until the

Second World War. Many Libyans refused to enrol their children at Italian schools due to the establishment of the Italian culture and language. Lack of Education led to keep the majority of Libyans illiterate during the Italian occupation. After the Second World War, Britain, in turn, took the place of Italy and ruled Libya until Libya got its independence in 1951. At that time education in Libya was gradually modelled on the educational system of its neighbour Egypt. According to Tamtam et al (2011), Libya at that time was one of the poorest countries in the world, and there were almost no schools until the discovery of oil in 1963. Meanwhile, according to Blackwell (2003), the relationships between Libyan and Britain developed and new trades were established between the two countries. Since that time, English became the language of business and Libya was transformed from a poor country into a wealthy one. The government conducted several projects to develop the educational system and guaranteed the right of education to all Libyans and the number of students has increased rapidly. By law and educational policies school education was compulsory and free to all Libyans from primary school right up to university level which have led to an increase in the number of educated people (from 20% in 1951 to 82% in 2003 and approximately 1.7 million school students in Libya (cf. Hamdy, 2007). The educational system was divided into two main sectors the school and the university. The primary level in Libya consists of six years from the age of 6 to the age of 11, then the preparatory level which consists of three years and then three years of secondary. Students will be able to choose from universities or higher training and vocational institutions after they get their secondary school certificate.

2.3.2. Higher education:

Higher education refers to universities and higher training and vocational institutions. All universities in Libya have set high admission criteria that put the minimum admission requirement at 65% which is equivalent to level B in the British education system whereas students who are below this level have other options to join the higher training and vocational institutions (Committee of Higher Education, 1991). The structure of Libyan higher educational system at universities is divided into three main levels: Bachelor's degree which lasts four years of study in most faculties. While in other faculties such as dentistry, pharmacy ...etc. it takes about five years and six years or seven years of study in medicine. Postgraduate students can finish their Master's degree at an average of two to three years of

study after holding a bachelor degree. The third degree is the PhD in only in specific subjects at certain universities that require three to four years of research (El-Hawat, 1996). Whereas higher training and vocational institutions award only higher technical Diplomas (National Foundation for Technical and Vocational Education, 1999).

2.3.2.1. Student Population

There are 12 state universities and five private universities in Libya distributed across the country. In addition, there are about 90 higher training and vocational institutions across the country which offer programs in several types of vocational specialties (National Foundation for Technical and Vocational Education, 1999). According to El-Hawat (2009), the population of students at Libyan universities (both state and private) is about 340,000 students. This number appears to be an imbalance between the number of students enrolled in social science and arts, and those in sciences, technology and medicine (El-Hawat, 2003). Highly qualified students who had graduated with a grade of 90% or more were sent abroad to complete their studies overseas in different countries such as Britain, America, Canada, France, Egypt ...etc. in order to come back and help in developing the higher education in Libya. All the decisions about funding, sending students abroad, teachers' employment, and regulating admission, curriculum development are always made by the General Peoples' Committee of Education (Orafi and Borg, 2009).

2.3.2.2. The Quality of Higher Education in Libya

The higher education in Libya has gone through several stages since the first university was established in Benghazi in 1955. It has faced a lot of pressure and challenges to rapidly grow and develop into a modern system. Higher education in Libya is free in all state universities, whereas those students who enrol in private universities or higher institutions need to pay a tuition fee. As the number of students has rapidly increased since 1981, university admission was restricted and many state universities were launched. Libyan universities lack the use of technology by providing infrastructures for IT studies. Technology is becoming more and more important for modern universities. Hamdy (2007) suggested that the main aim to improve the quality of education through International Communication Technology (ICT). Technology gives learners the opportunity to facilitate their learning process and provides

them with access to a massive amount of information, and adopting modern techniques and methods for both teachers and students of learning in general and the English language in particular. For example, new technology helps to get the quality teaching materials and to shift from traditional methods to more technological oriented approaches.

Ayub et al. (2016) reported that the Libyan higher education faces some challenges; meeting the demands for quality performance in higher education, raising the level of quality of the graduates, and financing and governing higher educational institutions. And then the increasing use of information technology and strengthening scientific research in higher educational institutions.

Tamtam, et al. (2011) described the problems and issues that influence Libyan universities as follows: most institutions of higher learning lack material resources that support learning, lack of strategic planning and sufficiency and lack of standards of choosing leaders, particularly academic leaders who can guide and plan the future of the educational system, absence of development and training programs for faculty members. Also, these higher institutions lack the stability of administration and continuous changes in the curriculum regulations and systems of the study programs of higher learning (ibid, 2011). They added that failure to establish a relationship and links with the labour market offering learners job chances, and looking for areas of research and development to allow the development of the higher education such as developing laboratories and libraries. Suwaed and Rohouma (2015: 695) believe that "the starting point to improve the higher education system is to support the teachers. Because teachers have the opportunities to discuss the challenges that they face in their classes and they understand that improving the higher education is essential by sharing their experiences; what they know, what they want to learn, and compare new thoughts and strategies with their own unique contexts with others. Thus, Suwaed and Rohouma (2015) suggested that this will help teachers who face difficulties which affect their job in terms of support and self-learning. Also developing and equipping laboratories and libraries to ensure that the education system is fully equipped with the relevant information sources. Misuse or the use of traditional methods of learning, which were established and applied a long time

ago and the lack of use of technology, have continued to affect the quality of the higher education system.

2.3.2.3. Challenges of Higher Education in Libya

Like most Libyan sectors, the higher education sector in Libya faces many challenges and hard times due to changes in educational systems and policies (Tamtam et al. 2011). Ibrahim et al. (2010) cited in Tamtam, et al. (2011) reported that Libyan higher institutions which had launched some programmes are struggling to deliver quality and they lack material resources to support their programmes, lack of development and training programmes for faculty members and "Use of traditional methods of learning, such as a focus on the conversation and rote learning by many universities, ... and the lack of use of technology, which has continued to affect the quality of education offered". According to the General Peoples' Committees of Education's (2008) report, the weakness of the education and teaching methods, due to the weakness of teachers educational qualifications and their little access to developments in pedagogical techniques and methods of teaching are also among the main factors that affect the quality of higher education. All these lead to a lower level of quality education programmes and prevent them from achieving their goals (Aldradi, 2015). She claimed that although the Libyan economy has the "resources to finance and upgrade its universities and teaching resources. There is a need for a quick solution to overcome these challenges and to achieve a high standard of education in Libya" (Aldradi, 2015, p. 30).

2.3.3. English in the Educational System in Libya

The official and first language spoken in Libya is Arabic which is spoken by almost all Libyans (Arabs and Berbers or Amazighs), and use to promote Arabic and Islamic culture whereas the Berber language is only spoken by Berbers (25 % of the Libyan people) who live mainly in small cities and towns on the Western Mountain and Zwara (a city on the north west coast) (Imssalem, 2001). Cowan (2000) mentioned three dialects of Arabic: Classical Arabic, the language of Quran and religious and Arabic studies; modern standard Arabic which is used in the press and formal speeches, and Libyan dialect which is the mother tongue and the language of everyday conversation.

Although most of the teaching materials in university faculties such as medicine and science were written in English, the government tried to protect the Arabic language by Arabising (translating into Arabic) those materials, but the attempts have not been successful (Imssalem, 2001). This happened in the mid of 1980s when Gaddafi made a decision to cancel English Language teaching across all sectors which lasted for about ten years (see 1.4.3). All students either in schools or universities who studied during the period ban of English suffered in terms of their "academic progress as well as compatibility with the latest scientific achievements" (Khaled, 2017: 13). This ban left a big gap between students and the use of English as a second or a foreign language. Some people described this issue as the most painful period in the history of the Libyan educational sector. I personally was affected by this ban during our studies. This negative effect of the ban is still obvious in several aspects of the educational system in Libya so far and needs very quick solution to minimize the gap in order to overcome all other problems and challenges that educational system faces (Joffe, 2001 and Simons, 2003). After the English language returned to the educational system, the Libyan Committee for Higher Education reviewed its policy regarding teaching English language and introduced a new curriculum for the English language. Currently, Both Arabic and English are being taught in all schools and universities, and English is mostly the medium of the courses in faculties of science and technology and schools of medicine (Andrews, 2009).

The English language is currently a mandatory subject in Libyan schools. As mentioned above a new English curriculum was adopted in basic and secondary education in the 1990s. The main aim of introducing this curriculum was to "develop students' oral communication skills" (Orafi & Borg, 2009: 251). Thus, these new materials which included different communication activities and learning tasks should have been performed through both pair and/or team work, and through other different communicative activities (Shihiba, 2011).

According to General Peoples Committee of Education GPCE, (2009) secondary school students who study English as a general subject take four classes of forty five minutes a week whereas those who are specialised in studying English take about nineteen classes of forty five minutes. However, after many years of implementing this curriculum, it was observed by local researchers that most English language teachers in Libyan secondary schools are still

the main character in the teaching process, in other words English lessons are teacher-centered (Ahmad, 2004; Alhmali, 2007; Ali, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009). That was the reason why Libyan secondary students usually start their university education with undeveloped communication skills (Shihiba, 2011).

2.3.4. English as a lingua franca

It is generally believed nowadays that English is not only the language spoken by some countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America but also the first and most common international language, which is later described as the lingua franca (Jenkins and Leung, 2013). It became the language of communication and technology all over the world because of the wide spread British colonisations and the great powers of the United States and the United Kingdom in the international community (Mauranen and Ranta, 2009). The population of non-native speakers of English, and the number of people who speak English as a foreign or second language are exceeding the number of its native speakers; about 80% of speakers of English are estimated to be bilingual users (Crystal, 1997). In Libya, it is the same as in most other countries where English is spoken are very important for communication in the oil and gas industries. It has become more important as a subject matter in several areas of students' social and professional career and life. Many researchers illustrated that Libya's social and political developments since the 1990s have made English language learning more important, more significant and needed than ever to Libyan people (Asker, 2012).

Sawani (2009, p. 10) described the importance of English, and the challenges associated with the reintroduction of the use of English in the 1990s as a challenge: "Libyan educationalists realised the fault and determined to incorporate English in the curriculum again. They decided not only that English must be taught, but that other language must also be learned ... When English was welcomed back at school again teachers who were once teaching English became unable to teach it." Libyan students began to realize the importance and value of learning the English language much more so than before. English for them is their window into the world or the path that leads to development and is a member of the International community (Asker, 2012).

Libyan students realize the importance of English language and begin to see it as a lingua franca and its value. For them, English is not only important for their academic achievements and a compulsory subject matter but also when travelling outside Libya and have access to foreign media and technology helps them so much in learning English (Turki, 2004). Libyan students' interest in learning English as a foreign language has been increasing (Alhmali, 2007), however their attitudes towards it and their lack of motivation are affected by their low level of English which becomes a barrier that prevents them interacting with the world (Mahjobi, 2007).

2.3.5. Students' Attitudes and Motivation towards Learning English

Students' attitudes and motivation are associated with learning a second or a foreign language (Gardner, 1985a). Students' attitudes play an important role in learning a language which affect their failure or success when learning a new language such as English for Libyan students. Students' attitudes are not only the most crucial factor in learning a second or a foreign language but also plays a major role in arousing students' interest and motivation to learn that language (Awadh, 2011). Many researchers believe that motivation is crucial in students' language learning (Keblawi, N.D). Gardner (1985) viewed their attitudes as a component of motivation in language learning. According to him, motivation includes favourable attitudes towards learning the language. Gardner also stated that learning a foreign language is determined by a learner's attitudes towards foreign people in general, and the target group and language in particular. Thus, success or failure in learning a language is determined by the degree of favourable dispositions that students hold towards the language in addition to the target language group and their culture (Awadh, 2011).

The Libyan environment is not conducive to learning. Alhmali (2007) pointed out that the purpose of education in Libya is to obtain high grades and pass the exams. Gardner (1985) stated that the students' attitudes play a key role in enhancing and motivating them to learn which in turn, affects their performance. Students' attitudes and motivations towards learning a foreign language play an important role during the learning process. Students' success or failure in learning a new language such as English in Libya can be affected by their attitudes

and motivations. Krashen (1981) stated that the more positive the attitudes of the students in learning a second language, the more likely learning achievement will improve. The negative attitudes at the same time will negatively affect students' achievement in learning a second language. For example, some students fear being ridiculed by their friends for their mistakes. Also, teachers should create a comfortable classroom atmosphere and build a good relationship with their students and between students themselves, so that the students feel comfortable to interact with both their teachers and their classmates. The issue of students' attitudes as admitted by Fakeye (2010) is one of the most important factors that influence language learning. It defines student behaviour, such as any action or effort conducted by students during the learning process (Alkaff, 2013).

2.4. Summary of the chapter

This chapter presented a general picture of Libyan context, Libya's location, population and history. The chapter then provided an overview of the status and background of Libyan educational system, English language and challenges that educational system faces, students' attitudes towards learning the English Language, the importance of English as a lingua franca, and students' interest for learning English. This chapter included also the objectives and challenges of Libyan higher education. With relation to aims and challenges higher education faces, staff development, staff training courses and effectiveness are needed to be addressed. The following chapter will critically review the literature regarding the teaching and learning of English as a second or a foreign language, learning its grammar and the factors that affect that such as teaching methodology and students' attitudes and motivation.

Chapter Three: Literature review

3.1. Introduction

It was stipulated in the first chapter that the first aim of the present study is to undertake a literature review of the most relevant and updated articles, books and studies in the field of teaching and learning English and in particular English grammar to foreign speakers of English (see 1.7) with special reference to the Libyan context. This chapter presents some of the most important theories of second language acquisition to achieve a better understanding of how languages are acquired and to gain knowledge of the development of theories of language teaching which has a long history of improvement. And then the chapter introduces analysis and discussion of the literature related to the importance of grammar in learning English as a second language (ESL), methodologies of teaching grammar, difficulties of grammar learning and approaches and methods in language teaching. It also presents some other issues that might have either direct or indirect relation to teaching and learning grammar such as students' attitudes and motivation towards learning English in general and English grammar in specific, teachers' beliefs and knowledge about grammar teaching, and students' language competence. The purpose of this literature review is to highlight some previous research findings for teaching grammar essential for producing formal and grammatical second language in line with the first objective which is to critically review the theories, concepts, and models related to teaching grammar, and the most relevant and updated articles, books and latest studies in the field of teaching and learning English in general and English grammar in particular to foreign speakers of English, especially Arabic learners. This chapter also critically reviews the current problems that English (as a second) language teachers are facing when teaching grammar in Libyan universities.

Relevant language learning methods are also presented in this chapter. Some of them are a starting point for various teaching approaches and an introduction of grammar teaching methods followed by an explanation of learning difficulties concerning grammar. The researcher introduces some of the ideas and issues pertaining to teaching and learning English grammar as a foreign language (EGFL) and its role in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). Thu (2009) investigated English language teachers' beliefs in teaching and

found out that teachers' beliefs of teaching grammar are essential to the mastery of a foreign language. Valuable insights and information related to problems and difficulties facing both teachers and students in teaching and learning English grammar as EFL is captured, with a focus on teaching and learning English grammar in Libya and the Arab world. The last part of this section examines contextual influences including Libyan socio-cultural factors, curriculum constraints and 'types' of students. Borg (1998) stated that when teachers are not obliged to follow specific syllabuses or textbooks, they depend on their own decision to choose the shape and content of their lessons and are encouraged to utilise a wide range of contemporary and less recent teaching materials available in the school's resource room.

3.2. Theories of Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

It is valuable here to present a history of theories of second language acquisition (SLA) which helps understand the basic theories and methods in this area and guides the researcher to approach the present instructional paradigms from a well-grounded and analytical viewpoint (Polio, 2003). Furthermore, researchers, as well as teachers, are encouraged to view and study second language acquisition theories not as abstract and distant from the challenges they encounter, but as an enormous practical value (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2004). This can provide distinctive views of the different ways ESL learning theories and practice have originated, shedding light on how the field has reached this status as a unique comprehensive discipline (Cumming, 2001 & Raimes, 1998). Without this knowledge, teachers, as well as researchers, may not be able to identify the points of strengths and the weaknesses of EFL/ESL teaching.

There is a strong relationship between these theories and how different grammar teaching methodologies are informed. Going back through the history of language teaching methodology regarding grammar teaching reveals that: Krashen's Monitor Theory proposed a distinction between language acquisition and language learning. Acquiring a language according to his theory is an unconscious process whereas learning is conscious (see 3.2.4), and Ellis' second language acquisition theory is mainly examined, especially focusing on the relationship between acquisition and learning.

During the second half of the 19th century, the dominant trend was with the Grammar-Translation Method when grammar was taught deductively in a systematic way, by teaching grammar rules with some practice through translation exercises. Then came the Direct Method which focused on teaching grammar inductively and the Audio-lingual Method which was derived from structural linguistics. Since the mid-1970s, the Communicative Language Teaching approach appeared to be the main teaching approach that focuses on communicative proficiency (see 3.4.4).

Second language acquisition (SLA) according to Ellis (2011) is a challenging and controversial field of study. Mitchell and Myles (2004) pointed out that there are over twenty theories of second language acquisition. Freeman and Long (1991) argued that there are at least forty theories and hypotheses of SLA which have been proposed and that none of these theories present a thorough explanation for the phenomenon. They explained that most of these theories focus only on the acquisition of grammatical structures and ignore other important aspects. Escamilla and Grassi (2000) categorised SLA theories into two main theories: Nativist Theory and Environmentalist Theory. The discussion will be about what theory or theories of SLA would be adequate and more appropriate for language learning (acquisition), for example, the Chomsky' theory of Universal Grammar (UG) or the Transition theory like connectionism. In this section, the researcher attempts to explain briefly some of the most important of these theories and hypotheses, and in more detail those related to the present study about difficulties faced in learning and teaching grammar. Through his study and research about theories of second language acquisition, Ellis (2006) illustrated that studying how second language learners acquire a second language helped him in studying how the grammar of a second language can be better learned. The main theories that describe how language is acquired and learned are the Behaviourist, the Mentalist, the Rationalist (also called Cognitive), Empiricist (also called Audiolingualism) and Cognitive-code.

3.2.1. Behaviourist

Behaviourist theory was advanced in the USA early in the 20th century as an approach to psychology emphasizing verbal behaviour (Yil, 1988). Bloomfield, Mowrer and Skinner

underpinned and supported this theory which was based on the observation of human behaviour stimulus and response (SR) interaction looking at language as a set of structures and acquiring it as a habit formation as a result of reinforcement and reward. However this theory belongs to the umbrella of environmentalism, it ignores the internal mechanisms (Yil, 1988, Escamilla and Grassi 2000) and undermines the role of mental processes (Johnson, 2004). Skinner (1957) argued that a child acquires the language by imitating and associating words with meanings. Noam Chomsky (1965) criticised Skinner's argument and points out that a child cannot acquire his language depending on language input alone. Instead, Chomsky proposed his theory of Universal Grammar based on the assumption of innateness (Lemetyinen, 2012, Ellis, 2009).

3.2.2. Universal Grammar

The Universal Grammar (UG) theory of language development was firstly developed by N. Chomsky based on the innateness hypothesis that he proposed (1976). Chomsky viewed language as a mirror of the mind, and that children are born with an innate knowledge that helps them acquire the language. Their ability makes learning the first language easier than it would otherwise be (Crain and Lillo-Martin, 1999). This hypothesis presumes that the human brain has a 'Language Acquisition Device' (LAD) with a set of linguistic rules that form the UG, i.e. universal grammatical rules that are commonly found in all human languages (Johansson, 1991). Chomsky's (1977) theory proposes that all children share the same innateness, the same internal constraints which characterize the grammar they will construct. This theory counts that the input from the surrounding environment is insufficient for the purpose of language acquisition.

3.2.3. Rationalist (Cognitive Theory)

This theory was developed by Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (1896-1980) based on cognitive psychology. It focuses on exploring the relationship between cognitive development and language learning skills. Cognition includes all mental activities that are involved in human knowledge and thoughts such as perceptions, memory, attention, language function, problem-solving (Joubish and Khurram, 2011). Human cognitive development accounts for the changes related to age and the system of what we know and the way it

interacts with other aspects of human behaviour from childhood until an advanced age. Wilburg (2010) summarized learners' stages of learning starting with the observation of objects then categorizing, forming, generalizations, decision making and finally solving problems that allows them to make sense of the information provided. According to Piaget's theory, stages of speech transition, for example, begin with a psychological level in which choice of words and the interpretation of their meanings are determined by the speaker and the listener. Secondly, there is a linguistic level in which learners are aware of selecting the correct sounds and words put them into correct grammatical order to form correct sentences. Thirdly, there come the physiological level and acoustic level which are advanced levels of sound mechanisms and sound waves between the speaker and the listener (Wyatt, 1965). Advocates of the cognitive theory argue that acquiring a second language must be viewed in the context of the child's mental development, and linguistic structures will only emerge if there is already a cognitive grounds (Sassonian, 2009).

3.2.4. Monitor (Comprehension hypothesis)

Stephen Krashen was the first to address the problem of acquiring a second language when he proposed a distinction between acquisition and learning. Acquiring a language according to him is an unconscious process whereas learning is conscious. His theory hypothesizes that people acquire a language in one way; when people understand what they hear from others and what they read. The actual language production performs only an indirect role in language acquisition and that consciously learned grammar rules function only as a monitor or editor; learning the rules is not essential to language acquisition (Krashen, 2003). He (1981, 1982, 1985, 2004, 2010) developed his Monitor Theory based on Chomsky's assumptions on language innateness and the concept of a LAD. Krashen had refined and developed his theory according to five hypotheses. The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis, The Natural Order Hypothesis, The Monitor Hypothesis, The Input Hypothesis and The Affective Filter Hypothesis (see Krashen, 1981, 1985, 2004). The first one focused on the contrast between language learning and language acquisition. The second dealt with acquiring grammatical structures in a predictable order where some grammatical structures are acquired early while some others will be acquired later. The third one referred to the relationship and influence between acquisition and learning, which function as a monitor for

learners' output. The fourth one focused on the comprehension level of the learner, i.e. a learner at a certain comprehension level acquires language at that level. The last hypothesis looks at some factors that facilitate second language acquisition such as motivation, self-confidence and anxiety (Bahrani, 2011). These hypotheses set the foundation for communication-based teaching strategies that are common to many language teachers today. The rise of communication-based teaching strategies in the 1970s and early 1980s was partly in response to the lack of success with traditional language teaching methods such as grammar translation, and the increase of the demand for learning a foreign language in Europe in general and in Britain in specific (Mitchell, 1994).

3.3. Teaching Methodology

The term teaching method refers to the general principles, pedagogy and management strategies used for classroom instruction. A method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material based upon a selected approach and one approach may include many methods. An approach is a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning and describes the nature of the subject matter to be taught. A language teaching method is a set of procedures or plans for systemic presentation applied in teaching a second or foreign language (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Brown, 2007). Hence, a teaching method plays an extremely significant part in teaching English as a second language (ESL) or as a foreign language (EFL). To reach the lesson's goals, a teacher should apply the appropriate teaching method (or methods) that meet the lesson objectives and the students' needs, all while giving them motivation (Natsir, 2014). Up to the end of the twentieth century, there were nine approaches that were integrated into other methods (Celce-Murcia, 2001) in second language teaching. At the present moment, teachers and teaching programme coordinators have a greater variety of methodological options to choose from in accordance with their learners' needs, their preferences, and the constraints and assumptions of the educational institutions (Richard and Rodger, 1986). That is to say that the choice of suitable teaching method(s) depends on what fits with the teacher; his or her educational philosophy, students' needs, classroom demographics and subject area. Furthermore, methods should be designed in a way that learners acquire the language and skills for the purpose the subject was included in the curriculum. In the following review, the

researcher presents various teaching methodologies and methods used in teaching a foreign language and some of the ideas and issues of teaching and learning English and English grammar as a foreign language (EFL).

In the history of the second language (L2) learning, much research on language teaching has been applied looking for the right method to be adopted in the teaching process. Richard and Renandya (2002) reported that the twentieth century saw a great amount of research on teaching methodologies and that by the twenty-first-century research had shifted from studying generic teaching methods to rather complex thoughts about language teaching. Brown (2002) argued that methods are no longer the milestones of language teaching journey. Teachers need not depend on a permanent set of procedures imposed externally, rather, they can hinge on their own beliefs and propositions regarding language teaching and learning (Brown, 2002). He explained that teachers can trust their own observations in the classroom and find out what their students need, their strengths and weaknesses and what best strategies suit them considering their possible variations of the socio-economic and cultural environment (see Brown, 2002; Darío Luis Banegas, 2014). Researchers such as Celce-Murcia, (1997) & 2001; Larsen-Freeman, (2001 & 2003); Nassaji and Fotos, (2004); Richards et al., (2004); Richards, (2006) worked on teaching methodologies as well as the problems facing both foreign language teachers and students in teaching and learning English grammar. For example, Ellis (2006) raised some questions which address whether grammar is necessary to be taught and if so what grammar, when, and how (see 3.2. & 3.2.1.).

As in most languages, English grammar plays a pivotal role in English language learning (Al-Mekhlafi, 2011). Richards and Renandya (2002) pointed out that earlier in the twentieth century, grammar was considered the backbone of language teaching while other aspects of language learning were either ignored or given little concern. Later in the 1970s, communicative competence rose in importance while teaching grammar fell in significance (Richards and Renandya, 2002). However, teaching grammar has flourished again and has played its role in the language teaching process over the last few decades and people now believe that without the knowledge of grammar, learners will not be fully competent in producing accurate language (reading and writing) (Richards and Renandya, 2002).

3.4. Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching

Al Ghazali (2006) demonstrated that applying a teaching method or methods in teaching a new language is a decisive factor in new language learning. According to him and to many other authors such as Holliday (2001), Ellis (2003) and Nassaji and Fotos (2004 & 2011), teaching methodologies are mainly related to two main categories; the structural approach (traditional grammar-based approaches) and communication-based approaches. The structural approach sees language as a complex of grammatical rules which are to be learned one at a time in a set order (Shoebottom, 1996). Structure-based methods (see Behaviourist and Cognitive theories, 3.2.1 & 3.2.3) are based on the assumption that the major problem in learning a foreign language is learning the structure of the second language (Nassaji and Fotos, 2011). The communication-based approach (see, for example, Krashen's Monitor theory, 3.2.4) focuses on the meaning and language use in communicative contexts, in other words, it aims to acquire the ability to use and interpret the meaning in real life communication (Widdowson, 1978).

Similarities or differences between approaches and methods are based on different theories of language learning or acquisition, objectives of learning, syllabus used, roles played by both teachers and learners and materials within an approach or a method (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). Many Libyan researchers such as Omar (2014) and Giaber (2014) pointed out that the most common method and model of teaching English until the mid-1980s was the grammar translation method. Following this, the Libyan government produces and implemented a new curriculum based on the communicative approach. However, the 1980s ban of English (see 1.4.1) and its subsequent reintroduction significantly impacted the approach of teaching English in Libya for many years (Najeeb, 2012). Both the grammar-translation method and the communicative approach are very interesting methods and differ greatly, with the very classic approach being grammar translation while the communicative approach to language learning is used by teachers in many countries (Natsir, 2014).

3.4.1. Grammar Translation Method

The grammar translation method is a way of studying a foreign language that approaches the language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by the application of this knowledge by translating sentences into the first language (L1) and memorizing these

rules in order to understand and manipulate the grammar of the foreign language (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). It is known as a traditional method of language learning where great emphasis was placed on grammatical rules and the translation of L2 to L1. It was considered the main teaching method for many decades for the purpose of reading and translating literary texts where the foreign language was less used in the classroom and there was no emphasis on the use of communication skills and applying this knowledge to the interpretation of texts with the use of a dictionary (Chang, 2010). Giaber (2014) reported that the majority of Libyan teachers, either at the school level or university level, depend on this method in teaching English grammar.

The grammar translation method was firstly presented at the end of the 18th century and became widely spread in the 19th and 20th centuries (Nassaji and Fotos, 2011). Many studies have been conducted on the use of the grammar-translation method in teaching a foreign language and attempted to prove that it is one of the most effective teaching methods applicable to the second language learning, especially when used in situations where understanding of literary texts is the primary focus of foreign language study and when there is little need for a speaking knowledge of the language (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). Furthermore, Al Refaai (2013) in his study about the role of translation in language teaching methods, which was carried out with 19 teachers of English as a foreign language in King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia, explored the use of translation in foreign language learning and discovered that translation enhanced learners' competence and accuracy of language when using the L1 alongside the L2 to fulfil the needs of the learners. Chang (2011) and Mondal (2012) found that the Grammar translation method is better than the communicative approach for promoting accuracy and concluded that the ideal approach can be produced by merging the two methods (grammar translation method and communicative approach) in teaching. The grammar translation method emphasises the presentation of clear grammatical forms (Al Ghazali, 2006).

Teaching grammar deductively is a traditional approach in which grammatical structures of the target language and rules are driven firstly, and then followed by examples. The principles of this method are generally used in classes where the target is teaching grammar

structures. The main characteristics of this method are reading and writing while speaking and listening are overlooked. Also, accuracy is emphasized where grammar is taught deductively by presenting and practising grammar rules and translating these rules in the student's first language, the medium of instruction (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). The two main goals of this method, according to Richards and Rodgers (2001) are to develop students' ability to read texts especially literature texts in the second language, and to develop students' general mental discipline. Teachers following this method may argue about how grammar is better taught, deductively or inductively (Al Ghazali, 2006) but grammar is mostly taught deductively where students learn grammar rules first, translate them into the mother language, then apply some examples and explain them also in the first language. Though this method lacks communicative language due to the lack of listening, speaking and pronunciation, it is still widely used all over the world in language teaching (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

Some modern writers and researchers express their support of the use of the grammar translation method in teaching a foreign language. Cook (2010) in his book, 'Translation in Language Teaching' remarks that translation has pedagogic advantages for teachers and students. It is a support and assistant in a task that requires a thorough knowledge of acquiring a new language and is considered to be a very practical skill for many language users. Cook (1998) demonstrated that this method can be used to complement the direct method (discussed below) rather than a substitute to it. Language classroom activities may include spoken as well as written exercises, and focus on combined text rather than separated sentences. Successful translation, moreover, may be assessed by rules other than the formal lexical and grammatical equivalence. Research on second language learning also shows that second language learners may have the ability to translate English words into their first language and that by doing so, they are able to comprehend a text (Iwai, 2010). Thus, the major emphasis in this method is on the memorization of new grammatical rules to keep learners aware of how to write correct sentences (Mackey, 1965). Learners are taught grammatical rules and then apply these rules by creating new examples and have more practice on them (ibid).

Another advantage of the grammar translation method is that it can be taught and applied with any class size (Ali, 1995). Aqel (2013) summarized three benefits of using this method: firstly, it is easy to apply; secondly, when learners at the early stage are unable or struggle to express their thoughts by using a totally new system of verbal or written communication such as English and Arabic, the first act that learners can do is to translate into their native language. Thirdly, it is a kind of joining of the knowledge and culture of both languages which helps the learner cope with the ambiguity of the second language.

However, the grammar translation method like any other method has received extensive criticism. Morris (1965) claimed that the emphasis on grammatical forms and structures and memorizing vocabulary in this approach does not put enough importance on listening and speaking which are required for communicative purposes which in essence means that learners will not possess these skills. Also, texts are mostly not authentic materials and memorising grammatical rules and vocabulary do not motivate students to communicate using the target language (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). In addition, Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) noticed that focusing on grammatical forms and ignoring other skills (listening and speaking) may lead to learning about the language rather than actually learning the language. Focusing on learning grammar manifested itself in different varieties of traditional grammar-based approaches such as the grammar translation method and the audio-lingual method which will be discussed below.

3.4.2. The Direct Method

A reform movement (as referred to by Richards and Rodgers, 2001) was created in opposition to the grammar translation method during the twentieth century in several European countries as a result of increasing opportunities for communication among these countries. This created a demand for oral proficiency in foreign languages. In this, the foundations for the development of other methods and techniques of language teaching were laid down and debates and controversies were raised which have continued to the present day without a conclusive decision.

Several alternative language learning methods were developed in reaction to that of grammar-translation, one of which is the direct method. This method was described by

Mackey (1965) as one of the most widely used known and the one has caused the most controversy. The direct method (the natural method) which belongs to the communication-based approaches was developed as mention above as a response to the grammar-translation method. The direct method came also as a result of the growing interest in teaching language for speaking purposes (Altaieb, 2013). It is based on the philosophy of learning a foreign language through the direct association of foreign words with objects and actions. It sought to immerse the learner in the same way as when a first language is learnt. Larsen-Freeman (1986) pointed out that the main objective of this method is learning through an association between meaning and target language which is achieved by the teacher through the use of objects or pantomime. The teacher uses real objects and visual materials to refer directly to meaning without much explanation of the target language, all teaching is carried out in the target language and the emphasis is on active and spontaneous participation in the classroom while grammar is taught inductively where students discover the grammatical rules themselves by examining the examples in isolated sentences or work on a text or an audio and explore the grammatical rules (Nunan, 1999) and they practise the language by creating their own examples (Thornbury, 1999).

According to Taylor (n. d.), using visual aids helps teachers as well as learners very much in teaching and learning everyday vocabulary and structures of the language and students are involved directly in speaking and listening. Ali (1995) concluded that the direct method encourages learners to use everyday vocabulary and structures of the language. It is conceptualized as a 'natural' method as language sounds natural to the learners and therefore this encourages them to practise natural conversation thus helping them develop listening skills (ibid).

In general, the direct method focuses on developing oral skills and teaching grammar inductively (finding out rules by presenting linguistic forms in the target language). The teacher's role is to direct classroom activities while the student's role is more active than in the grammar translation method. The use of this method of communication strategies highly contributes to oral proficiency in the target language which is considered as the major goal of foreign language learning (Mart, 2013). However, the disadvantage of this method is its

assumption that a second language can be learnt in exactly the same way as a first (British Council, 2008).

3.4.3. Audio-lingual Method

The goal of this method is to use the target language communicatively by focusing on developing listening and speaking skills. This method, also known as the aural-oral approach, was adopted and used during and after World War II due to political reasons and the use of international radio links (Ali, 1995). It was employed on a large scale during World War II in teaching US soldiers to speak different languages as the US government recognised the need for new and more intensive language teaching methodology. Richards and Rodgers (1986) reported that after the United States of America had been involved in World War II, the US government found it necessary for Americans to set up a learning programme which could help the government communicate with the individuals who spoke fluently and were able to work as interpreters in different languages such as German, French, and Chinese. Therefore, the US government authorised American universities to work on this programme to teach the US military members the conversation skills of different foreign languages. The main objective of this programme was to help participants gain conversational proficiency in foreign languages (Richards and Rodgers, 1986), where aural-oral skills are stressed on and emphasised (Mukalel, 1998). Richards and Rodgers (1986) stated that this learning programme, named the 'Army Method', gave good results and was then adopted in most parts of the world after being renamed 'Audiolingualism' in the mid-1950s.

Freeman (2000) defined the audio-lingual method as an oral-based approach which drills students in the use of grammatical sentence patterns through repetition to enable them to use the target language communicatively. It is similar to the direct method as both of them advise language to be taught directly, without using the learners' first language. Drills and pattern practice are typical of the Audio-lingual method, for example, repetition, where students repeat what they hear; inflection, where words are repeated in different forms in different sentences; replacement, where words replace each other; and restatement, where students rephrase sentences (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). Richards and Rodgers (1986) and Larsen-Freeman (1986) described how teachers were supposed to teach language, not about

language. The disadvantage of this method is that it does not give equal importance to all skills and the role of the learner is a passive one (Freeman, 2000). Despite this, it continues to be used and continues to be criticised (Barker, 2001).

3.4.4. Communicative Language Teaching Approach

When educators and researchers of language teaching recognised that approaches focusing on grammatical structural forms were inadequate and when they realized that knowing a language is more than knowing its grammar, there was a shift away from a focus on language forms to focus on meaning and language use in communicative contexts. This came to be known as the communicative based approach (Nassaji and Fotos, 2011). After the failure of the previous methods of language teaching in teaching students to use the language effectively and appropriately in communication, linguists called for an alternative approach for communicative competence. Richards (2006) reported that the huge demand for English language teaching and learning around the world created a great demand for quality language teaching and language teaching materials and resources. From the 1970s to the present day, learners as well as employers and employees want to be able to master English to a high level of accuracy and fluency. English became an international and global language for its uses in modern sciences and technology, in other words, it became the main means of international communication and is now spoken by some 1.75 billion people worldwide and by 385 million as native speakers of English (Neeley, 2012).

Over time, communication-based approaches and methods have taken different forms. These have been developed in response to changing geo-political contexts and some rethinking about the role of grammar. Since the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century, applied linguists have talked about the communicative language teaching approach.

Since the 1970s, the communicative method has continued to change and develop. In the beginning, it was a way of developing a syllabus and teaching approach which could be suitable to learners' needs for communicative competence. This led syllabus writers to focus on language functions and notions rather than grammatical structures (Richards, 2006). Richards added that later, methodologists focused on the kinds of classroom activities that help learners gain communicative competence, such as group work activities and task work

activities. The emphasis in this method is on building the students' communicative language competence; which was defined by Savignon (1983: 303) as "the expression, the interpretation, and negotiation of meaning involving interaction between two or more persons or between one person and a written text". This knowledge or competence is also referred to as the ability to use the target language for actual communication purposes (Altaieb, 2013). The teacher's role in the communicative approach is to facilitate the learning process. The teacher is the director and adviser of the class activities, supplying the language needed and engaging students in communicative activities by dividing them into pairs or groups of three or more (Larsen-Freeman, 1987). In the meanwhile, the students' primary role is to learn to communicate by communicating in a group or teamwork for example. In this, students are seen to be more responsible in the learning process.

In order to benefit from these procedures, a mixed approach of both inductive and deductive instruction with different activities can be followed up to facilitate the process of teaching and learning grammar. She explained that inductive activities allow learners to generalize a rule from a set of examples whereas deductive activities give them the rule first then apply it to examples. The difference between inductive and deductive activities is related to the difference between Behaviourist theory (belongs to the umbrella of environmentalism) and The Universal Grammar theory (Chomsky's hypothesis of innateness). The first one emphasizing the verbal behaviour based on the observation of human behaviour stimulus and response interaction looking at language as a set of structures and acquiring it as a habit formation (Skinner, 1957). Whereas the second one presumes that the human brain has a 'Language Acquisition Device' (LAD) with a set of linguistic rules that form the Universal Grammar (see 3.2.1 & 3.2.2).

However, this does not mean that grammar teachers use only one of these two approaches. Freeman (1987) explained that the students' level of English knowledge in general (particularly grammar) coupled with the type of lesson to be taught may both play a role in shifting between the two approaches (Inductive and Deductive). She (1987) summarized that EFL teachers alternated in using two kinds of teaching approaches: those which focus on analysing the language and those which focus on using the language. However, she stated

that in teaching grammar it is not enough to analyse and focus only on the grammatical form but also grammatical meaning and use.

Richards (2006) explained that communicative competence includes some aspects of language knowledge such as understanding the use of language for different purposes and functions, how to maintain this use and how to understand and produce different types of texts. However, as mentioned earlier in the introduction, there never was and may never be a single method for all (Nunan, 2000). Mondal (2012) referred to a combination of grammar translation method and communicative method which will meet all learners' needs. In recent years, as reported by Nassaji and Fotos (2011) language-teaching professionals have become aware that teaching approaches that put their focus primarily on meaning with no attention to grammatical form and structure are inadequate. They suggested that some type of focus on grammatical forms and structures is necessary if students are to develop high levels of accuracy in learning a second or a foreign language.

3.4.5. Focus on Form (FonF) VS Focus on FormS

Long (1991) suggested an approach which he called Focus on Form (FonF) regarding the problems presented by traditional structural approaches to the teaching of grammar, and dissatisfaction with communicative based approaches. Focus on Form is defined by Long and Robinson (1999) as a shift of awareness to linguistic code features between the teacher and his or her students as a result to certain problems happened in the comprehension and production process. In other words, it is a type of instruction that focuses the learners' attention to linguistic structure within a meaningful context, or a kind of instruction that focuses on the linguistic forms in the context of meaningful communication, and presents analysis of a series of grammatical forms that can be acquired sequentially and additively. Doughty and Varela (1999) showed three criteria for Focus on Form:

1. The target of Focus on Form should arise incidentally in the otherwise content-based lesson
2. The primary focus should remain on meaning or communication
3. The teacher should draw the students' attention to form rather than leaving it to chance that students will notice linguistic features without any pedagogical assistance

Focus on FormS, on the other hand, refers to the traditional teaching of discrete points of grammar in separate lessons (DeKeyser, 1998). It is described as a 'skills-learning approach' based on the presumption that the target language learning classroom derives from general cognitive processes that require learning skills (Sheen, 2002). Focus on meaning, however, is syntactic and based on the assumption that learners are able to understand grammar inductively (Nassaji and Fotos, 2011). They pointed out that if second language learners need to develop their communicative competence and use the target language accurately and fluently for communicative purposes, then a focus on grammar should be incorporated into the target language communicative instruction. While Focus on Form focuses the learners' attention to linguistic structure within a meaningful context of communication, and Focus on Forms refers to traditional teaching of discrete points of grammar in separate lessons, the PPP approach presents grammatical rules, practise some exercises about these rules with several examples and then let students produce their own examples.

3.4.6. Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) Approach

Presentation Practice Production is a method for teaching structures such as grammar or vocabulary in a foreign language classroom, which moves the learning process from tight teacher control towards more learner freedom. Research indicates that modern language teachers prefer the PPP sequence, which has an instructive approach to teaching grammar with class interaction and exercises as a preferred method of delivery and practice. This is often the case even when teachers believe that language instruction should develop the ability of student communication (Andrews, 2003; Borg, 2015). According to Willis (1996), this approach is accepted in different areas and nowadays it forms the basis of many teaching training courses. Crookes and Chaudron (2001) reported that many teachers consider the PPP model a basic lesson structure in many current second language classrooms.

Nassaji and Fotos (2011) explained that by using the PPP model, grammatical instruction consists of a three-stage sequence: the first stage is the presentation stage when the new grammatical rule or form is usually presented by the teacher through a text, a dialogue, or a story that contains that structure or form. When applying this, the students need to listen to that text or dialogue or read them out loud. Ur (1988) considered the purpose of this stage as

a first aid to help students become more familiar with the new grammatical structure and keep it in their minds. The second stage is the practice stage, in which students are given different types of written and spoken exercises to repeat, manipulate, or reproduce new forms. The practice stage usually begins with controlled practices that focus the learners' attention on specific structures and then moves to less controlled practices with free activities (Nassaji and Fotos, 2011). Ur (1988) considered the objective of this stage is to enable students to take control of the knowledge gained in the first stage (presentation stage), to practise it, and then memorise it in their long-term memory. The third and final stage is the production stage in which students are encouraged to apply and use the rules and structures they have learned in the first and second stages (presentation and practice stages) more freely and in more communicative activities. The aim of this final stage is to fully master the new forms and structures by using them automatically and spontaneously in order to develop language fluency (Nassaji and Fotos, 2011). PPP can be an effective way to teach since it makes planning easy, can be applied by teachers who may not have much teaching experience and students have more class activities during the second and third stages. However, it is difficult to say that it is an effective way to learn. It is not true to say that all learners who do well in the practice stage can transfer their ability to the production stage, and even if they do successfully manage the production stage, they often fail to transfer this ability outside the classroom (Harmer, 2009).

3.5. Methods of Teaching Grammar

Teaching and learning English grammar as a foreign language (EGFL) is not an easy task (Pathan and Aldersi, 2014). Nazari (2012) pointed out that teaching grammar as a second or foreign language remains controversial. Researchers, as well as teachers, have a great interest in learning how to teach grammar. Different attitudes toward teaching and learning grammar (as a result of contextual and/or theoretical influences) led theorists and researchers to develop different approaches. He explained that a distinction between Focus on Forms, Focus on Form and Focus on Meaning approaches should be taken into consideration. As described by Burgess and Etherington (2002), Focus on Forms as a structural and synthetic approach to language (with reference to Cognitive theory, see 3.2.3) teaching where the focus is on forms rather than meaning. Whereas Focus on Form includes drawing the students' attention to

grammatical forms in a communicative context. The third approach is Focus on Meaning which gives attention only to meaning through communicative classroom activities (Burgess and Etherington, 2002). Focus on Form approach would appear to be more appropriate to teachers and teachers may be able to include more integrated, skills-based grammar work in the teaching process (ibid).

Dkhissi (2013) reviewed grammar teaching methods in his research on integrating teaching methods, through a random selection of 36 Moroccan university students who were handed a questionnaire as a pre-test needs analysis, and found out the reasons behind the main difficulties in students' mastery of the English grammar. The most important reasons are the absence of coordination and cohesion of teaching methods and lack of materials and text books that focus on communicative grammar. With regard to the critical situation of grammar teaching in English departments in Morocco, his paper is premised on the assumption that formal grammar teaching does not provide the expected output that the teaching-learning enterprise requires from both teachers and learners. Then he concluded with a new and more practical model: The Exploration, Production and Integration Model. This involves a blended or integrated approach to grammar teaching where teachers focus on the form and at the same time, the class activities are meaning and context based. His model contributes to a deeper understanding and practical way of exploring information, drilling rules and integrating all interactive and reasonable tools to teach grammatical structure and language (Dkhissi, 2013).

Pachler (2014) outlined four steps to enhance students' grammatical knowledge, which are: input; explanation; habit-forming; and communicative application. He contends that teaching grammar can be either explicitly or implicitly and success in teaching depends on the teacher's knowledge and experience to cope with the teaching process in order to enable students to learn grammar and acquire the language (ibid). However, Ellis (2006) reported that teaching grammar explicitly is improbable to result in the students to acquire the implicit knowledge required for the fluent and correct language. Explicit knowledge of grammar becomes implicit if students have the opportunity for more communicative practice in the classroom (DeKeyser, 1998). Burgess and Etherington (2002) concluded that while teachers

of grammar may feel that teaching grammar explicitly is preferred and appreciated by their students because they feel more secure, the teachers advocate this approach for pedagogical reasons of their own. In addition to that, teachers prefer to teach grammar explicitly because of their own learning experiences and their beliefs in the need for an explicit focus on grammar (ibid).

Historically, teaching grammar explicitly had been considered one of the main modes of language instruction up to the first half of the 20th century. During the 1970s and 1980s with the integration of the theories and methodologies based on epistemology dogma in the language teaching community, it fell out of favour and did not, according to these theories, serve in attaining communicative competence which became the ultimate goal of learning a foreign language (Conti and Smith, 2015). It can be argued here that when there are various and opposite standards, unacceptable standards indicate then unacceptable from an appropriate epistemological view. Because educational disciplines are usually described by a particular epistemological ground, people may easily become epistemological dogmatists. Nearly everyone associated with education is aware of the resulting misunderstanding and mistrust over disciplines and missed chances for productive thinking within disciplines (Bell, 1998). To avoid being epistemological dogmatist, Bell recommended some guidelines to help overcome epistemological dogma. The most challenging guideline, but may be the most worthwhile is to use tools from alternative approach or approaches if they might be more fruitful than one's received tools (ibid).

According to Krashen's (1981) natural acquisition of language, students acquire a language unconsciously and there is no need for conscious acquisition. He mentioned that explicit grammar instruction only results in an increase in conscious competence which functions as a monitor to what learners produce. To him (2003) there is a difference between acquiring a language and learning a language. Grammar rules (which are not essential to language acquisition) function only as a monitor or editor (see 3.2.4). Also, Ellis (2009) emphasised that the aim of implicit instruction is to help learners to be able to deduce the rules without awareness. However, Nassaji and Fotos (2011) reviewed the developments of teaching grammar research over the previous decades and examined the different ways in which formal instruction can be integrated with communicative activities raised two main issues:

does teaching grammar make any difference to second language learning; and which grammar teaching is appropriate to assist second language acquisition. Based on their review, they argued that both implicit and explicit instructions are required as effective pedagogy to improve second language acquisition. Ellis (2006) illustrated that there is still methodological confusion and controversy regarding grammar pedagogy. Morelli (2003) conducted a mixed methods research on high school students in New York to determine which kind of grammar instruction (explicit grammar instruction or implicit grammar instruction) and found out that students need to be taught grammar through various teaching methodologies and approaches to cater to their needs in learning grammar.

3.6. Difficulty of grammar

Grammar is a part of a language that may be difficult for many people to master. Krashen (1982) reported the idea that grammar has easy rules and hard rules, however, he did not make an explicit distinction between the two. Some other researchers described grammatical difficulty in relation to comprehension and production, such as Berent (1985). While others such as Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1999), Larsen-Freeman (2003) described grammatical difficulty in relation to linguistic form, semantic meaning, and pragmatic use. A lot of research has been conducted on grammar teaching, and many books in different languages have been written based on research data from observations, interviews with teachers of English. Sometimes the suggested pedagogies in books are based on researchers' experiences. The books aim to help both teachers and learners to recognize grammar difficulties and to understand linguistic factors that lie behind these difficulties. These books and research were written to find appropriate and relevant strategies for working with grammar. Some of these books and studies are reviewed below.

Hulstijn (1995) whose research is concerned with implicit and explicit grammar learning, in addition to learning incidental and intentional second language vocabulary, argued that grammatical difficulty can be characterised as psycholinguistic such as developmental sequences, or linguistic such as complexity of grammatical structures. The difficulty of learning grammar depends on the inherent complexity of rules and structures; the more complex the rules and structures of grammar forms, the more difficult it is for second

language students to learn (Hulstijn, 1995). This assumption is related to the Rationalist (Cognitive theory) of language acquisition.

There have been some research studies which have been conducted about learning and teaching English grammar for Arab speakers of English such as those conducted by Al-Mekhlafi and Nagaratnam (2011). Their research about difficulties in grammar in the Omani context involved 20 survey questions adopted from the questionnaire employed by Burgess and Etherington (2002) which were answered by 90 teachers of English as a foreign language in Omani Basic Education schools. Results from their research showed that both Omani students of English as well as their teachers (to a lesser extent) find English grammar difficult to learn and teach thus causing them to face serious problems. In particular, difficulties were related to the use of grammatical terminology; transfer of grammatical knowledge into communicative language use; and error correction.

In their research into EFL teaching, Al-Mekhlafi and Nagaratnam (2011) revealed that both students and teachers of English experience certain difficulties with grammar. For example, students can struggle to transfer their declarative knowledge into procedural knowledge (see 3.7). Also, DeKeyser and Sokalski (1996), who conducted their research on 82 first-year Spanish as a second language students, found out that grammatical difficulty is related to students' comprehension and production. They argued that even when there are some grammar structures which are easy to comprehend and produce, there are other grammar structures that may be easy to comprehend but difficult to produce, or easy to produce, but difficult to comprehend. For example, the mismatch between form and function in English grammar such as the use of present continuous tense to describe actions in the future. These kind of problems are typical in English grammar for learners regardless of their mother tongue (Harmer, 1995).

Ellis (2006), however, believed that these areas cannot be defined as areas of difficulty. He related these areas to teachers who are unaware of learners' weaknesses. Teachers themselves must select the grammar areas which are appropriate to teach and avoid areas of difficulties. In other words, the teacher needs to focus on learners' weaknesses, either their

weaknesses in grammar structures comprehension or grammar structures production. Teaching content can be varied depending on learners' linguistic backgrounds.

Celce-Murcia (2002) argued that for students, mastering grammar is a hard task which requires decision-making in when and why to use one form over another. Learners need to make such decisions either while speaking or writing in their L2, requiring grammatical proficiency to produce accurate grammar that can appropriately convey meaning (Celce-Murcia, 2002). In addition, the use of authentic texts for grammar instruction, according to Al-Mekhlafi and Nagaratnam's (2011) research, is generally seen to pose problems for teachers and students. Authentic materials are not produced for the purpose of teaching but are found for other purposes in real life (Burgess and Etherington, 2002). Although authentic materials are useful as they help motivate students and make the classrooms more active and interesting, they are costly and time-consuming. In addition, students may become overwhelmed with the variety of structures in these materials. Furthermore, teachers have said to find authentic texts more difficult to use as they require more time for teachers when using them and it can be difficult to produce suitable tasks from such texts (Al-Mekhlafi & Nagaratnam, 2011). It is useful for learners to learn the language in logical contexts based on context instruction, either through authentic discourse-length input or through authentic materials (Hadley, 2003). Celce-Murcia (2007) emphasized that grammatical rules are more productive when they are in a meaningful context, introduced in the authentic (or semi-authentic) communicative discourse and motivated to make the student achieve an aim or perform a task.

The aforementioned literature in addition to the researcher's personal experience shows that teaching grammar to Arabic learners is a critical issue because grammar is taught differently from teacher to teacher in Libyan universities. In other words, the variety of ways in which teachers impart their grammatical knowledge onto students does not necessarily have any relation with their own or their students' potential difficulties. At times, teachers may be unaware of the difficulties facing their students and may have chosen inappropriate methods in the teaching grammar processes, thus they may require more training in foreign language teaching methodology (Giaber, 2014).

3.7. Factors impacting EFL teaching and learning:

3.7.1. Influence of Teachers' knowledge and beliefs

Research in the field of teaching provides much evidence of the relationship between teachers' knowledge, beliefs and practices. These factors can be grouped together as an attitude consistently applied to activities that guide teachers' thoughts and behaviours (Eisenhart et al., 1988, in Farrel and Lim, 2005). Many research studies have indicated that teachers possess a series of complex beliefs about pedagogical issues including beliefs about students and classroom practices (Berliner 1987; Burns 1992; Borg 1998, 2003, 2006). Borg (2003) illustrated that there is a growing realization of the need to understand teachers' beliefs of language teaching and the impact these have on their classroom practice. Teachers' beliefs have been found to be far more influential than knowledge in determining how individuals organize and define tasks and problems (Williams and Burden, 2002). Thu (2009) pointed out that beliefs may be the factors which have the power to affect the teaching and learning process. Thus understanding teachers' knowledge and beliefs is essential to improve teaching practices and teaching education programmes (Jonson, 1994).

Teachers' knowledge and beliefs play an important role in understanding more about teaching practices and why teachers do the things they do during the teaching process. The teacher's role is not only sending out messages and information to be received by students or just acting and reacting (as a response to what students produce) between the teacher and students, it is also his/her perception and conception of an approach, a style and a way of doing it. It is his/her perception and knowledge of what the pedagogical objectives are and how to achieve these objectives (Ibrahim, 2013). Shavelson and Stern (1981) based on their research on teachers' pedagogical thoughts, judgments, and decisions over the 1970s decade they identified areas of substantive and methodological research needed to improve the classroom practice. What teachers believe determines what they do in the classroom and their knowledge and beliefs often serve to act as a filter through which pedagogical and decisions judgments are made (ibid, 1981). Teachers' knowledge and beliefs influence not only their teaching process, but also form a structured set of principles that are obtained from previous

school practices, teachers' prior experiences and teachers' individual personalities (Borg, 2003).

Richards and Rodgers (2001) in reviewing the history of language teaching methods, reported that the study of teachers' beliefs and knowledge form part of their process of understanding how they conceptualise their work in teaching a second language. Research studies on teachers' beliefs have examined personal beliefs and knowledge of the pedagogical systems of teaching and found that they informed the instructional judgements and decisions of teachers of English as a second language (Burns, 1992; Borg, 2003). Studies on teachers' beliefs and grammar teaching such as Yim, (1993); Farrell, (1999); Richards, Gallo, & Renandya, (2001); Ng & Farrell, (2003); Farrell and Lim, (2005) investigated the extent to which teachers' theoretical beliefs influenced their classroom practices and found evidence to suggest that what teachers actually say and do in their classroom are governed by their previous knowledge and beliefs. However, this is not always the case as a great deal of empirical evidence suggests that there exists inconsistency, mismatches and discrepancies between teachers' beliefs and what they really practise (e.g. Basturkmen, Loewen, and Ellis 2004; Farrell and Kun 2008; Orafi and Borg 2009; Phipps and Borg 2009). Borg (2006) pointed out that although knowledge and beliefs clearly do influence what teachers do, teachers' instructional decisions do not always reflect their beliefs. Farrell and Lim (2005) in their recent study, suggested that teachers do indeed have complex belief systems that are not reflected in their real classroom practices for various contextual reasons. These contextual factors are still the most widely recognised factor accounting for the contradiction between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practice (Davis, 2003; Li, 2008). However, the precise connections between teachers' beliefs and their real practices in a classroom are difficult to be directly observed and examined in any detailed manner (Johnson, 1994 cited in Farrell and Lim, 2005).

Tran-Hoang (2009) in his research on teachers' beliefs in teaching grammar reported that due to the value of grammar in language learning and teaching, teachers' beliefs in grammar teaching have been the subject of study for many researchers. Extensive research has been carried out to examine teachers' beliefs in different educational fields in general and in grammar teaching in specific such as (Berry, 1997; Borg, 1998; Burgess and Etherington,

2002; Andrews, 2003; Thu, 2009). The investigation of English language teachers' beliefs in teaching grammar shows that their beliefs of teaching grammar affect learners' mastery of a foreign language due to the important role that grammar holds by leading the field of language teaching (Ellis, 2006). He proposed initial categories for the analysis of teachers' practices, such as presentation/practice, inductive/deductive teaching, correction of grammatical errors and use of grammatical terminology. Some of these categories were retained where prominent in the data. It is not enough for research on language teacher cognition to seek the awareness of language teachers to identify differences or tensions between teachers' beliefs and practices; rather it attempts to explore, recognize and understand the underlying causes of these tensions. He raised some questions related to what grammar learners need, when to teach (at what stage of learning) and how (explicitly or implicitly, inductively or deductively or through a combination of more than one technique). Then he concluded with a statement of his own understanding and beliefs about the importance of teaching grammar to second language acquisition; what, when, how ...etc. to teach grammar (see Ellis, 2003 & 2006).

Borg (2003) reviewed previous studies about Teachers' knowledge and Beliefs and classified research on language teacher cognition, which included "what language teachers think, know and believe" (ibid, 2006, p. 96) in teaching grammar into three types: research on teacher's declarative knowledge about grammar, research on teachers' stated beliefs about teaching grammar, and research on teachers' cognition as indicated in their grammar teaching practices. For Borg, teachers' declarative knowledge about grammar indicates that teachers' knowledge of grammar and grammatical terms and concepts is generally inadequate, so there may be a need to provide teachers in teacher education programmes with more training on declarative knowledge about language. Borg (2003) came to three conclusions. Firstly, teachers value and promote grammar in their work. Secondly, teachers refer to the influence of their views on their previous language learning experiences. Thirdly, teachers' and students' views about grammar teaching are widely contradictory. Finally, Borg examined studies of teachers' actual practices in grammar teaching and found out that teachers' awareness of grammar had been equated with their use of explicit metalinguistic knowledge

and can have an apparent impact on how they teach grammar, and teachers' understanding of students and of the classroom can also have an influence on what they do.

The teachers also reported high levels of integrating grammar in their practices. In addition, Burgess and Etherington (2002) in their research about English for Academic Purposes teachers' attitudes (n=48) towards grammar in British universities, found that most of the teachers whom they examined indicated that their beliefs of teaching grammar could be viewed as a framework for the language. Schulz (2001) found that more than 73% of the teachers in his study agreed that studying grammar helps in learning a foreign or second language. Borg and Burns who conducted research on teachers' beliefs and practices in teaching grammar surveying 176 English language teachers from 18 countries, found that English language teachers expressed strong beliefs about the need to avoid teaching grammar in isolation, i.e. explicitly (2008).

Andrews (2003) conducted a survey and tested one hundred seventy secondary school teachers of English in Hong Kong and interviewed seventeen of them. The results showed that those who were most in favour of teaching grammar inductively had a high level of explicit knowledge of grammar. In contrast, those teachers who had a lower level of explicit knowledge of grammar supported a deductive approach to grammar teaching. Andrews (2003) also found that there was a disagreement between teachers about the usefulness of explicit grammar knowledge for learners of a second language as a result of students' strong negative reactions to learning grammar. Gianfranco and Smith (2015) reported that several studies indicate that there is often a clear mismatch between what teachers say they do in the classroom when they teach grammar and what they actually do. For example, Andrews (2003) and Basturmkien et al. (2004, cited in Gianfranco and Smith, 2015) observed that teachers' communicative activities and behaviours in the classroom mismatch and contradict their beliefs, either they do not apply what they believe in the classroom, or they do not have the enough knowledge to do so.

Andrews (2003) studied the beliefs, feelings, and understandings about teaching in general and grammar and pedagogy in particular, and illustrated that beliefs refer to cognitive responses, feelings refer to effective responses, and understandings (of the context of the

learners) inform both. He also showed clearly how individuals' prior experience and knowledge of teaching impacted their beliefs and their pedagogical practice. He also illustrated the way teachers are influenced by their understanding of the educational environment in which they work, and by the roles they play in this environment. Andrews (2003) concluded that each teacher's beliefs and practices are influenced by both the culture of the society and the culture of their institution.

Ezzi (2012) in a study about Yemeni teachers' beliefs of grammar teaching reported that when asking teachers about their approach of teaching grammar, and whether it was inductive, deductive, both approaches or none of them, i.e. their own innovated approach, they found that although teachers have a set of beliefs, those beliefs are not reflected in their classrooms practices. The study also revealed that pre-service education alone is not adequate to prepare qualified teachers for a lifetime of teaching, therefore professional teaching development needs to be continued, and teachers need on-going training workshops to keep their knowledge and beliefs updated of the new techniques for teaching grammar.

3.7.2. Appropriate Professional Development

3.7.2.1. Addressing Beliefs

According to Williams and Burden (1997), English as a second language teachers need to reflect on their beliefs in grammar teaching and sometimes need to see how powerful their beliefs are, so they may understand the rationale behind what they actually do in the classroom. As teachers typically have reasons for what they do in their teaching activities, it seems that their beliefs do play an essential role in forming their actions and behaviours in the language classroom. It is likely that what teachers believe may even be more influential than the training they receive (Thu, 2009), and such beliefs may have a great impact on what learners believe in grammar learning in particular and language learning in general. Thu's (2009) study of 32 item questionnaire was administered to 11 ESL teachers revealed that it is useful for teacher trainers to be aware of ESL teachers' beliefs in grammar teaching, so they can help teachers teach grammar more effectively by thoroughly addressing the issues during their training programmes and keep them updated with new theories and innovations in this field of education. Second language acquisition and educational researchers may ill afford to

ignore the study of teachers' beliefs in language teaching and learning, especially in grammar teaching.

However, it is also generally uncontested that teachers need to develop their pedagogical knowledge in order to become accomplished classroom practitioners (Thu, 2009). In many developing countries, teachers complain that training programmes do not prepare them efficiently for the real classroom practices (Andrews and Martin, 2001; Steyn 2004). Many teachers consider their pre-service education to be too theoretical and far away from the real classroom practice context (Brock and Grady, 2001). Moreover, teachers who cannot perform and apply their knowledge of theories in practical classroom activities can face significant difficulty (Whitaker, 2001) and have limited or no preparatory training to develop their pedagogical knowledge and practice. Teachers should be aware and understand not only what the subject matter is but also go beyond that know and understand why it is so, on what grounds and under what circumstances their beliefs in such justification which can be either weakened or even denied. They are expected to understand why a particular topic is specifically central to discipline while another is not or may be peripheral. This is what Shulman referred to as Pedagogical Content Knowledge (Shulman, 1986).

3.7.2.2. Pedagogical Content Knowledge:

Pedagogical content knowledge is considered by Shulman (1986) as one of three important categories of teacher's content knowledge, including subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and curricular content knowledge (ibid). The focus in this review will be on the area of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge. Shulman (1986) considered that pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) is a kind of practical knowledge used by teachers to guide them during classroom activities. He indicated that in order for teachers to be successful they ought to meet with both content and pedagogy together by merging the aspects of content most appropriate to its teachability.

Borg (2006) defined pedagogical content knowledge as a set of beliefs, knowledge, and thoughts which second language teachers hold about all the aspects of their profession and their work. The way in which experienced teachers explain grammatical points in a classroom is known as the pedagogical content knowledge (Johnston and Goettsch, 2000),

i.e. their knowledge of instructional techniques of a specific subject (Borg, 2006). Pedagogical Content Knowledge plays an essential role in classroom instructions and during the teaching and learning process. PCK refers to teachers' knowledge of the specific instructional techniques such as metaphors and examples, which they use to explain the content of grammar in order to make it accessible to their students (Borg, 2014). Borg (1998) pointed out that experienced teachers are those who select grammar work based on their knowledge of the demands of the immediate teaching context such as students' expectations, communicative, and motivational needs. However, students' expectations and preferences, as well as classroom management concerns, may lead teachers to decide to take actions which might be contrary to their stated beliefs (Phipps and Borg, 2009 cited in Borg, 2014). Therefore, teachers need to be knowledgeable about the alternative strategies and techniques that help them recognise and understand their learners' conceptions and preconception, in other words, to be aware of what makes their students' learning easy or difficult (Shulman, 1986).

3.7.2.3. Teacher Training and Development in Libyan Universities

When the English language was reintroduced into educational programmes in the 1990s, (see 2.3.3), Hamed (2014) pointed out that the quality of EFL teaching was poor and great problems existed, namely a shortage of English language teacher and a less satisfactory stock of books and other teaching resources. There was also an unsatisfactory infrastructure related to the language teaching industry. These factors negatively affected the quality of teaching English as a foreign language (Hamed, 2014) and since that time, Libya has been striving to improve English language teaching (Orafi, 2008).

The shortage of English-language teachers and technical skills in the labour market in the Libyan educational system reflects a continued historical failure at secondary schools as well as tertiary education levels (Giaber, 2014b). Four decades of highly centralised decision-making have failed to implement top-down educational reform and raise the standard of English language teaching at Libyan universities and to identify weaknesses in the quality of English language teaching (Almansori, 1995). Many studies conducted about teaching English in Libya such as Orafi (2008), Aboshafa (2014), Giaber (2014a & 2014b), Hamed

(2014), Alhmali (2007) recommend that Libyan programmes of teaching English need reformation, and Libyan teachers need training and development courses, especially in the field of teaching methodology. Orafi (2008) insisted that teacher training and development are regarded as essential factors in the developing process. Also, Carless (1999) argued that when training teachers for educational purposes, they need to acquire the skills and knowledge to implement new teaching methods that meet the aims of the syllabus and students' needs, particularly if they are different to their existing ones.

3.7.3. Students' Motivation

Among the factors that influence the second language (L2) and foreign language (FL) learning is students' learning motivation. Research on students' learning motivation has increased (Dörnyei, 2001) and is still expanding (Spolsky, 2000). Being among the most important factors that impact on learning a language (Fakeye, 2010), and because of the growing relation between the importance of language use and the nature of individuals, language researchers have considered this in the previous fifty years (Saidat, 2010), and have made it a subject of research interest among the sociolinguists and social scientists over this period of time, making useful contributions to the significance of attitude in language learning (Alkaff, 2013). Gardner and Lambert (1972), according to Dörnyei (1994), initiated and inspired much of the research on motivation which plays a crucial role in students' second language learning.

Dörnyei, (1998) argued that there is little agreement in the literature about the meaning of the term motivation, although it is frequently used in both educational and research contexts. Gardner (1985, p.10) defined motivation as a "combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes towards learning the language". Gardner refers to two types of motivation, integrative and instrumental, with a greater focus on the first, which refers the desire of the learner to communicate or to integrate with the speakers of the second language, i.e. the learners' interest in the country or the culture represented by the people of the target language. The second kind of motivation refers to functional reasons for learning a second language, i.e. the desire to learn a foreign language to increase the chances and choices of getting an occupation or business opportunities, for

example, getting a job, a good salary or passing an examination (Gardner, 1985). Keblawi (2000) pointed out that orientations refer to the reasons for which a student studies the language whereas motivation refers to the driving capability which involves expending effort, showing desire and feel enjoyment. Motivation, according to him is measured by three scales: attitudes towards learning a second language, the desire to learn the target language and intensity of motivation. In other words, motivation refers to expressing desire, feeling enjoyment and the driving force that involves expending effort. Gardner emphasized integrative motivation and, in fact, it is the backbone of his model. Attitudes towards the target language, speakers of that language and the learning situation are all parts of the integrative motivation (ibid).

3.7.3.1. The Key Theories of Motivation

Research on motivation in second language learning was firstly initiated by social psychologists because of their awareness of the social and cultural effects of motivation on second language learning (Dörnyei, 2003). This results in a number of motivation models that highlighted the most effective aspect of language learning such as Krashen's (1981) Monitor Model and Schumann's (1986) Acculturation Model. However, Gardner (1985) illustrated that the development of the socio-educational model was the most effective model of language learning motivation in the 1960s up to the 1980s. According to his definition motivation is a combination of effort plus desire, (see 3.7.3). As he stressed the integrative motivation the most and it was, in fact, the backbone of his model, the integrative aspect of his model comes in three different components: integrative orientation, integrativeness, and integrative motivation with differences among them (Gardner 1985a, 2001; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Dörnyei (1994) made an attempt to build a comprehensive motivational construct relevant to second language learning motivation. This includes three broad levels, the Language Level, the Learner's Level, and the Learning Environment Level; these levels reflect the three different dimensions of language (social, personal and the educational subject matter). Based on the components of this model, a number of practical motivational strategies were listed that may help language teachers understand how to motivate L2 learners.

3.7.3.2. Role of Teachers to Motivate Second Language Learners:

While Gardner divided motivation into integrative and instrumental (Gardner, 1985), Dörnyei (1994) suggested a list of strategies to motivate language learners. Most of these strategies concern the learning situation. The following are the most important strategies that help teachers motivate their students: The teacher can develop learners' awareness of the culture of L2, develop learners' instrumental motivation of the importance of L2 learning, develop students' self-confidence, decrease student anxiety, make the syllabus and materials of the course relevant to students' needs and the course objectives, increase students' interest and involvement in the tasks, adopt the role of a facilitator rather than a controller, use motivating and positive feedback and apply cooperative learning techniques such as group or team work. Dörnyei (2001) also insisted that teachers can motivate learners by using certain strategies. First, it is very important to make the classroom atmosphere convenient and friendly in order to strengthen students' confidence. Then, teachers can motivate learners with their positive attitudes. In addition, teachers should make the learning process enjoyable and interesting for the students by using multimedia or new technological teaching aids in the classroom. Oxford and Shearin (1994) also showed several points that teachers can do in order to motivate students. Teachers should know the purpose of students' learning to help them to reach that goal, and encourage them to challenge and achieve that desired goal. Teachers can build a non-threatening environment so students feel free to share different thoughts in that context.

3.7.3.3. Role of Motivation

Motivation can affect students' learning a new language such as English for Libyan students and may include favourable attitudes towards learning the language (Gardner, 1985). Success or failure in learning a language is determined by the degree of favourable dispositions that students hold towards the language in addition to the target language group and their culture (Awadh, 2011).

Gardner (1985, 1995) illustrated that students' motivations are among the indicators of achievement as they reflect the active involvement of students in a class of learning a second language. Positive attitudes will lead to better learning, and students' confidence will be

enhanced and their motivation to learn the second language will increase (Elais et al., 2011). Brown (2000) reported that second language acquisition research had shown that students' attitudes towards learning a second or a foreign language in addition to their motivation and the degree of their involvement in a learning process play the most important role for their success.

3.7.3.4. Attitudes

There are several factors that affect attitudes and motivation in learning grammar such as teachers, their qualifications and important qualities a good teacher usually displays in the classroom. Attitudes are shaped by social factors which, in turn, affect either positively or negatively the learning of grammar (Ellis, 1994). If students are interested in the country where the language is spoken, they may be more motivated to learn the language (Noels et al. 2003), whereas negative attitudes can impede language learning, if a student is not interested or has difficulties with the teacher (Ellis 1994). However, if the learners have a strong will to learn a second language, negative attitudes may have a positive effect (ibid, 2000). Finally, students' attitudes can change. According to one of Krashen's theory Monitor Comprehension hypothesis (see 3.2.4) which looks at some factors that facilitative second language acquisition such as motivation, students who have negative attitudes at the beginning of learning a language may change when they realise what a good advantage it is to know this language (Lennartsson, 2008).

Abidin, et al. (2012) observed Libyan students showed negative attitudes towards learning English as a reaction to the instructional techniques and teaching methods used by some English language teachers and the belief among the learners that the English language is not needed and is not important for their future. Students' attitudes are not only the most crucial factor in learning a second or a foreign language but also plays a major role in arousing students' interest and motivation to learn that language (Awadh, 2011). Sociolinguists and social scientists over the previous fifty years have made useful contributions to the significance of attitudes in language learning (Alkaff, 2013) as a result of the growing relationship between the importance of the language use and the nature of individuals. Attitude has played a central role in the development of social psychology during the twentieth century (Mohideen, 2005). Gardner (1985) viewed students' attitudes as a

component of motivation in language learning. Montano and Kasprzyk (2008) stated that the individual's beliefs about outcomes or results of performing certain behaviour determine his or her attitudes towards that behaviour. Theories of self-determination also distinguish between two types of motivation by reasons or goals that cause an action (Deci & Ryan, 1985). They described these two types of motivation as intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. The former refers to things that a person does inherently interesting or enjoyable, and the second one refers to things that he/she does because of external reasons which may motivate him or her. Human beings are curious, indicating full readiness for learning and may not need external incentives to motivate them to learn (ibid). Different people have different amounts and types of motivation. It is suggested that intrinsic motivation tends to be more effective than extrinsic motivation because learners realize that any specific actions are inherently valuable (McLeod, 1987). Intrinsic motivation is considered an important factor associated with self-efficacy (ibid). Self-efficacy is a person's belief in his or her innate ability to learn tasks or achieve goals (Bandura, 1982). (See Ryan and Deci, 1999 & 2000, Deci and Ryan, 1985 & 2002). Self-efficacy is one of two types of efficacy; self-efficacy (personal efficacy) which refers to person's own ability to make a difference in his/her learning and general efficacy which refers to the power of external factors that affect student's performance (Eslami and Fatahi, 2008). If teachers have a high level of self-efficacy that means that they believe in their capabilities to achieve the aim of teaching (Ormrod, 2006). Strong self-efficacy will result in increasing achievement, thus a developing administration brings out a stronger self-efficacy level (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, an individual who has strong beliefs then positively valued outcomes will have a positive attitude towards the behaviour.

These theories are helpful when considering Libyan university students' attitudes and motivation to learn English and English grammar which plays a vital role in their education and academic improvement (Al- Tamimi and Shub, 2009). Alhmali (2007) pointed out that the purpose of education in Libya is to obtain high grades and pass exams. Gardner (1985) reported that the students' attitudes play a key role in enhancing and motivating them to learn which in turn, affects their performance. Krashen (1981) states that the more positive the attitudes of the students in learning a second language, the more likely learning achievement will improve. The negative attitudes at the same time negatively affect students' achievement

in learning a second language. Students who have negative attitudes towards the English language could be affected in their level of proficiency in English. For example, some Libyan students fear being ridiculed by their friends for their mistakes while successful learners are those who have positive attitudes towards learning a second language (Khalid, 2017). Positive attitudes lead to high motivation which in turn leads to more successful and active learning. And thus, active learning which involves learning skills and discussions can have a positive impact upon students' teaching (Al Dradi, 2015). Furthermore, Elais, et al. (2011) studied a cluster sampling of a total of 376 undergraduate students who participate in their research to evaluate their stress level. The findings of the study showed that through the interactions between students who have different perceptions, beliefs and thoughts about the influence of their language learning in their future career, their confidence and motivation to learn the English language will be developed. The issue of students' attitudes as admitted by Fakeye (2010) is one of the most important factors that influences language learning. It defines student behaviour, such as any action or effort conducted by students during the learning process (Alkaff, 2013).

3.7.4. Students' Language Competence

Learners' language competence is a very important factor that affects the grammar learning. Most second language researchers agree that competence is primarily a matter of knowledge and one of the most controversial issues in teaching grammar (Ellis, 2006). The majority of students who graduate from Libyan secondary schools begin their university study with a low language competence that does not meet the English language requirement at the university level (Al Dradi, 2015). In schools in the Middle East (including Libya) that contain under-qualified teachers, Rupp (2009) finds that language learners always memorise what they have been given and then recall that in their exams. Thus, when these students graduate from their schools, they do not meet the admission standards for universities (ibid). Students' level of English is very low and causes more problems when they start studying English as a second language. Giaber (2014b) reported that English language departments in most Arab universities accept high school graduates without any consideration for their level of competence, or if they are able to proceed and learn the English language. Libya shares most of the habits, culture and education infrastructure of Arab countries; in other words, it is not

isolated from the issues surrounding other Arab countries and the challenges being faced by both students and teachers in schools as well as higher education systems are the focus of this research (Aboshafa, 2014).

The secondary school stage in Libya is the most critical and important stage, which is considered as the point when students decide what field of study they are going to continue at the university level, or for progressing to higher education in general. Skills that students achieve at secondary school are essential for their development when they join their university study (Rabab'ah, n.d. cited in Aboshafa, 2014). There are certain barriers that also have an impact on secondary school students' level of English language competence, such as large classes, a shortage of equipment and classroom space (GPCE, 2008), but Alhmali (2007) found that there was a lack of computers and language labs in the schools, which may be a solution but teachers are not yet trained to use them. It is suggested that internet access should be made available in all schools and that an adequate number of computers should be provided for teachers and students (Abidin et al, 2012). Also Aboshafa (2014) recommended that in order to raise the language competence level, a diagnostic test should be carried out prior to joining university as a requirement for studying English at university. And those who do not meet the entry requirement should be offered an intensive summer course so that their levels can be raised to meet with the university standards.

3.7.5. Secondary School Effect

As mentioned in the previous section, secondary school students graduate with a low level of language competence. And it is generally known that university studies depend mainly on secondary school study stage, and also depend on students' competence in the subject and discipline they are going to learn at university (Abushafa, 2014). Abushafa (2014) pointed out that students need to be at the appropriate level when they finish school and reach university which then would be dealing with students at the university level. Libyan students face several challenges in learning English as a foreign language in secondary schools. These challenges are attributed and related to various problems such as lack of the appropriate educational environment in the classroom, lack of teaching facilities, teaching methodology and methods and students' attitudes and motivation (Zaghwani, 2014). Alhamali (2007), in

his study which involved three surveys questionnaires with very large samples (1939 in all) from a wide range of schools and catchment areas Libya, discovered that some Libyan secondary school students were more interested in learning English than in learning other subjects. However, Abidin et al. (2012) observed Libyan secondary school students' attitudes towards learning English and they found that students showed negative attitudes towards learning English due to the reaction to the belief among the students that the English language is not needed and is not important. The impact of a low-level secondary school on university and higher education in general and in English language departments is considered as one of the main causes of difficulties in teaching and learning English in general and grammar in specific (Abushafa, 2014).

3.8. Summary and Gaps in the Literature

A large number of objective research accounts suggested by second language theorists and researchers are available regarding difficulties in learning grammar. However, little research has been carried out to investigate these difficulties from both second language teachers' and learners' perspectives. This study attempts to fill this gap by investigating the question of grammatical difficulty from the perspectives of Libyan English language learners. It clearly investigates the teaching methodologies, students' motivation to learn and their language competence which affect their learning process and their ability to use grammar accurately.

This chapter discussed and critically reviewed the literature related to teaching and learning of English and English grammar. Understanding the nature of the English language programmes and becoming familiar with the history of the higher education in Libya is crucial for developing an effective language programme, which addresses the students' and teachers' needs to improve the quality of teaching and learning English as a second or a foreign language. The chapter also highlighted the purpose, types, approaches and models of teaching grammar. In addition, the discussion included students' attitudes and motivation towards learning English as a second language and its grammar and students' learning approaches in Libya. Several studies have been undertaken to show the significance of teaching methods and the importance of identifying students' needs. A review of some previous studies has been presented. To run and conduct training courses for academic staff members, higher education management, curriculum designers and university decision

makers need to have the knowledge of training and teaching strategies and approaches in order to develop and make the change successfully.

Teaching and learning grammar has received plenty of attention in Western Europe and in North America and some studies have been conducted in Turkey as well. The majority of these studies are set in educational contexts with well-established systems of education, but many of them lack practical implications. There is no indication whether the findings of these studies have been successfully applied. Many Libyan scholars agree on the importance of grammar in learning English, but they lack practical implementation. The following chapter discusses the research methodology and methods adopted by this study.

Chapter four: Research Methodology and Methods

4.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses and justifies the ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions guiding the study. It discusses the methodology, methods and research design that are applied in the present study to achieve the research objectives and successfully answer the research questions. Creswell (2009) outlined that a research design includes three main elements: research philosophy, i.e. research paradigm, research strategies of inquiry, i.e. methodology and methods for data collection, and data analysis. These issues are dealt with in the following sections. Firstly, it addresses the ontological assumptions as well as theoretical framework and the epistemological stance underpinning the current study. Secondly, it presents the methodological approach, outlining the mixed methods design and detailing the data collection and data analysis instruments. It also considers the reliability and validity of such methods of analysis employed to fulfil the objectives of the research. This is followed by a description and justification of the study sample. Finally, it presents the ethical considerations.

Before discussing the research methods, it is important to give some consideration to philosophical issues because, as Bryman (2012) argued, research methods are not neutral tools, but are linked to visions of the nature of the social world and how it can be understood. The next section will address the most fundamental question facing researchers, from which all others flow, that of the ontological assumptions.

4.2. Research Philosophy and Paradigm

The research philosophy, as illustrated by Saunders et al., (2009) contained important assumptions about how a researcher sees the world. These assumptions support your strategy and the methods he/she chooses. Guba and Lincoln (1994) pointed out that a researcher adheres to in his/her research study the philosophical stance and epistemological and ontological perspective. Therefore, deciding which methods of data collection and data analysis depend on the role played by those philosophical perspectives and the chosen

methodology (Cohen et al., 2007). It is essential for the researcher to choose a research paradigm (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

4.2.1. Paradigm

A paradigm is defined by Guba (1990) as a well-known approach that implements a kind of design or parameters for a community of researchers to apply in their profession. A paradigm relates to certain beliefs that basically guide and help researchers' actions to develop answers to certain questions related to their study: what is a researcher going to observe, inspect, examine and understand? How to structure these questions, how to represent the results of the investigations and then, how and by whom is the work conducted (ibid)? Other authors such as Crotty (1998) used different terms to refer to the same notion: epistemology and ontology (Neuman, 2000). Henn et al. (2006) argued that regardless of the term used, all agreed that the research is undertaken within a research paradigm that includes a set of assumptions about how the study is conducted.

A research paradigm significantly guides the researcher to work within a frame that suits the research questions, the context of these questions and provides insights on how data are going to be analysed. This leads to different methodologies used in the research. In this regard, the division between positivism and social constructivism becomes relevant, because they do not represent the same research paradigm that aims to explore different questions reflected in the design of research, data collection and data analysis (Shulman 1986; Guba and Lincoln 1994).

Any paradigm involves three guiding principles: ontology, epistemology, and methodology (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Ontology which concerns reality; epistemology relating to knowledge about the world and the relationship between the knower and the known and methodology which concerns how people gain knowledge about the world (Matsuda and Silva, 2005). These three principles are considered fundamental in educational and social research. In the following subsections, the researcher will explore and provide useful background on the research traditions/paradigms presented as this will help to give context to the decisions the researcher made about the methodology he employed.

4.2.1.1. The Ontological Assumptions

Ontology is the study of being which is concerned with the existence; with the nature of actuality and the structure of truth (Crotty, 2003). It is concerned with the kind of world we are investigating, its nature of existence, and the structure of reality (Gray, 2004). Guba and Lincoln (1989) pointed out that the ontological assumptions are those that respond to the question: What can a researcher know and what is the kind of reality a research has? It is the study of claims and assumptions about the nature of social reality, and claims about what is there, how it looks, what layers they form and how these layers cooperate with each other (Blaikie, 1993). Bryman (2008) reported that the assumption that underpins the interpretive paradigm is the ontological position that proposes the existence of various realities within the social world. In this assumption, it is affirmed that social phenomena and their implications are being achieved by social actors. A specific social phenomenon which is under investigation is not only the product of social interaction, but it is also revised and changed constantly. Recently, the notion has included the researcher's own accounts of the social world (Guba and Lincoln, 1999). Creswell (1994) pointed out that ontology relates to the propositions researchers make about the existence of a phenomenon and the nature of reality. Thus, ontological considerations of a particular phenomenon would raise queries about whether something exists as researchers believe it to, or independently of their beliefs. It is assumed that the world being investigated is a world of inhabitants who have their own ideas, interpretations and implications to it.

The researcher of the present study believes that there is no one reality, but rather multiple realities and that the ontological position underlining the current study is that of different versions of reality as seen by different people in the world. These realities are subjectively defined by those people (teachers and students) whose experiences and knowledge are not the same. Even if they have similar experiences, they may construct their experiences differently. For this reason, the researcher used three different data collection instruments: survey questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis to explore the difficulties and challenges that different groups (teachers and students) encounter in the grammar teaching and learning process. These two groups who participated in this study represent multiple realities about difficulties in the grammar learning. There are two main reasons for

these different realities: the first reason is that teachers have different views, experience and perspectives from students, and secondly, each group consists of different participants from different colleges and higher institutions. The combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques allowed the researcher to explore different understandings and perspectives about the nature of this social world of human beings and to interpret students' and teachers' feelings, attitudes, experiences and perceptions about the reality of teaching and learning English in general and the different difficulties and challenges that they encountered in grammar in specific within the Libyan university context.

4.2.1.2. Epistemology

Whilst ontology relates to the consideration of the nature of reality, epistemology concerns understanding the nature and scope of knowledge, its assumptions and bases about the status of knowledge (Schwandt, 2003), about the knower and the known. Saunders et al. (2007, p.102) pointed out that "an epistemology is a branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge in the field of study." Epistemology assumptions can be regarded as a question of the 'what' with the 'how', in order to explore knowledge (Partington, 2002) about the knower and the known. Epistemology is considered as knowledge about knowledge and it is a philosophy that assumes a separation between knowing and being. Different paradigms (such as positivism and interpretivism) hold contrasting epistemologies as well as ontology (Henn et al., 2006). The epistemological position used in this study is constructivism (interpretivism) which is known as the view that all facts, and thus every meaningful existence, depends on social practices, made up within and outside the interaction between individuals and their world and developed and carried out in a fundamental social context (Crotty, 2003). Thus, meaning is not discovered, but constructed and interpreted. There are two epistemological assumptions that will be discussed in the following subsections namely positivism and interpretivism. And to defend the researcher's choice of this paradigm, the following two sections will be about positivism and interpretivism in order to explain why he applied an interpretivist rather than a positivist approach.

4.2.1.2.1. Positivism

Positivism according to Denscombe (2007) is an approach that attempts to adopt and use a natural science paradigm of research for the investigation of the social world. Saunders et al.

(2003) reported that positivism is based on a highly structured methodology for enabling a researcher gain statistical generalization and quantifiable observations and assessing results with the help of statistical techniques. Positivism is commonly used in natural sciences as the philosophy of unchanging world global law and seeing everything that happens in nature. Viewing this, it can be said that the positivist paradigm is a link between social science and practice from one side and the natural scientific model of investigation from another side. In other words positivism is an attempt to investigate social phenomena informed by scientific principles (Crotty, 1998). Thietart et al. (2001) illustrated that positivism aims to explain the reality that exists in itself and has an objective character, and the reality of the observed subject which are independent of each other. Positivism assumes that the social world exists externally and that its characteristics can be measured through objective methods rather than subjective methods such as emotions, reflection or intuition (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). The positivists view is to test the theory and gather facts to allow hypothesis testing (Saunders et al. 2012). Guba and Lincoln (1994) pointed out that positivism assumes dualism between the researcher and the investigated object, and therefore favours standardised, structured methods such as observation and experiment, that facilitate replication, in order to test theory and develop laws (Bryman, 2012).

The positive paradigm deals with social phenomena through the lens of its regularity with a focus on broad patterns and large scale trends, as well as the effects and consequences of what is under investigation (Neuman, 2005, and Taylor 2005). Esterbay Smith and Lowe (2002) explained that the positivist paradigm provides some matches in the social world in that its properties can be scaled, and the differences can be displayed numerically. This assumption leads to the main property of the positivist paradigm, i.e. objectivity. Measurements and the belief that most things are measurable lie at the centre of this paradigm.

Several works argued that the positivist paradigm pays insufficient attention to the differences between the natural and the social sciences (cf. Guba and Lincoln 1994, and Silverman 2013). Working under positivism, it is difficult to maintain objectivity social science (Collis and Hussey, 2003). Furthermore, researchers working within the social sciences are influenced by their values, beliefs and experiences of the social phenomena they are dealing with. In the

next subsection, the researcher sheds light on the role of the constructivist approach, and the methods that are associated with it.

4.2.1.2.2. The role of the Social Constructivist Stance (Interpretivism) in the Current Study

Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) named Interpretivism as social constructivism, where the focus is on the way people make sense of the world and determine reality through sharing their experiences using language. It is the way humans attempt to make sense of the world around them (Saunders et al., 2012). Mascolo and Fischer (2005) defined constructivism as a philosophical position whereby knowledge towards certain phenomena arise through the process of active construction. And within this approach, the emphasis is placed on the significance of cultural and social context. Creswell (2009) reported that this approach refers to the subjective aspects of human activity by focusing on the meaning rather than the measurement of social phenomena. This approach aims to understand the context in which participants act, to understand the process in which events and actions take place (Maxwell, 1996 and Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The constructivist approach offers the most adequate framework for language teaching (Roberts, 1998). This is because it realizes the interdependence of the personal and social dimensions of teacher development. This approach capitalizes on the significance of culture as well as context in exploring and understanding what is happening in a society in addition to constructing knowledge through research, which is based on this exploring and understanding (Derry, 1999).

The constructivist approach focuses on knowledge constructed from the individual as well as the context in which it is constructed. It emphasizes education for social transformation and reflects the theory of human development that places the individual in a socio-cultural context (Abdal-Haqq, 1998). Bryman (2004) pointed out that this approach is associated with phenomenology, which is a philosophy that refers to the way people understand the world around them and how the philosopher should develop perceptions of his hold on this world. It seems that the social constructivism of language learning interacts directly with the nature of language learning in the classroom (Freeman & Johnson, 1998) learning.

According to this approach (constructivism) in educational research, individuals are unique and largely non-generalizable; there are multiple interpretations as well as multiple perspectives on single events and situations. Also, situations need to be examined not only through the researcher's view but also the participants' views (Cohen et al., 2007). The present study is informed by the constructivist (interpretive) paradigm which requires culturally-derived and historically-situated interpretations of the social world in which the researcher, as well as the participants, live (Crotty, 1998). This includes developing a description of participants by looking at the issue from their different perspectives, analysing data for themes or categories, and finally making an interpretation and drawing conclusions about the research problem (Wolcott, 1994). In order to understand the research problem and answer the research questions, the researcher must see events from the participants' point of view, how they look at teaching English and English grammar and thereby describe and constitute them of a certain sort (Pring, 2004). The researcher assumed in this study that teachers' as well as students' understanding, perceptions, experiences and practices differ from one to one, due to certain individual and environmental factors such as the teacher's training and experience, students' language competence and motivations, class size and many other factors. In particular, the researcher assumed that these factors do exist in the Libyan university context. The aim of the study, therefore, was not to explore and evaluate an objective reality, but to explore multiple interpretations of this reality of cooperative learning (cooperative education) as constructed in the Libyan higher educational context. By adopting this approach, the researcher is able to explore and understand the context within which learning of grammar of EFL is taught and learnt at the Libyan universities. This also helped him reveal the difficulties and challenges that teachers and students of English language encountered in their teaching and learning of English grammar. The researcher aligned himself mostly with constructivists (see 4.2.1.2.2) and a little bit with pragmatists (see 4.2.1.2.3).

The researcher applied triangulation of methods by addressing some varieties of teachers' and students' perspectives and views which were not only based on qualitative evidence but also guided by the questions of the questionnaire. Although the researcher confirms that quantitative and qualitative data are not precisely calibrated because they represent different views of world vision, he used different forms of evidence to build a better understanding of

the multiple realities than one approach. This was to provide a fuller recognition of the phenomenon investigated, because the researcher supposed that using only one method would provide inadequate evidence, in spite of its value (Wall and Alderson, 1993). It was possible for the researcher to conduct a single research method such as a qualitative method, however, when doing that, it would be difficult to know how the views were distributed across a large number of participants. Survey questionnaires are particularly useful when you want to contact large numbers of participants to gather data on the same problem or problems often by sitting the same questions to all (Jankowicz, 2000). Questionnaires are easier to get responses from a large number of people and the data gathered may therefore be seen to generate findings

Another advantage of using triangulation is that the researcher, by doing so, was able to choose and achieve the best design for research, because the theory about the epistemological origins of a given approach may undermine this ability. It would not be possible to include a survey in the study if the researcher has adopted the epistemological position and denied the other. The adoption of a mixed methodology, at the epistemological level, helped him to avoid this philosophical problem.

It might be argued that the use of the survey questionnaire reflects a positivistic paradigm aiming for generalization resulting from the questionnaire. However, it is not the case in the present research where the researcher applied a triangulation of data, i.e. this study is mostly constructivist and little pragmatist. Rather, this data was intended to feed into and support the later qualitative stage of the research and to assist in the interpretive process. Troudi (2010) agreed that the use of a particular research method should not be interpreted as an indicator of an epistemological position because it is what the researcher's approach to the study and what he wants to do with the data that reflects the paradigmatic nature of the study.

It might also be argued that the use of the semi-structured interviews reflects epistemological assumptions paradigm that meaning is jointly constructed between the subject and the object of the research which presupposes that there is no one objective truth to be discovered. Wellington (2000) argued that since the semi-structured interviews are designed to draw views and perspectives from participants, the goal is not to establish a kind of truth that cannot

be separated in an educational context. Interviews play an important role following up the survey questionnaire, and are an important way to check the accuracy of the impressions the researcher has gained from the survey questionnaire.

4.2.1.2.3. Pragmatism

Nastasi et al. (2007) reported that pragmatism is a philosophy that considers the research questions as the most important factor, the research context and research consequences are driving forces determining the most appropriate methodological choice. Saunders et al. (2012) pointed out that pragmatists are not clinging to either positivism or constructivism. They added that pragmatism allows to combine quantitative and qualitative approaches, and the exact choice will be possible on the particular nature of the research. It supports the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches, but not an incompatibility between them.

Though, as Silverman, (2004) argued, the selection of the research methodology is determined by the researchers' theoretical prospect and also his stance towards the strategies in which the data will be interpreted. The philosophical ground of pragmatism is that it allows more option of interrogation and does not limit the research stance. In the present study, the researcher adopted a mixed-methods approach and an epistemological mix by combining quantitative and qualitative research as complementary strategies appropriate to different types of research questions. A quantitative survey questionnaire was applied to collect numerical data in order to explain and study phenomena by collecting numerical data which can be analysed statistically (Creswell, 1994). Also, quantitative survey questionnaire can provide estimates of large samples. Furthermore, it is appropriate to know the range of agreement or disagreement with the teachers' and students' views related to teachers' use of teaching methods, their practical knowledge of teaching and learning English and English grammar, students' attitude and motivation towards learning grammar. Whereas qualitative methods (semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis) were used to understand the nature of these views, to describe, discover patterns and to generate themes to explore more of their views (see 4.4.). In the following section the researcher presents the most prominent aspects of research methodology and methods, which have been applied to inform this thesis.

4.3. Methodologies and Methods

Research methodology is the strategy or plan of actions which lie behind the choice and use of specific methods (Crotty, 1998). Research methods are often confused with research methodology. Many people do not distinguish between methodologies and methods, some people consider them as the same, while others believe that they are interchangeable, however they are distinct. Although methodologies and methods are different, they are linked to each other. Methods are range of approaches used in research to gather data to be used as a basis for inference and interpretation, for explanation and prediction (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). Methods are used as research tools for gathering and analysing data, a component of research, for example a qualitative method such as interviews. Whereas methodology indicates a combination of theory and methods within the evaluation process (Mertens and Hesse-Biber, 2013), or a justification and/or logic for using a specific research method. While methods refer to strategies, procedures, and techniques of gathering and analyzing data (ibid). Della Porta and Keating (2013) referred to a method as a way of acquiring data while methodology is the way in which the method or methods are used. Greene (2002) reported that a method acquires its meaning from the methodology that shapes and guides its use, and methods must be implemented in a systematic methodology framework. Several authors such as Van den Akker et al, (2006), Noor (2008) and Creswell (2013) agreed that an appropriate research study depends on an appropriate research methodology as well as appropriate research methods; thus any research study need to justify these concepts and how they interface with one another in order to produce reliable research findings.

Although there is disagreement between authors about whether the discussion of mixing methods must be a discussion of mixing methodologies, they agree that methods being instruments of data collection and methodology being the way a researcher designs his/her study (Aldradi, 2015). For example, the researcher agrees that the discussion of mixing methods must be a discussion of mixing methodologies (Greene, 2002). Whereas others disagree about the possibility of mixing research methodologies although, they agree that a researcher can decide to choose to design his/her study as mixed methods (tools of data collection and methodology) research. The difference between methodology and methods must be drawn and recognized since both concepts are different in terms of their nature and

objectives. It can be said that the main difference between them lies in the notion of dependence (Wilson, 2002), where methods rely on the methodology in that the latter does provide the philosophical groundwork for methods. In other words, methods of a certain research depend on the methodology of that research in making available why these methods are appropriate and why other methods are appropriate for the purposes of the research (Wilson, 2002).

The current study is exploratory with a multi-method approach where the researcher explored and examined the phenomenon under investigation in order to reach the research objectives. This provides deep intuitive understanding and comprehension of the focuses of teaching and learning grammar difficulties through using a variety of data collection and analysis and an overall interpretive methodology that attempt to gain an understanding of these difficulties as encountered by the Libyan teachers and students. This interpretive methodology attempts to justify why the participants hold different views and perspectives.

By adopting interpretive stance, the researcher employed a mixed methods approach which is considered by Johnson et al. (2007) as the third methodological or research paradigm (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007; Greene, 2007; Creswell, 2009; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). It is a procedure for collecting, analysing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study using a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods to explore difficulties and problems facing both teachers and students in Libyan universities and the main reasons that lie behind. The researcher started his study with the administration of the survey questionnaire. The findings obtained from the quantitative analysis of the questionnaire informed the administration of the semi-structured interviews. The findings of these two data analyses are discussed and interpreted together and then with findings of the third method of collection (document analysis) which provide a support to the general findings of the study. Both quantitative and qualitative evidence informed the report of findings of the study. This design is suitable for research on teachers' as well as students' knowledge of learning grammar, because of the need not only to investigate the participants' views of their knowledge, but also to explore the different understandings and interpretations which they bring with them to the situation.

The researcher employed multi-method approach to explore and gain knowledge about a phenomena in order to analyse the relations among elements of these phenomena (Kumar, 1999). Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods serves different purposes and can be used to complete each other (Richards, 2001). Robson (2011) stated that the combination of methods can improve the quality of research findings, and may provide a comprehensive picture of the project. This kind of combination of methods is used to enhance breadth and depth of understanding (Yin, 2006). The most important thing in this study is to end up with useful and valuable results, no matter which research method or methods are used (Patton, 2008f). The main goal for the researcher is to use the data to improve the quality of learning English language grammar and to achieve the research objectives. Methods are also considered by Hallebone and Priest (2009) as procedures, tools and techniques needed to implement certain tasks required by the methodologies. Research methodology is the application of various systematic procedures and techniques to create scientifically obtained knowledge (Bryman and Bell, 2007). To sum up, research methodology is a systematic scientific approach that is fundamental towards data collection of research.

Robson divided these multi-method designs according to sequence and status of data collection methods into six strategy designs; three of them are sequential, and the rest are concurrent. In the first sequential designs, the collection and analysis of quantitative data come first followed by collection and analysis qualitative data, and both of them are integrated into the interpretation part of the research whereas the second sequential design takes the opposite way where the quantitative data collection comes later after the qualitative data collection. As explained by Robson, in the first two designs, the priority is given to the preceded method, but in the third design where either method may precede the other, the priority is given to any one of them, then the findings will be integrated into the interpretation stage. In the concurrent designs, the two methods are used either separately or independently (triangulation design), or one is used primarily but embedded or nested by a secondary method (nested design). The sixth design is called concurrent transformative design where the researcher uses a specific theoretical perspective (Robson, 2011). In the present study, the researcher adopted a sequential design where the collection and analysis of quantitative data

came first followed by collection and analysis of qualitative data, and both of them are integrated into the interpretation part of the second phase of the research. The general purpose of this design firstly, is that a combination of methods can improve the quality of research findings, and provide a comprehensive picture of the project. Secondly, the qualitative data helps explain and build upon initial quantitative results (Creswell et al., 2003). In other words, the qualitative (second) phase of the study is designed so that it follows and connects the results of the quantitative (first) phase (Creswell, 2006), and the preceded method helps identify and formulate the research problem (Robson, 2011).

The current study is adopting an exploratory methodology with a mixed method approach (multi-method design). The study is divided into two phases. A two-phase multi-method design was employed where qualitative data was used to help explain and build upon initial quantitative results. The questionnaire as well as the interviews contain questions related to teaching methods and students' attitudes towards grammar and questions related to difficulties and problems faced by both groups of participants (see appendices 1-4). The researcher started with the administration of the survey questionnaire in the first phase. The quantitative evidence obtained from the statistical analysis of the questionnaire informed the administration of the semi-structured interviews in the second phase. Thus, the qualitative evidence originated from the analyses of the semi-structured interviews and the document analysis. Both quantitative and qualitative evidence informed the report of findings of the study. This interpretive methodology attempts to justify and explain why the participants hold different views. Table 4.2. below describes research questions and research instruments and participants.

This design of triangulating data and methodologies is suitable for studying teachers' knowledge and perceptions towards teaching grammar because of the need to investigate the participants' different views of professional practical knowledge, and to explore the different understandings and interpretations which they bring with them to the situation. It is noted here that while studying teachers' knowledge, a researcher should use methodologies that integrate their perspectives as well (Golombek, 1994).

This type of triangulation used by the researcher is referred to by Greene et al. (1989) as mixed methods to avoid the pitfalls of each of the research instruments. The quantitative and qualitative methods (survey and interviews) of data findings and analysis covered the research questions (1, 2 and 3). Whereas the fourth question will be covered by the findings and analysis of the all data methods (survey, interviews and document analysis). One of the advantages of using a mixed-method approach is that it allows for patterns emerging in the survey data to be confirmed by, and explored further through, individual learner portraits emerging through the interviews and the document analysis (Lamb, 2007). Aldridge, Fraser & Huang (1999) highlighted the need for combining methods for collecting quantitative data such as questionnaires and others for collecting qualitative data such as interviews and others. The researcher collected data of the questionnaires to answer the first two research questions and could be used as a starting point for the data collection of the second phase involving different research methods including interviews and document analysis.

In the current study, the use of mixed methods was very useful in terms of triangulation where more than one research method are used as well as complementarity where the weakness of one research method is complemented by the strength of another (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Moreover, using more than one method can reduce some of the biases that might occur when only one method is used. Consequently, the findings would be more representative of participants' views. (Greene et al., 1989) reported that five reasons for conducting mixed methods research: triangulation, complementarity, initiation, development and expansion. Consequently, the interpretation of the data is more meaningful.

Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) stressed the importance of focusing attention on the research problem in social science and then using multiple approaches to derive knowledge about the problem. The use of one method alone when conducting a research in education in general and in teaching in specific ,could not help a lot in clarifying the picture of what teachers and students do and the knowledge underpinning their actions. In the current study, as pointed out by Pring (2004) questionnaires alone do not tell everything about the respondents' true accounts. In fact, questionnaires that lead to similar responses to the same questions may give a distorted picture of how different people actually felt or understood a situation. To avoid

this, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews in the second phase for a deeper insight and clearer picture about the results gained from the questionnaire. Still not enough for the researcher (interviewer) to gain the whole picture and grasp the significance of what is said (ibid), the document analysis can help reach the best possible understanding of the research problem. Documents can be used for gathering data in mixed-methods research (Creswell, 2005) and are used in this study as a supplementary instrument to help find useful answers to support the preceded methods and to contribute to answering the fourth research question regarding the pedagogical approaches that meet the diversity of students' needs in learning grammar. Cohen *et al.* (2011) pointed out that documents do not speak for themselves but they require careful analysis and interpretation. All these factors make combining both quantitative and qualitative methods a solid basis for educational research.

Second language researchers are recommended to use such type of combination of methods in L2 learning research (Matsuda & Silva, 2005) to complement each other and surmount difficulties and the potential challenges of any single method. Similarly, Calderhead (1996) pointed out that research on teachers' knowledge requires the use of multiple methods because of the multi-dimensionality of the key variables in this kind of research. Thence, researchers gain a fruitful investigation needed to examine both the number and nature of the same phenomenon (Ritchie, 2003). All these factors led the researcher follow the sequential mixed method design in the current study (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998 and Creswell, 2003) in which the quantitative and the qualitative phases of the study were conducted in sequence.

Considering the research questions of the present study:

1. What, according to lecturers and students, is the impact of the approaches taken by lecturers on students' learning and students' attitudes?
2. What are the perceived difficulties and problems facing Libyan university English language teachers and English language students in teaching and learning English grammar?
3. How do Libyan teachers of English teach grammar and how they deal with difficulties?
4. Based on the findings of the study, what are the recommended pedagogical approaches that meet the diversity of students' needs in learning grammar?

The research questions related to teachers' knowledge and practice (1, 2 and 3) can be answered through quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. Whereas the fourth question will be answered according to the findings and analysis of the full data set including all three types of data, in order to present recommendation about the use of the most appropriated pedagogical approach in teaching grammar. In this case, quantitative and qualitative methods are not seen as competing or contradictory, but instead they are viewed as complementary strategies appropriate to different types of research questions and issues (Snape & Spencer, 2003).

To sum up, the purpose of using multi-method approach is to obtain complementary quantitative and qualitative data bringing together the different strengths of the used methods (Punch, 2009). Also, the use of a multi-method approach can explain more and fully the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one viewpoint (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007).

The findings obtained from the questionnaire represented a starting point for revealing the views of the participants which were studied in depth through the use of the semi-structured interview as well as the document analysis.

4.4. Research Methods

The researcher presents a detailed account of the methods of data collection and data analysis in this section to ensure the trustworthiness of both the process and the evidence. It is very important to give a clear account of research methods as part of displaying the credibility of the evidence and to explain how the research was conducted and why particular approaches and methods were chosen to meet the objectives of the research. The researcher used three methods in the current study to collect quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions. The methods are: a questionnaire, a semi-structured interview and a document analysis. The aim and justification of each of them are presented in the following sub-sections.

4.4.1. Data Collection Methods

There are two main different methods for collecting research data as stated by several authors such as Easterby-Smith et al., (2002), Saunders et al., (2009) and Bryman and Bell (2007).

These methods according to Easterby-Smith et al. (2002) are generally referred to as the traditional methods; quantitative data collection methods and qualitative data collection methods. However, quantitative and qualitative methods can both produce valuable information in any evaluation. Saunders, et al. (2012) stated that the priority or importance can be given to either quantitative or qualitative research and may vary, so that one methodology has a dominant role, while the other plays a supporting role (see 4.4), depending on the purpose of the research project.

In educational research studies, the research questions and objectives can determine what methods to be adopted. To answer the four research questions of the current study, the researcher designed three research instruments: a questionnaire, a semi-structured interview and a document analysis tool. Both the questionnaire and the interview consisted of two versions: one for teachers of English and one for the students, whereas the document analysis tool was applied only to samples of work from students. Table (4.1) below shows each of the research questions vis-à-vis the research instruments and the number of participants used to help answer each

Research Instruments	Participants	No	Research Question
Teachers' Questionnaire	20	1	What, according to lecturers and students, is the impact of the approaches taken by lecturers on students' learning and students' attitudes?
Students' Questionnaire	204	2	What are the perceived difficulties and problems facing Libyan university English language teachers and English language students in teaching and learning English grammar?
Teachers' interviews	5	3	How do Libyan teachers of English teach grammar and how do they deal with difficulties?
Students'	14		

interviews			
Students' documents analysis together with the findings of the questionnaire and interviews.	32	4	Based on the findings of the study, what are the recommended pedagogical approaches that meet the diversity of students' needs in learning grammar?

Table 4.1. Research questions and research instruments and participants

4.4.1.1. Quantitative Data Collection Method (Questionnaire)

Creswell (2009) pointed out that a quantitative study is a way of testing objective theories by investigating the relationship between variables. These variables, in turn, can be measured on instruments so that numbered data can be analyzed statistically. It generates statistics by using an instrument such as survey questionnaire. This data collection instrument for collecting data in this study will be a survey questionnaire which is very commonly used in language learning research. The aim here is to gain an understanding about the challenges and difficulties facing Libyan university English language teachers and students in teaching and learning English grammar from a breadth of respondents, to answer the first and second research questions, and to gain a primary answer to the third research question. The interviews at the same time play a complementary role to support in answering the second and third questions. Robson (2011) reported that applying for larger samples in survey research which usually seeks to incorporate more variables, can help the researcher increase usefulness and reliability of the results, the larger the samples required, the better the study will be.

The questionnaire employed closed ended questions. An advantage to this instrument of collecting data is that the data can be validated using statistics, and can be used to measure the occurrence of various views. Also this method can be followed up by qualitative research to explore some findings further. The questionnaire contained 5 point Likert scale questions to explore the similarities and differences between participants' views. Meijer et al. (2001)

used this format of a questionnaire to explore the similarities and differences in language teachers' practical knowledge and found it useful.

4.4.1.2. Questionnaire as a Means of Data Collection

The first and only quantitative data collection instrument to be used in the current research is a survey questionnaire to scale the teachers' and students' views and perceptions about the aspects of learning English and English grammar in Libyan universities. The questionnaire was formulated with due care using closed-ended questions for both participants; teachers and students. Brown (2001) reported that closed-ended questions are marked by providing uniformity across questions are easier for the participants to answered and less likely to be skipped, and are relatively objective. The close-ended questions used in this questionnaire were in the form of multiple choice that required respondents to choose and circle or underline one of five answers in a Likert scale that best suits their views. The questionnaire was self-completion and written in English in very simple sentences (see appendices 1 & 2). Questionnaires according to Greener (2011) are a popular instrument of collecting research data, but they must be chosen appropriately to address the research problem(s). Dornyei (2003b) described questionnaires as widely used in English language teaching and known for their efficiency in collecting information and being able to process them easily.

Questionnaires can be easily conducted and can also be self-completed by the participants. The wording of each question in the questionnaire enables all participants to interpret each question accurately (Boyton, 2005). Another advantage of using questionnaires in a quantitative research, is that they facilitate the collection of data in a pre-arranged form and can be easily analysed (Nunan, 2006 and Kumar, 2005). There are two main types of questions in questionnaires: an open - ended and a closed-ended. The open - ended questionnaire questions can be answered by the participant who decides what to say and how to say it, whereas the closed -ended questions are given possible responses and options determined by the researcher and the role of the participants is to choose from these options (Nunan, 2006b). The first part of the teachers' questionnaire contained 21 multiple choice questions that covered the general issues and practices applied during the process of teaching English as a foreign language. The second part was related to the main problems they encountered when teaching English grammar (8 choices about language competence,

materials and environment) and could be answered by choosing from these problems which are provided in the questions.

Questionnaires are generally graded as objective research method which implies a positivist approach in collecting data particularly useful when a researcher wants to contact relatively large sample and can be used to validate the results (Harris and Brown, 2010 and Jankowicz (2000). A questionnaire is one of the most widely used data collection techniques within the survey strategy. The questionnaire applied by the researcher provided him an efficient way of collecting responses from a large sample (224) for quantitative analysis (Saunders et al., 2009). Coleman and Briggs (2004) insisted that clear language and direct questions alone are not enough to produce useful information. The questionnaire had a good layout and accessible design which were needed to give further meaning to the questions to be answered.

Questionnaires can be easily administered in several ways such as self-completion, by post, face to face, email, online or house hold drop off surveys (Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003). Due to the risk of travelling to Libya where the situation was not safe at the time of conducting the survey, the researcher designed a self-completion questionnaire and sent it by email to some colleagues who took the part of distributing it to teachers and students via heads of different faculties in the university of Tripoli and the university of Zawia. The use of the EFL teachers and students questionnaire was necessary and proved to be useful. One of the reasons for using it is because of the familiarity of survey studies in the Libyan educational research context. Also, qualitative research using interviews is new to both the researcher and the participants, and more difficult and complex to begin with. Given these contextual considerations, using the questionnaire at the beginning of the data collection process was easy and simple for the researcher to begin with, and useful for the transition from the known to the unknown.

The value of the survey questionnaire is that it enabled the researcher to distinguish a point of view from purely individual reactions and opinions of teachers as well as students where students in general are not used to giving their views about the difficulties and problems they

face in their learning process. Whereas interviews alone especially with students cannot do this due to cultural concerns and shyness might be shown by students particularly female students. Collecting and analysing data about learning English language in general and grammar in specific by adopting this method, may directly and/or indirectly help to find solutions of students' language problems by putting suggestions into practice. The questionnaire was designed to investigate the students' perceptions on the English language programme and to what extent has the English programme at Libyan universities been effective in meeting their needs to learn grammar. The researcher has applied the sequential design of applying larger numbers in quantitative survey questionnaire in the first phase followed by smaller numbers in the qualitative data collection in the second phase.

4.4.1.3. Data analysis from the questionnaire

All data collected in the questionnaire needed to be analysed and interpreted in order to be understood (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Results from the close-ended questions in the teachers and students' questionnaires were statistically analysed for percentages. The researcher used SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software to analyse the data. This computer software is widely used to analyse data in quantitative research. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for each category in the questionnaire and the data was presented visually with tables and charts as shown in Chapter 5. To achieve the objectives of the research for the present study and answer the research questions related to the first phase of the study, the researcher employed the analysis technique of descriptive statistics to analyse the data. The descriptive analysis of the results provided the frequency and percentages of similarities and differences between the participants' answers from the data collected. For example, there was nearly agreement between participants regarding the class size and time being one of the main problems that both teachers and students face during the learning process.

4.4.2.1. Qualitative Data Collection Methods

There are different methods of data collection in qualitative research, such as interviews, documentary analysis and observations. Interviews is one of the most common methods used, particularly in education research. In addition to the quantitative data collection

method (questionnaire, see 4.5.1), the researcher conducted qualitative data collection methods in the form of semi-structured interviews and document analysis in collecting data of the second stage of the research.

4.4.2.2. Semi-Structured Interviews as a Means of Data Collection and Analysis

Although many research studies undertake and apply ethnographic observational approach to find out what happens naturalistically, this was very hard and difficult for the researcher due to the critical situation in Libya and time constraints. The researcher substituted the observational approach by interviews (Robson, 2006) which can be applied either face to face or in case of risk can be conducted through Skype or any other safer way. Robson (2006) explained that asking the research participants directly by the researcher saves time and effort in seeking answers to the research questions. Whiting (2008) argued that semi-structured interviews give the researcher the chance to collect more information that the researcher cannot know about in advance. The questions that are used in a semi-structured interview are more general in their frame of references from that typically found in a structured interview schedule. Bryman (2012) illustrated that the most important advantage of a semi-structured interview, is that the interviewees have the opportunity to ask more questions in response to what is seen as significant replies. By using semi-structured interviews, the researcher gathers data on the more intangible aspects of the participants' culture, such as values, assumptions, opinions, and difficulties. Also, semi-structured interviews can give agenda and open-ended questions as well as the important supplementary question 'why' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). For example, the interviewees discussed some issues related to secondary school impact on students' level and whether the curriculum at the university level meets their needs or not. There are many reasons to use interviews for collecting data and using it as a research method. Because of its flexibility, the semi-structured interview has been used by many researchers, particularly those working within an interpretive research tradition (Nunan, 2006b).

In this study, the researcher adopted the most common type of interviews which is the semi-structured interview (Rowley, 2012) because it allows the researcher to probe or ask more detailed questions and not adhere only to interview guide. Also the researcher is able to explain or rephrase the question if they are unclear to the respondents or to create new

questions that may emerge from the participants' responses. The findings of the questionnaire in the first phase helped the researcher form and structure the questions of the interviews. In other words, the findings of the first phase helped him propose and determine the questions of the semi-structured interviews. For example, the findings of questionnaire guided the researcher to form questions related to some issues of structure and content of English language courses in the university, and how physical resources in the classroom, class size and logistics affect the learning process. Interviews also provided further insight justifying the responses made by the participants to the questionnaire and thus explaining the findings revealed by the questionnaire. In addition, the use of in-depth interviewing helped in revealing the contextual factors affecting the realization of grammar learning. As mentioned above, semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis played the supporting role that helps find out the students' language proficiency level and some specific problems or difficulties that are encountered by students such as applying grammatical rules in language production i.e. to transfer their knowledge of the grammar rules into communicative language.

The interviews that were conducted at the University of Tripoli and other higher educational institutions were semi-structured and were conducted face to face. Some of the participants were from faculties that teach English for academic purposes and some were from faculties that teach English for specific purposes. Most of the questions asked in the questionnaire were highlighted in the interviews in a slightly different way. Thus, the interview served as a part of a triangular technique through which constant comparisons were made while presenting data yielded by the questionnaire. For example, students' English language competence, teaching methods, classrooms environment including class size, students' attitudes and motivations were asked about in the questionnaire and restructured and asked in the interviews too. The questions during the interviews were generally about the English language learning in general and English grammar in specific at the Libyan higher education institution. The researcher analyzed the data gained from the interviews, and this enabled him to formulate a theoretical account of the general features of study. Using the inductive approach, the researcher reviewed all the data collected. The recorded interviews were fully transcribed and some interviews which were conducted in Arabic were translated into English by the researcher. The codes were grouped into concepts and then into categories

which they were put into themes (see chapter 5). The researcher started coding transcripts using line-by-line coding of text, then chunks of data were coded according to the themes which were addressed and the themes that were emerged from the data . To do this, the researcher started using word-processing to cut and paste lines of data and categorise them under certain themes. He also used different colours available in Microsoft Word to distinguish different themes and sub-themes. Having developed a list of preliminary codes, he started to refine the codes to include more relevant categories. (for an example of an interview analysis, see appendix 6).

4.4.2.3. Document Analysis as a Means of Data Collection

Document analysis is referred to by many researchers such as Bowen (2009) as a form of qualitative research method in which the researcher interprets documents to give voice and meaning around a topic. He defined document analysis as a systematic method to analyze or assess written texts which requires data to be examined and interpreted to comprehend, work out meaning and widen empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009: 27). Document analysis is an important research tool in its own right, and is considered by Bowen (2009) as an invaluable part of most schemes of triangulation, the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon and thus reduces the impact of any biases that may happen in a single method research. It can support and strengthen the research. When analyzing documents, the researcher went through the students' written materials incorporating coding the content of the documents into themes and subthemes (categories such as adverbs and subcategories such as adverbs of place, of time or of manner) in a way that can be analysed and assessed according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

This approach is said to be less time-consuming and less costly than other research methods (Bowen, 2009), and it is efficient and effective way of collecting data because documents are manageable and practical resources (Triad, 2016). Bowen (2009, p. 31) described documents as stable, non-reactive i.e. "unaffected by the research process", data sources, meaning that they can be read and reviewed many times and remain unchanged by the researcher's influence or research. Bowen (2009) suggested that the wider array of documents the researcher should gather, the better the results will be, although the concern should be more about quality rather than quantity. The researcher must consider the original purpose of the

documents (Bowen, 2009), and the issue of the "unwitting" evidence of the document (O'Leary, 2014).

The researcher followed a qualitative method in a form of document analysis using the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for language assessment. The CEFR for language assessment was first published and developed in 2001 by the Council of Europe to describe language learners' ability in European languages including English. CEFR replaced the previous description of language learners' ability (beginner, Intermediate and Advanced) by a new description of Basic (A), Independent (B) and Proficient (C). And each of these standards has two levels making a scale of six levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2) (CEFR). It describes what learners can do in a language as they progress from the lowest level to the highest level of all language skills; reading listening, speaking and writing (CEFR, 2011).

The CEFR for "English Profile Programme (EPP) can provide Reference Level Descriptions for English to accompany the CEFR. These descriptions cover what learners know and can do in English at each of the six CEFR levels. The English Profile Programme is registered with the Council of Europe and is managed by a core group of collaborators at the University of Cambridge" (UCLES/CUP 2011).

This programme traces advancement and results in three main areas of research for English Profile; grammar, function and vocabulary. The Framework for Languages: learning, teaching and assessment (CEFR) aims to provide a theoretical as well as practical basis for developing foreign language teaching curricula, materials, and methods of assessment. The English Profile Programme aims to provide ELT professionals such as teachers, curriculum planners and researchers with resources and information including a database of English grammatical structures by CEFR level (UCLES/CUP, 2011). The English Grammar Profile (EGP) allows researchers to see how learners of English develop their competence in grammatical forms and meaning, as they move up from A1 to C2 at CEFR levels. This provides them with standard world-wide grammar profiles for each one of these levels (McCarthy, 2011). For example, grammatical forms that have more than one meaning, such as the modal verb 'may' which has more than one meaning. Each use of these

meanings refers at a different level of CEFR levels (McCarthy, 2011). According to EGP, the use of the modal verb 'may' in such an expression of 'The weather may be hot' (Weak possibility) refers to level A2. The use of the same modal verb in formal permission such as 'May I borrow your bike?' refers to level B1. Whereas the use of 'May well' in such 'You may well find that this is not the case.' refers to level C1 and the use of 'May as well' in an expression like; 'We may as well go home' refers to level C2. (McCarthy, 2011).

One of the main objectives of this programme is to analyse learners' English language in order to assess what they can and can't do with the language at each of the Common European Framework of Reference levels (A1-C2) in using, for example, grammar (UCLES/CUP, 2011). McCarthy (2011) reported that most researchers needed answers to the questions: what grammar can learners of English typically use, and how much grammar can they use correctly and appropriately in written as well as spoken English at each level of this framework (CEFR). He points out that EGP researchers at Cambridge Exam centre developed a unique methodology for describing the English grammar using language learner corpus that includes about sixty million words from around two hundred thousand Cambridge exams around the world from many different countries and backgrounds. This corpus is considered as a great innovative resource that consists of what learners around the world actually use when they write in their exams. This means that the methodology provides concrete evidence of what learners can do at each of the CEFR levels. In English grammar, which is finite (McCarthy, 2011), there are core features that are considered fundamental in learning grammar, such as tenses, articles, modal and auxiliary verbs, word order and reported speech...etc. So the researcher can draw up a long list of grammar features, but this word list is not enough, instead, researchers look for a whole group of words that tells how a learner forms grammatical items, see the use of the modal verb 'may' above.

The Framework grades six levels of proficiency in terms of grammar by providing interpretative descriptors in the form of Can Do and Can't Do statements (see Table ...), "for example, A2 level learners Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance" (UCLES/CUP, 2011, p. 9). The English grammar Profile's Reference Level Descriptions (RLDs) will serve as a framework to grade and compare what learners of the English language can or cannot produce (UCLES/CUP,

2011). The Framework defines levels of proficiency which allow learners' progress to be measured (CEFR). In his endeavour to obtain a better understanding about the challenges involved in teaching English grammar in Libyan universities, and to answer the research question regarding the impact of current teaching approaches on students' learning, the researcher used this framework (CEFR) in analysing students' written work. Also based on the findings of the analysis of students' documents using this framework helped in answering the research question regarding the recommended pedagogical approaches that meet the diversity of students' needs in learning grammar. It is a very valuable tool to make decisions about what grammar and how to teach students as they progress.

Proficient user	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation...
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously...
Independent user	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation...
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc...
Basic user	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment)...
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type ...

Table 4.2. Levels of CEFR (UCLES/CUP, 2011)

The Cambridge corpus for English grammar profile consists of huge data of grammatical structures and forms written by learners of English as a second or foreign language from different countries. This means that as an analytical tool in the document analysis that it can help to provide concrete evidence of what learners can do. This will help to inform teachers

as well as curriculum designers choose the most appropriate teaching strategies for teaching grammar. The framework actually suggests some strategies that may help students and materials that writers can use in developing the students' ability to write correct grammar. This, together with previous analysis will help the researcher answer the fourth research question to recommend an appropriate teaching method to teach grammar which is the main objective of the present study.

The researcher looked at students documents and coded them and categorised them under certain categories by checking 'mastery' of different grammatical points in relation to certain levels, (e.g. past tense, modal verbs, clauses, countable/ uncountable nouns, progresses and passive or active voice ...etc). The details of the mechanics of the document analysis using this framework will be discussed in fuller detail in chapter 6).

4.5. Sample of the study

Robson (2002) argued that it is not possible to deal with the whole of a population (i.e. all Libyan university teachers of English teaching grammar and university students) in a survey. Sampling is an important step in conducting any research. Therefore, an appropriate sampling strategy is an essential to researchers (Cohen et al., 2007). A sample is part of the population to be investigated in the study and refers to a division of the population (Robson, 2002, Bryman, 2012). Sampling techniques give the researcher several methods that enables him/her to select representative data from a larger group of a population. Saunders et al. (2009) stated that sampling techniques give the researcher a range of methods which enables him/her to select data from the bigger group rather than possible cases. Bryman (2012) illustrated two techniques of sampling; probability sampling and non-probability sampling. In the probability sampling technique, a sample is selected randomly where each individual in the population has a chance of being selected. The aim of using this technique of sampling is to keep sampling error to a minimum degree (ibid). Whereas in the non-probability technique, the sample is not selected randomly. According to the nature of this study and the objectives of the research, both techniques of sampling have been used.

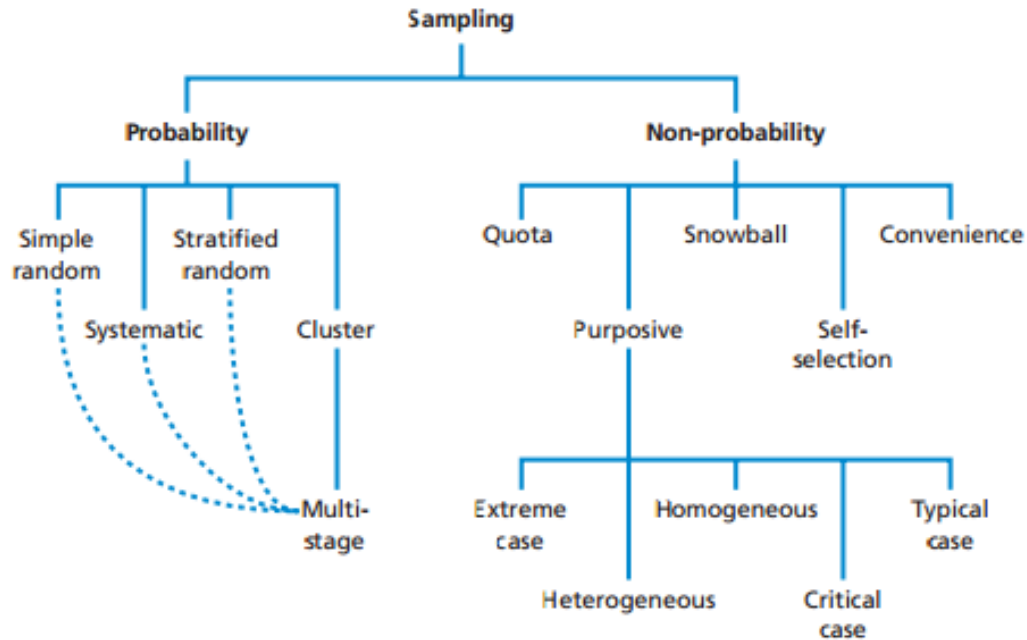


Figure 4.1: The chart of sampling techniques Saunders et al. (2009, p. 213).

Due to the situation in Libya where it is not safe to travel throughout the country (nearly 2 million square kilometres), the researcher chose the samples from two universities located in the northwest of Libya; the University of Tripoli (capital of Libya) and the University of Zawia which both hold nearly 30% of Libyan university students (Ministry of Higher Education, Libya, 2012). The stages of sampling would be non-probability sampling by selecting the samples from faculties and schools in the two universities using convenience sampling technique. The samples were collected on the basis of opportunity sampling, as they were conveniently available during course time at these universities. This type of sampling is a non-probability sampling method where the samples are collected or approached from a population of people who are easy to reach and contact. The only criteria to this method is the availability and willingness of people to participate (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). Henry (1990) considered this type of sampling easy to be used by almost anyone and attractive choice for most researchers due to the many advantages it provides such being easy, readily available, and cost-effective. A convenience sampling technique is used when the participants are accessible and consequently relatively easy for the researcher to employ (Given, 2008). In convenience sampling, the researcher tried to deepen his understanding of the selected participants by gathering information that enrich the study of

the phenomenon under investigation. Finding such participants who can enrich the study is one of the main goals of sampling.

In the first phase of the study, the researcher applied larger samples in survey questionnaire of 300 which usually seeks to incorporate more variables. However 224 participants responded and completed and returned the questionnaire. The participants were divided into two main groups; students who already study at both the University of Tripoli and the University of Zawia and their teachers who actually teach English grammar in these two universities (204 students and 20 teachers). Burns and Grove (2001) illustrated that there are no straightforward rules about the sample size but it should have at least 30 respondents. According to Polit and Beck (2006), quantitative research requires larger samples than qualitative research to increase representativeness and to reduce sampling error. To avoid being more positivist, the researcher followed the design of applying larger numbers in the quantitative data collection (survey) in the first phase and then smaller numbers in the second phase semi-structured interviews and documents analysis).

It is very important that selecting samples enables the researcher to reach the objectives of the research and answer the research questions (Saunders, et al., 2012). 20 teachers and 204 students from The University of Tripoli and the University of Zawia responded to the questionnaires. Table 4.4. below shows the questionnaires which were distributed and the questionnaires that were fully completed and returned by the participants:

Questionnaires	Numbers of questionnaires		
Questionnaire distributed	300		
Questionnaires fully completed	224	Teachers	20
		Students	204
Questionnaires discarded not valid	0	0	
Valid questionnaires	224	Teachers	20
		Students	204

Table 4.3. The number of questionnaires distributed and returned

In non-probability technique (non-random sampling technique), it is not necessary that individuals of the population have a chance of being selected and have equal probabilities to be selected (Saunders et al., 2009). This type of sampling is used with strategies such as case study (Robson, 2002), or when the sampling cases are difficult to identify (Collis and Hussey, 2003). In the second phase of the study, the researcher also applied a non-probability sampling strategy when collecting data. The qualitative data were collected through two types of data collection: semi-structured interviews and document analysis. In this regard, the researcher applied a convenience sampling technique constituted the non-probability sampling strategy when collecting these data. The samples were collected and approached from the population of people who are easy to reach and contact during the researcher's visit to the University of Tripoli and some other higher educational institutions in Tripoli (see 4.5).

Thus, the researcher used convenience sampling firstly, by selecting 14 Libyan university students and 5 teachers of English grammar to be interviewed face to face by himself in the second phase of the study. And secondly the researcher selected 32 students' documents from students of the third, fourth and fifth semesters. These teachers and students and students' written work (documents) were selected according to the criterion of accessibility (Silverman, 2001). The two types of sampling will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

The participants of the first part (interviews) of the second phase of the study were also categorized under two main groups as students who are currently studying at different faculties in the University of Tripoli and other faculties in Tripoli and teachers who teach English language grammar at these faculties. Both groups included males and females. However, the researcher did not find differences between participants regarding their gender. Whereas the participants of the second part (document analysis) of the second phase of the study were only students. A convenience sampling technique was used when collecting samples of both parts.

In relation to the second phase of the study, the researcher deliberately selected third, fourth and fifth semester students at the different faculties at the University of Tripoli because he wanted to investigate their learning difficulties as encountered by students who have been studying grammar for more than two years to examine the different views behind these difficulties. The aim was to focus on these students who have already learnt grammar and were able to provide a comprehensive picture covering the difficulties they encountered over the first and second university years. In reference to the teachers who were interviewed, one criteria was used. Teachers needed to have been teaching EFL grammar to university students in Libya. These teachers have all been teaching for eight years and more.

Despite the difficulties and obstacles that the researcher faced, he could travel to Libya and carried out the interviews face to face with 5 teachers and 14 students at their faculties. The researcher contacted the Deans of the faculties as well as the heads of the English language departments in order to distribute participant information sheets. The targeted participants who agreed to take part in the current study then met the researcher in private rooms. The researcher gave them more information about the study and explained that they are welcome to participate and that they have the right to withdraw at any time and that the interviews will be audio recorded. They signed consent forms for participating which they were given in advance. All the interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed. According to interviewees' choices, some interviews were conducted in English and some were conducted in Arabic and then translated by the researcher into English. The researcher whose native language is Arabic and has a master degree in translation from Arabic into English, translated the interviews transcription.

While being at these faculties, the researcher took the chance to collect the students' written work for the second part of the qualitative data collection. He contacted the Head of the English language department and asked for samples of students' written work (exams and composition). The head spoke to some grammar teachers for the documents and they promised to collate them the following day. After two days, the researcher went back to the head and collected these documents. Unfortunately, when the researcher came back to UK and had a meeting with the supervisors and showed them these documents, they said that these documents were undependable and inefficient and cannot reflect the students' level

because they included short paragraphs with simple sentences in the present simple tense. So, the researcher needed to collect other documents. He contacted the English language department in Tripoli and asked for new documents. The head and the teaching staff at the University of Tripoli were very cooperative and helpful as they collected new documents, scanned them and sent them by email to the researcher. These documents from students' exams and written compositions included long paragraphs with more compound and complex sentences and varieties of tenses uses.

4.6. Quality Issues (Validity, Reliability and Trustworthiness)

Validity is defined as the degree to which the results of data analysis can be accurately interpreted (Brown, 1997). Validity is a situation where the findings of the research are in accordance with what the researcher designed it to be found out and what he/she set out to measure, and whether the instruments used for research measurements are accurate. In other words, Cohen, et al. (2007), pointed out that if the findings of the research explain the phenomena in precise terms, the research is considered valid. The data collection instruments must be valid in any social science research to achieve high standards, findings, results, recommendations and conclusions (Burns, 2000). Validity is an essential point for the effectiveness of the research (Cohen et al. 2007). It was argued that validity should be addressed before reliability, since sufficient establishment of validity would achieve reliability, while establishing reliability does not necessarily lead to validity (Guba and Lincoln, 1985). Bryman (2012) illustrated that validity is the most important standard in research.

The understanding of reality, according to constructionist, is really the researcher's interpretation of participants' interpretation or understanding of the phenomenon of investigation (Merriam, 2002). This interpretation will be evolved mostly through the qualitative data obtained via interviews with teachers and students, and document analysis. As the notion of triangulation bridges issues of reliability and validity (Cohen et al., 2011: 196), the triangulation and mixed methods research design adopted for this study, driven by the objectives of the study as well as the research questions, strengthened the internal validity (Cohen and Manion, 1985) which ensures that the researcher investigated what he claims to be investigating. The researcher assessed his research claims based on how well the

knowledge generated from the final analysis integrated from the full set of data collection could facilitate effective teaching methodology promotion strategies or improve the provision of teaching and learning grammar of those he had researched.

In social science, there is no one hundred percent research tool to control certain factors such as ambiguity of the questions which are used in the questionnaire or the attitude of the respondents which can be vital to the research (Kumar, 2005). Wellington (2000: 30) stated that 'Validity refers to the degree to which a method, a test or a research tool actually measures what it is supposed to measure', whereas Gray (2004: 219) assumed that 'Validity means that an instrument must measure what it was intended to measure'. However, Patton (2002d) stated that validity and reliability are two factors which any qualitative research should take into consideration while designing a study, analysing results and judging the quality of the study.

Throughout this study, the researcher intended to use both methods which were quantitative and qualitative to evaluate the quality of English language programmes and the way its grammar is taught in Libyan universities to raise the quality of the research. In this study, the questionnaire was delivered to English language teachers in different faculties in the University of Tripoli and the University of Zawia, which shares the same culture, curriculum and education system with other Libyan universities. Given the similarity of social context and educational structure throughout Libya, reliability of the questionnaire will be possible since there are no variable factors or significant differences between the area in which the research took place and the country as a whole. As such, the results, conclusions, and the recommendations for improvement of the use of cooperative learning from this research can be trustworthy.

Trustworthiness, is put forward as the main criterion for assessing qualitative studies. Trustworthiness is defined as "a set of criteria advocated by some writers for assessing the quality of qualitative research." (Bryman, 2008, p. 700). In other words, trustworthiness enables qualitative researchers to illustrate the merits of their studies away from the often ill-fitting quantitative parameters (Given, 2008). Trustworthiness is something like how convincing the findings of the research are, or even how much one would be prepared to

depend on these findings being true or replicable. For a qualitative study to be trustworthy, four criteria need to be achieved: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Bryman, 2008; Given, 2008). Triangulation was the tool or instrument for improving trustworthiness. Triangulation is an important methodological issue in naturalistic and qualitative approaches to evaluation control bias and building trustworthy assumptions. Triangulation was core in this study because the researcher examined the phenomenon of the study from multiple perspectives (Mathison, 1988).

It is trustworthy that the researcher obtained the findings of his study based on the participants' views and answers not through predetermined assumptions. This is called Confirmability which requires that the researcher, confirms the findings and results that he obtained through interpretations of the data collected. These findings might agree or disagree with what the researcher had already proposed about the investigated phenomenon. Findings might show that there is no problems in teaching English grammar in Libya.

4.7. Ethical Considerations

It is crucial to consider the ethical implications when conducting any research. Ethics is very important issue that plays a major role in getting access to a population for gathering data for the study (Saunders et al., 2009). According to Punch (2006), it is essential to define the ethical dimensions of any research before conducting it. Furthermore, it has to be considered that ethical concerns may result in a clash between professionals and personal interest in the piece of research (Easterby-Smith et al., 2002). In any research discipline and working within any paradigm, researchers should not put participants' lives in any danger or be in any way disrespectful to them (Lindorff, 2010). This is true for both teachers and students taking part as respondents in the present study. Ethical issues were considered from the outset of the research and included obtaining full ethical approval from Research Ethics Committee (REC) of Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU), as well as obtaining all the necessary permissions from education authorities at the University of Tripoli, The University of Zawia in Libya and some other higher institutions in Tripoli. All participants in this study were volunteers. They were invited to take part and supplied with participant information sheets, which included full details about the research project (see appendix 8a, 8b & 8c), and they were asked for permission and consent to participate (see appendix 9a, 9b & 9c). The

researcher was aware throughout of his responsibility for the research participants. Every effort had been made to ensure that they were satisfied with the research procedures and felt that they were able to respond normally, without any coercion or restrictions on his part.

In the present study, the researcher has used the Liverpool John Moores University's ethical guidelines as the main source for determining the ethical issue of this study. Prior to conducting the data collection, the researcher informed all participants via the heads of English language departments (see appendix 10) in both universities, that participation in the research was completely voluntary which requires that participants not be coerced into participating in research (William, 2006). Students were informed that their participation would not affect their studies in any way. In the first phase of the study, all participants were provided with information sheets that contained invitations to participate in the research and that all data collected in the survey would securely be anonymous (see appendix 8a). And they were also provided with consent sheets. All participants gave their voluntary consent verbally to my colleagues who carried out the questionnaire without any pressure to participate and complete the survey questionnaire. Again prior to conducting the interviews and collecting students' written work in the second phase, all participants were provided with information sheets about the research that contained invitations to participate in face to face interviews, and that participation in the research was voluntary (see appendix 8b). The prospective respondents were also reminded that participation was also voluntary with no implications for not participating. Also, permission to record conversations was sought from interviewees before the interviews took place. All participants were also informed that the information they gave would be kept strictly confidential: neither revealed nor shared with anyone. All participants were asked if they needed further clarification and were invited to withdraw if they wished to. And they were also provided with consent form (see appendix 9b). The consent forms included the researcher's and his sponsor's names, general information about the purpose of the research, the participants' right to withdraw at any time, and information about the confidentiality and anonymity of the collected data, to encourage frankness (Robson, 2002). The researcher complies with BERA (2011) and LJMU ethical guidelines and consideration.

When conducting the survey, all participants were not asked to write their names or any personal details on the survey sheets. All the questionnaires were passed from participants to the researcher via trusted colleagues without any kind of access by teachers to students' questionnaires which made their responses confidential. In the interview transcriptions, all participants were protected by labelling them by using numbers for the one-to-one interviews to protect their identity. Teachers were labelled as (Lecturer + number), and students were labelled as (student + number). All the interviews were carried out in Libya by direct personal contact between the researcher himself and the participants. The interviews were conducted in participants' free time in their places of study. All participants felt at ease and relaxed without being under pressure to say the right things in questionnaires and interviews. There was no any power dynamic between the researcher and students when conducting the one to one interviews. The interviews were recorded and transcribed by the researcher himself. When collecting the students' written work (see appendix 5), the researcher spoke to some teachers asking for some of students' written work. All students were able to opt out of providing their work for document analysis via their teachers without any pressure to provide samples of their work, and they really have an option about whether their work was going to be used or not (see appendices 8c & 9c).

4.8. Summary of the Chapter

This chapter started with discussing the ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions guiding the study. Then, the methods of data collection were justified. This chapter focussed on the research methodology and methods that were applied in this study to achieve the objectives of the research and answer the research questions effectively. It has also provided adequate justification at every stage for the decisions taken. The current study has adopted a mixed method approach to identify the students' and teachers' views regarding the difficulties and problems they both face in learning English language in general and English grammar in specific at the University of Tripoli and the University of Zawia. To achieve this target the researcher applied a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods to collect the data quantitatively by applying a questionnaire to reach a large number of participants and to ensure that the findings are valid. Also a combination of two qualitative methods; semi- structured interviews and document analysis were applied to find out more about the reasons behind the decline in standards of students studying English grammar. The

proposed sample size required for this study was three hundred students from the University of Tripoli and the university of Zawia to participate in the survey and 20 participants in the interview and 30 documents from students written work. The following chapter will present the data analysis and findings of the survey questionnaire and semi structured interviews.

Chapter Five: Results and Analysis of Questionnaire and Interviews

5.1. Introduction

As discussed in the previous chapter, the empirical part of the research was carried out in two phases. This study was carried out in different faculties of higher education in Tripoli and Zawia and facilitated by collecting both quantitative and qualitative data in two phases. Phase 1 involved the collection of quantitative data by means of a self-completion questionnaire and phase 2 involved qualitative data collection through face to face semi-structured interviews complemented by document analysis. This chapter presents the results and the findings obtained from the questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews in line with the methodology and methods discussed in Chapter 4 to gauge the perceptions of teachers and students at different faculties in Tripoli and Zawia then followed by document analysis in chapter 6. Both quantitative and qualitative data are triangulated in this chapter which are organised into themes stemming from the research objectives and research questions in addition to themes emerging from the semi-structured interviews. The purpose of data analysis is to answer the research questions and to help determine the trends and relationship among variables. The findings of the research interviews revealed that there are number of factors that have contributed to the students' experiences and the quality of English language learning programme at the university of Tripoli and higher technical and vocational institutes and faculties in Greater Tripoli, which match with the findings of the questionnaire. In order to interpret and analyse the data gained from the semi-structured interviews, the researcher looked at and analysed the themes that had emerged from these interviews. In addition to the research objectives, these themes enabled him to formulate a theoretical account about the general features of study (See 4.4.2.2). The main themes that emerged from the data collected from the interviews will be presented from both lecturers' and students' perspectives. Some of these themes are classroom, class size and logistics, lecturers' qualifications, training and skills and secondary school effect.

The chapter is sequentially divided into three main sections according to the research questions of the study. Each section includes both teachers' and students' responses which are discussed under different sub-themes. The first section highlights the findings related to the

first question, dealing with the impact of approaches taken by teachers on students' learning and students' attitudes. The second section is concerned with presenting the perceived difficulties and problems facing Libyan university English language teachers and English language students in teaching and learning English grammar. The last section sheds light on how Libyan university teachers of English teach grammar and how do they deal with difficulties. Finally, it discusses the major themes that have emerged from the data related to the teaching and learning difficulties of EFL grammar at the concerned faculties of higher education in Libya such as large class size, class timing, secondary school effect and lack of resources.

As both data collecting instruments were designed to elicit information related to teachers' and students' conceptions and practical knowledge of the teaching and learning EFL grammar, both quantitative and qualitative data have been presented, analysed and discussed in an interactive way (Marton, 1986). It is suggested that all the related data from different data streams such as questionnaires and interviews etc. should be presented in order to produce a collective answer to the research questions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). This approach was useful for presenting and organizing data because it brings the reader back to the driving concerns of the research objectives (ibid). It enables the reader to recognize the relationship between the research questions and the data (Jang et al, 2008).

5.2. The Impact of Teaching Approaches on Students' Learning Motivation and Attitudes

This section highlights the findings related to the first research question, "*What, according to lecturers and students, is the impact of current teaching approaches on students' learning motivation and attitudes?*" This research question looks into the different perspectives among teachers and students regarding students' learning motivations and attitudes. In order to answer this research question, the researcher divided this section into two main sub-sections; Teaching methods and Students' motivation to Learn English and English Grammar.

5.2.1. Teaching Approaches and Methods

(a) Results and Data Analysis of Questionnaire

The responses indicate that 80% of teachers preferred to teach grammar explicitly and that 70% of the teachers used a deductive teaching methodology. However, when asked about teaching grammar implicitly, only 40% of lecturers agreed that grammar needs to be taught implicitly. This confirms findings in the literature about teacher and student preferences regarding methodology. Norris & Ortega, (2000) advocated that explicit grammar instruction is more effective in promoting L2 learning. Burgess and Etherington (2002) found out that teachers of grammar may feel that teaching grammar explicitly is preferred and appreciated by their students because they feel more secure, and at the same time teachers advocate this approach for pedagogical reasons (See section 3.5). Figure 5.1 shows that most lecturers believed that grammar needed to be taught explicitly with examples and that they actually taught it deductively.

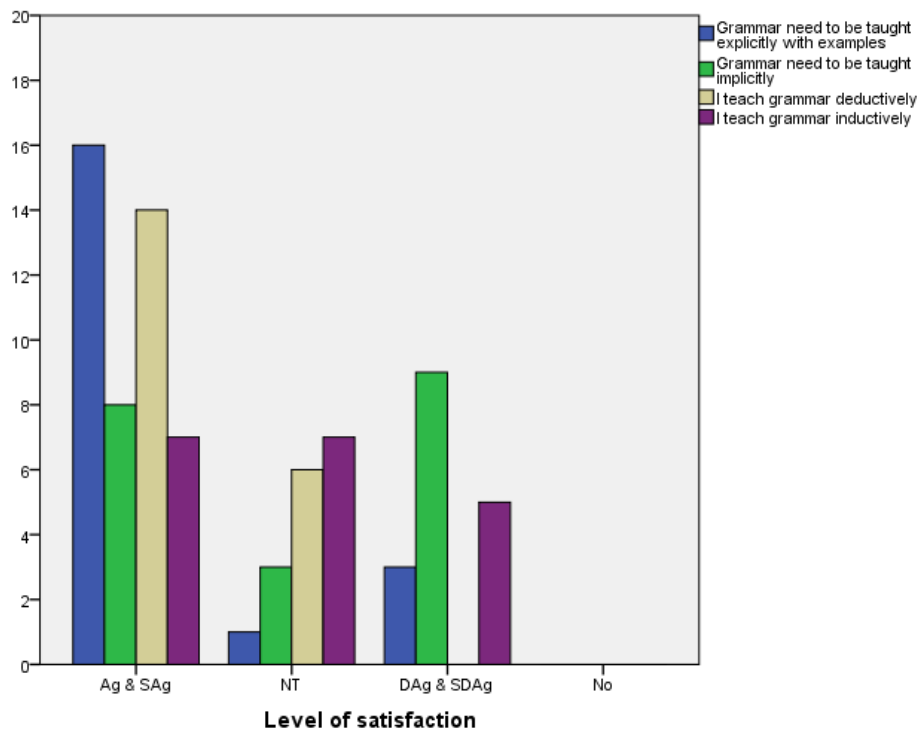


Figure 5.1. The distribution of grammar teaching approaches applied by lecturers.

Ag = Agree, SAg = Strongly agree, NT = Neutral, DAg = Disagree, SDAg = Strongly disagree and No = No answer.

Numbers (0-20) on the left margin refer to all participants (lecturers) of the questionnaire.

However, 75% of the teachers agreed that students may well possess grammar knowledge, but cannot always transfer it into communicative use. This implies that students need to be taught grammar through various teaching methodologies and approaches to cater to their needs in learning the grammar of a language (Morelli, 2003). This gap of lack of practical application of grammar is something teachers were familiar with, as their students generally demonstrate accurate recall of grammatical rules, but may not always manage to reproduce such grammatical accuracy in real communication. The majority of teachers appear to see the grammatical experience as important for their students and wanted to have a better understanding of the problems encountered by students. However, around half of the students agreed on the importance of pair and group work in grammar classes which is considered as a means of communication. Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) noticed that focusing on grammatical forms and ignoring other communication skills (listening and speaking between pairs and groups) may lead to learning about the language rather than actually learning the language for communication. Also, Richards (2006) added that communicative methodologists focused on the kinds of classroom activities that help learners gain the communicative competence, such as group work activities which focuses on building the students' communicative language competence. This knowledge or competence is also referred to as the ability to use the target language for actual communication purposes (Altaieb, 2013).

Interestingly, almost the same percentage (60%) of both groups agreed that it is the teaching methodologies themselves which may cause difficulties in learning grammar. However, 65% of the teachers also regarded students' underlying attitudes to learning grammar as among the main challenges encountered in grammar teaching.

(b) Results and Data Analysis of the interviews **L** to refer to lecturers, **S** to refer to students,

In this section, the researcher uses numbers to refer to participants in addition to the following symbols: **(M)** for males and **(F)** for females. Also, he uses the abbreviations: **(ESSP)** to refer to English for specific and scientific purposes and the abbreviation **(EFAP)** to refer to English for functional and academic purposes.

1) Lecturers' replies

It is clear that there was nearly a kind of consensus among the teachers regarding their responses to the question regarding which method they used in teaching English grammar. Their answers were as follows: **Lecturers F1 (EFAP), F2, F3 & M5 (ESSP)** indicated that they used the traditional grammar translation method by asking students to drill and memorize grammatical rules and ready-made examples in a non-communicative way. In response to the question about whether lecturers change their method of teaching during the course or they stuck to one method, **lecturer F3 (ESSP)** added that she sometimes mixes between both methods; grammar translation method and communicative approach, starting with the CA and ending with GTM. The other two **lecturers F4 (ESSP) & M5 (EFAP)** emphasised that they prefer to be more flexible and use their own way of teaching which varies according to the level of their students. **Lecturers F3, M5 (ESSP) & F4 (EFAP)** explained that mixing between both methods helps to some extent in increasing students' motivation to learn. By adopting this way of teaching, students were given the rules and the chance to talk and practise the language. All lecturers agreed about the large size of the class was the main obstacle (see 5.3.2.a.1) to adopting the communicative approach and in addition to that, there was not enough time to carry out communicative activities during the class.

2) Students' replies

Generally speaking, students did not seem to be aware of teaching methodology and methods. So during the interviews, the researcher tried to explain the two main approaches used by most Libyan teachers and let them talk about the way they were taught so that the researcher could consider which method they experienced most and their opinions about these. Their responses strongly suggested that their lecturers used the GTM for teaching grammar.

Nonetheless, at the same time, some students inferred that the CA was being applied by some lecturers. For example **students M2, 3 (ESSP), 4 & M11 (EFAP)** pointed out that some of their teachers had taught them communicatively by focusing on students' participation in the class, encouraging them to speak the language and by creating some communication between

pairs and groups, and they emphasised that this way of teaching was very useful because it helped them communicate in English. Whereas **students F7, M8 & M9** argued that some of their teachers had also taught them communicatively, but that was not so useful. They explained that their teachers could not carry out much practice and activities during the class due to the large number (see 5.3.2.2.2) of students in the class. Responding to the question about whether lecturers shifted from one method to another, the vast majority of students claimed that their teachers stuck to one method and did not try to use different ways to help students understand grammar. Only **student F12** replied that one of his teachers sometimes shifted from GTM to CA by carrying out some communicative activities in pairs and groups, and that was very useful. In response to the question about which method they found to be better, **students F1, M4 (EFAP), M2, F3, M5, F6, F7, M8, M9 & F10 (ESSP)** felt that GTM was useful. The rest of them added that the method could have been useful if teachers had made the class more active and more practical; the more practice they have the more useful the method is. **Students M2, F3, F6, M11 & F12 (ESSP)** concluded that mixing between the two methods is the best way to teach grammar to overcome the problem of a large number of students.

To sum up, teachers expressed that although they prefer to teach grammar implicitly, they actually taught it explicitly. They believed that the communicative approach was better in teaching grammar, but they apply grammar translation method instead. These contradictions seem to be due to the inappropriate teaching environment of large class size and limited time to apply such techniques. This was evident in the majority of the data from both instruments (questionnaires and interviews). Another issue raised by both teachers and students was that although students can understand grammatical rules, they cannot transfer their understanding into communicative language and produce correct language. However, some teachers, as well as some students, believe that mixing between grammar translation method and communicative approach can help overcome to some extent the obstacles of large class number and limited time.

According to Al Ghazali (2006) and to many other authors such as Ellis, (1997), Nassaji and Fotos, (2004) and Nassaji and Fotos, (2011), grammar teaching methodologies broadly fall

into two main categories: the structural approach (traditional grammar-based approaches) and communication-based approaches. Many Libyan researchers such as Omar, (2014) and Giaber, (2014) pointed out that the most common method and model of teaching English as a foreign language in Libya was the grammar translation method since Libyan independence till the mid-1980s. Then came the communicative approach which has been applied since the mid-1990s with the new curriculum. One of the goals of the interviews with lecturers and students was to find out about their experiences and views about these different methods and to explore perceived weaknesses or strengths of these. The data presented above would suggest that the teachers may benefit from professional training and development in communicative grammar teaching.

Teachers' professional development refers to providing teachers with opportunities to reflect considerably on their practice and to acquire new knowledge and beliefs about the learning process, i.e. pedagogy, programme content, and learners (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). Holliday (1996) referred to teachers' lack of training not only in classroom management but also in curriculum and syllabus design, classroom interaction techniques and teaching methodology. This is relevant to Libyan lecturers in the present study, who did not receive any professional training or development in grammar pedagogy. Professional development could take place through special programmes of training.

There are a limited number of experienced university teachers available to teach grammar at Libyan universities. The lack of experienced teachers is a common problem in many universities (Bijlani & Rangan, 2008) in Libya. In addition, most teachers of grammar are not experienced in teaching grammar because they are not specifically grammar teachers, but rather teachers of English reading comprehension or linguistics, which may explain the traditional teaching methods they use. In other words, they are not trained to teach grammar and they do not know much about how grammar should be best taught. Furthermore, as Royse (2001) states, teachers tend to teach as they themselves were taught. The professional development opportunities offered to Libyan grammar teachers are very limited due to their overloaded schedules, teaching support, financial and institutional resources, small salaries and daily routines. Ballantyne et al. (2000) pointed out that limited professional development

opportunities affect their work efficiency. Teachers' knowledge of teaching methods, techniques and strategies could be improved through extensive professional development opportunities at various times that suit all their teaching plans. Firstly, teachers can relate it to practice in a significant way that would improve teachers' way of thinking and teaching practices, and student achievement (Ross et al., 1999; Mitchell et al., 2009). It will also lead teachers to find out new problems continuously and enhance their productivity (Hong et al., 2007). Furthermore, teachers must be aware of the benefits of the communicative approach to grammar teaching such as using the language effectively and appropriately in communication and to improve their communicative competence. (See 3.4.4. for CA. and 3.7.2.3. for training teachers).

5.2.2. Students' Motivation to Learn English and English Grammar

Students' learning motivation is one of the most effective factors that influence second language and foreign language learning (Dörnyei, 2001). It can affect students' success or failure when it comes to learning a new language such as English for Libyan students. Dörnyei (1994) suggested a list of strategies to motivate second language learners. The second language teacher can develop learners' awareness of the culture of L2, develop learners' instrumental motivation of the importance of L2 learning, develop students' self-confidence, decrease their anxiety, increase students' interest and involvement in the tasks, adopt the role of a facilitator rather than a controller and apply communicative learning techniques such as group or teamwork. Also, teachers can make the classroom atmosphere convivial and friendly to strengthen students' confidence.

Brown (2000) reported that second language acquisition research had shown that students' attitudes towards learning a second or a foreign language, their motivation and the degree of their involvement in a learning process play the most important role for their success. Motivation is considered responsible for language learners' achievement, and without adequate motivation, even students with distinctive talents having a good curriculum and teachers may not be able to fulfil such objectives (Dörnyei and Csizer, 1998). The following sub-sections show the results of the data analysis of the questionnaire and interviews regarding students' motivation.

(a) Results and Data Analysis of Questionnaire

The teachers pointed out one important issue related to motivation: the lack of intrinsic motivation among students. The results show that 75% of the teachers thought that students were unmotivated, while 80% of the teachers claimed the students only studied to pass exams (see figure 5.2.), and 70% did not believe their students to be hard-working. However, 70% and 66.2% of teachers and students, respectively, declared they enjoyed learning grammar and 90.2% of students stated they thought it was important to learn and understand grammar when acquiring a foreign language, and 69.1% of students expressed their desire to obtain good marks. This is perhaps the reason why three-quarters of the students claimed to do their homework regularly and 81.4% declared they attended all their grammar classes. However, this does not necessarily indicate their real motivation. As a result, this issue requires more attention during the interviews taking into consideration other factors related to students' motivation such as culture, shyness and reasons for lack of intrinsic motivation among students (see figure 5.3.).

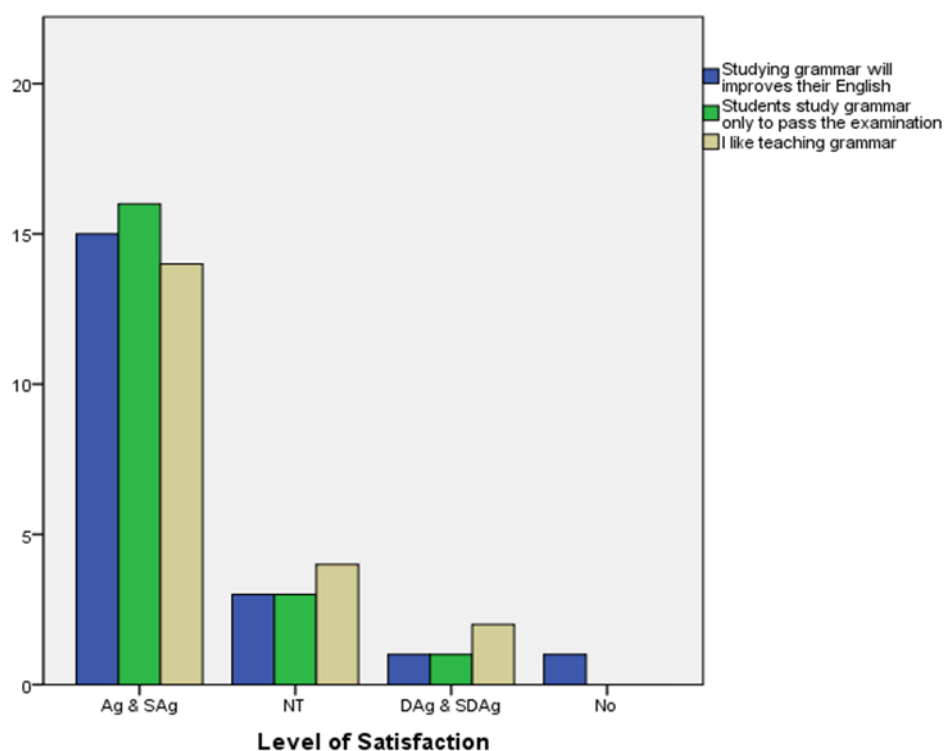


Figure 5.2. Teachers' perceptions of the importance of learning grammar.

Ag = Agree, SAg = Strongly agree, NT = Neutral, DAg = Disagree, SDAg = Strongly disagree and No = No answer.

Numbers (0-20) on the left margin refer to all participants (lecturers) of the questionnaire.

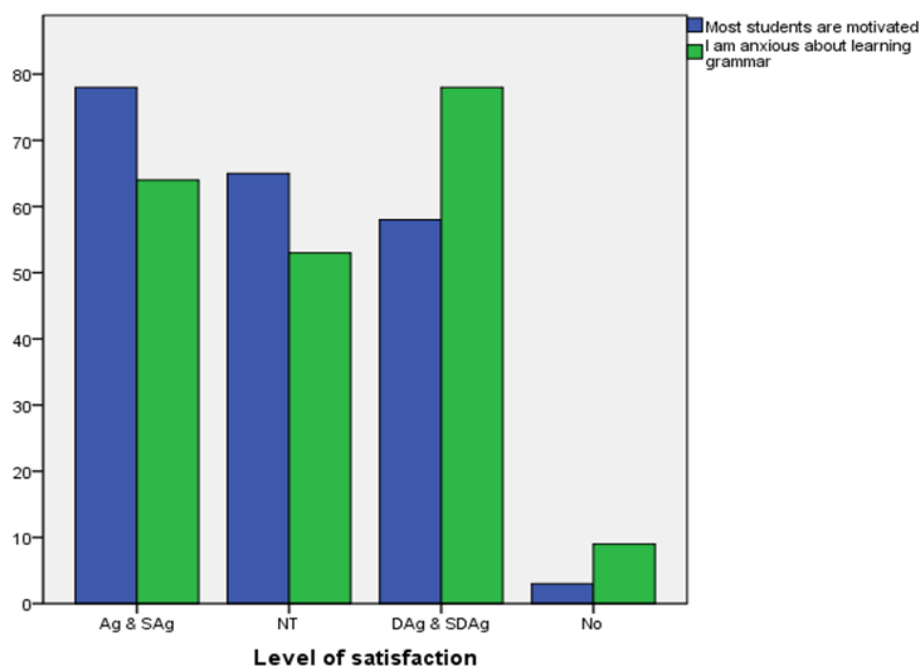


Figure 5.3. Students' motivation towards leaning grammar.

Ag = Agree, SAg = Strongly agree, NT = Neutral, DAg = Disagree, SDAg = Strongly disagree and No = No answer.

Numbers (0-80) on the left margin account the number of agreements or disagreements between all participants (students) of the questionnaire.

(b) Results and Data Analysis of the interviews

1) Teachers' replies

Regarding the interview question that sought to find out about the views and perceptions of students' motivations towards learning grammar, all lecturers stated that their students either lacked motivation or had no motivation. All lecturers believed that students study only to pass exams, and they generally confirmed that this is the main attitude students have towards learning a second language which meets with Gardner's (1985) theory of instrumental motivation that refers to students' desire to getting employment opportunities through learning a second language. Lectures considered this as a negative attitude. The other common response from lecturers was that they felt that students thought that they would commit mistakes when speaking in front of the class and that other students would laugh at them when making mistakes which leads to a decrease of motivation. Students think that the same thing will happen to them when they speak or communicate with native speakers of

English in real life. Gardner pointed out that integrative motivation is related to students' desire to communicate or to integrate with the speakers of the target language. Lecturers 2, 4 & 5 attributed this to their low competence of English language in general (see 3.7.4 & 5.3.1). Regarding whether students like and enjoy learning grammar, lecturers at faculties which teach English for specific purposes replied that students enjoyed learning grammar whereas lecturers at faculties which teach English for academic purposes said that their students did not enjoy learning grammar. This contrast may be related to the amount of grammar teaching devoted to courses in the different faculties offering different types of courses. Learners of grammar at faculties that teach English for academic purposes are taught more grammar than those at faculties that teach English for specific purposes. This disagreement between lecturers regarding whether students like learning grammar or not, will be more closely explored in relation to students' perspectives.

Lecturer F1 (EFAP) thought that most students in Libya considered studying in general as a secondary thing in their life, and their priority was work to get money. In other words, they did not give priority to their study. And this had affected negatively their attendance and then their level of study. However, she believed that in order to motivate students, grammar lessons ought to be more communicative by doing some interactive class activities. She found that her students preferred this to the traditional provision of rules and examples and then being asked to memorise them. She explained that most students hesitated when they were asked to create a new example or a new sentence and feared to do that. However, she tried to encourage and motivate them to do so. She said she tried her best to motivate them by creating competitions in the classroom to encourage them to participate in the lesson. However, most **lecturers** illustrated that their students lack intrinsic motivation among themselves, and this needs to be developed by parents and school teachers in earlier stages. Most second language teachers wish to motivate their students in different ways (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991), which is very similar to instrumental motivation that refers to more functional reasons for learning the language such as getting a better job or passing an examination (Gardner, 1985). However, people are curious and can indicate full readiness for learning or do things because they find them inherently interesting and enjoyable. They may not need external incentives to motivate them to learn. Researchers called this type of

motivation intrinsic motivation (ibid). It is suggested that intrinsic motivation tends to be more effective than extrinsic motivation because learners realize that any specific actions are inherently valuable (McLeod, 1987). Teachers can encourage intrinsic motivation to the learning situation through the effects of rewards, feedback, and other external events on intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

Lecturers F2, F3 & M5 (ESSP) argued that although their students enjoyed learning grammar, they get bored very quickly, and the reason for that was that the tasks were non-communicative. **Lecturer F3 (ESSP)** said that because her students were careless and lacked confidence, she tried to thank them and say bravo to encourage and motivate them to learn harder. She said: *"I say the names of good students and thank them. This may motivate them. I sometimes involve some students if they are quiet and try to ask them direct questions. But they become bored very quickly"*. However, it was not always boredom that was the main issue. **Lecturers F4 (EFAP) & M5 (ESSP)** believed that when starting university, students with low-level English feel frustrated and fear being involved in teamwork, groups or pairs. All lecturers emphasised the importance of students' motivation to make the teaching process successful especially when trying to apply communicative class activities. *"We do encourage them to attend classes, give them work to do, we guide them and give them advice. We also give them grades and marks to encourage them to work, and then good students are given recognition. But they don't enjoy learning grammar"*. Students need to be motivated to build up their natural and inner desire to learn the language (self-efficacy). Self-efficacy is a person's belief in his or her innate ability to learn tasks or achieve goals (Bandura, 1982). Teachers can increase students' self-efficacy by giving them clear feedback about particular skill improvement, particularly when connected to specific, proximal goals, can be an important influence on students' self-efficacy (Alderman, 1999).

2) Students' replies

As English became a universal language which may offer students more employment opportunities in the future, some students showed a positive attitude towards learning English. **Students F3 & F10 (ESSP)** believed that they learn English for its importance in their future employability. However, regarding their attitudes towards learning its grammar,

they raised five main causes of negative attitudes. Firstly some of them felt that grammar is difficult to learn. For instance, **students F1 (EFAP) & M2 (ESSP)** thought that grammar was very hard and difficult. In fact, one student thought that "grammar is more difficult than maths". Secondly, they argued that although grammar was very important to them, it is very boring. The third cause is anxiety where learners fear learning grammar. **Students F1, M4 (EFAP) & M2 (ESSP)** said that they and many other students feared to learn grammar, *"because grammar means rules and people fear rules, and rules must be followed"*. Fourthly, students expressed the view that when they do not understand a grammar lesson or part of a grammar lesson, they do not usually ask their teachers for further explanation due to shyness or embarrassment. **Students M2, M5, F6 & M11 (ESSP)** pointed out that when they spoke English in the classroom they felt shy and afraid of committing grammar mistakes when answering in front of other students and opted not to participate in classroom conversation to avoid committing such mistakes. Interestingly, although **students M2 & M5 (ESSP)** felt shy and were embarrassed, when working in pairs or groups, this helped them greatly. However, fifthly, most students agreed with lecturers that they study only to pass exams. For example, **student F12 (ESSP)** reported: *"We study only to pass exams and get our certificates"*. **Student F3 (ESSP)** explained that students not only studied to pass exams but also to pass and succeed in their future. Nonetheless, **students F12 (ESSP) & M14 (EFAP)** argued that the university and its teachers and staff should offer sessions and talk to students trying to change their attitudes towards English positively in order to motivate them. Not all students, however, had negative attitudes. **Students F1 (EFAP), F10 & M11 (ESSP)** replied that they like learning English and English grammar. **Student F10 (ESSP)** explained that she herself really loved English and found grammar easy, because it is very important to her and is useful in her future, but *"some other students have no motivation. Students think they don't need English in their future and they study only to pass the exam."*

Students F6, F12 (ESSP) & M14 (EFAP) advised that students should be encouraged and motivated by their teachers to be involved in class discussion and activities and not to be shy or embarrassed. **Students F3, M9 (ESSP) & M4 (EFAP)** disliked grammar, but they did not fear it or get embarrassed when participating in class discussion. **Students F3 (ESSP) & M4 (EFAP)** enjoyed working in pairs and groups. They believed that other students should try to

motivate and push themselves forward. **Student F3 (ESSP)** suggested that students and teachers should come closer to each other and meet in the middle and try to make the learning process more fun as most students found learning a second language boring, due to the boring teaching methods applied by their teachers. These contrasting views reflect the variety of students' perspectives towards English, their different levels of language competence and their different lecturers who taught them grammar.

The results suggested that some other students at faculties, where English is taught as an academic discipline, were highly motivated to study English in general, and grammar in particular as a result of their positive attitudes towards learning the English language. Students at these faculties thought that their main focus was on learning English as a language, whereas most students at faculties where English is taught for specific purposes, lacked the motivation to study English grammar as a result of their negative attitudes towards learning the English language. Most students at these faculties thought that their main focus and target were on learning scientific and applied subjects but not learning English as a second language and they considered English as a secondary subject.

The findings suggested that many students were highly motivated to learn English language and were aware of the importance of learning grammar and how beneficial grammar is for improving their English. Alhmali (2007) pointed out that the purpose of education in Libya is to obtain high grades and pass the exams. Gardner (1985) stated that the students' attitudes play a key role in enhancing and motivating them to learn which in turn, affects their performance. Students' attitudes and motivations towards learning a foreign language play an important role in the learning process. Students' success or failure in learning a new language such as English in Libya can be affected by their attitudes and motivations. Krashen (1981) stated that the more positive the attitudes of the students in learning a second language, the more likely learning achievement will improve. The negative attitudes at the same time will negatively affect students' achievement in learning a second language. For example, some students fear being ridiculed by their friends for their mistakes. Teachers should create a comfortable classroom atmosphere and build a good relationship with their students and

between students themselves so that the students can feel more comfortable to interact with both their teachers and their classmates.

Al Dradi (2015) in a research conducted at the University of Tripoli illustrated that active learning which involves learning skills and group discussions can have a positive impact on students' learning. Johnson (2005) pointed out that cooperative learning is a teaching strategy where students from small groups to work on class activities which will eventually improve their understanding of the subject. Hendry et al. (2005) reported that study groups helped their students overcome learning difficulties, support each other and correct each other's misunderstandings of the subject. Also, group work helps shy students feel more comfortable working with their classmates and gain more confidence in their ability to learn and support them to develop their language skills (Holloway, 2004).

Regarding whether students like and enjoy learning grammar as mentioned above, **lecturers (EFAP)** at faculties which teach English as an academic discipline claimed that their students enjoyed learning grammar, and were highly motivated to study English in general, and grammar in particular. Whereas most students at faculties which teach English for specific purposes (**ESSP**) did not enjoy learning grammar as their main focus and target were on learning scientific and applied subjects, but not learning English as a second language, and they considered learning English as a secondary subject. These different points of views are related to looking at learning English and English grammar from different perspectives by both lecturers and students. Lecturers were concerned with how interesting grammar was to learn, while students were more concerned about its level of difficulty. If it was 'easy', it was more 'enjoyable'.

Students' attitudes and motivation are associated with learning a second or a foreign language (Gardner, 1985a). Gardner (1985a, 1995) illustrated that students' attitudes and motivations are among the indicators of achievement in second language learning. Students' attitudes and motivations are important as they reflect the active involvement of students in a class of learning a second language (Gardner, 1985b). Positive attitudes will lead to better learning, and students' confidence will be better and their motivation to learn the second

language will increase (Elais et al., 2011). Students' attitudes towards a particular language affect their motivations in learning that language (Al-Tamimi and Shub, 2009).

Gardner and Lambert initiated and inspired much of the research on motivation which plays a crucial role in students' second language learning (Dörnyei, 1994). Gardner divided motivation in second language learning into two types, integrative and instrumental, the first refers to the desire of the learner to communicate with the speakers of the target language. Whereas the second one refers to the desire to learn another language to increase the chances and choices of getting, for example, a job, a good salary or passing an examination (1985). He emphasized integrative motivation and considered it as the basis and the backbone of his model.

Dörnyei (1994) made an attempt to build a comprehensive motivational construct relevant to second language learning motivation. This includes three broad levels, the Language Level, the Learner Level, and the Learning Environment Level; these levels reflect the three different dimensions of language (social, personal and the educational subject matter). Based on the components of this model, a number of practical motivational strategies were listed that may help language teachers understand how to motivate L2 students (see 3.7.3, 3.7.3.1, 3.7.3.2 & 3.7.3.3).

Learners have different amounts and different types of motivation. That is different levels of motivation and different orientations of that motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000). A learner can be motivated to do a learning activity out of curiosity and desire or/and because he or she wants to gain the approval his or her teacher. Also, the learner can be motivated to learn a new skill because he or she believes its possible advantage or importance or because by learning this skill he/she will get good grades (ibid). This led Deci and Ryan (1985) to the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Learners must experience the satisfaction of the needs both for competence (self-efficacy) and autonomy (independence) to reach a high level of intrinsic motivation. Most of the research in the area of intrinsic motivation focuses on the effects of contextual conditions that support or frustrate the learners' needs for competence (self-efficiency) and autonomy (independence) needs, while others recognize that the supports can come from individuals' continuing internal resources that support their ongoing consciousness of competence and autonomy (Ryan and Deci,

2000). Later, intrinsic motivation will frequently be reduced and become weaker by the educational demands of each advancing grade and tasks that expect learners to assure reliability for non-intrinsically interesting responsibilities. At that stage the extrinsic motivation takes place when learners not only feel competent and independent, but also self-determined and can be extrinsically motivated (see Ryan and Deci, 2000). Table 5.1. below shows the percentage of agreement of teachers' and students' perceptions of main problems they encountered when learning EFL grammar. It shows that about two thirds of lecturers considered students' attitudes to learn grammar as one of the main problems that affect learning grammar.

	Problems	Teachers	Students
1	Students' lack of language competence	75%	38.2%
2	Class size	70%	51%
3	Students' attitudes to learning grammar	65%	27.9%
4	Teaching methodology	60%	59.8%

Table 5.1. Teachers' and students' perceptions of some of the problems involved in learning EFL grammar (questionnaire)

5.3. Difficulties and Problems Facing Teachers and Students in Learning English Grammar

This section highlights the findings related to the second research question, "*What are the perceived difficulties and problems facing Libyan English language university teachers and students, in terms of the teaching and learning of English grammar?*" Table 5.2. below shows the percentage of agreement and strong agreement of the questionnaire participants regarding the problems involved in learning EFL grammar.

	Problems	Teachers	Students
1	Students' lack of language competence	75%	38.2%
2	Class size	70%	51%
3	Students' attitudes to learning grammar	65%	27.9%
4	Students' background knowledge of grammar,	60%	52.5%

	established in secondary school		
5	Teaching methodology	60%	59.8%
6	Type of teaching materials used for teaching grammar	50%	56.4%

Table 5.2. Teachers' and students' perceptions of some other problems involved in learning EFL grammar (questionnaire)

The figures presented in Table 5.2. show that most teachers and students agreed on class size, teaching methodology and background knowledge of grammar is the main reasons for problems with EFL grammar (for more information on students' lack of English language competence, see section 5.3.1). It is believed by most lectures and most students who participated in this study that class size is an important determinant of student outcomes, and teaching large classes can be a difficult task and can pose particular challenges. 70% of the teachers and 51% of the students were of the opinion that the classes were too large (50 to 80 students per class), which renders the process of teaching and applying grammar all the more difficult, given that time is limited and inadequate for extra practical activities. Teachers care more than students about reducing class size. This is probably because small classes help them control and communicate with their students. Secondly reducing class size means reducing teachers' effort in the assessment process (correcting, giving marks and feedback). Whereas students are not affected directly by large classes because they are relatively passive, and they listen more than speak. In other words, students are potentially less concerned about large class size, probably as many of them do not see themselves as active contributors to the class and a didactic model of teaching is less hampered by large numbers.

5.3.1. Students' Language Competence and Secondary School Effect

Students' language competence is their knowledge of the subject and discipline gained from school and upon which they are going to continue learning at university. It is generally known that university studies depend on school study, especially the secondary school stage, and also depend on students' competence in the subject and discipline they are going to learn at university. Abushafa (2014) pointed out that students need to be at the appropriate level when they finish school and reach university. Libyan students face several challenges in learning English as a foreign language at secondary schools and thus become low competent.

These challenges are attributed and related either to the teachers themselves, problems with the educational environment in the classroom, lack of teaching facilities, teaching methods or students' attitudes and motivation (Zaghwani, 2014). All these problems are considered factors that affect their English language competence. Although there was not a question in the interviews regarding the impact of secondary school on university students, some participants raised the idea that the low level of secondary education especially in the English language, as the main cause of difficulties in teaching and learning English in general and grammar in specific. The following section shows the participants' views regarding the question of students' language competence.

(a) Results and Data Analysis of Questionnaire

With regard to the question about language competence, 65% of the teachers reported that students' English language competence is generally poor when starting at university, with 75% of the teachers believing that the students' lack of English language competence was one of the main problems affecting grammar teaching and learning. Whereas 38.2% of students reported that their language competence is poor and 30.6% did not answer this question. The possible reasons for differences between teachers and students are one of either two things: The first reason is that usually teachers can assess their students' competence and give them marks and correction on their work whereas students find it difficult to assess themselves. The second reason is that most students in Libyan culture are not comfortable with describing themselves as incompetent. Figure 5.4. describes that most lecturers' responses in the questionnaire revealed that students' English language competence was poor when they joined the university, and that weak students need more training courses to improve their language competence.

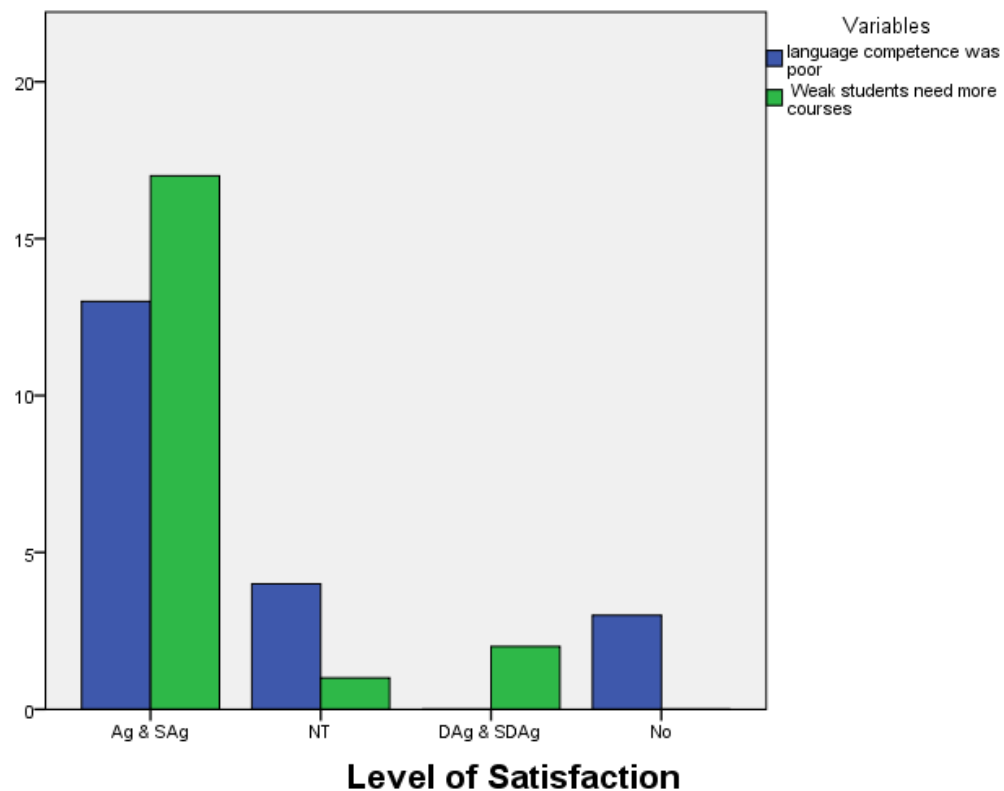


Figure 5.4. Students' English language competence.

Ag = Agree, SAg = Strongly agree, NT = Neutral, DAg = Disagree, SDAg = Strongly disagree and No = No answer. Numbers (0-20) on the left margin refer to all participants (lecturers) of the questionnaire.

The responses from teachers also suggest that the English language competence achieved in secondary schools falls below the required standard for university study. Interestingly, 75% of the teachers and 87.5% of the students appeared to believe that language competence is actually improved by learning grammar.

(b) Results and Data Analysis of the interviews

This section shows the participants' views regarding the question of students' language competence first followed by the secondary school effect on the teaching and learning of EFL grammar that emerged from data collection of the semi-structured interviews.

1) Lecturers' perspectives

The interviews confirmed that all lecturers claimed that most students do not have the language competence that meets the English language requirement at the university level. They emphasised that the reason for that lies behind the secondary school education. For example, **lecturer F1 (EFAP)** reported that *"Students' language competence in my point of view, is the main challenge that I face."* Regarding the question about to what extent students' language competence is important for learning grammar, **lecturers F1 (EFAP) & F3 (ESSP)** replied that language competence is very important in learning grammar and that low language competent students are also low in other elements of language learning'. *"It depends on the students' level and their background knowledge gained from secondary school."* However, **lecturer F1 (EFAP)** argued that she has students with good language competence, but they face difficulties in learning grammar. Whereas **lecturer F3 & M5 (ESSP)** said that although they faced difficulties in teaching grammar due to low language competence, they sometimes meet students who can understand even advanced grammar issues and that some students at first stages can understand and comprehend grammar better than others at advanced stages. Nonetheless, both **lecturers F1 (EFAP) & F3 (ESSP)** agreed that highly competent students in English, in general, were not necessarily good at grammar and vice versa. **Lecturer F2 (ESSP)** observed that the variable levels of students' language competence play an important role in learning grammar. She explained that some students came to university ready and competent while others were incompetent. *"We are dealing with very low levels from secondary school. So we suffer from problems of others, not our problems."* She suggested that if the secondary school curriculum was taught appropriately, students would not find any difficulty at the university level. What the researcher observed here is that students who were good at grammar were highly competent students in English, in general, and those who were not good at grammar were low language competent students, however, there were exceptions in both groups.

A common view was that students were not sufficiently qualified in their English language competence for university study. Lecturers shed light on the issue that the Libyan school educational system is not effective with regard to the development of English language skills, because English is not delivered early enough in the primary school stage. In other words, the

English language they learnt in schools is not sufficient to enable them to university study.

Lecturer F1 (EFAP) shed light on the issue that students were not at the level expected because there was a mismatch between the curriculum and the actual level of students when they finish school and blamed teachers' competence for this:

I know that the language programme and curriculum in school is good, but higher than our pupils' level, and we don't have enough qualified teachers to teach such a school curriculum. Teachers of English in secondary schools don't have the ability to teach it.

Lecturers, however, asserted that not only the school educational system was responsible for their poor preparation but also the students themselves. Most lecturers highlighted that students lacked good command of English in their first university years in adapting appropriately to the demands of the English course.

Lecturer F2 (ESSP) also pointed out that the challenge existed from secondary school due to unqualified teachers. She explained that there were some students ready for university whereas others were not. She argued that teachers in schools lacked English subject knowledge and pedagogical skills to teach such a curriculum:

We are dealing with very low levels from secondary school, although the curriculum of the secondary school is perfect. If this curriculum was taught appropriately, students will not find any difficulty in the university level. We suffer from problems of the level of the students coming from secondary school.

Lecturer F3 & M5 (ESSP) indicated that although the majority of students coming from secondary schools had low language competence, there were some times highly competent students. These varieties of students' levels from secondary school made lecturers face more difficulties in teaching grammar. She explained that there were some students who finished their school and took other separate training courses to improve their English while some others did not take such courses and had a low level of English which led us to face the challenge of differentiation:

I can deal with students having low competence, and I may start with them even from zero. But the problem is that I had some students who had high language competence. This depends on the students' level and their background knowledge gained from secondary school and from other language courses taken before entering university. For example, I have students who can understand even advanced grammar issues. And some students at first

stages understand and comprehend better than others at advanced stages (Lecturer F3 (ESSP)).

2) Students' perspectives

The majority of students also thought that on graduating from secondary school, they had low English language competence and found difficulties in learning grammar. For example, **students F6, M8, M9 & F12 (ESSP)** agreed that most students have low competence and the reason for that lies in the secondary school. **Student M9 (ESSP)** believed that a low level of language competence affects her learning of grammar. However, some of the participants said that they tried to attend training courses and gain acceptable language competence gained from these courses or from their independent learning and that helped them in learning grammar.

About two thirds of students who participated in the interviews highlighted the issue of the background knowledge gained from secondary school and its impact on their university study. **Student M5 (ESSP)** argued that the programme structure of English language adopted at the university was put together on the basis that students are at the level of pre-intermediate, but the problem was that most of the students finish their secondary school at the level of beginner. **Students F6, F7, M8 & M9 (ESSP)** claimed that the problem of low language competence in general and grammar in specific lies in secondary school level and they thought that English should be taught properly in primary schools as well as secondary schools. **Student F12 (ESSP)** also argued that the quality of learning the English language at secondary school is very low and focus should be thrown on schools and English language must be taught properly so students will be at an advanced level when entering university. **Student M9 (ESSP)** claimed that she did not like learning English because she had not been taught properly in secondary school due to the unqualified secondary school teachers. Whereas **student F10 (ESSP)** said that he liked learning English earlier when he went to the UK and later at school when he took training courses to improve his English:

Before I entered the university, I had loved English, I'd been to Britain and some other countries, so I found it important and necessary for me to learn English. I started self-learning, then I studied it at school and found it easy to learn. There was no longer a barrier between me and learning grammar. I mean I found it easy and familiar during my secondary school time. In addition to that, I took a course to improve my English.

Similarly, **Students M4 (EFAP) & M8 (ESSP)** responded that they did not find any difficulty in learning grammar when they joined university because their secondary school study was in an English speaking country and they acquired language and improved their language competence and some of its grammar during their secondary school study. They blamed at the same time other students for their low level because most of the grammar basics at the university were similar to those grammar basics already learnt at secondary schools. This suggests that in order to improve students' language competence, the government needs to take two parallel steps: the first step is to run training courses for teachers, especially in teaching methods. The second step is to offer training courses to students who finish their secondary school to improve their language competence.

Interestingly, students had different opinions about where the responsibility for progress lay. **Student M5 (ESSP)** commented that students needed to be taught some language basics and start from the beginning, then they can understand grammar. However, **student M4 (EFAP)** felt that *"students can overcome this if they have the will to improve themselves."* Similarly, **student F10 (ESSP)** disagreed about the relationship between learning grammar and students' English language competence. He explained: *"I think that it is related to students' will towards learning English. I think the main reason behind that is how important English is to students and how useful it is in their future. Students have no motivation. Students think they don't need English in their future and they study only to pass the exam"*. Low language competence may also not directly affect the ability to grasp grammatical concepts. **Student F7 (ESSP)** expressed that even low competence students might be able to understand and learn grammar. **Student M11 (ESSP)** mentioned that he considered himself as low level but he can understand grammar, however, he cannot produce more language or sometimes he cannot respond to others in English. It can be said that students can overcome their low language competence problem gained from school by increasing their integrative motivation. In other words, if students have a strong desire to improve their English and grammar, they can do so by increasing their level of integrative motivation. On the other hand, teachers, as well as higher educational staff in general can help their students by showing them the

importance of English in their future and career and the advantages of learning the language (instrumental motivation).

Second language researchers agree that competence is primarily a matter of knowledge and one of the most controversial issues in teaching grammar (Ellis, 2006). According to Ellis (2006), there are two ways when to teach grammar. The first one is to teach grammar in the early stages of second language learning. Whereas the second one, which Ellis favoured, is to introduce grammar teaching later when learners have gained some language competence. He argues that lexical knowledge can provide the basis for developing grammatical competence needed for communication. That is why delaying teaching grammar until learners have developed a basic communicative competence (Ellis, 2006). Many language teachers believe that beginning-level students cannot participate in grammatical activities because they lack the basic knowledge of the target language to perform tasks. The majority of students who graduate from Libyan secondary schools begin their university study with a low language competence that does not meet the English language requirement at the university level (Al Dradi, 2015). Students' level of English is very low which causes more problems when they start studying English as a second language. Giaber (2014b) reported that English language departments in most Arab universities accept high school graduates without any consideration for their level of language competence. Aboshafa (2014) pointed out that in order to raise the language competence level, a diagnostic test should be carried out prior to joining the university as a requirement for studying English at university. Al Dradi (2015) found out that the English language programme in the University of Tripoli needs to be regularly evaluated and assessed to see if it meets the students' needs, then restructured and developed to bridge the gap between the curriculum and students' needs which will basically, include developing grammar teaching. Othman, et al. (2013) also emphasized that the current curriculum in Libya needs to be reviewed, in order to develop a better and modern English language programme.

To sum up, the literature, as well as the results of the questionnaire and the interviews, showed that language competence is a very important factor in learning grammar and that the majority of students graduated from Libyan secondary schools have low language

competence which does not meet the English language requirement at the university level. However, some of them thought that high competence language students were not necessarily good at grammar and that students could overcome these difficulties if they had the motivation to do so. Finally, the literature and the results of this study illustrated that in order for students to understand grammar and being able to produce a communicative language, we need to develop a better and modern curriculum that meets students' needs, increase students' learning motivation.

5.3.2. Physical Resources in the Classroom, Class Size and Logistics

(a) Results and Data Analysis of Questionnaire

Around two-thirds of the students agreed that the time allocated to the grammar course should be increased, whereas only a third of the lecturers supported this – perhaps because they thought it was more important to look at ways of reducing class size (see table 5.2.). They thought that smaller classes have a positive impact on students' achievement. (See section 5.2). However, 64.7% of students thought that increasing grammar course time is important to have more practice. They thought that increasing the time would help them to have more practice on grammatical rules and to apply these rules in communicative activities such as pair and/or group work.

There are other factors potentially affecting the learning process: materials and resources. The responses to questions were similar from both groups of respondents, with 90% of teachers and 80% of students emphasising the need for new audio-visual resources and more than half the participants in each group agreeing that the types of materials used for teaching grammar were inappropriate, i.e. mostly authentic texts. According to 70% of the teachers, authentic texts are considered by their students to be difficult to understand. The difficulties arising from authentic texts are seen as posing problems for students, given the variety of structures presented, as well as issues of unfamiliar culture and vocabulary. Arguably, learning grammar needs to be applied in materials that are based on explicit grammar instructions which gives a more precise understanding of the grammar and provides accuracy in both oral and written skills (Wajnryb, 1990).

(b) Results and Data Analysis of the interviews

1) Lecturers' perspectives

Question about physical resources in the classroom, class size and logistics sought to find out what kind of classroom environment and facilities are available for lecturers to enhance the quality of their lessons. All responses were the same; there is an issue with large class size and insufficient time. **Lecturers F2, F3 & M5 (ESSP)** claimed that time makes it harder for them. *"The problem is that the time isn't enough for more practice. There is no chance, time is limited, and to be honest I cannot say that I have time"*. They argued that the need for more time is related to the fact that they have such large numbers of students. If a teacher has, for example less students, he/she can deal with their problems and carry out more activities, but if he/she has 40 students or sometimes more he/she might try active activities once or twice, but then he/she cannot waste time. It is difficult to control a class of 40 students or more. The faculty does not provide suitable class rooms, labs or other facilities that help them minimise the problems. When asked about whether she would prefer to reduce the class size or increase time, Lecturer 3 replied that reducing numbers is more important and needed. She explained that by increasing time but not reducing numbers, the problem is still that students still make a lot of noise and students are likely to go to off-task especially when working in pairs or groups. With such large number of students, it is difficult for her even to control students. She described such a class of 40 as a 'bee hive'. **Lecturers F4 (EFAP) & M5 (ESSP)** believed that teaching grammar is more difficult than teaching literature, because of the environment; classroom size, facilities and materials and lack of visual aids. The class is very crowded and it seems impossible to divide them into groups or pairs to make the class more communicative.

2) Students' perspectives

Students F1, M4 (EFAP), M2, F3, M5, F6, F7, M8, M9, F10, M11, F12 & F13 (ESSP) all believed that a large number of students was more problematic than little time, whereas only **student M14 (ESSP)** disagreed about it. When asked about solving these problems, their answers varied in terms of which solution had priority. **Students M5 & M11, F12, F13, M14 (ESSP)** thought that increasing time can give lecturers more chances to carry class activities which may improve students' understanding of the grammatical rules. Whereas

students F3, M4 & F6 - F10 (ESSP) thought that for grammar lessons decreasing the number to 30 students or less per class is more useful and would make it easier for the teacher to carry on the class especially if the teacher wants to do more activities and group working in a communicative way. They believed that with a large number a teacher does not have the chance to practise more communicative activities such as pairs or group work. In addition to limited time, large numbers, small rooms and hot weather, especially in summer, make it worse.

These findings find resonance in existing research. Whilst according to Larsen-Freeman (1987), the teacher of a communicative language class should be the director and adviser of the class activities, supplying the language needed and engaging students in communicative activities by dividing them into pairs or groups of three or more. Burnaby and Sun's study (1989) claimed that teachers in China found it difficult to use communicative language approach because of the class sizes. Also Ellis (1994), who studied the communicative language approach confirmed that the class size, grammar-based examinations, and lack of exposure to authentic language as constraints on using communicative language approach. As a result of the limited time, more focus is spent on the teacher's elaborate explanation of language meaning and little attention is paid to training activities that increase students' communicative competence.

5.4. Teaching Grammar and Difficulties Faced by Lecturers

This section highlights the findings related to the third research question, "How do Libyan teachers of English teach grammar and how do they deal with any difficulties which ensue?".

5.4.1. Use of Teaching Materials

1) Lecturers' perspectives

Most lecturers who taught English grammar reported that they used photocopied sections from books and worksheets. **Lecturers F1, F4 (EFAP) & M5 (ESSP)** used authentic texts that included very short paragraphs and dialogues written in a communicative way but did not contain grammatical explanations or exercises. Lecturers then encouraged their students to use separate grammar books as supplementary materials. These additional materials contain grammatical rules with some examples and exercises. But these materials were very

expensive; a book may cost more than 50 LD which made it difficult for students to own. In addition to books and sheets, **lecturers F2 & F3 (ESSP)** used CDs that included texts with some grammar practice to develop students' listening skill. However, all the exercises in these books and sheets are related to technical terminology in a communicative way, and neither included explicit nor implicit grammar to be taught to students. All **lecturers** claimed that they lacked access to visual aids, projectors or smart boards or even the internet.

Using textbook or published materials continuously in teaching grammar can make learners less motivated in studying the language, thus a teacher is better to provide supplementary materials (authentic materials) to support the textbook (Mestari and Malabar, 2016). The main purpose of using authentic materials is to prepare students to use the real language in their social lives (Morley and Guariento, 2001) and to learn more about the culture of the target language. In other words, the authentic materials are used in order to close or minimise the language gap between what students learn in the classroom and using this knowledge in the real life (Mestari and Malabar, 2016). So, it can be said here that a combination of using grammar textbooks (either explicitly or implicitly) supported by authentic materials, or a combination applying authentic materials supported by explicit grammar books will help students understand grammatical rules and structures and use this knowledge in their social and communicative life. This is the teachers' role to combine the two types of materials that complement each other, and it is the teachers' decision to choose which material comes first and which one comes later.

Authentic materials refer to language samples drawn from different resources such as magazines, stories, printed instructions, airport notices, bank instructions, and any written messages (Nunan, 1999). Since the introduction of the communicative approach in the 1970s, authentic materials have been promoted for teaching English as EFL and English grammar. This type of materials helps students to learn different samples of English used by its native speakers in all kinds of language use and make students more communicative in classroom activities. These materials help learners learn the real language not about the language (Mestari and Malabar, 2016).

2) Students' perspectives

Interestingly, **students F1 & M4** said that the rooms were equipped with data projectors, but they were not used regularly because most lecturers were not able to apply them in their lessons. With the exception of the students at the faculty of engineering, all other students reported that their teachers used written materials with audio scripts and sometimes used the interactive whiteboards boards to show some materials and then apply some practice on the smart board using a computer provided in the classroom. **Student M14** at the faculty of engineering claimed that teachers only gave them worksheets about grammar in question and answer form but without any kind of communicative activities. **Students F3, M5, F6 & F10, M11 & F12 (ESSP)** said that they were taught from books with grammar in communicative texts and that these were useful, however, they are not available anymore. All current materials (books and sheets) are full of technical terminology and do not include much grammar. However, **student M11 (ESSP)** responded that teachers who use these kinds of books could identify some grammar teaching points within them and then exploit these to teach students grammar.

5.4.2. The Influence of Pedagogical Expertise

1) Lecturers' perspectives

All **lecturers** who participated in the interviews were master degree holders in applied linguistics and they had been teaching English in the University for 7 years or more which should mean that they have well experience in teaching English as a foreign language. However, **lecturers F1, F4 (EFAP), F2 & M5 (ESSP)** had never taken any courses in how to teach grammar. According to **lecturer F4 (EFAP)**, some teachers had been better than others in teaching grammar, especially to beginner university students who had just come from secondary school because of applying mixed teaching methods they use in addition to their different personal characteristics.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the above comments is that all lecturers did not say much, during the interviews about themselves or their colleagues in relation to their teaching competence. All they said about lecturers' teaching competence at the university is that there are some inexperienced and often incompetent lecturers. In addition, they described teachers

of English in secondary schools as unqualified to teach rather than looking at their own needs for development. Most of them also pointed out that they had not been offered any courses in how to teach grammar.

2) Students' perspectives

Students' views about lecturers' pedagogical expertise varied because each one of them was taught by more than one lecturer during the time of the study. **Student F1 (EFAP)** felt that *"some of the lecturers' helped us in learning English grammar with high-quality teaching but some did not"*. **Student M8 (ESSP)** argued that some teachers had used traditional teaching methods and made little effort to interact with students. In this case, students found grammar more difficult to understand. Others, however, used the communicative methodology and made the class more active, and did their best to help students understand grammar. **Student M2 (ESSP)** claimed that while some teachers were focusing on students' participation in communicative activities in the class, others did not focus on grammar or communication, they only taught terminology. She said that the teacher who taught her through communication by dividing students into groups of 3 or 4 and let them try to read the text together and find out the rules inductively was better for communication than the others. She thought that any difficulty in learning grammar is mostly related to the teaching method adopted by the teachers, which might not help students learn. For example, when lessons are teacher centred and students have little or no role to play in the class, the class lacks communication. **Student M5 (ESSP)** argued that a teacher of grammar wrote the rules on the board, explained them and students had to memorise, and then students go home without understanding. Also, **student F10 (ESSP)** reported that teachers mostly followed the traditional way of teaching by writing the lesson on the board with some examples or pictures. Teachers used traditional methods where there is not much discussion between the teacher and students. It was almost always teacher centred.

On the other hand, **student F3(ESSP)** described her teachers as well prepared when they deliver the lessons. However, she found that only one of them used enjoyable ways and techniques during the class by making it more communicative; allowing students to participate, giving all of them the opportunity to communicate with each other and share information in pairs or in groups. This lets students understand and practise grammar rather

than just memorising its rules. She pointed out that all teachers should also try to deal with different varieties of students. **Student M4 (EFAP)** indicated that:

"teachers used only traditional teaching techniques and did not improve themselves with new methods and did not use technology to facilitate teaching process. Teachers should be aware if their students had understood the contents of the lesson or not rather than just teaching the lesson and going home."

He believed that feedback from students could help the teacher assess students and then improve the quality of the teaching process.

Students M11 & F6 (ESSP) were also enthusiastic about communicative methods: *"They were good and did their best in teaching us grammar and put us in a circle and let us all participate"*. **Student F12 (ESSP)** also illustrated a preference for more active learning: *"My current teacher is good; she gives us more class activities. All teachers must give more activities and practice"*. **Student M14 (ESSP)** demonstrated dissatisfaction with passive lessons, complaining that the teacher just read the lecture notes and carried out drill exercises; this was not useful. He remarked: *"They are not qualified to teach at university. Although the curriculum is taken from Britain, teachers do not know how to teach it"*.

The data illustrates that although university students are arguably supposed to have some knowledge about their discipline, to create their own motivation and to bring their own cognitive abilities to learn, a university lecturer still has a crucial role to play in the learning process. The lecturer is supposed to create an appropriate learning environment that helps students understand and express their thoughts, seeking to improve them and helping them to achieve their aims of learning (UTS, 2012).

A university lecturer plays an important role in teaching a second language or any other subject. Dörnyei (2001a) suggested that any teacher should be encouraging a positive and open-minded personality towards the language that is learned in a way that enables learners to develop a positive attitude towards language learning. Almost everything a teacher does in the classroom has a motivational effect (positive or negative) on learners' attitudes towards learning a second language. Teachers' appropriate behaviours with a good relationship with

learners will lead to positive students' attitudes. Thomas (2003) reported that a good lecturer is a teacher who can give students more confidence in themselves and motivation to learning.

According to Delaney et al. (2010), nine characteristics are expected by students from their lecturers at the university which are: to be knowledgeable, approachable, engaging, communicative, organized, responsive, professional, respectful and humorous (Delaney et al. 2010). For example, they found that "effective teachers have strong content knowledge and knowledge and expertise on how to teach what they know ... and pedagogical knowledge" and to be more communicative (p. 9) which mean that teachers ought to be able to provide different teaching methods and/or strategies to teach different materials and variable students' levels, and to be able to switch from strategy to strategy such as giving notes then class discussion or small group work (ibid).

Richards and Rodgers (2001) argued that a single approach or teaching method cannot usually take into consideration all variables of language learning. It is very important for teachers to train and learn how to use different approaches and teaching methods and to be aware of when they might be useful (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). The professional training and development of teachers can be a major source of improving the quality of their pedagogy to form adequate students with the required knowledge and skills on various subjects (Boudersa, 2016). Teachers' training and professional development and the most important factor in the quality of students' learning is the quality of teaching and teaching leadership where teachers and their professional thinking and practice need to be developed continuously throughout their careers (Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications, 2014).

5.4.3. Difficulties in Grammar

1) Lecturers' perspectives

In response to the questions that sought to find out difficulties in teaching grammar, none of the lecturers felt that they had difficulties in the actual teaching of grammar, but that there were other reasons that made grammar harder to teach and difficult for learners to learn. As already mentioned, all lecturers referred to large class size and limited time as the greatest

causes of difficulty (see 5.3.2.a & 5.3.2.b). Nonetheless, further responses about particular aspects of students' difficulties in learning grammar were given as follows.

Lecturer F1 (EFAP) replied that there were four main causes of difficulties in learning grammar. Firstly, students feared to learn grammar and committing mistakes so that they felt shy and embarrassed. She considered this as a result of their low level language competence in general (see 5.3.1.b.1.). Secondly, she claimed that there were not enough qualified teachers to teach grammar at university (see 5.4.2.a.). Thirdly, she pointed out that although students can understand some grammar, they cannot apply the information they have learnt into communication. And the difficulty in learning, as also stated by **lecturer F2 (ESSP)**, becomes greater with higher levels of study especially in learning different tenses which are more variable than in Arabic. Fourthly, students felt annoyed and bored when learning rules in a classical and traditional way, but they loved and preferred to be taught in a more communicative way.

The other problem or cause of difficulty reported by **lecturers F2, F3, M5 (ESSP) & F4 (EFAP)** is that students are variable in their levels which made the process of teaching grammar communicatively more difficult. **Lecturer F2 (ESSP)** added that her students faced different levels of difficulties in different levels or stages of study. She also thought that students in the first year saw grammar as only form, and did not understand the relation between form, context and use. To sum up, none of the lecturers claimed to find difficulties in teaching grammar, and what made learning grammar difficult for most students is a series of other issues related to students themselves or to the educational system and environment in Libyan universities and secondary schools as well.

2) Students' perspectives

When discussing the questions that sought to find out students' views and perceptions regarding learning grammar, approximately half of the students who participated in the interviews pointed out that grammar is easy and they could understand its rules, while the other half considered grammar a difficult subject. For example, **student M2 (ESSP)** said that grammar by itself, (the rules) is difficult to memorise. However, all of them agreed that large

class size and limited time can cause difficulty in learning grammar. For instance, **student F3 (ESSP)** stressed that the most difficult challenge she faced was that grammar is hard to understand and needs much time to learn new rules and more and more examples and explanations (see 5.3.2.b.2).

Some students replied that there were certain issues that may cause some difficulties in learning grammar. For example, **student M5 (ESSP)** pointed out that because some students felt shy and tried to avoid participating in grammar discussion, they found it difficult to learn. **Student F1 (EFAP)** considered grammar as a very boring subject and difficult to understand. Whereas **students M2 & F7 (ESSP)** felt that the difficulty or accessibility of grammar depended on the teaching method a teacher adopted. Also, **student F10 (ESSP)** argued that there was not much discussion between the teacher and students; it was almost always teacher centred (see 5.2.1.b.2.).

Some of the interviewees raised the issue that they have some difficulties in learning some grammatical forms. For example, **Student F1 (EFAP)** referred to the difficulty of putting prepositions in the right space. **Student F10 (ESSP)** expressed difficulties in writing a paragraph and connecting sentences together. **Student F3 (ESSP)** said that she faced a problem with past simple and past participle forms and why sometimes the two forms are different. **Student M4 (ESSP)** argued that many students who understood grammar have many mistakes in written and spoken English, which means that they have the knowledge about grammar but they cannot transfer it into communicative language. Also **students F6, F12 & F13 (ESSP)** pointed out that although grammar is easy and they could understand its rules, they could not apply them into communicative use, whereas **student M11 & M14 (ESSP)** said that they could understand the rules and produce correct English, but they had some difficulties in dealing with some tenses such as past, continues and perfect tenses.

5.5. Results and Data Analysis of the Themes Emerged from the Semi-Structured Interviews.

In this section, the researcher analyses the results of the data of the themes that emerged from data collection of the semi-structured interviews and related to the teaching and learning of EFL grammar.

5.5.1. Structure and Content of the English Language Programme in the University

The structure and content of the English language programme in the Libyan university is another theme related to the teaching and learning of EFL grammar that emerged from data collection of the semi-structured interviews. English is being taught for two main purposes; English for academic purposes and English for specific purposes. The following sections illustrate both lecturers' and students' views regarding this theme.

1) Lectures' Perspectives

The structure and content of the English language programme in Libyan universities refer to the English language curriculum and its application. In response to the question “*In your opinion what are the weaknesses of the university English language programme in Libya?*” most lecturers referred to students' lack of practical use of English, rather than making an assessment of the curriculum. For example, **lecturer F4 (EFAP)** replied that “*students do not use English outside the classroom.*” **Lecturer F3 (ESSP)** responded that “*the curriculum itself does not have any weaknesses, but... there are no opportunities for students to practise their English. As soon as a student gets out of the class, English is dead*”. Also, **lecturer F2 (ESSP)** replied that students lack “*the opportunity to practise the language*”.

When discussing the question regarding whether the programme structure and content form a basis to communicate in English, some lecturers explained that the curriculum itself is good but the problem is that it does not meet students' needs, and also is not taught properly. For example, **lecturer F2 & M5 (ESSP)** remarked that the programme structure and content were appropriate, but there is a mismatch between students' language competence and course level or difficulty as a result of educational system problems in secondary schools where there were “*no qualified teachers and students' level is very weak*” (see 5.5.1, 5.5.1.a. and 5.5.1.b.).

Lecturer F2 (ESSP) pointed out that some university faculties teach English as a second or foreign language while others teach it for scientific or specific purposes such as engineering or medicine. “*The curriculum makers of this faculty [English for scientific purposes] had put a target that teaching the English language aims to help students learn more vocabulary*”

*and terminology" rather than learning it for communicative purposes. "Students are mainly asked to memorise definitions and memorise electrical circuits." Teaching English in such faculties and colleges did not focus on teaching the language as a language. Rather it is considered as a tool and means that helped students learn technical terminology of other scientific and technical subjects where many key texts are written in English. In relation to courses that teach English for scientific purposes, **lecturer F3 (ESSP)** was not at all satisfied with the curriculum. "I feel that the curriculum content is more advanced and does not match the students' level. This content does not give us a chance to teach grammar. The syllabuses are mostly related to terminology and vocabulary rather than grammar". She added: "I reject the current curriculum. I am not obliged to teach branches of engineering. I am sure that such students who are taught this curriculum of engineering will not communicate as well as others who are taught a communicative curriculum."*

This means that teaching English for scientific or specific purposes may not help students learn the grammar and the language in general for communication purposes. However, research on teaching English for specific purposes refers to the communicative needs and practices of particular professional, occupational or social groups, and has become very important in English language teaching and research. Teaching English for specific purposes refers to specific skills, teaching materials, linguistic forms, and communicative practices that a special group of learners need to acquire informing the curriculum and materials for the group (Hyland, 2007). He found that teaching of English for specific purposes was clearly based on the idea that certain people use a language as members of social groups which means that it is concerned with learning communication rather than the language and with how teaching materials are created and applied. The results of this study, however, did not show that English had been taught for this sake. The results showed that the English language curriculum in such faculties is not related to teaching the English language for communication, but teaching students some vocabulary (technical terms) in scientific materials. Hyland (2007) then argued that teachers of English for specific purposes should be encouraged to focus on communication rather than language, to assume a research orientation for their work, to apply collaborative teaching methods, to be conscious of the diversity of discussion, and to consider the broader political implications of their role.

When it came to the question regarding lecturers' opinions about students' views about the structure and content of the English language curriculum, lecturers' responses varied. **Lecturer F1 (EFAP)** explained that she had taught two different syllabuses; one was purely about grammar rules while the other one was much more communicative. She said "Students loved the second part much more, they felt bored by the first part". **Lecturers F4 (EFAP) & M5 (ESSP)** said that students do not care about the programme, "*students study only to pass the exams*". Whereas **lecturer F3 (ESSP)** replied that her students like the English language programme, but she herself thinks that the curriculum and its contents are very boring.

2) Students' perspectives

In response to the question about programme organisation for over four years, students' answers showed that they were not entirely satisfied with the programme structure. **Student M4 (EFAP)** who had studied in the English language department, responded that they have some foundation courses at the beginning of their studies such as grammar, comprehension, conversation and writing, but the programme is not well ordered; "*It doesn't have a chain... There are no obvious links that you can rely on or use between these different components.*" Linkage and relationships between different aspects of the course were perceived to be incoherent as different parts of the course/s taught by different teachers are not complementary to each other.

Students M2 & M5 (ESSP) mentioned that they only "study *English basics*" such as the verbs to be, to have and to do. **Student F3 (ESSP)** claimed that there is a little about grammar and little about communication; "*the curriculum itself, I think is not that useful, it is more about texts and technology than the English language itself.*" She added that "*for students who don't know much about English, it is hard to understand.*" **Student F10 (ESSP)**, a former head of the students union of the faculty, pointed out that he had provided the faculty management with some feedback from the students about the curriculum and English language programme. For example "*the technical terms we have in the curriculum are not practised or used by students. When we have these terminologies, other teachers of technical subjects translate them into Arabic. ...Also, it does not focus on grammar*" **Student M14 (ESSP)** replied differently, explaining that in his faculty of engineering the curriculum

does focus on grammar with some vocabulary, but *"we only study English in the first two semesters"*.

Also, **students F6, F12 & F13 (ESSP)** responded that the curriculum is not at degree level yet difficult at the same time. He said: *"It's honestly weak (below university degree level standards), but most students are weak"*. They explained that the curriculum for them as university students is difficult because *"we don't have the basics."* By comparison, **students F7, M8 & M9 (ESSP)** believed that the curriculum was good and acceptable. **Student 9** commented that she was not good at English grammar: *"for me as a low level student, I see it as difficult."* For **student M5 (ESSP)**, the programme is intended for university students, but the problem is that students find it more difficult as a result of the low quality of teaching in secondary schools in Libya. Also, **student F6 (ESSP)** thought that *"the main problem lies in the secondary school."*

Students F12 (ESSP) commented that *"English is based on practice, there should be projectors that help students learn real-life communication from films and cartoons, students need more oral practice and listening"*. **Student F13 (ESSP)** added that *"we should have more courses of English language throughout the four years of study"*.

The findings from the semi-structured interviews tell us that there is a gap between the secondary school curriculum and students' level when they finish school. Another gap seems to exist between the university curriculum and the students' needs. So the programme needs to be assessed and updated regularly to bridge these gaps and meet the students' needs.

Also, the findings showed that faculties which teach English as a foreign language in its own right focus on teaching students grammar, while those which teach English for scientific purposes focus on teaching them terminology and vocabulary rather than grammar. However, all of them seem to lack communicative elements to the programme. Grammar curriculum developers should have more understanding of these variations and issues, and provide sufficient guidance in the curriculum showing how these difficulties could be addressed and dealt with. It has been pointed out that students need to be taught grammar through various teaching methodologies and approaches to cater to their needs in learning grammar (Morelli, 2003).

5.5.2. Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher tried to provide a descriptive and interpretive analysis of the collected data from different perspectives based on the research questions of the study. The researcher combined where appropriate the findings of the questionnaire and interview analysis as well as results of statistical analysis to present the study findings integratively and to avoid repetition. The themes that emerged from the data were discussed such as teaching methods, students' motivation to learn, students' language competence, classroom, class size and logistics, teaching materials, lecturers' qualifications, training and skills, difficulties in grammar and secondary school effect.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the above findings shows that the main aims that were addressed by the research questions regarding *"the impact of the approaches taken by lecturers on students' learning and students' attitudes, the perceived difficulties and problems facing Libyan university teachers and students in teaching and learning grammar, and the way Libyan teachers taught grammar and dealt with difficulties"* were reached from the responses of the participants. Their responses showed that there are many current problems that English language lecturers and students face at the Libyan university level. It is clear from the participants' responses that the English language and its grammar learning are facing a wide array of problems, given their low levels of language competence as a result of inadequate preparation that students received at school. This inadequate school educational background affects their university studies. Some lecturers advised that introductory courses in English would successfully develop the students' level of English in general and grammar in specific.

Many factors were found to hamper Libyan students' mastery of grammar. These difficulties and challenges which they encounter in grammar learning are emphasised by their grammar teachers. However, students attributed these difficulties to a number of factors, whereas lecturers attributed them either to same factors or to some extent to different ones. There was a mismatch between lecturers' views and their practices as understood from students' views. These inconsistencies will be discussed and interpreted in more detail in chapter seven. The

next chapter focuses on students actual use of written language where students try their best to write a correct language which will be assessed according to what they have been taught. It will present the results and findings of the document analysis.

Chapter Six: Results of Documents analysis

6.1. Introduction

As mentioned previously, the research was carried out in different faculties of higher education in Tripoli and Zawia and facilitated by collecting both quantitative and qualitative data in two phases. In chapter five the researcher listed the research questions and how the data were collected regarding these questions. It was mentioned that phase 2 of the study involved qualitative data collection through face to face semi-structured interviews complemented by document analysis. This chapter presents the results and the findings obtained from the document analysis of students' written work (exams and compositions). The purpose of data analysis is to contribute to answering the fourth research question "*What are the recommended pedagogical approaches that meet the diversity of students' needs in learning grammar?*" The findings of this analysis along with the findings of the questionnaires and interviews helped the researcher understand the grammatical problems that the process of grammar learning involves and how these problems can perhaps be overcome.

The sample of EFL students who were involved in this part of study were studying in the third, fourth and fifth semesters of their degrees, i.e. they were in the middle of their higher education courses which last for eight semesters in Libya. Samples of students' written work (exams and compositions) were collected from 32 students in the academic year 2016/2017 at the faculty of languages, English language department where students are English major undergraduate students. Students who study English for specific purposes (non-English major undergraduate students) are not included. The reason behind excluding students at faculties where English is taught for specific purposes is that the curriculum for these students does not include writing tasks.

The documents were collected on the basis of opportunity sampling, as they were conveniently available during the researcher's visit to the University of Tripoli. This type of sampling is a non-probability sampling method where the samples are collected or approached from a population of people who are easy to reach and contact. The only criteria to this method is the availability and willingness of people to participate (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). Henry (1990) considered this type of sampling easy to be used by almost

anyone and attractive choice for most researchers due to the many advantages it provides such being easy, readily available, and cost-effective (see 4.5).

Although 50 samples of work were returned to the researcher, he only chose to include 32. He opted to use those with more words with an average of 300 words; the longer the document was (from the researcher's point of view) the more useful it would be. The IELTS writing test requires 150 words in task one and 250 words in task two (McCarter, 2010). Also, the TOEFL writing exam requires a minimum word account of 150 words in question one and a minimum of 300 words in question two (ETC. TOEFL, online). So, an average of 300 words for students' written work would be appropriate. Some of the students had written about two or more different topics, which gave the researcher more varieties of work from the same participant. Some of these documents were exams and some were compositions where some of them were written by students in the classroom and some others were written as homework. The samples were collected from exams because, in exams, students are likely to use their maximum efforts to achieve the highest marks. So, the exam documents can reflect their language skills and understanding of grammar in writing and give a credible representation of their writing ability. The exams were conducted in the classrooms to assess and evaluate students' English writing ability including their competence in grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation. In the exams, students were given a variety of different topics and were asked to write about one of them, or they were able to write about a topic of their own choice. These included some common topics such as 'about yourself, your best friend, a nice place you visited '. The other type of documents analysed were those that were written by the students as a homework task, which gave students more time and access to resources such as internet and books. Students were asked to write about a topic of their own choice and about 'the advantages and disadvantages of using Internet'. The homework tasks had the same purpose as the exam tasks.

Document analysis is a qualitative method in nature and widely used in social sciences research. This method is used for analysing the contents of any written materials. Document analysis is a systematic method to analyse or assess written texts which requires data to be examined and interpreted to comprehend, work out meaning and widen empirical knowledge. Document analysis is a cheap means to gather practical data. Although the strengths of

document analysis are considerable, documentary data is often combined with other data from other instruments such as interviews to reduce bias and confirm credibility (Bowen, 2009). Documents can be analysed as a way to support findings or confirm evidence from other sources of data (ibid). Analysing documents incorporates coding content into themes and sub-themes in a similar way to that involved in the analysis of interview transcripts. In order to interpret and analyse the data gained from the document analysis, the researcher adopted the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for language assessment by applying the English Grammar Profile (EGP) which is related to the English Profile Programme (EPP) of the CEFR. He tried to analyse these documents through coding the content of these materials into themes in a way that can be analysed and assessed according to the CEFR. The CEFR is language-neutral that can be applied to any foreign language learning. This framework describes what learners can do in a language as they progress from the lowest level (A1) to the highest level (C2) of all language skills; reading listening, speaking and writing (CEFR, 2011). The CEFR can be used for many different purposes and features from all aspects of languages education, such as developing syllabuses, making and marking exams, evaluating language learning needs, developing learning materials, self-assessment and developing programmes of teacher training.

The CEFR for "English Profile Programme (EPP) has been developed by the University of Cambridge. The EPP is registered with the Council of Europe and is managed by a core group of collaborators at the University of Cambridge providing Reference Level Descriptions for English to accompany the CEFR. These descriptions cover what learners know and can do in English at each of the six CEFR levels" (UCLES/CUP 2011). In other words, the main focus of the EPP is the identification of features from all aspects of language which can specify CEFR levels from one another and hence serve as a base for the evaluation of a learner's proficiency level (Salamoura & Saville, 2010). The EPP can help teachers understand what the CEFR means for the English language. The programme describes aspects of English (grammar, function and vocabulary) that are usually learned at each level of the CEFR. This programme helps teachers, curriculum designers and developers and authors of course books to identify what is appropriate for learning at each level. The English

Grammar Profile (EGP) is one of these three main areas (grammar, function and vocabulary) of the EPP.

The CEFR and EPP have invested much effort in developing this Framework system for describing language proficiency because they see that such a Framework meets the needs of language learners and teachers, and end users of language qualifications.

By adopting the EGP framework within the broader framework of the CEFR, the researcher was able to assess students' written work from level A1 to level C2 at CEFR levels, and to make an assessment of students' grammar competence. The EGP researchers at the Cambridge Exam Centre developed an English grammar corpus that includes more than sixty million words from thousands of Cambridge exams around the world. This corpus was divided into grammatical categories (super categories) such as "adjectives" and grammatical sub categories such as "combining, position, modifying, comparative and superlative". These categories and sub categories tell the corpus user what grammar area the 'can do statement' relates to. The corpus has also a column under which there are the so called "can do statements" which refers to either form, use or form/use. 'Form refers to building the grammar structure itself such as 'affirmative, negative or interrogative', whereas 'use' concerns specific uses or application of the grammar for example, to express politeness. (EGO Demo, online). Also the corpus includes some examples, indicating how the CEFR levels refer to each sub category. Table 6.1. shows what language learners can do at each level in their overall writing interaction.

	OVERALL WRITTEN INTERACTION
A1	Can ask for or pass on personal details in written form.
A2	Can write short, simple formulaic notes relating to matters in areas of immediate need.
B1	Can convey information and ideas on abstract as well as concrete topics, check information and ask about or explain problems with reasonable precision. Can write personal letters and notes asking for or conveying simple information of immediate relevance, getting across the point he/she feels to be important.
B2	Can express news and views effectively in writing, and relate to those of others.

C1	Can express him/herself with clarity and precision, relating to the addressee flexibly and effectively.
C2	As C1

Table 6.1. learners' overall writing interaction.

According to these categories and sub categories, the researcher analysed the students' written documents in order to assess the students' level and to assess what they can do with English grammar at each of the CEFR levels. This means that by triangulating data gained from this data collecting method with the data gained from the questionnaire and interviews, the researcher attempts to provide a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility (Bowen, 2009) which can provide concrete evidence of learners' written competence and what they can/cannot do at each of the CEFR levels in written English. In English grammar, which is finite (McCarthy, 2011), there are core features that are considered fundamental in learning grammar, such as adjectives, adverbs, tenses, articles, conjunctions, modals and auxiliary verbs and reported speech...etc. which represent the themes (categories) of the data to be analysed. These themes (categories) will be discussed in alphabetical order starting with adjectives then adverbs and clauses ...etc. All the following classifications and scaling are classified according to the Cambridge CEFR corpus of grammar. For example, the category "adjectives", includes according to EGP programme, Cambridge Corpus, the sub categories "combining, position, modifying, comparative and superlative". Each sub category can refer to any of the CEFR levels, for instance, the combining adjectives can be used to combine between two adjectives with "and" which refers to level A1, or can be used with "but" to join a limited range of common adjectives after the verb 'to be' which refers to level A2. Sometimes, a comma can be used to combine the two adjectives before the noun they modify. Also, they can be used to combine two adjective phrases that modify a noun(s). Each one of these as well as other uses that were found in the documents are explained in the EGP, with additional information about how these levels are assigned for each part of speech, and are to be related to a certain CEFR level. In the tables below, numbers refer to how many times a word or a phrase was repeated by students, zero means that the sub category is found in the Cambridge corpus but is not used by students, whereas the use of lines (-----) means that a grammatical structure (a word or a phrase) of a certain sub category is not classified by

the Cambridge corpus at any of the CEFR level. In the following section, the researcher presents a full analysis and description of the first category (**Adjectives**) as an example to give the reader some details of how he analysed these documents. The symbol **SF** refers to a Female student's work whereas the symbol **SM** refers to a male student's work. However, the researcher will present the rest of the data analysis in tables with some explanations and overall summary for each category and subcategory of the EGP (i.e. in some less detail, given the detail provided for the first category).

6.2. Adjectives

The majority of students used adjectives that refer to CEFR level A1, according to the classification of Cambridge CEFR corpus of grammar, such as single adjectives that come before nouns, combining two adjectives or joining a limited range of common adjectives with 'and'. Modifying common gradable adjectives with 'very', and using a limited range of adjectives attributively before a noun or noun phrase were also commonly used by all students. Furthermore, they used a limited range of adjectives predicatively, after the verb 'to be'. The irregular superlative adjective 'best' in the phrase 'my best friend' was used as well. Meanwhile, none of the students used a combination of two adjectives with 'but' which refers to the level A2.

Level A1

In addition to many uses of a single adjective that modifies a noun or pronoun such as "a new job, a small cat", **SF1** and **SF2** used a combination of two adjectives with 'and' such as "It was cold and boring day", "I felt bad and tired". Also **SM6** used a similar example, "it is dark and ugly". **SM7** and **SF9** wrote "to be pleasant and honest", and "He is kind and strict at the same time" was written by **SF9**. Another form of this level is the use of a modifier (e.g. very) before an adjective such as "The consequences of risk were very dangerous. She is very active. She looks very beautiful" by (**SF2**), "very important" by (**SM7**) "very useful" by (**SF15**), "very sweet" by (**SM16**), "very serious issue" by (**SM19**) and "very important, very sweet, very special" by (**SF9**). The expression "My best friend" which was used by some students such as **SM3** and **SF12** is also considered at the level A1. Finally, **SF12** was the only student who wrote a sequence of three adjectives with a comma and 'and' in this example "very quiet, smart and confident".

Level A2

As mentioned above, none of the students used the form of combining two adjectives with 'but' which refers to the level A2. However, when analysing the students' documents, the researcher found some other forms that refer to this level. One of these forms is the comparative adjectives that end in *"er, ier, double consonant + er* or irregular comparatives" such as "easier, harder, nicer, safer, worse" by (SF5, SM6, SM16, SM19 and SF20) and the use of comparative form with more for example, "more useful" by (SM19) and more + adjective of three syllables such as "more different, more convenient" by (SM6). Another form that refers to this level is the use of superlative adjectives which end in *'est, iest'* or the use of irregular superlatives and the use of *the most + adjective*". For example, SM16 wrote "my greatest memories, the best days", SM6 wrote "the latest, the biggest and the most important", SM19 used "the biggest", SF9 and SF18 expressed "the worst day", SF18 mentioned "lowest point" and SF10 comprised "the most important" and "to be in the best way". SF14 wrote "the most interesting people" and SF17 used "biggest, too young".

The Cambridge English grammar corpus also contains some expressions such as the use of adjective + prepositional phrase and the use of *'too, so, quite and totally'* + common gradable adjectives that refers to level A2. In this regard, the SM7 used the expression of "full of surprise", SF5 used the expression "so many students", SM7 applied the "totally different" and "such wonderful places", SF10 wrote "quite old", SM11 expressed "so cute", "so hard" by SM16 and SF18, and "so wonderful" and "too young" by SF17. SF12 also used "so wonderful".

Level B1

When it came to the CEFR level B1, the researcher found that few students used adjectives at this level such as the use of a series of two adjectives or more before the noun they modify without using a comma or *'and'*. For example, SF1 wrote "little poor cat", SM8 "short red hair and big brown eyes" and SF15 wrote "a lovely rounded face" and SF17 "a beautiful big family". Furthermore, SF18 used "poor old man" while SM19 expressed "healthy mental life" and "serious, healthy mental life". Among the forms of this level is the form of "a lot of", for example, SM19 used this expression "a lot of information" and the form of repeating

the same comparative adjective with 'and' "better and better, whereas **SF20** expressed the "more and more". Table 6.2 shows the distribution of adjectives used by students at each level.

Categories	Level A1	Level A2	Level B1	Level B2	Level C1	Level C2	Total
combining	15	1	9	0	0	0	25
comparative	-----	19	3	2	0	0	24
modifying	12	13	4	0	0	0	29
position	147	6	2	1	4	2	162
superlative	15	10	18	1	0	0	44
Total	540	100	52	4	4	2	702

Table 6.2. Distribution and classification of adjectives.

It can be said here that in the category of adjectives, students used adjectives that refer to levels A1, A2 (91%) and B1 whereas levels B2, C1 and C2 were rarely found in the students' documents.

6.3. Adverbs

When analysing the use of adverbs by students, it was noticed that a third of their use of adverbs was at level A1 and more than a third was at level A2. This means that about three quarters of this category came at both levels A1 and A2. Table 6.3 shows the distribution of the use of adverbs according to the classification. Level A1 refers to the basic uses of a limited range of adverbs that describe, for example, place such as 'here and there', time such as 'yesterday and tomorrow' or frequency such as 'always and sometimes'. Level A2 refers to the basic uses of a limited range of adverbs that modify the degree of adjectives such as 'so much and a lot of' and the manner of verbs such as 'quickly and slowly'. At level B1, students can use different adverbs of time such as 'recently' or different adverbs of place such as 'upstairs'. Another sub category of the adverbs is the adverb phrase form which contains an adverb and one or more other words such as 'Luckily for you, I left some notes'. There are of course other classifications (in the corpus) of adverbs according to their position or form such as the front, middle, and final position adverbial phrases such as 'very often and luckily

enough' and the adverb of degree before an adjective such as 'so glad and quite expensive'. Here in this respect, the researcher dealt only with the sub categories that were commonly found in the students' work.

Categories	Level A1	Level A2	Level B1	Level B2	Level C1	Level C2	Total
As modifiers, types & meaning	70	109	74	9	3	0	265
As modifiers, types & meaning	70	109	74	9	3	0	265
position	45	32	3	0	0	0	80
Adverb phrase form	2	2	0	1	1	0	6
Total	117	143	77	10	4	0	351

Table 6.3. Distribution and classification of Adverbs

6.4. Clauses

When looking at the use of clauses by the students, it was noticed that about 90% of students' use of clauses were classified at level A1 whereas only 4% and 6% came from levels A2 and B1 respectively. This means that the majority of students used clauses that refer to level A1 such as comparative clauses, coordinated clauses, declarative clauses and subordinated clauses. Table 6.3 presents an overview of the distribution of the uses of these clauses. This table shows also that the most trending sub category is the declarative clause at level A1 (730 times), for example, 'I live in Tripoli' or 'I am not English'. There are of course other classifications of clauses according to their functions, for instance imperatives clauses, interrogatives clauses and exclamatory clauses. However, there are few uses of them. See table 6.4 below.

Categories	Level A1	Level A2	Level B1	Level B2	Level C1	Level C2	Total
comparative	-----	0	21	0	0	0	21
coordinated	164	7	51	0	0	0	222
declarative	730	0	0	-----	-----	-----	730

relative	-----	23	0	0	-----	-----	23
subordinated	16	20	0	0	0	0	36
Total	910	50	72	0	0	0	1032

Table 6.4. Distribution and classification of clauses.

6.5. Determiners

According to the corpus, the category 'determiners' is used to refer to words or phrases that mostly determine nouns such as 'articles, possessives or quality'. Table 6.5 indicates that most students' use of determiners could be assessed at level A1. Using articles at level B1 has different forms such as the use of 'another' with a singular noun, for example, (Tomorrow will be another day). The form of a preposition followed by a noun without an article refers also to level B1 such as (The weather is very cold at night). Students at this level can use 'another' to talk about something different, for example, (I can go another day). The use of articles which refer to level B2 such as 'the other' with a singular noun to refer the second of two things (e.g. on the other side of the street) was not found in students' writing. Possessives that refer to levels C1 and C2 such as 'One's, singular nouns ending in (S) + apostrophe (S) (e.g. series' aspects) or the use of two apostrophe ('S 'S) in the same noun phrase (e.g. Ann's mother's albums) were not found either. Also determiners which refer to levels C1 and C2 such as 'either/neither' + singular noun and 'Many a' could not be identified.

Categories	Level A1	Level A2	Level B1	Level B2	Level C1	Level C2	Total
articles	233	0	16	0	-----	-----	249
possessives	233	0	12	1	0	0	246
quantity	39	15	5	2	0	0	61
Total	505	15	33	3	0	0	556

Table 6.5. Distribution and classification of Determiners

6.6. Past Tense

Because of the use of narrative style of students' writing, most students used the past simple tense which is classified at A1 level in the corpus. It can be seen from the data in table 6.6 according to the EGP corpus, past continuous, past perfect simple and past perfect continuous are not usually used by students at level A1, and at the same time, the use of past simple is not a feature that refers to level C2. Learners at earlier stages start learning past simple; then at the stage of A2 level they typically start to learn the past continuous. Whereas they are not taught past perfect and past perfect continuous until the stages of B1 and above. So, past simple and past continuous can be found in advanced stages, while past perfect cannot be found at levels A1 and A2.

Students at level A1 can form simple structures of past simple such as regular and irregular forms of past to talk about every day events and states, e.g. "The people were very polite. Every day I went to the park, I saw many people there". Students at level A2 can form similar past simple structures with an increasing range of verbs, can form the negative and interrogative in the past, and can also form past simple with 'when', for example, "when I arrived, the weather was horrible". Students who reached levels B1 and B2 can form and use past simple in forms such as affirmative and negative with a wide range of verbs and question tags with a limited range of verbs, for example, B1: "I didn't realise I had lost the ring till I was at home. We arranged to meet each other next week, didn't we?" B2: "I'm sure it wasn't my fault as I didn't switch anything on or off" (EGP, online). At C1 level, learners are supposed to form inversions with 'Not only...but also' and use complex ordering of past events and emphasis with 'Did', for example, "We did reach the target figure" (EGP, online). Past perfect and past perfect continuous at level B1 refers to different uses such as affirmative and negative forms; "I hadn't heard from her for two months", "Laura realised that she had not been studying hard lately". Also, past perfect and past perfect continuous can refer to level B2 to form various uses such as 'background information with relative clause and with time conjunction', and 'after because explanation', for example, "I was driving on towards my parents' house because I have arranged to have dinner with them", "The guide also tells some funny stories about an old lord, who had been living there in the 18th century" (EGP, online).

The findings (see table 6.6) show also there is a significant difference between the use of past simple and past continuous. It illustrates that past continuous tense was used very much less than the past simple. However, this does not necessarily mean that students cannot use the past continuous. A written task sometimes does not require the use of past continuous or the narrative style of students' writing was mostly applicable. When analysing students' work, the researcher did find some cases where students used past simple in a position where past continuous was needed to be used. The following examples from the students work show their misuse of them; "When I walked to the university, I slipped ..." "She was reading and pray for us a lot."

Categories	Level A1	Level A2	Level B1	Level B2	Level C1	Level C2	Total
Past simple	174	29	8	0	0	-----	211
Past continuous	-----	16	0	0	-----	0	16
Past perfect	-----	-----	4	0	0	0	4
Past perfect continuous	-----	-----	0	0	-----	0	0
Total	174	45	12	0	0	0	231

Table 6.6. Distribution and classification of Past Tense.

6.7. Present Tense

As can be seen from the table 6.7 the results obtained from the analysis of Present Tense can be compared with the past simple where most students used present simple at the level A1. Some students were able to use the present simple and present perfect at A2 level but there was an absence of usage of the various present tense constructions at higher levels than this (see 6.7). Students at level A1 can form simple structure of present simple such as showing facts or expressing habits either affirmative or negative, e.g. "I work in a supermarket". Students at level A2 can form similar present simple structure with an increasing range of regular and irregular verbs, can form negatives and interrogatives in the present, and can also form the present simple with 'adverbs of indefinite frequencies', for example, "They always try to make special things for their celebration" (EGP, online). Students who are supposed to be at levels B1 can form and use present simple in forms such as a negative tag question,

'Yes/No Question and Wh' Question' with a wide range of subjects and reporting verbs such as 'say and show', for example, "Where do they want to spend their holidays?" Students who are supposed to be at levels B2 can form and use the present simple in forms such as inversion with 'not only...but also'. At C1 level, learners can form negative question as a persuasion strategy or to check opinions, for example, "Don't we like parents?" (EGP, online). Used to refer to actions happened in the past and having relationship with present time, the present perfect is supposed to be used regularly by students, but according to the findings, it was only used 21 times compared with 211 of past simple (see table 6.6) and 397 of present simple (see table 6.7). Students only used present perfect at A2 'with for + time, with yet, with a limited range of adverbs in the normal mid position' or to use it to 'talk about experience up to now' for example, "I have never seen a competition like this before". Also, present perfect can refer to level B1 to form many various uses such as with since, with already and to express recent actions that have present relevance, for example, "I have already had my lunch" (EGP, online).

Categories	Level A1	Level A2	Level B1	Level B2	Level C1	Level C2	Total
Present simple	343	53	0	1	0	-----	397
Present continuous	7	0	0	0	0	0	7
Present perfect	-----	21	0	0	0	0	21
Present perfect continuous	-----	-----	0	0	-----	0	0
Total	350	74	0	1	0	0	425

Table 6.7. Distribution and classification of Present Tense

6.8. Future

As table 6.8 shows, there is a significant difference between the use of past and present simple and the use of future. It illustrates that future tense was very rarely used. The use of the past and present simple by students, but not future does not necessarily mean that students cannot use the future. A written task sometimes does not require the use of future forms, and if it does, a learner can use either present simple or present continuous verbs to

refer to future. In this case, the user needs to write a key word that refers to the future, for example, "The plane arrives at 12 PM tomorrow. I am visiting my parents next weekend. What are you doing tomorrow morning?" When analysing students' work, the researcher did not find any type of these uses.

Categories	Level A1	Level A2	Level B1	Level B2	Level C1	Level C2	Total
Future simple	2	17	2	-----	0	0	21
Future continues	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Future perfect s.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
F. perfect cont.	-----	-----	-----	0	-----	0	0
Total	2	17	2	0	0	0	21

Table 6.8. Distribution and classification of Future

6.9. Modality

Table 6.8 provides the results of students' use of some modal verbs. The table illustrates that there was not much use of the modals. 'Can' was used 39 times to form affirmative, negative and question. 'Can' was also used regularly to express ability, offer, possibility and request, relating to CEFR level A1, e.g. "I can cook. I cannot swim. Can I help you?" According to EGP, 'can' can further have other uses to refer to levels A2, B1, B2...etc. For example it can be used for permission (A2), to express surprise such as "can you believe that!" (B1). It can be used to guess or predict such as "I think that it can be true." 'Will' was also used 20 times to form a future simple tense, for example, "I will come to see you tomorrow". 'Will' can be used by students at level A2 in the negative and question forms, and for future plans and requests. Students at level B1 can use 'will' to talk about fixed plans in the future with timetable and order. And it can be used at level B2 for request, specifically 'will you please'. From the table below, it can be noticed that most modal verbs used by students are mostly at the level A1 and at level A2. These two levels, according to the CEFR, refer to the lower levels of learners who can only use modal verbs to express the basic structure and meaning

such as using 'can' followed by a verb to express ability or permission and 'Will' to form a future simple.

Categories	Level A1	Level A2	Level B1	Level B2	Level C1	Level C2	Total
Can	39	0	0	0	0	0	39
Expression with 'Be'	0	0	5	1	0	0	6
Have (got) to	-----	4	3	0	-----	0	7
May	-----	6	2	0	0	0	8
Might	-----	3	0	0	0	0	3
Shall	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Should	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Will	16	4	0	0	0	0	20
Would	7	2	0	0	0	0	9
Must	-----	1	0	0	-----	0	1
Used to	-----	-----	2	0	0	0	2
Total	62	21	12	1	0	0	96

Table 6.9. Distribution and classification of Modality

6.10. Nouns

The category of nouns as seen in the table 6.10 was the most commonly found part of speech in students' documents. However, more than three quarters of these nouns were used at the level A1. Nouns have variable uses and according to the Cambridge corpus they can reflect CEFR levels from A1 to C1. The corpus does not include nouns at the C2 level. The EGP classifies students of level A1 as learners who can only use certain simple types of nouns such as using a single limited range common nouns such as 'house, a car a boy a company...etc.' or proper noun such as 'Saturday', a simple compound noun such as 'swimming pool', a single gerund or simple noun phrases by modifying singular and plural

nouns preceded by for example 'an adjective' and/or determiner. Also, students at level A1 can use regular plurals by adding an (S) to the noun, and use these nouns as a subject, an object of the verb, an object of a preposition or a complement after a linking verb such as verb to be.

Students at level A1, according to the EGP are not considered able to use uncountable nouns such as 'happiness, faith, courage...etc.' The table 6.9 shows that some uses of uncountable nouns were applied by students at levels, A2, B1 and B2, for example, "I like music (A2). I hope this advice can help you (B1). Music was her life not only a hobby (B2)".

A noun phrase, according to the EGP, can only refer to level A1. It can function as a complement of verb to be such as "He is a university student", a complement of preposition such as "I went to your house", as a subject or an object of a clause such as "His name is George", "I love my parents".

Categories	Level A1	Level A2	Level B1	Level B2	Level C1	Level C2	Total
Type of noun	905	65	35	5	3	-----	1013
plural	205	35	11	-----	-----	-----	251
uncountable	-----	73	13	25	0	-----	111
Noun phrase (function)	450	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	450
Total	1560	173	59	30	3	0	1825

Table 6.10. Distribution and classification of Nouns.

6.11. Passive

The Cambridge corpus of the EGP does not classify the passive voice at A1 level. Table 6.11 presents the passive starting from level A2. That means that learners at the very beginning of their English learning are not expected to be able to form the passive. In other words learners are typically not taught the passive voice at level A1. The table shows that students did not make much use of passive constructions. However, this does not necessarily mean that they are not able to form it.

Categories	Level A1	Level A2	Level B1	Level B2	Level C1	Level C2	Total
Passive	-----	15	7	6	0	0	28

Table 6.11. Distribution and classification of using passive

6.12. Prepositions

Prepositions are a very important part of speech which can add or change the meaning of other parts of speech such as nouns and verbs. Prepositions according to the classification of the corpus, do not include sub categories; in other words prepositions have just one category. Prepositions have variable uses and according to the Cambridge corpus they can reflect CEFR levels from A1 to C1. The corpus does not include prepositions at the C2 level. Table 6.12 shows that about two thirds of students' use of prepositions was at the level A1 and more than a quarter at the level A2. Whereas about only 12% were at levels B1 and B2. Learners at level A1 can form a preposition with a single noun and a prepositional phrase with a single preposition and a simple noun phrase such as 'when I have a free time, I go to the park **with my dog**'. Learners at level A2 can form a wide range of prepositions with more complex noun phrases such as ' we can meet **in the park near to my house**'. Learners at level B1 can form different uses of a range of more complex prepositional phrases such as 'I wanted **to go to Croatia with my friends instead of flying to the USA**'. Also, they can use adverbs of degree to modify a prepositional phrase such as 'It is **quite near my house**'. Learners at level B2 can form more advanced uses of prepositions, for example they can form and use prepositions with WH words such as 'The Company has a vacancy **in which** I am very interested.'

Categories	Level A1	Level A2	Level B1	Level B2	Level C1	Level C2	Total
Prepositions	310	105	55	7	0	-----	477

Table 6.12. Distribution and classification of Prepositions

6.13. Pronouns

Table 6.13 illustrates the distribution of pronouns used in students' documents. It does not show the possessive pronouns at the level A1 or any of the other levels, which means that students did not use possessive pronouns in written work. However some students have commonly used the possessive adjective pronouns 'my' and 'your' which function as adjectives followed by nouns. According to their function, these possessive adjectives can come under the category 'adjectives' which was already dealt with (see 6.2). The table shows that the majority of uses of pronouns are under the sub-category *Subject & Object* which refer to the basic uses of subject pronouns such as 'I, we, you ...etc.', and the basic uses of object pronouns such as 'me, him, it, them ...etc.

Categories	Level A1	Level A2	Level B1	Level B2	Level C1	Level C2	Total
Possessive	-----	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reflexive	-----	5	3	1	-----	0	9
Subject & Object	125	35	5	3	1	0	169
Total	125	40	8	4	1	0	178

Table 6.13. Distribution and classification of students' use of pronouns

6.14. Conclusion

According to the total of the figures provided in the previous tables, it can be said that more than three quarters of the grammar structures used by the students were at the level A1 and about 15% was at the level A2. This indicates that about 90% of students, according to this analysis, were at levels A1 and A2. Depending on the grammar accuracy and scale of what learners *can do* in relation to the CEFR, students at level A1 can write grammar with a limited control of its simple structures and sentence patterns. Students at the level A2 can use some simple structures correctly, but still systematically make basic mistakes such as misuse of tenses and misuse of subject verb agreement. However, the absence of using any sub category does not necessarily mean that students do not have the knowledge of it. Document analysis can provide the researcher with what participants produce but not what they cannot produce. This can be found also in the findings of the questionnaire and interviews where

most participants illustrated that students have the knowledge of grammatical rules and structure, although they cannot transfer it into communicative use.

Bowen (2009) as well as O'Leary (2014) asserted that it is essential for a researcher to thoroughly assess and examine the subjectivity of documents and his/her understanding of their data in order to maintain the credibility of the research.

Regarding the general requirements related to the quality of the students' exams, the content of these exams is commonly directed by instructions that leave little space for manoeuvre. Although the statement "can do" in the CEFR framework is formulated in a completely abstract way, it may be that the requirements of the curriculum and the CEFR means are contradictory. Some of the items on the exam may be so complicated that clear determining of CEFR levels is difficult or may not be possible, while on the other hand, ambiguity may contrast with the curriculum demands (CEFR, 2009). The accurate way is to find agreement and establish the link between analysing only one part of the exam and relating it to the CEFR framework, leaving the other part(s) of the tasks and parts, because it is difficult to link them all with CEFR categories or levels.

According to the CEFR (2011), developing learners' linguistic competences is a central, indispensable aspect of language learning. The best way to facilitate learners' competence in relation to grammar learning is by developing his/her ability to organise sentences to convey meaning, which is clearly central to communicative competence. This can usually be done in ordering step-by-step practising and drilling of new grammatical structures, starting with short sentences consisting of a single clause and phrases represented by single words (e.g. Alice is beautiful) and ending with compound complex sentences. In the next chapter, the researcher will discuss in detail these findings along with the findings of the questionnaires and interviews in the light of the existing literature hoping to reach conclusions that answer the research questions of the study.

Chapter 7 Discussion and conclusion

7.1. Introduction

In the previous sections, the researcher reviewed the findings of the questionnaire, interviews and document analysis which were carried out with teachers and students of English language in Libyan universities and higher education institutions. The aim of this chapter is to discuss in detail the implications of the findings of the research in relation to its setting and existing related research evidence. The chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part discusses the results and the key findings of the current study and those factors which have contributed to the different difficulties that face Libyan teachers as well as students of English in learning grammar. The discussion in this chapter covers the students' and teachers' perspectives regarding the nature of the English language teaching at Libyan universities and links these to the existent literature in order to find out the problems which have contributed to the decline in standards of students studying grammar. The discussion will be guided by the research questions (see 1.8), covering the following areas: teaching methodology, students' motivation to learn English and English grammar, students' language competence, difficulties and problems facing teachers and students in learning English grammar, physical resources in the classroom, class size and logistics and structure. These themes are discussed in the following sections.

The second part of this chapter deals with the implications of the study, and what can be recommended for continuing research in this area by suggesting a future research agenda in the field of learning English and English grammar as a foreign language. The chapter will also present the limitations of the study and then ends with a conclusion.

The present study investigates the literature review related to the field of teaching and learning English and in particular English grammar as a foreign or a second language in order to explore the range of approaches and methods employed in this learning process, the difficulties and problems facing both teachers and students. It also aims to achieve better results which will help them facilitate the whole process of teaching and learning English

grammar and to find out ways of addressing them to overcome these difficulties and problems (see 1.7).

The findings of both quantitative and qualitative data collected in this study elicit information related to teachers' and students' conceptions and practical knowledge of the teaching and learning EFL grammar. The researcher thought that the quantitative data collected from the questionnaire is not enough to understand the lecturers' and students' perceptions towards research aims and objectives. It is also important to talk to them about their views and thoughts in one to one interviews (Frechtling, 2000). Borg (2006) also reported that researchers need further sources of data to draw inferences about teachers' cognition. During the interviews, lecturers as well as students reflected upon classroom practices and articulated lecturers' beliefs and contextual factors that impacted on their grammar lessons. These data collected from both instruments have been presented, analysed and discussed in an interactive way (Marton, 1986), in order to produce a collective answer to the research questions and research objectives (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

7.2. Teaching Approaches and Students' Learning Motivations

In response to research question one: "*What, according to lecturers and students, is the impact of current teaching approaches on students' learning motivation and attitudes?*", this section will deal with two main aspects; teaching methods and their impact on students' learning motivations.

7.2.1. Methods of Teaching English and English Grammar at Libyan Higher Education

One of the main aims of this study was to examine the teaching of English and English grammar in Libyan universities. This investigation highlighted the challenges that both teachers and students face when learning grammar. According to the findings of the study, there was no set curriculum that teachers can follow. Nor did the curriculum recommend any particular teaching methods. This inconsistency has resulted in teachers struggling when trying to update grammar teaching methodology. Each teacher taught grammar using his/her own materials and applying his/her own ways of teaching. Both teachers and students complained that there were difficulties in accessing the curriculum, which was also regarded as not meeting students' needs. When looking at lecturers' and students' views and

perspectives on teaching English language in general and English grammar in specific at Libyan universities, it can be concluded that the method most commonly followed in teaching English at Libyan higher institutions was the grammar-translation method (see 1.4.4. & 1.4.5) even when teaching communicative syllabuses, which is broadly consistent with the existing studies such as Sinosi (2010), Gadour (2006), Hamed (2014), Giaber, (2014a) and Orafi, (2008). It is clear that English is primarily taught using rote learning and passive methods. Many of the lecturers claimed that they had not been offered any support they needed such as training courses or professional development in the field of teaching methodology which would help them apply new teaching methods that suited curriculum and students' needs. Because of this, most lecturers opted to use traditional approaches which were familiar to them such as the grammar-translation method. Whilst some lecturers tried to apply more communicative approaches in the classroom, they found that was not appropriate for some reasons; e.g. students' lack of motivation to participate, large class size and class timing.

The results in chapter 5 illustrated that teachers actually taught English grammar explicitly (see section 5.2.1. and Figure 5.1.) and they used the traditional grammar translation method by asking students to drill and memorize grammatical rules and ready-made examples in a non-communicative way. However, they sometimes mixed between the two methods; grammar translation method (GTM) and mostly communicative approach (CA), starting with the CA and ending with GTM. They thought that mixing between two methods helped them to some extent in increasing students' motivation to learn. Some of the responses of teachers and students revealed that grammar was sometimes taught communicatively, but, that was not so useful. Lecturers and students explained that this was due to the fact that teachers could not carry out many communicative activities such as group work during the class due to the large number of students in the class. However, most of the participants argued that lecturers stuck to one method and did not try to use different ways to help students understand grammar. Students and lecturers thought that communicative class activities can be useful if class size is reduced and also, mixing two teaching methods can also help make the class more active and more practical and increase students' motivation to study.

The majority of lecturers agreed that grammar can be taught implicitly in a more communicative way, however, lecturers were compelled to teach grammar explicitly to overcome the problem of large classes. These findings meet with some of other Libyan researchers such as Omar, (2014) and Giaber, (2014) who pointed out that the most common method and model of teaching English as a foreign language in Libya was the grammar translation method. Also, Burgess and Etherington (2002) reported that teachers of grammar preferred to teach grammar explicitly, and that was appreciated by their students because they felt more secure (See section 3.5). This means that even when students can understand grammatical rules, they cannot transfer their understanding into communicative language and produce correct language.

Regarding the way grammar was presented, there are two main ways to teach English grammar: deductively and inductively. However, it may well generally be accepted that a combination of both approaches is best suited for the EFL classroom. The results in chapter 5 illustrated what the lecturers at Libyan universities have actually been doing during English grammar lessons. The results showed that most lecturers illustrated that they taught grammar deductively, some of them taught it inductively and one lecturer pointed out that she taught it eclectically. This study has found disconnect rather than concurrence between what teaching methods teachers actually apply when teaching grammar and what curriculum recommends regarding teaching methods. This mirrors all existing research; however there is a variation in the findings of this study related to the teaching/learning environment. The Libyan teaching environment, especially the large size of classes, does not help teachers apply the appropriate teaching method(s) that match the curriculum. This implies that the class size should be decreased in order to apply a more communicative teaching approach or to apply a combination of two or more teaching methods which in turn may help students learn the grammatical rules and structures and be able to transfer this understanding into communicative use. The next section discusses teaching grammar deductively.

7.2.1.1. Teaching English Grammar Deductively

The deductive approach is a top-down theory i.e. it is essentially a top-down approach which moves from the more general to the more specific. In other words, teachers start grammar lessons with a general notion or theory, which we then narrow down to specific hypotheses,

which are then tested. The grammar of a language is taught from the whole to parts by which teachers present grammar rules and structures with explanations and examples to help students understand these grammatical rules and structures firstly. The next step is that learners look at these examples, understand them and do some practice on them. The last step is that learners start to use apply these examples and produce their own examples. Harmer (2007) pointed out that this sequence of explaining the rules and practising them is similar to the Present, Practice and Produce method (PPP. see 3.4.6). The literature provided in chapter 3 showed that teaching grammar to Arabic learners is a critical issue because grammar was taught differently from teacher to teacher in Libyan universities. The various ways which teachers impart their grammatical knowledge onto students does not necessarily have any relation with their own or their students' potential difficulties. Teaching grammar of English as EFL is still a controversial issue (Thornbury, 1999), and there might not be a best way appropriate for all contexts to teach it. The results revealed that most lecturers taught explicit grammar deductively, (see figure 5.1) adopting the grammar translation method (Nunan, 1991). These teachers started their grammar lessons by presenting grammatical rules, then gave some examples highlighting the grammatical structures with some practice, and at the end of the lesson they let their students produce their own examples (Thornbury, 1999). Being aware of these rules and structures, students can understand written and spoken language more easily which develop their reading and listening skills (ibid). However, when using this approach students have a passive role as they are considered recipients when teachers elicit the rule on the board, and teachers do not involve their students in interactive class activities and do not make connections between grammatical rules and structures and communicative skills. These results from the questionnaire and interviews were also complemented by analysing students' documents (see 6.14). However, these documents did not create any situations through which grammatical rules might be contextualized, so that their students would be able to use them in similar situations either in written or spoken activities, inside or outside the classroom. The tasks of these documents did not lend themselves to students' use of particular grammatical constructions. Results from the questionnaire showed that most participants agreed that students may well possess grammar knowledge and understand grammatical rules, but cannot always transfer this knowledge into communicative use.

7.2.1.2. Teaching English Grammar Inductively

The inductive approach is more of a bottom-up approach, moving from specific to the more general, in which learners make specific grammar comprehension, detect patterns, formulate hypotheses and draw conclusions working out a rule for themselves in order to form a theory. It gives learners greater responsibility for their own learning. Nunan (1999) identifies inductive approach as a process where learners discover the grammar rules themselves by examining the examples. Students can also use the grammar contexts (text or audio) to explore the grammar rules in a text rather than isolated sentences (ibid). Teachers need to tell students what they are going to talk about, give them clear instructions about their grammar tasks to be taught, with samples which include the target grammar that they will learn. After students obtain the grammar rule(s), they then practise the language by creating their own examples. Students play a very active role as they are responsible for exploring and working out the rules and their class can provide a more comfortable and motivating learning environment (Thornbury, 1999). The teacher's role is to guide, facilitate and help while students study the grammar rules themselves, i.e. the inductive approach class is student-centred.

Richard & Rodgers (2001) argued, as mentioned above, that there is no best method in all contexts, and shifting from method to another or a combination of the two methods can be more useful and a solution to the various students' levels, their needs, ages, and backgrounds, and to the problems of the learning environment such as class size and time and teaching materials. Learners differ from each other and they learn in different ways. The results showed that most teachers were using only one teaching method, and only one lecturer illustrated that she taught grammar eclectically, and another lecturer illustrated that he successfully taught grammar using a combination of two methods. Brown (1994) remarked that young learners are better taught grammar inductively because they are more successful in exploring grammatical structures and rules from text and context. Whereas adult learners are better taught grammar deductively because their mentality is able to deal with abstract items and with the rules when they use the foreign language. So, as he pointed out, the deductive method is more appropriate to adult learners and who can give more importance to

grammar structures and rules when they use the target. Larsen-Freeman (2003) argued that if the grammar rules are quite simple, an inductive method is better applied. The findings of this research revealed that most lecturers seemed to take this approach. Lecturers illustrated that they used the deductive approach when teaching grammar explicitly. However, some of them argued that they found it better to shift from one method or approach or combine two or more methods or approaches in one lesson depending the variation of students' understanding levels, teaching materials, and the class environment.

The findings of the interview with one of the lecturers revealed that he found it useful to apply a combination of deductive and inductive approaches in his grammar lessons depending on the students' level. The complexity of some lessons and the time limit of the class allowed him to apply such a combination. Also, applying this combination depends on the lesson content or the learning goals; for example a grammar translation method depends on a deductive approach whereas the direct method depends on the inductive approach and so on. However, when applying the audio lingual method, grammar can be taught deductively and inductively (see Andrews, 2007) where drills are taught inductively, learners need to understand and memorise grammar structure and rules deductively in order to speak accurately.

To sum up, the main target of deductive and inductive approaches is to teach grammar however in different ways. There might not be, as mentioned above, a best method or approach for all contexts. Some researchers such as Fotos and Ellis (1991) found that teaching grammar deductively is more effective, others such as Fotos (1993) considered teaching grammar inductively as more effective than deductively, while some others such as Rosa and O'Neill (1999) stated that there is no difference between the two methods in efficiency and effectiveness. The findings of this study revealed that teaching grammar is challenging and that grammar has mostly been taught deductively and explicitly in Libyan higher education. The new knowledge that can be contributed here is that in a context such the Libyan education context, a teacher or a lecturer needs to be aware of the different teaching methods and approaches so that he/she is able and has the flexibility to apply the most appropriate method(s) when teaching grammar. In the following section, the researcher

presents the findings that will complement with the previous section in answering the first research question. These findings highlight the issue that has a strong relationship with teaching a second language in general and in grammar in specific: students' motivations to learn grammar.

7.2.2. Students' Motivation to Learn English and English Grammar

In addition to teaching methods, students' motivation to learn a language is considered among the factors that influence second language and foreign language learning. As seen in the literature, students' motivation is a very complex and challenging issue that both teachers and students are facing today. Students' motivation to learn is considered as a driving force to acquire a second language. Dörnyei (2001) suggests that teachers of second language should motivate their students towards learning the language in a way that language learners can develop a positive attitude towards learning that language. Qualified teachers give their students motivation and confidence to their learning (see 3.7.3.).

Gardner divided motivation into two types, integrative and instrumental, the first refers to the desire of the learner to communicate or to integrate with the speakers of the target language, and the second kind of motivation refers to functional reasons for learning a second language. He emphasized integrative motivation and considered it as a basis for his model which includes attitudes towards the target language, speakers of that language and the learning situation (see 3.7.3.). Dörnyei (1994) attempted to build a comprehensive motivational construct relevant to second language learning motivation. This construction includes three broad levels, the Language Level, the Learner Level, and the Learning Environment Level (see 3.7.3.1). He suggested a list of strategies to motivate language learners. Most of these strategies concern the learning situation. In his view, teachers can motivate their students by developing their awareness of the culture of L2, their instrumental motivation of the importance of L2 learning and their self-confidence (see 3.7.3.2). Deci & Ryan (1985) described two types of self-confidence (self-determination) motivation as intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. The former refers to things that a person finds inherently interesting or enjoyable, and the second one refers to things that he/she does because of external reasons which may motivate him or her (see 3.7.3.4).

In the Libyan university context, students' attitudes and motivation to learn English and English grammar play a vital role in their education and academic improvement (Al- Tamimi and Shub, 2009). Alhmali (2007) reported that the purpose of education in Libya in general and in learning English is to obtain high grades and pass exams. The findings of this study revealed that during the interviews some students illustrated that motivation is very important and plays a significant role in language learning. They said that if a student is interested and motivated, there is nothing stop him/her from learning a second language. However, 75% of the teachers thought that students were not motivated, and 80% of them claimed their students only learn to pass exams (see section 5.2.2.a. & figures 5.2 & 5.3).

The findings of the present study highlighted that Libyan university students lack motivation and their main reason for learning a second language is to pass their exams; they lack the real desire to learn the language for communication purposes. Lecturers attributed this to students' low competence of English language in general (see 3.7.4 & 5.3.1) on the one hand, and on the other hand, they attributed students' lack of motivation to the use of traditional non communicative teaching methods where students feel bored. The findings also revealed that lack of motivation is related to a number of other factors: some of the participants considered grammar difficult to learn, anxiety where learners fear learning grammar, and students study only to pass exams. The results emphasized the role of the teachers' influence on developing students' motivation to learn. Results showed that about two thirds of lecturers considered students' attitudes to learn grammar as one of the main problems that affect learning grammar (see table 5.2).

From the above discussion, it can be said that teaching methods and the way lecturers present grammar lessons have the most impact on students' motivation. Many students felt that grammar lessons were boring. They felt that these lessons were similar to mathematics lessons where teachers give rules and examples and students needed to memorise these rules. Students thought that people are anxious about rules. This suggests that lecturers need to change the way of presenting grammar lessons in a more communicative way by applying group and team work techniques or dividing students into pairs and running oral dialogues. This could increase students' motivation and help students enjoy their lessons, develop their language competence and apply the grammatical rules and structures they have learned into

communication. Also, increasing learners' participation by choosing grammatical materials and contents that reflect the learner's interests would in turn increase their motivation to learn the language and its grammar. However, highly motivated learners, who integrate both linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes of the learning experience, will attain a higher degree of second language proficiency. Learners' lack of motivation may lead to other multiple factors that cause teachers difficulty and disturb classroom teaching (Ellis, 1997). This was clear from the participants' responses that the English as a foreign language and its grammar learning are facing a wide array of problems.

To sum up, the findings showed that students' motivation towards learning grammar was one of the challenges that teachers face when teaching grammar. Lack of motivation to learn was a problem that English language lecturers and students face at Libyan university level. In the next sections the discussion is about some other factors that cause difficulties in learning grammar.

7.3. Difficulties and Problems facing Teachers and Students in Learning English Grammar

In this section, the researcher presents a discussion related to the second research question: *"What are the perceived difficulties and problems facing Libyan English language university teachers and students, in terms of the teaching and learning of English grammar?"*. The findings of the present study revealed that most teachers and students agreed that students' general language competence (see section 5.3.1) and the low level of English language teaching in secondary school were the main reasons for the difficulties and problems Libyan English language teachers and students face when learning English grammar at the university. In addition, the findings evidenced that class size affects the EFL grammar lessons (see table 5.2).

7.3.1. Students' Language Competence and Secondary School effect

In this section, the researcher refers to students' language competence as their knowledge of the English language gained during their school study and upon which they are going to continue to learn at university. Libyan students face several challenges in learning English as

a foreign language at secondary school and thus many have a low level when starting university. Researchers as well as teachers attributed and related these challenges either to the learning environment such as lack of teaching facilities, teaching methods or students' attitudes and motivation (Zaghwani, 2014). The only thing that the Libyan government has offered to foreign language programmes is a new curriculum. Teachers were not trained to run this new curriculum which focuses on a communicative teaching approach. The findings also showed a gap between this curriculum and students' level when they finished school. Another gap seems to exist when moving from school to university. This is a significant educational transition. University is a new and different environment from secondary school. Successful transition can be dependent on students making appropriate decisions to choose a field of study, selecting the right educational institution, and coping with a completely different learning environment. It is so important that students are prepared to meet university requirements. However, the findings of this study revealed that this kind of transition does not exist in Libyan education. In the Libyan secondary school curriculum, students are not taught or prepared for university. To help close or bridge these gaps, the government needs to offer training courses for school teachers about the new curriculum and how it should be applied. In order to close the second gap regarding the transition from school to university, the school curriculum designers should include a transition programme that help students choose their right field of university study and meet its requirements. Then the other gap between the university curriculum and the students' needs can be assessed and updated regularly to be bridged and meet the students' needs (see section 2.3.3).

The findings of this research showed that students' English language competence was generally poor when starting at university, and that the students' lack of English language competence was one of the main factors that affect grammar teaching and learning. The findings also revealed that in order to improve their language competence, the ministry of education should offer students training courses before joining university to meet the English language requirement at university level (see figure 5.4). These courses could be run at schools maybe in the holidays after school graduation or could be included in the school curriculum. Results illustrated that language competence is very important in learning grammar and that low language competent students are also low in other elements of language learning'. *"It depends on the students' level and their background knowledge*

gained from secondary school" lecturers 1 & 3. The findings of this study highlighted that this low language competence is an influential factor contributing to grammar learning problems. This is obvious in two perspectives: firstly, university teachers stated that their students join a university with a low language proficiency level. This shed light on the issue that students were not at the level expected because there was a mismatch between the curriculum and the actual level of students when they finish school. This leads to the various difficulties they face in grammar learning in particular. Secondly, it seems that students themselves do not peer review each other's written texts because they think that they experience a low language competence level which would not help them learn grammar.

Ellis (2006) and other second language researchers agreed that competence is primarily a matter of knowledge and one of the most controversial issues in teaching grammar. Grammar can be taught in the early stages of second language learning or can be introduced later when language learners have gained some language competence. Ellis (2006) favoured teaching grammar later because lexical knowledge can provide the basis for developing grammatical competence needed for communication. Learners in the beginning stages lack the basic knowledge of the target language to perform tasks. That is a reason for delaying teaching grammar until learners have developed a basic communicative competence (ibid). Aboshafa (2014) points out that in order to raise the language competence level, an evaluation exam should be carried out prior to joining the university as a requirement for studying English at the university, and English language programme needs to be regularly evaluated and assessed to see if it meets the students' needs, then restructured and developed to bridge the gap between the curriculum and students' needs which will basically, include developing grammar teaching (Al Dradi, 2015).

To sum up, the results of the study showed that language competence is a very important factor in learning grammar and that the majority of students graduated from Libyan secondary schools do not possess high language competence that can meet with the English language requirement at the university. However, it is possible that students with low language competence can learn grammar and overcome his/her low competence if he/she had a strong motivation to do so. Finally, the literature and the results of this study illustrated that

in order for students to understand grammar and be able to produce communicative language, the starting point is at secondary school where we need to develop a better application of the curriculum including a transition programme for preparing students to join the university. Also, we need to develop a better and modern curriculum that meets students' needs, increase students' learning motivation in addition to improving physical resources in the classroom and teaching environment facilities.

7.3.2. Physical Resources in the Classroom, Class Size and Logistics

The teaching and learning process consists of three main elements: the teacher, the learner and the learning environment. In this section, the discussion is about class size which refers to the number of learners in a class. The findings of this study revealed that class size is an important determinant of student outcomes, and teaching large classes can be a difficult task and can pose particular challenges. Results showed that 70% of the teachers and 51% of the students were of the opinion that the classes were too large (50 to 80 students per class), which renders the process of teaching and applying grammar all the more difficult, given that time is limited and inadequate for extra practical activities (See section 5.2. & table 5.2). Teachers care more than students about reducing class size. This is probably because small classes help them control and communicate with their students. Secondly reducing class size means reducing teachers' effort in the assessment process (correcting, giving marks and feedback). Whereas students are not affected directly by large classes because they play a relatively passive role, and they receive from their teachers more than produce. In other words, students are potentially less concerned about large class size, probably as many of them do not see themselves as active contributors to the class and an academic model of teaching is less hampered by large numbers. EFL class size effect has been a frequent topic that teachers and researchers discussed in recent decades. The effects of EFL class size are evident in the areas of pronunciation and communicative skills (Yi, 2008). The participants of Yi's study suggested that EFL classroom of 12-20 students is better for learning grammar and other language communicative skills. In a class of 40 students or sometimes more the teacher might try active activities once or twice, but then he/she cannot waste his/her limited time, and it seems impossible to divide them into groups or pairs to make the class more communicative or to listen to all students and give feedback. The findings suggested that

reducing class number is preferred, rather than increasing time to let the teacher manage, control and run communicative activities. Larsen-Freeman (1987) looked at the teacher of a communicative language class as the director and adviser of the class activities, supplying the language needed and engaging students in communicative activities by dividing them into pairs or groups of three or more.

Also, results of the current study showed that materials and other resources impacted on the learning process. The majority of participants showed that Libyan universities lack supporting facilities such as audio-visual resources, computers and language labs. These facilities can help students improve their language competence which in turn facilitate their grammar learning. Type of teaching materials were also expressed by the interviewees as important when teaching grammar. Learning grammar needs to be applied in materials that are based on explicit grammar instructions which gives a more precise understanding of the grammar, and provides accuracy in both oral and written skills (Wajnryb, 1990).

7.4. Teaching Grammar and Difficulties Faced by Lecturers

In this section, the researcher presents a discussion related to the third research question: *"How do Libyan teachers of English teach grammar and how do they deal with any difficulties which ensue?"* As mentioned in section (7.3.2) the teaching and learning process consists of three main elements; the teacher, the learner and the conducive learning environment. In the following two sections, the discussion is about the teaching materials which is the most important part or tool of the learning environment and the teacher who is the person who chooses, prepares and applies the materials in the classroom.

7.4.1. Teaching Materials

The findings revealed that most teachers agreed that authentic materials are mostly preferred and through their deployment, grammar knowledge will be more interesting and effectively developed. Further, if these materials are chosen properly and meet with students' level, students are more likely to feel that they can apply their grammatical knowledge in real life (see section 5.4.1). The main purpose of using authentic materials is to prepare students to use the real language in their social lives (Morley and Guariento, 2001) and to learn more

about the culture of the target language. The use of authentic materials in teaching grammar gives a different atmosphere to grammar learning because it can enhance students' understanding of the text, as well as avoid feeling bored in grammar lessons. From the teachers' point of view, the authentic materials are exciting and motivate students to learn grammar because they are connected with activities related to the use of natural language (Malabar, 2016). In addition, the findings evidenced that additional materials that contain grammatical rules with some examples and exercises were sometimes used, but these materials were very expensive for students to buy. All the exercises in these materials are related to technical terminology, but they do not include explicit or implicit grammar. However, the lecturer can apply a technique that lets him apply two types of teaching materials; one that focuses on grammatical forms and one that focuses on communication or real life. The findings revealed all current materials (books and sheets) used by lecturers at faculties that teach English for specific purposes are full of technical terminology and do not include much grammar.

7.4.2. The Influence of Pedagogical Expertise

The third element of the teaching and learning process is the teacher or the lecturer who plays the most important role. The teacher is the driver of the class. The teacher should be cautious when choosing the materials that suit his/her students' level and needs. The teacher can use other aids such as boards and chalk and can create the context where learners can interact with lesson. A professional teacher can make the lesson teacher-centred or student-centred (see 7.2.1. & 7.2.2).

The findings revealed that all lecturers have 8 or more years of teaching grammar experience. Most students reported that their teachers were well experienced, but, they claimed that some of them used communicative methods while others used non communicative ones. However, most lecturers argued that it is difficult or even impossible to teach grammar in a communicative way in large size classes (see section 7.3.2). Difficulty in learning grammar is mostly related to the teaching method adopted by the teachers, and the way grammar is presented.

The findings revealed that a university lecturer has a crucial role to play in the learning process. The lecturer is supposed to create an appropriate learning environment, apply the right teaching method/s that help students understand and express their thoughts, and use the appropriate materials that suit students' needs seeking to improve them and help them to achieve the aims of learning (UTS, 2012). The lecturer should have a motivational effect on learners' attitudes towards learning a second language and have a good relationship with learners which will lead to positive students' attitudes. The good lecturer is the teacher who can give students more confidence in themselves and motivation to learn (Thomas, 2003).

To sum up, all lecturers stated that teaching grammar is not difficult in itself, however, what made learning grammar difficult for most students is a series of other issues which will be discussed in the next section.

7.4.3. Difficulties in Grammar

The results revealed that difficulties in grammar are related to one of the three elements of teaching and learning process. The first element 'the learner' can face difficulty in learning grammar if he/she has a low level of language competence in general which can be influenced by their secondary school experience (see 5.3.1.b.1.), if he/she fears learning grammar and committing mistakes so that he/she feels shy and embarrassed. Also large class size may cause difficulty in learning grammar (see 5.3.2.a & 5.3.2.b). And as a result of traditional teaching methods, students can understand some grammar, but they cannot apply the information they have learnt into communication.

The second element 'the teacher' can cause difficulties in learning grammar if he/she does not prepare and apply the appropriate teaching method or deploy appropriate teaching materials that meet students' level and needs which is related to the third element of teaching and learning process. Teachers are supposed to assess their students' understanding of grammar and give them feedback that helps students focus on their weaknesses and their mistakes.

7.5. Pedagogical Recommendations

The findings of this study revealed that teaching grammar is challenging and that grammar has mostly been taught deductively and explicitly in Libyan higher education. The findings revealed that students at Libyan universities can understand and learn grammar rules and structures but they cannot transfer this knowledge of the rules into communicative use. These findings highlighted the issue that students might have difficulties and struggle to improve the accuracy of their grammatical knowledge in their written activities such as homework and written exams (see sections 7.2.1. & 7.2.2). In the following section, the researcher presents the findings that will complement with the previous sections in answering the fourth research question, *"Based on the findings of the study, what are the recommended pedagogical approaches that meet the diversity of students' needs in learning grammar?"*

Many researchers considered writing as one of the difficult skills of language for both native and foreign speakers. The writing skill requires learners to balance between content and linguistic issues such as meaning, grammar, purpose, vocabulary and mechanics. Learners' of the target language are assessed according to their competency in writing in that language. Writing in the foreign language is even more difficult, complex and challenging since writers are expected to produce written samples that are grammatically accurate, semantically acceptable and culturally appropriate (Alsamadani, 2010). Libyan learners of English face several difficulties in learning English as a foreign language that reflected their weaknesses and low level of grammar in their writing. The findings of this study showed their weaknesses in the use of grammar, lack of practice and grammatical background gained from secondary schools where they were not taught English in a proper way.

The findings of document analysis indicated that about 90% of students were at levels A1 and A2 in their written production of language. Depending on the grammar accuracy and scale of what learners *can do* in relation to the CEFR, students at level A1 can write grammar with a limited control of its simple structures and sentence patterns. Students at the level A2 can use some simple structures correctly ... (see 6.14). However, students at their mid university study are supposed to be at the level of B2 (Libyan General People's Committee for Higher Education, 2008). This can meet with the findings of the questionnaire and interviews where most lecturers indicated that Libyan students have low linguistic

competence and/or have the knowledge of grammatical rules and structure but they cannot transfer it into communicative use.

In order to improve students' language competence, the Ministry of Education needs to take two parallel steps: the first step is to run training courses for teachers especially in teaching methods to improve their knowledge of teaching approaches and students' motivation. The second step is to offer training courses to students who finish their secondary school to improve their language competence. Also, to facilitate learners' competence in relation to grammar understanding and production, the focus should be on developing their ability to organise and form sentences to convey meaning, which is clearly central to communicative competence. This can usually be done in ordering step-by-step practising and drilling of new grammatical structures, starting with short sentences consisting of a single clause and phrases represented by single words and ending with compound complex sentences.

The findings also revealed that lecturers were not aware of the English language curriculum which focuses on the communicative teaching approach which results in misuse of the appropriate teaching method(s). The findings showed another gap between this curriculum and students' level when they join university. In other words there is a gap between the university curriculum and the students' linguistic level and needs. So the whole English teaching programme at the university needs to be checked, assessed and updated regularly to bridge these gaps, meet the students' needs and to develop the EFL Curriculum and supplementary materials, if necessary. It is also recommended that in order to raise the students' language competence level, an evaluation exam should be carried out prior to joining the university as a requirement for studying English at the university. Students who pass this exam can join the university whereas those who do not pass the exam, may be offered to attend language courses to improve their English. The study recommends that Libyan students are better taught grammar explicitly within communicative or skills-based work. The findings revealed that teachers prefer to teach grammar using authentic materials and real-life tasks which can be adopted by applying a Focus-on-Form approach. Grammar can also be taught through various methodologies and approaches either separately or combined. Instructors should consider learners' beliefs and perceptions when deciding how grammar should be taught. Curriculum designers with the help of experienced teaching staff,

need to design and develop a new curriculum that maintains university standards and reduces its weakness (Lang, 2003).

7.6. Conclusions

The primary focus of this study was to view the importance of grammar for learning English as a foreign language, difficulties that learners and lecturers faced when teaching grammar, and how lecturers in Libyan higher education teach it. Data was collected through a mixed-methods approach using questionnaires, interviews and document analysis to explore the perceptions and views of Libyan university lecturers and students regarding teaching methods and approaches, students' motivation, teaching and learning facilities, and the Libyan learning context. Based on the results, it was found that both students and lecturers had concerns about several issues that have either direct or indirect impact on the grammar learning process. The study revealed that students' language competence is low and does not meet with the requirements of the English language programme and curriculum. The study also showed that the teachers did not adhere to the teaching methods as stated in the curriculum but instead used those they had learned or experienced in the past.

The findings revealed very clearly that students lack positive motivation towards learning grammar, and they only study to pass exams. Students feel embarrassed and shy about participating in grammar class activities and fear making mistakes in front of others. The results showed that many students felt bored during grammar lessons when being taught rules explicitly.

According to the learning environment, the results indicated that the Libyan higher education institutions lack teaching and learning resources, teaching and learning facilities and have insufficient library resources that may help lecturers develop their knowledge of the recent research on teaching methodologies. These facilities may also help students to improve their competence by providing access to supporting materials, computers and internet, creating an informal environment where students can meet with each other, and help each other to exchange their knowledge and experience. This will help them better establish themselves as

university students, and increase their motivation to learn and decrease their feeling of embarrassment and shyness.

7.7. Recommendations

Based on the results of the research and the literature which emphasises the importance of teaching and learning grammar, the researcher recommends the following to Libyan Universities where this study was conducted to improve the teaching of English and English grammar in Libyan Higher Education. These recommendations were based on the suggestions made by participants in the study, as well as on findings from other studies in the available literature:

- Grammar is very important in learning English and should be given much emphasis.
- The English language curriculum need to checked and reviewed and developed to meet students' needs.
- The English grammar curriculum should be inspiring and encouraging for both students and lecturers and should provide teachers with syllabuses, teaching materials that suits students' varying levels.
- Different assessment types need to be considered, and teachers should give feedback to students, and work with students to overcome any difficulties or weaknesses.
- The ministry of higher education should develop the universities' infrastructure and provide it with the recent technology and teaching facilities.
- Lecturers should be given training programmes especially in teaching methodologies.
- Applying a transition programme could help students reach the entry requirements to the university, and conducting evaluative exams would be a reliable way to ensure that students meet the university academic requirements.
- Class size plays an important role in the teaching and learning grammar, and it should be minimized to the number of fifteen to twenty students.
- Lecturers need to be aware that using the traditional way of lecturing (teacher-centred) techniques cannot provide students with valuable knowledge and use of grammar that lasts beyond the end of their course. They need to place greater emphasis on the use of interactive and communicative teaching strategies.

- Teachers are encouraged to use teaching techniques which give students more freedom to choose some materials and tasks. Also, using authentic materials that contain real-life situations is likely to increase their motivational incentive to learn.
- Libyan universities should provide essential resources such as a good library that provides books, journals, articles etc. Also language labs allow students to listen to a variety of grammatical examples, which they can practise through recording themselves and listening to their performance.

However, many of these recommendations may be difficult to apply or even impractical in the current socio-political circumstances facing Libya.

7.8. Limitations of the Study

In all research studies, there are limitations that a researcher should acknowledge. It must be acknowledged that there have been some limitations to this study. This research was limited to only two universities in Libya which are Tripoli University and Zawia University and two Vocational Higher Institutions in Tripoli. However, focusing on these two universities can be justified in that Tripoli University is one of the oldest universities to be established in Libya and many students from all around Libya study at this university, and that Zawia University is the second largest university in the North West of Libya. More specifically, there is a methodological limitation with relation to collecting data under such political conditions in Libya which has made the data collection challenging. The sampling was not able to be carried out as originally proposed to be collected from different universities around Libya. The sample size of questionnaire and interviews could have been greater. An increase in the number of participants would strengthen the robustness and reliability of the findings of the study. But the culture of questionnaires and interviews is not familiar to Libyan students and teachers. The interviews took place only in Tripoli but not as originally planned as it was too dangerous to travel Zawia university at the time of the data collection. Also, the third data collecting method, which involved document analysis was about collecting data related to students' writing skill, whereas their speaking skill was not taken into consideration in this study.

It is suggested by the researcher that further research on teaching grammar in English as a foreign language should be carried out throughout Libya providing a viewpoint of what

grammar structures and how much grammar should be taught to university students in Libya. However, it is difficult to suggest how some of these limitations may be overcome in future, as this was an unusual and unique situation which highlights the risks and the limitations of researching during a period of instability.

7.9. Contribution to Knowledge

This study has contributed to knowledge in several ways. The study was carried out over a critical period of time of change in Libya. However, the process of undertaking research during this period contributes much to the understanding of the difficulties involved in collecting three different types of data and making sense of it during this critical time. This research contributes practical support to the use of mixed-methods that strengthen the reliability of the findings of the research and overcome any possible insufficiency that may take place as a consequence of using a single method. Also, adopting the Common European Framework of Reference in analysing documents has not been carried out in this way before. This research is the first (to the best of the researcher's knowledge) to be conducted in Libya regarding difficulties in teaching and learning grammar as a whole rather than specific grammatical structures such as prepositions and tenses. In the literature of teaching grammar, there is no case study investigating this topic as a whole in Libya. Thus, this study contributes to the field of teaching and learning grammar in Libya and in the Arab world as a whole. Teachers have changed their focus from traditional teaching methods, that consider students as passive receivers of knowledge (teacher-centred), to consider them meaningfully involved and can reflect on the content of the grammar course. A shift in perceptions and views about instruction methods and learning approaches can lead to a great change in Libya.

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Appendices

Appendix 1:



LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY QUESTIONNAIRE QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

Teachers' questionnaire:

I. Write a number from 1 to 5 in front of each statement where 1 means strongly agree and 5 means strongly disagree

1 = strongly agree. **2** = agree. **3** = neutral. **4** = disagree. **5** = strongly disagree.

1	Students' English language competence was poor when they first started university.	
2	Studying grammar will improves their English language competence.	
3	Time of grammar courses should be increased.	
4	Classrooms need to be modernized with new teaching audio visual resources.	
5	Classrooms should be more interactive.	
6	Grammar books are appropriate and available.	
7	Students study grammar only to pass the examination.	
8	Most students are not hard working.	
9	Most students are not motivated.	
10	Weak students need more courses to support their weaknesses.	
12	Teachers are well-qualified.	
13	I like teaching grammar.	

14	Teachers induct their classes using English at all times.	
15	Students need grammar to be taught explicitly with examples.	
16	Students need grammar to be taught implicitly.	
17	I teach grammar deductively.	
18	I teach grammar inductively.	
19	I speak in English at all times during grammar classes.	
20	Students understand grammar, but they cannot transfer their grammatical knowledge properly into communicative use.	
21	I use authentic texts in teaching grammar.	
22	Students find authentic texts difficult.	

II. Your own experience of teaching English grammar:

What are the main problems you encountered when teaching English grammar?

Tick all that you found to be challenges:

1	Students' lack of language competence.	
2	Back ground of students' knowledge of grammar gained from secondary school	
3	Students attitudes towards learning grammar.	
4	Teaching methodology.	
5	Type of teaching materials used in teaching grammar.	
6	Number of hours of teaching.	
7	Class size.	
8	Other	

III. What grammatical structures do you personally find difficult to teach ?

Tick any that apply:

1	Parts of speech and their functions in the sentence (adjectives, adverbs, articles ...etc	
2	Tenses	
3	Active and passive voice	
4	Kinds of sentences (the differences and formations of simple, compound, complex, and compound complex)	
5	Conjunctions	
6	Wh words (questions and relatives)	
7	Word order and syntax.	

8	Other	
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IV. Please use the space provided to write any additional comments related to difficulties as well as positive experiences of teaching grammar in teaching grammar.

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Appendix 2:



**LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES
UNIVERSITY**

**QUESTIONNAIRE QUESTIONS FOR
STUDENTS**

Students' questionnaire:

I. Write a number from 1 to 5 in front of each statement where 1 means strongly agree and 5 means strongly disagree

1 = strongly agree. 2 = agree. 3 = neutral. 4 = disagree. 5 = strongly disagree.

1	My general English language competence was poor when I started university.	
2	Studying grammar improves my English language competence.	
3	Time of grammar courses should be increased.	
4	Classrooms need to be modernized with new teaching resources.	
5	Classrooms should be more interactive.	
6	Grammar books are appropriate and suit students' level.	
7	Students study grammar only to pass the examination.	
8	Students' attendance is poor.	
9	Most students are hard working.	
10	Most students are motivated.	
11	Weak students need more courses to support their weaknesses.	
12	Teachers are well-qualified.	
13	I like learning grammar.	
14	I am anxious about learning grammar.	
15	I do all my grammar home work.	

II. Circle a number under the initial that applies to you; very important (VI), important (I), neutral (N), unimportant (U), very unimportant (VU):

How important is it to you to get good marks?	VI	I	N	U	VU
How important is it to you to understand grammar?	1	2	3	4	5

How important is it to you to work in pairs?	1	2	3	4	5
How important is it to you to work in groups?	1	2	3	4	5
How important is it to you to do your home work?	1	2	3	4	5
How important is it to you to speak in English during the class?	1	2	3	4	5
How important is it to you to attend all classes?	1	2	3	4	5

III. What are the main problems you have encountered with learning grammar?

Tick all that you found to be challenges:

1	Lack of language competence.	
2	Back ground of your knowledge of grammar gained from secondary school	
3	My attitudes towards learning grammar.	
4	Teaching methodology.	
5	Type of teaching materials used in teaching grammar.	
6	Number of hours of teaching.	
7	Class size.	

IV. What grammatical structures do you find difficult to learn?

Write a number from 1 to 5 in front of each statement where 1 means strongly agree and 5 means strongly disagree

1 = strongly agree. 2 = agree. 3 = neutral. 4 = disagree. 5 = strongly disagree.

1	Parts of speech and their functions in the sentence (adjectives and adverbs)	
2	Tenses	
3	Active and passive voice	
4	Articles	
5	Conjunctions	
6	Wh words (questions and relatives)	
7	Kinds of sentences (the differences and formations of simple, compound, complex, and compound complex).	
8	Word order and syntax.	

Appendix 3:



LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

Interviews with teachers (Phase two)

Interviews with teachers (phase two) will include almost the following questions. These interviews are meant to assist me, in addition to the findings of the questionnaire in the first phase in gaining a good view of the situation. Also, they will provide me with in-depth information and ideas about teachers' perspectives towards methods currently in use to improve students' English, in general, and grammar in specific. These questions may change later depending on the findings of the first phase of study.

- 1- How long you have been teaching grammar?
- 2- Where/when did you get your degree? Have you always worked as a university teacher?
- 3- How long you been teaching in this university?
- 4- What are your current responsibilities?
- 5- How long you been teaching grammar?
- 6- What is your general approach to teaching English grammar? Could you please outline the approaches you use in relation to teaching grammar?
- 7- If this has not been made clear: What part does grammar play in relation to all the other aspects of teaching English in your perspective?
- 8- Do you believe that students enjoy learning grammar in English language classrooms?
- 9- How often do you, as an English language teacher face difficulties in teaching grammar to university students?
- 10- How have you been dealing with these difficulties?
- 11- Through you experience, do you face the same difficulties or different with different classes or levels? Please explain.
- 12- Are these difficulties found with only first year students or with second year and above as well?
- 13- What method or methods do you use in teaching grammar?
- 14- Do you normally use one method?
- 15- What materials do you use in classroom?
- 16- Does the students' competence of the English language play a role causing some of these problems?
- 17- Does class size affect the process of teaching grammar?

- 18- Have you ever taught the students as team work such as working in pairs or groups? If yes: what did you do and what happened.
- 19- If no: Could you explain why you have not used these sorts of activities?
- 20- Would you like to try that? Are there particular difficulties you think you would face if you tried?

Appendix 4:



LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Interviews with students (Phase two)

Interviews with students will help me gain more understanding about students' experiences of learning grammar and their opinions of the teaching method.

The interviews will be carried out mostly in English and, if needed in Arabic. These questions may change later depending on the findings of the first phase of study.

The main questions will be:

- 1- What are your experiences of learning English? (Prompts to take the student back to when they first started learning English at the university).
- 2- Why did you decide to study English at the university?
- 3- Take me back to the beginning of your course here at the university. What happened when you first arrived? What were your first experiences of studying for an English Language degree?
- 4- Tell me about the different methods that teachers use in order to support your learning of English language in general.
- 5- Have the teachers' way of teaching changed over the time you have been at the University? Do your teachers use various methods?
- 6- What have been the high and low points of your English language in general and grammar in specific at the University?
- 7- Do you get opportunities to use English outside the classroom?
- 8- If yes, could you please describe those experiences to me?
- 9- Have you ever get the opportunity to speak in English to a native speaker of English?
- 10- How often do you read English texts outside your English Language course?
- 11- How often do you write English texts outside your English Language course?
- 12- Is grammar given particular emphasis in your English Language classes? How is it taught? What methods are used?
- 13- Have you ever participated in discussing grammar issues in classroom?
- 14- If yes, about what was the discussion? What did you think of it? Would you like to have more opportunities to look at and learn through such discussion in the classroom?
- 15- Have you ever read or tried to read and study grammar books outside the classroom? If yes, How did you find it? If no, why not?
- 16- Do you fear learning grammar? If yes, why?

- 17- I would like to find out more about the methods that have been used in your time at the university. Have you ever been asked to work in pairs in your English language classrooms?
- 18- What do you think of working in pairs or groups? Do you enjoy it? Do you think it is helpful in learning grammar?
- 19- What are the difficulties and problems which you have faced as a student in learning English language, and what are the reasons?
- 20- what difficulties have you been struggling the most in learning grammar?
- 21- Do you think that the reason for them is the teacher him/herself, or because of the way and method of teaching he/she uses? Please explain.
- 22- Or do you think that the difficulty in learning grammar is related to the student's English language competence in general?
- 23- Do you have any different or alternative ideas about this? Your point of view is important to me.
- 24- What do you hope to do when you leave University?

Appendix 5:



LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY

Document analysis

The Advantages and Disadvantages of Internet

Modern life has become easier and the people of the world have to thanks to the immense contribution of the internet technology to communication and information sharing. There is no doubt that internet has made our life become easier and more convenient. We can use internet to communicate with people around world, doing business by using internet, make new friend and know different cultures, searching information, studying.

The internet not only allows for communication through email but also ensures easy availability of information, images, and predicts amongst other things. Every day the internet continues to provide a new facility, something new that is immensely convenient and that makes life more easier for web users. However, this internet also contains some unwanted elements. Disadvantages. Followings are the advantages and disadvantages of the internet.

Advantages of internet :-

Finally, the internet can let a person to communicate with people in virtually any part of the world through the internet or e-mail, without having to leave his room. Email allows people to communicate with minimum of time. It is very possible to send a message to any part of world through a single e-mail address and the message is delivered in matter of seconds. Every company is using email in business. The convenience of email has allowed businesses to expand and communicate with their vendors and customers located all over the world in records times. ~~Video conferencing~~ Personal Communication has also become more easier thanks to e-mail. Chat rooms, video conferencing are some of the latest additions in this technology and these have allowed people to chat in real time. Besides, there are a lot of messengers services in offering. The internet also allows people within an organization to easily communicate and share informations. Search information is probably the biggest advantage that internet offers. Information is vital for us to have of information. Any kind of information on any topic under the sun is available on the internet. The search engines like Google, Yahoo are a few service through the internet. There is a huge amount of information available on the internet for just about every subjects known to man, ranging from government law and services, trade fairs and conferences, market information, new ideas and technical support, the list is simply endless. We can use these search engines, websites dedicated to different subjects

and large amount of articles and papers are available for personal use in matter of a few seconds. Thirdly, entertainment is another popular reason why many people prefer to surf the internet. In fact, the internet has become a successful in helping the multimedia entertainment industry. Downloading games or just surfing the celebrity websites are some of the uses people have discovered. Even celebrities are using the internet effectively for promotional campaigns. Besides this, there are numerous games that can be downloaded for free. The industry of online gaming has taken a dramatic and phenomenal attention by game lovers. Instead of watching movies at cinema now have companies offering their services where you just can download or order your favourite movies and watch it with a fast internet connection. ~~There are~~ The internet also allows people from different cultures and backgrounds to connect with each other. Internet gaming is a huge business and allow enthusiastic gamers to compete against each other in games even when they are located far apart. Likewise dating has also allowed people to find their prospective soul mates. One of the most important benefits is that students can come from internet through bloggers. Students can take interest in anything through internet. It would be a great source of income for them and also it would provide them a big experience writing. The students who are interested in media and who be a writer in the future must do this work. This would increase

Disadvantages of internet.

However, for all its advantages and positive aspects, the internet has its dark and ugly side too. The recent rumours that mongering about racial riots in Kuala Lumpur which in created a furore, just goes to show how this tool with its unrivalled reputation as an information associations and company regulations can suffer if internet facilities are abused, especially by those with an axe to grind. Besides that, some students will spend a lot much of time through the internet. Students are likely to neglect ^{their} studies. If the movies has too strong a hold over even doctory people are likely to neglect some their important work. Students might lose concentrate on their studies because they spent too much time on internet.

Another problem or disadvantage of the internet is that it has allowed a great deal of ownership to a large number of people who have access the internet websites, forums and chat rooms available. This has allowed perverted individuals to at times take advantage of innocent people and abuse their trust. We can always hear from news that cheaters used internet to make crimes. Another disadvantage of internet is harmful to little children. Children nowadays ~~love~~ explore the internet and they are used to motion internet as their daily life.

The points mentioned above have posed new challenges to teachers and parents. There are demands from various quarters that there should be some sort of regulation to check this issue. However, we believe that instead of making internet a taboo, we should educate children to use it for their benefit. It is advisable for parents to monitor how much time their children spend on the internet. Parents play important role in this context and they have to pay attention on their children despite themselves distracted by internet. Although studies on this disorder are in preliminary stages, it has been established that children who spend most of their time on the internet, show a peculiar kind of behaviour which is marked by an urge to be on the internet all the time, so much that the child may show all activities and become immersed in the virtual world. Surveys conducted over the years have found that most people who suffer from Internet addiction disorder are young adults, who easily fall into the lure of exploring everything that is available on the internet. We have written this article for the internet audience, and you are reading it through the internet, which itself explains the positive side of internet usage. It is for us to decide whether we use technology for the betterment of our life or put it to unneeded abuse. Children may not be mature to understand this, but us as parents, teachers and guardians need to ensure that we indicate the right behaviour children. Lastly, we have to take the responsibilities

Appendix 6:



LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY

Interview Analysis

Interviews with teachers (Phase two)

Teacher 1: Mufeedah

Gender: Female

Degree: MA

How long you have been teaching? How long you been at the university of Tripoli? 8 years in the university of Tripoli. teaching

How long you have been teaching **grammar**? 4 years teaching **grammar**.

Could you tell me a bit about your 'history' as a teacher (where/when did you qualify, have you always worked at university level, etc, have you always worked as a language teacher)? What do you need specifically? you need to talk about...aaa **any thing** It 's not easy to teach in university, I, I faced many problems, the problem that aaa students, **they have many problems with grammar, even the basics,** most of students don't know.

When you first started here, what level did you teach? I started with level 1; **grammar** 1, Writing 1, composition 1. So you can say I went steadily with teaching **grammar**, I started by teaching **grammar** 1 then **grammar** 2 then aaa taught now I teach **grammar** 4.

What are your current responsibilities? Only teach.

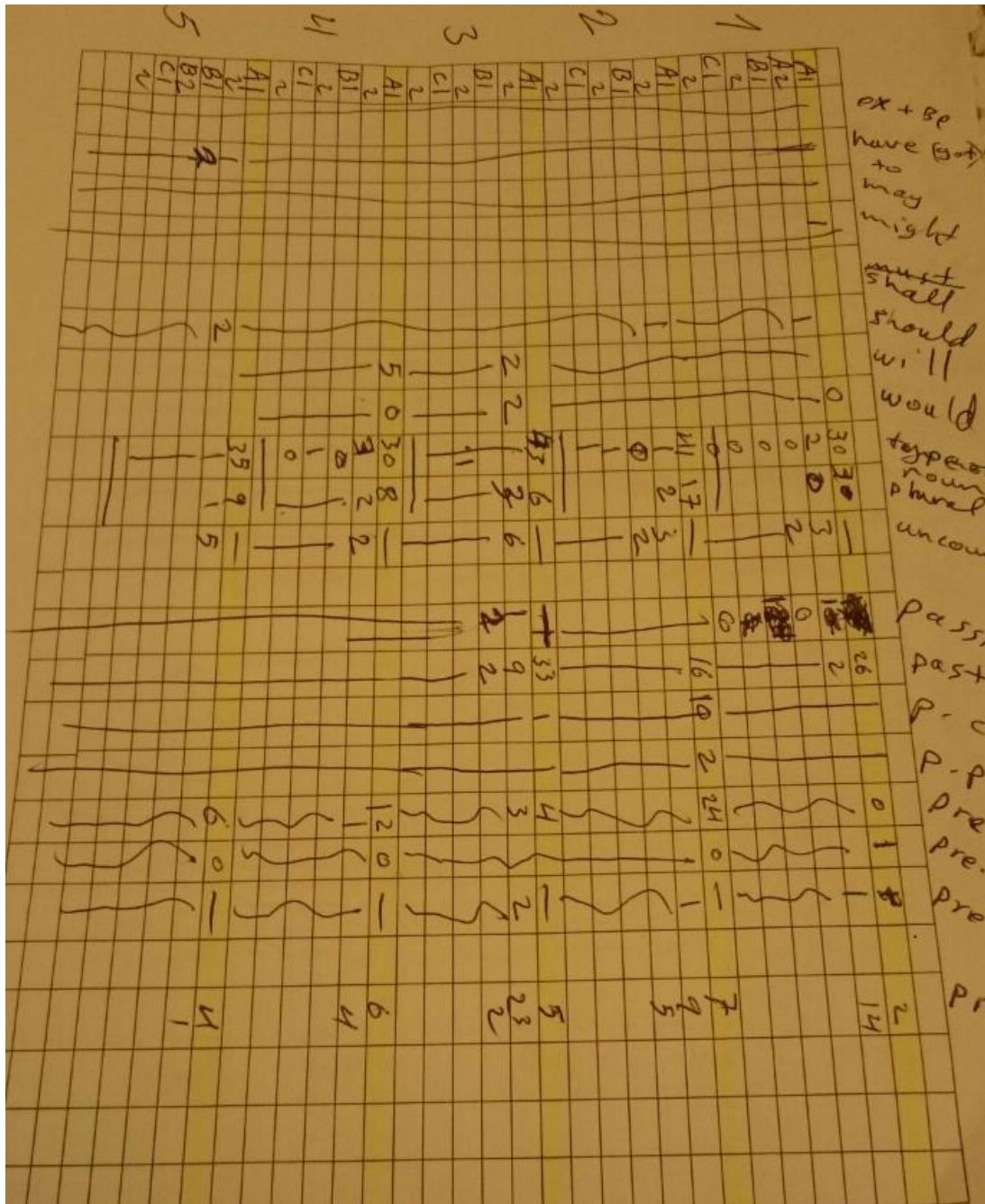
What is your general **approach to teaching grammar**? What are the main skills / understandings that you are trying to promote? Could you please outline the approaches you use in relation to teaching **grammar**? What I do, I start my lesson by writing examples, then use them to explain the rules, then we read the rules from the sheet, then after that we answer the exercises. This how I use, and sometimes tell the students they must memorise the rules and try to find other exercises supplementary material and try to answer these rules that we explained. We practise them and - they-I asked them to try to answer the exercise, That's what I do. As I said I give example, explain the rules then we answer the exercises together, if they understand the rules, I ask them to memorise them, try to apply the rules on the same subject. **What do you mean by applying the rules? Do you mean that after student memorise the rules, they can bring their own examples, I mean new examples? Can they create new examples for the same rule?** No, no, I don't ask them so. Most of them, I mean they hesitate, when you ask a student to create a new example or his own sentence, most of them fear of doing this. I don't know why. Although I try

Appendix 7:



LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY

Document Analysis



Appendix: 8a, b & c



LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION SHEET

Title of the project

Difficulties In Teaching And Learning English Grammar In Libyan Universities

Name of Researcher and School/Faculty

Hisham Fitori, Faculty of Education, Health and Community

Invitation

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you make your decision, it is important that you know what the research will involve and why it is being done. Please read all the information below and feel free to ask me if you need more information.

1. Purpose of the study

The purpose of the current research is to undertake a literature review of the most relevant and updated articles, books and latest studies in the field of teaching and learning English and English grammar to foreign speakers of English, especially Arabic learners. This literature review will help in exploring the range of approaches and methods employed and thus establish the knowledge base to which this study is making a contribution.

Also this study focuses on how English language teachers and learners have been dealing with English grammar in order to explore errors, difficulties and problems facing both teachers and students.

Furthermore it aims to find out a suitable way or ways to achieve better results which will help students as well as teachers of English facilitate the process of teaching and learning grammar. In addition to that, the study will assist in narrowing down and minimizing the gap of the

incompatibility between Libyan students' learning needs and approaches of teaching and learning grammar.

2. Do I have to take part?

It is completely up to you to decide whether you want to participate in this study or not. However, if you want to go ahead and take part, this information sheet will be given to you to retain and you will be requested to sign a consent form. If you decide to participate, you still have the right to withdraw at any stage of the process whether this is before or during the interview. You do not need to provide a reason for doing so.

3. What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to participate I will carry out a face-to-face interview and, with your permission, audio record this interview. The interview should last between 30 to 45 minutes. The questions will revolve around your experience of learning English and English grammar, and your experiences (if any) and feelings about the methodologies used by your teachers in teaching grammar. A discussion of the time and date of the interview, which will take place at the department where you are currently studying, will be arranged at your convenience.

4. Are there any risks / benefits involved?

There are no risks arising from your participation in this study. Similarly, you will not directly profit from taking part in the research. However, it is hoped that the course will improve your English language skills. In addition, the information gathered will improve the researcher's knowledge about suitable curriculum materials and lead to developments in teaching at Libyan universities.

5. Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

Yes. No names will be used and your confidentiality will be safeguarded during and after the study. Copies of field notes will be kept in locked cupboards/ audio-recorded files and interview transcripts will be stored in password protected files.

Further Information

Should you require any additional information regarding the study, please feel free to contact the researcher or my academic supervisor, by using the contact details given below.

Thank you for your consideration.

Hisham Fitori (Researcher)

Room H203, Faculty of Education, Health and Community

Liverpool John Moores University,

Holmefield House, I.M. Marsh campus

Barkhill Road

L17 6BD

Email: H.O.Fitori@2014.ljmu.ac.uk

Dr, Gillian Peiser (Academic Supervisor)

Faculty of Education, Health and Community, Liverpool John Moores University

Email: G.Peiser@ljmu.ac.uk

Appendix:9a



LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHERS

Title of the project

Difficulties In Teaching And Learning English Grammar In Libyan Universities

Researcher: *Hisham Fitori, Faculty of Education, Health and Community*

I confirm that I have read and understand the information provided for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

1. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and that this will not affect my legal rights.

☐

2. I understand that any personal information collected during the study will be anonymised and remain confidential.

☐

3. I agree to take part in the above study (interview).

☐

4. I understand that the interview will be audio recorded and I am happy to proceed.

☐

5. I understand that parts of our conversation may be used verbatim in future publications or presentations but that such quotes will be anonymised.

☐

Name of teacher:

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher: Hisham Fitori

Date

Signature

Faculty of Education, Health and Community, Liverpool John Moores University, H203

Holmefield House, I.M. Marsh Campus, Barkhill Road, L17 6BD.

Email: H.O.Fitori@2014.ljmu.ac.uk

Note: When completed 1 copy for participant and 1 copy for researcher

Appendix:9b



LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY CONSENT FORM FOR STUDENTS

Title of the project

Difficulties In Teaching And Learning English Grammar In Libyan Universities

Researcher: *Hisham Fitori, Faculty of Education, Health and Community*

I confirm that I have read and understand the information provided for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

1. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and that this will not affect my legal rights.

☐

2. I understand that any personal information collected during the study will be anonymised and remain confidential.

☐

3. I agree to take part in the above study (interview).

☐

4. I understand that the interview will be audio recorded and I am happy to proceed.

☐

5. I understand that parts of our conversation may be used verbatim in future publications or presentations but that such quotes will be anonymised.

☐

Name of Student:

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher: Hisham Fitori

Date

Signature

Faculty of Education, Health and Community, Liverpool John Moores University, H203

Holmefield House, I.M. Marsh Campus, Barkhill Road, L17 6BD.

Email: H.O.Fitori@2014.ljmu.ac.uk

Note: When completed 1 copy for participant and 1 copy for researcher

Appendix 10:



LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TRIPOLI AND UNIVERSITY OF ZAWIA

Title of the project

Difficulties In Teaching And Learning English Grammar In Libyan Universities

Name of Researcher and School/Faculty

Hisham Fitori, Faculty of Education, Health and Community

To the Deans of the English Language Departments, The University of Tripoli and University of Zawia.

I am writing to ask your permission to carry out a research project in the English Language Department at the University . The purpose of the study is to explore and analyse the difficulties in teaching and learning English grammar in Libyan universities

The work is divided into two phases. In the first phase I will employ questionnaires to gather data from students and teachers. The questionnaires will provide me with in-depth information about methods currently in use in English language classrooms and the challenges and problems they face in teaching and learning grammar. I will use the insights gained to help inform the design of Phase two of the study.

I will then design a semi structured interviews to be carried out with teachers and students in the second phase. In addition to that I will take some of the students' documents (tests and homework) to be analysed and assessed to gain in-depth understandings about their strengths and weaknesses in learning grammar.

This piece of research has been given full ethical authorisation from Liverpool John Moores University in the UK [**PENDING**].

Invitation to participate

All participants will be volunteers and they will have the study fully explained to them before being asked to volunteer. They will all be supplied with a consent form. There are no risks associated with participating in the research. All information will be confidential to the participants and no names will be used in the report. At the end of the project, I will supply you with a summary of the project and its outcomes with recommendations for changes in the English Language Department.

If possible, I would like to begin the work in September 2015, and then return to Libya again in Spring semester 2016 to carry out Phase 2 followed by document analysis of students' works in June 2016. While conducting the research, I will make sure that the process does not interfere at all with the day-to-day routines and activities of the university. As such, I am requesting formal approval to be allowed access to your institution in order to gather data for my piece of research.

Further Information

Should you require any additional information regarding the study, please feel free to contact me or my Academic Supervisor (details below).

I hope you will feel able to support the study.

Yours sincerely,

Hisham Fitori

Faculty of Education, Health and Community

Liverpool John Moores University

Room H203, Holmefield House, I.M. Marsh campus

Barkhill Road

L17 6BD

Email: H.O.Fitori@2014.ljmu.ac.uk

Mobile: 00447424 795 798

Academic Supervisor:

Dr Gillian Peiser

Faculty of Education, Health and Community, Liverpool John Moores University

Email: G.Peiser@ljmu.ac.uk

