

The influence of absence of teacher's roles on EL students' learning (A Case Study of English Language Teachers of Primary Schools in AlBaida City)

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تأثير غياب أدوار المعلم في تعليم طلاب اللغة الانجليزية (دراسة حالة لمعلمي اللغة
الانجليزية في المدارس الابتدائية في مدينة البيضاء)

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| Received: 09-01-2026 | Accepted: 14-03-2026 | Published: 26-03-2026 |
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Abstract

This qualitative study investigates the roles of English language teachers in primary schools in Al-Baida, Libya, focusing on their instructional practices, challenges faced, and the impact of traditional teacher-centered approaches on student learning. Data were collected through unstructured observations of six teachers across two primary schools over five lessons each, analyzing teaching roles, classroom dynamics, and student engagement. Findings reveal that teachers predominantly adopt traditional, controller roles characterized by a focus on rote memorization, limited use of interactive strategies, and minimal integration of technological resources. Major challenges include managing large class sizes, diverse student proficiency levels, and resource constraints, which hinder effective teaching and learning. The reliance on traditional methods contributes to passive student participation and impedes language acquisition. The study recommends professional development initiatives that promote flexible teaching roles, student-centered methodologies, and incorporation of technology to enhance English language education in Libya. These reforms aim to improve learner engagement and academic outcomes in the evolving educational context.

Keywords: (English language teaching; Teacher roles; Traditional teaching methods; Primary education; Classroom challenges; Student engagement; Teacher-centered instruction; Educational technology).

المخلص

تستكشف هذه الدراسة الأدوار التي يتبناها معلمو اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الابتدائية في مدينة البيضاء، ليبيا، والتحديات التي يواجهونها، وتأثير الاعتماد على الأدوار التعليمية التقليدية. أجريت الدراسة باستخدام الملاحظة غير المنظمة في صفوف ستة معلمين من مدرستين ابتدائيتين، مع تحليل بيانات نوعي قائم على التحليل الموضوعي. كشفت النتائج أن المعلمين يميلون إلى اعتماد أساليب تدريس تقليدية تركز على دور المعلم كمتحكم رئيسي في الصف، مما يؤدي إلى تراجع تفاعل الطلاب وتقليل فرص المشاركة النشطة والتفكير النقدي. كما تم تحديد تحديات مثل كثافة الطلاب العالية، نقص الموارد التكنولوجية، وتفاوت مستويات الطلاب، بالإضافة إلى ضغوط من أولياء الأمور للتركيز على نتائج سريعة. تؤثر هذه العوامل سلباً على تحفيز الطلاب وتقديمهم في تعلم اللغة. توصي الدراسة بضرورة تطوير البرامج التدريبية للمعلمين لتبني أدوار تدريس أكثر مرونة، واستخدام استراتيجيات تفاعلية، وتوظيف التكنولوجيا التعليمية لتعزيز فعالية تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الابتدائية الليبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية؛ أدوار المعلم؛ أساليب التدريس التقليدية؛ التعليم الابتدائي؛ تحديات الصف الدراسي؛ تفاعل الطلاب؛ التدريس المرتكز على المعلم؛ التكنولوجيا التعليمية.

Introduction:

Teachers are essential stakeholders in the educational system, playing a pivotal role in shaping students' academic and personal development. In today's dynamic educational landscape, teachers are expected to be well-prepared, adaptable, and proactive in addressing the evolving needs of their learners. Their responsibilities extend beyond the mere delivery of content to include problem-solving, emotional support, and fostering a conducive learning environment. For English language teachers in particular, subject-matter expertise and pedagogical skills are fundamental to ensuring that students comprehend and engage with language instruction effectively.

Effective lesson preparation is a prerequisite for successful teaching. Competent teachers should design well-structured lesson plans that include clear objectives, appropriate activities, tasks, and exercises. They must also be responsive to students' questions, needs, and levels of understanding during classroom interactions. In addition, motivating students to learn English is crucial for enhancing their engagement and promoting a positive attitude toward language learning. Creative educators who can think beyond traditional methods—adapting various roles, strategies, and theoretical frameworks—are more likely to succeed in making the learning experience enriching and impactful. Patience, empathy, and adaptability are also vital attributes that contribute to a teacher's effectiveness, especially in dealing with diverse classroom situations and student challenges.

However, when comparing this ideal teacher profile to the current roles of English language teachers in Al-Baida, Libya, notable differences emerge. In many classrooms, teachers often adopt a dominant, controller-based role. While classroom management is essential, relying solely on this role can hinder students' language development. Harmer (2007) emphasizes that a teacher, much like an actor on stage, must skillfully alternate between roles depending on the context and needs of the learners. Teachers are not only transmitters of knowledge but also facilitators, guides, and mentors who establish meaningful interactions with their students.

Through effective communication, teachers can receive feedback, identify learning gaps, and adjust their teaching strategies accordingly, thus fostering a more productive and student-centered classroom.

This study focuses on the roles adopted by English language teachers in Al-Baida primary schools. Observations revealed that teachers typically positioned themselves at the front of the classroom, where they focused on writing and translating lesson content. A significant portion of instructional time was devoted to content presentation, while other important stages of the lesson—such as production, practice, and revision—were often overlooked. As a result, students were not given sufficient opportunities to internalize and apply the content.

Ihsan (2020) asserts that English language instruction, especially in contexts where English is a second language, requires thoughtful methodological choices. These include not only how the material is delivered, but also how classroom space is utilized, how student participation is encouraged, and how resources are employed to support diverse learning styles. In the observed settings, while students were sometimes permitted to engage in reading or translation activities, these opportunities were frequently limited to a select group of active participants.

Moreover, English classes in these schools often lacked essential learning resources such as audio materials for listening practice or technological tools that support interactive learning. Teachers and students struggled with resource limitations, large class sizes, disruptive behavior, varied student proficiency levels, limited parental involvement, and insufficient administrative support. These challenges significantly hinder the teaching and learning process and add pressure on English language teachers in Libya.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

English language teaching in Libya remains problematic due to the continued reliance on traditional, teacher-centered instructional methods. Many Libyan teachers tend to resist professional development opportunities, either due to a belief that their existing experience is sufficient or because of environmental constraints that limit access to training programs. Consequently, teachers often adhere to a single, static role, typically that of a controller, which restricts student engagement and hampers language acquisition. There is a pressing need for instructional reform that emphasizes flexibility in teaching roles, encourages professional development, and promotes the adoption of innovative teaching strategies tailored to student needs. Such changes have the potential to improve the quality of education and enhance student outcomes in English language learning.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What is the usual role that English language teachers play in Al-Baida primary school?
2. What are the difficulties teachers may encounter teaching?
3. What are the consequences of using traditional role?

1.3 Research Objectives

This study aims to:

- Investigate the predominant teaching roles adopted by Libyan English language teachers in primary classrooms.
- Identify the key challenges encountered by English language teachers in the educational process.
- Analyze the consequences of traditional teaching methods on student engagement and academic achievement.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study offers several contributions to the field of English language education in Libya. First, it raises awareness among English language teachers about the wide range of roles they can adopt to enhance student learning. The findings may inspire a shift from the conventional, teacher-centered model to more modern, flexible approaches that prioritize student engagement, collaboration, and autonomy. Second, the study highlights the need for continuous professional development and institutional support, which are essential for equipping teachers with the skills necessary to implement innovative pedagogical strategies. Ultimately, by fostering more dynamic and learner-centered classrooms, this research supports improved educational outcomes and prepares students for meaningful use of English in academic and real-life contexts.

2. Literature Review

Teaching is broadly defined as either a profession undertaken by a group of individuals identified as teachers or as a set of activities aimed at helping learners acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, or interests (Mangal & Uma Mangal, 2009, p. 257). Islamia (2016) posits that a teacher is someone who not only delivers instruction and evaluates student participation but also contributes significantly to the administration and leadership of educational programs. Teachers are often regarded as secondary parental figures who offer guidance and support, helping learners make informed decisions about their futures.

2.1 The Role of the Teacher

Traditionally, the role of the teacher has been characterized by authority and control within the classroom. Scrivener (2011) explains that in conventional settings, teachers typically stand at the front of the class, using the board to explain lessons while students passively listen, take notes, and ask questions only when permitted. In this model, the teacher is the central figure, responsible for content delivery, classroom activities, and assessments, thus remaining the most active participant in the learning process.

However, Ur (2012) notes that by the mid-twentieth century, educational philosophy began to shift away from viewing teachers solely as authoritarian figures. There was increasing support for a more facilitative approach, where teachers encouraged students to think critically, engage in discussions, and take ownership of their learning. According to Patel and Jain (2008), effective teachers should not rely exclusively on experience but must also possess strong pedagogical skills and competencies.

Harmer (2007) identified several distinct roles that teachers can adopt in the classroom, including controller, prompter, participant, organizer, resource, assessor, and tutor. These roles enable teachers to respond flexibly to the needs of their students and the dynamics of the classroom environment.

2.1.1. Controller

In the role of controller, the teacher maintains full authority over classroom activities, deciding when and how tasks should be completed. This role assumes that the teacher is the primary source of knowledge and that students are passive recipients. Students are expected to listen attentively, take notes, and ask questions only with the teacher's permission. Although this role ensures discipline and structure, it may limit opportunities for student autonomy and interaction (Harmer, 2007).

2.1.2 Prompter

The teacher as a prompter encourages student participation in tasks and discussions. In this role, the teacher offers subtle guidance, prompting learners to think, engage, and respond

without directly providing answers. Prompters must be well-prepared and sensitive to students' needs, avoiding dominance while supporting their efforts in a constructive manner (Harmer, 2007).

2.1.3 Participant

In contrast to traditional teaching, where the teacher is the sole authority, the participant role involves the teacher actively engaging in classroom activities alongside students. This collaborative approach reduces the gap between teacher and student, fosters a more relaxed and supportive atmosphere, and motivates learners to contribute more freely (Harmer, 2007).

2.1.4. Organizer

The organizer role is both complex and crucial. Teachers are responsible for managing classroom arrangements, coordinating group work, and preparing materials such as handouts, textbooks, or multimedia resources. Organizational responsibilities also extend to arranging students according to language proficiency or skill levels, and managing time effectively. For the teacher to be a successful organizer, self-organization is equally important (Harmer, 2007).

2.1.5 Resource

Traditionally, teachers were the sole source of knowledge. However, with increased access to information—especially through the internet—students can now find answers independently. Nevertheless, teachers still serve as valuable resources, especially when students require clarification or deeper understanding that may not be readily available through independent search (Harmer, 2007).

2.1.6 Assessor

Assessment remains a core function of teaching. As assessors, teachers evaluate student progress through a variety of formative and summative assessment tools. These evaluations help identify areas of strength and weakness, allowing for informed instructional decisions that promote student development (Harmer, 2007).

2.1.7 Tutor

As tutors, teachers provide individualized support to small groups or individual students. This role combines the characteristics of a resource and a prompter. The tutor offers guidance, monitors progress closely, and addresses specific learning needs to ensure that each student receives the appropriate support to succeed (Harmer, 2007).

This multifaceted view of teaching illustrates the complexity of the teacher's role in modern education. While traditional methods still persist in many contexts, current pedagogical research advocates for a more flexible and student-centered approach, where teachers adapt their roles according to learners' needs, content, and context. Recognizing and effectively implementing these roles can lead to improved classroom interaction, student engagement, and overall learning outcomes.

2.2 Establishing a Good Rapport

Stronge (2007) emphasized that an effective teacher builds rapport and credibility with students by modeling fairness and respect in all interactions. Establishing such a relationship contributes to a positive learning environment, fostering mutual respect and student engagement. Harmer (2007) similarly noted that building a good relationship with students encourages them to respect their teacher and feel more comfortable in the classroom. Remembering students' names can be challenging, especially in large classes, so teachers may use strategies such as name cards or repeated introductions during the initial lessons to facilitate personal connection.

2.3 Classroom Interactions

Classroom interaction involves more than a simple pattern of action and reaction. According to Sarosdy et al. (2006), classroom activities are guided by the teacher's plan, and students may respond in varied ways, depending on the nature of the tasks. The teacher, while facilitating these interactions, may not be able to correct every individual mistake. Crawford et al. (2005) argued that classroom exchanges should encourage students to share their ideas openly, especially when their contributions are acknowledged and valued. This inclusive environment motivates learners to participate more actively and take intellectual risks.

2.4 Motivation

Motivation plays a central role in student success. Dörnyei (2001) asserted that motivating teachers must connect with their students on both personal and academic levels to be effective. This connection helps build trust and fosters a sense of community. Similarly, Stronge (2007) suggested that strong teacher-student relationships and support for student achievement contribute to teachers' enthusiasm and effectiveness. When students feel personally connected to their teachers, they are more likely to be motivated and engaged in the learning process.

2.5 Learning Styles

Learning styles refer to individual preferences for processing information rather than innate abilities. Dörnyei (2005) pointed out that, unlike skills and aptitudes, learning styles do not indicate natural talent but instead reflect how learners prefer to acquire knowledge. Day (2002) highlighted the diversity present in classrooms, noting that students come from varied backgrounds and have different learning motivations and abilities, which makes teaching particularly challenging. Gilakjani (2012) identified three major learning styles—kinesthetic, auditory, and visual—and argued that these categories help teachers tailor instruction to meet the diverse needs of students more effectively.

2.6 Planning for Lessons

Lesson planning is a fundamental aspect of effective teaching. As Murcia (2001) stated, a lesson plan reflects not only a teacher's instructional philosophy but also the specific needs of the student population, the learning goals, and the curricular materials. Lesson plans serve multiple functions: they guide instruction, serve as a historical record of classroom activity, and help teachers maintain focus. Crawford et al. (2005) found that lesson planning that promotes active learning requires greater intentionality and effort than traditional planning.

2.7 Learning and Teaching Strategies

Learning strategies are deliberate behaviors or mental actions used by learners to influence how they acquire and retain information. Weinstein and Mayer (1983) described learning strategies as tools that help students organize, integrate, and apply new knowledge effectively. Good teaching involves equipping students with these strategies—such as how to study, recall information, think critically, and stay motivated. According to Mangal and Uma Mangal (2009), teaching strategies can be broadly categorized into democratic (student-centered) and autocratic (teacher-centered) approaches. Effective educators choose strategies based on instructional goals and student needs.

2.8 Techniques and Activities

Brown (2000) defined a technique as any classroom task or activity planned and executed with a specific pedagogical purpose. Techniques are deliberate and typically supported by instructional materials. They are selected to align with learning objectives and student needs. Dhand (2008) explained that teaching techniques include daily classroom practices such as textbook use, group discussions, field trips, and project-based learning. Brown also emphasized

the role of activities as structured, time-bound student actions that are preceded by teacher guidance and directed toward a clear learning goal.

2.9 Teaching Issues

One of the most significant challenges teachers faces is addressing students' diverse language proficiency levels. Harmer (1998) noted that it is particularly difficult when some students speak English fluently, others are complete beginners, and some fall somewhere in between. This diversity requires teachers to differentiate instruction and manage a range of learning needs within the same classroom.

New and experienced teachers alike often struggle with the complexity of planning lessons, managing administrative tasks, and responding to students' behavioral and academic needs. Melnick and Meister (2008) found that many teachers, especially novices, express concern about meeting the diverse needs of students, managing unusual classroom behaviors, and dealing with the time-consuming nature of lesson planning and paperwork. Additionally, limited communication skills with parents can hinder the resolution of student-related issues.

2.10 Technology and Staying up to Date

The advent of the internet and digital tools has transformed the educational landscape. Students are no longer solely dependent on teachers for information; learning now occurs through online platforms, individualized activities, and collaborative group work. Richard (2015) emphasized that learning environments have evolved beyond the classroom, with learning increasingly occurring at home through virtual resources.

According to Mangal and Uma Mangal (2009), educational technology provides both guidance and solutions to many of the problems encountered in teaching. While computers are often the first technological tools associated with language instruction due to their prevalence in everyday life, Brown (2000) pointed out that educational technology encompasses a broad range of tools, including computers, videos, and audio devices—all of which enhance the teaching and learning process.

3. Methodology

The study was conducted to answer **these** research questions:

1. What is the usual role that English language teachers play in Al-Baida primary school?
2. What are the difficulties teachers may encounter in teaching?
3. What are the consequences of using traditional teaching role?

Two schools in Al-Baida, Libya were selected based on their accessibility and established reputations within the community. The proximity of the schools to the researcher's residence also facilitated communication and transportation. At Rossol Al Ghad, data were collected between October 29 and November 6, 2024. Two English language teachers participated, and each class consisted of approximately 25 students. At Al Sediqa Bint Al Sediq, data collection occurred from November 12 to December 4, 2024, involving four English language teachers and classrooms with an average of 40 students. Each teacher was observed during five different class sessions.

As Mack et al. (2005) noted, qualitative research is most effective when conducted in the natural settings of participants. Observations and interactions took place within the school environment, allowing the researcher to understand the teaching practices in context.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling, a common technique in qualitative research that involves selecting individuals based on specific characteristics relevant to the study (Mack et al., 2005). The sample consisted of six English language teachers—five female and one male. Four participants held bachelor's degrees in English, one had a degree in Arabic,

and another in law. Each teacher was observed during five lessons, focusing on instruction in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades. These grades were chosen because they represent foundational stages in students' language development and are crucial for preparing learners for more advanced concepts in English.

Observation was chosen as the most appropriate method for capturing teachers' behaviors and instructional roles in real-time classroom contexts. According to Kothari (2004), observation is one of the most widely used methods in behavioral science research. Unlike casual observation, scientific observation is systematic and purposeful. Under this method, the researcher collects data by directly observing subjects without relying on their self-reported information.

Unstructured observation was employed to allow for a naturalistic understanding of classroom dynamics. Each lesson, lasting approximately 40 minutes, was observed five times between October 29 and December 4, 2024. Observations were conducted in 4th, 5th, and 6th-grade English language classrooms at Rossol Al Ghad and Al Sediqa Bint Al Sediq primary schools. This approach enabled the researcher to collect rich qualitative data on teaching strategies, classroom management, student engagement, and teacher-student interactions. The goal was to identify patterns and variations in teacher roles across different grade levels. As Bernard (2006) noted, "The faster you write up your observations, the more detail you can get down" (p. 395), emphasizing the importance of prompt documentation to preserve observation quality.

4. Data Analysis

Data analysis is one of the most intellectually demanding stages of qualitative research, requiring both analytical rigor and creative interpretation. As Ritchie and Lewis (2003) emphasized, data analysis is not a distinct phase but rather an ongoing and iterative process that begins at the outset of the research and continues through to the final reporting of findings. Miles and Huberman (1994) supported the view that analysis should begin concurrently with data collection. This iterative approach allows the researcher to refine data collection strategies based on emerging insights, leading to the acquisition of more relevant and comprehensive data.

This study employed thematic analysis to interpret the data gathered through classroom observations. Braun and Clarke (2006) define thematic analysis as a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data. It differs from other analytical methods in that it does not require adherence to a particular theoretical framework and is suitable for a wide range of research questions. In primary qualitative research, thematic analysis is especially valuable for summarizing and interpreting key themes that recur across a dataset. Cruzes and Dyba (2011) further describe a related approach, "thematic synthesis," which aggregates and interprets common themes from multiple studies for systematic review purposes.

4.1 Implementation of Braun and Clarke's Six Phases

Phase1: Familiarization with Data

This stage involved deep immersion in the observational field notes, re-reading them multiple times to grasp the nuanced behaviors, teaching techniques, and learner reactions observed in the classroom. Through this process, I began identifying preliminary patterns, recurring teacher practices, and student engagement dynamics. Since the data were collected firsthand, I approached this step with both experiential and interpretive knowledge. Braun and Clarke (2006) note that immersion allows the researcher to actively engage with the data and begin mentally coding.

Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes

After familiarization, initial codes were developed by identifying keywords, repeated phrases, and behaviors that aligned with the study's core questions about teaching styles, roles, and learning interaction. This phase emphasized the segmentation of data into manageable, meaningful units (Braun & Clarke, 2006), focusing on descriptive aspects such as instructional techniques, student reactions, and classroom management strategies.

Phase 3: Searching for Themes

Here, related codes were grouped together under overarching concepts. For instance, codes such as "teacher-centered instruction," "minimal student talk," and "focus on textbook activities" were clustered into a broader theme: Traditional Teaching Approaches. This thematic grouping marked the transition from descriptive coding to interpretive analysis.

Phase 4: Reviewing Themes

During this step, themes were refined by examining the coherence and consistency of the data within each theme. Some codes were reallocated, and others were either excluded or reclassified into subthemes. Braun and Clarke (2006) stress that not all identified clusters qualify as themes—only those that are substantively supported by the data and have analytical depth.

Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes

Each theme was defined with clarity, outlining its scope and relationship to the study's objectives. Themes such as Teacher Dominance in Instruction, Lack of Multimodal Learning, and Limited Learner Autonomy were named to reflect the most salient patterns in the classroom observations.

Phase 6: Producing the Report

Finally, the analysis culminated in a detailed write-up where each theme was examined in relation to the research questions and existing literature. This narrative synthesis highlighted how traditional teaching roles persist in Libyan primary classrooms and the implications of these roles for learner engagement and achievement. Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasize that effective reporting should tell the "story" of the data, supported by rich evidence and thoughtful interpretation.

5. Findings

This section presents the key findings derived from the qualitative data collected through unstructured classroom observations in Al-Baida primary schools. The objective was to investigate the actual roles played by English language teachers, the challenges they face in their instructional settings, and the implications of traditional teaching methods. Data analysis followed the thematic analysis framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), allowing for the identification of recurring patterns, key themes, and meaningful insights from the observation notes. The observational data were analyzed in accordance with the six-phase model of Braun and Clarke, which includes familiarization with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report.

5.1 Theme 1: The Common Methods and Roles

This theme captures the instructional strategies and typical responsibilities adopted by teachers in their day-to-day practice. Under this theme, two sub-themes emerged:

- **Preparation and Organization:** Most teachers demonstrated a high level of preparedness, relying heavily on the textbook as their primary instructional tool. Lessons were generally structured, but limited in terms of innovation or adaptation to

students' diverse learning needs. Teachers often began with routine greetings, followed by reading from the book or assigning exercises, suggesting a rigid, teacher-centered instructional approach.

- **Methods of Assessment:** Assessment practices primarily involved oral questioning and textbook-based written exercises. Few instances of formative or alternative assessment methods were observed. There was little evidence of individual feedback, differentiated evaluation, or reflective practices that consider students' varying learning styles or needs.

These observations provide evidence that many teachers operate within a traditional instructional model characterized by minimal flexibility, limited student engagement, and an overreliance on printed materials.

5.2 Theme 2: Classroom Environment

The second theme reflects the physical and emotional climate of the classrooms, which directly influences the teaching and learning process.

- **Large Classes and Noise Management:** Teachers consistently struggled to manage classrooms with high student numbers. Overcrowding created challenges for movement, effective monitoring, and personalized attention. Additionally, noise levels were often high, which disrupted teaching and learning activities. Teachers responded to these conditions with disciplinary language, increased voice volume, or passive tolerance, all of which reflect the limitations of traditional teacher-centered discipline models.

This sub-theme highlights structural and environmental challenges that compromise the quality of English language instruction and place significant pressure on the teachers.

5.3 Theme 3: Effectiveness of Traditional Teaching Methods

This theme sheds light on how traditional pedagogical approaches shape student-teacher dynamics and overall classroom effectiveness.

- **Teacher-Student Interactions:** Interactions were largely unidirectional, with the teacher delivering content and students responding when prompted. Opportunities for dialogue, critical thinking, or collaborative activities were rare. The focus remained on content coverage rather than active participation, experiential learning, or creative engagement.

This pattern indicates that the conventional role of the teacher as the sole knowledge provider persists, and that students' roles are often passive, limited to responding rather than contributing. As a result, meaningful learning opportunities are constrained, and learner autonomy is underdeveloped.

6. Discussion

This section presents and discusses the findings of the study, which explored the roles of English language teachers in primary schools in Al-Baida, Libya, the challenges they encounter, and the impact of using traditional teaching roles. The data was collected through unstructured classroom observations of six English teachers across two primary schools—Rossol Al Ghad and Al Sediqa Bint Al Sediq. Each teacher was observed over five lessons between October 29 and December 4. The classes included 4th, 5th, and 6th grades. Thematic analysis was applied to analyze the data, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework.

6.1 The Usual Role of English Language Teachers in Al-Baida Primary Schools

The observations revealed that most teachers adhered to traditional, teacher-centered instructional roles. Teachers primarily acted as controllers, directing all classroom activities, controlling material use, and assessing student performance through written tests and oral participation. As Scrivener (2011) described, traditional teaching often involves a teacher standing at the front, using a board to deliver content while students passively listen. This method was confirmed in the observed classrooms, where teachers dominated the classroom discourse, and students were mostly silent.

Teachers focused on translating English vocabulary into Arabic and having students repeat the words, emphasizing memorization over meaningful language use. Harmer (2007) noted that relying solely on repetition and translation can hinder language acquisition by neglecting communicative competence. The emphasis on preparing students for exams led to a lack of contextual learning. This instructional style reduced student engagement and critical thinking opportunities, further supporting Patel and Jain's (2008) claim that effective teaching requires both experience and pedagogical competence.

Although most teachers had lesson plans and demonstrated some organization, a few relied heavily on experience without structured preparation. According to Murcia (2001), lesson plans act as a roadmap for instruction and enhance classroom effectiveness. The observations confirmed that teachers with clear plans were better able to manage instructional time and student participation.

6.2 Challenges Faced by English Language Teachers

Several key difficulties emerged from the data. First, teachers struggled with managing large class sizes. Brown (2000) emphasized that overcrowded classrooms hinder student interaction and individual support. In Al-Baida, noise and student movement were ongoing challenges, limiting teachers' ability to maintain discipline and deliver content effectively.

Second, there was a notable lack of technological aids and supplementary resources. As Mangal and Uma Mangal (2009) highlighted, educational technology plays a crucial role in enhancing instructional effectiveness. Observations revealed that lessons relied solely on the textbook and the board, with no visual or auditory aids, limiting student engagement and understanding.

Additionally, teachers encountered a wide range of student proficiency levels within the same classroom, consistent with Harmer's (2001) observation that students are typically categorized into beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. Teachers were further pressured by parents expecting rapid results, which led them to prioritize performance over meaningful learning.

6.3 Consequences of Using Traditional Teaching Role

The continued reliance on traditional roles and rote learning methods had several negative implications. Lessons lacked variation in teaching strategies, and instruction focused heavily on repetition and memorization. This practice discouraged active student participation and limited opportunities for creative language use, consistent with Crawford et al.'s (2005) assertion that repetition-based instruction turns students into passive learners.

Moreover, observations revealed minimal student interaction or group work, and responses were often choral, which signaled a lack of personal engagement. Effective classroom management, according to Stronge (2007), requires care, patience, and relationship-building—qualities not evident in all the observed classrooms. Some teachers enforced discipline through strict commands rather than encouraging intrinsic motivation.

Students also faced issues such as poor seating arrangements and visual barriers that affected their ability to see the board, further impeding their learning experience. Furthermore, lessons often ended without a review or production phase, denying students the chance to consolidate

their learning or demonstrate understanding. Murcia (2001) emphasized the importance of lesson structure, including review stages, to reinforce learning outcomes.

Another concern noted was occasional mispronunciation by teachers, which may contribute to fossilized learner errors. Mismanagement of instructional time was also observed, reducing the effectiveness of lesson delivery. These factors collectively demonstrate how traditional teaching roles, when not supported by contemporary methods and adequate preparation, can hinder language learning outcomes.

7. Conclusion

The findings indicate that English language teaching in Al-Baida primary schools remains predominantly teacher-centered, with limited use of student-centered strategies or modern educational tools. Teachers face significant challenges related to classroom size, resource limitations, and diverse student needs. These challenges, compounded by a reliance on traditional roles, adversely affect student motivation, engagement, and overall language development. Future teacher training initiatives should emphasize flexible teaching roles, interactive methodologies, and the integration of technology to enhance English language instruction in Libyan primary schools.

8. Recommendations

1. The effectiveness of student-centered or democratic teaching methods in Libyan primary school classrooms. Research might focus on how incorporating pair work, group discussions, or task-based activities influences student engagement, motivation, language acquisition, and critical thinking skills compared to traditional teacher-centered approaches.
2. Impact of class size and classroom management strategies
3. Integration of educational technology
4. Teacher professional development such as teacher training programs and pedagogical competence
5. Individual differences and learning styles
6. Parental influence and socio-cultural factors

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Compliance with ethical standards*Disclosure of conflict of interest*

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