INVESTIGATING TEACHERS' PRACTICES AND BELIEFS IN RELATION TO CURRICULUM INNOVATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN LIBYA

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

This thesis presents the findings of a study which investigates the relationship between curriculum innovation and teachers' actual classroom practices in ELT. It examines five teachers' implementation of the English language curriculum in Libyan secondary schools, and compares their implementation to what is recommended by this curriculum innovation. It also sheds light on how teachers' beliefs and other contextual factors influence the way teachers interpreted and implemented this curriculum.

In order to study these issues, a qualitative research design was employed as a mode of inquiry. Data collection methods consisted of classroom observations in which audio recordings of the teachers' actual classroom practices were obtained, and follow up interviews in which teachers commented on their classroom practices and discussed the factors shaping these practices.

The analysis of the data pointed to a limited uptake of the curriculum by these teachers. The interviews with the teachers shed light on the tensions between teachers' actual classroom practices and the intentions of the curriculum. They also highlighted complex relationships among the curriculum reform, teachers' practices, teachers' beliefs, and other contextual factors.

This study illustrates the value of studying what teachers do while implementing educational innovations and how their beliefs and other contextual factors influence the way teachers interpret and implement these educational innovations.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the year 2000, Libya introduced a new English curriculum into its preparatory and secondary educational system as part of its efforts to improve the status of English language teaching. This curriculum is embodied in a series of textbooks called "English for Libya". These textbooks were written by an ELT publishing company based in the UK with the cooperation of representatives of the National Education and Research Centre in Libya. The principles of this curriculum represented a significant shift for Libyan English language teachers in terms of teaching methodology, curriculum materials, and theories of language teaching and learning.

This curriculum innovation required Libyan English language teachers not only to change what they do regarding language teaching and learning, but also how they think about their work and the beliefs underpinning it. The Ministry of Education in Libya utilized a top-down strategy (Chin & Benne, 1976) to implement this curriculum innovation. Within this centralized approach, teachers had little say in the planning and the design of the innovation. They were simply required to implement the policies and decisions of the educational policy makers, curriculum designers, and change agents.

As an introduction to the advantages and effectiveness of this new curriculum, Libyan teachers of English were given briefing sessions which lasted about a week. These briefing sessions were conducted by Libyan English language inspectors who were themselves given briefing sessions by ELT educators sent by the publishing company. It was assumed that these sessions would equip teachers to deliver the curriculum, but there has been no analysis of the extent to which they are doing so. The purpose of this study is to consider this issue.

Acknowledging that teachers are key players in the success or failure of

educational innovations (Carless, 2003; Fullan, 2001; Wedell, 2003), this study examines teachers' implementation of the English language curriculum in Libyan secondary schools, and compares their implementation to what is recommended by this curriculum innovation. It also sheds light on how teachers' beliefs and other contextual factors influence the way teachers interpret and implement this curriculum. It is hoped that this study will offer insights and useful messages for curriculum developers, policy makers, change agents and teacher educators in Libya and elsewhere. One assumption behind this study is that investigating what teachers do while they are implementing curricula, and how their beliefs and other contextual factors shape what they do, can provide significant insights into the process of educational innovations.

I will now discuss the context for this study in more detail, and comment further on its rationale. I will then outline the contents and organization of the thesis.

1.1 Context of the study

In this section I present an overview of the educational system in Libya including the key characteristics of its educational culture, and provide background about English language teaching in Libya. This background sheds light on the various challenges of English language teaching in Libya including the reasons which led to the introduction of curriculum innovation I study here. I also provide a general overview of the new curriculum, including its principles and organisation, and illustrate how this curriculum represented a significant shift for English language teachers in Libya.

1.1.1 The educational system in Libya

Libya became independent in 1951 after forty years of occupation by European powers. The country had been an Italian colony until the defeat of the Axis forces in North Africa in 1942. From 1942 to 1951 it was under temporary British military rule. Under the monarchy (1951-1969), all Libyans were guaranteed the right to

education. Schools at all levels were established; and old Koranic schools were reactivated and new ones were opened resulting in a heavy religious influence on Libyan education (Deeb & Deeb, 1982).

The revolution in 1969, and the establishment of the modern Libyan state, brought with it considerable changes to the educational system. For example, the number of primary schools increased significantly and primary education became compulsory for all children in Libya. In the 1970s an educational structure was introduced with four levels. Primary (six years), intermediate (three years), and secondary (three years), and vocational (three years). Students studied a range of subjects such Arabic language, Islamic religion, English language, French language, Science, and Mathematics. The teaching workforce in Libyan schools in the 1970s and 1980s relied heavily on expatriate teachers from Egypt. Further significant changes took place in the 1990s, with the introduction of what is called the"New Educational Structure". This structure divided the educational system into five levels. These levels are illustrated in the following table:

Table 1.1 The education system in Libya since the 1990s.

level	Description
Kindergarten	▪ Lasts for two years and enrols children at the age of four and five.
Basic education (primary and preparatory)	▪ Lasts for nine years- three yeas at the primary level and six yeas at the preparatory level. It enrols students from 6 to 15 years of age.
Intermediate education (Secondary)	▪ It includes three to four years of study and enrols the age group of 16 to 19. Secondary schools are now divided into six main areas: basic science, life science, engineering, social science, social science, economics, arts and media.
University education	▪ This level includes universities, and higher technical and vocational centres. It lasts for three years for some centres and institutions and up to six years for some university faculties.

1.1.2 The characteristics of the educational culture

It is widely recognized that the educational process in any society is affected by the sociocultural factors within this particular society (Coleman, 1996; Holliday, 1994; Shamim, 1996; Tudor, 2001). Teachers and students operate within a sociocultural setting and their beliefs and expectations are influenced by the norms of that particular setting. When students and teachers come to a classroom they bring with them beliefs and expectations about who does what inside the class, what to teach, and how to teach. In this section, I shed light on the key characteristics of the Libyan educational culture.

Libyan students often assume that their role in the classroom is to sit quietly and to memorize the information imparted by the teacher. It is considered rude and impolite to interrupt the teacher or argue with the teacher. Students try to be quiet as much as possible to show respect to their teacher. If a student has a question, he/she has to raise their hands to take the teacher's permission to ask their questions (Aldabbus, 2008). Students are seated in desks which are arranged in rows .facing the front of the classroom, and normally participate in classroom activities when they are called upon by the teacher. Such assumptions about students' role might prevent students from taking part in classroom activities where students' active involvement is required.

Teachers are often seen as the source of knowledge in the school curriculum and their role is to impart that knowledge to their students. In ELT teacher education in Libya for example, the focus is mainly on increasing teachers' knowledge about the English language (knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, phonetics, and literature), and methodology is often considered to be secondary. The rational behind focusing on developing teachers' knowledge about English is that if teachers are well equipped with the knowledge of the target language, they will be in a better position to impart this knowledge to their students. This reflects deeper ideas in the culture generally about

education being a process of knowledge transmission.

Thus, teachers are often viewed as the sole authority in the classroom and therefore they should not be questioned or interrupted. Also, the perception of teachers in Libya requires them to appear to be knowledgeable; the inability to answer students' questions, for example, would be seen as a deficiency in the teacher as would any admission that they were not sure about particular aspects of the English language. This obligation of giving precise and accurate answers might force some teachers to focus on acquiring knowledge about the target language rather than developing their teaching skills. In addition, this responsibility might prevent Libyan teachers from adopting teaching methods which do not give them the sense of security to avoid any ambiguous questions asked by students while using these methods. Even further, teachers may actively discourage students from asking questions altogether.

As I mentioned above, the educational process in any context is influenced by the sociocultural factors that are prevalent within this particular context. Therefore in order to understand the kinds of behaviours described above, we need to examine more broadly the sociocultural factors that are inherited in the Libyan society. Such an examination will help us understand some of the data which we might encounter later in this thesis.

Libya is a highly conservative Islamic society, and many of the cultural norms that are common in the Libyan society stem from the principles of Islam (Deeb & Deeb, 1982). Many Libyan parents tend to send their children to Koranic schools at early ages. In these schools, children sit in circles where they compete to memorize and recite as many Koranic verses as they can. The Imam (the teacher) often reads aloud verses from the Koran, and children read aloud after the Imam trying to mimic the Imam's pronunciation. Within these schools, children are taught that showing respect to adults

is an important element of the Islamic religion, and therefore children are not encouraged to dispute, and argue with people who are older than them. The influence of the Islamic religion extends into how parents raise their children. The Libyan family often emphasizes the importance of listening attentively to adults, and respecting their opinions. Children often are not encouraged to participate in conversations or discussions particularly if these discussions are among adults. If children do not follow these rules, they are punished by their parents.

The Libyan culture emphasizes the value of saving face over maintaining conversation. Even if you disagree with one's points of view, it is considered as impolite to explicitly show your disagreement. In addition, within the Libyan culture, there is always separation between males and females. The reason for this is because males and females are not brought up together, there is always separation even within the families. As a result females and males grow up with out having close relationships. Therefore, in classrooms, it might be seen as a violation of the sociocultural norms to work in groups of the opposite sex. Even in mixed schools of males and females, interactions within the classroom usually occur among groups of the same sex. That is, males tend to speak with each other, while females also prefer to keep to themselves.

Knowledge within the Libyan society is traditionally viewed as a set of facts not open for discussion and disagreement. The text books are highly regarded as an important source of knowledge. Students are supplied with textbooks about different school subjects, and are expected to master and comprehend the content of these textbooks without questioning their credibility. According to a report by the Ministry of Education:

> The evaluation of the knowledgeable content of the Libyan curricula assures the education's interest to supply students with knowledge and information to an extent made some teachers and parents think that the knowledgeable content of the curricula has exceeded the learners' abilities (The Libyan National

Commission for Education, 2004:64).

Thus, learning is often seen as an individual endeavour rather than a collective and dynamic process. Students compete to pass the exams, and those who achieve high grades in the exams are highly regarded by the Libyan society. Families tend to openly show their pride in children who pass the exams with high grades. In fact a key public role teachers are expected to fulfil is to prepare students to pass the exams. If students cannot reach this goal, teachers will be held responsible for students' failure. This responsibility compels teachers to concentrate on teaching the skills that are tested in the exams and ignore the ones that are not.

Exams often focus on testing students' memorization of the information imparted by the teacher. For example, in English language teaching, exams often focus on grammar memorization and vocabulary knowledge and ignore other language skills such as the oral skills (Al-Buseifi, 2003). A recent report by the Ministry of Education highlights the role of memorization within the Libyan educational culture:

> Education in Libya has a traditional character in methods and schemes. It is interested to supply students with information, but it does not care much for scientific thinking methods. Undoubtedly, the assurance on information learning by heart, for which the learner is awarded with high grades, is one of the obstacles of innovative thinking, and preparing students to knowledge production (The Libyan National Commission for Education, 2004:65).

In summary, the social, cultural, and religious factors that are inherent in the Libyan society play an important role in determining what goes on in Libyan classrooms. These factors in turn, influence who does what inside the classroom, what kinds of behaviours are acceptable, what is learned, and how it is learned. I will return to some of these issues in discussing the data that emerges from this study.

1.1.3 English language teaching in Libya

English language plays a major role in the Libyan educational system. It is taught from the intermediate level onward, and in the universities numerous scientific, technical, and medical courses are conducted in English. During the seventies and eighties, new English textbooks books called *Living English for Libya* were introduced to the intermediate and secondary public schools. I will comment here on the approach to English adopted in these textbooks so that later on the shift in pedagogy implied by the new curriculum will be evident.

The Living English for Libya textbooks included topics focusing on different aspects of Libyan life. For example, some units focused on the lives of the Libyan farmers, and how these farmers managed their daily life.(for a sample from one of these textbooks, see Appendix 1). A typical lesson in these textbooks would start with a reading passage to introduce the students to the new words followed by comprehension questions about the reading passage. The lesson would also include a sentence completion exercise, and some drilling exercises to practise the grammatical exercises covered in the lesson.

Typically, the teachers would start the lesson by writing the new words on the board, and pronouncing these words for the students. Teachers would also ask the students to repeat the words after them to make sure that the students are pronouncing the words correctly. Arabic often dominated the classroom interaction, especially when teachers were explaining the meaning of the new words. Students often wrote the Arabic equivalent of the English words to help them memorize the meaning.

After presenting the new words and making sure that the students understood the meaning and pronunciation, teachers would read the reading passage out to the students. Students would listen very carefully to the teachers while they were reading the lesson.

When the teacher had finished reading the passage, they would select some students to read the passage. The teacher would usually make sure that students pronounced the words correctly and sometimes would interrupt their reading to correct their pronunciation. The teacher would also check on the students' comprehension of the meaning of the words, and sometimes would ask the students to give the Arabic translation of these words.

The next stage of the lesson would deal with the grammatical structure included in the passage. The teacher would write the grammatical structure on the board and provide explicit explanations and examples. The students would listen very attentively to the teacher, writing down every example written on the board. After dealing with the grammatical structure, the teacher would ask the students some questions to check their comprehension of it.

During the late eighties, the relationship between Libya and the west was characterized by political tensions. On the 15th of April 1986, American aircraft flying from bases in Britain and carriers in the Mediterranean bombed Libya killing hundreds of people and destroying many buildings. This incident created resentment and anger towards the west across Libya (Almoghani, 2003; Elmajdob, 2004). As a result, the government of Libya decided to ban the teaching of English in schools and universities across the country. Teachers of English were ordered to give up teaching English. Some of these teachers were asked to teach other subjects such as history and social science. Others were given administrative responsibilities. English departments in universities were also shut down. Only students in their third and fourth year were allowed to continue their study after intense negotiations with the Libyan authorities. However, no new students were allowed to enrol in the English departments. The status of teaching English in Libya deteriorated considerably between the mid-eighties and the mid-

nineties. The resources allocated to English language teaching were severely reduced, and English language teacher education was no longer provided. In fact, many Libyan English language teachers changed their careers.

It was only in the mid-nineties that the Libyan government started to fully reintroduce English language teaching into its educational system. This process was beset by many problems and challenges. First, there was a shortage of Libyan English language teachers due to the closure of English language departments and English language training institutions who were the main suppliers of Libyan teachers of English. Second, many Libyan English language teachers had left English language teaching, and it was difficult for them to restart teaching after years of being away from the English language. Third, the reintroduction of English language teaching was not systematic and gradual, but it was unplanned and sudden. For example, many students who were at the time at the university level had not studied English when they did their secondary and intermediate levels of education. These students suddenly had to study English at the university level without any basic knowledge of English. A report by UNESCO summarizes the state of English language teaching during this period as follows:

- The communicative approach to English language learning has not yet reached the Jamahiriya (Libya).
- Schools lack the use of educational media; there is even no use of tape recorders and no testing of oral skills. Some schools have overhead projectors, but it seems that teachers do not have printed or blank transparencies or suitable pens to use them.
- Each basic school class is taught English in the same classroom as the other subjects. There are no language laboratories or even specialist English teaching

rooms. (UNESCO, 1996:22-23)

In the mid-nineties the country started to suffer the consequences of banning English language teaching. A key response by the Libyan government to this situation was the introduction of a new English curriculum in 1999-2000 to its preparatory and secondary levels of the education system.

1.1.4 The new English language curriculum

A new curriculum for English, as mentioned earlier, was introduced in 2000. The coursebooks which embody this curriculum are called *English for Libya*. These textbooks were written by a committee consisting of representatives of the National Education and Research Centre in Libya and Garnet publishing company based in the UK. The materials for this curriculum consist of a students' textbook, a teachers' book and a class cassette. I use the term curriculum here to refer all these components, although it is primarily the students' textbook which defines the curriculum. The new curriculum is the focus of this study and below I discuss its overall organization, aims, and methodological principles.

1.1.4.1 Overall organization

The students' textbooks are divided into eight units of ten pages, and each unit is further divided into two sections (for samples from one of these textbooks see Appendix 2 and 3). First there is a core section, which all students need to study. Then there is a specialist section which differs according to the specialism a student is following (e.g. Basic science, Economics, Social science). The core section in each unit has a particular theme, which is developed in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and communicative function. Each unit presents eleven lessons, with six for the core section and five for the specialism. The core section covers six pages of the unit. The specialist section is four pages long. Each core section follows the same format and consists of four stages as

follows:

- Reading (2 lessons)
- Vocabulary and Grammar (2 lessons)
- Functions and listening (1 lesson)
- Speaking and writing (1 lesson)

In the reading stage, students are introduced to the theme of the unit through a reading text. This text can be, for example a fax, newspaper article, a recording transcript, with perhaps a map or diagram. Vocabulary related both to the reading text and to the theme of the unit is introduced at this stage, either before or after the reading text. The students are asked to discuss ideas and work together to do a series of exercises.

At the vocabulary and grammar stage, the students first build up areas of vocabulary coming up from the reading passages. Particular consideration is given to strategies for vocabulary collection and acquisition. Work on grammar follows. This is divided into revision exercises and the presentation and practice of new structures.

The function and listening stage starts with an activity that focuses on the communicative functions of the unit. New ways of expressing functions such as suggestions and advising are introduced in this stage. Next, there is a listening activity which expands the functional focus through new and more complex situations.

The speaking and writing stage takes students into more demanding language production. The students first do one or more speaking activities intended to build confidence and fluency. Some examples of the speaking activities are: role plays, discussions, quizzes, information gap, and problem solving activities. Finally, the students move to the writing stage. Some examples of the writing activities include

writing about the weather in Libya, and writing about what students did during the summer holidays.

1.1.4.2 Overall aims and principles

According to the teachers' book, the textbooks are "designed to consolidate and further develop understanding of the grammatical system, to increase the students' range of active vocabulary and to extend their ability in the four language skills of reading, listening, speaking, and writing" (Macfarlane, 2000:1). The teachers' book also highlights several principles in relation to the process of English language teaching. These are summarized in Table 1.2:

Table 1.2 Curriculum principles as highlighted in the teachers' book.

Focus	Curriculum principles
Reading	▪ Aims to help students develop the sub-skills of prediction, inference, reading for gist, for specific information, and to work out the meaning from the context.
Grammar	▪ Aims to activate the grammatical points which students have already learned through the productive skills of speaking and writing.
Listening	▪ Aims to develop the sub-skills of prediction, inference, listening for gist, listening for specific information, and to enhance students' competence and confidence in listening comprehension.
Speaking	▪ Aims to promote fluent communication and to make talking in English a regular activity among the students. ▪ Discourages error correction during the speaking stage.
Writing	▪ Aims to develop the language and grammar students have already learned through producing longer pieces of writing. ▪ Considers the process of witting as important as the end product, and encourages students to work together, to help each other with note taking and editing, and to produce work with a communicative purpose.
Pair work	▪ Encourages the use of pair work, and considers it as a good opportunity for students to speak the target language.
Error correction	▪ Making mistakes is part of the language learning process.

I believe that the above principles coincide with Mitchell's (1994:38) characterization of the communicative language teaching. Her characterization includes

the following:

- Classroom activities should maximize opportunities for learners to use the target language for meaningful purposes.
- Learners trying their best to use the target language.....are bound to make errors; this is a normal part of the language learning, and constant correction is unnecessary, and even counterproductive.
- Language analysis and grammar explanation may help some learners, but extensive experience of target language use helps everyone.

The principles outlined in the teachers' book also seem to correspond with Richards' and Rogers' (2001:172) view of the principles of the CLT. They put these principles as follows:

- Learners learn a language through using it to communicate.
- Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities.
- Fluency is an important dimension of communication.
- Communication involves the integration of different language skills.
- Learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error.

In addition, the teachers' book describes the teacher as a monitor who manages the classroom, and provides encouragement, guidance, explanation, and feedback to allow the students to effectively achieve the required tasks. These roles appear to be similar to Breen & Candlin's (1980:99) view of the teacher's role in CLT. According to them, "the role of the teacher in the classroom is to facilitate the communicative process between all participants in the classroom and between these participants and various activities and texts".

Although neither the course book nor the teachers' book explicitly define the learner's role in the language learning process, it is clear from the nature of the activities that the students are expected to participate actively in the learning process, relate some of the classroom activities to their own experiences and personal lives, and undertake a

variety of tasks which involve problem-solving, classroom discussions, expressing opinions, and discussing answers together.

In addition to looking at the materials which comprise the curriculum, I also contacted the publishing company for any documents which explain the thinking behind the new curriculum. The publishing company (Garnet) provided me with a document outlining the objectives that guided the committee which wrote the materials. The objectives mentioned in this document are:

- For the students to leave school with a much better access to the world through the lingua franca that English has become.
- To create an interest in English as a communication tool, and to help students develop the skills to start using this tool effectively.
- To help students use the basic spoken and written forms of the English language.
- To help students learn a series of complex skills: these include reading and listening skills that help get at meaning efficiently, for example, skimming and scanning and interpreting the message of the text; they also include the speaking and writing skills that help the students organize and communicate meaning effectively.

It is clear that compared to the previous curriculum, the new English curriculum presents a significant shift in principles of language learning and teaching. Teachers and students have to adopt new roles. For example, teachers have to view themselves as facilitators who should provide opportunities for the students to practise and use the language in meaningful situations. Students have to take more responsibility for language learning. Language learning is no longer seen as a matter of mastering grammar and vocabulary.

It is also evident that there are several other significance differences between the

old and new curriculum. In the old curriculum, for example, students were presented with reading passages. These reading passages were not preceded by any pre-reading activities to help the students use their knowledge to guess the theme of the reading passages. On the other hand, the reading activities in the new curriculum are organized into pre-reading activities, while reading activities, and after reading activities. Through these activities, students try to make predictions from the title or photographs. They use their knowledge of the world to help them focus on the theme of the text before they read it. Students are also asked to read the text very quickly to identify its general meaning. This helps the students "to realize that it is possible to understand the gist of a text without having understood every word in the text" (Macfarlane, 2000:3).

In addition, the grammar practice activities in the old curriculum were presented in drills where students can master the grammatical structures without using these structures in communicative activities; in the new curriculum, students are provided with the grammatical structure, and then are asked to apply this structure in functions such as reporting on a car accident or describing what is happening in a photograph.

Overall, all aspects of English in the new curriculum are meant to be taught much more communicatively than they were in the previous curriculum. The extent to which this difference in curriculum principles is being reflected in the classroom is the key focus of this study.

1.2 Rationale for the study

As previously mentioned, this study examines teachers' implementation of the English language curriculum in Libyan secondary schools, and sheds light on how teachers' beliefs and other contextual factors influence the way teachers interpret and implement this curriculum innovation. I am interested in what happens in classrooms, to what extent this reflects what the curriculum recommends, and the reasons for any

discrepancies if these are found.

Although I was not involved in the introduction of this curriculum, I had the chance to attend some of the teachers' briefing sessions and to observe how these briefing sessions were conducted. In these sessions teachers were given advice on how to implement this curriculum, but this advice was not based on a consideration of teachers' beliefs and other contextual factors which could facilitate or hinder the implementation process. The expectation was that after these briefing sessions, teachers would be able to implement the curriculum.

However, following the introduction of this curriculum, several concerns were raised about its implementation. In my informal discussion with different Libyan educational officials, they often blamed teachers for not being able to teach this curriculum. In one of these discussions for example, a senior Libyan educational official argued that the curriculum is excellent, and that it is the teachers who do not know how to teach this curriculum. On their part, teachers often raised concerns that they face obstacles during the implementation of this curriculum.

As an ELT educator in the Libyan context, I became interested in looking at what actually happens inside the classrooms. I felt that teachers' voices need to be heard, and that an investigation of teachers' beliefs and the contextual factors which influence teachers' implementation of the curriculum is needed. I believe that such an investigation could have significant implications for ELT in Libya.

Besides my personal interest in this topic, the literature suggests that teachers are not simply implementers of educational innovations that are handed down to them by policy makers, but they interpret, modify, and implement these innovations according to their beliefs and the context where these teachers work (Keys, 2007; Spillane et al., 2002; Woods, 1996). Therefore, investigating how teachers' beliefs and other

contextual factors influence the way teachers carry out these innovations in classrooms will offer insights and useful messages for curriculum developers, policy makers, change agents and teacher educators. As Ramanathan & Morgan (2007:449) suggest "research on individual beliefs, everyday contexts, and practices, casts an instructive light on potential obstacles to policy initiatives and reforms".

In addition, the literature suggests that curriculum planners and educational policy makers often focus on the planning and initiation issues ignoring the dilemmas and obstacles that might evolve during the actual implementation (Markee, 1997), and that little attention has been given to how teachers implement changes in pedagogy (Carless, 2004).

However, as Goh (1999:18) argues "innovators must take steps to ensure that after investing so much time and money in disseminating the innovation, the final and most crucial stage implementation is not left to chance". This implies that investigating what happens during the implementation phase should constitute an integral part of any educational innovation. Wang and Cheng (2005:10) point to the importance of investigating what happens during the implementation process. They suggest that "without knowing what is happening during the implementation phase, it is impossible to probe the underlying reasons why so many educational innovations fail".

1.3 Overview of the thesis

Following this introduction, Chapter 2 is divided into two main sections. In the first section, I review the key concepts from the field of educational innovation that inform this study. I first define educational innovation. I then identify common strategies that are used to introduce educational innovations. I also discuss the main factors which influence the implementation of educational innovations. My review of the literature in the first section will be used to critique the English curriculum

innovation introduced to the Libyan educational system.

Given that teachers' beliefs is a key concept in this study, the second section of Chapter 2 considers key concepts related to the study of teachers' beliefs. I first look at how the field of teachers' beliefs has become a key area of research on teaching. I then examine different definitions of teachers' beliefs and consider what we know about the origins of teachers' beliefs. I also review studies which explore the relationship between teachers' beliefs and classroom practices. The overall purpose of Chapter 2 is to argue that the study of teachers' beliefs and classroom practices is important in understating how teachers interpret and implement educational innovations.

In Chapter 3, I present a detailed description of the methodology used in this study. I describe and justify the mode of inquiry employed, then define the research questions which this study addresses. I then provide a detailed account of the processes of data collection and analysis I followed. I conclude Chapter 3 by highlighting the different strategies I used to enhance the quality of this study.

In Chapters 4-8, I present the findings of this study. Each of these five chapters presents one teacher's classroom practices and illustrates the extent to which these practices reflect those recommended by the curriculum. Each findings chapter also sheds light on the factors and beliefs which had an impact on how this teacher interpreted and implemented the curriculum. In these five chapters, I cite classroom data which illustrate teachers' actual classroom practices. I also quote extensively from the teachers' commentaries on their practices in order to provide insight into the thinking behind these practices.

Chapter 9 is the discussion chapter. It brings the findings of the study together and discusses these in relation to the research questions, and existing research. This chapter consists of two main sections. The first section examines the extent to which

teachers' practices reflected the intended curriculum. The second section sheds light on teachers' beliefs and other contextual factors which had an impact on the way teachers interpreted and implemented the curriculum. I conclude this section by brining teachers' beliefs and the contextual factors together in an attempt to explain how these factors influence the extent to which teachers implement educational innovations as intended.

Chapter 10 is the conclusion. It presents an overview of the findings of the study, highlights some limitations, together with suggestions for further research and implications for the Libyan context.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I review the key concepts from the field of educational innovation that inform this study. I start by defining educational innovation, then, I identify the main strategies that have been used to implement educational innovations. I also address the main factors which influence the implementation of educational innovation. This review of the literature from the field of educational innovation will be used to critique the introduction of the ELT curriculum innovation in Libya.

Given that teachers' beliefs is a key concept in this study, I also consider central concepts related to the study of teachers' beliefs. I start by examining how the field of teachers' beliefs has evolved to become a key issue in research of teaching. I then look at the different definitions of teachers' beliefs. Next, I classify the main sources of teachers' beliefs. Since educational innovations often require teachers to adopt and implement new classroom practices, I review different studies which point to the relationship between teachers' beliefs and classroom practices. The chapter ends with some implications for this study

2.1 What is an educational innovation?

The term innovation implies introducing something new and changing what already exists. Nicholls (1983:4) suggests that an innovation is "an idea, object which is intended to bring about improvement in relation to desired objectives, which is fundamental in nature and which is planned and deliberate". Fullan and Park (1981:10) describe an innovation as "alterations from existing practice to some new or revised practice (potentially involving materials teaching, and beliefs) in order to achieve certain desired students learning outcomes". Hamilton (1995:10) views an innovation as "the instigation and implementation of a new way of doing and thinking which has some potential for diffusion". Crookes et al. (1994:489), referring to innovations within

ESL/EFL teaching suggest that:

> An innovation in a second language teaching program is an informed change in an underlying philosophy of language teaching/learning, brought about by direct experience, research findings, or other means, resulting in an adaptation of pedagogic practices such that instruction is better able to promote language learning as it has come to be understood.

Markee (1997:46) defines curriculum innovation as a "managed process of development whose principle products teaching (and/or testing) materials, methodological skills, and pedagogic values that are perceived as new by potential adopters". Fullan (2001:39) identifies three dimensions with respect to educational innovations at the classroom level. These dimensions are:

1. The possible use of new or revised materials such as curriculum materials.
2. The possible use of new teaching approaches (New teaching strategies or activities)
3. The possible alteration of beliefs (Pedagogical assumptions and theories underlying new policies and programs)

Fullan gives an example of how a teacher may implement one dimension or two dimensions and ignore the other. For example a teacher may use new curriculum materials without altering the teaching approach or may use the new materials and change some teaching behaviour without altering their beliefs. Fullan emphasizes the importance of the three dimensions mentioned above and argues that "change in the three dimensions in materials, teaching approaches, and beliefs, in what people do and think are essential if the intended outcome is to be achieved" (Fullan, 2001:46). He goes further to argue that "innovations that do not include changes in these dimensions are probably not significant changes at all "(Fullan, 2001:40).

On the basis of the above definitions, innovation here is used as a change in the

way of doing and thinking with the aim of achieving certain desired objectives.

The above discussion clearly has certain implications for English language teachers with respect to what they do and how they think about English language teaching and learning. Thus, the above discussion implies that any educational innovation needs to be planned very carefully, and to take into consideration the various strategies and factors which may influence its successful implementation. I discuss these strategies and factors below.

2.2 Strategies for introducing innovations

Teachers are usually asked to face and adopt change at different levels. Such change is often imposed and demanded by educational authorities. This change often has its root within decision-making processes which usually do not involve teachers, who are expected to carry out the change process. In addition, stakeholders who are responsible for this centralized decision-making usually conceive that teachers will consistently implement the innovation as directed (Billett, 1996).

However, an educational innovation is not an end-process. (Fullan, 2001). It requires elements of planning, control, direction, and order. (Nicholls, 1983). A very important question when carrying out an innovation is how to introduce it. Chin and Benne (1976) identified three main strategies. These strategies are:

1- Power-coercive strategy which entails imposing forms of laws and legislation to force people to change and act in certain ways. Within this strategy, the authority of change rests with a small number of government officials who are at the top of the decision making process. "The decision makers derive the right to exercise authority based on hierarchical positions they occupy in a bureaucratically organized institution" (Markee, 1997:63). This top down approach is criticized for ignoring the individuals who are required to implement the innovation. Teachers who are asked to implement an

innovation introduced by this top down approach may not understand the nature of this innovation simply because they had no stake in the development of this particular innovation.

Kennedy (1987) argues that the success of change imposed by the power-coercive approach will depend on the amount of the public support this approach receives. If there is opposition, a compromise may be sought. If it is not possible to reach a compromise, then there is a possibility of considerable conflict, depending on the costs and benefits. He suggests that "if not changing is costly and the form and content of the change is not costly, then the change is likely to be adopted and conflict to be resolved" (Kennedy, 1987:164).

2- Empirical-rational strategy. This strategy is utilized on the assumption that people are logical beings and that a change will be adopted once proof has been produced to show that it will profit those whom it affects. This strategy implies that the main task of the innovators is to present as effectively as they can the soundness of the innovation in terms of the benefits to be gained by adopting it. Markee (1997:65), however, does not share the assumptions of this strategy and argues that:

> The biggest disadvantage of this approach is that it is mistakenly assumes rational argument to be sufficient to persuade potential users to accept change. In fact, sociocultural constraints, systemic and personal factors, the attributes of the innovations, and so on are frequently much more important than rational argument alone in determining an innovation's success or failure.

The criticism of the empirical rationale strategy has been also restated by Zembylas & Barker (2007:239) who claim that innovations which are based on the rational strategies "overemphasize the rational and consequently do not take into account the complexity, ambiguity, and uncertainty acknowledged to be part of change in schools". In both strategies discussed so far, the power coercive strategy and the empirical rationale strategy, the teachers' role is to implement change which is handed

down to them. Although teachers are responsible for implementing change, "they often do not feel personal commitment to change" (Schwartz, 2002:126).

3- Normative and re-educative strategy. This strategy is different form the two preceding strategies in that it is the end users of an innovation who recognize the need for the change. In this sense, the strategy of change becomes a bottom up rather than a top down strategy. Underlying this strategy is the assumption that people act and behave according to the values and norms established in a given society, or culture and that accepting change sometimes necessitates changes to deep-rooted beliefs and behaviours (Richardson & Placier, 2001). The implementation of this strategy requires "a collaborative, problem solving approach, with all those affected by the change involved in some way and making their own decisions about the degree and manner of change they wish to accept" (Kennedy, 1987:164). Unlike the power coercive and the empirical rational strategies in which "teachers merely implement the decisions that are handed down to them" (Markee, 1997:63), teachers within the normative and re-educative strategy play a crucial role because they act as both initiators of and collaborators on change (Markee, 1997; Schwartz, 2002).

Waters and Vilches (2001) have argued that a sound strategy for maximizing the potential for adoption and ownership of ELT innovations can be developed by utilizing a needs analysis framework. This framework has four levels of need. These levels are familiarization, socialization, application, and integration. Familiarization involves the advocates of the innovation being well acquainted with the innovation situation. The innovation end-users such as teachers should be well-informed about the background to, the justification for, and possible instructions, and guidelines of the innovation. In a case of a curriculum innovation, needs at this level might be assessed by meetings in which the initial innovation idea is explained to those who will use the curriculum

including teachers, as well as those who will be responsible for overseeing it.

Socialization involves giving opportunities for the initial innovation model to be altered or modified by the groups who provided input into the needs analysis process, so that the initial model of the innovation is evaluated for its fit with the beliefs, and socio-cultural preconceptions of the participants in the educational system. In the case of a curriculum innovation, discussion could be held, in which teachers (and if possible students), heads of departments, supervisors, trainers are given opportunities to give feedback to the curriculum designers on how the curriculum materials and its underlying principles and methodologies do or do not fit in with the existing beliefs and assumptions of those who will use and oversee the curriculum.

The application level requires that while the end users test and evaluate the innovation, they have to be monitored and supported in such a way that their understanding and expertise is gradually maximized. To use a curriculum innovation example, meeting needs at this level might involve a teacher training program in which teachers are closely supervised and guided in their attempts to put the principles and materials of the curriculum into practice. The integration level requires a broadening of the scope of the innovation so it becomes the personal property of the end-users through its further development. This can be done by connecting the teachers' attempts to get the best out of the innovation to their schools agendas and their own professional development programs.

Commenting on the curriculum change process within English language teaching, Wedell (2003) calls on curriculum planners to provide support for teachers in order to make the significant professional adjustments that are required by the TESOL curriculum change process. He argues that:

> If planners introduce English language curriculum change with stated objectives whose achievement requires teachers to make significant professional

> adjustments, it is clearly their responsibility to consider how teachers may be supported in making these. To be able to do so, planners themselves need to be clear about what adjustments the proposed changes will necessary involve (Wedell, 2003:447).

He suggests that when the curriculum changes do represent a significant cultural shift, TESOL curriculum change planners need to consider two interdependent points of view. First, they need to decide the extent of cultural change that the practices implied by the suggested change will signify for teachers and therefore what kind of support will be required, by whom, and for how long, to help teachers make the required change. Second, they need to decide what imbalances the proposed curriculum changes may entail for other significant components of the language education system, and so what modification will be required, and when, to restore balance and so support the introduction of new practices.

I draw on the above issues in introducing educational innovations when I critique the ELT curriculum innovation in Libya below. Next, I will discuss factors which influence the implementation of educational innovations.

2.3 Factors influencing the implementation of educational innovations

A number of researchers have attempted to identify factors, which have an impact on the adoption and implementation of an innovation (Fullan, 2001; Karavas-Doukas, 1995; Owston, 2007; White et al., 1991). Below I consider the following factors as being crucial in the implementation process of any educational innovation; the nature of the innovation; the role of teachers' beliefs, teachers' training and development; and finally the context where the innovation is implemented.

2.3.1 The nature of the innovation

The nature of the innovation itself can have a crucial impact on the acceptability and implementation process. (Fullan, 2001; Rudduck, 1986; White et al., 1991). The

nature of the innovation can be viewed in terms of its originality, complexity, clarity, and triability (Fullan, 2001). Originality means that the innovation includes new practices which are different from the existing practices. This however may lead to consistency problems. In a curriculum innovation, for example, inconsistency may include the mismatch between the curriculum materials on the one hand and an existing examination, or between the curriculum principles and the teachers' beliefs and practices.

Complexity is related to the difficulty and extent of change required of the implementers of the innovation. Brindley and Hood (1990:183) argue that "the more complex an innovation is perceived to be, the less likely it is to be adopted". They go further to propose that "when complex changes are required in teacher behaviour, it is more difficult to bring about the successful adaptation of an innovation in teaching methods". This position is not shared by Fullan (2001:78) who suggests that "while complexity creates problems for implementation it may result in greater change because more is being attempted".

In a study of teachers' responses to the introduction of task based learning in Hong Kong, Chan (2002) reported that teachers could not make sense of the innovation because of its complex structure and very theoretical orientation. He added that when teachers began to feel the ideas endorsed by the reformers were inconsistent with reality, many teachers switched back to their traditional approaches of teaching.

The clarity of the innovation will also have a significant impact on the implementation stage. Teachers are often asked to implement a curriculum innovation without being given a clear explanation of how to put the innovation into practice. Fullan (2001:77) warns that "lack of clarity, diffuse goals, unspecified means of implementation represent a major problem at the implementation stage, teachers and

others find that change is simply not very clear as to what it means in practice" He goes further to suggest that "unclear and unspecified changes can cause great anxiety and frustration to those sincerely trying to implement them". (Fullan, 2001:77)

In ELT for example, Karavas-Doukas (1995), in an examination of a communicative language teaching curriculum being implemented in Greek secondary schools, found that teachers showed incomplete understanding of the innovation they were asked to implement and that this misunderstanding resulted in negative perceptions of the innovation.

Teachers should not be left alone to find ways of implementing the innovation. In this respect, Leithwood et al. (2002:12) stress the importance of providing teachers with clear description of how to put an innovation into practice. They suggest:

> The curriculum to be implemented should be described in exceptionally clear and concrete language. This is not meant to diminish the necessity and value of dealing with relevant conceptual and philosophical matters in curriculum frameworks and related materials. It does mean however, that the actual practices emerging from such consideration need to be outlined very clearly, and with plenty of illustration if they are to be uniformly understood.

Thus, teachers need to understand why they are being asked to behave and act in certain ways. This can be done by explicitly explaining the rationales and principles which underlie the practices which teachers are asked to implement As McLaughlin & Mitra, (2001:307) contend:

> Absent knowledge about why they are doing what they are doing, implementation will be superficial only, and teachers will lack the understanding they will need to deepen their current practice or to sustain new practices in the face of changing contexts.

Whether or not an innovation can be tried and tested on a small/large scale is also an important factor. Conducting an innovation on a small scale reduces the risks involved in large scale adoption without testing or experimenting. For example, it might

be advisable to try out a new curriculum in one or two schools before making decisions to implement this curriculum more widely. This experiment would give all the parties involved in the curriculum innovation some idea about any obstacles that might affect the implementation process

2.3.2 Teachers' beliefs

Educational innovations frequently require teachers to change their behaviours and practices. However, "we are unlikely to bring about change in practice unless we face up to and, if necessary challenge teachers' deep rooted beliefs about the nature of knowledge transmission" (Adey & Hewitt, 2004:156). Spillane et al. (2002:415) state that:

> Reform cannot be accomplished by having teachers learn only the surface form of reform practices. It requires grappling with the underlying ideas and may require deep conceptual change, in which teachers rethink an entire system of interacting attitudes, beliefs and practices.

Thus, as Breen et.al (2001:472) have proposed "any innovation in classroom practice from the adoption of a new technique or textbook to the implementation of a new curriculum has to be accommodated within the teacher's own framework of teaching principles". According to Breen et al., these principles stem from underlying beliefs or personal theories the teachers hold about nature of the broader educational process.

Tillema (1994:602) has argued that "beliefs serve as filters which screen new information, ultimately determine which elements are accepted and integrated in the professional's knowledge base". The filtering effect of beliefs has been also been stressed by Pennington (1996), who claims that teachers' existing beliefs function as filter, hindering or modifying new information coming in.

The above discussion leads us to consider the crucial role of teachers' beliefs in

determining teachers' rejection or adoption of educational innovations. With reference to mathematics education for example, Handal and Herrington (2003:65) warn that:

> The current trends in mathematics education towards constructive learning environments and assessment of learning based on demonstrable outcomes will only succeed if teachers' beliefs about these reforms are considered and confronted. Otherwise teachers will maintain their hidden agendas in the privacy of their classrooms and implementation process will result in a self deceiving public exercise of educational reform and a waste of energy and resources.

Commenting on a science education reform, Levitt (2001:1) similarly asserts that "if teachers' beliefs are incompatible with the philosophy of science education reform, a gap develops between the intended principles of reform and the implemented principle of reform, potentially inhibiting essential change".

As mentioned in Section 2.1, innovation at the classroom level is multidimensional and often involves possible alteration of beliefs. This implies that in order to fully adopt educational innovations, teachers may need to readjust and sometimes change their beliefs to match the principles endorsed by these innovations. Lee and Yong (1987:84) for example, argue that:

> Without effecting a change in teachers' attitudes any systematic innovation in the curriculum which purports to bring communicative dimension to EFL instruction will not have a significant effect on what goes on in classrooms.

Belief change arises from the fact that one needs to modify their ideas as a result of dealing with new ideas and practices (Tillema, 2000). However, change in teachers' beliefs may not be an easy process as Fullan (2001:44) notes:

> Changes in beliefs are more difficult: they challenge the core values held by individuals regarding the purposes of education; moreover beliefs are often not explicit, discussed our understood, but rather are buried under the level of unstated assumptions.

Therefore, it is very important to clarify the conditions under which existing beliefs are challenged and changed. Hashweh (2003:426) identifies a set of conditions

in order for teachers to carry out innovations or reforms that require them to re-examine their traditional beliefs and practices. These conditions are:

1. Teachers must be internally motivated to develop professionally; to develop their ideas and practices. Usually they must see a gap between their ideas and goals and their existing practices.
2. Teacher prior knowledge, beliefs, dispositions, expectations and practices should be critically examined.
3. The teacher must be aware of his or her tacit knowledge, beliefs and practices.
4. The teacher should realize the limitations of prior knowledge, beliefs and practices.

Hashweh argues that if these conditions are not met, one of two outcomes might occur. The teachers either carry on struggling with unresolved conflicts and dilemmas, or they might alter the new ideas in such a way that allows them to preserve prior ideas and practices.

2.3.3 Teacher training and development

Since many educational innovations require teachers to change their classroom practices and adopt new ways of teaching, teachers' training and development are also regarded as an essential factor in the implementation process. As Malderez & Wedell (2007:xiii) emphasize "the effective teaching of teachers is the key factor influencing the extent to which the effective implementation of new education policies and curriculum reforms takes place as intended".

In addition, Carless (1999:23) argues that "teachers need to acquire the skills and knowledge to implement something, particularly if it is slightly different to their existing methods". Thus, as discussed in Section 2.2, the application level of the

innovation requires that while teachers examine and assess the innovation, they need to be monitored and supported in a way that their personal practical understandings and knowledge of the innovation are enhanced. Carless (ibid) highlights the consequences of neglecting the retraining of teachers:

> If teachers are not equipped to deal with the implications of a new approach, they are likely to revert to the security of their previous behavior and the desired change may not take place. Without sufficient retraining, even teachers initially enthusiastic about an innovation can become frustrated by the problems in innovation and eventually turn against it. (Carless, 1999:23)

However, it should be noted that briefing teachers with short sessions about the innovation will be insufficient in equipping teachers with the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes for successful implementation of the innovation As Adey & Hewitt (2004:156) put it "real change in practice will not arise from short programs of instruction, especially when those programs take place in a centre removed from the teacher's own classroom".

An example of this in ELT is reported by Lamb (1996). Returning one year later after conducting a two week training sessions for English language teachers in Indonesia, he commented that "a great deal of our original input had simply been lost, and what was taken up was reinterpreted by teachers to fit their own beliefs and their own concerns about what was important to them and their students". Lamb (1996:147). This raises several questions about the way teachers in Libya were introduced to the new curriculum as I discuss below.

Furthermore, teacher training and development programs which depend on knowledge transmission models may not be effective in brining about the desired change (Adey & Hewitt, 2004; Kennedy, 2005). In these models teachers often act as receivers of specific knowledge which is imparted to them by an 'expert' without taking into consideration the context in which teachers work. Acknowledging the importance

of the context, Bax (2003:283) states that "any training course should make it a priority to teach not only methodology but also a heightened awareness of contextual factors, and ability to deal with them".

Thus, as highlighted in Section 2.3.2, change does not only mean adopting new skills and practices, but it also means grappling with one's beliefs and values, and to achieve this level of change, teachers need to be given opportunities to reflect upon their own practices. As Harris (2003:378) explains:

> For teachers to learn effectively they need to be able to reflect on their own learning and internalize new knowledge. Change in the classroom therefore involves much more than acquiring new skills or knowledge. It essentially means changes in attitudes, beliefs and personal theories in order to reconstruct a personal approach to teaching. This cannot be achieved unless there are opportunities to reflect upon their practice and the practice of others.

Teachers often encounter different obstacles while trying to implement educational innovations. Shamim (1996:120) claims that many teacher training programs do not take the dynamics of change, and the potential obstacles encountering change into consideration. According to Shamim, this makes teachers unable to face the problems that follow their attempts to implement change in their classrooms and institutions. She insists on the need to advise teachers of the various obstacles that might face them in the implementation process. She writes:

> It is important for teacher trainers to encourage participants in teachers training programmes to discuss both overt and 'hidden' barriers to the successful implementation of change in their own teaching/learning contexts. This will not only make trainees aware of potential sources of conflict but it will also enable them to develop strategies and tactics to deal with anticipated problems in initiating and managing change in their own classrooms. (Shamim, 1996:120)

As mentioned previously, teachers' beliefs play a significant role in teachers' adoptions or rejections of educational innovations. However, teachers may not be aware of their beliefs. Therefore an important role of teacher training programs is to raise

teachers' awareness of their existing beliefs and the principles behind change.

The need to raise teachers' awareness about their beliefs has been echoed by Hedge & Whitney (1996:122) who suggest that:

> All teachers operate according to set of beliefs about what constitutes good classroom practice, but some may never have made those beliefs explicit to themselves. Thus an essential part of in-service education is to encourage teachers to reflect on their own professional practice, to make explicit to themselves the assumptions that underlie what they do and then to review those assumptions in the light of new perspectives and practices.

2.3.4 The socio-cultural context

The educational process in any context is not only an exchange of information between teachers and students, but it is also a set of conventions which decides what happens between these parties (teachers and students). These conventions are determined by the social, and cultural norms within this particular context (Coleman, 1996; Holliday, 1994; Tudor, 2001; Tudor, 2003).

Stressing the central role of the social context, Tudor (2001:35) indicates that "the classroom is a socially defined reality and is therefore influenced by the belief systems and behavioural norms of the society of which it is part". This coincides with Locastro's (2001:495) argument that "classrooms are social constructions where teachers, learners, dimensions of the local educational philosophy, and more general socio-cultural values, beliefs, and expectations all meet".

Nunan and Lamb (2001:33) add that "classroom decision making and the effective management of the learning process cannot be made without reference to the larger context within which instruction takes place". Holliday (1994:24) also notes that "the culture of the classroom provides tradition and recipe for both teachers and students in the sense that there are tacit understandings about what sort of behaviour is acceptable".

The socio-cultural context where an innovation is to be implemented therefore will play a major role in the adoption or resistance of the innovation. For example, commenting on the process of curriculum innovation, Morris (1998:120) argues that "the implemented curriculum can be far removed from the intended curriculum, particularly if ...insufficient consideration is given to the context in which the reform is to take place". Goodson (2001:53) also highlights the consequences of ignoring the context where the innovation is to be implemented:

> Without sensitivity to context, the new change forces may be shipwrecked in the collusion with hard sedimentary rocks of existing school contexts. Externally mandated change forces are all very well as a triumphalist symbolic action pronouncing the new world order, but unless they develop sensitivity to school context and to teachers' personal missions, the triumph may be short-lived and unsustainable, or we will see the emergence of a new purpose and function for teaching and schooling far removed from the mandated intensions.

If an innovation is implemented without consideration of the socio-cultural structure of the society, conflict and resistance might arise. If an innovation entails new behaviours and roles which contradict the behaviours and roles inherent in the society and culture, receivers of this innovation might not easily accept these new roles and behaviours. Therefore, for successful implementation, it is important for the culture of the proposed innovation to be consistent with the social-cultural norms of the context where the innovation is to be introduced. As Markee (1997:84) points out, "the likelihood of an innovation to be adopted is always contingent on its appropriateness in a specific context of implementation".

Shamim (1996), in her attempt to introduce a process approach to English writing classes in Pakistan, found that conflicts between the learners' assumptions about knowledge, their learning behaviour in the classroom inherited from the culture of the wider community, and the assumptions of the innovation impeded its successful implementation. Shamim explains the reasons behind learners' resistance to this

particular innovation. As she notes:

> The lack of 'fit' between the 'users' (learners) and the assumptions of the innovative methodology was largely as a result of 'value conflict'. On the one hand, learners' beliefs and assumptions about the norms of appropriate classroom behaviors shown to be entrenched in the culture of the community clashed with the assumptions of the innovative methodology. On the other hand, the affinity between their expectations of the etiquette of teacher/learner behavior in the classroom and the culture of the community made it easier for them to reject the innovation (Shamim, 1996:119).

She also makes suggestions regarding introducing educational change in general. They are as follows:

1. The need for behaviour change is not limited to teachers. Students, parents and communities also have to change for the successful implementation of the innovation.
2. It is easier to implement change that is congruent with ways of thinking and believing and the norms of interaction prevalent in the culture of the community.
3. An innovation, if it clashes radically with the culture of the community, should be adapted to the local culture before being introduced.

Holliday (2001:169) calls for innovations "to be sensitive to the cultural expectations of the recipients of the innovation, whether they be students or teachers encountering new teaching methodologies, or stakeholders in curriculum projects".

In addition to the socio and cultural factors, other elements of the educational context such as the availability of the resources, and the structure of the examination system can have a significant impact on the extent educational innovations can be implemented effectively. Johnson et al. (2000), reporting on Egyptian Science teachers' practices after attending a 12 week in-service program in England, indicated that most of the teachers who attended this program were unable to incorporate the

practices they learnt into their classrooms in Egypt due to different practical considerations such as class size, lack of resources, students' resistance, and even resistance from the school management. They concluded that:

> The ultimate constraint on producing change in educational systems does not rest solely in the skills of the teachers, but rather in their ability to deploy those skills effectively. The barriers here are again external to the teachers-they are the resources available, the pre-existing culture into which an externally trained teacher returns, the examinations regime in place, and more broadly perhaps, the expectations and value placed on education in the system at large (Johnson et al., 2000:23).

To conclude this section, a number of key issues from the field of educational innovation that inform this study have been discussed. Educational innovation is a complex process, and an understanding of the meaning of the educational innovation will ultimately facilitate its introduction and the implementation. Thus, an educational innovation needs to be planned very carefully, and take into consideration the various strategies and factors discussed here which may influence its successful implementation.

2.4 A critique of the English language curriculum innovation in Libya

In the previous sections, I highlighted a range of strategies and factors which are relevant to the successful implementation of educational innovations. I now use these strategies and factors to critique the English curriculum innovation introduced into Libyan educational system.

Some of the policy makers may have felt that they were adopting an empirical-rational strategy by trying to explain the advantages of this curriculum innovation for the teachers. However, what happened on the grounds implies that in practice the strategy adopted to introduce this innovation was in fact a power coercive strategy. Teachers were simply given briefing sessions about the innovation, and in these sessions were told to follow the teachers' book. Thus, in these sessions there was no

consideration of teachers' existing beliefs, and of the contextual factors that might inhibit the implementation process. The decision to introduce the new curriculum was taken by the top levels at the Ministry of Education in Libya. Figure 2.1 illustrates the process of how this curriculum was introduced into the Libyan Educational system.

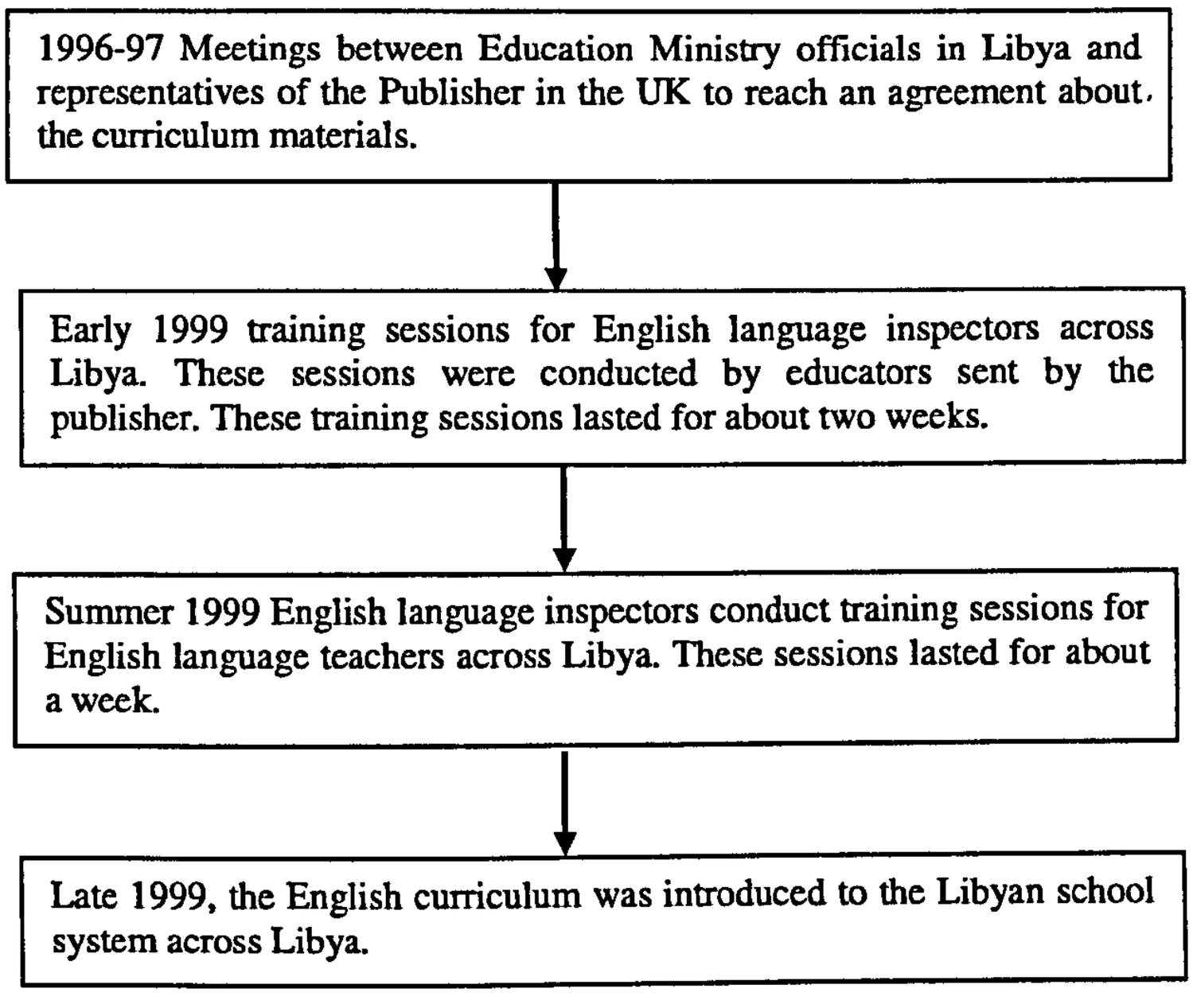

Figure 2.1: The process of introducing the curriculum

As Figure 2.1 shows, educators from the publishing company conducted briefing sessions for English language inspectors across Libya. These training sessions lasted about two weeks. For a sample of the materials which were used in these sessions see Appendix 7. After finishing these sessions, inspectors returned back to their cities and conducted briefing sessions for the English language teachers across Libya.

The focus of these sessions was on how to use the teachers' book, with little attention to enabling teachers to understand the rationale behind this new curriculum. For example, in the city where this research was conducted, teachers were gathered in a big hall in a local university, and were lectured by the inspectors about how to teach the curriculum. Some teachers refused to attend these sessions arguing that the inspectors are not qualified to teach the teachers. This created confusion which led the local

educational authority in this city to ask some lecturers from the English department in the local university to participate in these sessions. These lecturers had no idea about the curriculum, and therefore they could not provide any support for the teachers. Consequently, the training sessions ended up teaching teachers about English phonetics, and English grammar and writing.

It should be noted here that what I described above was typical of what happened during the introduction of this curriculum across Libya. There was no attention as to what this curriculum implies for English language teachers classroom practices. Nor was there any attention to teachers' beliefs and other contextual factors.

It should be mentioned too that participation in these sessions was compulsory for all the English language teachers in Libya. Thus, many of these teachers who participated in these sessions had not taught English since the ban on teaching English in 1986. In addition, many of these teachers expressed difficulties and frustration at being required to return to teaching after attending this short training program.

Moreover, this new curriculum required both teachers and learners to adopt new assumptions about language leaning, new teachers' roles, and new learners' roles. For example, many of the curriculum activities view language learning as a dynamic process where students can develop their language skills by using the language in meaningful situations such as expressing suggestions, giving advice, reading a newspaper, and writing letters. The learners as well are expected to assume some classroom responsibilities. For example, they are expected to actively participate in activities such as pair work, group work, role play, and group discussion.

Many of the curriculum activities also require teachers to adopt the role of facilitator rather than the knower. The teachers' job is to provide opportunities for the students to use the target language. According to the teachers' book, the teachers' job is

to monitor the class- that is to walk around the class and check for three main things.

1. That the students have understood the task. If only one or two students are not sure what to do, quietly explain the task to them.

2. That the students who have finished got some thing else to do. For example, two pairs who have finished the exercise quickly could check their answers in groups of four while waiting for the rest of the class to finish.

3. That the students are using the target language reasonably accurately. Speaking activities give the teacher a chance to listen to students' language and note any common problems (Macfarlane, 2000:5).

However, it is likely that even after these short training sessions many English language teachers still did not have a clear understanding of what was expected of them in their new role. Thus, these teachers may not have had the necessary skills to carry out their new roles. The reason for that is that many of English language teachers in Libya graduate from English department which focus on enhancing students' linguistic and literature knowledge about English. Teacher training and education are still considered to be secondary in most English language departments in Libya.

As previously mentioned, the socio-cultural context where an educational innovation is to be implemented plays an important role in the acceptance or resistance of this particular innovation. For example, in the Libyan society, English language teachers are often regarded as source of knowledge about English language and therefore their responsibility is to impart that knowledge to their students. However, sharing this responsibility with the students might be seen by many teachers as a threat to their role as language teachers, and might be interpreted by many teachers as not fulfilling their responsibility towards their students. These assumptions about the role of the teacher which are inherent in the Libyan society might prevent Libyan teachers from

adopting the teacher's roles endorsed by this new curriculum, and consequently hinder the successful implementation of this curriculum.

In addition, this English language curriculum innovation was not grounded in any attempt to investigate the pedagogical beliefs of the teachers involved in its implementation. By focusing on teachers' behaviours, the introduction of the innovation failed to address teachers' existing beliefs and this was another factor likely to limit the uptake of the curriculum. I discuss the role of beliefs in understating teachers' practices in the next section.

2.5 The consideration of teachers' beliefs

In this section, I examine how the notion of teachers' beliefs has become an important issue in research on teaching. I also discuss how different researchers have conceptualized the concept of belief, and identify the main sources of teachers' beliefs. Since educational innovations sometimes require teachers to adopt and implement new classroom practices, I conclude this section by reviewing different studies which point to the relationship between teachers' beliefs and classroom practices.

Research on teaching has witnessed different paradigm shifts. The 1960s for example, was influenced by the behaviourist view where teaching was regarded as sets of observable and describable behaviours. The study of teaching thus focused on such behaviours. The role of teachers' thinking and mental processes in such behaviours were not taken into consideration (Carlsen, 1991). As Freeman (2002:5) indicates "the teacher was viewed...as a doer, as an implementer of other peoples' ideas about the curriculum, methodology, and even about how students learned". This focus started to shift during the 1970s as new ideas emerged giving more attention to the role of teacher thinking in the teaching process. Lortie (1975) in his book *School Teacher: A*

Sociological Study emphasized the need to take the teachers' perspectives on the teaching process into account.

The interest in teachers' thinking expanded throughout the 1980s and the 1990s on the assumption that to understand teaching, it is crucial to understand how teachers conceptualize their teaching. Clark and Peterson (1986:265), in their review of teachers' thought processes, argued that "a major goal of the research on teachers' thought processes is to increase our understanding of how and why the process of teaching looks and works as it does".

In ELT, research on teachers' beliefs emerged in the mid-1990s. This work has highlighted teachers' beliefs as an important element in the field of language teaching. Johnson (1994) suggested that an exploration of teachers' beliefs is needed to provide us with "insights into the unique filter through which second language teachers make instructional decisions, choose instructional materials, and select certain instructional practices. Freeman and Richards (1996:1) argued for the need to consider teachers' views about teaching in order to understand language teaching:

> In order to better understand language teaching, we need to know more about language teachers: what they do, how they think, what they know, and how they learn. Specifically, we need to understand more about how language teachers conceive of what they do: what they know about language teaching, and how they think about their classroom practice.

More recently, Borg's (2006) has provided a detailed review of the research on what second and foreign language teachers think, know, and believe with respect to language teaching. This work confirms the important status that the study of teacher cognition now has in our field.

2.5.1 Defining beliefs

Given the crucial role teachers' beliefs play in accepting or rejecting innovations, one might ask what the term belief means. Pajares (1992) argues that researchers cannot understand teachers' beliefs without defining clearly what belief is, and how it is different to other similar concepts. Fields such as anthropology, social psychology, and philosophy have added to our awareness of the nature of beliefs. According to Richardson (1996:103), there is a significant congruence of definition among these three fields in that "beliefs are thought of as psychologically held understandings, premises or propositions about the world that are felt to be true".

Pajares (1992) cited different researchers who use different conceptions to refer to the term teachers' beliefs. For example, Clark (1988) defined teachers' beliefs as preconceptions and implicit theories. Porter and Freeman (1986) regarded orientations to teaching as including teachers' beliefs about students and the learning process, about the role of schools in society, and about teachers themselves, the curriculum and the pedagogy. Tabachnick and Zeichner (1984) chose to use the term teachers' perspectives to refer to teachers' beliefs. In addition, Thompson (1992) used teachers' conceptions to include beliefs, meanings, concepts, propositions, rules, mental images, and preferences.

Pajares (1992:324) provided 16 "fundamental assumptions that may reasonably be made when initiating a study of teachers' education beliefs". These assumptions include among others that (a) beliefs are formed early and tend to self perpetuate, preserving even against contradiction caused by reason, time schooling, or experience; (b) individuals develop a belief system that houses all the beliefs acquired through the process of cultural transmission; (c) beliefs are instrumental in defining tasks and selecting the cognitive tools with which to interpret, plan, and make decisions regarding

such tasks; (d) individuals' beliefs strongly affect their behaviour; and (e) knowledge and beliefs are inextricably intertwined. Adopting Rokeach's (1968) argument regarding the importance of inference in understanding beliefs, Pajares (1992:314) asserts that "beliefs cannot be directly observed or measured but must be inferred from what people say, intend, and do-fundamental prerequisites that educational researchers have seldom followed".

The above discussion illustrates that defining the concept of belief is complex one, and that there is no one agreed upon definition. In ELT, Borg, (2001:186) conceptualized the term belief as a "proposition on which may be consciously held, is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual, and is therefore imbued with emotive commitment; further it serves as a guide to thought and behaviour". Basturkmen et al. (2004:224) define beliefs as "statements teachers made about their ideas, thoughts, and knowledge that are expressed as evaluations of what should be done, should be the case and is preferable". Clearly, this definition encompasses many of the ideas mentioned above, and it is the one which I adopted in this study.

2.5.2 Sources of teachers' beliefs

If we acknowledge the role of beliefs in the process of teaching, we should ask how teachers acquire and develop their own beliefs about teaching. Teachers' belief systems are structured gradually over time and include both subjective and objective knowledge (Richards & Lockhart, 1996). Some beliefs may be rather simple, for example, the belief that teachers should correct their students' grammatical mistakes. Others may be more complex, for example, the belief that a learner-centred approach rather than teacher centred approach enhances learners' opportunities in language learning. Kindsvatter et al. (1988) indicate that teachers' beliefs stem from a number of different sources including:

1. *Their own experience as language learners.* This draws our attention to the notion that teachers teach the way they were taught. That is, all teachers were once learners themselves, and their beliefs about teaching are often reflection of how themselves they were taught. Lortie (1975) calls this experience the "apprenticeship of observation". This means that when student teachers come to the classroom, they have already held a set of profound beliefs based on their own experience as learners. Some researchers suggest that these strong beliefs held during the teacher's early education can generate dispositions that make it difficult for pre-service teacher education to have a crucial impact (Almarza, 1996; William & Burden, 1997).

2. *Experience of what works best.* Experience could be a powerful source in shaping teachers' beliefs about teaching. After years of teaching experience, teachers develop many insights into the teaching process, including which pedagogical techniques enhance learning.

3. *Established practice.* This refers to favoured teaching styles, techniques, and strategies which are used by teachers, schools or a certain institution.

4. *Educational based or research-based principles.* Teachers may rely on their interpretation of a teaching principle according to their understanding of principles in education, language acquisition, or teaching methodology and try to apply this principle into their classrooms.

5. *Principles derived from an approach or method.* Teachers may consider the efficiency of a specific teaching method or approach and try to employ it in the classroom. For example, some teachers may believe in the effectiveness of communicative language teaching, and plan their classroom activities according to this approach. Others may adapt a more process approach rather than a product

approach in their teaching writing activities.

Similarly, Richardson (1996) suggests three types of experiences that could affect the development of beliefs about teaching. These three forms of experiences start at different periods of the individual's educational profession. They are personal experience, experience with schooling and instruction, and experience with formal knowledge.

2.5.3 Teachers' beliefs and classroom practices

Acknowledging the role of teachers' beliefs in determining classroom practices, several studies have examined the extent to which teachers' beliefs affect what happens in the classroom. For example, Briscoe (1991) conducted a case study to investigate a chemistry teacher's attempts to implement more student-centred practices focusing on problem-solving relevant to the use of chemistry in daily life. Briscoe concluded that this teacher's conceptualization of his role as a "knowledge giver" hindered his attempts to incorporate cooperative learning into his classroom. Here are Briscoe's comments:

> Because Brad viewed his role as teacher as performer and giver of knowledge, he was unable to function in the cooperative learning model which required students to take responsibility of their own learning. The conflicts Brad experienced in practice because of his beliefs about how students learn and his role in facilitating learning prevented him form making lasting changes. (Briscoe, 1991:189)

Smith (1996) examined the influence of teachers' beliefs on the pedagogical decisions of nine experienced ESL teachers. Smith's study revealed that teachers' beliefs had a crucial impact on how they organized curricula and designed lesson tasks and instruction. Teachers who regarded grammar and accuracy to be a priority in instructional goals utilized a structural focus for their curriculum design and developed lessons activities which emphasized the grammatical structure. On the other hand, teachers who held a functionally based view of language, organized curricula with a

functional emphasis, and provided opportunities for students to interact in communicative and meaningful situations. Smith (1996:214) concluded that "teachers' decisions revealed an eclectic use of theory but an internal consistency between individual beliefs and practices"

However, a number of studies have found inconsistencies between teachers' beliefs and their practices. For example, Hiep (2007) investigated three teachers' beliefs and implementation of communicative language teaching in Vietnam. Findings revealed that although these teachers expressed beliefs which were in line with the principles of the CLT, they were not able to implement activities such as pair work, group work, and role play. The inconsistency between teachers' expressed beliefs and their actual classroom practices was due to several contextual factors such as traditional examinations, large class sizes, beliefs about students and teacher role, students' low motivation, and teachers' limited expertise in creating communicative activities

Similarly, Richards and Pennington (1998) studied five teachers who had been trained to implement the principles of the communicative language teaching in Hong Kong secondary school classrooms. Richards and Pennington reported that, although these teachers expressed their belief in a communicative teaching methodology during their first year of teaching, practical considerations such as large classes, exams pressures, lack of confidence to go beyond the textbook, discipline problems, and unmotivated students forced these teachers to deviate from communicative language teaching. Borg (2003) also refers to a number of studies which point to the role of context in hindering teachers from implementing practices which are consistent with their beliefs.

In summary, the above mentioned studies provide evidence that beliefs affect teachers' practices in many ways. They indicate how a teacher's set of beliefs can have

an influence on the overall nature of teacher's practices. They also show that what teachers admit to believe and what they actually do in the classroom may or may not be consistent, and that the degree of congruence can be influenced by various contextual factors.

2.6 Implications for the study

The literature discussed so far has several implications for the study. First, it is obvious that the new English curriculum in the Libyan Educational system represented a significant change in principles of language teaching and learning. This significant change required teachers to adopt and to implement new teaching practices, new roles, and to accept new assumptions regarding the process of language teaching and learning. Second, in light of the literature on educational innovation, the way the innovation was introduced (see Section 2.4) raises serious concerns.

One concern is that it was introduced on the assumption that teachers would see the advantages of this innovation, and consequently would easily adopt and implement it. There was no attention as to what actually happens inside the classrooms during the implementation process.

Another concern is that no attention was paid to the role of teachers' beliefs and other contextual factors in hindering or facilitating the implementation of this curriculum innovation. Therefore, this study aims to examine what teachers do during the implementation of this curriculum, and how their beliefs and other contextual factors influence what they do. I will now proceed to outline the methodology of the research through which I investigated these issues.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter addresses the methodology adopted for this study. I begin by identifying the mode of inquiry which was employed in this study, and justifying its choice. I then identify the research questions which informed my data collection methods and analysis. The process of the fieldwork is then outlined, followed by a description of the participants in the study, and the procedures of data collection and analysis. The various challenges which I encountered during fieldwork will be highlighted. I conclude this chapter by discussing strategies I adopted to enhance the quality of this study.

3.1 Interpretive research paradigm

It is very important for the researcher to understand the theoretical assumptions of the research paradigm they employ as failure to do so will have serious consequences for the whole enquiry (Richards, 2003). This study examines teachers' implementation of the English language curriculum in Libyan secondary schools, and compares their implementation to what is recommended by this curriculum innovation. It also sheds light on how teachers' beliefs and other contextual factors influence the way teachers interpret and implement this curriculum. To approach this topic, an interpretive research paradigm was adopted as a mode of inquiry. In this section, I explain theoretical assumptions which underline the interpretive research paradigm.

The interpretive research paradigm is known under different terms including, naturalistic, constructivist, and qualitative (Erickson, 1986; Ernest, 1994; Robson, 2002). Therefore, the terms qualitative and interpretive will be used interchangeably in this study.

The interpretive paradigm assumes that meaning and process are essential in

understanding human actions, that knowledge is captured through people talking about their meanings; that knowledge is structured within personal biases and values; and that knowledge develops, emerges, and cannot be removed from the context in which it is studied (Bryman, 2004; Cohen et al., 2007; Lincoln & Denzin, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Rossman & Rallis, 2003; Scott & Usher, 1999). As Bogdan and Biklen (1998:55) have suggested, these assumptions "provide the parameters, the tools, and the general guide of how to proceed" with qualitative research.

Smith (1987:140) has argued that "for interpretive approaches, the object field to be studied is the acts and meanings ascribed to events by actors in a particular social context". This correlates with Marshall & Rossmans' (1999:57) argument in which they claim that "for a study focusing on individual lived experience, the researcher could argue that one cannot understand human actions without understanding the meaning that participants attribute to these actions, their thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values, and assumptive worlds".

The world in the context of the interpretive research paradigm is understood through the subjective life of human experience. "The imposition of external form and structure is resisted, since this reflects the view point of the observer as opposed to that of the actor directly involved" (Cohen et al., 2000:22). Subjectivity is regarded as a tool to deal with the understandings, interpretations, and experiences people bring with them to their social context. As Anderson and Burns (1989:67) suggest, "the subjective meaning of action for humans is legitimate content of study". In this regard Pring, (2000:96) argues that if we consider that "the social world is constituted by the intentions and meanings of the "social actors", then there is nothing to study, objectively speaking".

On the basis of the above discussion, the interpretive paradigm contributed to

my study in the following ways:

- It provided me with the opportunity to study the participants (teachers) while working in their normal setting (classrooms)
- It enhanced my understanding of participants' perspectives and the meanings behind their actions.
- It allowed me to establish and develop a relationship with the participants of the study.
- It offered me the flexibility to use different strategies and methods to broaden the understandings of the phenomenon under study.

3.2 Research questions

Mason (2002:19) has stated that "often qualitative researchers will use the existing literature…….as a background or springboard for launching their own research in ways to which connect it with current debates". As I have demonstrated, the existing literature has emphasized the significance of studying how teachers implement pedagogical innovations. It also pointed to the crucial role of teachers' beliefs and contextual factors in determining the success or failure of educational innovations, and to the connection between beliefs and practices in teaching (Borg, 2003; Borg, 2006; Handal & Herrington, 2003; Keys, 2007; Spillane et al., 2002; Woods, 1996). Therefore, the existing literature was used as a background to inform and direct the research questions of this study.

In addition, the context of this study outlined earlier showed that teachers' beliefs were not taken into consideration in the implementation of the new English curriculum introduced in Libya. As discussed in Section 2.4, teachers were asked to teach a new curriculum, and were given one-off training sessions in the hope that these

would equip teachers with the necessary knowledge of how to teach this new curriculum. Since the introduction of this curriculum, neither was there a review of what actually happens inside the classroom nor was there attention to the role of teachers' beliefs and other contextual factors in determining how teachers interpret and implement this curriculum. The literature and context for the study thus suggested the following research questions:

- What classroom practices characterize the work of Libyan secondary school English language teachers?
- To what extent are teachers' practices congruent with those recommended in the curriculum?
- Where curriculum principles and teachers' practices are not congruent what teacher beliefs and contextual factors account for these differences?

3.3 Site selection

Marshall and Rossman (1999:69) propose that (for qualitative research) the ideal research site is where "(a) access is possible; (b) there is a high probability that a rich mix of the processes, people, programs, interactions, and structures of interest are present; (c) the researcher is likely to build trusting relations with the participants in the study; and (d) data quality and credibility of the study are reasonably assured".

Taking these considerations into account, I decided to conduct my research in Almanara city (pseudonym). I chose to do my research in this particular city because I had worked there as an English language teacher both at the secondary school level and at the university level. My work experience in this city has enabled me to establish relationships with the local educational officials who agreed to provide me with access to the secondary schools in this city in order to identify teachers who are willing to

participate in the study.

3.4 Contacting potential gatekeepers

Cohen et al. (2007) suggest that it is important for the researcher to identify the official and important figures whose permission is needed, and before meeting them that researchers need to clarify issues such as the nature and scope of their research. In this regard the researcher should identify the goals of the research; its practical benefits; the design, methods and procedures to be used to collect data. Once the researchers have clarified these issues, "researchers will be in a strong position to discuss their proposed plans in an informed, open and frank manner.....and may thereby more readily gain permission, acceptance, and support" (Cohen et al., 2007:56).

As far as my research study was concerned, in addition to the teachers, the main figures whose permission was needed in order to conduct this study were the Ministry of Education in Libya, the educational authorities of the city where the research conducted, and the principals of the schools where data collection took place.

In April 2005, I sent a written request along with a letter from my supervisor to the Libyan embassy in London to get permission from the Ministry of education in Libya in order to travel to Libya and start the fieldwork. The written request and the letter from my supervisor explained the aims and the procedures of the fieldwork. After two weeks, the Libyan embassy in London informed me that they had contacted the Ministry of education in Libya and requested their approval, but this approval might take sometime. In June 2005, I received a telephone call from the Libyan embassy in London informing me that I was given the permission to travel to Libya and to conduct the filedwork. On July 2005, I travelled to Libya to start the fieldwork.

Although I had received an earlier permission from the Libyan embassy in London to travel to Libya and to start the fieldwork of my research study, further

permissions had to be sought before starting the fieldwork. In September 2005, I tried to meet the head of the educational affairs in Almanara city. The head of the educational affairs is the Ministry official who is in charge of the educational matters in the city. Unfortunately, he was very busy and I could not have a meeting with him in his office. I decided to approach one of my friends who has a good relationship with the head of educational affairs in order to visit him in his house. I went with my friend and fortunately this time we were able to meet him in his house. After brief chat about some of the educational matters in the city, my friend introduced me mentioning that I am doing a PhD research in the field of English language teaching and I needed to conduct the fieldwork in the secondary schools of the city. I then introduced myself and explained the purpose of and the procedures of the study. The head of the educational affairs welcomed the idea of the research and insisted on the potential of doing such a research. In my discussion with him he raised several comments. These comments are:

- It is important to talk with the teachers and to establish good rapport with them before embarking on the field work.

- The Libyan teachers are not used to being observed and being interviewed. Therefore it is important to explain the aim of the research and make them understand that the purpose of the research is neither to evaluate their work nor to criticize it.

- There might be some teachers who will be reluctant to participate in the study because they may not have the confidence to be observed while they are teaching.

The head of the educational affairs assured me that he would provide assistance in order for the field work of this study to be done effectively. He promised to issue a letter in order for me to get access to the schools in Almanara city. However I was not

able to obtain this letter until September 2005.

In September 2005, I visited the National Centre of Educational planning in Tripoli the capital of Libya. The purpose of this visit was to obtain any documents which explain or outline the principles of the English curriculum implemented in secondary schools in Libya, and to review any studies related to how teachers are implementing the curriculum. I met the head of the national curriculum planning. The individual is in charge of the curriculum planning for the state educational system. He indicated that the Garnet Company which wrote the English curriculum did not provide any documents which explain the methodological principles of this curriculum. He also indicated that the only documents they have are those which are included in the teachers' book. The head of the national curriculum planning also expressed some interesting views which I summarize as follows:

- That this curriculum is not suitable for the Libyan setting.
- Although the Ministry of education has conducted several workshops to train the teachers to implement the curriculum, the teachers are still not qualified enough to implement this curriculum.
- No studies were conducted to examine how the teachers are dealing with this curriculum.

Although these views were not expressed officially, it is interesting to note that there were concerns among educational officials in Libya about the appropriacy of the new curriculum.

3.5 The pilot study

Prior to travelling Libya, I decided to conduct a pilot study. The purpose of this pilot study was to trial the data collection techniques intended for the main study. The

pilot study was conducted in a private English language institute in Almanara city in Libya. This institute teaches English language from the level of beginners to the level of the advanced students. The English materials which are taught in this institute are the Headway series.

The teachers in this institute teach English both in the private sector and in the different levels of the state educational system. They had between six and 30 years experience of teaching English. The students who are enrolled in this institute come from various educational backgrounds. Some of them are university students; others are secondary and primary school students. There are also some students who work for the government and students who are self employed.

Classes in this institute are usually held during the evening from 4 pm to 8 pm. I chose to conduct the pilot study in this institute because I had taught in this institute before I started doing my PhD, and I was already known to most of the teaching and administrative staff. Also, because this language institute was a private institute, I did not need to get official permission from the educational authorities in the city, getting accesses did not pose a problem.

In late June 2005, I had a telephone conversation with one of my friends who teaches in this institute. In this telephone conversation, I explained to my friend the purpose and the procedures of my research. I also explained to him why I needed to do a pilot study. I also asked him if he could participate in the pilot study. He told me that he would think would give me his answer when I arrive in Libya. In this conversation, I also asked about the names of the teachers who were teaching in the summer course in order for me to identify other possible participants for the pilot study. My friend gave me the names of seven teachers. From, these names, I identified another two teachers who could be possible participants in the pilot study. These teachers were also friends of

mine, and we were teaching in this institute.

In August 2005, I visited the institute. At the beginning, I met the head of the institute in his office. I explained to him the purpose and the procedures of this research, and also explained to him why I needed to do a pilot study. The head of the institute welcomed the idea and verbally gave his permission. I then went to the staff room in order to meet the teachers whom I had already identified. I verbally explained to these teachers that the purpose of this pilot study is to try out the research methods intended for my PhD field work. I indicated that I needed to do classroom observations. The pilot study lasted a week during the last two weeks of August 2005.

I conducted three classroom observations with three teachers. Each observation lasted about one hour. I used an mp3 voice recorder to record the lessons. I asked the teachers to wear the MP3 around their necks in order to enhance the quality of the recording. Using this MP3 voice recording player was not common for the teachers so I had to teach them how start recording when the class starts, and how to stop recording when the class finishes. I sat at the back of the classroom and started taking some notes. After each observation, the data from the MP3 voice recording player were transferred to my laptop computer. I transcribed one of the classroom observations. After reading the transcription of the observation, I then developed an interview schedule. The questions of this interview schedule emerged from the transcription of the observation. I sent the interview schedule to my supervisor in Leeds. My supervisor returned it with some comments on how to improve the style of my questions. These comments proved to be valuable when I started conducting the main study. The pilot study thus contributed to this study by allowing me to:

- test the quality of the MP3 voice recording.
- develop my skills of how to use MP3 players in classroom observation.

- enhance my knowledge as to how to deal with observational data.
- get more ideas about how to develop interview schedules from observational data.

3.6 Selecting participants

According to Morse (1991), a good informant is one who has the understandings and experience the researcher requires, is able to reflect, is communicative, has the time to be interviewed, and is eager to participate in the study.

Glesne (1999:99) adds that "qualitative researchers neither work (usually) with populations large enough to make random sampling meaningful, nor is their purpose that of producing generalizations". Rather qualitative researchers select their cases purposefully (Patton, 2002). "The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information rich cases for study in depth. Information rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry" (Patton, 2002:230).

The sampling strategy which I employed in this study was the purposeful sampling strategy (Patton, 2002). Purposeful sampling is sometimes called purposive or judgment sampling: "In judgment sampling, you decide the purpose you want informants (or communities) to serve, and you go out to find some" (Bernard, 2000:176). Thus, "in judgment sampling informants may be selected for study according to a number of criteria established by the researcher" (Burgess, 1984:55).

The key criterion for selecting participants (apart, obviously, from teachers' willingness to participate in the study) was that they had been teaching the new English curriculum for at least 6 years (the curriculum was introduced in 1999). The decision to opt for this minimum level of experience was based on the assumption that teachers who had been working with the curriculum for a number of years would be well-positioned (through their greater experience) to comment on the implementation of this

new curriculum. I also felt that more experienced teachers might also have developed established ways of working with the curriculum which would provide useful indicators of the extent to which the intended curriculum was being implemented as planned. Initially, I wanted to work with six teachers who teach at the second secondary level to facilitate comparisons in their work.

Finally given that teachers in Libya are generally not accustomed to being observed by researchers or being asked to talk about their teaching, the novelty of the processes I was asking the participants to engage in might, I felt, have been threatening (and thus less productive) with teachers with less experience.

3.7 Identifying participants

As I have indicated previously, I was not able to get a written permission from the educational officials in Almanara city until the end of September 2005. I then started contacting several schools in order to find participants for the study. However, it was difficult to identify teachers who might participate in the study because the school year has not actually started yet. During the month of September I visited five schools, but still no teachers could be found and the schools' timetable was not put in place yet. It was not until the mid of October 2005 that I was able to start the fieldwork. It should be noted that it was not possible to identify potential participants for the study before I travelled to Libya for the following reasons:

- Teachers are usually assigned to their classes at the start of each new school year. Therefore, it was not possible to identify potential participants until the actual beginning of the school year.

- I needed to make personal contact with the teachers in order to introduce myself and to explain the aims and the procedures of the research.

- It was not possible to make contacts through email or through the post. Not all teachers in Libya have access or used to these means of communication.

In October 2005, I visited the Huria (pseudonym) secondary school. This is a girls' school and all the teachers who teach in this school are females. I met the school principal, and explained to him the purpose and the procedures of the research. Since the focus of the research was initially on the teachers who teach at second secondary school level, I had to identify teachers who teach this particular level of the secondary school system.

The principal of the school gave me the names of two teachers and their time schedule. The teachers were Eman and Nora. The next day, I revisited the school and met with these two teachers. I first introduced myself to them, and then explained to them the purpose and the procedures of the research. These teachers agreed to participate in the study. The fieldwork in this school lasted two weeks until the end of October 2005.

In the last two weeks of October 2005, I tried to contact other schools, but I found it more difficult to work with more than two teachers at one time. This is because of the clashes among the timetables of the teachers. Therefore, I decided to work with two teachers in one school and then move to other schools.

In November, 2005 I visited the Noor (pseudonym) secondary school and met the principal of the school in his office. After introducing myself and giving some idea about the purpose of the research, I asked the principal about the names of the teachers who teach the second secondary level in his school. The school principal gave me the names of two teachers. I tried to meet these teachers in this visit, but both teachers were not available. I revisited this school about four times, but each time I could not meet these teachers. The principal of the school told me that one of these teachers gave up

coming to the school since he knew the purpose and the procedures of my research. I got the sense that this teacher might not be willing to participate in the research, and therefore I decided not contact this teacher any more. However, the principal informed me that the other teacher expressed no objection to participate in the study. The teacher's name was Murad (pseudonym).

I returned to the Noor school to meet with Murad, but unfortunately he was not in the school this time either. The principal of the school advised me to go to Murad's house to meet him. However, I thought it might be inappropriate to visit Murad in his house since I did not know him. Therefore, I decided to contact one of my friends who knows him.

I went to Murad's house accompanied by a friend. Fortunately, this time, we were able to meet Murad. He indicated that the principal of his school had already given him some idea about the research. He also pointed out that he had no objection to participate in the research. He gave me his timetable, and we set a schedule for the start of the fieldwork. The field work in Murad's school lasted until the first of December 2005.

Within the last two weeks of November, I tried contact other schools as well so I could work with two more teachers. I contacted the Huda (Pseudonym) secondary school. This is a mixed girls' and boys' school. I decided to work in this school because I already knew the principal of this school and thought this would facilitate access. The principal of this school introduced me to Hanan (pseudonym) who teaches the second secondary level. I gave Hanan a general idea about the purpose and the procedures of the research. She showed great interest in participating in the research. She gave me her timetable, and we agreed on a date to start the field work. My intention was to set a schedule so I could work with Murad and Hanan together at the same day, but this

proved to be difficult because of the clash between their timetables and also because of the distance between Hanan's school, and Murad's school. However, I was only able to conduct an introductory interview with Hanan, and I was not able to do any observations to Hanan's teaching because the educational officials in the city decided to transfer her to another preparatory school. This meant that she was no longer teaching in the secondary stage.

As mentioned previously, I was initially planning to study six teachers who teach in the second secondary level of the educational system in Libya. Therefore, I decided to identify another three teachers who teach the second secondary level. I decided to visit the Abdulnasser (pseudonym) school. I chose this school because I already knew the principal of this school. I first met the principal of this school in a social occasion in one of my friend's house. After greetings, I gave him a general idea about the purpose of my research, and asked if it is possible to do fieldwork in his school. This principal guaranteed that he would provide me with full access to his school. He gave me three names of the teachers who teach in the second secondary level. These teachers were Juma and Anwar and Abaden (pseudonyms).

Two days later, I went to Abulnasser school to meet these teachers. At this visit, I was only able to meet Abaden. Both Juma and Anwar were not in the school during this visit. Abaden had been a friend of mine for several years. I talked with Abaden about the purpose of the research and asked him if he is willing to participate in the research. Abaden welcomed the idea of the research, but indicated that he might not be a good participant because he is frequently absent from the school and he may not be able to commit himself to the requirements of the field work. He also mentioned that he was not satisfied with working in his school, and he was thinking of getting transferred to another school. Abaden did not frankly tell me that he is not willing to participate in

the study, but from my discussion with him, I had the impression that he was not a potential participant for the study, and therefore decided not to work with him.

After obtaining the timetable of both Juma and Anwar form the school principal, I revisited the school in order to meet them. I met both teachers in the staff room and explained to them the purpose and procedures of my study. I asked them if they were willing to take part in the study. Both teachers showed interest in participating in the study. We agreed to set a timetable to start the fieldwork. However, when I wanted to start the fieldwork, I found out that both teachers were not committed to the fieldwork requirements. For example, Juma was frequently absent from the school. I had to come to the school several times, but Juma was not there. Anwar promised to allow me attend his classes. He gave a certain date that I could start observing his classes, but when I came on this date, Anwar told me that the class needs to be organized and that he needs to do some arrangements in the class. He gave me another date to start attending his class, but again even on this date I was not able to observe his teaching. I came to the school about three times, but each time Anwar made excuses for not letting me observe his teaching. On the last visit, I got the impression that Anwar is not willing to allow me attend his classes. I therefore decided not to involve Anwar as a potential participant in this research.

By the middle of November 2005, I had only secured the cooperation of three teachers at second secondary level. I then started looking for more teachers from the second secondary level. However, I found that most of the teachers who teach in this particular level are new to the profession of teaching. When I approached some of these teachers, I got the impression that these teachers still do not have the confidence to be observed. Therefore, I decided to include more experienced teachers from the fourth level since the textbooks of the second level and the fourth level share the same

methodological principles.

I then contacted Fathi and Munir (pseudonym) who teach in the fourth secondary level. Fathi teaches in the Thura (pseudonym) secondary school., and Munir teaches in the Muktar (pseudonym) school. I had already known both of these teachers because they worked in the private language institute where I conducted the pilot study. I visited both of these teachers at home. I asked them if they could participate in the study, and both agreed. I then visited the Muktar and Thura schools in order to meet with principals of these schools. I provided these principals with a copy of the letter from the educational officials in the city, and explained to these principals the nature and the procedures of the research. Both of these principals granted me access to their schools, and were cooperative throughout the fieldwork process.

In summary, in total I invited nine teachers to participate in the study, and actually worked with five of these. The following table provides background information for each of these teachers, including the pseudonym I assigned to each and which I use throughout the study.

Table 3.1 Teachers' background information

Pseudonym	Gender	Years in Teaching the curriculum	Years in TEFL Teaching	TEFL Qualifications	Secondary Level Taught
Eman	Female	6	6	BA	Second
Nora	Female	6	6	BA	Second
Murad	Male	6	13	BA	Second
Munir	Male	6	12	BA	Fourth
Fathi	Male	6	25	BA	Fourth

3.8 Ethical considerations

Ethics is an important consideration in any type of educational research. Ethical concerns may stem from the kinds of problems investigated by the researcher and the

methods applied to gain reliable and valid information. This implies that each procedure in the research could be a source of ethical problems.

Bogdan and Biklen (1998:42) define ethics in research as "the principles of right and wrong that a particular group accepts at a particular time". One fundamental concept which aims to reduce ethical tensions and problems is that of informed consent where individuals decide whether to take part in an investigation after being told of facts that would likely affect their decisions. According to Cohen et al. (2000), this conceptualization of informed consent implies four components. These components are competence, voluntarism, full information, and comprehension. Competence means that the participants should have the ability to make informed decisions if they were given the appropriate information. It is the researchers' moral obligation to ensure that they do not compel participants incapable of making informed decisions either because of their immaturity or some sort of psychological deficiency. Voluntarism implies that the participants have the choice to take part or not in the research. Comprehension necessitates that the participants fully understand the nature of the research including the research risks. Full information implies that consent is fully informed, and contains general idea of the aims and procedures of the research.

The principles of competence, voluntarism, full information, and comprehension have also been stressed by Homan (2002:25) who argues that:

> The voluntary consent of the subjects is absolutely essential. This means that the person involved should have legal capacity to give consent; should be so situated as to be able to exercise free power of choice without the intervention of element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, over-reaching or any other form of constrain or coercion; and should have sufficient knowledge and comprehension of the elements of the subject matter involved as to enable them to make an understanding and enlightened decision.

Mindful of the implications of having to sign one's name on a piece of paper within the Libyan cultural context, and taking the above discussion into consideration, I

verbally provided the participants in this study with the following information:

- I explained the purpose of the research and the procedures that will be used for data collection. I assured participants that the purpose of the research is not to evaluate their teaching practices.
- I offered to answer any questions concerning the procedures of data collection.
- I indicated that participation is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw from the study at any time.
- I assured participants that confidentiality of the data and anonymity of the research participants' identities will be guaranteed.
- All participants agreed orally to take part in the study.

3.9 Data collection and analysis

As I have stated previously (See Section 3.1), this study was informed and directed by the interpretive research paradigm. Thus, the data collection methods and the types of data collected for this research study needed to be in accordance with this position.

Since the goal of the interpretive research paradigm is to "understand the inner perspectives and meanings of actions and events of those being studied" (Anderson & Burns, 1989:67), and words not numbers are considered as the primary source of data, (Dörnyei, 2007), I conceived using non-structured-observations, and semi-structured interviews as suitable data collection methods for this study. Non-structured observations are characterized by the use of field notes, and audio recording or video as a means of recording data (Borg, 2006). Semi-structured interviews (Drever, 2003; Kvale, 1996) are directed by a set of general topics, and questions which the researcher uses flexibility in encouraging the interviewee to talk about his/her experience. The

rationale for choosing these data collection methods is provided in Table 3.2 and Table 3.3.

Table 3.2 Advantages of the non-structured observation

- It gives the observer the flexibility in what information is gathered and how it is recorded (Robson, 2002).
- It provides a rich description of the situation under investigation (Cohen et al., 2007).
- It is concerned with understandings of natural settings and the representations of the meanings of the actors within that settings (McDonough & McDonough, 1997:114).
- It allows the researcher to generate questions in relation to specific observed behaviours. These questions can provide the basis of follow-up interviews in which the researcher and the participants discuss the rationales and meanings of these behaviours (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

Table 3.3 Advantages of the semi –structured interview

- It aims to understand themes of the lived daily world from the subjects' own perspectives (Kvale, 1996:27).
- Because of its flexible structure, it gives the interviewees more freedom of how to express their points of view (Flick, 2002).
- It allows the researcher and the interviewer to develop unexpected themes and issues which come out during the conversation (Cohen et al., 2000; Mason, 2002).
- It enables the researcher to develop a relationship with the participants (Burns, 2000; Cohen et al., 2000).
- By relying on open ended questions, it has the potential to generate data which are more elaborate and richer than those generated by closed questions (Anderson & Burns, 1989).

I now proceed to present a detailed account of the processes through which data were collected and analyzed.

3.9.1 Introductory interviews

I first conducted a 35 minute pre-observation interview with each teacher. The purpose of these interviews was to obtain background information about the teachers' educational and teaching experience, and to elicit the teachers' views about the curriculum in general. The introductory interviews with Eman, Murad, and Nora, were conducted in their schools, while introductory interviews with Fathi and Munir were conducted in my house. Each interview was recorded using mp3 voice recorder. I asked each interviewee for the permission of recording the interviews before I started recording.

3.9.2 Open classroom observations

After the introductory interviews, I conducted classroom observations over a two-week period with each teacher. Table 3.4 provides contextual information about these observations (the number of observations with each teacher, the length of each observation, the date of each observation, and the number of the students). During the classroom observations, I obtained detailed accounts of the teachers' practices.

Eman, Nora, and Murad were observed teaching lessons from unit one of the second secondary level textbook. Fathi and Munir were observed teaching lessons from unit two of the fourth secondary level textbook. To maximize the accuracy of the data collected, and hence the descriptive validity (Maxwell, 1996), the lessons observed were audio-recorded, using a digital mp3 voice recorder.

During classroom observations, I also took field notes to complement the recorded data. Bogdan & Biklen (1998:108) define field notes as "the written account of what the researcher hears, sees, experiences, and thinks in the course of collecting and reflecting on the data in qualitative study" . The field notes included a description of the setting, what the teacher was writing on the board, and my own feelings and ideas about

what was observed. The observational data provided a detailed account of the work which characterized the teachers' practices during the lessons I observed with them and showed the extent to which these practices reflected the curriculum principles.

The observational data were fully transcribed to get a detailed account of the teachers' practices. Each teacher was given a copy of their transcribed lessons and given the opportunity to comment on these (although none of them did). In analyzing the observations, I first focused on describing what teachers did at each stage of the unit (as explained in Chapter 1), each unit consists of number of sections focusing on different aspects of language such as reading, grammar, listening, speaking etc.). I then identified episodes from each teacher's work which were characteristic of their approach to each section. I then compared these practices to those recommended in the textbook. The analysis of the observational data generated a number of questions, issues, and themes which were further discussed during the follow up semi-structured interviews. An analytical memo recording the questions, issues, and themes generated by the observational data was produced after each observation (see Appendix 4).

3.9.3 My role as an observer

A key dimension of observational research is the degree to which the researcher immerses themselves in the setting. The degree of participation is a continuum that ranges from complete immersion in the setting as full participant to complete separation from the setting as spectator with variation along the continuum between the two end points (Patton, 2002). The degree of participation depends on the research questions, the context of the study, and the theoretical orientations of the researcher (Glesne, 1999).

During classroom observations, my role was what Robson (2002:319) calls the observer-as-participant. According to Robson, "this is someone who takes no part in the activity, but his status as a researcher is known to the participants". My purpose was to

observe the events of the language lesson as they unfold in their naturalistic setting (the classroom). Of course, I am not claiming that my presence had no impact on classroom events, but I did my best to minimize this.

Table 3.4 Classroom observations background information

Eman	Length(Minutes)	Date of Observation	Number of students
1	27	14-10-2005	48
2	50	16-10-2005	48
3	47	20-10-2005	43
4	37	23-10-2005	23
5	41	25-10-2005	40
6	40	26-10-2005	40
7	38	27-10-2005	40
8	30	29-10-2005	40
Nora	**Length (Minutes)**	**Date of observation**	**Number of students**
1	40	13-10-2005	22
2	40	16-10-2005	23
3	32	20-10-2005	18
4	30	23-10-2005	23
5	35	26-10-2005	23
6	40	27-10-2005	19
Murad	**Length (Minutes)**	**Date of observation**	**Number of students**
1	54	8-11-2005	30
2	60	10-11-2005	25
3	50	13-11-2005	22
4	44	15-11-2005	20
5	40	22-11-2005	27
6	37	24-11-2005	25
7	40	29-11-2005	17
8	25	1-12-2005	23
Fathi	**Length (Minutes)**	**Date of observation**	**Number of students**
1	40	19-11-2005	35
2	44	20-11-2005	35
3	44	21-11-2005	32
4	45	27-11-2004	35
5	45	28-11-2005	35
6	44	30-11-2005	35
Munir	**Length (Minutes)**	**Date of Observation**	**Number of students**
1	45	5-12-2005	21
2	45	12-12-2005	19
3	45	14-12-2005	25
4	42	20-12-2005	30
5	45	21-12-2005	30
6	44	22-12-2005	18
7	45	23-12-2005	22

3.9.4 Follow up semi-structured interviews

As mentioned above, the analysis of the observational data generated a number of questions, issues, and themes which further were discussed during the follow up semi-structured interviews. In order to gain access to the beliefs and factors which underlie teachers' practices, I presented the teachers with key episodes from their lessons. During the follow up interviews, teachers commented on what they were doing, explained the rationale for their actions, and identified the different factors which underlie their classroom practices. The interviews when used after classroom observations helped me in understanding the perspectives of the teachers being observed instead of relying on my own inferences.

During the interviews, I listened very carefully to what teachers had to say. I also used probes to enhance the richness of data. A probe is defined by Robson (2002:276) as a "device to get the interviewee to expand on a response when you intuit that the she or he has more to give".

My probing strategies involved asking teachers to add more details on issues which I felt needed more elaboration. In order to minimize my influence on what teachers had to say, I tried to use statements or expressions teachers had already said. The following example illustrates how probing was used during the interviews. My probing question is underlined.

> There are difficulties in teaching this curriculum. For me there are some difficulties in teaching this curriculum. I do not find any one who can give instructions of how to deal with these difficulties. I try to use my knowledge and my efforts in order to deal with these difficulties. (MN I. 1:84-87)
>
> <u>What kinds of difficulties are you talking about?</u>
>
> For example, when I teach the speaking activities, I find the student have not thing. He does not react to the speaking activities. He cannot do the speaking activities. What is the solution for this dilemma? As a teacher what shall I do in this case? What shall I do? (MN I. 1:89:92)

Initially, I planned to do an interview after each classroom observation, but this proved to be difficult because I needed more time to transcribe and to read the transcriptions of the classroom observations. Two follow up semi-structured interviews were conducted with each teacher. The two follow up interviews with Munir took place at the end of the observations while with the other teachers, one interview took place around the mid-point of the observations, and one at the end. As mentioned above, the focus of interviews was to discuss issues, themes and questions generated from the observational data. In the second follow up interviews, I also asked teachers to elaborate on issues that emerged from the first follow up interviews. Interviews were conducted on days when the teachers were free teaching duties. The following table provides contextual background about the dates and the length of the interviews.

Table 3.5 Follow up interviews

Eman	**Interview Date**	**Interview length**
Interview 1	22-10-2005	One hour
Interview 2	2-11-2005	Forty five minutes
Nora	**Interview Dates**	**Interview Length**
Interview 1	22-10-2005	One hour
Interview 2	2-11-2005	One hour
Murad	**Interview Dates**	**Interview Length**
Interview 1	19-11-2005	Forty five minutes
Interview 2	6-12-2005	One hour
Fathi	**Interview Dates**	**Interview Length**
Interview 1	25-11-2005	One hour
Interview 2	5-12-2005	Fifty five minutes
Munir	**Interview Dates**	**Interview Length**
Interview 1	3-1-2006	Forty five minutes
Interview 2	4-1-2006	One hour and fifteen minutes

The interviews with Eman and Nora were carried out in their schools. The interviews with Munir, Fathi, and Murad were carried out at my house for reasons I will explain later. The interviews were conducted in the teachers' language (Arabic) to

enable teachers to express ideas more fluently and confidently (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Thus, since I and the teachers speak the same language (Arabic), I thought the interview would feel artificial if we spoke another language. All interviews were audio recorded using MP3 digital voice recorder, transcribed, and then translated into English.

In transcribing the audio recorded interviews, I focused on the content of what teachers said rather than how they said it (for example, the use of stress, intonation, and pausing). I acknowledge, however, stress, intonation, and pausing are important features in all talk (Richards, 2003). For example, the interviewee's emotional emphasis can be crucial with regard to real meaning of the message he/she wants to convey (Dörnyei, 2007). This means that by focusing only on transcribing the content of what had been said, some aspects of the interaction may not be captured. Once transcribed, the interviews were translated into English. Esposito (2001:570) defines translations as "the transfer of meaning of a source language...to a target language". Therefore, in translating the interviews, I aimed to represent the meaning of what teachers said to the best of my ability.

In order to check my translation, I gave one original Arabic interview transcription to a Libyan friend who is currently doing a PhD degree at the university of Leeds, and asked him to translate it into English language. The majority of the transcript my friend translated was similar to my translation, and there were no significant differences in terms of meaning (see Appendix 8 for an example of this process).

3.9.5 Coding the interview data

In order to develop a framework for analyzing the interview data, I repeatedly read through the interview transcripts to make sense of what teachers had said during these interviews. As Marshall & Rossman (2006:158) note "reading, reading, and rereading through the data once more forces the researcher to become intimately

familiar with those data". With my research questions in mind, I looked for comments related to beliefs teachers' held, influences on these beliefs, and other factors which influenced the way teachers interpreted and implemented the curriculum.

Initially data were coded manually. My initial attempt at coding the data resulted in a large number of codes which were difficult to work with. In order for these codes to be grouped under broader categories, I went through all the teachers' interview transcripts to group the codes that share common characteristics together under a more general category. For example, the interview data revealed that in justifying their instructional decisions, teachers frequently made comments' in relation to students' language abilities, students' willingness, students' expectations, and students' prior experiences. All these comments reveal teachers' beliefs about their students. All codes including teachers' comments about students were thus categorized under teachers' beliefs about students. Teachers also justified their work in terms of their beliefs about language teaching and learning. All coded comments which refer to teachers' beliefs about language teaching and leaning were grouped and categorized under teachers' beliefs about language teaching and learning. In addition, teachers made comments in relation to their teaching abilities, to their understanding of the curriculum. These comments were categorized under teachers' beliefs about teachers.

The interview data also showed that teachers made reference to other contextual factors which had an influence on how they interpreted and implemented the curriculum. For example, teachers made comments about the examination system, about how English is viewed within the Libyan educational system, the role of the inspectors. All these comments were coded and categorized under contextual factors.

However, when reading through the interview transcripts, I realized that I needed to add another category to group the coded statements where teachers talked

about their past experience as learners or as teachers. All the statements which refer to teachers' background experience as learners or as teachers were categorized under background information.

The coding of the interview data was facilitated by the use of a software package called MaxQDA. I created a file in MaxQDA calling it 'interview data'. I divided this file into five text groups. Each text group included one of the teachers' three interviews (including the introductory interview). The interview transcripts which were in a Word format were saved as Rich Text Files (RTF) and these RTF documents were imported to MaxQDA. The use of MaxQDA software facilitated the process of data analysis in the sense that it allowed me to organize and retrieve the coded data. For example, if I wanted to retrieve data related to a teacher's perceptions about pair work, I would activate this teacher's interviews, and then highlight the code views on pair work which comes under the category beliefs about language teaching and learning. The software then would retrieve any data coded under views on pair work. If I wanted to look at teachers' views about pair work across the teachers' interviews, I would activate all the teachers' interviews and highlight the code views on pair work. The software then would retrieve all data related to views on pair work across the teachers.

In order to organize and manage the data, I exported data related to each category to a separate Word file. For example, each teacher's data related to his/her beliefs about students' were exported to a Word file with the teacher's name, the name of the category, and the teachers' quotations related to this particular category. Key illustrative quotations were marked for use in the subsequent presentation of the data (see Appendix 9 for an example of a category and sub-categories resulting from the analysis, with some illustrative data).

Once all categories had been organized, I started reading across these categories

for each teacher individually to find links among them. For example, in some cases, I found out that teachers' background as learners played an important role in shaping teachers' beliefs and practices in relation to teaching certain aspects of the curriculum. To enhance my interpretation of the interview data, the categories emerging from the interview data were checked against the observational data. Teachers' commentaries on their practices were checked against episodes from the observational data to find evidence of congruence and possibly incongruence between practices and beliefs. In this way, I was able to construct a full account of each teacher's practices and the factors which underlie these practices.

3.10 Fieldwork challenges

In this section, I provide a detailed account of the challenges and problems I encountered during the process of the field work. I can summarize these challenges in the following points:

- Although the school year officially started on 3 September, timetables were not actually in place by that date. This delayed the process of approaching and identifying teachers.

- Ramadan was in early 2005, and this meant that the school day was reduced, and lessons were shorten or cancelled altogether. I was not able to start fieldwork until mid-October.

- There is a conception in Libyan schools that if someone sits at the back of the class, and takes notes, this someone is an inspector sent by the Ministry of Education to evaluate the teachers' teaching and to write reports about their teaching. In fact, I had many questions by different teachers in the schools where I was conducting the fieldwork. These questions were about whether I had changed my job, and become an inspector. I even had to reassure teachers who were not involved in the research

that I was not an inspector. In summary, I had to explain to the whole school system the purpose of my presence in their school. I had to do this so that the teachers participating in the study would not be influenced by any misconception from their colleagues about the nature of my research.

- Libyan teachers are not used to being asked about what they are doing in their classes, or to give the rationale of what they are doing. Even if they are visited by the inspectors, the inspectors usually write reports about their teaching, and the inspectors would rarely discuss what they had seen in the class. Therefore, I needed to frequently remind the teachers that what they are doing and their reasons for what they are doing are crucial to the research.

- The atmosphere and the working environment of the schools were not always conducive to conducting the research. A convenient room to conduct the interviews was not always available. In Libyan schools, teachers usually have one staff room. All the school teachers from different subjects gather in this room to chat, and to spend their free time. I tried to conduct the interviews in the teachers' room, but this proved to be difficult because of the noise in this room and because of the frequent interruptions by other teachers. On one occasion, I asked the principal of the Noor school to give me the keys of his office so that I could lock the door and conduct an interview with Murad, but this also was not effective because as soon as I locked the door and started the interview, teachers, parents, and students started knocking the door asking about different administrative issues. I got the impression that teachers needed more privacy to talk freely. Therefore, I decided to conduct the interviews in my house. After discussing this idea with the male teachers, we agreed to do the interviews in my house. However, it was not possible to invite the female teachers to do the interviews in my house due to cultural reasons. Also in the female school, I

had to be very sensitive to the cultural norms. It was not possible to conduct the interviews in the teachers' room because the room was crowded with the female teachers. Therefore, all the interviews with Eman and Nora were conducted in the principal's office. I had to deal with various inconveniences as a result of working in this office.

- Teachers were not always able to commit themselves to the requirements of the fieldwork. In one occasion for example, I was supposed to do an observation in one of Murad's classes. I came to the school on time and met with Murad who told me that today he wouldn't be teaching because he wants to go to Benghazi to visit one of his relatives who is in the hospital. In another occasion, I tried to set a date for an interview with Munir after I had finished observing his class, but Munir told me he would be busy over the next week preparing for his MA examination. So I had to wait two more weeks until he had finished his examinations.

- The frequent change of the school timetable also posed a challenge when I started the fieldwork. This was frequently happening in the Noor school. In November 2005, I was supposed to observe one of Murad's classes, but he told me that his class had been taken by the Arabic teacher. I thus had to leave the school without doing the observation. Murad aslo indicated that he is falling behind in his teaching and he needs to speed up in order to finish the required curriculum. He also asked me how many more classes I need to observe. From this question I got the sense that I am no longer welcome in Murad's class. Murad told me that he would allow me to observe two more classes only. He revealed that the school administration complained that he is behind schedule.

In summary I would say that the practicality of the research sometimes requires the researcher to take decisions that were not considered during the preliminary stages

of the research. These decisions might not be known until the researcher has actually been to the context of the study. Although I thought that it would be easy to do the fieldwork since I am familiar with the context of the research, it proved that even for the researchers who are familiar with the research context there are certain difficulties and challenges that have to be encountered.

3.11 Enhancing the quality of the research

In this section, I briefly discuss how the qualitative (interpretive) research paradigm views the issue of validity and reliability in doing research. Then, I address the main threats to validity and reliability in qualitative research. I conclude this section by outlining the strategies I used to enhance the quality of this study.

3.11.1 Issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research

The terms reliability and validity were originally introduced within the quantitative research tradition. Dörnyei (2007:50) defines reliability as the "the extent to which our measurement instruments and procedures produce consistent results in a given population in different circumstances". Validity is essentially concerned with "a demonstration that a particular instrument in fact measures what it purports to measure" (Cohen et al., 2007:105).

Qualitative research is often criticized for lacking the standard means for establishing validity and reliability used in quantitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maxwell, 1992; Robson, 2002). "Proponents of positivist quantitative research often imply that qualitative research especially interpretive approaches to human inquiry are so rife with threats to validity that they are of no scientific value" (Angen, 2000:378).

Some researchers adopting a qualitative tradition reject the quantitative research criteria of reliability and validity which stress the importance of the consistency of the

results over time, the accurate representation of the total population under study, and the repeatability and generalizability of the results (Altheide & Johnson, 1994; Kirk & Miller, 1986; LeCompte & Presissle, 1993). Others go further and deny the idea of any evaluative criteria such as reliability and validity (Wolcott, 1994).

Maxwell (1996) claims that validity is relative and can never be verified or taken for granted. Lincoln and Guba (1985), argue that concepts such as 'internal validity', 'external validity, and 'objectivity' are inappropriate for qualitative research. They replace the concept of validity and reliability with that of "trustworthiness", and propose four alternative concepts which they claim to be more appropriate to enhance the trustworthiness of qualitative research. These concepts are credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. Creswell (1998) uses the term 'verification' instead of validity and proposes seven verification procedures that are often applied in qualitative research: triangulation, peer reviewing, negative case analysis, clarifying researcher's bias, member checks , thick description and external audits.

With respect to this issue, I agree that the quantitative criteria of reliability and validity are inappropriate for the qualitative research. However, this does not mean validity and reliability issues can be ignored as this might create the danger of having an invalid and unreliable piece of research. In this study, the terms validity and reliability are regarded as ways of enhancing the quality and credibility of the research.

3.11.2 Threats to reliability and validity in qualitative research

Maxwell (1996) identifies three different types of validity threats that have to be considered very carefully by qualitative researchers. These validity threats could affect the different elements of the research process including, description, interpretation, and theory.

The major threat to valid description is the incorrectness and incompleteness of

your description of what you heard and saw. Wolcott (1990, cited in Maxwell, 1992:286) argues that "description is the foundation upon which qualitative research is built". Maxwell (1996) warns that if the description process is invalid, then any explanations or conclusions reached from these descriptions are doubtful.

Qualitative researchers are not concerned only with providing a valid description of the things, events, objects, actions and behaviours in the setting they study, but they are also concerned with what these things, objects, events, and behaviours mean for the people in the setting under investigation. As I have discussed in Section 3.1, one cannot understand people's actions and behaviours without understanding the meaning that participants attribute to these actions and behaviours. Thus, the aspect of understanding is central to interpretive research which seeks to grasp phenomenon not on the basis of the researcher's assumptions and beliefs, but from the perspectives of the individuals under study.

The key threat to valid interpretation therefore is imposing the researcher's own conceptions rather than understanding and considering the conceptions of the individuals under study. There are a number of ways which could lead to threats to valid interpretation including; not listening to the participants' own understandings; not being aware of your own framework and assumptions; asking leading, closed, or short-answer questions that do not enable participants to reflect upon their own perspectives.

Maxwell (1996) discusses two other general kinds of threats to validity that are often associated with qualitative research. They are the influence of the researcher on the setting or participants under study, and the researcher's bias. Maxwell uses the term reactivity to refer to the impact of the researcher's presence on the setting or participants under study.

Researcher bias refers to the researcher's selection of data that are suitable to the

researcher's conceptions and values. Maxwell (1996:91) points to the impossibility of eradicating the researcher's preconceptions, theories, and values. He also argues that it is an implausible idea to try to standardize the researcher to accomplish reliability. He goes further to claim that "qualitative research is not primarily concerned with eliminating variance between researchers in the values and expectations they bring to the study, but with understanding how a particular researcher's values influence the conduct and conclusions of the study".

3.11.3 Strategies of enhancing the quality of the research

Having discussed how qualitative research views the issue of validity and reliability, and identified the main threats to validity and reliability in qualitative research, I now proceed to present the strategies I employed to enhance the quality of this study:

- To maximize the accuracy of the data collected and therefore enhance the descriptive validity, the lessons I observed were audio-recorded, using a digital mp3 voice recorder.

- To reduce reactivity (the impact of the researcher on the setting and participants), each teacher was observed teaching over a period of two weeks. However, it should be clear that it is impossible to completely eliminate the effects of the presence of the observer, and that the observer's presence will inevitably have some effects on the events being observed. As McDonough & McDonough (1997:110) note "any form of observation is going to introduce some distortion from normality". Thus, the researcher in a qualitative research is a key instrument in the research process (Duff, 2007), and therefore their presence will inevitably have an influence on the participants and the setting under investigation. For example, during the first observations, I got the feeling that some teachers were trying to speak as much

English as they can. I would say that these teachers were trying to show me that they were able to speak English fluently. In my first observation in Murad's class, I noticed that the students were frustrated and confused. I got the sense that the students were not used to Murad's speaking English as much as he did when I was there. In fact, after the class, I heard the students complaining to the teacher that they could not understand what he was saying because he was using too much English. However, I could say that during the subsequent observations, teachers got used to my presence in the class, and started to behave more normally.

- The interviews were conducted in the teachers' own language (Arabic) to allow them to express their ideas more fluently and confidently and therefore enhance the quality of the interviews.

- During the interviews, I tried to monitor my own perceptions about the curriculum and about language teaching and learning in order not to affect what teachers say. However, in one of the interviews with Eman she asked me about what I think about error correction. In this particular interview, I had an argument about how correcting the students while they speak might affect their interaction in the classroom. I pointed out that the teacher should not correct the students while they are speaking. Eman insisted that it is very important for the teacher to correct the students while they speak so that students would learn how to speak correctly. I felt that this argument might affect what Eman does in the classroom, and decided to be more cautious in the subsequent interviews. In addition, Eman and Nora asked me to give them feedback after each observation. I answered that I would not do this while I was observing them. This is because I did not want to influence what they were doing in the classroom.

- Data were collected using different methods (open classroom observations and

follow up interviews). Classroom observations provided the basis for follow up interviews. The follow up interviews allowed me to understand the observational data from the teachers' perspectives instead of depending on my own interpretations. Together, these methods allowed for a more complete analysis of the phenomena under investigation.

- Repeated close readings of the data was carried out during the data analysis process to improve my interpretation of the data. For example, I interpreted that all teachers omitted the listening section because of the exam. However, through close reading of the data, I found out that in Munir's case, his past experience of teaching listening, and attitudes towards the listening section were also influential factors which underpinned his decision to omit the listening section.

- I have provided a detailed account of the design and conduct of the study, and the thinking behind it. This information allows readers to understand what I did.

- I have also provided detailed analysis of the context which should enable readers to make inferences or judgements about the extent to which findings from this study are applicable to other contexts.

- During the fieldwork process, I frequently sent copies of the observational data and the interview data to my supervisor back in Leeds, and received feedback on these copies. The feedback proved to be crucial in enhancing the way I conducted the fieldwork.

3.12 Presentation of data

According to Richards (2003:283) "our claims will be judged on the extent to which we are able to support them with adequate evidence that is fairly representative of our data set". Thus as Marshall & Rossman (2006:201) argue:

> The credibility/believability of a qualitative study that aims to explore a problem

> or describe a setting, a process, a social group, or a pattern of interaction will rest on its validity. An in-depth description showing the complexities of processes and interactions will be so embedded with data derived from the setting that it is convincing to readers.

In light of the above argument, in presenting the findings I make use of extensive primary data from transcripts of classroom observations and interviews. The data I will quote serve as evidentiary function allowing readers to examine the data and to judge whether the conclusions drawn from them are justified.

In this study, data is presented in five separate chapters. Since the aim of this study is to examine teachers' practices in relation to the curriculum principles, and the factors and rationales underlying teachers' practices, each teacher's practices and the rationales underlying his/her practices are presented in a separate chapter. The structure of the five chapters follows the same format. I first identify the characteristic of each teacher's work during the lessons I observed with them, and the extent to which these characteristics reflect those recommended in the curriculum. I then proceed to shed light on the factors and rationales which underlie their practices. I discuss the collective findings emerging from each teacher's work in a separate chapter following the presentation of the data.

3.14 Summary

In this chapter, I presented a detailed account of the mode of inquiry adopted for this study, the rationale for choosing this, the process of fieldwork, the procedures involved in the data collection and analysis, and the strategies used to enhance the quality of this study. This description should assist readers by providing them with information about the design and the execution of the study in order to make judgments about its quality. I now proceed to present the findings of this study in the five chapters which follow.

CHAPTER 4: NORA

In this chapter I present the work of Nora, the first teacher in my study. At the time of the study, Nora had been involved in teaching English for six years. She had a BA in English language teaching and had graduated from a higher institute for teacher training.

Nora worked in a public secondary state school for girls between 15 and 19 years of age. All of the teachers working in this school were female teachers. Nora was observed teaching second secondary level students and their speciality is Basic Science. In addition to English, students studied other subjects such as chemistry, physics, biology, maths and Arabic language. These students had already finished four years of studying English. They had finished three years of studying English as one of their school subjects at the preparatory stage and one year of intermediate English at the first secondary stage. The number of the students during the lessons I observed with Nora ranged from 19 to 23. Students' in Nora's class were sitting in desks which were fixed to the floor. Two students shared each desk. The desks were arranged in rows facing the board.

4.1 Nora's practices

In this section, I present a detailed account of Nora's practices. Nora was observed teaching lessons from the secondary two coursebook (see Appendix 2). The textbook is divided into eight units of ten pages, and each unit is further divided into two sections. First there is a core section, which all students in Secondary 2 need to study. Then there is a specialist section, which differs according to the specialism a student is following. In this case it was Basic Science. The core section in each unit has a particular theme, which is developed in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and

communicative function.

The lessons I observed with Nora were from the core section of the first unit. The title of the unit was "Global Village". As I have mentioned in Section 1.1.3.1, lessons in the core section are divided into reading, vocabulary and grammar, functions and listening, and speaking and writing lessons. However, during the lessons I observed with Nora, she skipped the listening activities, the speaking activities and the writing activities. Therefore my presentation of her work will only include the lessons she taught. Later in this chapter, I will examine why certain parts of the unit were omitted. In the following sections, I present a detailed account of what Nora did while teaching the core section of the first unit of the second secondary basic science textbook.

4.1.1 The reading lessons

The reading lessons of the core section are on pages 4, and 5. The reading lessons are divided into before you read activities, while you read activities, and after you read activities. The reading text of the core section is about telecommunications, and how developments in telecommunications have made the world a global village. The reading text provides the students with a historical background about the telecommunications system in the world. It shows the students how news can travel across the world.

As mentioned earlier in Section 1.1.3, a key principle in the curriculum which is highlighted in the teachers' book regarding the teaching of reading is that students should make predictions before they start reading the text. This can be done through talking about the title of the unit or discussing the content of a picture which precedes the reading text, and discussing some questions which prepare the students for the reading text.

The following episode sheds light on the implementation of this principle in Nora's work[1].

Episode 4.1

T: Now look at the picture. All of you in your book you have a picture. What can you see in the picture? What is happening in the picture?

T: (in Arabic) The teacher asks the students to look at the picture and talk about it.

T: (In Arabic) Use simple sentences.

T: What can you see? What can you understand from the picture?

T: (In Arabic) What can you understand from the picture?

The students are looking at their course books.

T: (In Arabic) You must develop your speaking. You must speak English.

Students stay silent.

T: (In Arabic) Just a small sentence.

T: Picture in your book. You have a picture in your book. What is happening in the picture?

T: (In Arabic) What is happening in the picture?

T: Ok what is happening in the picture?

T: There is a plane. A plane is damaged. The news reporter is reporting the crash or reporting the action. (NO.1:23:33)

Episode 4.1 illustrates that Nora encouraged the students to talk about what was happening in the picture. However, although she used Arabic to encourage the students to describe what was happening in the picture, students were not able to do so. It was Nora who talked about the picture and described was happening. Nora then wrote the title of the unit (Global Village) on the board and asked the students about the meaning of global village, but the students were not able to answer Nora's question. Then Nora used Arabic to talk about the meaning of global village.

Nora then moved on to the before you read discussion questions. In unit one students discuss some questions about how news travels around the world, the history of

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[1] T=Teacher S=Student SS=Group of students N=Nora O=Observation 1=Observation number.

telecommunications, the sorts of telecommunications people usually have, and what is the most important sort of telecommunications equipment and why. The teachers' book proposes that the teacher helps with vocabulary as necessary during the discussion. Episode 4.2 shows how Nora managed the pre-reading discussion.

Episode 4.2

T: Now number five, a lot of people have TV in their homes what sort of equipment do they have?

SS: Yes teacher, yes teacher (students raise their hands).

T: For you, which for you is the most important equipment? Ok.

SS: Yes teacher, yes teacher.

Students raise their hands.

The teacher selects one of the students to answer the question.

S: The most important communication equipment the mobile phone and computer because I do not have to go to a telephone. It goes with me every where.

SS: Yes teacher, yes teacher.

The teacher selects another student.

T: Yes you.

The student stands up to answer.

S: TV because it is very important.

T: You prefer what……

S: TV because it is very interesting.

T: Because it is very interesting. (NO.1: 80-94)

The pattern in this episode was typical of the way Nora handled the pre-reading questions. She asked questions and the students raised their hands to answer. There was no student-student interaction during this stage of the lesson.

After the before you read activities, students start the while you read activities. The goal of the while you read activities as stated in the teachers' book is to encourage purposeful reading For example, in unit one, the teacher discusses three titles with the students and then students are asked to choose the title which is most suitable for the text. This is done after the students have already read the text quickly. After that students do a scanning task looking for individual words and phrases in the

text. Then students are asked to figure out the meaning of some words from the context through reading the sentences in which these words appear.

Nora's practices during the while you read activities were not in line with the recommended procedures described above. She first asked the students to do silent reading. She then did reading aloud. She read the text aloud word by word and sentence by sentence. While she was reading aloud, she frequently stopped at individual words and translated them into Arabic. After reading the text, she selected individual students and asked them to read aloud. While the students were reading aloud, she frequently stopped them to correct their pronunciation and to ask them about the meaning of words. When students were not able to give the meaning of the words, Nora would give the meaning of these words in Arabic. During the while you read activities, students were not given any tasks to complete.

The final stage of the reading lessons is the after you read activities. A key principle in the curriculum as illustrated through the teachers' book is that at the after reading stage, students do some extension work making use of the theme of the text. This often involves students in relating the theme of the text to themselves. For example, the last paragraph of the reading text on page 5 in unit one discusses the issue of how the communications revolution is changing our planet. Students are asked to freely discuss whether this will make the world a kinder, friendlier, more peaceful place. Students are also required to focus on the diagram on page 5 and prepare a description in pairs. They are also asked to work in pairs to locate some sentences in the reading text and explain these sentences in their own words. Nora skipped all the after you read activities.

4.1.2 The grammar lesson

A key principle regarding teaching grammar which is illustrated in the teachers' book is that grammar is not overtly taught in the early stages of the unit. Students first see and hear examples of the target language used in variety of situations and begin recognize it. They are then more able to focus on analysis, followed by accurate use of the target language in productive situations. In unit one for example, (see Appendix 2), students study adjectives and comparative adverbs. A number of adverbs are introduced through a dialogue before the form of adverbs is explained to the students, focusing attention at this stage primarily on the use of the adverbs. Students are then introduced to a picture of eight characters of a family of different ages and physical characteristics. The teachers' book recommends that the students work in pairs. One is describing a character, the other one trying to guess which one is it. Students are encouraged to produce further descriptions of people through answering some questions about the people in the previous picture. During the grammar lesson, Nora skipped all the introductory grammar activities described above.

After the introductory grammar activities, students start to work on grammar analysis. Students are expected to use the grammatical items they have already studied during the following stages of the unit. In this episode, I show how Nora started the grammar lesson

Episode 4.3

T: (In Arabic) Good is from the irregular adjectives.

T:(In Arabic) When we change small what we add.

SS: Er.

T: Er .

T: (In Arabic) Small will become smaller.

The teacher writes the word smaller on the board.

T: This book is smaller than that book.

T: Tall.

SS: Taller.

The teacher writes the word taller on the board.

T: This is was short adjectives one syllables small and tall ok, two syllable adjectives that end in y like happy friendly, ok.

T: What is happening to this adjective?

SS: (In Arabic) Change the Y.

T: Change the y into I and ly happy happily friendly friendly, ok.

S: Windy.

T: Ok (In Arabic) it is important to understand the y rule when the word ends in y change the y and add er. (NO.2:41-56)

The above episode show that the key characteristic of Nora's work in relation to teaching grammar were her focus on explicit grammar analysis, and the use of Arabic to explain the grammatical rules. In addition Nora wrote some examples on the board and guided the students to figure out the grammatical rules through these examples as episode 4.4 demonstrates:

Episode 4.4

T: Ok look at these two sentences.

The teacher wrote on the board the following two sentences and asked the students look at them.

(Television is changing more and more quickly, other communications are also changing more rapidly).

T: What is the meaning of rapidly?

SS: (In Arabic) The students say the equivalent of rapidly.

T: Rapidly, quickly.

The teacher reads what she wrote on the board.

T: Television is changing more and more quickly.

T: This is the first sentence. Where is the adverb in this sentence?

SS: Yes teacher, yes teacher.

The students are raising their hands to answer the question.

T: Where is the adverb?

SS: Quickly.

T: Quickly, describe or tell us more about the verb, quickly is the adverb.

T: Where is the adverb in the other sentence? Other communications are also changing more and more rapidly? Where is the adverb?

SS: Rapidly.

T: Rapidly, rapidly adverb, quickly adverb, ok. (NO. 2: 170-186)

The above episodes illustrated the key characteristics of Nora's work in relation to teaching grammar.

4.1.3 The function lesson

As illustrated in Section 1.1.3.1, each unit contains a function section. The function section focuses on the communicative function of the unit. At this stage, students are encouraged to practise using functionally the vocabulary and grammar they have already studied. In unit one for example, one activity requires students to tell a guided picture story. First students work in pairs to organize the order of jumbled pictures. Then, they work in pairs to write notes about these pictures, and after that they take turns in telling the story. The teachers' book advises the teacher to move around the class to provide assistance as needed. It also recommends that during this stage, the teacher notes common mistakes, and later explains and gives extra practice.

The following episode illustrates how Nora started the functions activities:

Episode 4.5

T: Look at the picture and try to order the pictures in the right order.

T: Put the pictures in the right order.

T: (In Arabic) Every two work together.

T: (In Arabic) Do you understand from the picture?

T: Huda and her brother go fishing, go fishing or journey in the sea.

T: We will see the order.

T: (In Arabic) We will see the order.

T: (In Arabic) Every two work together.

The students are working on the activity in pairs

A student talks to the teacher in Arabic

S: (In Arabic) We organize the picture only, we do not have to make conversation.

T: (In Arabic) Before we start the story put the pictures in the order. (NO.3-40-50)

The above episode shows that Nora gave the students the chance to work in pairs to organize the order of the pictures. After students finished organizing the pictures, Nora asked them to work in pairs to write some notes about each picture. While the students were working in pairs, Nora moved around the class and checked the students' writing.

As I mentioned above, students are supposed to tell their story in pairs. In the following episode, I present an account of how Nora dealt with the process of telling the story:

Episode 4.6

T: (In Arabic) We will start the story.

T: Huda and her brother Omer went fishing. Went what is the tense here?

T: (In Arabic) What is the tense?

SS: (In Arabic) Past.

T: Ok, went in the past.

T:(In Arabic) The story in the past.

T: (In Arabic) What is the present of went?

SS: Go.

T: Go, present, past went, ok.

T:(In Arabic) The tense of the story is in the past ok.

S: Yes teacher, yes teacher (the students are raising their hands).

The teacher selects on of the students

T: Yes, you.

The students stands up and starts to read from her book.

S: One day Huda and her brother went and went go fishing and went fishing and weather is sunny and catch a fish and eat the sandwich and the weather is bad. Weather is got worse and fishing boat is not working

While the student was reading from her book, Nora frequently stopped her and corrected her grammatical and pronunciation mistakes.

The student continues reading from her book.

S: Later the sky cold and rain. Huda and her brother (inaudible) fishermen and the girl waved and thanked to the fishermen.

T: And thanked the fishermen.

T: Ok, thank you sit down.

T: Yes, another one. (NO.4:53-73)

It is clear from the above episode that the process of telling the story was not done in pairs. Nora selected individual students to read from their note books. While students were reading from their notes books, she frequently stopped them to correct their grammatical and pronunciation mistakes.

Nora then introduced reading aloud to the functions lesson. She first wrote her own version of the whole story on the board and selected individual students to read it aloud. During the process of reading aloud, she frequently interrupted the students and corrected their pronunciation mistakes. She also focused on specific grammatical forms as illustrated in the following episode:

Episode 4.7

T: Now we use many adjectives in this part, many adjectives. Where is the adjectives? Who can tell us where is the adjectives here?

T: Adjectives, do you know what is the meaning of adjectives?

The teacher points to the story written on the board, and draws the students' attention to what is written on the board.

T .(In Arabic) We will see what are the adjectives that we used in the story.

T: (In Arabic) Can you tell me where the adjectives are?

SS: Yes, teacher, yes teacher

T: Yes, you.

S: Good.

T: Good, adjective.

S: Calm.

T: Calm, the weather was calm.

S: Worse.

T: Is worse adjective?

S: Adverb.

T: Worse is adverb or comparative adverb.

S: Comparative.

S: Cloudy.

T: Ok, the sky was cloudy.

S: Said.

T: No, what is said?

S: (In Arabic) The student says the equivalent of said.

T: (In Arabic) Is said noun or verb?

S: (In Arabic) Verb. (NO.5:118-140)

In summary, Nora's work during the functions activity was mainly teacher-class work. There were limited chances for the students to work together during the functions activities. During these activities, Nora spent considerable time on reading aloud, correcting students' pronunciation mistakes, and focus on form. There was little attention to developing skills in using the target grammar and vocabulary to express meaning communicatively.

As noted earlier, Nora skipped the listening activities which follow the functions activities; she also skipped the speaking and the writing activities. In the following sections, I will discuss the factors and the rationale behind Nora's practices during the lessons I observed with her.

4.2 Factors influencing Nora's practices

In order to get insights into the rationale and the factors which underlie Nora's practices, I interviewed her twice in addition to a pre-observation interview. The interviews were conducted in Nora's school. During these interviews, Nora reflected upon the beliefs which underlie her practices. She expressed her views about the implementation of the curriculum she is teaching. She also referred to different factors which had an impact on what she did in the classroom. This analysis of the rationales for her practices will enable us to understand some of the tensions highlighted above between what she does and what the curriculum recommends. In the following sections, I proceed to shed a light on what Nora had to say during these interviews[2]. Six themes

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[2] N=Nora I=Interview 2=Number of the interview.

are discussed. These themes are: Views on teaching reading, the use of pair work, the use of Arabic, students' English language ability, teachers' English language abilities, and the role of the exams.

4.2.1 Views on teaching reading

Nora started the reading lesson by focusing on the pre-reading activities, and spent some time discussing the pre-reading questions with the class. She described the advantages of the pre-reading questions as follows:

> In each lesson I have a pre-reading....pre-reading is not like what we used to do before when dealing with reading texts. Before, we used to start the reading text directly. I think this is a little bit difficult for the students. In pre-reading usually there are three or four questions for discussion in the class. I use the general questions to open the lesson so the students can understand the lesson. We get general idea about the title so when we start the text the students will have already seen the words, and they will understand what they are required to read...I will not start the text directly. It is difficult to start the text directly like what we used to do before. The pre-reading now has many advantages. (NI.2:6-14)

As I mentioned earlier, the while you read activities require the students to do scanning, matching, reading the text quickly, and working out the meaning of the words from the context. Nora skipped all these activities and introduced reading aloud: She described her approach to dealing with the reading text:

> I read the text aloud and the students follow me while I am reading aloud. I read word by word and sentence by sentence, and try to concentrate on pronunciation. When students read, they do not know how to pronounce the words, but when I read aloud first and they follow me, it will be easier for them to pronounce the words. (NI.3:4-7)

These practices seem to be influenced by Nora's beliefs about what reading is:

> Reading is just a clear passage. You translate it and you have some questions about it. Reading is just a passage. You read it for the students and they read it after you. (NI. 2:127-129)

Nora went on to explain the purpose of teaching reading:

> I want them (students) to read. I want to see how they deal with the full stop, the comma, the tone of reading, their way of pronunciation. This is the purpose of teaching reading. (NI. 3: 47-75)

During the reading lesson, Nora read the text word by word and sentence by sentence, and while she was reading, she frequently translated vocabulary from English into Arabic. This pattern of dealing with vocabulary did not go reflect what Nora had suggested when I asked her to comment on how she deals with vocabulary in the reading text:

> I introduce the word in English first. I put it in a sentence. When I put the word in an English sentence, students will predict the meaning of the word from the context of the sentence. Putting the word in a sentence helps the students guess the meaning of the word. When they cannot predict the meaning from the sentence, I then say it in Arabic. If something can be described, I describe it. It is better if we have a picture. It helps. If it is a verb, I put it in a sentence. If it is something I can describe I say it in English, but sometimes there are difficult words. Then I am forced to say them in Arabic, but If I can explain them in English, I explain them in English. (NI. 3: 20-27)

These comments suggest some awareness of the principles for teaching vocabulary promoted by the curriculum; as noted above though, I did not see evidence of such practice.

During the lessons I observed with Nora, she spent considerable time on the reading lesson. The following quote highlights Nora's preference for reading:

> We concentrate more on reading. I do not know why. Perhaps it is clear or it requires less effort from the teacher. It is just a reading text and comprehension questions……but writing and speaking are more demanding activities for the teacher…….reading and grammar are easier for us. We feel that speaking and writing are strange things for us. We are not used to them. (NI. 2: 129-133)

These comments shed some light on why speaking and writing activities were omitted by Nora. She elaborated on the challenges of teaching writing below:

> Teaching reading and grammar are easier for the teacher. Reading is just a clear text. You read it and translate it for the students. You may have questions about the passage. Reading is just a passage…in grammar we explain the rule and give the students some examples about the rule. That's it. It is easier for us. In

> writing, the teacher has to do lots of things. First I want the students to write down their ideas as a paragraph. This is the first stage……then I will ask them to correct their writing. Then we check the writing mistakes, and the punctuation. All of this is very difficult for the teacher and needs more time and my time does not allow for all of this. (NI. 2: 355-362)

Overall, the salience of reading work in her teaching reflected customary modes of teaching English in Libya. Her approach to teaching reading was shaped by the view that the goal of teaching reading is to develop accuracy (e.g. of pronunciation and teach vocabulary). There was little evidence in her comments of an awareness of the communicative purposes of teaching reading. This, though was an important principle in the new curriculum.

4.2.2 The use of Pair work

There was little evidence of pair work during the lessons I observed with Nora. However, in talking about her teaching she expressed positive views about this form of interaction:

> When I ask the students to work in pairs, they work right away. Sometimes there is a weak student and a good student. They help and encourage each other. I can see them asking each other. I feel that the students help each other in pair work. The students feel comfortable when I ask them to work in pairs. This is because the weak student finds someone who helps her….The weak student will be active in pair work. Even the weak student participates with us in pair work. Perhaps she benefits from her friend. Her friend helps and encourages her. (NI. 3: 83-89).

Although she expressed positive views towards pair work, her views on group work were different:

> There is no outcome from group work. I tried group work a number of times but it did not work. For me pair work is better. I use pair work but not group work. There will be a chaos in group work. In group work, there will no concentration. Only one student works and the rest of the students do not participate. Pair work is better. (NI.3:264-267)

She claimed to use pair work whenever it is suggested by the curriculum:

When the curriculum requires me to do pair work, I use pair work. Sometimes

> the curriculum does not suggest pair work, but I use pair work. In some cases I use pair work. For examples, when there is a box of words, and there is a text needed to be completed by these words. When the curriculum asks me to use pair work, I must use it. I use pair work even if the curriculum does not require me to do pair work. I follow this policy. I do not always to follow the textbook. (NI. 3: 286-290)

Nora's views about the advantages of using pair work did not seem to be consistent with her classroom practices. Although she claimed to use pair work, there was little evidence of pair work during the lessons I observed with Nora. She seemed however, aware to some extent that pair work was promoted by the curriculum.

4.2.3 The use of Arabic

During the lessons I observed with Nora, Arabic was the dominant language of classroom interaction. It was frequently used by the teacher and the students. I asked Nora what she thinks about the use of Arabic:

> As I teacher I do not plan to use Arabic. Using Arabic is not in my plan, but I use it unconsciously. I try to reduce Arabic in the class....but honestly we are still using it too much. Using Arabic in the class is a necessity. It is an unconscious thing. We are forced to use Arabic. (NI. 2: 184-186)

She expanded further on these views:

> I do not like using Arabic. I prefer not to use Arabic. ...I am dissatisfied with my excessive use of Arabic. I should not use Arabic with the student. I am not satisfied with using Arabic in the class. It is wrong to use Arabic in the class. I want the students to get used to using English in the class. I do not want them to use Arabic during an English lesson. Using Arabic in an English class is a big mistake. (NI. 3: 162-166).

In our discussion, we explored why Arabic featured heavily in her lessons. Despite her negative views about it, the learners were one factor:

> When I find that the students can use English, I use English, but if the topic is difficult for the students, I am then forced to use Arabic. The reason is from me and from the students. (NI. 2: 195-197)

It is not only the English level of the students which forces Nora to use Arabic:

> I cannot always say that the level of the students is not good therefore I use Arabic. Arabic is my language. When we come to the class, we are still not used to speak in English. We still have not reached that level....We are still not used to use English because English has not existed for long time in our life. It is only a school subject. It is only during the class. Do you think that forty five minutes in the class will influence our life? (NI.2.168-173)

Although Nora said that using Arabic in an English class is a big mistake, she felt that it was acceptable to use Arabic in teaching grammar:

> It is not wrong to use Arabic when we teach grammar. In speaking and reading I try not to concentrate on Arabic, but in grammar I feel it is allowed to use Arabic. I explain the grammatical rule in Arabic so the students can understand it. The important thing is to understand the rule and how to use the rule. It is grammar the important thing is that the students get the idea. It is not important whether in Arabic or in English.....The language here is not important for me. The important thing is that they get the idea. That's it. (NI. 3: 174-178).

Overall, the use of Arabic in Nora's class seemed to be determined the students' English language level, the status of English in the school curriculum, and her beliefs about grammar teaching. Her comments on the status of English were particularly insightful- English "is only a school subject".

4.2.4 Students' English language abilities

During the lessons I observed, Nora omitted, completely or partially some of the activities in the course book. She omitted all the after you read activities, some of the grammar activities, and she completely omitted the listening, speaking, and writing activities. Students' limited proficiency was cited by Nora as one reason why she used Arabic; she referred to the same factor in explaining why she omitted course book activities:

> I cancelled the speaking and writing activities because these activities are difficult for the students. The language level of the students affects my implementation of the curriculum. The students do not have vocabulary and words. Students in the secondary level do not have vocabulary, verbs and words. You can notice that students in the secondary level as if they are starting from the beginning. (NI. 2: 28-33)

Nora went on to comment why she did not teach the writing lesson:

> I tell the students that writing is important, but they say that they have never done writing. The students say that during the previous years they did not do writing. That is why the students are weak. Students will improve if they are used to writing from first preparatory. They will be able to write at the sentence level then at the paragraph level. But they do not know how to write. How can they write stories and letters? (NI. 2: 334-337).

Nora seems to have contradicting views when it comes to writing. On the one hand, she omitted the writing activities based on her assumption that writing is demanding for the teacher and requires more effort and time from the teacher (see Section 4.2.1). On the other hand, she felt that writing is important for the students, and that students will improve their English if they were used to writing from preparatory school.

Nora had more to say about the inadequacies of the preparatory stage in teaching students' English:

> The problem starts from the preparatory stage. If the students in the preparatory stage finish their curriculum as it is intended, when they come to the secondary stage they will not have problems.....but our problem starts from the preparatory stage. The students in the preparatory stage only study two units. There is no English language learning. The students come to the secondary level without having vocabulary or verbs. The reason is from the preparatory stage. The English curriculum in the preparatory stage is a rich curriculum....there are twelve units in this curriculum, but I noticed that in many preparatory schools, students only study two or three units. Therefore students will not have vocabulary. (NI. 2: 66-74)

Nora felt that students' low level of English inhibits them from participating in the activities which require them to speak in English. She said that she tries to make the students aware that it is important for them to try to speak in English to improve their speaking skills. However, she admitted that her attempts have had no impact on the students. This in turn had an impact on how Nora viewed the speaking activities:

> Students are afraid from speaking in English. They do not speak in the class. There are lots of the students who have difficulty with regard to speaking. They do not want to speak. I try to encourage them to speak in English.

> Students should understand that it is important that they speak even if they make mistakes.....of course this is a difficulty for all of the students. They have difficulty from their childhood about English. English no English. They have this conception. I think I am just wasting my time if I concentrate on the speaking activities. What shall I do if they do not want to speak? I will waste the whole time of the class without any result. I prefer to spend the time of the class in other useful things. (NI.2:123-130)

Her comments point to a mismatch between the curriculum expectations and the students' English abilities. The curriculum expects the students to actively participate in the classroom activities, while the students' English language level inhibits them from taking active part during classroom activities. This mismatch between the level of English assumed by the curriculum and the students' actual level recurs in the subsequent data chapters. For Nora, this was a major limitation on the extent to which she was able to implement the curriculum as intended.

4.2.5 Teachers' English language abilities

Nora's beliefs about the students' ability in English clearly played an important role in her decisions to omit the speaking and writing activities. However Nora's perceptions about her teaching abilities may also have influenced her teaching practices:

> I do not think the teacher is familiar with the curriculum particularly with the speaking activities. Frankly we have weakness in the speaking skills. I can only say two or three sentences. Teachers still have some weakness. There are certain things to be taken in order to be called a teacher. (NI.2:305-308).

In Nora's view, the teachers are not qualified to teach the curriculum:

> They (teachers) are not implementing the curriculum properly. For example, they are not teaching listening and speaking. In fourth year, there are some teachers who only teach grammar. It is a difficult curriculum and there are no qualified teachers. Frankly, it is a difficult curriculum, and there are no qualified teachers. (NI.3 3:328-331)

I asked Nora to elaborate on what she meant by there are no qualified teachers:

> I do not know. They are not qualified to implement this curriculum. There are teachers who are weak in English. They do not have character to teach. They are not equipped to teach English. They do not have vocabulary. They do not have

> abilities to speak in English; they do not have character in the class. Therefore, do I have to blame the students? No, I blame the teachers. The students are victims. The teacher themselves do not understand the curriculum. The students here are victims. How can I blame the students? (NI.2.333-339)

These quite strong claims which point to major problems in the implementation of the curriculum: teachers lack both the linguistic skills required as well as an understating of the curriculum itself. Nora attributed this lack in the teachers' English language abilities to their past experience as learners:

> During the university we were not used to do speaking activities. We might only say only one or two sentences. There were no oral practices which could prepare a teacher. I still do not know where the mistake is. I am still searching for the mistake every time I teach a lesson. I am still inquiring. (NI. 2: 313-316)

She also pointed to the discrepancy between what she studied as a learner and between what the curriculum requires her to do, and described the kinds of difficulties she is still encountering in her teaching of this curriculum:

> I studied the old curriculum where you have a reading passage and a group of questions about this reading passage...when I started teaching this curriculum, I started to study all over again. When we were students, we did not have speaking activities. I consider the activities in the new curriculum as unfamiliar to me. Listening, speaking and writing all these activities are new to me. We were not used to doing these activities when we were students. We only had grammar and questions about grammar, but when we (teachers) came to teaching this curriculum, we found listening, pronunciation, speaking, and writing. Teaching this curriculum is still difficult for me. I have to do lots of efforts. I have to speak a lot. I have to use English a lot. There is lots of work. I was used to doing certain things when I was at the university, but when I came to teach this curriculum, I found things completely different. Of course I still find difficulties teaching this curriculum. I usually check the teachers' book to find guidance of how to teach this curriculum, but sometimes I do not understand how to implement what is suggested in the teachers' book. I still depend on myself. We (teachers) need training sessions to understand how to teach this curriculum. It will be useful if they give us training sessions. (NI. 1:33-49)

The teacher's abilities obviously play an important role in how they interpret and implement curriculum innovations. The above interview extracts point to the crucial need for providing help and support for teachers in order to carry out the

requirements of any educational innovations. If, as Nora suggests, teachers are not equipped to teach the curriculum, it is unlikely that the innovation is being delivered as intended.

4.2.6 The role of exams

Nora felt that examinations were another influence on her classroom practices. According to her they shape how students think about the curriculum:

> Students just study for the exam. We are just studying for the exams. The student should be better than this. The student should be prepared to use English, read, and listen to the TV. We just consider English as an additional subject. We are not considering English as part of our life. It is only a curriculum. We only concentrate on the exams. When I finish a unit, the students start asking if this unit is important, and will be included in the exam. The students ask me to show them the important questions that might be in the exam. All of them care about the exam, and what is to be tested in the exam. Because speaking and listening are not in the exam, they are considered as unimportant things. Students do not care about them. (NI.3:349-357)

Nora explained the focus of the exams as follows:

> The exams only focus on grammar and reading. They are reading passages with some questions, and perhaps filling some missing words. There is no focus on writing. Students consider writing as not an essential thing, because we do not focus on writing in the exams. The teacher focuses on the things which will be in the exam. The student as well focuses on the things which will be in the exam. Generally, there is only reading and grammar. (NI.3:469-473)

In this respect, Nora blamed the teachers for forcing the students to concentrate on the things that will be tested in the exams:

> It is because of the teachers who force the students to pay more attention to what is to be included in the exam. Students are used to what teachers do. I should deal with the students on the basis that they should do the four skills. I should draw their attention to this point. The students are old now. They are in the secondary stage. For six years they have been used to studying English as grammar, reading and exams. This is because of the teachers' work. (NI. 3: 461-466).

Nora went on to explain how difficult it is to change students' perceptions about English language learning:

> As I told you, I cannot do any thing right now. Students have been learning English this way for years. They have formed this conception about language learning since they have started learning English. I cannot change this conception. They are used to study English as grammar and reading. When I come to the secondary school students and try to do speaking activities with them, I find it difficult, and I cannot do it. It is impossible. (NI. 3: 476-481)

Students' existing conceptions of language learning, then, represent for Nora another obstacle in the implementation of the new curriculum. I asked Nora why teachers do not change the writing of the exams and make them more consistent with the requirements of the curriculum:

> We as teachers do not have meetings to discuss these issues. There are no meetings to discuss any issues related to the curriculum. We as teachers consider these issues as not important issues for us. Every one teaches just to finish the curriculum and to write the exam. The important thing is to finish the curriculum. It does not matter in which way you finish the curriculum. We finish the curriculum without any outcome. English is not our language and the students will not use it. It is only grammar. Before, they used to blame the old curriculum for being a grammar curriculum. Now they introduced the new curriculum but still have not implemented it properly. We still have not reached to the progress which we hoped for. I have not seen any progress. (NI.485-493).

The quote above highlights fundamental issues in the teaching of English in Libya; there has been a change to the curriculum, but previous conception of English and practices in teaching it prevail.

4.3 Summary

In this chapter, I provided a detailed account of Nora's work during the lessons I observed with her. Classroom observations showed that there were some aspects of Nora's work which to some extent were in line with the intended curriculum. This was particularly evident during the pre-reading activities. During these activities, Nora encouraged the students to participate in the discussion questions. However, during the lessons I observed with her there were some practices which were not in line with the intended curriculum. For example, during the while you read activities, the curriculum

expects students to work out the meanings of the words from the context, to do matching activities, and to scan the reading text for specific information. Instead Nora skipped all these recommended activities, and introduced reading aloud, reading word by word and sentence by sentence, and focused on grammar, pronunciation, and frequent Arabic translation. The omission of the after you read activities, the speaking activities, the listening activities, the writing activities, and the absence of pair work were other features of Nora's practices which were not consistent with the intended curriculum. In Table 4.1, I provide a summary of the extent to which Nora's practices matched the intended curriculum

During the interviews, Nora spoke about the rationale for her teaching, and the various contextual factors which had an impact on how Nora implemented the intended curriculum. She expressed concerns about the student's English language abilities, and explained how the students' English language level affects how she implements the curriculum. She also expressed doubts about the teachers' English language abilities, and explained how both teachers and students focus on the activities which are included in the exam and ignore the activities which are not. In addition, Nora revealed a range of beliefs about English language teaching and learning which influenced how she implemented the curriculum. In Table 4.2 I summarize the beliefs and the contextual factors which emerged during the interviews.

Table 4.2 The intended curriculum and Nora's practices

Focus	Intended Curriculum	Nora's practices
Reading	▪ Aims to develop the sub skills of prediction, inference, reading for gist, and reading for specific information. ▪ Aims to teach the students how to work out the meanings from context. ▪ Aims to make use of the theme of the text by involving the students in discussion, relating the theme of the text to themselves.	▪ Reading word by word and sentence by sentence. ▪ Focus on reading aloud. ▪ Focus on word meaning. ▪ Focus on Arabic translation. ▪ Focus on pronunciation. ▪ Omission of the after reading activities.
Grammar	▪ Encourages students to discover grammatical points through examples of the target language used in variety of situations. ▪ Work on grammar analysis follows after students recognize the grammatical points. ▪ Develops accurate use of the target language in productive situations.	▪ Omission of the introductory grammar activities. ▪ Focus on explicit grammar analysis. ▪ Using Arabic in grammar analysis.
Functions	▪ Encourages students to use the vocabulary and grammar they have learned in functions such as suggesting, advising, and telling a story.	▪ Focus on form. ▪ Focus on reading aloud. ▪ Focus on correcting students' pronunciation mistakes.
Listening	▪ Aims to develop the sub skills of prediction, inference, listening for gist, and listening for specific information. ▪ Aims to develop confidence and competence in listening comprehension.	▪ Omission of the whole listening section.
Speaking	▪ Aims to activate the language students already have learned. ▪ Aims to promote fluent communication and making talking in English a regular activity among the students. ▪ Aims to build confidence and fluency. ▪ Error correction is not recommended during the speaking stage.	▪ Omission of the whole speaking section.
Writing	▪ Aims to develop the language and grammar students have already learned through producing longer pieces of writing. ▪ Considers the process of writing as important as the end result because it is during the process that learning takes a place. ▪ Encourages students to work together, to help each other with note taking and editing, and to produce work with a communicative purpose.	▪ Omission of the whole writing section.
Pair work	▪ Considers pair work as a good opportunity for the students to speak the target language. ▪ Advises the teacher to give many opportunities for the students to work together during each unit.	▪ Limited chances for the students to work in pairs during the functions activities. ▪ Most of the activities were led by the teacher. ▪ The type of classroom interaction was teacher to individual students, and teacher to the whole class.

Table 4.2 Factors influencing Nora's practices

Factor	Description
Beliefs about reading	▪ Reading is just a clear passage you read it and you translate it for the students. ▪ The purpose of teaching reading is to see how students deal with the full stop, the comma, the tone of reading, and pronunciation.
Beliefs about language teaching	▪ Teaching reading and grammar are easier for the teacher. ▪ Writing and speaking are demanding for the teacher. ▪ Speaking and writing are strange things for the teacher. Teachers are not used to them.
Beliefs about pair work and group work	▪ Students help each other in pair work. ▪ There is no outcome from pair work.
Attitudes towards the use of Arabic	▪ Using Arabic in the class is a necessity. ▪ The use of Arabic facilitates the teaching of grammar. ▪ The important thing is that students get the message, and it does not matter whether in English or in Arabic.
The status of English	▪ English is only a school subject. ▪ English is just an additional subject. ▪ English is not our language and the students will not use it.
Students' perceptions about learning English	▪ Students are used to studying English as grammar, and reading.
Teachers' ability	▪ Teachers have weakness in the speaking skills. ▪ Teachers are not implementing the curriculum properly. ▪ Teachers are not qualified to teach the curriculum. ▪ Teachers do not understand the curriculum.
Nora's past experience as a learner	▪ There was no focus on oral skills at the university. ▪ There is a mismatch between what the curriculum expects Nora to do and what Nora used to do as a learner of English. ▪ There was no preparation at the university to teach this curriculum.
The role of exams	▪ Both the teacher and the students focus on the activities which are included in the exam and ignore the activities which are not included in the exam. ▪ Exams focus on grammar and ignore other curriculum activities such as speaking and writing activities.

CHAPTER 5: EMAN

At the time of this study Eman had been teaching English for six years. She had a BA in English, and had graduated from an English department of a university in Libya. She worked in the same school described earlier in Nora's chapter. During the lessons I observed with Eman, the number of the students ranged from 35 to 42. In some cases, three students shared a desk. The desks were arranged in rows facing the board. There was little space between the rows which made it hard for the teacher to move around the room. In this chapter, I present Eman's practices in relation to her implementation of the curriculum, and then proceed to highlight the various factors which had an impact on her practices. This chapter shows that in many respects Eman's work reflected practices highlighted in Nora's work (Chapter 4). Eman's rationale for work was also similar in many ways to Nora's.

5.1 Eman's practices

Eman was observed teaching lessons from the core section in unit one of the second secondary textbook (see Appendix 2). As I explained in the previous chapter, lessons in the core section are divided into reading, vocabulary and grammar, functions and listening, and speaking and writing lessons. In the following sections, I describe in detail how Eman taught the activities in these lessons.

5.1.1 The reading lessons

Eman, started the reading lessons by focusing on the discussion questions of the pre-reading activity. She asked the questions, and then selected individual students to answer. The discussion process was led by the teacher, and the students did not work together during the discussion. The type of interaction during this discussion activity was teacher to student interaction. The discussion of further pre-reading questions followed this pattern. This pattern of classroom interaction was frequently repeated

throughout all the lessons I observed with Eman.

Then Eman moved to the while you read activities. In these activities students read the text quickly and then discuss three titles to choose the best title for the text. Then students do a scanning task looking for individual sentences and phrases. Finally students figure out the meaning of some words from the context. The following episode shows the extent to which Eman's practices are consistent with the recommended while you read activities.

Episode 5.1

T: I am going to read paragraph number one.

The teacher starts reading paragraph number one on page 5.

The students are listening to the teacher while she reads.

While the teacher reads paragraph number one, she frequently stops to ask the students about the meaning of some words in the paragraph.

T: Distance mean what.

SS: (In Arabic) The students give the equivalent of distance.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher repeats the equivalent of distance.

While the teacher is reading, she frequently stops at some words in the text and translates these words into Arabic.

While she reads.

T: What is the meaning of communication system?

SS. (In Arabic) The students give the equivalent of communication.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher repeats the equivalent of communication.

The teacher reads word by word and sentences by sentence.

While she reads the teacher translates into Arabic.

While she reads the teacher asks the students about the meaning of some words in the text, and the students give the equivalent of these words in Arabic. (EO.1: 222-239)

After the reading aloud the whole text, Eman selected individual students to do reading aloud. While the students were reading aloud, she constantly stopped them to correct their pronunciation, and to check their understanding of the meaning of the words. She picked individual words from the text, and asked the students about the meaning of these words in Arabic. Students demonstrated their understanding by

translating these words into Arabic.

The above episode clearly illustrates that there was a mismatch between Eman's practices and the curriculum principles regarding the teaching of reading. While the curriculum emphasizes purposeful reading, Eman focused on reading aloud, word meaning, and translation. There was no while-reading task completion by the students during the lessons I observed with Eman.

As I mentioned previously in Chapter 4, a key principle regarding the teaching of reading is that students relate the theme of the text to their own experiences. This is often done during the after you read activities. However, Eman skipped all the after you read activities during the lessons I observed with her.

5.1.2 The grammar lesson

As I have indicated earlier, the curriculum suggests that the students see and hear examples of the target structures used in a variety of situations and so begin to notice and understand it. This is usually done in the introductory activities before the teacher starts analyzing the grammatical points. In unit one, students study the adjectives and adverbs. First they role play an interview where they can see how the adverbs are used. Then students work in pairs describing some characters in a picture. One is describing a character, and the other one is guessing which character is it. Focus on analyzing the grammatical items follows the introductory grammar activities.

Eman skipped the introductory grammar activities described above, and started the grammar section in unit one by asking the students to come up with examples of adjectives (adjectives and adverbs) as illustrated in episode 5.2:

Episode 5.2

The teacher says the equivalent of adjectives in Arabic.

T: Give me an example.

SS: Yes teacher, yes teacher.

Students are shouting and raising their hands to answer.

The teacher selects one of the students.

T: Yes you.

The student stands up to answer.

T: Slow.

T: Slow, thank you. Sit down.

The teacher writes slow on the board. (EO.2:16-22)

After selecting individual students to come up with examples of the target language and writing these examples on the board, Eman started to select individual students to put these examples in complete sentences as episode 5.3 illustrates:

Episode 5.3

T: Put slow in a sentence.

T: (In Arabic) Put slow in a sentence.

The teacher selects one of the students.

T: Yes you.

The student stands up to answer.

S: I met a slow car.

T: Ok I met a slow car or a fast car. Ok thank you sit down.

T: Ok you put bad in a sentence.

The teacher selects another student.

S: I am bad, I am bad…..

T: Ok I am bad in grammar maybe. Or this book is bad. This book is good. This car is slow. I saw a slow car. This car is fast. I saw a fast car. (EO.2:41-49)

Then Eman started to explicitly focus on grammar analysis as episode 5.4 shows:

Episode 5.4

The teacher writes on the board Ahmad is fat. This room is clean.

T. Ok, so where is the adjective here? Where is the adjective here?

T: (In Arabic) Where is the adjective here?

SS: The students are looking at the example which is written at the blackboard.

T: Where is the adjective here?

SS: Slow.

T: Ok it comes before or after the noun.

SS: Before the noun.

T: Before the noun so the position is. We have two positions before the noun and after the verb to be. So the adjectives come after the verb to be and before the noun.

T: Ok, so this is the position of the adjectives. (EO.2:52-63)

Throughout the grammar lesson, Eman used Arabic when she focused on grammar analysis. In fact the use of Arabic was a key characteristic of Eman's work during the lessons I observed with her.

5.1.3 The functions and listening lesson

The functions activities are designed to give the students a chance to practise the vocabulary and the grammatical items they have already studied. In unit one, for example students are encouraged to use the vocabulary and the grammar they studied in telling a picture story. First students work in pairs to write notes about some pictures, and after making notes they take turns in telling the story. The teachers' book recommends that at this stage the teacher moves around the class and gives assistance as needed. It also recommends that the teacher notes common errors, and later explains these errors. In the following episode, I illustrate how Eman started the functions activities:

Episode 5.5

T: (In Arabic) What can you describe in the first picture?

T: (In Arabic) How can we describe it?

Students are shouting and raising their hands to answer.

SS: Yes teacher, yes teacher.

The teacher selects one of the students

T: Yes you.

The student stands up and starts to talk about the picture.

S: They are was very happy.

The teacher interrupts the student.

T: They are was, no, no this is wrong.

T: (In Arabic) We cannot say this in English.

The teacher talks to the student who is still standing.

T: What is wrong here? Can you tell what is wrong here?

SS: They are was.

T: They, they what?

S: They were.

T: They were, they were. Ok.

S: They were very happy.

T: They were very happy. Ok we can say that. (EO.4: 45- 63)

After a number of individual students had talked about the pictures, Eman started to select individual students to come to the board and write sentences about the pictures. While individual students were taking turns to write sentences on the board, Eman corrected the students' grammar and spelling mistakes. While students were writing on the board, the rest of the class copied what is written on the board. Eman ended the function activities by calling on individual students to come to the front of the class to read what they have written. Students were taking turns to do reading aloud. In the following episode, I illustrate what Eman did while the students were reading aloud:

Episode 5.6

T: Here please, stand up here, take my place, tell them the story.

T: Listen to her.

T: (In Arabic) If there are any mistakes in the pronunciation, correct her.

T: Raise your voice. I want to hear you.

The teacher talks to the student who is standing in front of the class.

The student stands in front of the class and reads the from her book.

The teacher and the rest of the students are listening to the student who is reading the story.

T: Stop please, again.

The teacher stops the student who is reading.

T: (In Arabic) What is the mistake she did in her reading?

The teacher talks to the whole class.

T: (In Arabic) Not grammar mistakes or spelling mistake.

T: (In Arabic) Her way of reading.

T: Why we use the punctuation and the comma?

T: To stop, comma, just take a breath, full stop, stop, ok again please, slowly.

T: Listen to her please.

The student continues reading.

The teacher frequently stops the student while she reads to correct her pronunciation.

T: (In Arabic) When she says something wrong correct her.

The teacher talks to the whole class.

The student finishes reading.

T: Thank you sit down. (EO.5: 409-431)

The patterns illustrated in the above episodes show that Eman's work during the function activities was characterized by teacher-fronted work. Students during the functions activities did not work in pairs as suggested by the course book. Thus, Eman changed the functions activities into a reading aloud activity.

The listening section follows the function section. This section is divided into before you listen activities, while you listen activities, and after you listen activities. During the lessons I observed with Eman, she skipped all the activities in the listening section.

5.1.4 The speaking lesson

As I heave mentioned earlier in my analysis of the curriculum, the teachers' book advises the teacher to give the students as many opportunities as possible to talk to each other and to make talking in English a regular activity. The speaking activities in unit one require the students to work in pairs and take turns to tell each other what they did during the summer.

However, Eman did not teach the speaking lesson as suggested by the course book. She asked the class to do this activity as a writing activity at home. Students individually wrote about what they did during the summer and brought their writing to the class. In the following section, I illustrate what Eman did after the students had brought their writing to the class.

5.1.5 The writing lesson

After students had brought their writing to class, Eman selected individual students to come to the front of the class to read their homework. While students were

reading their homework, she frequently stopped them to correct their grammatical and pronunciation errors. Eman spent the whole class repeating this pattern.

The patterns illustrated described above provide evidence that Eman's practices were not congruent with the suggested curriculum principles regarding the teaching of writing. The curriculum considers the process of writing itself as important as the product of the writing, whereas Eman's practices were more concerned with the product of the writing. Thus, students did not have a chance to help each other and exchange ideas during the process of writing as suggested by the curriculum.

Perhaps the only chance where students were given a chance comment on each other's work was during the error correction process. Eman often asked individual students to stand in front of the class and to read their writing to the whole class. She would ask the whole class to listen very carefully to the student who is reading and stop her if there are any mistakes. Students would interrupt the student who is reading and correct her mistakes.

5.2 Factors influencing Eman's practices

The previous section presented Eman's practices in relation to the curriculum she was teaching, and showed the limited extent to which her practices were congruent with the curriculum's principles. I now focus on the teacher's rationale for her practices. The interviews highlighted different factors which appeared to have an impact on Eman's work during the lessons I observed with her. I now proceed to present these factors. I focus on the following themes: beliefs about the teaching of reading, beliefs about pair work, the use of Arabic, focus on error correction, exams and lack of resources, and lack of understanding the curriculum principles.

5.2.1 Beliefs about the teaching of reading

Eman started the reading lesson by focusing on the discussion questions of the pre-reading activities. She felt that the pre-reading is essential in preparing the students for the theme of the unit:

> The pre-reading activity is very important. It gives the students general idea about the unit. It prepares the students for the unit. I always concentrate on the pre-reading activity as it gives the students the new vocabulary they need in order to understand what the unit and the reading text are going to be about. The discussion questions prepare the students for the reading text. They provide them with the vocabulary, and ideas about the unit. (EI.2:8-13)

I asked Eman about her role during the discussion questions of the pre-reading activity. She commented:

> My role is to make sure that students talk about the topic if they talk about something different, I bring them back to the topic. That is what I do I ask the questions, and the students answer the questions. I select individual students to answer the questions. (EI.2:26-29)

Classroom observations showed that Eman's practices during the reading lessons were not consistent with the suggested curriculum principles for dealing with the reading lessons. This was particularly evident during the while you read activities. Instead of doing the skimming and scanning activities suggested by the curriculum, Eman read the text word by word and translated the vocabulary into Arabic. On reflecting on these practices, Eman commented:

> My thinking is that if I give the students the text to read by themselves, they will not know how to read it, there might be words which the students do not know their meanings, the students might get lost and confused. I think it will be easier if I read the text and give the students the exact meaning of each word. I use this way to make things easier. (EI.2-225-259)

Eman was concerned about students not being able to read the text without her support. Her approach was also influenced by her beliefs about the purpose of teaching reading:

> I think the purpose of reading is to teach the students how to pronounce the words correctly. That is my belief about reading. Reading means that you read and pronounce every word correctly. I read the text before the students to give them a model of reading. I show them how to pronounce the words. Then I check if the student comprehended how I read the words. I check if the student read the words correctly as I read them or not. (EI.2:300-305)

It is evident that Eman's practices during the reading activities were influenced by her beliefs about the nature of teaching reading. Eman's conceptions of teaching reading however were clearly at odds with those embodied in the curriculum.

5.2.2 Beliefs about pair work

Classroom observation illustrated that Eman dominated classroom interaction. She often asked questions and selected individual students to answer these questions. During the classes I observed with Eman, students were not given opportunities to work together to do the activities even when the curriculum explicitly required the students to do so. When I asked Eman about her views on the use of pair work, she commented:

> The students are not used to working together. The students are used to the teacher asks a question, the students raise their hands to answer the question, the teacher tells the students your answer is ok sit down or you made a mistake...From the first preparatory students are not used to student to student interaction. The interaction is always between the student and the teacher. (EI.2:213-217)

These comments point to ways of learning which the students were used to, and which were in contrast with those in the curriculum. With respect to students' lack of independence, Eman criticized the teachers for not giving the students enough chances to depend on themselves:

> We (the teachers) do not give the students a lot of space. This is one of the bad things which we are used to. We are not used to giving the students enough space so that he could speak, and does not depend on the teacher. (EI.2:232-234)

Eman went further to describe what the teacher is expected to do within the Libyan educational setting:

> We are used to the idea that the focus should be on the teacher... Here in Libya the focus is always on the teacher. The teacher does every thing in the classroom. This is what we are used to since we were students. (EI.3:229-231)

The class size appeared to be another reason for not instructing the students to work in pairs during classroom activities:

> I think pair work is done for a class with twenty five students so you can have a chance to check each pair and to see what they are doing. You saw the class. It is about fifty students. There is no possibility that I can check every two students. Do you imagine what is going to happen if I use pair work in a class of fifty? I know what will happen if I use pair work. There will be chaos in class. (EI.2:100-104)

Eman felt that there would be no outcome from using pair work or group work even if she had a small class:

> Even if I have a small class, I will not use pair work or group work because there will be no advantages of using pair work or group work. If the purpose of using pair work or group work is to encourage students to use English, students will not use English. Students will use Arabic, and therefore pair work is only a waste of time. If I give the students any chance to take control of the class, they will use this opportunity to make noise, and talk about things which are not related to our lesson. Students will not respect the teacher if they feel that the teacher lost control of the class. I prefer to stay on control of the class so the students can pay attention to what I say. (EI.2:112-120)

As we have seen a range of factors appeared to have an impact on how Eman conceived the process of classroom interaction. Students' expectation about who does what inside the classroom had a crucial influence on what Eman did. Students come to the class with the assumption that the teacher is responsible for everything in the classroom. This assumption about the teacher's role is not consistent with what the curriculum requires the teacher and the students to do inside the classroom. Eman's attitudes towards pair work also appeared to have a crucial impact on why she opted for teacher fronted-work. She admitted that even if she had small class she would not use pair work. She considered giving the students opportunities to work together as a waste of time, although at the same time she complained about students' lack of

independence. We have here, then, a range of factors which collectively worked against the implementation of the curriculum as intended.

5.2.3 The use of Arabic

During the lessons, I observed with Eman, classroom interaction was dominated by the use of Arabic. This was particularly evident during the reading lessons and the grammar lesson. I asked Eman about how often she uses Arabic in the class. She answered:

> Frankly, I do not have a strategy of when to use Arabic and when to use English. You can see here that I do not have a strategy when to use Arabic and when to use English. I am still confused. I ask the students not to use Arabic, and then I use it. (EI.2:39-41)

Although Eman felt that English should dominate classroom interaction when teaching English, she expressed positive attitudes towards the use of Arabic, and suggested that the use of Arabic helps her to convey what she wants to her students:

> The important thing is that students get the message. It does not matter whether I use Arabic or I use English. Although we should use English here so that they (the students) improve their speaking, but the important thing is that students understand what I am saying. (EI.1:45-48)

She gave an example of how the use of Arabic facilitates the process of teaching grammar:

> I prefer to use Arabic when I teach grammar because ninety percent of the class will understand what I teach whereas if I use English perhaps half of the class will not understand. The student already has a complicated grammar lesson. I do not want to use English to further complicate things. If I use English I will further complicate things. I want to simplify things not to complicate them. Therefore I use Arabic. I agree one hundred percent that the Arabic language should be used when teaching grammar. (EI.2:81-98)

Overall, Eman appeared to have positive attitudes towards the use of Arabic, and used it frequently during the lessons I observed with her, and not just when teaching grammar.

5.2.4 Students' English language abilities

During the lessons I observed with Eman, she often omitted and modified some of the curriculum activities. For example, she omitted the after you read activities, and modified the speaking activities. Eman explained the rationale which underpinned these practices:

> Students do not have English language. They do not have English vocabulary to make sentences in English. This is one of the most difficult problems students face in this curriculum. Some of the curriculum activities require students to speak in English, but the students do not have the vocabularies which enable them to speak in English and make sentences in English.... I know the level of the students. They cannot do the after you read activity therefore I decided to skip it. The after you read activities require students who have good English abilities. (EI.2:312-318)

The speaking activities in unit one require the students to work in pairs to talk about what they did during the summer. Eman changed this activity into a writing activity, and asked the students to individually write about what they did during the summer. Students did this activity as homework. Once again Eman's beliefs about the students' English language abilities appeared to be an influential factor for not teaching the speaking activities as recommended in the curriculum:

> The speaking activities in particular require the students to speak about a whole story not only a sentence. I did not do this activity because this activity is beyond the students' ability. This activity requires the students to think in English and talk in English about something they did in the summer. I think this activity is beyond the students' level and ability. That is why I did not teach this activity as speaking activity. I did it as a writing activity. Instead of asking the students to talk about what they did in the summer, I asked them to write about what they did in the summer. If the students are asked to say just sentences, it will be ok, but if you ask the students to think about a whole story and say this story in English, the students will not able to do it....As I told you, I thought this is beyond the students' level and abilities. There will pressure on the student to speak in the class. Students might be able to speak on the sentence level, but on a story level, I do not think they can do it. I think writing is easier than speaking for the students. That is why I did this activity as a writing activity not as a speaking activity. (EI.3:150-164)

Unlike Nora, who omitted the teaching of writing on the assumption that writing

is difficult for the students (see Section 4.2.4), Eman decided to change the speaking activity into a writing activity because she felt that writing is easier for the students.

I asked Eman to reflect on the curriculum's recommendation that the students be given opportunities to make talking in English a regular activity:

> I know the curriculum encourages the use of English inside the class, but this idea will waste my time. Students will find difficulty speaking in English. It is easer for me to use Arabic. I have a background about the students' abilities. I will waste my time if I concentrate on using English inside the class. Students' English level is very weak. If we use English, students who have English speaking abilities will be very few in the class. They will be less than half of the class. The rest of the class will not understand what we are talking about, and they will not catch up with us, but if I use Arabic, the whole class will pay attention to me, and will understand what I am talking about. This is my idea. (EI.2:80-88)

Overall, Eman's beliefs about the students' English language abilities played an important role on how She implemented the curriculum In her view some of the curriculum activities are beyond the students' English language abilities and therefore she decided to omit or modify these activities. These concerns reflect similar points raised by Nora in the previous chapter.

5.2.5 Focus on error correction

During the lessons I observed with Eman, it was evident that she was keen to have students' grammatical and pronunciation mistakes corrected. Eman explained her approach regarding the process of error correction:

> When a student makes a mistake, I wait a little bit; sometimes, I stop the student to draw her attention that there is a mistake; sometimes students themselves stop her before I stop her. Sometimes, I wait to see if the student who made the mistake can correct herself. If she cannot, I wait for the class to do the correction. If the class cannot do the correction, I do the correction by myself. (EI.3.131-135)

As classroom observation showed, Eman often called on individual students to come to the front of the class to read their homework. Eman said she uses this approach

to engage the whole class in the process of error correction:

> Instead of just correcting the students' papers and returning the papers back to the students; I thought that if the student reads her paper in front of the class, we will check the student's pronunciation. We will check how the student pronounces the words he wrote. In this way, the whole class will see the mistakes which were made by this particular student. Also the whole class may participate in the process of error correction. (EI.3:131-136)

While individual students were reading their papers in front of the class, Eman often gave other students in the class the chance to correct this particular student's mistakes. Eman explained the rationale which underpinned this approach:

> I want to draw the students' attention that it is their responsibility to do the correction. In this way, students will pay attention to what is happening in the class. It is a good thing if the students can get to the stage in which they are able to correct each other's mistakes; the pronunciation mistakes, and the grammatical mistakes. I consider this as a good thing for the students.
>
> (EI.3:123-127)

Despite these references to student's responsibility, Eman practices during error correction were often incongruent with the curriculum principles regarding the process of error correction. Although, Eman seemed to be aware of the curriculum principles regarding error correction, her practices were underpinned by some clear views:

> I know that the curriculum suggests that the teacher makes notes and deals with the mistakes later. However, I have a point of view regarding this aspect. There are many mistakes students make. You cannot make notes of every mistake the student makes. There are too many mistakes and I am not sure that I can remember all the mistakes to correct them later. My belief is that I must correct every mistake students make immediately. (EI.2:199-204)

Eman's prior experience as a student appeared to shape her perceptions about error correction:

> When we were students during the preparatory and secondary school, the teachers used to stop us whenever we say sentences with pronunciation and grammatical mistakes. They used to stop us and correct the mistakes, and then we complete the sentence. (EI.2:180-183)

When she spoke about her views regarding the process of error correction, Eman also referred to the inspectors sent by the Ministry of Education as also having an influence on what teachers do regarding language teaching:

> The inspectors tell us that we must correct the students' mistakes straight away. They say that if we do not correct the students' mistakes straight away, students will keep having the same mistakes..... I am doing what the inspectors tell us to do because they are the ones who evaluate the teachers and write reports about the teacher's performance in the classroom but I do not think that the inspectors understand the ideas of this curriculum. The inspectors taught the old curriculum when they were teachers, but they have not taught this curriculum. The problem is that when they come to the classroom, they still evaluate the teachers according to their ideas about the old curriculum. (EI.1:123-131)

Clearly Eman's focus on correcting students' errors was influenced by her perceptions about the value of error correction, her past experience as a learner, and the inspectors sent by the Ministry of education.

5.2.6 Exams and lack of resources

During the lessons, I observed with Eman, it was evident that more time was giving to the grammar activities in comparison with other activities. Eman explained this as follows:

> I prefer to use the time of the class on important things such as grammar. We give more time for teaching grammar because the exams concentrate on grammar. (EI.3:99-102)

I probed on why the exams concentrate on the grammar activities:

> We cannot test the students in the speaking and writing skills. The concentration of the exams is on grammar. In the exam, I cannot ask the students to talk or write about anything. If I do this, the whole class will fail. The exams depend on the things that students can memorize. In the exams, students expect the teacher to ask them about things they have already memorized. Therefore, the students depend on memorization. The students memorize the grammatical rules, and use these grammatical rules in the exams. They write some grammatical rules in sentences. Frankly, the writing and speaking activities are not included in the exams. The exams concentrate on grammar questions. Students memorize these questions. Every thing depends on memorization. (EI.3:191-199)

In addition to the mismatch between the focus of the exams and the skills covered in the curriculum, Eman claimed that a lack of resources forced her to omit the listening activities. Although she felt that the listening activities are important in enhancing the students' English language abilities, she suggested that omitting the listening activities has no effect on the implementation of the other parts of the curriculum:

> The cassettes are not available to us. Therefore, we cancel the listening activities. The good thing about the listening section is that the cancellation of the listening activities will not affect the other parts of the curriculum such as grammar, writing, and speaking. If you cancel the listening activities, these parts of the curriculum will not be affected, but certainly we are losing an important thing. Surely, the listening section is important. It will add something. It will make an addition. (EI.3:171-176)

Further discussion of this issue, though, revealed mixed views about the listening activities. She felt that the listening activities are important, and described the kinds of obstacles which made it difficult to implement the listening activities suggested by the curriculum:

> The most important thing about the listening activities is that when the students listen to the tapes, they will have the ability to comprehend what is on the tape. Also, the listening activities will improve the student's pronunciation. Students will understand the various levels of speech such as the stress, intonation, and how to make questions. These things are important for the students, but unfortunately we do not have the tapes. If you enter to the classrooms, you will not find plugs. If the cassettes are available for me, I may use them, but they are not available. Even if the cassettes are available, how am I going to use them? We do not have plugs in the classes. All the classes in the school have no plugs. Some of the classes have no electricity either. All the teachers cancel the listening activities. (EI.3:178-187)

At the same time, she did not mind the cancellation of the listening activities:

> Nobody cares about the listening activities. The students do not complain for not teaching them the listening activities and the teachers do not care for not having the cassettes to teach the listening activities. If the educational authorities provide us with the cassettes, we will have extra work load, and we will be forced to teach the listening activities. Frankly, I think it is ok as long as we do not have the cassettes because we are having an excuse for not teaching the listening activities. What we have is enough. We do not want extra work load.

(EI.3:189-195)

Thus, although a lack of resources prevented Eman from teaching the listening activities, at the same time she was glad that this was the case as it gave her a legitimate excuse to omit these activities.

5.2.7 Lack of understanding the curriculum principles

One key principle regarding the teaching of writing suggested in the teachers' book is that the process of writing is as important as the end result because it is during the process of writing that learning takes places; and that students should be encouraged to work together, to help each other with note taking and editing, and to produce work with a communicative purpose. I asked Eman to reflect on these principles regarding the teaching of writing: She commented

> I just explain the instructions of the writing task and I ask the students to do the writing task at home. When the students bring their writing to the class, we do the error correction as a class. This is my approach of teaching writing in general. Frankly this is my approach. When the students bring their writing to the class, I then concentrate on the mistakes in general. (EI.3:79-88)

She went on to say:

> To consider the teaching of writing as a process is a new idea for me. To observe how the students do the writing itself is a new idea. I do not have any ideas about considering the teaching of writing as a process..... I do not have an idea about what the curriculum suggests regarding the teaching of writing. In the class, I prefer to teach grammar...I think I may waste time if I just ask the students to write, and sit on a chair waiting for the students to finish their writing. Writing can be done at home. (EI.3:69-75)

One factor behind the lack of congruence between Eman's practices and the curriculum principles was then her lack of understanding of the curriculum principles. This is something Eman acknowledged during the interviews:

> I think as teachers we still do not understand the ideas of this curriculum. We are still not given any explanations as to how to effectively teach this curriculum. When I finished the university I was appointed in this school. During the university they did not teach us how to teach. They just gave us information

about English grammar, and phonetics, but they did not teach us how to deal with the students or how to convey the information you have to the students. When I first came to this school, the principal of the school told me that they have a shortage of teachers at the secondary level, and asked me to teach at the second secondary level. It was my first time to see the curriculum. I had no idea of how to deal with this curriculum. I think this curriculum is still difficult for the teachers. I cannot say that I implement what is suggested by the curriculum. I try but sometimes, I get confused, and skip the things which I do not understand or I cannot implement. (EI.1:140-152)

When I asked Eman if she had taken any training sessions to support her deal with this curriculum, she commented:

> I only attended two summer sessions which were run by the English language inspectors, but in my idea these sessions were not useful. There were very short sessions only about one week. Do you think one week is enough to prepare teachers to deal with this curriculum? Also, the people who ran these sessions were not qualified enough to provide us with ideas about this curriculum. As I told you some of these inspectors still do not understand this curriculum. They themselves need training of how to deal with this curriculum. When they (the inspectors) come to our classes, they tell us not to use Arabic in the class, but they do not give us any rationale or reasons for not using Arabic. I try to do what they tell me, but as soon as they leave the class, I do what I am used to doing. The problem is that when the inspectors come to observe us in the class, they focus on the weakness of the teacher, and often criticize the teacher. They do not give any support or guidance to the teacher. (EI.1:154-162)

Additional several factors thus influenced Eman's practices: a lack of understanding the curriculum, particular beliefs about language teaching and learning, and lack of training.

5.3 Summary

This chapter has presented the work of Eman during the lessons I observed with her. It also provided an account of the rationale which underpinned Emas's practices during these lessons. Throughout this chapter, the various factors which had an impact of Eman's implementation of the curriculum have been presented. Eman's practices were largely incongruent with the intended curriculum. This was especially evident in the teaching of the reading and writing, the omission of the speaking and listening

activities, the frequent use of Arabic, the absence of pair work during most classroom activities, and the constant focus on error correction. In Table 5.1 I summarize the extent to which Eman's practices were congruent with the intended curriculum.

The interviews highlighted factors which explain why in many cases Eman's practices were not in line with the intended curriculum. These factors included a range of beliefs about language teaching and learning as well as additional contextual factors such as students' English language abilities, the lack of resources, the role of the exams, the inspectors sent by the Ministry of Education, and the lack of support and guidance A key issue relevant to understanding Eman's work was her lack of information she acknowledged having with regard to the thinking behind the curriculum. In Table 5.2 I summarize the factors which underpinned Eman's work during the lessons I observed with her.

Table 5.1 The intended curriculum and Eman's practices

Focus	Intended Curriculum	Eman's practices
Reading	▪ Aims to develop the sub skills of prediction, inference, reading for gist, and reading for specific information. ▪ Aims to teach the students how to work out the meanings from context. ▪ Aims to make use of the text by involving the students in discussion, relating the theme of the text to themselves.	▪ Reading word by word and sentence by sentence. ▪ Focus on reading aloud. ▪ Focus on word meaning. ▪ Focus on Arabic translation. ▪ Focus on pronunciation. ▪ No task completion by the students ▪ Omission of the after reading activities.
Grammar	▪ Encourages students to discover grammatical points through examples of the target language used in variety of situations. ▪ Work on grammar analysis follows after students recognize the grammatical points. ▪ Develops accurate use of the target language in productive situations.	▪ Omission of the introductory grammar activities. ▪ Using example to illustrate the grammatical points. ▪ Focus on explicit grammar analysis. ▪ Using Arabic in grammar analysis.
Functions	▪ Encourages students to use the vocabulary and grammar they have learned in functions such as suggesting, advising, and telling a story.	▪ Focus on form. ▪ Focus on reading aloud. ▪ Focus on correcting students' pronunciation mistakes.
Listening	▪ Aims to develop the sub skills of prediction, inference, listening for gist, and listening for specific information. ▪ Aims to develop confidence and competence in listening comprehension.	▪ Omission of the whole listening section.
Speaking	▪ Aims to activate the language students already have learned. ▪ Aims to promote fluent communication and making talking in English a regular activity among the students. ▪ Aims to build confidence and fluency. ▪ Error correction is not recommended during the speaking stage.	▪ Changing the speaking activities into writing, and asking the students to do the writing at home.
Writing	▪ Aims to develop the language and grammar students have already learned through producing longer pieces of writing. ▪ Considers the process of writing as important as the end result because it is during the process that learning takes a place. ▪ Encourages students to work together, to help each other with note taking and editing, and to produce work with a communicative purpose.	▪ No chances for the students to work together to do the writing activities. ▪ Focus on error correction. ▪ Asking students' to correct students' grammatical mistakes while they read their writing.
Pair work	▪ Considers pair work as a good opportunity for the students to speak the target language. ▪ Advices the teacher to give many opportunities for the students to work together during each unit.	▪ Absence of pair work during classroom activities.

Table 5.2 Factors influencing Eman's practices

Factor	Description
Beliefs about what is reading	▪ Reading means you read and pronounce the words correctly.
Beliefs about the teaching of reading	▪ The purpose of teaching reading is to teach the students how to pronounce the words correctly.
Attitudes towards pair work	▪ Pair work has no advantages. ▪ Pair work is a waste of time.
Attitudes towards the use of Arabic	▪ Using Arabic is easier for the teacher. ▪ The use of Arabic facilitates the teaching of grammar. ▪ The important thing is that students get the message, and it does not matter whether in English or in Arabic.
Beliefs about error correction	▪ Students' mistakes should be corrected immediately. ▪ It is good if the students' can correct each other's mistakes.
Classroom expectations	▪ The focus is always on the teacher. ▪ The teacher does every thing in the classroom. ▪ Classroom interaction is between the teacher and individual students or between the teacher and the whole class. ▪ The students are not used to working with each other.
The role of the exams	▪ Both the teacher and the students focus on the activities which are included in the exam and ignore the activities which are not. ▪ Exams focus on grammar and ignore other curriculum activities such as speaking and writing activities.
Lack of resources	▪ Lack of facilities which facilitate the teaching of the listening section.
Lack of understanding the curriculum principles	▪ Teachers still do not understand the ideas of the curriculum. ▪ Teachers are not given the explanations as to how to teach the curriculum effectively. ▪ The curriculum is still difficult for the teachers.
Eman's prior experience	▪ During the university the focus was only on English grammar and phonetics. ▪ During Eman's previous language learning, teachers used to stop students to correct their grammatical and pronunciation mistakes when they make mistakes.
Inspectors	▪ Inspectors are not qualified to give teachers ideas about the curriculum. ▪ Inspectors themselves need training of how to deal with this curriculum. ▪ Inspectors evaluate the teacher, but they do not give support and guidance to the teacher.
Perceptions about the training sessions	▪ The training sessions do not qualify the teachers to teach the curriculum.

CHAPTER 6: MURAD

At the time of the study Murad had a BA in English. He graduated from an English department of a university in Libya in 1988. At the time of his graduation, English language teaching already had been banned in Libya (see Chapter 1). During the ban, Murad taught social science at the preparatory stage. Murad returned to English language in 1994 when the Libyan government started to reintroduce English language teaching into its school system. Murad taught different English language curricula before the introduction of the new curriculum both at the preparatory level and the secondary level.

At the time of the study Murad worked in a state secondary school for boys between 15 and 19 years of age, and taught English at the second secondary level. He taught two classes at the same level. Each class had four English lessons of 45 minutes each per week. During the lessons I observed with Murad, the students were 16-17 years old, and the number of the students ranged from 20 to 30. Students had already completed three years of basic English in the preparatory stage and one year of intermediate English in the secondary stage. Students in Murad's class were sitting in desks which were arranged in three rows facing the board.

6.1 Murad's practices

The lessons I observed with Murad were from the core section of the first unit of second secondary level. These are the same materials I saw Nora and Eman teaching, and Murad's practices did in fact reflect many of those we saw in Chapters 4 and 5. In the following sections, I present a detailed account of what Murad did during the lessons I observed with him.

6.1.1 The reading lessons

As I discussed earlier, (see Chapters 4 and 5), the reading lessons in the course books are divided into before reading, while reading and after reading activities. Murad started teaching unit 1 by writing the title (Global Village) of the unit on the board. Then he asked the students about the meaning of the title. When the students could not answer him, Murad started to explain the meaning of global village. He used both English and Arabic to do this. After explaining the meaning of the title of the unit, Murad started to deal with the discussion questions in the pre-reading questions as described in the following episode.

> Episode 6.1
> T: This is a picture. Look at the picture here. What is happening in the picture? What can you see in the picture? What can you see in the picture?
> The students start talking about the picture in Arabic.
> T: In English, in English.
> S: Crash.
> T: Crash. Ok a crash. You can see a crash. Desert crash. A plane crashed in the desert. So what is happening later after the plane had crashed? What had happened?
> T: How many people are there? How many people are there? There are three, one, two, three, four, and six. What are they doing? What are they doing? There are three soldiers. What are the soldiers are doing? Who can tell me what are the soldiers in the picture are doing?
> The teacher is waiting for the class to answer his question.
> The teacher uses Arabic to talk about the picture.
> The students started to talk about what is happening in the picture in Arabic.
> T: OK, what is the meaning of pilot? Pilot. The two soldiers are carrying the pilot of the plane. You know plane.
> One of the students gives the equivalent of pilot in Arabic. (MR O.1:36-52).

The above episode illustrates that Murad tried to engage the students in discussing the pre-reading questions by helping them with vocabulary and ideas, but the students were not able to engage in the discussion using English. When the teacher used Arabic, the students started to engage in the discussion in Arabic. The discussion of

further pre-reading questions followed this pattern.

Then Murad started the while you read activities. He first read the text aloud. He read word by word and sentence by sentence. While he was reading aloud, he frequently translated into Arabic, and stopped on some grammatical points to ask the students to explain these. After reading aloud the whole text, he selected individual students to read aloud. While individual students were reading aloud, Murad frequently stopped them to check their comprehension of the words and to correct their pronunciation. Students demonstrated their comprehension of the words by translating theme into Arabic. These patterns were repeated throughout the reading of the text.

Then Murad started the while you read activities. According to the textbook, students should discuss three titles to choose the best title for the text. This is done after the students had already read the text very quickly. Episode 6.2 sheds light on how Murad dealt with this part of the reading lesson:

Episode 6.2

T: Choose the best title for the text. Number one the title number one machines and people. Number two the story of telecommunications. Three here is the news. Which one is the best? Which one is the best title for the text?

S: Two.

T: Why did you choose number two? Why Mustafa? Why do not you choose number one, or three? Machines and people. You know machine. What is the meaning of machine? Machine.

S: (In Arabic) The student says the equivalent of the word machine.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher says the equivalent of machine.

T: Machines and people.

T: (In Arabic) Here it says machines and people.

T: (In Arabic) What does it mean?

The students answer in Arabic.

T: (In Arabic) Here it says that you choose one of the three titles.

T: (In Arabic), Number one machines and people, two the story of communication.

The students repeat the previous in Arabic.

T: Choose the best one for the text.

The teacher is waiting for the class to answer but there is no response from the students.

T: (In Arabic) Ok the best title for the text is number 2.

T: (In Arabic) The story of telecommunications is the best title for the text.

(MR O.3:22-45).

The above episode illustrates that the students were not able to do the activity. Although Murad used Arabic, there was little participation by the students during this activity. The second while you read activity required the students to focus on a diagram below the reading text (see Appendix 2, p.244). The diagram contains pictures of telecommunications. Some pictures are labelled; others only have the pictures without the names. The students are required to scan the text quickly to find the missing names. In the following section, I illustrate how Murad taught this activity:

Episode 6.3

T: look at the diagram again. Find the missing names in the text. Find the missing names in the texT: Look at the diagram. Where is the diagram? On page five, and find the missing names.

T: Yes missing names. Miss.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher says the equivalent of missing names.

The teacher points to the diagram.

T: Here number two is missing, number thirteen is missing, number fifteen is missing, and number twelve is missing. These are the missing names.

T: look at the diagram, and find the missing names in the text. So let us go to the text and find the missing words in the diagram.

T: (In Arabic) Read the text and find the missing names.

The teacher waits for the students to do the activity, but the students do not seem to be able to.

The teacher starts reading the text. He reads aloud.

T: Follow with me.

The teacher talks to the whole class.

The students are following the teacher while he reads.

The teacher reads the text from the beginning and reads sentence by sentence.

T: (While he reads) Radio this is one of the missing words. Underline it.

T: (In Arabic) What is the meaning of underline?

The teacher writes the word radio on the board.

The teacher continues reading. He stops at the word telephone in the text.

The teacher writes the word telephone on the board.

The teacher continues reading and stops at the missing words.

The teacher writes the missing words on the board.

The students copy the missing words from the board. (MR O.3:48-69)

In the above activity, students should have scanned the text to find the missing words, but it was the teacher who read the text and located the missing words. The only role the students had during this activity was copying what the teacher wrote on the board. During this activity the teacher occasionally used English though this could have been the result of my presence in the class. However, students seem unable to say any thing in English during this activity.

The third part of the while you read activity required the students to work out the meaning of words from the context. These words are mobile, signals and planet. Students are expected to read the sentences where these words appear, and then explain the meanings of these words in their own words. Murad instructed the students to do this activity as homework.

Then Murad started the after you read activities which are divided into three parts. Episode 6.4 presents an account of how Murad dealt with the first after you read activity:

Episode 6.4

The teacher reads from the text book.

T: Look at the reporter at the desert rescue. Explain how her story will travel to peoples' homes.

T: In the top of page 4.

T: (In Arabic) What is the meaning of top?

T: Top of page 4 you can see a reporter. Have you seen the reporter? Explain, explain how the story will travel to the world.

T: How can people know the story of the desert crash? How can they know the story of the crash?

T: Have you got the idea?

The teacher repeats the question in Arabic.

T: In top of page 4 you can see a reporter. She is making a report.

T: How the story will travel to peoples' homes?

The teacher repeats the question in Arabic.

S: (In Arabic) By satellite.

T: By communication satellite system. Communication satellite system.

The teacher writes on the board and reads what he writes. He wrote the following:

The reporter is speaking to the camera. The signals travel to the mobile satellite links.

This satellite mobile links send the signals to communication satellite.

T: Is it clear?

The teacher reads aloud what he wrote on the board and translates what he wrote into Arabic.

The students repeat the Arabic translation after the teacher.

T: Write the answer from the blackboard.

The students are copying what the teacher has written on the board. (MR O.3: 96-115)

In the course book, this activity is a pair work activity. Students should work in pairs to prepare a description of how news stories travel to the world. However, as the above episode showed, Murad did not instruct the students to do the activity in pairs. Although Murad encouraged the students to talk about how news stories travel across the word, it was evident that the students were not able to do the activity. It was Murad who did the activity, and the students' role was to copy what Murad had written on the board.

The second after you read activity required the students to locate some sentences in the text and to explain these sentences in their own words. The teachers' book advises the teacher to encourage the students to discuss their ideas with their partners, and to give their own interpretations. The third activity of the after reading activities required the students to discuss a statement from the reading text. This activity is about whether the communications revolution will make the world a kinder a friendlier, more peaceful place. During this activity free discussion is encouraged. However, Murad skipped both the second and the third activities of the after you read activities during the

lessons I observed with him.

6.1.2 The grammar lesson

Students in Unit 1 study adjectives and adverbs. First they should role play an interview where students can see the use of adjectives and adverbs. Then, they work in pairs to describe some characteristics in a picture. This is followed by further practice in description. Focus on grammar analysis follows these introductory activities.

The way Murad started the grammar activities was to some extent in line with the suggested curriculum principles regarding teaching grammar as he did not directly work on grammar analysis. Murad started by focusing on the introductory grammar activities. However, there was no pair work during these activities and the students worked individually.

After finishing the introductory grammar activities, Murad started working on grammar analysis. The following episode illustrates Murad's work during this part of the lesson:

Episode 6.5

The teacher writes on the board and reads what he writes.

T: Mohamed is a kind man. Mohamed is a kind man. Mohamed is a kind man, but Ali is kinder than Mohamed.

T: We compare between Mohamed and Ali. Compare, compare, compare.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher says the equivalent of compare.

T: (In Arabic) What is the meaning of adjective comparative?.

The teacher answers in Arabic.

T: (In Arabic) Here we have one kind of adjectives.

T: What is the meaning of kind?

T: (In Arabic) The teacher says the equivalent of kind.

T: Kinder than.

T: (In Arabic) This is the comparative adjective.

The teacher writes on the board, and reads what he is writing.

T: He is a friendly boy. He is a friendly boy. Ok he is a friendly boy or Ali is a friendly boy, but Ahmed is more friendly than Ali.

T: (In Arabic) The explanation here will make it clear.

T: One syllable adjective, one syllable adjective.

T: (In Arabic) What is the meaning of one.

SS: The students answer in Arabic.

T: (in Arabic) What is the meaning of syllable.

SS. (In Arabic) The students say the equivalent of syllable. (MR.O.5:16-37)

The key patterns which emerge from the above episode are the use of examples to illustrate the grammatical points, and the frequent use of Arabic to illustrate these points. These two patterns were frequently repeated during Murad's work on grammar analysis.

6.1.3 The functions and the listening lesson

As I indicated in Chapters 4 and 5, the functions activities in Unit one encourage the students to use the vocabulary and the grammar they studied in telling a story. First students work in pairs to organize the order of jumbled pictures. Then, they work in pairs to write notes about these pictures, and after that they take turns in telling the story. The teacher at this stage is advised to move around the class to provide assistance as needed. It is recommended that during this stage, the teacher should note common mistakes, and later explain these and give extra practice.

Murad started the functions activities by explaining the instructions of the first activity in. He then selected a pair of the students to do this activity. The following episode shows what happened during this activity:

Episode 6.6

The teacher selects two students.

T: Yes Mustafa and Ahmad. Stand up, stand up both of you. Mustafa which one comes first?

S: I think B comes first.

T: I think picture B comes first. What will he say? I think so too.

T: Ok another pair.

T: (In Arabic) Another pair.

The teacher selects two students, and interacts with them individually.

T: Which one comes second?

S: I think number D.

T: I think D comes second. Ok I think D comes second.

T: Yes Sallah.

S: I think so.

T: I think so too. I think so too. Ok thank you. (MR.O.6:47-58)

The above episode raises questions about Murad's notion of pair work. Although Murad selected two students to do the activity, there was no student to student interaction during this activity. Students did not work together during this activity as recommended by the course book. The type of interaction during this activity was teacher–student interaction. Asking two students to stand up and interacting with them on an individual basis was a common practice during this activity.

As I mentioned above, the second part of the functions activity required the students to work in pairs to write notes about the pictures which they have already organized. I now present an episode which shows how Murad dealt with this part of the lesson:

Episode 6.7

The teacher reads from the text book.

T: First write notes with your partner.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher says the equivalent of notes.

T: Write notes with your partner, with your partner. The student which sitting beside you.

T: Write two or three short notes for each picture, two or three short notes.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher says the equivalent of short notes.

The teacher talks about the first picture.

T: Omar is trying to start the motor. Omar is trying to start the motor, but nothing happened.

T: Ok, the second one, Omar and Huda went fishing, and they say, they said, said goodbye.

The teacher gives instructions in Arabic of how to make a story about the two pictures he already explained.

T: Practice the story with your partner.

T: (In Arabic) Practice the story with your partner.

T: Try to prepare or to write at home or at your homes.

T: (In Arabic) When go home try to follow these steps and make a story, a story about Huda and her brother Omar. Ok.

T: (In Arabic) Prepare the story, and next class I will ask you to read the story in front of the class, and we will listen to you and correct mistakes if there are any mistakes. (MR.O.6:125:149)

Again episode 6.7 illustrates that Murad's practices did not concur with the recommended practices for teaching this activity. The above activity should have been done in pairs. Students should have been given a chance to work together during this activity, but as episode 6.7 illustrates students did not have an active role during this activity. Students seemed to be unfamiliar with pair work activities. Again I want to emphasize that the students' lack of response and lack of engagement were common features during the lessons I observed with Murad.

Work on the listening activities follows the functions activities. The listening activities are divided into before you listen activities, while you listen activities, and after you listen activities. In the before you listen activities, students are introduced to a picture where two girls are calling each other on the telephone. Students are asked where these girls are. What can they see from the pictures? Then, they are asked what they already know about the two girls and their families.

In the while you listen activities, students are asked to read some questions and they are asked to answer these questions while they are listening to the tapes. Then the students listen to the tape again. This time, they are given some expressions, and they are asked to identify which of these expressions they hear. The students listen to the tape again to collect time words and expressions, and add them to their vocabulary book. After students have collected some information, they are then asked to individually retell the story they had already listened to.

During the lessons I observed with Murad there were no cassettes used in the

class. Murad started the listening activities by reading the tape script from the teachers' book. The following episode illustrates how Murad started the listening activities:

Episode 6.8

The teacher reads from the text book, page 9 (see Appendix 2, p. 248).

T: Listen and answer these questions. Listen and answer these questions.

The teacher reads from the text book page 9.

T: One who is at home? Who is away from home? Two what else do you learn about Mona's family?

T: So Now I will read the script and you just, just listen.

T: (In Arabic) I will read the text and you listen.

The teacher reads the tape script from the teacher's book. The students are listening to the teacher while he reads.

The students do not have this script in front of them, it is not available in their text book, and they only listen to the teacher while he is reading.

The students are listening to the teacher without taking notes while they are listening.

The teacher finishes reading the tape script.

T: Ok this is the script or tape script.

T: (In Arabic) This is the conversation between Mona and Huda.

T: Ok A, Who is at home? Who is at home? Who is at home? Who is at home?

The teacher asks the students some questions but the students are not able to answer

T: Huda, ok. Huda is at home, ok Huda is at home. (MR.O.7:9-20)

As the above episode shows, Murad skipped the pre-listening activities, and directly started the while listening activities. However, Murad practices during the while listening activities were to some extent congruent with the curriculum principles. Although Murad did not use cassettes during the listening activities, he read the tape scripts several times, and asked the students to answer some questions after doing so. However, during the lessons I observed with Murad it was evident that students had little participation during the listening activities. Most of the listening activities were done by the teacher.

As I mentioned above, the after listening activity requires the students to tell the story of the tape after they had listened to it several times. Although Murad read the

tape script several times and asked the students to retell the story, it was evident that the students were not able to do this activity or were not willing to participate in the activity. The following episode illustrates this:

Episode 6.9

The teacher reads from the text book.

T: Four, after you listen. Tell the story in Hassan's words.

T: Suppose you are Hassan, and you are telling the story.

T: (In Arabic) What is the meaning of suppose?

T: (In Arabic) The teacher says the equivalent of suppose.

T: Suppose you are Hassan, and you telling the story. What will you say, or what would you say? What has happened with Hassan? He fell into one of his grandparents' cistern.

T: Suppose you are Hassan. Tell us the story.

T: Try, Just try.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher says the equivalent of try.

T: If you are Hassan, what will you say or what will you tell us about what has happened with you yesterday?

The teacher tries to engage the students in the activity, but the students do not respond to the teacher

T: Yes, Yes, I fell over; I fell over near my grandparents' cistern. It was open, it was open. (in Arabic, it was open), and I fell in, and I fell in, then I was in the water, then I was in the water, and it was very dark, dark. I shouted for help, o shouted for help. After that Mona heard me, Mona heard me. She came to the cistern and threw the end of rope to me. (The teacher says the equivalent of rope in Arabic), ok. She threw the end of the rope to me, then she called dad and granddad. They pulled me out of the cistern.

T: (In Arabic) This is the story in Hassan's words. (MR.O.7:58-73)

As can be seen from the above episode, the activity was done by the teacher, and the students were silent throughout although the teacher did encourage the students to participate. This pattern was repeated throughout the listening activities.

6.1.4 The speaking lesson

During the lessons, I observed with Murad, students had no opportunity to do the speaking activities in the class. Murad read the instructions of the speaking activities and asked the students to do these activities as homework. Then he quickly moved on to

the writing lesson.

6.1.5 The writing lesson

Murad's practices in relation to the writing activities were similar to those of the speaking activities. He read the instructions of the writing activity, and asked the students to do the writing activity as homework. Students did not have the opportunity to work together to do the writing activities.

6.2 Factors influencing Murad's practices

The interviews provided an opportunity for Murad to talk about his classroom practices, and to express his views regarding the implementation of the curriculum he is teaching. The interviews highlighted a number of factors which had an impact on Murad's implementation of the curriculum. In the following sections, I present an account of what Murad had to say during the interviews. I cover the following themes: beliefs about the teaching of reading, students' English language level, students' willingness and expectations, teachers' abilities, attitudes towards the use of Arabic, and focus on error correction.

6.2.1 Beliefs about the teaching of reading

The observational data showed that Murad started the reading lessons by focusing on the discussion questions of the pre-reading activity. Murad felt that the discussion questions assist the students' comprehension of the unit:

> Before we start the unit, I should deal with the discussion questions of the pre-reading activity. The pre-reading activity helps the students to understand the theme of the unit. Students can guess the topic of the unit from the pre-reading activity. It prepares the students for the unit. For example in this unit we have questions which discuss the issue of telecommunications. I should deal with these questions first even before I open the text book. (MR I.2:9-13)

Although Murad's perceptions of the purpose of the pre-reading activity appeared to be in line with the curriculum, there were some aspects of Murad's

practices during the reading lesson which conflicted with the intended curriculum. This was particularly evident during the while you read activities. Murad read the text word by word and frequently translated into Arabic. Murad explained the rationale for these practices:

> I read the whole text first. When I read the text, I concentrate on the pronunciation of the words in the reading text; I explain the new words to the students. It is very important for the students to know the meaning of each word in the text because words in the text are connected to each other. If the student does know the meaning of the word he may not understand the meaning of the sentence in which this word appears. (MR I.2:79-84)

Murad also justified his focus on word pronunciation while he was dealing with the reading text:

> I concentrate on the pronunciation of the words, and on explaining the meaning of the words. It is very important for the students to learn the correct pronunciation of the words. We as teachers lack the ability to pronounce correctly. As I told you before there is no teacher development. Sometimes we go to the TV to listen to the pronunciation of some words. You may have seen in your observations that I sometimes mispronounce some words. This is what I do in reading. The first step I concentrate on the pronunciation of the words, then the next step I concentrate on the meaning of the words. I read the text word by word. (MR I.2:86-94)

The data illustrate the impact of teachers' beliefs on their classroom practices. Although the curriculum encourages purposeful reading activities, Murad adopted practices which appeared to be in line with his beliefs about what skillful reading involves, but not in line with the curriculum recommended practices regarding how reading should be taught. Murad's reference to his own pronunciation skills is important too, a point I return to in 6.2.4.

6.2.2 Students' English language level

A key theme that emerged from the interviews was the students' English language level. When Murad reflected upon his practices, he frequently referred to this factor as having an influence on his implementation of the curriculum:

> The students do not have background in English. This has an effect on our implementation of the curriculum. The weak level of the students hinders our implementation of the curriculum. As you have seen in the global village unit, I spent more than three classes just in the beginning of the unit. I should explain everything in English The students should use English, but we are forced to use Arabic because of the level of the students. (MR. I .2:20-25)

Classroom observation showed that Murad often skipped the activities which require the students to speak English. Murad also referred to the students' level in justifying the omission of these activities:

> I find difficulties in the discussion activities. These activities require the student to speak. Activities such as talking about a picture, you see that there is speaking skill in this activity. The students either feel shy to speak or they do not have background in English. They do not have knowledge in English. They do not have vocabulary to do the discussion activity. This hinders the teacher's implementation of the curriculum. (MR I .2:108-113)

Murad felt pressured for time: students' level, he felt, slowed his progress even further:

> This curriculum focuses on the student. The student should work a lot, but as you have seen it is the teacher who does the work. This curriculum does not work for this kind of students that we have in our schools. The students' English level hinders my implementation of the curriculum. I am restricted with time. I have to finish three or four units in one term, but as you have seen I sometimes spend fifteen to twenty minutes in explaining the meaning of one word. This slows my implementation of the curriculum. The time is not enough, and also the student does not help you in your implementation of the curriculum. Did you understand what I mean? I am restricted with specific time. (MR I.3:29-37)

As classroom observations showed, students did not have the chance to do the speaking activities in the class, Murad asked the students to do this activity as homework. Again the students' English language level was a crucial factor in Murad's decision here:

> I did not do the speaking activity in the class because as I told you, there is no student who can do this activity. I told the students to prepare this speaking activity at home because at home they will have more time to do the activity. At home they may be able to do the activity, but here in the class, the students cannot do the activity. But when I asked the students if they prepared the story at home, I did not find any one who prepared the story at home. (MR I.3:235-241)

As we have seen, Murad's perceptions of the students' English language abilities had a crucial impact on his implementation of the curriculum. He believed some of the curriculum activities were beyond the students' English language abilities and therefore Murad decided to skip these activities.

6.2.3 Students' willingness and expectations

Murad's case points to a mismacth between the curriculum's expectations and the students' willingness to study English. The curriculum focuses on the students and requires them to actively engage in the classroom activities. However, as Murad noted students may not have the enthusiasm and the courage to do what the curriculum requires them to do:

> They (students) do not have the courage to stand up in the class and speak in the class. Even if they know the answer, they do not want to participate. Students are shy. They don't have the courage to do such activities which require them to speak. In our classes, the student takes the role of the listener. All the work has to be done by the teacher. (MR. I.3:15-19)

The absence of pair work was a key characteristic of Murad's practices during the lessons I observed. Although Murad expressed positive attitudes towards the use of pair, the students' unwillingness to participate in pair work was a crucial factor in the absence of such work in his lessons:

> I know this curriculum encourages pair work. Pair work is a good thing. In pair work students get used to conversation, they get used to speaking. However, we do not have students who can do pair work activities. Students do not have the willingness to participate in pair work. They feel shy to stand and speak in front of the class. They are careless. I try to encourage students to use English, but students do not care about using English. I tried pair work with several classes, but it did not work. (MR. I .2:65-73)

Murad suggested that the students' unwillingness was the result of their past English language learning experience:

> The students are not used to working in pairs. They were not use to working in pairs during their past experience of learning English. During first preparatory, second preparatory, third preparatory, and first secondary students were not used

> to working in pairs. Students should have done pair work activities in the past so when they come to second secondary they will be ready to do pair work. (MR. I.3:177-181)

Classroom observation showed that most of the classroom activities were done by the teacher. For example, during the listening lesson, there were no tasks performed by the students while and after the teacher read the tape scripts. Once again, Murad explained this by referring to the students' unwillingness:

> As I told you, it is the same thing in all the stages of the unit. In all stages of the unit, it is only one or two students who interact with me. There are many students who even do not have the willingness to study English at all. For example in unit one the curriculum suggests that the students tell each other a story. This is a speaking activity, but our students cannot do this kind of activity. Therefore I am forced to do the activity; the students cannot do it. It is the same thing in the listening activities. I read the tape scripts and the students listen to me. (MR I.3:227-233)

Murad also explained students' behaviour in terms of their expectations:

> The teacher does everything in the classroom. This is what students are used to. It is not only in the English subject, but it is in all of school subjects. How do we expect the students to change their behaviour in the English subject? The students come to the school to listen to the teacher. They just sit and write down what the teacher says. I cannot force the students to change their behaviour. This is what the students are used to for many years. (MR I.3:254-239)

Students' expectations about who does what in the classroom thus conflict with the role the curriculum expects them to assume. Many of the activities in the curriculum require the students to engage in discussing topics, do role plays, and work together during classroom activities. However, it seems that the students come to the classroom with the assumption that their role is to sit, and to listen to what the teacher says. This incompatibility between the students' expectations and the curriculum requirements appears to be an obstacle to the effective implementation of the curriculum.

6.2.4 Teachers' abilities

In addition to the students' weak level of English, and their unwillingness to engage in the classroom activities, Murad expressed some concerns regarding the competence of the teachers:

> What is suggested in the teachers' book needs a prepared student, and a prepared teacher. The teacher is not prepared for this curriculum. He is not trained to teach this curriculum. The teachers are not qualified to teach this curriculum. (MR I.2:32-35)

I asked Murad to elaborate what he means by the teachers are not qualified to teach this curriculum. He commented:

> Teachers are not prepared for this curriculum. You can say they do not have an idea about this curriculum. The teachers don't have the teaching skills to teach this curriculum. There are no training sessions to train the teachers to teach this curriculum. (MR I.2:37-39)

Murad also criticized the way this curriculum was introduced to the teachers:

> The introduction of this curriculum was unplanned. We did not have any training when we started teaching the new curriculum. Many teachers had already quit teaching when they were asked to teach this curriculum. We did not have any idea about this curriculum when it was introduced to the schools. The government asked the teachers to teach but it did not prepare them for teaching this curriculum. Perhaps some teachers had a chance to attend some training sessions, but I do not think they were enough to prepare the teachers to teach this kind of this curriculum. (MR I.1:14-11)

I asked Murad how he felt when he moved from teaching the old curriculum to this curriculum:

> This depends on the teacher himself. If the teacher prepares himself, and studies the curriculum, he can teach this curriculum. If the teacher does not prepare himself well for this curriculum, he cannot teach it. I know some teachers who quit teaching because they could not teach it. The teacher has to depend on himself. Here nobody cares about the teachers' needs. As a teacher, you have to depend on yourself. I tried to study the curriculum very well. I sometimes check the teacher's book, and see what it requires the teacher to do, but I think what is suggested in the teachers' book requires a well prepared teacher as well as good students who can do what is suggested in the curriculum. This curriculum is excellent. I have nothing to say about it, but as I told you the students and the

> teachers are still not prepared for this kind of curriculum. (MR I.1:23-33)

Murad clearly felt that the curriculum made demands on teachers, and that careful preparation and training was required for teachers to meet these challenges. It is interesting that despite the lack of compatibility between students and teachers on the one hand, and the curriculum on the other hand, Murad still said the curriculum was excellent.

6.2.5 Attitudes towards the use of Arabic

The frequent use of Arabic was another key characteristic during the lessons I observed with Murad. When I asked Murad to reflect on this issue, he appeared to have mixed views. On the one hand, he suggested that the right thing is to minimize the use of Arabic:

> The teacher's book suggests that we do not translate everything into Arabic. Not any thing should be translated into Arabic. The difficult things only should be translated into Arabic, but the level of the students forces me to use too much Arabic in the class. This is a class for teaching English, and teachers should use English more than Arabic. The right thing is that we should use English, but when I realize that the student cannot comprehend what I am saying in English, I then translate what I am saying into Arabic. For example, I first explain the word in English, but if I realize that the student cannot comprehend my explanation of the word in English; I then translate the word into Arabic. Translation is a negative thing, but it is a quick solution because I have to finish the curriculum. (MR I.2:55-64)

On the other hand, Murad expressed views that seemed to be incompatible with the curriculum principles which aim to make talking in English a regular activity among the students.

> I cannot blame the students for not using English. English is not their specialty. They (students) study English only as a school subject. English is just like other school subjects. Why should I blame the student for speaking in Arabic in the class? If the students' subject is English, then we should insist on them to use English. Why should students care about the use of English since it is not their subject? (MR I.3: 53-57)

When it comes to teaching grammar, the use of Arabic seemed to be essential in Murad's views:

> I usually use Arabic when I teach grammar because the grammatical rules in this curriculum are above the students' level. If you want to teach grammar in English there are many things that the students will not comprehend. It is difficult to teach grammar using English. In grammar, there are many details which the students need to understand. I use Arabic so the students can understand these details. (MR I.3:129:133)

I asked Murad to reflect further on the issue of using Arabic in relation to teaching grammar. He commented:

> As I told you, it is difficult to teach grammar in English. It is difficult for the teacher to teach grammar in English. Sometimes the teacher cannot communicate the information to the students if he explains grammar in English. It is also difficult for the student to understand grammar if the teacher teaches grammar in English. There are some grammatical terminologies that are difficult for the students to understand in English. For example, the curriculum uses the term syllable in explaining the kinds of adjectives. I think it is difficult to explain the term syllable in English. It is also difficult for the students to comprehend the term syllable in English. Therefore, it is easier for the students and the teacher to use Arabic while dealing with grammar. ....I think that the teacher should not complicate things for the students when teaching grammar. (MR I.3:149-159)

Clearly, the extent to which Murad used Arabic in the classroom was affected by different factors. Two key ones were his perceptions of the students' English language abilities, and the low status of English as a subject the school curriculum.

6.2.6 Focus on error correction

During the lessons I observed with Murad, it was obvious that he was keen on correcting students' errors. The beliefs behind this position emerge clearly here:

> If there is a mistake in the sentence, I correct it directly at the same time of the error. I correct all kinds of mistakes especially the grammatical mistakes. I concentrate on correcting mistakes even if the activity is a speaking activity. I cannot let the students continue speaking while they are making grammatical mistakes. It is very important to correct the students' mistakes especially the grammatical mistakes. I will not stay silent when the student makes mistakes while he speaks. I cannot let the student say work where it should be works. The student will keep making the same mistake if I do not correct him right away. I correct him right away so the student will learn the correct language. When the

> student makes mistakes I should correct it straight away. I will not let him continue with out correction because if you do not correct, students will keep making the same mistake. (MR I.3:108-119)

His approach to error correction was also based on views about the process of language learning:

> Students should give me full and correct answers. They should give me complete and correct answers. This is the right thing. This is the correct language learning. When the students give you full and correct sentences, it will become easier for them to understand these sentences. Language learning should be in a form of correct and complete sentences. This is what I think. (MR I.3:69-73)

Murad's concern for accuracy was also reflected in his views about teaching writing:

> We do not do the writing activities in the class. I personally do not do the writing activities in the class. I usually ask the students to do the writing activities at home. When they bring their writing back, I correct their grammatical mistakes I will waste my time if I do the writing activities in the class. Students do not have grammar and vocabulary to write correctly. I like to spend the time of the class to focus on grammar. If students have good grammar, they can write in English. Grammar is very important in language learning. When you have good grammar, you can write, and you can speak. This is my own theory. (MR I.3:255-262)

Murad was very clear about his own beliefs about language learning. These beliefs, though, were in direct opposite to the principles underpinning the curriculum.

6.3 Summary

This chapter has presented an in depth account of Murad's practices. There were some instances where his teaching was to some extent consistent with the principles suggested by the curriculum. This was evident during the pre-reading activities, and at the start of the grammar lesson teaching. However, there were many examples where Murad's practices were not consistent with the curriculum. This was mainly evident in the teaching of the while reading, the absence of pair work during classroom activities,

the omission of the speaking activities, the constant focus on correcting students' grammatical mistakes, the frequent use of Arabic, and the way the listening activities were done. In Table 6.1, I summarize the extent to which Murad's practices were in line with the curriculum's recommend practices. Overall, in Murad's lessons students were not active, and this contrasted with what the curriculum intended.

The interviews with Murad provided insights into the factors which had an influence on his practices. Key factors were Murad's beliefs about the process of language teaching and learning (particularly about grammatical accuracy), students' English language abilities, students' motivation and expectations, and Murad's perceptions about the teachers' abilities. Murad did not explain his teaching with refrence to external factors such as examinations: his teaching was though, shaped by the interaction of the range of beliefs summarized in Table 6.2.

Murad's teaching confirms patterns evident in the previous two chapters: uptake of the curriculum was limited and pedagogy was shaped the teachers' beliefs more than by the principles the curriculum embodied. The perceived mismatch between students' abilities and what the curriculum expects was once again a major influence on the teacher's work.

Table 6.1 The Intended curriculum and Murad's practices

Focus	Intended curriculum	Mutrad's practices
Reading	▪ Aims to develop the sub skills of prediction, inference, reading for gist, and reading for specific information. ▪ Aims to teach the students how to work out the meanings from context. ▪ Aims to make use of the theme of the text by involving the students in discussion, relating the theme of the text to themselves.	▪ Reading word by word and sentence by sentence. ▪ Focus on reading aloud. ▪ Focus on word meaning. ▪ Focus on Arabic translation. ▪ Focus on pronunciation. ▪ No task completion by the students. ▪ Omission of the after reading activities.
Grammar	▪ Encourages students to discover grammatical points through examples of the target language used in variety of situations ▪ Work on grammar analysis follows after students recognized the grammatical points. ▪ Develops accurate use of the target language in productive situations.	▪ Using example to illustrate the grammatical points. ▪ Focus on explicit grammar analysis. ▪ Using Arabic in grammar analysis.
Functions	▪ Encourages students to use the vocabulary and grammar they have learned in functions such as suggesting, advising, and telling a story.	▪ The functions activities were done by the teacher.
Listening	▪ Aims to activate the language students already have learned. ▪ Aims to promote fluent communication and making talking in English a regular activity among the students. ▪ Aims to build confidence and fluency. ▪ Error correction is not recommended during the speaking stage.	▪ The teacher read the tape script, but there was no task completion by the students.
Speaking	▪ Aims to activate the language students already have learned. ▪ Aims to promote fluent communication and making talking in English a regular activity among the students. ▪ Aims to build confidence and fluency. ▪ Error correction is not recommended during the speaking stage.	▪ Students were asked to do the speaking activities at home.
Writing	▪ Aims to develop the language and grammar students have already learned through producing longer pieces of writing. ▪ Considers the process of writing as important as the end result because it is during the process that learning takes a place. ▪ Encourages students to work together, to help each other with note taking and editing, and to produce work with a communicative purpose.	▪ The teacher read the instructions of the writing activity and asked the students to do the writing at home.
Pair work	▪ Considers pair work as a good opportunity for the students to speak the target language. ▪ Advices the teacher to give many opportunities for the students to work together during each unit.	▪ Absence of pair work during classroom activities.

Table 6.2 Factors influencing Murad's practices

Factor	Description
Beliefs about the teaching of reading	▪ It is very important for the students to know the meaning of each word in the text. ▪ It is very important for the students to learn the correct pronunciation of the words.
Beliefs about error correction	▪ It is very important to correct students' grammatical mistakes. ▪ If students' grammatical mistakes are not corrected they will keep making the same mistakes. ▪ Language learning should be in a form of correct and complete sentences. ▪ If students have good grammar, they can write and speak in English.
Beliefs about Students	▪ Students do not have background in English. ▪ The weak level of the students affects the implementation of the curriculum. ▪ Students do not have vocabulary to do the discussion activities. ▪ Students cannot do pair work activities. ▪ Students do not have the courage to speak in the class. ▪ Students do not have the courage to do the activities which require them to speak in English. ▪ Students do not have the willingness to participate in pair work. ▪ Students do not care about using English.
Attitudes towards the use of Arabic	▪ The use of Arabic facilities the teaching of grammar.
Beliefs about teachers	▪ Teachers are not prepared to teach the curriculum. ▪ Teachers are not trained to teach the curriculum. ▪ Teachers are not qualified to teach the curriculum. ▪ Teachers do not have ideas about the curriculum.
Classroom expectations	▪ The teacher does every thing in the classroom. ▪ All the work has to be done by the teacher.
Attitudes towards English	▪ We should not blame the students for using Arabic because English is not their subject. ▪ English is just a school subject.

CHAPTER 7: MUNIR

At the time of the study Munir had been teaching English for twelve years. He graduated from the English department of a Libyan university. He had taught English in various educational institutions within the Libyan educational system including preparatory schools, secondary schools, and institutions for preparing English language teachers.

Munir was observed teaching fourth year secondary students. Students' speciality was social science. Students had already completed three years of basic English in the preparatory stage and three years of intermediate English in the secondary school, and their speciality was social science. The number of the students during the lessons I observed with Munir ranged from 19 to 21. The students were sitting in desks in two separate rows. The female students were sitting in a row next to the wall, and the male students were sitting in a row next to the windows. The middle row of the class was empty.

7.1 Munir's practices

The lessons I observed with Munir were from the core section of the second unit in the secondary fourth course book (see Appendix 3). The title of the Unit was Climate and Weather. According to the teachers' book, the core section includes two reading lessons, two grammar and vocabulary lessons, one listening lesson, and one speaking and writing lesson. In the following sections, I provide a detailed account of Munir's practices during the lessons I observed with him.

7.1.1 The reading lessons

The reading lessons are divided into before you read activities, while you read activities, and after you read activities. The before you read activities include two activities. In the first activity, students are required to work in pairs to write

as many words to do with weather and climate as they can. In the following episode, I illustrate how Munir taught this part of the lesson:

Episode 7.1

T: What is the meaning of weather?

S: (In Arabic) The student says the equivalent of weather.

T: Can you give me in English what is the meaning? What is the meaning of weather? What is the weather like now? What is the weather like now?

S: (In Arabic) The students says the equivalent of cloudy.

T: What is the weather like? What is the weather like?

SS: (In Arabic) Students say the equivalent of cloudy.

T: English, English, English. in English please.

T: (In Arabic) What is cloudy in English?

SS: (In Arabic) The students say the equivalent of cloudy. (MN O.1:14-20)

In the second activity students look at two pictures and captions and then work in pairs to discuss some questions which are related to these pictures. The two pictures show two different groups of people coming from two places with different climates. These people wear different clothes. The students are asked to discuss where these people come from, what they think the climate is like in these people's places, and what these people are wearing. The teachers' book advises the teacher to move around the class, monitoring students' answers and joining in discussions. Episode 7.2 sheds a light on how Munir dealt with this part of the lesson:

Episode 7.2

T: Now, where does Wendy live?

T: (In Arabic) The answer is in the picture, just read it.

T: I ask you where does Wendy, Wendy, Wendy only. Where does Wendy live?

S: Wendy live in.....

T: Wendy lives, Wendy lives in Alaska, in Alaska. Now we can say Wendy's hometown is Alaska or Fairbanks.

T: This is number one. Number two, who can read number two?

The students are raising their hands and shouting.

SS: Yes teacher. Yes teacher.

The teacher selects one of the students

The student stands up and starts reading from the textbook.

S: What do you think the climate is like in these places?

T: In these places. What do you think the climate is like in these places?

T: From this picture how is the climate is like? How is the climate in Oman, and how is the climate in Alaska?

T: In Oman what is the weather like in Oman? Very cold, in Oman the weather is very hot. In Fairbanks, what is the weather? What is the climate like?

SS: Inaudible. (MN O.1:62:80)

Both the activities described above were supposed to be done in pairs, however in both cases; Munir led the activities and did them with the whole class. Throughout, Munir asked questions and selected individual students to answer although generally students seemed to lack the vocabulary to do so. The subsequent pre-reading discussion questions were done following the same pattern. After dealing with the discussion questions of the pre-reading activities, Munir wrote the answers for these questions on the board and asked the students to copy these answers.

The second part of the reading lesson is the while you read activities (see Appendix 3). In the first of the while you read activity, students read the introduction of the reading text and then answer two questions. In the second while you read activity, students are given headings and then make notes about them from the text. The teachers' book advises the teacher to move around the class helping the students and monitoring their progress. In the third while you read activity, students locate some words and phrases in the text and then explain their meaning. Finally, students match some words and pictures to words and phrases in the reading text.

During the lessons I observed with Munir, he skipped all these while-reading activities, and started directly reading the text. The reading text describes the weather in Muscat and Fairbanks, the kinds of clothes people wear in each city, and the characteristics of the buildings in each city. Munir read the whole text aloud. During the

reading aloud process, he frequently stopped at words and asked the students about their meanings. The following episode shows what Munir did while he was reading the text:

> Episode 7.3
> The teacher reads from the textbook, page 17.
> T: If you go out of your house at midday, sweat begins to drip down your neck within seconds.
> The teacher stops reading.
> T: What is the meaning of this, what is the meaning?
> T: If you go out.
> T: (In Arabic) What is the meaning of if you go out?
> T: (In Arabic) The teacher says the equivalent of if you go out.
> The teacher continues reading the text on page 17. He continues reading word by word and sentence by sentence. (MN O.2:92-99)

The pattern presented in the above episode was frequently repeated until Munir finished reading the whole text. He read word by word and sentence by sentence, and stopped to ask the students about words and phrases in the text. When the students were not able to come up with an answer which was normally the case, Munir used Arabic to translate the meanings of these words and phrases.

Then Munir started the after you read activities. He skipped the first after you read activity which requires the students to role play a conversation in pairs. In this conversation, one student comes from Muscat and the other student comes from Fairbanks. These students are supposed to talk about the weather in their cities.

In the second after you read activity, students work in pairs to discuss two questions. The first question is about the advantages and disadvantages of each season in Libya, and the second question is about the best time to visit Libya. Students should first write notes about these two questions and then start discussing these two questions. When pairs finish discussion, the teacher is meant to invite the class for an open discussion. I now present an account of how Munir dealt with this part of the lesson:

Episode 7.4

The teacher writes on the board and reads what he writes.

T: How many seasons are there in a year?

T: Four seasons.

The teacher writes on the board and reads what he writes.

T: What are they?

T: Summer.

The teacher writes the word summer in on the board.

T: What else? Summer, winter, what the other two? Summer, winter, what else, summer winter, and……

T: Nobody answers.

T: We have four seasons.

T: (In Arabic) How many seasons do we have?

SS: (in Arabic) Four.

T: (In Arabic) We have other two, what are they?

T: What is the other two? Spring, and autumn or fall.

The teacher writes spring, autumn, and fall on the board.

T: We have two words, we can say autumn, or we can say fall.

T: What is the meaning of summer?

SS: (In Arabic) The students say the equivalent of summer.

T: What is the meaning of winter?

SS: (In Arabic) The students say the equivalent of winter (MN O. 3: 26-46)

The above episode illustrates that once again, the teacher did not instruct the students to work in pairs to do discussion as suggested in the textbook. It also shows that students only responded in Arabic to the teacher's questions. In fact, throughout the reading section of the unit, students rarely said anything at all in English.

7.1.2 The grammar lesson

In unit two, students study sentence patterns with "too, so and enough". They also study the order of adjectives. Students are expected to use the grammar later during the speaking and writing stages of the unit. The following episode shows how Munir started the grammar lesson:

Episode 7.5

The teacher writes on the board, and reads what he writes.

T: The ice is so thick that you can drive on it.

T: Thick. What is the meaning of thick?

S: (In Arabic) The students says the equivalent of thick.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher says the equivalent of thick.

T: Now the adjective is between so and that, after that we start with subject verb and comma.

The teacher writes on the board and reads what he writes.

T: The ice is thick enough to drive on.

T: Now we have infinitive, infinitive.

The teacher writes the word infinitive on the board.

T: What is the meaning of infinitive?

S: (In Arabic) What.

T: Infinitive, we can say for example, play.

S: (In Arabic) What is the meaning of infinitive?

T: Play, now, this is the infinitive, the infinitive of played, past.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher says the equivalent of infinitive in Arabic.

T: (In Arabic) The rule here, says that the infinitive comes after enough using to and verb, to plus verb, to plus verb. (Mun O.3:130-144)

This episode illustrates how Munir used examples to present grammar. Examples were given and then the teacher extracted rules from them. In explaining the rules, the teacher commonly used grammatical terminology. He also used Arabic freely in teaching grammar (and in his teaching generally).

7.1.3 The listening lesson

The listening lesson follows the same structure as the reading lessons. It consists of before you listen activities, while you listen activities and after you listen activities. In the before you listen activities, students should read five weather related items vocabulary, and then they define these words or they explain them. During the while you listen activities, students listen to a weather forecast several times, and do different tasks while doing so (see Appendix 3).

In the after you listen activities, students should work in pairs to prepare a weather forecast for Libya. When they are ready, they join other pairs in the class to listen to their weather forecast, and to look for similarities and differences. During the lessons I observed with Munir, all the listening activities mentioned above were skipped.

7.1.4 The speaking and writing lesson

The speaking part of the lesson involves students in discussion which prepares them for the writing in the second part of the lesson. The course book suggests that students study newspaper headlines and pictures which describe the weather in various countries of the world (see Appendix 3). Then, they discuss each picture and newspaper headline. The discussion includes what has happened and why, in which part of the world is this country, and what they know about the climate in this country. Munir selected individual students to read the newspaper headlines, and while the students were reading, he corrected their pronunciation mistakes. There was no class discussion as suggested in the course book.

In the second part of the speaking, students are required to work in pairs to talk about their experience of the worst weather which happened in Libya. The teachers' book advises the teacher to move around the class to help the students with vocabulary, and to make sure that the students are using only English. The following episode provides an account of how Munir dealt with this activity:

Episode 7.6

T: What is the worst weather ever you have experienced? Have you experienced, experienced, what is the meaning of experienced? Mean that something happened in the past and still in your mind.

The teacher repeats the previous statement in Arabic.

T: What is the worst weather you have ever experienced? What is the meaning of this question? What is the meaning of this question? What is the worst weather you have ever experienced?

T: (In Arabic) We know the meaning of worst and we know the meaning of experienced

T: (In Arabic) What is required in this question?

S: (In Arabic) The student says the equivalent of weather in Arabic.

T: (in Arabic) What is the worst weather you experienced?

The teacher keeps asking the same question but the students do not respond to the teacher.

The teacher uses Arabic to explain his question.

T: Where and when, who please can give me an example? What is the worst weather you have experienced? Where and when, what happened, who can tell me?

T: (In Arabic) Do you understand the question or you do not?

T: (In Arabic) The worst weather you have ever experienced, when and what happened.

T: Who can tell me please, who can tell me, who can tell me. There is no one, there is no one.

T: Last year what happened? There is nothing. You can say for example last year. What happened last year? Last year what happened? There is some house flooded.

T: (In Arabic) Many houses flooded last year, do not you remember.

T: Ok we come to writing now, writing, number two writing. (MN O.7:67-92)

Once again the above episode shows that there was no pair work during the activity. It also shows that the students were not able to do the activity. Even when the teacher spoke Arabic, students did not participate in the activity. Eventually, the teacher gave up and moved on.

The writing part of the lesson requires the students to write a newspaper article, including a headline about one of the stories that have been discussed during the lesson. The teacher is advised to remind the students of the features of newspaper headline of headlines. The teacher should also remind the students of the features of newspaper articles. The teachers' book advises the teacher to move around the class to encourage the students and to offer help and advice with the students writing. During the lessons I observed with Munir, students did not do the writing activity in the class. Munir gave the class the instructions of how to write a newspaper article and asked the students to do the writing activity as a home work.

7.2 Factors influencing Munir's practices

Once again the observations were followed by the interviews in which Munir talked about the thinking and the factors behind his instructional decisions. I now proceed to present what Munir had to say during these interviews. I discuss the following themes: beliefs about teaching reading, students' English language level, students' expectations and motivations, students' prior experience, attitudes towards the listening section, and the lack of support.

7.2.1 Beliefs about teaching reading

Classroom observation showed that Munir skipped the recommended practices of the while you read activities. Munir reflected on why he skipped these activities:

> I have to read the text very slowly and explain every detail in the text so the students can comprehend what the reading text is about. The students cannot do quick reading and comprehend the main idea of the text. The students are not used to activities such as scanning activities and reading quickly activities. It is difficult for me to get the students to adapt to these activities. The students were not used to these activities in their previous years of studying English. How can I change the students' learning style when they are in their seventh year of learning English? We face difficulties in the implementation of the scanning and quick reading activities. (MN I.2:261:269)

Munir thus felt that students simply could not complete the activities as presented in the text. He explained this with reference to their previous experience:

> When I ask the students how did you do the reading lessons during your previous years, they say the teacher does reading aloud for us, and selects some individual students to do reading aloud, and then we answer some comprehension questions. This is our approach of dealing with reading lessons. Most of the students conceive the teaching of reading as this way. When I ask the students to quickly read the text, they say we are not used to this way of teaching reading. They are used to the teacher doing reading aloud for them. The teacher reads first then the students do reading aloud. (MN I.2:269-274)

Doing reading aloud was a key characteristic of Munir's practices during the reading lessons. He selected individual students to do reading aloud, and while students were doing reading aloud he frequently stopped them to correct their pronunciation.

These practices also appear to be influenced by Munir's perceptions about the teaching of reading:

> The important thing in teaching reading is that the teacher should make sure that the students are pronouncing words correctly while they are reading aloud. I ask the students to do reading aloud to make sure that the students' pronunciation is correct. Correct pronunciation is important for language learning. How can the students learn English language without correct pronunciation? When the students make pronunciation mistakes, I immediately stop them to correct their pronunciation mistakes so the students can figure out their mistakes. If I do not correct the students' pronunciation mistakes, students will keep making these mistakes again. (MN I.2:208-215)

In addition to valuing pronunciation, Munir felt that knowing the meaning of the words was essential in order for the students to comprehend the content of the reading passage:

> The purpose of asking about word meaning is to check the students' understanding of words. Does the student have any understanding of the reading passage I am reading? I want to check students' understanding of the words within the reading passage. Understating the meaning of the words within the reading passages is very important for the comprehension of the reading passage. That is why I read the passage very slowly I read the passage very slowly to make sure that the students understand the meaning of the words. If the student cannot understand the meaning of the words in English, I have to translate these words into Arabic so the student can understand the topic of the reading passage. In my opinion understanding the meaning of the words is the key to the comprehension of the reading passage. (MN I.2:288-297)

The above extracts highlight several influences on Munir's approach to teaching reading: his views about students' expectations and abilities, and about the role of accurate pronunciation and word meaning in reading. Collectively, these factors provide insight into why his practices were not congruent with those recommended in the curriculum, and which promoted purposeful, meaningful, and student-centred reading.

7.2.2 Students' English language level

As we have seen, many of the course book activities require the students to participate in classroom discussions and to express their opinions about different issues.

However, Munir believes that the students do not have sufficient ability in English to enable them to actively participate in these activities:

> How can the students make a discussion when they do not know the seasons of the year in English? How can these students discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each season in Libya? Students do not know the word spring. They do not know the word summer. How can students at this level of English discuss a topic such as the advantages and disadvantages of the seasons of the year? I think the main problem of the students is their lack of English vocabulary. Perhaps a student may have the courage to speak, but he does not have enough vocabulary to speak in English. The student cannot speak in English. This is the main reason why the students cannot do the activities required by this curriculum. (MN I.2:365-373)

These concerns about students' level also emerged in Munir's comments on the writing activities in the coursebook:

> When I ask the students to write about a topic for example, I spend the whole time of the class without finding any student who can write about this particular topic..... They cannot write even one sentence. When I ask the students why you cannot write in English, they say we write our ideas in Arabic then we change them into English. Sometimes they say we have ideas in Arabic but we cannot change them into English. Sometimes they say we do not have ideas about this topic. For these reasons I decided to give the writing tasks as homework so I can use the time of the class in other things. Even when I ask the students to do the writing task at home, students copy from each other. They bring you the same writing with the same mistakes even the same spelling mistakes. I can tell who copied from each other. Some students ask their relatives, or friends to write for them. Sometimes they bring writings to class which is not their writing. I can tell it is not their writing. (MN I.3:311-323)

He went further to express concerns about the writing tasks in this curriculum:

> I wish the students can write for themselves, but I think the writing tasks in this curriculum are difficult for the students. I consider them difficult for the students. If the student is not used to do writing from the basis, how can he write now? He cannot write a paragraph. Then how can I ask him to write a complete passage. (MN I.3:323-326)

He felt that the students' weak level of English is the result of many factors:

> I ask the students why you are not able to speak in English. They students say we do not understand any thing. The teacher of the last year did not teach us any thing. Some students say that during the preparatory stage, they did not study any thing. Some students say we did not finish the text book last year. We have

this problem. The teachers do not finish the curriculum (MN I.1:93-97)

Munir felt that the problem was a more general one:

> In general the Libyan students are weak in English. I do not know the reason why students in general are weak in English. Is it because the teachers are not qualified to teach this new curriculum? Is it because of students' unwillingness to study English language? I do not know. I am still looking for the answer. (MN I.1:92-95)

He also made a statement about how the Libyan students view English language learning:

> The students always claim that English language is difficult to learn. This is the assumption most of the Libyan students have about English. In my years of teaching English, I always ask the students why you do not have the willingness to learn English, they say English is difficult. I do not know why English language is difficult for the students. (Mun I.3:144-148)

Overall, Munir felt that the student's proficiency was a key factor which limited his ability to implement the curriculum in the manner intended.

7.2.3 Students' expectations and willingness

Students' expectations about who does what inside the classroom also emerged as another reason why the students in Munir's class where not actively involved in the classroom activities. Munir expressed views about students' expectations which might be incompatible with what the curriculum requires the students to do:

> My role as it is suggested by this curriculum should be as a guide or as a facilitator for the student….., but in reality I am the one who does all things in the class. The students only act as listeners. The students come to the school only to listen to what the teachers say. They do not think that they should actively participate in the classroom activities in order to learn English. (MN I.1:177-182)

He went on to say:

> I do every thing in the class. The students come to the class only as listeners. This is the outcome of teaching English in Libya. The student considers his role as a listener. I do every thing in the class. It is the responsibility of the students

to work in the class, but students do not think like this. They think that their role is to sit in the class and listen to what the teacher says. This curriculum concentrates on the students. Lots of activities have to be done by the students, but students are not willing to participate in the classroom activities. They think that it is the teachers' job to do the activities for them. (MN I.2:156-163)

These expectations shaped students' views of a good teacher:

The students want the teacher to do every thing for them. The teacher who does every thing in the class is the good teacher according to the students' beliefs. If you start pushing them to do discussions and forcing them to speak in the class, then you are not a good teacher. The students want you to do everything for them, and they just listen and take notes (MN I.3:284:288)

Munir felt that these perceptions about the teacher's role are the result of the teachers' work:

In my opinion, the student should depend on himself rather than depending on the teacher, but perhaps the student is used to depending on the teacher I think this is because of the teachers. The teachers in Libyan are used to doing all the activities in the classroom. The teachers are used to controlling the classroom. They do not give the students chances to participate in the classroom activities so they can depend on themselves. (MN I.2:172-179)

It is not only the students' expectations which hinder the effective implementation of the curriculum, but also their unwillingness:

The speaking activities usually require the students to talk about some issues either individually or in pairs. For example in this unit, the students are required to discuss which the best time to visit Libya. My role in this activity is to explain to the students what they are required to do, and then I ask them to talk, but when I find that the student does not want to talk what shall I do? Do I have to skip the activity? I try to simplify the activity and to participate with the students in the activity hoping that the students may react to me. As you may have noticed in this unit, I asked the students to talk about the best time to visit Libya, but I did not find any reaction from the students. I tried to stimulate the students to the discussion, but the students were not willing to participate in the discussion. They do not want to talk. I do not know perhaps they are not willing to talk, or they are afraid to talk. (Mun I.2:233-243)

Munir went further to describe how he feels when he finds no reaction from the students:

> When I ask the students to talk and to do discussions and realize that the students are not reacting to me, I lose my patience and I get very irritated. If this thing happens to you on a daily basis, you will lose your temper. This sometimes makes me skip pair work activities and speaking activities. (Mun I.3:241-244)

Clearly students' expectations and their unwillingness were at odds with what the curriculum requires the students to do. This Munir felt made it difficult to implement the curriculum as intended.

7.2.4 Students' prior experience

Although many of the course book activities require the students to work in pairs either to write notes together or to exchange ideas and discuss certain topics, classroom observation showed that the absence of pair work activities was a key characteristic during the lessons I observed with Munir. When I asked Munir to reflect on the absence of pair work, he commented:

> Teachers at the preparatory stage do not give the students the chances to do activities such as pair work activities and discussion activities so when the students come to the secondary stage they will be ready to do these activities. Students come to my class after they have been studying English for seven years. They are used to certain methods of studying English. How can I ask them to do things they are not used to do? (MN I.3:271-276)

Munir went on to criticize the teachers at the preparatory stage:

> The teachers at the preparatory stage do not implement the curriculum properly. If they implement for example pair work activities and give the students chances to speak in the class, students will become prepared to do these activities.
> (MN I.3:280-283)

According to Munir, more attention needs to be paid to the way English is learnt at the preparatory level:

> I think if we want to fix the situation of teaching English in Libya, we should put more efforts and concentration on the preparatory stage of the educational system in Libya. Students at the preparatory stage do not do speaking, listening, and writing activities. These skills are ignored at the preparatory stage. How can you ask the students to do these activities when they have never done them before? (MN I.3:177-181)

During the lessons I observed with Munir, classroom interaction was dominated by the use of Arabic. Students would engage in the classroom activities when the teacher used Arabic, but when English was used there was little student participation. I asked Munir about his views regarding the use of Arabic in the classroom:

> We should depend on using English in our classroom interaction, but unfortunately this is not the case in our situation. We should not extensively use Arabic because the students have been studying English for six years, and this is their seventh year of studying English. In this case students should depend on using English. I do not know why students depend too much on using Arabic (Mun I.2:83-88)

Munir was aware that the extensive use of Arabic contradicts the recommendations of the curriculum:

> The curriculum suggests that the teacher should speak in English in the class, but now I do not speak in English in the class. I shifted the class from an English class into an Arabic class. We use Arabic more that English. (MN I.2:114-117)

Munir's practices related once again to students' expectations, based on their prior experience:

> I think the students come to the class with the assumption they will depend on Arabic more than on English. They would directly go to Arabic without even trying to recall the English vocabulary which they had studied during their previous years of studying English. Students are used to depending on Arabic from their previous experience of learning English. It is difficult to change this assumption of depending on Arabic now. (MN I.2:142-147)

Students' prior English language learning experience appeared to be influential in what happens inside the classroom. It did not only influence how Munir implement the curriculum, it also affected the extent to which he used English during classroom activities.

7.2.5 Attitudes towards the listening section

Munir skipped the listening section during the lessons I observed with him. He explained this decision as follows:

> As far as I am concerned, I avoid teaching this section. I do not teach the listening section. In general I avoid teaching this section. As far as I am concerned, I consider the listening section as not appropriate for me because the student gets no benefit from the listening section. The listening section is not suitable for me because it is a waste of time. (MN I.3:109-113)

Apparently these negative attitudes are the result of Munir's past experience of teaching this section:

> I tried to teach the listening section before, and applied many different ways to teach the listening section. I brought tape recorder and made the students listen to the conversations. when I turn on the tape and ask the students what you understand from the conversation, I do not find any reactions from the students. I also divided the listening lesson into different parts and made the students listen to short episodes form the tape, but when I asked the students what they understood I did not find any result. I also wrote the dialogue of the tape on the board, and asked the students to follow this dialogue while they were listening to the tape, but again I did not find any results. Perhaps, I wasted six or seven classes in the listening section without any outcome. I do not see any benefit from teaching the listening section. The students get nothing from the listening section. (MN I.3:114-123)

However, Munir acknowledged that the omission of the listening activities constitutes a gap in the implementation of the curriculum:

> There is a gap in the implementation of the curriculum. This curriculum includes the four language skills. When you skip one of these skills, this means that you are not implementing the curriculum properly. The problem is not in the curriculum. The problem is that we do not implement the curriculum as it is intended. This curriculum is a complete curriculum. It has the four language skills. Even the content of the listening section is about the theme of the unit, but we do not implement the curriculum as it is intended. [The question is why we do not implement the curriculum as it is intended]. (MN I.1:163-169).

Answering this question is of course the purpose of this study. In the case of listening Munir's beliefs about its value based on his past experience in teaching listening led him to skip this section.

In addition, to Munir's past experience and his negative attitudes towards the listening section Munir referred to the exams as another factor which makes the teachers and the students ignore the listening section:

> There are no exams for the listening section so the teachers omit it. I have been teaching this curriculum for about six years and I have never seen any exam which includes the listening activities. Therefore both the teacher and the students do not pay attention to the listening section. What is the goal of teaching the listening section if the students do not care about this section? I do not want to waste my time in teaching this section. That is why I do not teach this section. (MN I.3:185-190)

Munir made a distinction between teaching English for the sake of passing the exams and teaching English in order to learn English:

> Everyone learns a language must learn the four skills of the language. The listening skill complements other skills of the language such as speaking, reading and writing but we if we teach English so the students can pass the exams, then there is no need to teach the listening activities. But if we teach English in order for the students to learn English, then we must teach the listening activities. I want the students to learn the language and not think about the exams, but the students do not have the willingness to learn the language. They just think about the exams. (MN I.3:138-144)

The examinations, therefore, did not reflect the curriculum. Since exams do not test listening, both the teacher and the students saw no value in the listening activities in the course book.

7.2.7 Lack of teacher training and support

During the interviews Munir also referred to different obstacles which affect the implementation of this curriculum. These problems provide further insight into why in many cases Munir's practices were not congruent with what the curriculum requires the teachers to do. As Munir stated, one of these obstacles is the lack of training and support:

> There was not enough preparation for the teachers when this curriculum was introduced. Teachers were given a week of briefing sessions on how to teach this curriculum. These sessions were given by the English language inspectors. They told us to follow the teachers' book, but what is in the teachers' book is not

consistent with our conditions. I cannot implement all what is in the teachers' book. Sometimes I do not understand what is in the teachers' book. I do not find any one who can give me instructions. Sometimes, I go to the more experienced teachers to get advice. I try to use my knowledge and experience, but we still need some directions. (MN I.1:85-92).

Munir criticized the schools for not providing enough support for the teachers

As I told you we do not give any priority to the English subject. The schools always consider the English subject as a secondary thing. The teachers face difficult circumstances in implementing this curriculum. The schools do not provide any support for the teachers. There are no training sessions. There are no workshops which improve the skills of the teachers and help them understand the principles of this curriculum. How can teachers work in these circumstances? Can you tell me what teachers working in these circumstances can do?

(MN I.3:189-199)

As noted in Chapter 2, training is an important element in the implementation of educational innovations; Munir clearly felt that this element was severely lacking in Libyan ELT.

7.3 Summary

In this chapter I provided a detailed account of Munir's work during the lessons I observed with him. This chapter showed his teaching was largely incongruent with the suggested curriculum principles. This was clearly evident during the while reading activities, from the omission of some of after reading activities, the absence of pair work, the omission of the listening activities, the frequent use of Arabic during classroom activities, the absence of the student participation during the speaking activities, and the omission of writing activities. In Table 7.1 I summarize the extent to which Munir's practices were congruent with the intended curriculum. A key issue which emerged from the classroom observations was that most of the activities were done by the teacher, and that the students appeared to be either not willing to take part in the classroom activities or are not able to do the activities as they are required by the curriculum.

The interview shed light on why many of Munir's practices were not congruent with the curriculum. During the interviews Munir reflected upon his classroom practices and justified the decisions which underpinned his classroom practices. His teaching was influenced by a range of factors such as beliefs about the teaching of reading, the value of the listening, students' experience and expectations, the lack of support for teachers trying to understand and implement the curriculum, and the role of the exams in shaping what happens inside the classroom. In Table 7.2 I summarize the various beliefs and contextual factors which underpinned Munir's work during the lessons I observed with him.

Table 7.1 The intended curriculum and Munir's practices

Focus	Intended curriculum	Munir's practices
Reading	▪ Aims to develop the sub skills of predictions, inference, reading for gist, and reading for specific information. ▪ Aims to teach the students how to work out the meanings from context. ▪ Aims to make use of the theme of the reading text by involving students in discussing the theme of the text and relating it to themselves.	▪ Asking questions and selecting individual students to answer throughout the pre-reading activities. ▪ Focus on reading aloud. ▪ Focus on word meaning. ▪ Focus on Arabic translation.
Grammar	▪ Aims to activate the grammatical points which students have already learned through the productive skills of speaking and writing.	▪ Using examples to illustrate the grammatical points. ▪ Explicit explanation and using terminology.
Listening	▪ Aims to develop the sub skills of predictions, inference, listening for gist, and listening for specific information. ▪ Aims to develop confidence and competence in listening comprehension.	▪ Omission of the whole listening section.
Speaking	▪ Aims to activate the language students already have learned. ▪ Aims to promote fluent communication and making talking in English a regular activity among the students. ▪ Does not recommend correcting errors during the speaking stage.	▪ The speaking activities were done by the teacher and the students did not participate in these activities.
Writing	▪ Aims to develop the language and grammar students have already learned through producing longer pieces of writing. ▪ Considers the process of writing as important as the end result because it is during the process that learning takes a place. ▪ Encourages students to work together, to help each other with note taking and editing, and to produce work with a communicative purpose.	▪ The teacher instructed the students to do the writing activity as homework.
Pair work	▪ Considers pair work as an opportunity for the students to speak the target language. ▪ Advises the teacher to give the students as many opportunities as possible to work in pairs during each unit.	▪ Absence of pair work during classroom activities.

Table 7.2 Factors influencing Munir's practices

Factor	Description
Beliefs about teaching reading	▪ The teacher should make sure that the students are pronouncing words correctly when they are reading aloud. ▪ Correct pronunciation is important for language learning. ▪ Students' pronunciation mistakes should be corrected immediately. ▪ Understanding the meaning of the words within the reading passage is important for the comprehension of the reading passage.
Beliefs about the writing activities	▪ The writing tasks in this curriculum are difficult for the students.
Beliefs about the speaking activities	▪ The speaking activities are beyond the students' level.
Students' English language level	▪ In general students are weak in English. ▪ The main problem of the students is their lack of English vocabulary.
Students' classroom expectations	▪ Students think that their role is to sit in the class and listen to what the teacher says. ▪ Students want the teacher to do every think for them.
Students' prior experience	▪ Students are used to certain ways of learning English. ▪ When students were at the preparatory level they were not used to do activities such as speaking, listening and writing. ▪ Students were not used to do pair work activities when they were at the preparatory level. ▪ Students were used to reading aloud during their past experience of learning English, and it is difficult for the teacher to get them used to doing activities such as skimming and scanning the text. They simply conceive reading as reading aloud. ▪ Students are used to depend on Arabic from their previous experience of learning English.
Teachers' role	▪ The teachers in Libya are used to doing all the activities in the classroom. ▪ The teachers are used to controlling the classroom. ▪ The teachers do not give students chances to participate in the classroom activities so they can depend on themselves.
Attitudes towards the listening section	▪ Students get no benefit from the listening section. ▪ The listening section is a waste of time, and the students do not understand the listening texts and activities.
The role of the exams	▪ Both the teacher and the students focus on the activities which are included in the exam and ignore the activities which are not. ▪ The listening is not covered in the exam.
Lack of support and teacher training	▪ Schools consider the English subject as a secondary thing. ▪ Schools do not provide support for the teachers. ▪ There are no training sessions for the teachers to help teachers improve their skills and understand the principles of the curriculum. Munir simply depends on his experience and knowledge.

CHAPTER 8: FATHI

Fathi graduated from an English department from a Libyan university. He had been teaching English since 1980, and had taught English in various educational institutions including preparatory schools, secondary schools, and private English language schools. Fathi had been teaching the new English curriculum since its introduction in 2000.

At the time of the study, Fathi worked in a secondary public state school for girls from 15 to 19 years old. The majority of the teachers in this school were females. For this study, Fathi was observed teaching fourth year secondary students, and their speciality is life science Students had already completed three years of basic English in the preparatory stage and three years of intermediate English in the secondary level. The number of the students during the lessons I observed with Fathi ranged from 30 to 35. Two students sat at each desk. The desks were fixed to the floor and were organized in rows facing the board.

8.1 Fathi's practices

Fathi was observed teaching lessons from the core section of the second unit in the secondary fourth course book (i.e. the same materials as Munir in the previous chapter). The title of the unit was Weather and Climate (see Appendix 3). As I have mentioned in Chapter 7, the core section is divided into two reading lessons, two grammar and vocabulary lessons, one listening lesson, and one speaking and writing lesson. I now describe how Fathi taught this material.

8.1.1 The reading lesson

As we have seen in the previous chapters, the reading lessons in English for Libya are divided into before you read activities, while you read activities, and after you

read activities. In the Unit described here, students are expected to start the before you read activities by working in pairs to write words to do with weather and climate (see Appendix 3). The focus of this activity is to elicit the students' knowledge in relation to vocabulary related to weather and climate. In the following episode, I show what Fathi did during this part of the lesson:

Episode 8.1

The teacher reads the instructions of on page 16.

T: Before you read. Work in pairs. Write words to do with weather and climate.

T: To do with weather that means related to weather and climate.

T: (In Arabic) They have relation with weather and climate.

T: How many words can you write in three minutes?

SS: Yes teachers, yes teacher.

The students are shouting and raising their hands.

The teacher selects one of the students.

S: Wind.

T: Ah, we say wind. We use wind as a noun.

The teacher writes the word wind on the board.

T: Wind has no verb, but as an adjective, we say…..

The teacher is waiting for a reply from the students.

The students did not respond.

T: Wind, windy. What about hot? Is hot here is a noun or an adjective?

SS: Noun.

T: It is an adjective.

The teacher writes the word hot on the board. (FO.1:15-32)

Although the instructions of the above activity required the students to work in pairs to write words that are related to weather and climate, there was no pair work during this activity. Fathi asked questions, and the students answered these questions individually or as a whole class. The subsequent before you read activities were done following the same pattern.

The recommended practices for the while you read activities with the reading text in Unit 2 require the students to read the introduction of the reading text and then

answer two questions. After that students should read six phrases, and then find relevant points for these phrases in the text. Students are then asked to locate some words and phrases within the reading text, and explain the meaning of these words and phrases with words and phrases with the same meaning. Finally students are given a matching activity where they match some pictures and words to words and phrases in the reading text. The following episode shows Fathi's approach to the while reading activities:

Episode 8.2

T: Now lets' read Ali's text.

The teacher reads the first text on page 17 (see Appendix 3).

The teacher reads slowly word by word, and often stops at single words to explain their meaning in Arabic.

[While he reads]

T: What is the meaning of 'too hot to swim in'?

SS: Inaudible.

The teacher explains the meaning of "too hot to swim in" in Arabic.

The teacher continues reading from the text.

T: Car bodies get hot enough to cook on.

T: We have adjective here.

T: (In Arabic) Can you tell me where the adjective is?

The teacher stops reading and waits for the answer.

The students cannot answer the teachers' question.

T: Hot.

T: (In Arabic) The adjective is hot.

T: We have enough, too, infinitive to cook.

T: Car bodies get hot enough to cook on.

The teacher translates the previous expression into Arabic.

T: To cook on, what is cook?

SS: (In Arabic) The students say the equivalent of cook.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher says the equivalent of cook.

The teacher continues reading from the passage, and translates what he into Arabic.

(FO.2:17-42)

The above episode illustrates a mismatch between Fathi's practices and those recommended in the coursebook in relation to dealing with the reading text. Fathi read

the text word by word and sentence by sentence. While he was reading aloud, he frequently translated into Arabic what he was reading. He also stopped at words in the text and asked the students about the meaning of these words. Students gave the meaning of these words in Arabic. He frequently stopped to explain grammatical points within the reading text. During this lesson, students used English-Arabic dictionaries.

Fathi moved to the activity which requires the students to locate some words and phrases in the text and to explain their meaning. In the following episode I show what happened during this activity:

> Episode 8.3
> T: Number one, within seconds, you find this phrase in line seven. Look at like seven. Look at line seven.
> The students are looking at page 17. They are working individually on the activity.
> T: (In Arabic) What is the meaning of within seconds?
> T: Very soon, means very soon or immediately, within seconds means very soon or immediately
> T: Feels horrible, feels horrible. You find this phrase in line 8.
> T: (In Arabic) You find this phrase in line 8.
> (Silence)
> T: Horrible means uncomfortable or unpleasant.
> The teacher writes the words uncomfortable and unpleasant on the board.
> The students copy what the teacher writes. (FO.3:64-72)

Although this activity should have been done by the students, the above episode shows that it was the teacher who asked the questions and answered the questions himself. Students copied what the teacher wrote on the board.

Fathi skipped the after you read activities during the lessons I observed with him. These activities would have involved students in pair work, role play, and note taking.

8.1.2 The grammar lesson

In this unit, students study the order of the adjectives. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, students are supposed to use the grammar later during the speaking and writing activities. Fathi first wrote some adjectives on the board, and they asked the students about the meaning of these adjectives. Students gave the meaning of these adjectives in Arabic as illustrated in the following episode.

Episode 8.4

The teacher writes on the board and reads what he writes.

T: Interesting, interesting, interesting, what is interesting?

SS: (In Arabic) The students say the equivalent of interesting.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher repeats the equivalent of interesting.

T: Worried, what is worried, what is worried?

The teacher waits an answer from the students.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher gives the equivalent of worried.

T: Angry, Angry, Angry with.

SS: (In Arabic) The students give the equivalent of angry. (FO.4:63-71)

After writing some adjectives on the board, and asking the students about the meaning of these adjectives, Fathi wrote some words on the board and asked the students to describe these words using adjectives:

Episode 8.5

The teacher writes the word 'game' on the board.

T: How can we describe this noun using two adjectives?

The teacher repeats the previous question in Arabic.

T: Remember to put the adjectives in order.

SS: Game interesting.

T: Game interesting.

T: (In Arabic) No this is wrong.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher explains the position on the adjective.

T: (In Arabic) The adjective comes before the noun. Always the adjective comes before the noun. It is not like Arabic.

T: (In Arabic) Do not say game interesting.

T: (In Arabic) Interesting game.

T: An interesting game.

T: (In Arabic) The indefinite article should come before the noun. We should write it before the adjective.

T: (In Arabic) Don't say a interesting game. (FO.4:80-95)

The above episodes show that the explicit grammar teaching, the use of examples and the use of Arabic in explaining grammar were key characteristics of Fathi's work during teaching grammar. The extent to which students used grammar during the later stages of the unit will be illustrated in the following sections.

8.1.3 The listening lesson

The listening lesson (see Chapter 7 for a description of the activities of the listening lesson) follows the grammar lesson. During the lessons I observed with Fathi, all the listening activities in Unit were skipped.

8.1.4 The speaking and writing lesson

The first activity of the speaking lesson requires the students to discuss newspaper and headlines which describe the weather in different parts of the word. The discussion focuses on what has happened and why, in which part of the world this country is, and what students know about the climate in this particular country. In the following episode I show how Fathi taught this part of the lesson:

Episode 8.6

The teacher reads the second headline on page 21 (see Appendix 3).

T: Flash floods kill seven.

T: Flash flood. What is flash flood?

T: (In Arabic) The teacher says the equivalent of flash flood.

T: Kill seven.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher gives the equivalent of kill seven.

The students are listening to the teacher and writing the teachers' translations in their textbooks.

The teacher reads headline number three on page 21.

T: Man injured by lightning.

T: (In Arabic) The teacher says the equivalent of man injured by lightning. (FO.5:29-38)

The above episode shows that there was no class discussion as suggested by the course book. Fathi read all the headlines and translated these headlines into Arabic. Students wrote down the Arabic translation in their course book. Fathi talked about each headline and picture in Arabic. Fathi's work during this part of the unit and in fact in most of the lessons I observed with him was characterized by the use of Arabic. This issue will be examined further in Section 8.2.3 below.

Fathi skipped the second speaking activity where students were supposed to work in pairs to talk about their experience of the worst weather in Libya, and moved to the writing part. As I have mentioned in Chapter 7, the writing part of the lesson builds on the speaking part. For example, in this unit students are required to write a newspaper story about one of the headlines which they should have discussed during the speaking part of the lesson. The following episode presents an account of how Fathi dealt with this part of the lesson

Episode 8.7

T: Last winter if you remember there was a torrential rain in our city.

T: (In Arabic) It lasted for three days.

SS: (In Arabic) It lasted three days.

T: Many houses were damaged. What is damaged?

T: (In the Arabic) The teacher says the equivalent of damaged.

The teacher writes the word damaged on the board and says its equivalent in Arabic.

T: Try to write a newspaper headline and story about this subject.

T: (In Arabic) Try to write about the torrential rain last year in our city.

The students are working in the activity.

The students are discussing the activity in pairs. The discussion is done in Arabic

The teacher moves around the class.

Some students are working in pairs, and some are working on groups.

A student shows the teacher her writing and the teacher gives the student feedback in Arabic.

The teacher reads the student's writing

T: Flash flood causes damage.

The teacher comments on the student's writing.

T: Very good.

Students are working in pairs and in groups.

The teacher moves around the class and provides assistance and feedback. (FO.6:54-71)

What is interesting to note here is that although Fathi skipped the speaking activity which prepares the students for the writing activity, Fathi gave students the chance to work in pairs to do the writing activity. During this part of the lesson, students exchanged ideas and helped each other with vocabulary and feedback. Fathi moved around the class provided help and feedback for the students. It is worth mentioning that Fathi was the only teacher whom I observed who asked the students to do the writing task in the class. Fathi's rationale for giving the students the chance to do the writing activity in class will be further discussed in Section 8.2.5 below. His approach to the writing activity was at least partly in line with what the curriculum recommended.

8.2 Factors influencing Fathi's practices

In the previous sections, I provided a detailed account of Fathi's practices during the lessons I observed with him. I now proceed to examine the beliefs and factors which underpinned Fathi's practices. The following themes will be discussed: concerns about the curriculum, beliefs about the students, attitudes towards the use of Arabic, beliefs about teaching reading, and the role of the exams.

8.2.1 Concerns about the curriculum

During the interviews, Fathi raised some concerns about the introduction and the implementation of the curriculum:

> I think the people who wrote this curriculum did not have enough understanding of our situation. They just introduced the curriculum and asked us to teach it. At the time of the introduction of the curriculum, we did not have any ideas of how to deal with this curriculum or how to teach it. At the beginning we were shocked by this curriculum. We felt that it is difficult curriculum and it is not suitable for us. It took us long time to comprehend this curriculum; but still many teachers do not have enough ideas about this curriculum. They just teach two or three units out of eight things. They concentrate on the things which they understand, and skip the things which they do not understand. This is of course affects the implementation of the curriculum. If teachers do not understand the

curriculum they are asked to teach, then how can these teachers teach it? (FI.2:255-265)

I asked Fathi what he did in order to deal with this curriculum:

> I just concentrated on the teachers' book and tried to understand what the teachers' book requires me to do. I tried to comprehend the ideas of the teachers' book. At the beginning it was difficult, but after some time I became more used to the curriculum. Every year I feel that I am better than the previous year. Every year I feel that I have made some progress in my understanding of the ideas of the curriculum. (FI.1:109-114)

Fathi thus seemed to have gradually developed his understanding of the curriculum independently and over time; he received no support in developing this understanding. He also commented on the lack of monitoring the implementation of the curriculum:

> There is no inspection as to what the teacher does in the classroom. Nobody is asking the teacher why you do not finish the curriculum. Teachers teach only two or three units out of eight units. This affects my implementation of the curriculum because sometimes I have to spend considerable time in teaching things which students should have studied during their previous years of studying English. (FI.2:56-61)

The above interview extracts indicate that Fathi felt the curriculum was not appropriate for the Libyan context, that teachers were not supported in understanding it, nor monitored in their implementation of it. Collectively, these factors made it less likely that the curriculum would be implemented as intended.

8.2.2 Beliefs about the students

Classroom observations showed that students were not given the chance to work in pairs particularly during the activities which require students to exchange ideas in English. When I asked Fathi about the absence of pair work during these activities, he commented:

> Pair work is good, but the English background of the majority of the students is poor. If you use pair work, perhaps only one pair or two pairs will work in the class. The rest of the class will just wait for the answers and will do nothing.

> Therefore pair work will waste my time without any outcome. Perhaps only few students will participate in pair work. The rest of the class will not participate in pair work activities. If you let the students work in pairs, students will not work. They will talk about things from outside the topic. I tried pair work in the past, but it did not work. (FI.2:37-44)

These are concerns noted by previous teachers in this study. In addition to the students' weak English background, Fathi referred to the students' attitudes towards pair work as another factor which influenced his decision to omit pair work activities.

> The students do not have a positive attitude towards pair work. They do not understand the significance of pair work. Even if the students participate in pair work, they will speak in Arabic. Therefore, I think there is no advantage of pair work in the Libyan classes. (FI.2:62-65)

Fathi thus felt that there was a mismatch between the curriculum's emphasis on pair work and what students could and were willing to do. This mismatch reflected more general problems with the role learners were expected to take on:

> The students just depend on the teacher. They write down every thing the teacher says, and memorize what he writes and says. The students depend totally on the teacher. The teacher does every thing for them. They just sit silent and write what the teacher says and writes. Of course this is the result of the previous years. During the previous years the students did not study enough English. For example, the teacher is required to teach eight units, but he may teach only two or three units. The students have weak English because they never finish the required curriculum. That is why the Libyan students are weak in English and have limited and weak vocabulary. (FI.2:50-59)

The students were thus not able, Fathi felt, to assume an active role; again, he blamed this on their previous experiences. As episode 8.3 showed, students were not given the chance to do the while your read activity which required them to locate some words and phrases within the text and then explain these words in their own words. This activity was done by the teacher, and students listened to the teacher and copied what the teacher wrote on the board. Fathi felt that this activity is difficult for the students:

> I do not think that the students are able to do this activity by themselves. This activity requires students who have vocabulary in English. Our students lack vocabulary in English. How can these students do these activities when they do

not have vocabulary in English? I have to do these activities by myself. I think many of these curriculum activities are difficult for the students.

(FI.2:234-239)

I asked Fathi why he thinks that many of the activities are difficult for the students:

> As I told you, students cannot do activities which require them to use English. They do not have English vocabulary to do the activities as they are required in the curriculum. How can students use English to explain the meaning of some words in the text when these students do not have English vocabulary? The teacher has to translate every thing in the text into Arabic and make sure that the students understood the text. This is our approach to teaching reading, and the students are used to this approach. We cannot change our approach. (FI.2:241-247)

Fathi's comments reveal his beliefs about students' limited ability and about their expectations; such factors shaped his teaching in ways which conflicted with the curriculum, this comment though, also revealed a certain resignation on his part- the belief that his current way of teaching could not be changed.

8.2.3 Attitudes towards the use of Arabic

The use of Arabic was a key characteristic of Fathi's practices during the lessons I observed with him. I asked Fathi for his views regarding this frequent use of Arabic:

He answered:

> I found the use of Arabic a successful idea. I say the idea in Arabic to the students and the students try to translate this idea into English. This approach helps the students to translate into English. This approach helps the students to construct the sentence in their mind and to try to speak in English. But if you just speak in English, students will not respond to you in English because their background is weak in English. Students even do not know how to construct a good sentence in English. They need someone to help them word by word in order to build a sentence. I help them by giving them the words in Arabic, and they try to translate these words into English. Sometimes they can succeed in translating into English, but sometimes they cannot. (FI.2:81:90)

His views here drew once again on the belief that his students' level of English was inadequate: this, he felt, made Arabic necessary. He also felt that the use of Arabic

has a number of advantages:

> I think the use of Arabic has an advantage particularly for the weak students. These students do not have communication skills. They are not used to speaking in English. They may have resources of vocabulary in English, but they do not know how to use these resources in spoken language. Students want someone to stimulate them in Arabic so they can try to use their resources of English. Some students may have good amount of vocabulary in English but they have never tried to speak in English. Therefore you have to stimulate them in Arabic so they can build on what they want to say in their minds and say it in English. I found this approach successful with the students. I have tried this approach with the students for some years and I have found it successful. (FI.2:92-102)

Arabic, here, was seen as a stimulus for students to think and speak. In Fathi's view students seem to enjoy the translation process:

> Students get interested when they translate into Arabic. When you say something in English and the student is able to say this thing in Arabic, the students get happy. They feel that they understand what the teacher says in English. (FI.2:183-185)

The frequent use of Arabic during the lessons I observed with Fathi was thus underpinned by Fathi's positive attitudes towards the use of Arabic. He also believed that the students shared his views.

8.2.4 Beliefs about teaching reading

Although the curriculum suggests that it is possible to understand the gist of the reading text without the need to read the text word by word, Fathi's approach to teaching reading was not in line with this suggestion. Instead he read the text word by word and translated every word in the text into Arabic. When I asked Fathi about the rationale behind this approach, he commented:

> I have to read the text word by word and sentence by sentence so the students can understand the content and the topic of the text. How can the students understand the topic of the text if you do not explain every word in the text? I translate word by word into Arabic so the students can understand the topic of the text. Students cannot do the while you read activities if they do not understand the reading text. (FI.2.128-132)

Fathi's position here again reflected little confidence in his students' abilities to understand any thing in English on their own. His comments also implied that the reading texts were far too difficult for his students.

The use of dictionaries was another characteristic of Fathi's work during the reading lessons. Fathi frequently asked the students to check their dictionaries for the Arabic equivalent of words within the reading text. In Fathi' views' using dictionaries has several advantages:

> Dictionaries can help students in the translation process. Students can increase their English vocabulary when they use English-Arabic dictionaries. Dictionaries can help the students memorize the Arabic equivalent of the English vocabulary. I think English-Arabic dictionaries are very helpful in teaching reading. (FI.2:134-137)

While Fathi was reading the text aloud, he frequently stopped at grammatical points in the reading text and asked the students about these. I asked Fathi about this regular focus on grammar:

> Whenever I meet a grammatical rule in the reading text, I remind the students about this grammatical rule so the students can memorize this rule because if you just teach the grammatical rule for only one time, students will not memorize this rule. They will forget it. I always try to remind them with grammar. This constant reminder helps students memorize the grammatical rule. Memorization is important for the students to do well in the exam. My idea is that the grammatical rule will always stay in the students' minds. This means that I do not teach the reading as a reading lesson, I always concentrate on grammar even if it is a reading activity or a writing activity. (FI.2:154-161)

Fathi was quite frank here. He used reading activities to teach grammar, this position was based on an awareness of what students had to do in the exam but also clearly reflected his own beliefs about the roles of grammar and of memorization in language learning. Such views were completely at odds with the curriculum.

8.2.5 Perceptions about teaching writing

Fathi was the only teacher in this study who did the writing lesson in the class. I asked Fathi about the rationale for this. He answered:

> Some teachers ask the students to write at home and bring their writing to the class. They do not see how the students do their writing. They do not give any guidance for the students to do their writing task. They just ask them to write. I think doing the writing task in the class is very important for language learning because in the class, students can exchange ideas, they can help each other with vocabulary. (FI.3:166-171).

While Fathi did not refer to process writing, his position on writing was closer to the curriculum than any of the other teachers in this study.

Although Fathi did not instruct the students to work in pairs during the writing activity, students worked in pairs and helped each other with vocabulary and ideas. Fathi commented on the use of pair work during the writing lesson:

> Pair work is useful particularly during the writing task because students can help each other when they work in pairs. They can support each other and provide feedback for each other. Pair work can help the students to exchange ideas and vocabulary. I think pair work has many advantages during the writing process. Students can help each other; they can exchange ideas, and words. Working in pairs during the writing task teaches the students how to depend on each other instead of just depending on the teacher. (FI.3:143-149)

Fathi appeared to have mixed views about the use of pair work. In the speaking activities which required students to work in pairs, and exchange ideas in English (see 8.2.2), Fathi felt that pair work activities would waste his time without any outcome. On the other hand, Fathi appeared to have a positive attitude towards pair work in doing the writing tasks. As the above quote shows, Fathi felt that students can help each other and can exchange ideas when working in pairs during the writing process.

While the students were doing their writing, Fathi moved around the class and provided help for the students. Fathi spoke about why he was moving around the class

during the writing lesson:

> I was moving around the class so the students can have a chance to show me their writing. Students have different questions during the writing process. Some students want to make sure that they write the sentences correctly. Others they have ideas but they do not know how to write them in English. I move around the class to provide help for the students. I help them through their writing process. I move around the class to check the students' writing, and to support them with ideas. It is very important for the teacher to see how the students write. (FO.3:164-170)

Despite his previous statements, then, (see 8.2.2) that the teacher does every thing for the students and that the students just listen to the teacher and write what the teacher says and writes. In the case of writing, Fathi did feel students could be more responsible for their work.

8.2.6 The role of the exams

As I have mentioned previously, Fathi skipped the listening section during the lessons I observed with him. He reflected on the omission of the listening section:

> I think the implementation of the curriculum is incomplete because there is a whole language skill which is missed. The listening skill is missed. Because we do not teach the listening section, students think that this section is not important and consider it as an extra thing. (FI.3:90-93)

He went on to describe the advantages of teaching the listening section:

> The listening section is important. The students should have a chance to listen to native speakers of the language. When students listen to a native speaker of English, they can trust this native speaker's pronunciation. Listening to a native speaker of English is not like listening to a teacher who is not native speaker of English. If students get a chance to listen to native speakers of English, they will get interested, and they will try to mimic their pronunciation. (FI.3:69-75)

Clearly Fathi has positive attitudes towards teaching the listening section and feels that the students would benefit from this section. However, since the exam does not include the listening section, he decided to skip this section:

> We try not to waste our time on teaching things that will not be included in the exam. We are only teaching for the exams. For example, we do not teach the listening section because the exams do not have listening section. If

> you want to teach the listening section as required by the curriculum, you will waste your time. I am restricted by time. I have a limited time. I am required to teach the students the things that will be included in the exam. The ministry of education writes the exams and we have to teach the students in order to pass these exams. The problem is that the exams do not concentrate on the listening and speaking activities. Therefore, the teachers and the students do not care about these activities. (FI.1:43-49)

Exams not only affect how the teachers implement the curriculum, but also shape how parents and school administrators evaluate teachers:

> You know that the parents of the students and the school administration evaluate the teacher by how many students pass the exams. The parents want their children to pass the exams. They do not care if their children learn English or not. What should I do in this situation? Should I teach the things which will be in the exam or should I waste my time in the things which will not be included the exams? (FI.1:48-53)

Overall Fathi considered the pressure of the exams as an obstacle towards the effective implementation of this curriculum. Both teachers and students considered the skills which are not tested in the exams to be of little importance; these were thus omitted, particularly because Fathi also felt under time pressure to complete the curriculum.

8.3 Summary

This chapter presented an in depth description of Fathi's practices during the lessons I observed with him. It was evident that there were some aspects of Fathi's practices which were in line with the intended curriculum. This was particularly obvious during the writing lesson. During this lesson, students worked in pairs and in groups, and exchanged ideas and feedback. Fathi provided feedback and helped the students with their writing process. However, there were also several aspects of Fathi's work which were not in line with the intended curriculum. This was evident during the while reading activities, the omission of the listening activities, the absence of pair work during the reading and the speaking activities, and the frequent use of Arabic which

dominated the classroom interaction. In Table 8.1, I summarize the extent to which Fathi's practices were congruent with the intended curriculum.

The interviews gave Fathi the chance to comment on the various contextual factors and the beliefs which underpinned his classroom practices. Table 8.2, summarizes the key beliefs and factors which shaped Fathi's work: he had several concerns about the way the curriculum was introduced and about its suitability; in particular, he felt it was too difficult for the students, and this meant that they were unable to do activities in the learned-centred and interactive manner the curriculum suggests. Another key factor in Fathi's work was exams, and these influenced his decision to focus more on grammar than on reading and listening.

Table: 8.1 The intended curriculum and Fathi's practices

Focus	Intended curriculum	Fathi's practices
Reading	▪ Aims to develop the sub skills of predictions, inference, reading for gist, and reading for specific information. ▪ Aims to teach the students how to work out the meanings from context. ▪ Aims to make use of the theme of the reading text by involving students in discussing the theme of the text and relating it to themselves.	▪ Reading word by word and sentence by sentence. ▪ Focus on word meaning. ▪ Focus on reading aloud. ▪ Focus on Arabic translation. ▪ Focus on grammar ▪ Omission of the after reading activities
Grammar	▪ Aims to activate the grammatical points which students have already learned through the productive skills of speaking and writing .	▪ Using examples to illustrate the grammatical points. ▪ Explicit grammar teaching. ▪ Using Arabic to explain grammar.
Listening	▪ Aims to develop the sub skills of predictions, inference, listening for gist, and listening for specific information. ▪ Aims to develop confidence and competence in listening comprehension.	▪ Omission of the whole listening section.
Speaking	▪ Aims to activate the language students already have learned. ▪ Aims to promote fluent communication and making talking in English a regular activity among the students. ▪ Does not recommend correcting errors during the speaking stage.	▪ Focus on Arabic translation. ▪ Students did not actively participate in the required speaking activities. ▪ Omission of some of the speaking activities.
Writing	▪ Aims to develop the language and grammar students have already learned through producing longer pieces of writing. ▪ Considers the process of writing as important as the end result because it is during the process that learning takes a place. ▪ Encourages students to work together, to help each other with note taking and editing, and to produce work with a communicative purpose.	▪ Students worked in pairs and in groups during the writing activities. ▪ The teacher provided help and feedback during the writing process.
Pair work	▪ Considers pair work as an opportunity for the students to speak the target language. ▪ Advises the teacher to give the students as many opportunities as possible to work in pairs during each unit.	▪ Most of the activities were led by the teacher. ▪ The type of classroom interaction was teacher to individual students, and teacher to the whole class. ▪ Students only had a chance to work in pairs and groups during the writing activity.

Table 8.2 Factors influencing Fathi's practices

Factor	Description
Beliefs about the students	▪ The English background of the students is weak. ▪ Students do not have a positive attitude towards pair work. ▪ Students do not appreciate the significance of pair work. ▪ Students depend totally on the teacher. ▪ Students are used to depending on the teacher. This is the result of students' past learning experience.
Attitudes towards pair work	▪ Pair work wastes time and has no outcome. ▪ Pair work is useful during the writing task. ▪ Students can help each other when they work in pairs.
Attitudes towards the use of Arabic	▪ The use of Arabic helps the weak students. ▪ The use of Arabic stimulates students to participate in classroom activities. ▪ Students get interested when they translate into Arabic.
Beliefs about the teaching of writing	▪ Doing the writing tasks in the class is very important for language learning. ▪ It is very important for the teacher to see how the students write.
Beliefs about the teaching of reading	▪ Students cannot do the while you read activities if they do not understand the text. ▪ Translation can help students understand the text. ▪ Students cannot understand the reading text if the teacher does not explain every word. ▪ Bilingual dictionaries are helpful in teaching reading.
Concerns about the curriculum	▪ Many of the curriculum activities are difficult for the students. ▪ Many teachers still do not understand the curriculum.
The pressure of the exams	▪ The focus of the exams is not in line with the intended curriculum. ▪ Exams shape the expectations of students, teachers, parents and school administration. ▪ The activities which are not included in the exam do not receive priority by the teachers and the students. ▪ Teachers are judged according to the exam result.
Lack of monitoring	▪ There is no inspection as to what happens inside the classroom and whether the teachers meet the demands of the curriculum.

CHAPTER 9: DISCUSSION

The accounts in the previous five chapters illustrated how five teachers in Libya implemented and made sense of the curriculum they were required to work with. In this chapter, I discuss the key findings which emerged from these chapters in relation to my research questions. This chapter will be organized into two main sections. In the first section, I will discuss the extent to which teachers' practices were congruent with the curriculum principles. In the second section, I will look at the factors behind teachers' practices, in particular the beliefs and the contextual issues which underpinned teachers' practices.

9.1 Curriculum principles and teachers' practices

Although the new English language curriculum was introduced in Libya in 2000, it has not been the subject of any evaluation; in particular, there have been no reviews of how teachers are implementing this curriculum. This lack of attention to how teachers implement curriculum innovation is not unusual as Carless (2004:640) has noted "how teachers implement changes in pedagogy is an important area which does not receive sufficient attention".

Given therefore the crucial role of the teachers in the implementation of educational innovations, this study aimed to provide a picture of how five teachers of English implement the English language curriculum in Libya. More specifically, this study investigated the characteristics of these teachers' practices, and the extent to which these practices were congruent with the methodological principles endorsed by this curriculum. It also shed light on the rationales and the factors which had an impact on the teachers' practices.

An account of each teacher's practices in comparison to the curriculum principles was presented in the tables at the end of each of the previous five chapters.

These tables show that there were some aspects of the curriculum which were implemented as intended. This was particularly evident during the teaching of the pre-reading activity. For example, three teachers (Nora, Eman, and Murad) encouraged the students to discuss the pre-reading questions before they started reading the text. Another teacher (Fathi) allowed the students to work together during the writing activities. When teachers reflected upon these practices, they expressed beliefs which were to some extent congruent with those endorsed by the curriculum (see Sections, 4.2.1, 5.2.1, 6.2.1, and 8.2.5). This means that the parts of the curriculum which were to some extent were similar to the teachers' beliefs were the ones which they were more likely to implement. In other words, teachers were filtering the curriculum and selecting those aspects of it which were already congruent with their beliefs.

Although there were some aspects of the curriculum which were implemented as intended, teachers' practices in most cases did not reflect the principles of the intended curriculum. Thus, although one of the curriculum aims is "for the students to communicate effectively and fluently with each other and to make talking in English a regular activity" (Macfarlane, 2000:3), classrooms were generally teacher centred and Arabic was the dominant language during classroom interaction

Teachers also spent considerable time correcting students' grammatical and pronunciation mistakes. During the reading lessons, teachers spent substantial time reading word by word and sentence by sentence, explaining vocabulary, translating into Arabic, and reading aloud. Little attention was given to activities included in the curriculum such as working out the meaning of the words from the context, scanning the reading text for specific information, matching activities, and the after reading activities. Grammar items were taught in discrete activities without developing students' abilities to use the grammar for communicative purposes.

A similar pattern was evident in the teaching of speaking and listening. Activities which aimed to give the students the chance to speak the target language were either omitted completely or talked through by the teachers, with little student involvement. Pair work activities (a core component of the curriculum) were either skipped or carried out at the class level between the teacher and the students. The listening activities which were designed to enhance the students' skills of prediction, listening for gist and to develop the students' confidence and competence in comprehension were omitted altogether by all five teachers.

The implementation of the writing activities in the curriculum, too, deviated significantly from the approach suggested by the curriculum. With the exception of one teacher, the writing activities were not done in the classroom to give the students the chance to work together and help each other during the writing process. While the curriculum considers the process of writing as important as the product of writing, and "students therefore are encouraged to work together, to help each other with note taking and editing, and to produce work with a communicative purpose" (ibid:2) , teachers either left out the writing activities or (in one case) asked the students to do these activities as homework.

The fact that educational innovations may not be implemented as intended is a phenomenon which is widely noted within the wider educational literature (Chapman, 1997; Elmore, 1996; Fullan, 2001; Sarason, 1996). Spillane and Zeuli (1999) investigated 25 teachers' mathematics practice while implementing a reform within mathematics education. Findings revealed that all teachers reported teaching mathematics in ways that reflected the key aspects of the intended reform; observations however, showed that only four of the 25 teachers actually taught mathematics in ways that were consistent with the reform's recommendations.

In the context of science education reform, Smith & Southerland (2007) examined the interactions between two teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning science and the ideas of the reform which had been imposed on them. Although the teachers in this study showed familiarity with the ideas promoted by the reform, their actual classroom practices reflected their beliefs, which were not in line with the ideas of the reform. The authors concluded that:

> The pedagogical and curricula decisions made by these teachers are solidly grounded in their beliefs about appropriate practice, beliefs that do not necessarily align with the tenets of current reform. Not surprisingly, these deeply held personal theories have not been easy to supplant, nor have they been readily modified by the ideas and methodologies that were externally imposed. Rather these teachers' fundamental beliefs about science and their personal theories of what it means to teach and learn science have profoundly impacted the way they have interpreted reforms as well as how (or if) changes have been enacted in their classrooms (Smith & Southerland, 2007:415).

This study of ELT in Libya reflects the findings of Smith & Southerland's (2007). Teachers here also interpreted and implemented the curriculum according to beliefs which were not in line with the recommendations of the curriculum. However, this study goes beyond beliefs and also considered the contextual factors which determine teachers' practices. I discuss these factors in the second part of this chapter.

In addition to parallels with the findings from educational research more generally, results of this study also resonate with those specifically in the field of ELT. For example, in Greece, Karavas-Doukas, (1995) used one structured classroom observation and semi structured interviews with 14 teachers to examine their implementation of an EFL curriculum innovation which advocates a communicative learner-centred approach. She reported that classrooms were generally teacher-centred and form-focused. Lessons primarily consisted of activities which provided practice on discrete language items while activities that encouraged spontaneous genuine communication were almost non-existent. Most pair work activities were carried out

between the teacher and the students rather than, as intended by the curriculum between pairs of students.

Another study of relevance here is that by Gorsuch (2000:137), who conducted a questionnaire survey of teachers' perceptions (876 teachers who teach English at high schools in Japan) towards the impact of English educational policy on their classroom practices. Findings revealed that while the educational policy emphasises the development of students' communicative skills and calls for the equal treatment of the language skills, "Japanese teachers' current orientation toward foreign language learning seems to be that strong teacher control is desirable and that students need to memorize, use written mode, and be very accurate". This apparent mismatch between curricular principles and teachers' beliefs and practices is further reflected in a study in Taiwan where there was an attempt to improve the status of English language teaching. The Taiwanese government introduced new textbooks featuring activities for communicative language teaching into its junior and high schools. In this study, Wang (2002:137) interviewed six teacher educators to investigate their perceptions of this curricular innovation. These educators reported that:

> Most high school teaching is grammar oriented. Grammar-translation method prevails, which makes learning every day English impossible. Instruction resembles "parrot learning" wherein students make sounds without knowing why.

The trend apparent in this set of ELT studies recurs in Nunan (2003) who conducted a multiple case study of the effects of English as a global language on the policies and practices in a number of countries in the Asia-Pacific region: Mainland China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam. Data were collected through a variety of methods, including document analysis (e.g. recent books, articles, government reports, syllabuses and curriculum documents) and interviews with 68

informants from these countries. Nunan concluded that:

> English language policies and practices have been implemented, often at significant cost to other aspects of the curriculum, without a clearly articulated rationale and without detailed consideration of the costs and benefits of such practices and polices on the countries in questions. Furthermore there is a widely articulated belief in that, in public schools at least, these policies and practices are failing. (Nunan, 2003:609)

Another study which focuses on the implementation of curriculum innovation comes from O'Sullivan (2004:640), who used an eclectic approach (interviews, semi-structured and unstructured observations, lesson observation, assessment of learners' work and an examination of documents), to examine 145 English language teachers' implementation of learner-centred approaches within the Namibian context. Findings revealed that while "most teachers claimed to be implementing learner-centred approaches in their classrooms, lesson observations did not match teachers' implementation claims".

Although the above studies offer significant implications for curriculum planners and educational policy makers, they do not provide detailed accounts of what happens inside the classroom and how teachers actually implement pedagogical innovations. Yet, as Carless (2004:640) argues, "to analyse an innovation's success, it is necessary to learn how teachers are carrying it out in classrooms at schools where the innovative curriculum is supposedly being implemented". With the exception of O'Sullivan (2004), the ELT studies above base their findings on interviews, questionnaires, document analysis and, in the case of Karavas-Doukas (1995), one structured classroom observation.

In contrast, the findings of this study are based on a detailed analysis of what actually happens inside the classroom. Teachers in this study were observed in their normal classrooms teaching units from the same curriculum. This enabled me to

compare more closely curricular principles and teachers' practices. As described earlier in Chapter 3, the teachers in this study were observed teaching lessons consecutively over a period of two weeks. This moderate longitudinal perspective provided detailed insight into the characteristics of the teachers' work as they implemented the curriculum. The longitudinal classroom observation aspect of this study does, I feel distinguish it from much existing work on curriculum innovation in ELT.

9.2 Factors influencing teachers' practices

As noted above, classroom observations in this study revealed that, overall, teachers' practices deviated significantly from those recommended by the curriculum. However, a description of classroom observations alone does not allow us to understand why teachers implement curricula in particular ways. As Breen et al. (2001:498) put it "we cannot infer the intentions of teacher action or the reasons why teachers work in the ways they do in particular lessons with particular students only from observed practices". Richards (1996:281) calls for "the need to listen to the teachers' voices in understanding classroom practice in order to be in able to understand teaching in its own terms and in ways in which it is understood by teachers". Frechtling (2000:281) adds that "it is essential not only to observe instruction, but also to talk to teachers about their instructional decisions". More recently Borg (2006:247) has argued that:

> Observation on its own...provides an inadequate basis for the study of what teachers think, know, and believe. Researchers may draw inferences about cognition from what is observed, but verification for these must be sought through further sources of data.

Reflecting these concerns, this study did not only focus on what teachers do, but also on the factors behind their actions. As I explained in Chapter 3, interviews provided me with the opportunity to listen to the teachers' voices. During these interviews teachers reflected upon their own practices and articulated both the beliefs

and the contextual factors which had an impact on their classroom practices. In this section, I will discuss these influences and in doing so shed light on why teachers' practices and curricular principles are not aligned. However, before I proceed, I would like to emphasize that teachers' beliefs and the contextual factors which underpin teachers' practices are in practice inextricably interrelated and the separation between them below is only for the purpose of data analysis and data presentation.

9.2.1 Teachers' beliefs

I have already argued in Section 2.3.2 that teachers' beliefs play a significant role in shaping how they interpret and implement educational innovations. During the interviews, teachers expressed a range of beliefs which allow us to make sense of how they interpreted and implemented the curriculum. Before I proceed, I should mention that I am aware that a possible criticism of this type of research is that the data might reflect post hoc rationalisation rather than beliefs. However, in this study I worked with five different teachers over a period of time, and the fact that responses of each teacher converge in the way they did gives me the confidence that the study did actually accessed their beliefs. I discuss these beliefs below under the following broad headings: (a) beliefs about language teaching and learning (b) beliefs about students, and (c) beliefs about teachers.

9.2.1.1 Beliefs about language teaching and learning

In this study, teachers' practices clearly reflected deeply held beliefs about the process of language teaching and learning that were contrary to those embedded in the curriculum. The discussion of these beliefs will allow us to understand the tensions between what teachers do and what the curriculum recommends.

Beliefs about teaching reading

The curriculum encourages purposeful reading activities such as skimming,

scanning, matching, and working out the meaning from the context. In fact, one of the principles which underlie the teaching of reading is that "it is possible to understand the gist of the text without having understood every word" (Macfarlane, 2000:3). The beliefs about teaching reading teachers expressed during the interviews were at odds with the curriculum's approach to this aspect of language teaching. As illustrated in Chapters 5-9, a common belief among the teachers in this study was that the goal of reading is to develop accurate pronunciation. There was little evidence in the teachers' comments that they were aware of the communicative orientation towards teaching reading embedded in the curriculum. Similar difficulties in promoting communicative reading instructions were noted by Ghaith (2003). In the Lebanese context, he employed a survey design to elicit 290 EFL teachers' assumptions towards reading in relation to curriculum innovation in Lebanon. The study found that while the curriculum encourages the development of reading skills, teachers' theoretical views about reading were inclined towards the development of pronunciation. The author suggested that one possible explanation for these results is that the majority of the teachers have not been exposed to the recent trends and methods of teaching EFL reading. Similarly in the Libyan context, the lack of exposure to communicative approaches to teaching EFL reading might be one factor which led to the inconsistency between what the curriculum proposes with respect to teaching reading and what teachers do when they teach reading. The way teachers themselves were taught to read English (and possibly Arabic) could also have been influential here, especially given the lack of formal methodological training they received.

Beliefs about pair work

Another key principle endorsed by this curriculum innovation is that students should be given as many opportunities as possible to work in pairs. The use of pair work

is encouraged on the assumption that "it is a good opportunity for the students to speak the target language" (Macfarlane, 2000:5). However, classroom observations, as noted above, showed little evidence of pair work. During the interviews an interesting range of beliefs related to pair work emerged. Two teachers (Eman and Fathi), for example, revealed negative attitudes towards pair work, expressing doubts about its effectiveness as an instructional strategy with their learners. One of these teachers (Eman) declared that even if she had a small number of students, she would not use pair work in her class. She argued that although the purpose of pair work is to encourage students to use English, her students would revert to speaking in Arabic. Sakui (2004), who examined 14 teachers' practices and beliefs while implementing communicative language teaching in Japanese secondary schools, found that one of the reasons why CLT was not implemented is teachers' lack of confidence in conducting activities such as pair work and group work. She cites one of the teachers who suggests that if she uses pair or group work, students may go back to conversing in Japanese. Another study which reports teachers' negative attitudes towards pair work comes from Kennedy (1999:33):

> Trainee A is unwilling to use pair work in class due to his negative attitude. He does not believe that pair work will improve the communicative level of his students. In addition, his colleagues are against pair work, and he doubts his skill and ability to implement pair work in the classroom. All three factors (attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control) are negative. Not surprisingly, then, pair work is not used and no change is implemented.

While subjective norms did not emerge as an influence on teachers' work here, attitudes to pair work and concerns about students' behaviour were influential. Two teachers in this study (Munir and Murad) expressed positive beliefs towards pair work and felt that pair work can enhance students' English language learning. However, these positive beliefs did not result in the use of pair work. This suggests that there are other factors which have greater influence on teachers' practices. For example, these two teachers reported that pair work is useful in improving students' speaking

skills, but their beliefs about the students' English language level and students' expectations discouraged them from using pair work. This finding reflects that from Kennedy (1999) who also found that despite teachers' positive beliefs towards pair work, other factors overrode these beliefs:

> Trainee B is willing to use pair work in class and has a positive attitude with the belief that it will improve the communicative level of her students...but unfortunately she does not use pair work as she is worried about losing control of her large class, especially in a culture which has high regard for student discipline. (Kennedy, 1999:34)

Concerns about students' ability in English were in fact a major factor in teachers' decisions about implementing many aspects of the curriculum as I discuss further below.

Beliefs about the use of L1

The interviews also explored teachers' beliefs about the use of Arabic, given as noted above, the fact that one aim of the curriculum was "to make talking in English a regular activity" (Macfarlane, 2000:3). Once again the beliefs expressed by the teachers were in conflict with this aim. All teachers expressed positive attitudes towards the use of Arabic; they explained their position with reference to (a) the status of English, (b) the advantages of using Arabic in language teaching, (c) the students' English language level.

As noted above, classroom interaction in the classes observed for this study was dominated by the use of Arabic. One factor behind this frequent use of Arabic was teachers' views about the status of English. Two teachers (Murad, and Nora) felt that English is just a school subject, and that students do not need to use English outside the class. Clearly this belief is in contrast with the philosophy which underlies the curriculum. While the curriculum aims to make talking in English a regular activity, teachers tend to omit the activities which are designed to achieve this aim on

the assumption that the students do not need to use English in real life. Drawing on a study of three teachers' beliefs and implementation of CLT in Vietnam , Hiep (2007) found that one of the factors which led to the tensions between the principles of CLT and teachers' actual classroom practices was teachers' beliefs about the status of English. He cites one of the teachers who argued that the teacher is Vietnamese, the students are Vietnamese, and therefore there is no need for them to use English. Hiep went on to question the value of conducting activities which may not be applicable to students' immediate needs:

> In Vietnam, English language students share the same mother tongue and thus do not have the immediate need to use English in the classroom. Nor do many of them have this need outside the classroom. The principle of doing tasks in the classroom which are applicable to the world outside the classroom is thus questioned. (Hiep, 2007:195)

In addition to teachers' attitudes towards English, two teachers (Eman, and Murad) suggested that they prefer to use Arabic while teaching grammar on the assumption that grammar is difficult for the students, and that the use of English will complicate matters further. Harbord (1992:353) suggests that such a position is not uncommon:

> Most often, teachers resort to LI to explain grammar because they feel that L2 explanation is too complicated, and may even feel themselves incapable of giving a clear and unambiguous explanation of the structure in question exclusively in English.

This explanation also suggests that teachers' perception of their own competence in English may be an influential factor in their use of L1. Cook (2001) argues that foreign language/second language teachers should integrate the L1 into their pedagogies as it helps to explain difficult grammar, clarify new vocabulary, and manage the classroom. Turnbull (2001) agrees that the use of L1 can facilitate the process of grammar and vocabulary teaching, but cautions against teachers relying too much on the

L1. He recommends that teachers should use the target language as much as possible in their teaching particularly in contexts where students have limited access to the target language outside the classroom. The literature, then does not rule out the use of L1 in the EFL classroom: however, the extent to which it was used in this study seemed to exceed the reasonable levels most writers advise.

Another issue which emerged when teachers justified their frequent use of L1 was the students' low English language level. The issue of students' English language level will be discussed later in this section.

Beliefs about error correction

Although the curriculum considers making mistakes a normal part of the language learning process and suggests that the teachers should not correct too much in order to encourage fluency and confidence, classroom observations showed that teachers spent considerable time on correcting students' grammatical and pronunciation mistakes. These classroom practices reflect deeply held beliefs about the process of language teaching. When teachers talked about the rationales for these practices, they revealed beliefs which conflict with the curriculum's recommendations regarding the process of correcting mistakes. Three teachers insisted that it is very important to correct students' grammatical and pronunciation mistakes immediately because if the teacher does not do so, students will keep making the same mistakes. In a study investigating Colombian teachers' and students' perceptions in relation to the role of grammar and error correction, Schulz (2001) found that Colombian teachers were more inclined towards traditional language teaching, and that these teachers held strong beliefs regarding the effectiveness of explicit grammar teaching and error correction. Schulz claimed that teachers' background as learners was an important factor in shaping these teachers' beliefs. The influence of teachers' background in shaping their beliefs

and practices was evident in this study too; the teachers' views about error correction reflected those they had been subject to as learners (see Eman's chapter, Section 5.2.5).

9.2.1.2 Beliefs about students

As mentioned previously, all teachers attributed the frequent use of Arabic during classroom interaction to the students low English language level. Teachers reported that if they used English, students would not be able to cope because their proficiency was too low. This finding reflects that from Liu et al. (2004), who investigated 13 Korean teachers' practices and beliefs in relation to a government policy which require teachers to maximize English use in the classroom. Through analysis of one audio taped lesson from each teacher, and teachers' questionnaires, findings revealed that teachers would switch to Korean when they felt their students, had difficulty understanding them or when they had difficulty expressing themselves in English.

The impact of the students' low English proficiency on the teachers' practices has also been reported by Li (2001), who investigated the challenges teachers encounter while trying to implement a curriculum innovation in English language teaching in South Korea. Findings revealed that because of students' limited command of English structures, teachers found it difficult to do any oral communicative activities with them. Similarly, Greek teachers regarded students' English low level as a barrier to implementing a communicative approach (Karavas-Doukas, 1995).

Overall, a clear finding to emerge from this study of Libyan teachers is that they perceive the demands of the English curriculum to be beyond students' capabilities. My observations support this view, and this suggests, then that an important reason why the curriculum is not being implemented as intended is that in its current form it is poorly aligned to students' proficiency in English it is simply too difficult for them.

I would argue that one reason behind students' low level of English is the way teachers view and teach English. If teachers do not see a need for encouraging students to speak in English and purposefully omit the activities which are designed to give the students the opportunities to do so, this in turn will have consequences for the students' English level. Students after all, cannot be expected to develop communicative skills in English if they are never given opportunities to do so in class (and this is even more significant in Libya, where opportunities to learn English out of class are minimal). Teacher cognition research has been criticized for not telling us anything about learning (Borg, 2006), and in the sense of quantifiable, statistical relationships between teachers' beliefs and learning outcomes this criticism is justified; however, there is clearly a relationship in this study between teachers' beliefs, the learning opportunities they afford students, and what students ultimately learn.

9.2.1.3 Beliefs about teachers

In addition to concerns regarding students' low level of English, teachers in this study expressed concerns regarding their abilities to meet the demands of this new curriculum. Overall, teachers regarded this curriculum to be beyond teachers' abilities and understanding. For example, one teacher (Nora) cast doubts about her English language proficiency, and suggested that teachers have weaknesses in their speaking skills. Another teacher (Eman) suggested that teachers do not have clear ideas about this curriculum. These perceptions about teachers suggest that the curriculum is mismatched to the teachers' abilities in addition to those of the students. Teachers' perceptions about their limited ability to implement the curriculum are clearly significant. Such views will shape teachers' choices of pedagogical activities and strategies, and lead them to omit those most likely to cause problems; this was, for example, why oral activities were commonly omitted in this study: teachers often had doubts about their own spoken

English.

It is worth mentioning here that English language teachers in Libya graduate from English language departments where the focus is still on the mastery of English grammar, phonetics, and literature. Students study for four years in these departments without having the chance to develop their speaking skills. However, as Chacon (2005:269) states:

> EFL teachers require adequate preparation not only in grammar, reading and writing, but also in speaking and listening so that they build a strong sense of efficiency to use the language and engage students in learning English through CLT.

The mismatch between the curriculum rhetoric and teachers' abilities has been reported by a number of researchers. For example, commenting on the impact of English on educational policies and practices in the Asia-Pacific region (Mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Vietnam), Nunan (2003:606) writes:

> In all countries surveyed, it would seem that rhetoric rather than reality is the order of the day. Poor English skills on the part of teachers as well as inadequate teacher preparation make it very difficult, if not possible for many teachers to implement CLT in their classrooms.

Another study of relevance her is that by Al-Hazmi (2003:342) who comments on EFL teacher preparation programmes in Saudi Arabia:

> The gap between the content of teacher education programs and the needs of the classroom widens. After graduating from university many teachers lack essential English skills, especially the ability to speak the language.

The apparent mismatch between curriculum rhetoric and teachers' abilities is further reflected in a study in Korea where the CLT teaching was introduced into the Korean Secondary school system. In this study, Li (2001) found that one of the factors which hampered teachers' ability to implement CLT was their limited oral proficiency

in English.

The above discussion underlines the need for preparing teachers to meet the demands of any curriculum innovation particularly if this innovation requires highly qualified and well prepared teachers. Hu's (2002:651) claims seem particularly relevant to the Libyan ELT context:

> Without qualified teachers, no matter how good the curriculum, the syllabus the textbooks and the test are, the development of English language teaching will be handicapped and quality compromised.

9.2.2 Prior experience and teachers' beliefs

Clearly data emerging from this study points to the crucial role of teachers' beliefs in shaping how teachers interpreted and implemented the curriculum. Teachers' decisions in implementing the curriculum however cannot be explained in terms of one specific belief but are influenced by complex interactions amongst the range of beliefs teachers hold which I have already discussed.

In addition, it is important to remember here that teachers in this study were educated in a context where English language teaching was characterized by an emphasis on teaching grammar, reading aloud, and error correction (see Section 1.2). Three teachers in this study did actually teach the previous curriculum for more than ten years. Many of the beliefs teachers articulated here seemed to reflect their prior experience of English language teaching and learning.

Thus, in the absence of adequate teacher training, teachers seem to rely on their prior beliefs and experience in interpreting the new curriculum. This in turn may have contributed to the mismatch between what the curriculum aims to achieve and what actually happens inside the classroom. Spillane et al. (2002:378) reflect on the influence of teacher's prior beliefs and experience when they write:

> Teachers' prior beliefs and practices can pose challenges not only because

> teachers are unwilling to change in the direction of the policy but also because their extant understandings may interfere with their ability to interpret and implement the reform in ways consistent with the designers' intent.

This implies the need to realize that teachers are not only implementers of policies that are handed to them by educational policy makers. Educational policy makers and curriculum planners need to recognize that teachers interpret, filter, modify, and implement the curriculum depending on their beliefs and the context where the curriculum innovation is being implemented (Borg, 2006; Freeman & Richards, 1996; Keys, 2007; Smith & Southerland, 2007; Spillane et al., 2002; Tillema, 1994; Woods, 1996). The importance of teachers' beliefs has been stressed by Tudor (2001:16) who argues:

> Teachers cannot be taken for granted or viewed simply as skilled technicians who dutifully realize a given set of teaching in accordance with the directive of a more or less distant authority. Teachers are active participants in the creation of classroom realities, and they act in light of their own beliefs and attitudes, perceptions of the relevant teaching situation.

Handal and Herrington (2003:65) also stress the central role of the teachers in enacting the curriculum, and call on policy makers to take teachers' attitudes and perceptions into account:

> Policy makers should no longer assume that curriculum implementation is a process that translates directly into the classroom reality. Teachers are those who ultimately decide the fate of any educational enterprise. Consequently teachers' attitudes, feelings, and perceptions must be recognized well before the launching of any innovation. Likely discrepancies between teachers' opinions and ideas underpinning a curriculum innovation need to be identified, analyzed, and addressed.

Such discrepancies clearly exist in the context under study here. The new English curriculum in Libya was introduced without consideration of teachers' prior experience, existing beliefs and the kinds of support teachers need to understand, accept and implement this curriculum as intended. As described earlier, teachers were simply

given briefing sessions about the new curriculum, and they were asked to implement it.

9.2.3 Contextual factors

As mentioned earlier, this study goes beyond teachers' beliefs and takes into account the contextual factors which had an influence on how teachers implemented the curriculum. As Borg (2006:275) puts it:

> The social,, institutional , instructional, and physical settings in which teachers work have a major impact on their cognition and practices. The study of cognitions and practices in isolation of the contexts in which they occur will inevitably, therefore, provide partial, if not flawed, characteristics of teachers and teaching.

Thus during the interviews, teachers were also encouraged to comment on aspects of their context which they felt had an impact on how they implemented the curriculum. I now proceed to address these issues.

9.2.3.1 Classroom expectations

When teachers talked about the rationales and the beliefs which underlie their classroom instructions they revealed conceptions of the roles of teachers and students which are not in line with those implied in the curriculum. Overall, teachers reported that students' come to the classroom expecting the teacher to do every thing for them, and that the students' role is to sit and listen to what the teachers says.

It is worth mentioning that such expectations are prevalent within the Libyan school curriculum and are not exceptional for the English language curriculum. As I have explained in Section 1.1.2, within the Libyan educational culture, teachers are often regarded as the source of knowledge, and their role is seen to consist of imparting this knowledge to students. Students often assume that their role is to sit quietly and to memorize the information imparted by the teachers.

I have already argued in Section 2.3.4 that the educational process in any context

is in influenced by the social and cultural norms that prevail within this particular context (Coleman, 1996; Holliday, 1994; Markee, 1997; Shamim, 1996; Tudor, 2001). Changes in the English curriculum which imply new roles for teachers and students and thus not likely to have a major impact on actual classroom practices when instruction in all other school subjects remains grounded in traditional views of the roles of teachers and students.

I would argue that we cannot expect students to develop new learning strategies and expectations for the sake of a change in one school subject. Thus an, innovation in English language teaching is inextricably connected with the educational system, and the attitudes to teaching and learning that underlie this particular system. This might make it difficult for teachers to adopt new ways of teaching that are not grounded in the broader educational system. As Adey & Hewitt (2004:24) observe, "an individual teacher finds it virtually impossible to maintain a radically new form of teaching while colleagues around them in the same school remain untouched by the innovation".

It is clear from this study that the Libyan educational system more broadly was not supportive of the reform being implemented in the teaching of English and that this is yet another factor which worked against the implementation as intended of the new curriculum in ELT.

If an innovation is not compatible with the socio and cultural conventions of the context where the innovation is to be implemented, conflict and frustration will emerge. This seems to be the case with respect to the English curriculum innovation being implemented within the Libyan educational system. Clearly the expectations outlined above point to a mismatch with the curriculum expectations. This in turn led to a frustration and conflict during the implementation process (see Munir's chapter, Section 7.2.3).

A number of researchers have pointed to what happens when a proposed innovation is in conflict with the socio and cultural norms of the context where the innovation is to be implemented. For example, Karavas-Doukas (1998) found that one of the factors which led to the limited implementation of a EFL curriculum innovation in Greek secondary school was its incompatibility with the characteristics and the nature of the Greek educational context as a whole. Shamim (1996) also reports on how she had to change her teaching style by assuming a more authoritarian role to overcome learners' resistance to her innovative methodology in her classroom in Pakistan. She concluded that:

> There was found to be a lack of fit between the learners' perceptions of knowledge, learning and teaching-learning behaviour in the classroom, derived from the culture of the wider community, and the assumptions of the innovation which predisposed the learners negatively towards the proposed methodology. Consequently the dissonance between the two cultures became a major impediment to the successful implementation of the innovation. (Shamim, 1996:106)

Another example comes from Anderson (1993), who described how a native English speaker teacher faced difficulties when she tried to implement the communicative approach in China. He reported that students refused to participate in class activities when they realized that their expectations were not consistent with these activities. Here are Anderson's comments:

> Several students told her to her face that they consider her "method" ridiculous and inappropriate; they refused to sit in a circle and speak English to each other. They did not like to invent conversations or play communicative games. They insisted on taking conventional exams instead. Several students did not attend her classes at all, preferring to audit the older professors' lectures on intensive reading and grammar instead. (Anderson, 1993:474)

Curriculum planners and educational policy makers in Libya need to recognize that "curriculum innovation is not about putting into place the latest curriculum. It

means changing the cultures of teachers, classrooms, and schools" (Shakedi, 2006:719). As I have mentioned in Section 2.4, this curriculum innovation represented significant shifts in terms of what teachers do inside the classroom. This implies that teachers need support in order to make these significant shifts. As Wedell (2003:447) points out:

> If planners introduce English curriculum change with stated objectives whose achievement requires teachers to make significant professional adjustments, it is clearly their responsibility to consider how teachers may be supported in making these. To be able to do so, planners themselves need to be clear about what adjustments the proposed changes will necessary involve.

Students as well need support to make the necessary shifts required by the proposed change. Shamim (1996:110) criticizes change agents for ignoring the learners' role in the curriculum change process:

> Whenever a change in the curriculum is planned, a lot of thought and attention is given to the resocialisation of teachers in new modes of thinking and behaving. On the other hand, the role of learners perhaps because they have low status is by large ignored in planning and decision making concerning the introduction of an innovation.

In the context studied here, both teachers and learners needs for resocialisation were ignored in the implementation of the new curriculum.

9.2.3.2 The examination system

Overall, teachers in this study pointed to a mismatch between the focus of the exams and the aims of the curriculum. Although the curriculum aims to extend students' abilities in the four language skills of reading, listening, speaking, and writing (Macfarlane, 2000), exams still focus on grammar memorization and vocabulary knowledge, and ignore other language skills such as speaking , listening, and writing (see Appendix 6 for a sample of these exams). This mismatch in turn, as the interviews showed, led teachers to focus on reading and grammar and to pay little attention to the development of students' communicative skills. Fotos' (2005:666) description of many

EFL settings appears to coincide with the findings of this study:

> Many EFL situations have a centrally controlled education system with a set curriculum, prescribed textbooks, and highly competitive nationwide examinations determining admission to middle, secondary and tertiary institutions. Such examinations usually have an English component requiring reading comprehension, knowledge of grammar rules, vocabulary....As a result; English language teaching is often aimed at mastery of points tested on such examinations. Therefore, it is not surprising that traditional EFL instruction usually emphasizes the development of knowledge about English...rather than the development of communicative ability.

The finding of this study also reflect those of Gorsuch (2000), who investigated teachers' practices in relation to an English curriculum innovation in Japanese high schools. Gorsuch reported that while the curriculum innovation calls for all four skills to be treated equally, the exams written by the Ministry of Education in Japan focused on knowledge of grammatical points, vocabulary, and English usage. He added that because speaking and listening activities are not tested in the exam, students resisted teachers' attempts to implement these activities in the class.

Another study which points to a mismatch between the aims of the innovation and the focus of the exam is Agrawal (2004), who investigated the implementation of an English curriculum innovation in secondary schools in India. Findings revealed that although the curriculum emphasized the development of oral skills, teachers tended to ignore these skills because they did not form a part of the exams written by the Ministry of Education.

I should mention here that within the Libyan educational system exams at the fourth secondary level which marks the end of the secondary school level are written by the Ministry of Education, while exams at other secondary school levels are written by the teachers at these levels. Thus, as mentioned in Section 1.1.2, it is often regarded that it is the teachers' responsibility to make sure that their students can pass the exams. If students cannot achieve this goal, teachers will be blamed for not doing their job. This

obligation may force teachers to focus on teaching the skills that are tested in the exams and ignore the ones which are not. Students as well are pressured by the exams and require their teachers teach for the exams.

A number of researchers have pointed to the crucial role exams play in shaping what teachers do inside the classroom (Andrews, 2004; Cheng, 1997; Cheng & Watanabe, 2004; Choi, 2008). For example, Lamie (2004:127) indicates that:

> If the tests are perceived by the teachers to have significant effects on their students' lives, then they can see it as part o their duty to make sure that their pupils have the best possible chance they can to succeed.

Given the crucial role of exams in determining what happens inside the classroom, one could argue for a change in the examination system to match the aims of the proposed change. Wedell (1992:338) claims that "the success or failure of any proposed changes in teaching content and methods depends on whether the examination system is altered to reflect the proposed changes". It is clear, then, that the mismatch between assessment and the curriculum is another factor that works against communicative teaching in Libya.

9.2.3.3 Lack of teacher training and development

A lack of training was another contextual factor which helps explain the lack of congruence found in this study between the curriculum and teachers' practices. As explained earlier in Section 2.4, when the new curriculum was introduced, English language teachers were given briefing sessions about it on the assumptions that these teachers would see its benefits and would therefore be able to implement it. However, briefing teachers with one off training sessions is not enough to prepare teachers for the demands of the proposed change (Lamb, 1996), and, as Carless (1998:355) observes, "if teachers are to implement an innovation, it is essential that they have a thorough understanding of the principles and practices of the proposed change".

Such an understanding however does not exist among teachers of English who were studied here; they had not received adequate support to enable them to develop new ways of thinking about teaching and learning and consequently their practices reflected their own learning experiences as well as the teacher-centred grammar-oriented curriculum that had previously been in place.

This study has shown the influence of teachers' prior experience and existing beliefs on how teachers implement the curriculum. This implies that we cannot expect teachers to completely abandon their accustomed ways of teaching and accept unfamiliar approaches to English language teaching. This in turn requires that any teachers training programs need to make links between the newly proposed practices and teachers' prior experience and existing beliefs (Timucin, 2006; Wedell, 2005).

Teachers may not be aware of the influence of their previous experience and their existing beliefs on their classroom practices. Therefore it is the responsibility of teacher training and development programs to provide teachers with opportunities to uncover their beliefs and reflect upon their classroom practices. As Roehrig et al. (2007:23) state:

> It is through exploring teachers' actual classroom practices and the beliefs and knowledge that support or constrain these practices that more targeted professional development can be implemented.

In addition to teachers' prior experience and existing beliefs, this study pointed to a range of contextual factors which led to the tensions between the intentions of the curriculum and what actually happens inside the classroom. Therefore, any teacher training programmes need to take into account the contextual factors which influence what teachers do inside the classroom. The need to take the context into consideration has been stressed by Johnson (2006:236) when she writes:

> Teacher educators could no longer ignore the fact that teachers' prior experiences, their interpretations of the activities they engage in, and

> most important the contexts within which they work are extremely influential in shaping how and why teachers do what they do.

The lack of training the teachers in this study received meant that their implementation of the new curriculum was based largely on their prior experience of teaching English and on their experience of learning English. In both respects these influences were at odds with the new curriculum.

9.2.3.4 The role of the inspectors

Inspectors play an important role within the Libyan educational system. They are responsible for monitoring the educational process, and providing support and training for teachers. They often visit teachers in their classes to monitor teachers' performance and to provide help and support for teachers. They also appraise teachers and submit reports on them.

However, as two teachers in the study said, English language inspectors may not understand the principles of this curriculum, and therefore they may not be able to provide teachers with the necessary help and guidance. In the absence of proper training, inspectors often rely on their beliefs and experience to interpret the new curriculum. These beliefs and experience may not be in line with the principles of the new curriculum. This in turn creates frustration and confusion during the implementation process. One the one hand, teachers need guidance and support in order to understand the principles of the new curriculum, on the other hand, inspectors themselves may not understand what teachers need to understand, and how to help them understand it. This implies that those responsible for providing support for teachers need to understand the principles of the proposed change in order to be able to help teachers. As Wedell (In press) argues:

> If English teachers working to help learners achieve the outcomes of a particular EFL curriculum are to be come 'qualified', it is necessary for those planning to support them to be clear about what knowledge and skills the curriculum expects

of them, and so how teacher educators can help them become qualified.

Given the crucial role of inspectors within the Libyan educational system, I would argue that a key issue that has to be taken into account is qualifying inspectors in order for these inspectors to provide the support teachers need. However, within the Libyan educational system, inspectors are often regarded as the experts in the school subjects, and therefore asking them to enrol in qualifying programs might be seen by some of these inspectors as a threat to their status within the educational system.

In addition within the Libyan educational system, the relation between teachers and inspectors is often characterized by tensions. Inspectors often visit teachers in their classes to evaluate teachers rather than to support them. They evaluate teachers according to criteria set by the Ministry of Education. This in turn often creates a hostile atmosphere between inspectors and teachers. Given the evaluative nature of inspectors' work, teachers will be cautious to behave in ways the inspectors approve of; this may mean as this study suggests, adopting conventional practices the inspectors understand.

9.3 Summary

Cleary this study highlights the complex relationships among curriculum reform, teachers' beliefs, classroom practices, and the educational context. It also confirms the widely acknowledged view that teachers are not simply implementers of policies that are handed down to them, but they interpret, modify, alter, and implement these policies according to their beliefs and the context where these policies are being implemented. The major overall finding points to a limited uptake of the ELT curriculum being implemented in the Libyan secondary school system. This limited uptake appears to be the result of a series of mismatches between the intended curriculum reform and what teachers can do (their knowledge, and pedagogical skills), what teachers believe, what students can do, and the system (classroom expectations, assessment, resources,

inspectors, teacher education). Figure 9.1 shows the way in which curriculum expectations relates to classroom practices. The two ovals in the figure point to the factors (contextual factors and teachers' beliefs) which mediate between the intended curriculum, and what actually happens inside the classroom. The dual pointed arrow between the educational context and teachers' beliefs shows that these factors are interrelated and collectively lead to the limited uptake in the curriculum. These factors can be summarized in the following points:

- Teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning are not congruent with the curriculum principles. This led to teachers' practices to deviate significantly from the intended curriculum.
- Teachers' lack the pedagogical skills to cope with the communicative requirements of the curriculum.
- In the absence of proper training, teachers interpret the curriculum according to their existing beliefs and prior experiences as learners and teachers.
- Classroom expectations about teachers' roles do not reflect the roles implied in the curriculum.
- The level of proficiency in English assumed by the curriculum is beyond students' actual competence.
- The way the curriculum was introduced to the system did not take into account the role of teachers' beliefs and other contextual factors.
- The status of English is not high – it is simply another school subject.
- The assessment system is not in line with the curriculum expectations.
- Inspectors lack the skills and knowledge to provide teachers with the support and

guidance they need.

There is evidence in this study that these factors interactively determined the lack of congruence between the intended curriculum and the classroom practices of the teachers investigated here. I would argue that these findings are relevant more broadly to an understanding of curriculum innovation in ELT, and generally in other subject areas too.

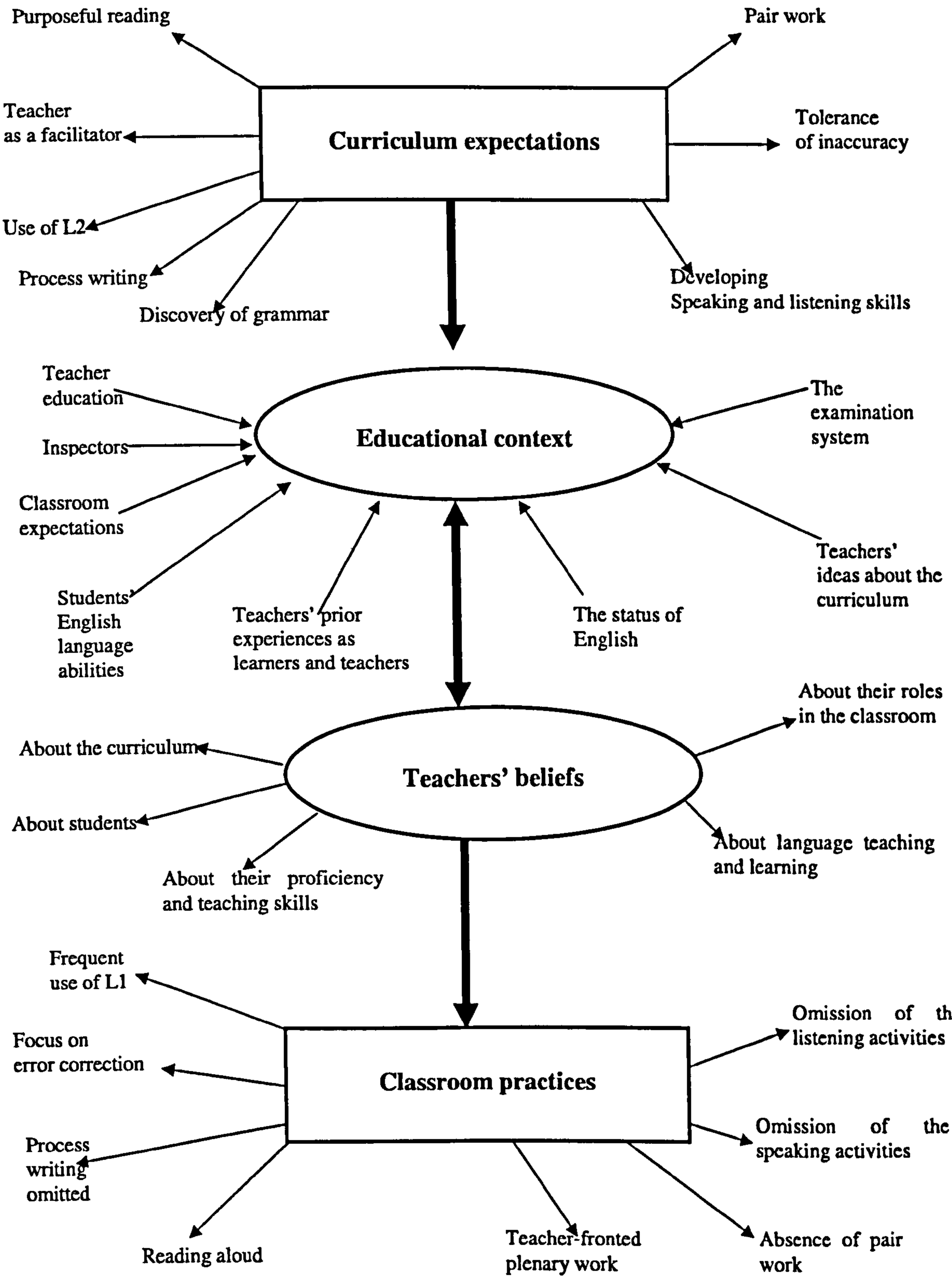

Figure 9.1 Understanding limited uptake in the curriculum

CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSIONS

This chapter provides a summary of the main findings in relation to the research questions, notes the limitations of the study, outlines its contributions and suggestions for further research, and discusses its educational implications. I conclude this chapter with some personal reflections on this work.

10.1 Summary of the main findings

Given the key role of teachers in the implementation of educational innovations, the purpose of this study was to examine how five secondary teachers of English implement the English language curriculum in Libya. More specifically, this study investigated the characteristics of these teachers' practices, and compared their practices to those recommended by the curriculum. It also shed light on the rationales and the factors which had an impact on these teachers' practices.

In order to identify the characteristics of the teachers' work, I conducted classroom observations over a period of two weeks for each teacher. Three teachers were observed teaching lessons from the second secondary textbook, and two teachers were observed teaching lessons from the fourth secondary textbook. I also conducted two follow up semi structured interviews with each teacher to listen to their perspectives. During these interviews teachers' commented on their practices and discussed a range of beliefs and contextual factors which had an impact on the way they interpreted and implemented the curriculum.

This study points very clearly to a limited uptake in the English language curriculum being implemented in the Libyan secondary school system. In Chapter 9, I summarized the key characteristics of the teachers' practices. The summary showed little evidence of core curricula principles such using pair work , promoting the use of

the target language among the students, and enhancing the skills of reading, listening and writing. Classrooms were generally teacher centred with substantial time spent in reading aloud, explaining vocabulary, translating into Arabic, and correcting students' grammatical and pronunciation mistakes.

This limited uptake highlighted in this study can be explained in terms of complex relationships among the curriculum reform, teachers' practices, teachers' beliefs, and a range of contextual factors. It was evident during this study that teachers' classroom practices reflected strongly held beliefs about language teaching and learning that were not in line with the principles endorsed by the curriculum.

Teachers in this study expressed beliefs about the process of English language teaching and learning which were strongly shaped by their prior experiences of English language teaching and learning. Teachers' views about their students also played a significant role in how they interpreted and implemented the curriculum. While the curriculum expects the students to take an active role in the classroom activities, teachers felt that their students lack the linguistic abilities to cope with the demands of this curriculum. This in turn led teachers to frequently omit classroom activities which they felt were beyond the students' linguistic abilities.

In addition, teachers in this study expressed doubts about their understanding of the principles of the curriculum, and their abilities to meet its demands. They considered this curriculum to be beyond teachers' abilities and understanding. These perceptions imply that the curriculum is incompatible with both the teachers' abilities and those of the students.

As noted in Section 9.2.3, this study went beyond teachers' beliefs and took into consideration the contextual factors which had an impact on how teachers implemented the curriculum. Teachers revealed a range of contextual factors which seem to have

contributed to the limited uptake in the curriculum highlighted in this study. Social expectations about teachers' roles and students' roles appeared to be one of the contextual factors which led to the tensions between the curriculum expectations and what actually happens inside the classroom. While the curriculum expects students to actively take part in the language learning process, teachers reported that students come to the class expecting the teacher to do everything for them. These perceptions about who does what in the classroom conflict with the curriculum expectations.

The examination system is also mismatched to the curriculum. Exams still focus on grammar memorization and vocabulary knowledge, and ignore other language skills embodied in the curriculum such as speaking, listening, and writing. This in turn led both teachers and students to ignore these skills.

Teachers' lack of understanding of the principles of the curriculum appears to be the result of lack of teacher training and development programmes. In the absence of proper teacher training and development programmes, teachers relied upon their existing beliefs to interpret the curriculum. Additionally, inspectors who are responsible for providing support for teachers may not have the knowledge and the skills and perhaps understanding of the curriculum needed to provide such support. The criteria inspectors used to evaluate teachers' work also may not be in line with the practices promoted by the new curriculum.

10.2 Limitations of the study

Some limitations of this study need to be acknowledged here. The first limitation is from a methodological point of view. As explained in Chapter 3, English language teachers in Libya in general are not used to being observed or asked about their instructional decisions. Observation in this context is also associated with appraisal. Therefore, it was inevitable that the teachers I worked with had some concerns about

my presence in their classrooms and this may have influenced their behaviours (and perhaps those of the learners) while I was there. Having said that, the fact that the teachers taught in a way that deviated from the curriculum rather than following it to the letter suggests that my presence may have encouraged them to adopt behaviours they were comfortable with and to avoid risks. Also, my presence over a two week period will have gradually reduced any initial reactivity I caused.

Another limitation related to the small number of teachers studied. However, the teachers studied here were typical in terms of their qualifications and their educational backgrounds. The schools examined here were similar in terms of the students who study in these schools, and the kinds of curricula taught in these schools. Thus, teachers' beliefs and practices that emerged from this study were similar. This typicality together with my experience of the context studied give me the confidence to suggest that the findings that emerged from the study are relevant to an understanding of what happens in secondary English classrooms in Libya more generally.

Finally, another limitation is related to the translation of data. The interviews with the teachers were conducted in Arabic, and then translated into English. Despite the fact that I paid considerable attention to the translation of the interviews, and asked one of my Libyan colleagues to check the translated data, the process is not without its shortcomings. I believe that it is not possible to have perfect translation and that there always be certain meanings that will be lost in translation. However, I am confident that the translated data captured faithfully the meanings teachers expressed during the interviews and these data presented here do not misrepresent the teachers in any way.

10.3 Contributions and implications

Despite the limitations outlined above, I believe that this study contributes to the relevant literature in many ways. Carless (2004) for example, noted that little attention

has been given as to how teachers implement changes in pedagogy. In this respect, this study provides detailed insight into a range of factors which shape how teachers implement curricula innovation. It also shows how curriculum implementation can be constrained by many adverse forces and conditions both internal to the teacher and external.

Methodologically, this study shows the value of qualitative research with a longitudinal element as it involves both observations and interviews in studying how and why teachers implement curriculum innovation in particular ways. I believe this study thus provides significant insights into the process of curriculum innovation, and educational change in general.

In addition to contributions to educational research in general, this study suggests several implications for English language teaching in Libya. I highlight these implications in the following points:

- It is vital for educational policy makers within the Libyan educational context to understand that curriculum innovation does not only mean introducing a new set of textbooks, but it also implies a change in the way teachers behave and think.

- Educational officials in Libya need to realize that in order for the intentions of this curriculum to be implemented effectively, teachers need the skills and knowledge which enable them to cope with the demands of this curriculum. Officials need to understand that it is not enough to ask teachers to follow the guidelines of the teachers' book.

- English language teachers in Libya need the support to make the necessary adjustments required by the curriculum. Therefore educational officials in Libya need to examine what the requirements embodied within the curriculum imply

for teachers' classroom practices. We cannot simply ask teachers to implement a curriculum innovation without looking at what this curriculum innovation requires teachers to do.

- English language teachers within the Libyan context may not be aware of the influence of their existing beliefs. This implies the need for teaching training and education programs where teachers are given opportunities to reflect upon their own classroom practices, and where their existing beliefs are uncovered and confronted. As Kumaravadivelu (2001:552) argues "when teacher educators use the teachers' values, beliefs, and knowledge as integral part of the learning process, then the entire process of teacher education becomes reflective rewarding".

- Any teacher training programs targeted at improving the status of English language teaching in Libya should take into consideration teachers' prior experience of language teaching and learning and the contextual factors which influence what teachers do inside the classroom.

- Students need the support to make the necessary adjustments required by the curriculum. They need to understand that learning a language might be different from other school subjects. Students need to know why they are being asked to act in certain ways and how they can learn most effectively.

- Inspectors may not have the necessary skills and knowledge to provide teachers with the support and guidance they need. In order for these inspectors to effectively help teachers in the implementation process, educational officials in Libyan need to consider the provision of inspector training programs.

- It is the responsibility of the educational officials in Libya, and English language

teachers to consider the extent to which examinations and the curriculum in ELT are aligned.

- Finally, this study highlighted a range of factors which led to the limited uptake in the curriculum being implemented in secondary schools in Libya. Therefore, we cannot simply blame the teachers for this limited uptake. If the Libyan society is willing to improve the status of English language teaching in Libyan classrooms, all the stakeholders including educational officials, curriculum planners, and policy makers need to commit to this process.

10.4 Suggestions for further research

Having identified the main the main contributions of this research study, and illustrated its educational implications, I now proceed to propose some suggestions for further research.

Given the fact that this study has provided insights into the implementation of curriculum innovation, I would suggest that more research of this kind will provide insights both in Libya and elsewhere. Further qualitative study of the teachers' practices and beliefs will be valuable to build on the insights highlighted in this study.

The findings from this study can provide the basis for the design of a survey in which the practices and beliefs of a wider range of teachers can be studied. Additionally further research with inspectors and Education Ministry officials to understand their perceptions might by insightful.

Throughout this study teachers frequently referred to students as having an impact on how they implement the curriculum. It should be noted that this study did not focus on students. Therefore all teachers' comments about students reflect the teachers' perceptions. Further research is needed to examine students' perceptions of the curriculum. For example, if the curriculum expects the students to make talking in

English a regular activity, to participate in classroom activities, and to work in pairs, then it is important to understand what students think about these expectations.

Finally, this study pointed to a relationship between teachers' beliefs, the learning opportunities they afford students, and what students learn. However, further empirical research is needed to examine the relationship between teachers' beliefs and students' classroom achievement.

10.5 Personal reflections

To conclude, here a brief comments on how this study has contributed to my own development.

As a novice researcher, this study helped me develop research skills and ideas that I would not otherwise have mastered. I learned the conventions of academic writing, audience awareness, and how to illustrate my ideas. I also learned what data is in qualitative research, how to collect/generate data, analyse and make sense from it. This gives me the confidence to carry out further qualitative research needed in English language teaching in my country.

I have also learned that doing educational research is not a straightforward process and that even for the researcher who may think that he/she is familiar with the research context, there are certain difficulties and challenges that have to be encountered.

My reading in the literature of educational innovation and teachers' beliefs made me more sympathetic with teachers in general and particularly with English language teachers in Libya. It made me appreciate the difficulties and complexities teachers face when they are required to implement educational innovations.

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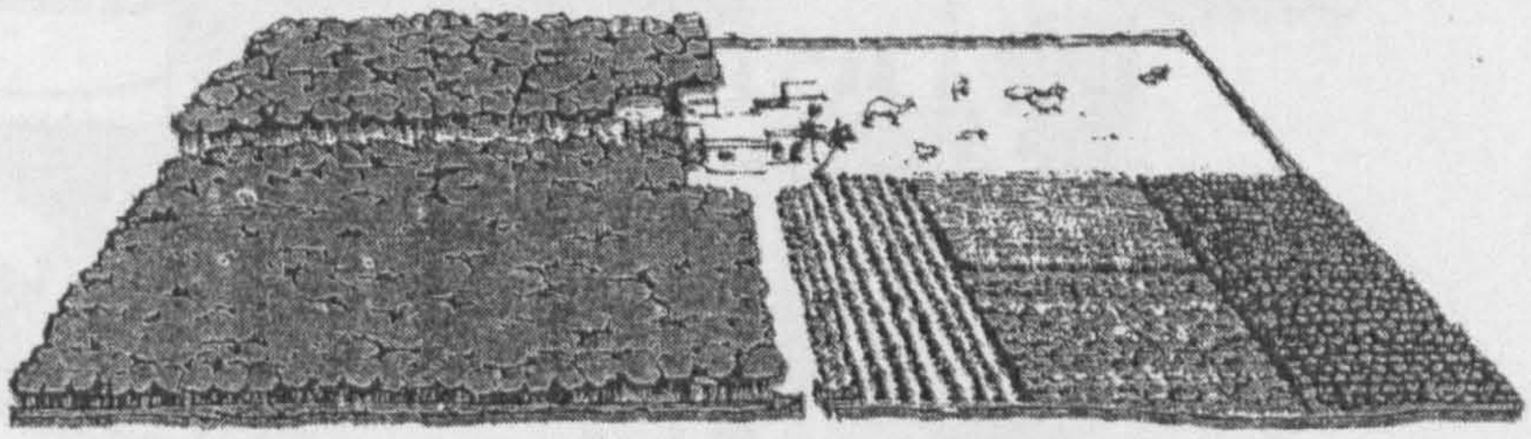
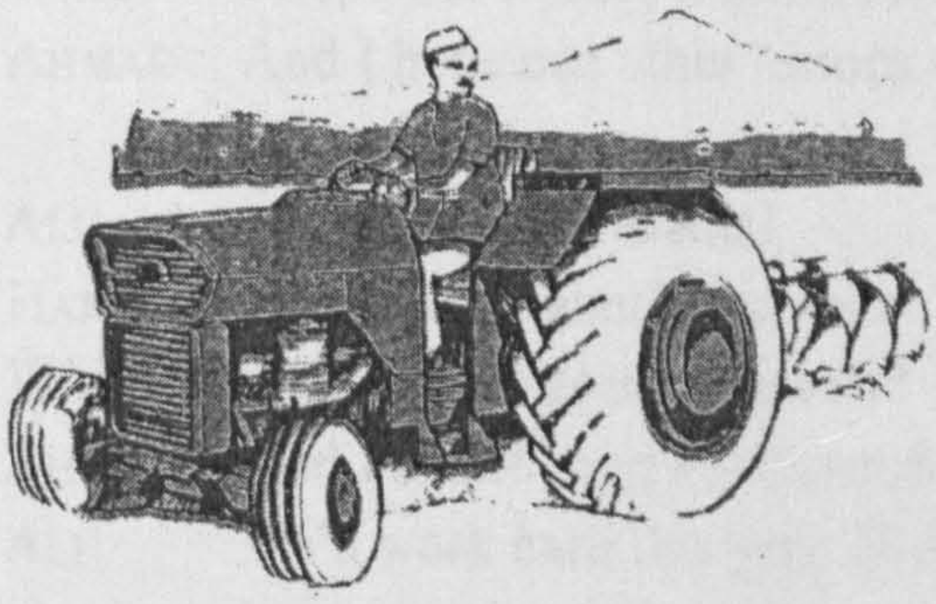
Appendix 1: Living English for Libya

LESSON TWO



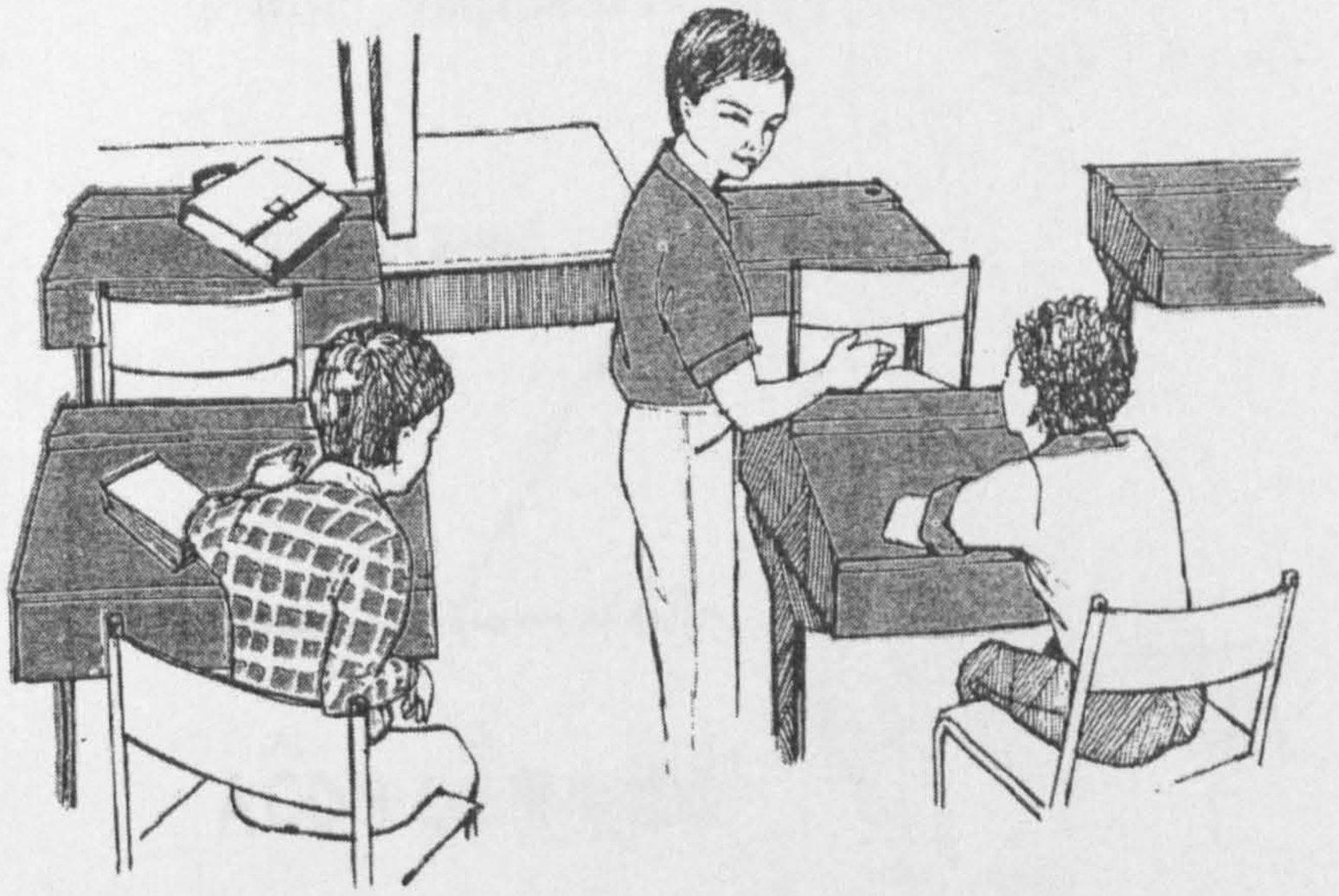
A. Ahmad's father, Mr. Fellah, is a farmer. His farm is not big. But it is not small, either. He likes his farm very much. He always says, "My farm is part of me!" From an airplane the farm looks like this:

The big part of the farm is for trees. The other two parts are for animals and wheat and barley. Mr. Fellah grows some vegetables, too. Potatoes, onions and carrots are vegetables.



B. Mr. Fellah works hard. Only his wife and children help him. But he has machines. Machines can help farmers very much. Look at Mr. Fellah. What is he doing? He is working. He is driving a tractor. The tractor is pulling a plough. What does the plough do to the earth? It cuts the earth, and it turns it over.

Mr. Fellah's machines always run well. Why do his machines always run well? Because he always cleans them. He always oils them, too.



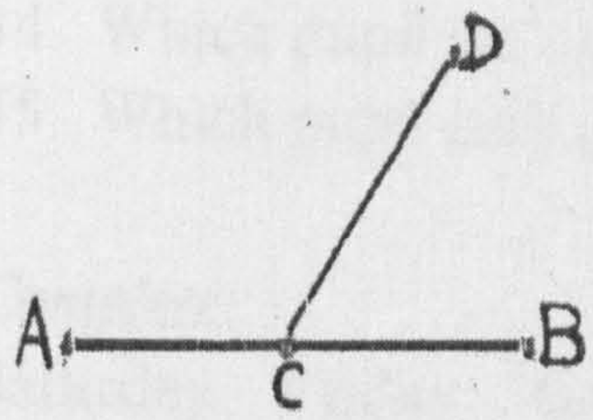
C. AHMAD: Here we are in school again!
ALI: Yes, and we feel fresh and happy.
HANI: We're in Class Two this year. I hope our English lessons will be interesting this year.
WAFI: I hope our Arabic lessons will be interesting, too.
AHMAD: And I hope our other lessons will be interesting.

D. ALI: I'm not good at maths!
HANI: And I'm not good at science!
WAFI: And I'm not good at history!
AHMAD: And I'm not good at geography!
ALI: We'll work hard this year. We'll be good at all our lessons.
AHMAD: We have two new teachers this year. One comes from Derna. The other comes from Sebha. I hope they'll be nice teachers.

WAFI: I hope so. Nice teachers give interesting lessons.

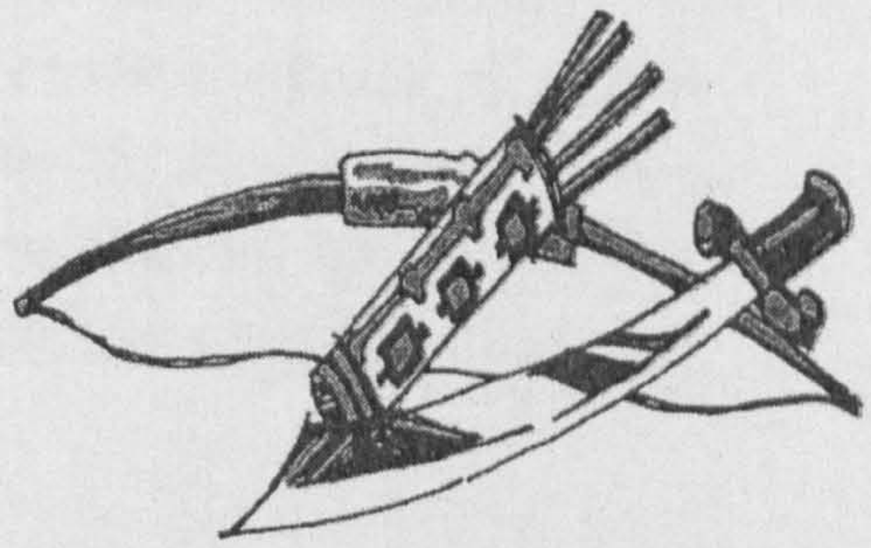
They'll = They will

E. *What's his lesson?*



$A\hat{C}D + D\hat{C}B = 180^{\circ}$

H_2O = WATER



F. *Answer these questions:*

1. What does Mr.Fellah always say?
2. Why does he say so?.
3. Which part of the farm is for trees?
4. What vegetables does he grow?
5. Is a peach a vegetable or fruit?
6. Does Mr.Fellah work hard?
7. Who helps him on the farm?
8. Why do his machines always run well?
9. What does a plough do to the earth?
10. What day of school is it?
11. How do the pupils feel?

12. Which pupil isn't good at maths?
13. Which pupil isn't good at science?
14. Which pupil isn't good at history?
15. Which pupil isn't good at geography?

G. *Complete:*

Saturday Friday Tuesday Sunday Thursday Wednesday Monday.

1. Saturday is the first day of school.
2. . . . . will be the second day of school.
3. . . . . will be the third day of school.
4. . . . . will be the fourth day of school.
5. . . . . will be the fifth day of school.
6. . . . . will be the sixth day of school.

H. *Play this game:*

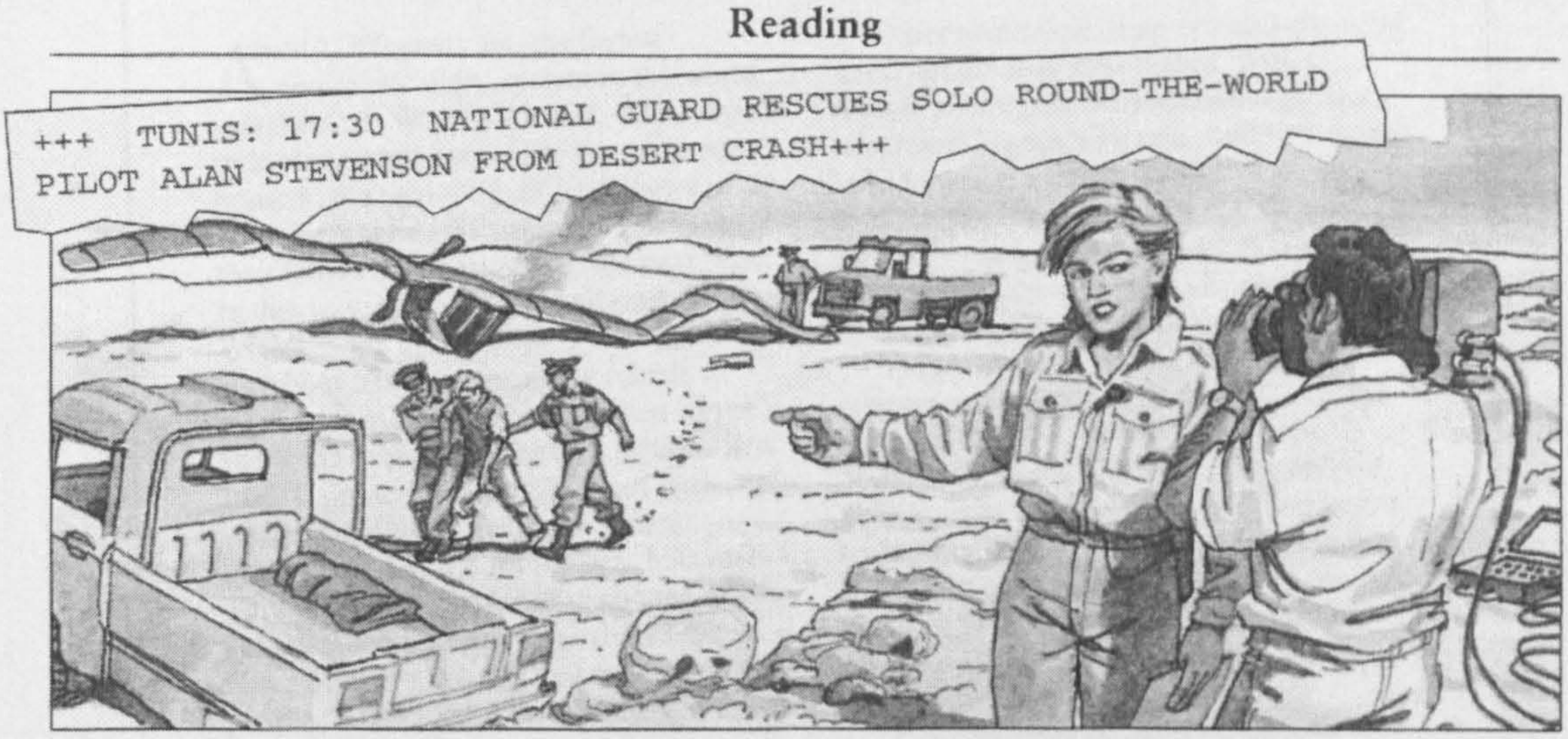
SON: We have a new pupil in our class.
FATHER: Do you? Where does he come from?
SON: He comes from Zawia.
FATHER: What does he look like?
SON: Well, he has big black eyes, smooth black hair and big ears.

I. *Make sentences from this table:*

Do you	know	what Ahmad wants?
Does he		what Ali looks like?
Does she		what farmers in Garian grow?
Do they		what schoolgirls in Libya wear?

UNIT 1: Global Village

Reading



1 Before you read

A Discuss these questions.

1 What is happening in the picture?

2 Why do you think a rescue like this is a good news story?

3 How do you think news stories reach so many homes so fast today?

4 What about the past? How did news travel 1,000 years ago? How did it travel 150 years ago? Or 50 years ago?

5 A lot of people have TV in their homes. What other sorts of communications equipment do they often have?

6 Which, for you, is the most important sort of communications equipment? Why?

B Look at the diagram on the next page. What do you think the text is about?

C Which words in the diagram do you know? What about the things without names? How many do you know in English? ■

2 While you read

A Read the text and choose the best title.

1 Machines and people

2 The story of telecommunications

3 Here is the news!

B Look at the diagram again. Find the missing names in the text.

C Work out the meanings of these words from context.

1 mobile (paragraphs 4 and 5)

2 signals (paragraph 6)

3 planet (paragraph 7)

3 After you read

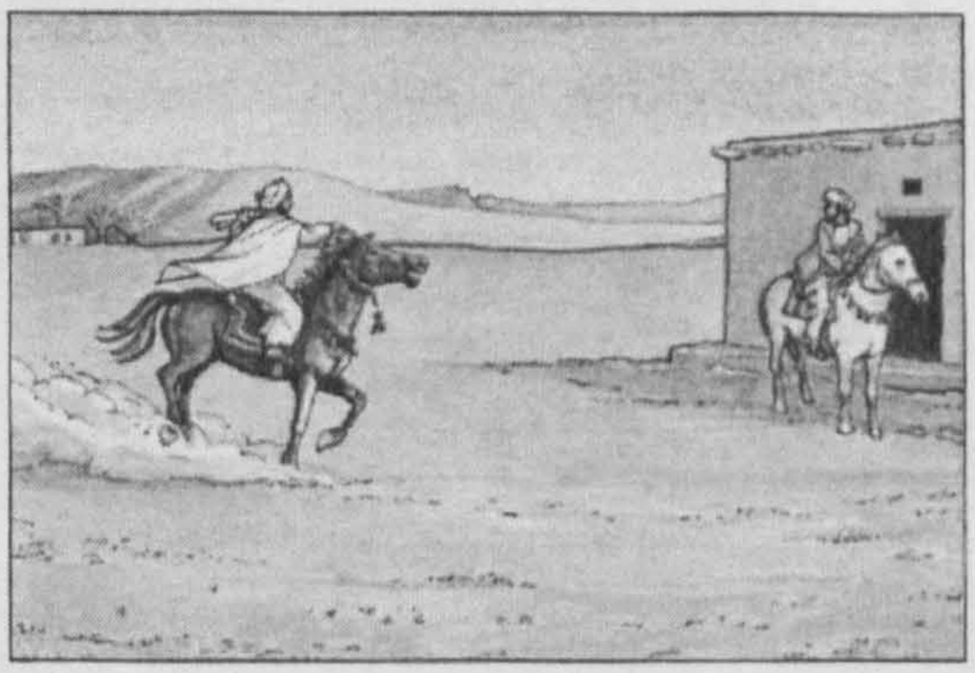
A Look at the reporter at the desert rescue. Explain how her story will travel to people's homes.

B Find these sentences in paragraph 7. Explain them in your own words.

1 In the past, the next town was a different world.

2 Today the whole world is becoming a village.

C Answer the question at the end of the text. ■



About 1,300 years ago the fastest communications system in the world was the Arab World's Albarid. Messengers rode along important roads from one rest-house to the next – usually a distance of ten kilometres. They then stopped and gave their letters and messages to the next rider. In this way, news travelled all over the Arab World.

About 1,000 years ago, hundreds of pigeons carried messages between Egypt and Syria every day. The best pigeons flew from Cairo to Damascus without stopping.

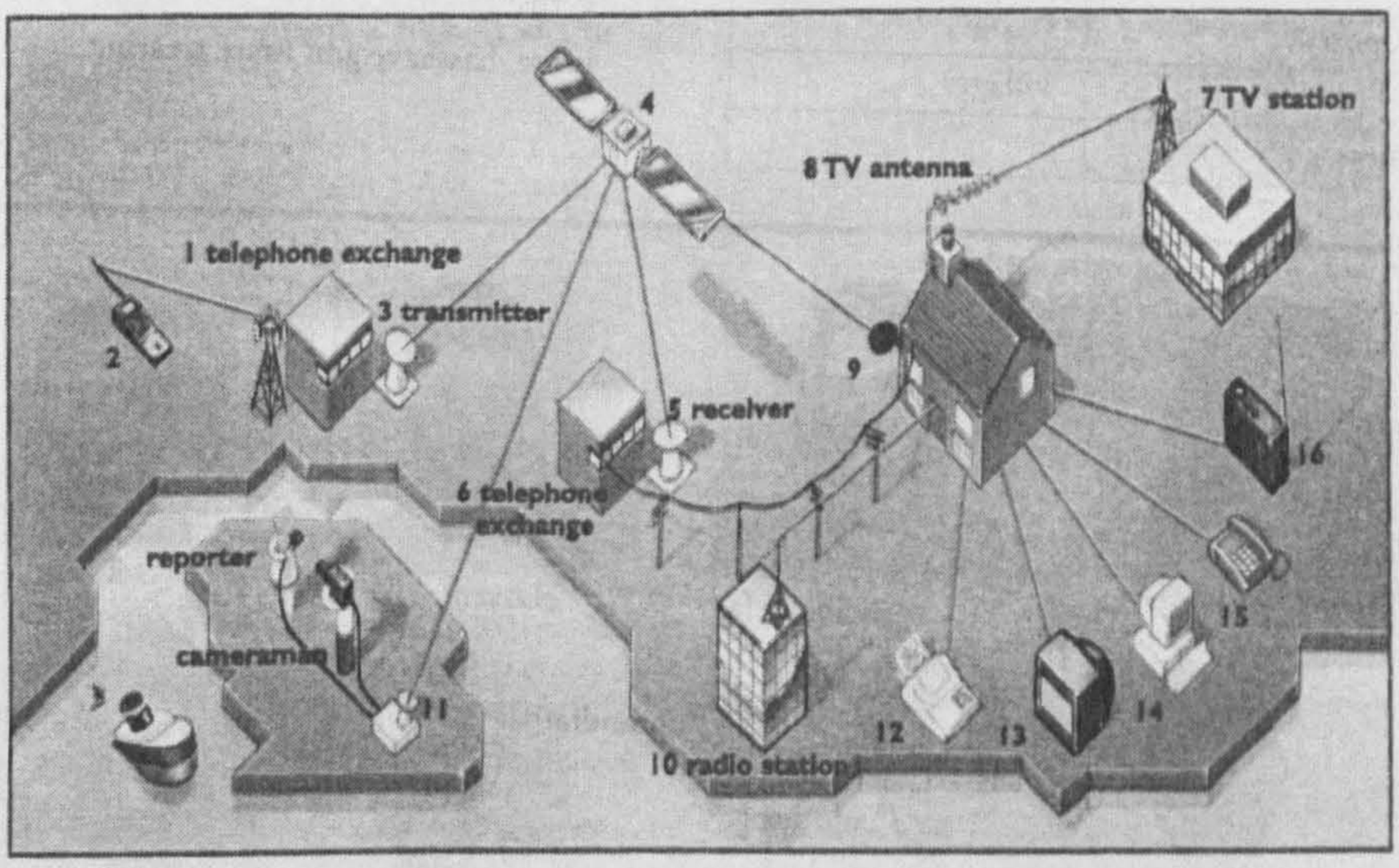
That was the fastest communications system in the world for the next 850 years. Things only really started to change when the telecommunications revolution began about 50 years ago. By that time, a lot of people had a radio in their homes. Soon, they had a telephone too, and then a television. Now TV is everywhere.

Today television is changing more and more quickly. Now satellite dishes bring programmes from all over the world. Thanks to mobile satellite links, reporters can send news stories and pictures back to their TV stations from the loneliest parts of the world.

Other communications are also changing more rapidly than ever before. With a mobile phone, you do not have to go to a telephone: it goes with you. And you do not have to wait for letters by post. You can send a letter much faster by fax. Or you can send an e-mail from computer to computer. And this change is worldwide: our planet is now one huge communications network.

This international network needs communications satellite systems like Arabsat. These satellites are in space, 36.000 kilometres above us. They receive signals from one dish and send them down to another. The signals can be a telephone conversation from Tripoli to Tokyo, or they can be TV pictures from the Olympic Games to the whole world. The satellites can handle everything!

The communications revolution is changing our planet. In the past, the next town was a different world. Today the whole world is becoming a village. People everywhere are now our neighbours. But will all this make the world a kinder, friendlier, more peaceful place?



Vocabulary and Grammar

1 Vocabulary: prefixes

Prefixes go at the front of words and add meaning: *tele-* = long-distance
inter- = between, connecting

Ⓐ Three words in the text on page 5 begin with *tele-*. What are they?

Ⓑ Explain the following:

1 an intercity train

2 an intercontinental journey (continents = Africa, Asia, Europe, etc.)

Ⓒ Start lists of words with prefixes in your vocabulary book.

2 Vocabulary: time expressions

Ⓐ Find more time expressions in the text.
Example: *two thousand years ago, today*

Ⓑ Start a list of time expressions in your vocabulary book. It will help you later when you write a story.

3 Vocabulary: collecting related words

Copy and complete the table with words from pages 4 and 5.

noun: thing	noun: person
	rescuer
report	
	villager
message	

4 Vocabulary: collecting groups of words

Pictures and diagrams with labels can help you remember groups of new words.

Copy the diagram on page 5 into your vocabulary book and label everything.

5 Grammar review: questions

The reporter is talking to the leader of the desert rescue, Captain Ahmed Ibrahim.
Study his answers and write the reporter's questions. Example:

1 *Can I ask you one or two questions, please?*

1 Yes, of course you can – but quickly. We have to go.

2 It's Ahmed Ibrahim.

3 I come from Djerba, near the border with Libya.

4 No, I don't. I live near Tunis now.

5 We knew about him because we heard his radio call for help.

6 We're going to fly to the nearest hospital.

7 No, I certainly haven't. I've never done anything like this before! ■

6 Grammar review: personal descriptions

Ⓐ Look at the pictures of Mona and her family. Make statements about them with these verbs:

is/are, has/have got, is/are wearing

B Answer these questions. Say what you think from what you can see in the picture.

1 Does Mona's sister go to school or college?

2 Do Mona and Hassan go to the same school or to different schools?

3 Does Tariq go to school, or does he stay at home?

4 Does Mona's father work in an office or on a farm?

5 Do her grandparents live in the city or the country?

I think ...

7 Grammar review: adjectives and adverbs

Adjectives tell us more about nouns.
Adverbs of manner usually refer to verbs.

A Complete the stories with the words in the boxes. Change the words to adverbs when necessary. Be careful with *hard, fast* and *good.*
Example: ① *well*

careful	good	good	good	happy	slow

Mona's grandfather looks after his farm ① and his olives are famous. In the evening, he often walks ② along the lines of olive trees and looks at them ③, one by one. This year, he is very ④ because the olives are growing very ⑤, and he knows they will be very ⑥ this year.

angry	angry	dangerous	fast	hard
lucky	stupid	silly	young	

Mona's younger brother, Hassan, is still very ① – just ten – and he sometimes does ② things. The other day, he acted very ③: he kicked a football too ④ and it went over the school wall. So then he ran out of the school gate and into the street – and that was very ⑤: it's against the school rules. He ran into the street, and a car had to stop very ⑥. Hassan was ⑦ because the car did not hit him. But the driver shouted at him ⑧ and his teachers were very ⑨ with him too!

B Look at the text on page 5 again. How many adjectives and adverbs of manner can you find? (Do not count comparative and superlative forms.)

8 Grammar review: comparative adjectives

A Look at the last sentence of the text on page 5.

But will all this make the world a kinder, friendlier, more peaceful place?

- One-syllable adjectives usually take *-er.*
  Example: *kind > kinder*
- Two-syllable adjectives with *-y* usually take *-er* and *-y* changes to *-i.*
  Example: *friendly > friendlier*
- Other two-syllable adjectives and longer adjectives usually take *more.*
  Example: *peaceful > more peaceful*

Don't forget: *good > better* *bad > worse*

B Make the comparative forms of these adjectives.

clean	dangerous	easy	exciting	fast
happy	hard	interesting	natural	nice
popular	quick	surprised	tall	windy

9 Grammar: comparative adverbs

A Look at these pieces from the text.

... television is changing more and more quickly. Other communications are also changing more rapidly than ever before.

- Regular comparative adverbs like those above take *more* + (adjective) *-ly.*
  Examples: *quick > more quickly*
  rapid > more rapidly
  Be careful: *happy > more happily*
  beautiful > more beautifully
  terrible > terribly
- These comparative adverbs are the same as the comparative adjectives: *faster, harder, better, worse.*

B Make comparative adverbs from these adjectives.

bad	busy	cold	good	hard	lucky
peaceful	remarkable	surprising			■

GAME

Form two teams – A and B. Write and then read out sentences with adverbs like this:
A: We can swim very well.
B: We can swim even better than you!

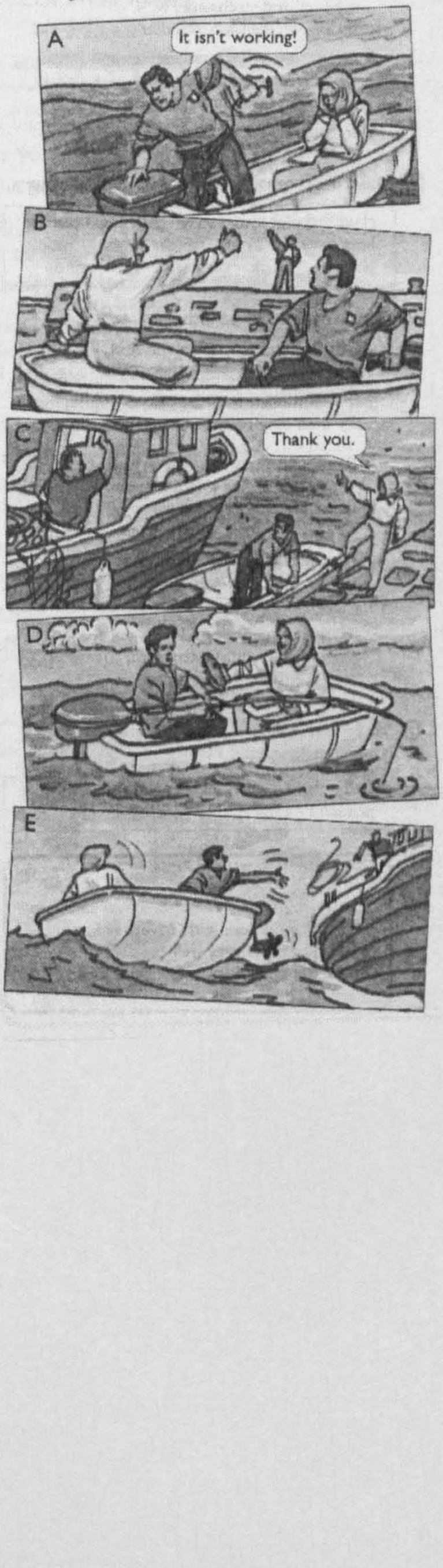
Functions and Listening

1 **Functions:** telling a story

A Work with a partner. The pictures show Huda and her brother Omar. Put the pictures in the right order. Use this language:

> I think this one comes first/second/last/...

> I think so too./I don't think so. I think ...



B Match the words in the box with what you can see in the pictures.

go fishing catch a fish fishing boat fisherman sunny windy cloudy rain calm rough

C Get ready to tell the story. Follow these steps:

1 First write notes with your partner. Write two or three short notes for each picture. Think of useful words and phrases, and useful adverbs too.

2 Add time words and phrases like *one day, first, after that, in the end.*

3 Practise the story with your partner. Start like this:

One day, Huda and her brother Omar went fishing. They said goodbye, and they ...

Take turns to speak. Help your partner when you listen.

D Tell the story to the class.

2 Before you listen

A Huda is talking to her schoolfriend Mona. Where are they? What can they see from their windows?

B What do you already know about the two girls and their families? ■

3 While you listen

A Listen and answer these questions.

1 Who is at home? Who is away from home?

2 What else do you learn about Mona's family?

B Listen again. Which of these telephone expressions do you hear?

1 a) Hello. Could I speak to Huda, please?
b) Hello. Is that Huda?

2 a) Speaking.
b) This is Huda speaking.

3 a) It's great to hear you.
b) I'm sorry, I can't hear you.

4 a) I got the wrong number.
b) There was no answer.

C Listen again. Collect time words and expressions like *yesterday* and *after that*. Add them to the list in your vocabulary book.

4 After you listen

Tell the story in Hassan's words.

5 Pronunciation: how to sound interesting and interested

A Listen and repeat Mona's expressions.

When you tell a story, sound interesting!
Sound like Mona when she phoned Huda.

1 Listen!

2 Guess what happened!

3 It was really bad!

4 Luckily, ...

5 ... suddenly, ...

6 And then I saw him!

7 Finally, ...

B Listen and repeat Huda's expressions.

When you listen to a story, sound interested!
Sound like Huda when Mona phoned.

1 Really?

2 No!

3 You're joking!

4 So what did you do?

5 Really!

6 So what happened then?

7 That's terrible!

6 Speaking

A Get ready to tell your own story – perhaps about something you did in the summer holidays.

B Practise the story in your head. When you speak, use some of Mona's expressions in 5A.

C Work with a partner. Take turns to tell your stories. When you listen, use some of Huda's expressions in 5B.

7 Writing

A Here are parts of Huda's letter to her pen-friend, Emma. Use them and write the body of her letter. Write about the boat trip on page 8.

THE OPENING
Guess what happened yesterday!

SENDER'S ADDRESS
PO Box 596
Tripoli

THE FAREWELL
Lots of love,

THE GREETING
Dear Emma,

SENDER'S NAME
Huda

THE DATE
25th April

THE CLOSE
Well, that's all for today. Please write soon.

B Write a letter about your story in 6. Choose one of these pen-friends.


Lisa, Canada


Jason, Australia


Liam, Ireland


Sita, India

■

Appendix 3: English for Libya (Fourth Secondary Textbook)

Reading

1 Before you read

A Work in pairs. Write words to do with weather and climate, like these examples. How many can you write in three minutes?

nouns	verbs	adjectives
temperature	–	–
rain	*rain*	*rainy*

B Look at the pictures and captions on page 17. Discuss these questions.

1 Where are Ali and Wendy's hometowns?
2 What do you think the climate is like in these places?
3 What are Ali and Wendy wearing?

2 While you read

A Read the introduction on page 17 and answer these questions.

1 What does the writer want to find out?
2 Why did the writer choose someone from Muscat?

B Read Ali and Wendy's texts. Make notes under these headings.

1 examples of extreme temperatures
2 going out and staying in
3 clothes
4 special features of buildings
5 health problems
6 the best part of the year

Example:

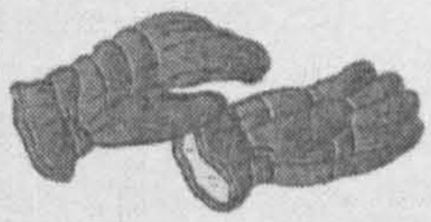
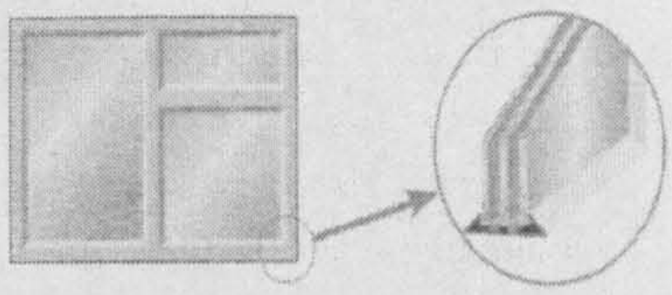
1 examples of extreme temperatures

MUSCAT	FAIRBANKS
swimming pools too hot to swim in	*ice on lake – cars can drive on it*

C Explain the meaning of these words and phrases in Ali's text.

1 within seconds (line 7)
2 feels horrible (line 8)
3 Surprisingly (line 13)
4 spreads germs (line 16)

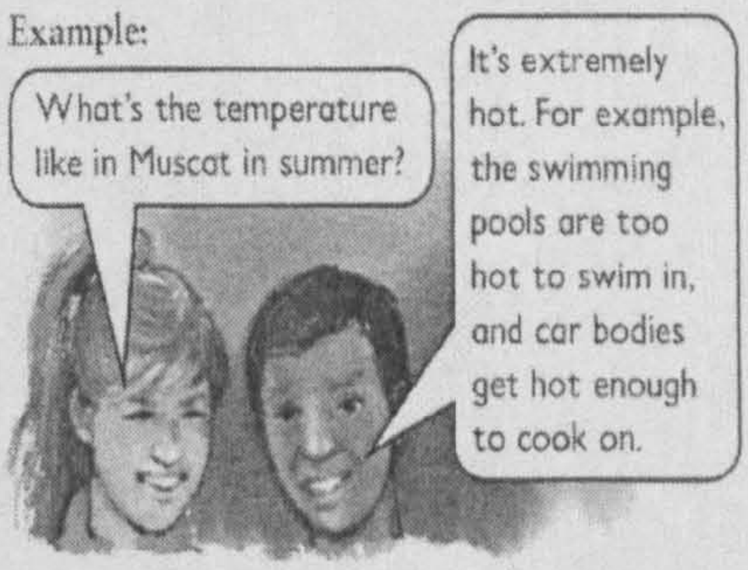
D Match these phrases and pictures to words and phrases in Wendy's text.

1 partly covered
2 if you do not
3 
4 
5 becomes water

3 After you read

A Work in pairs. Role play conversations with a teenager from Muscat and a teenager from Fairbanks.
A: Ask questions about the topics 1 to 6 in 2B.
B: Answer the questions using your notes.

Example:

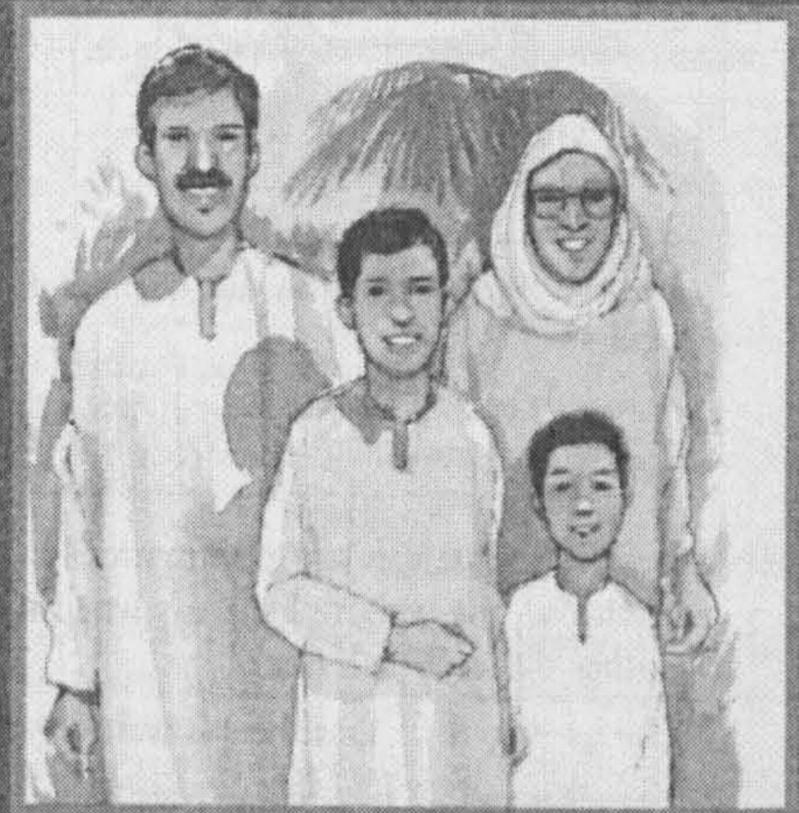


B Work in pairs. Discuss these questions and make notes. Then discuss with the class.

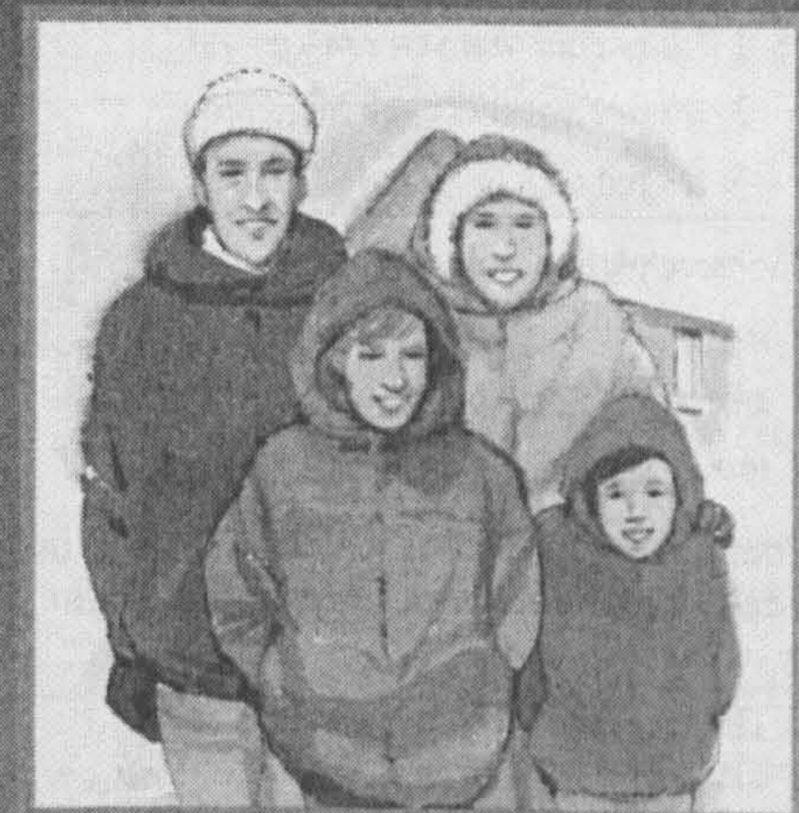
1 What are the advantages and disadvantages of each season in Libya?
2 Which is the best time to visit Libya?

Hot and Cold

How does climate affect the way we live? To find out, we asked two teenagers from different parts of the world: Ali Naji, who lives in the hottest capital city on Earth, and Wendy Baker from a town where the winter temperature drops to -25 °C or lower.



Ali and his family in Muscat, Oman



Wendy and her family in Fairbanks, Alaska

'Muscat, the capital of Oman, is so hot in summer that most swimming pools are too hot to swim in. Car bodies get hot enough to cook on. Without air-conditioning, driving would be impossible; the steering wheel would burn your hands.

If you go out of your house at midday, sweat begins to drip down your neck within seconds, which feels horrible. We stay indoors during the day if we can, and go out in the evenings and early mornings. We wear thin cotton *dishdashas*, which feel more comfortable than European clothes, and open leather sandals. Of course, everyone covers their heads.

Surprisingly, more people catch colds in the summer than in the winter. This is because the air-conditioning in big buildings sometimes makes the air too cold, and it spreads germs too.

The winter in Oman is wonderful. It's like a European summer. Sometimes the clear blue sky becomes cloudy, but most of the time the weather is perfect for enjoying life outdoors.'

'The winters here are very cold. There's a lake near my house which freezes in winter. The ice on the lake is so thick that you can drive a car on it.

Houses are often half-buried under snow in winter. If your front door is on the ground floor, you have to dig your way out through the snow. So many houses have an upstairs door, which is above the snow.

It's too cold to go out unless you wear thick woollen sweaters, a thick waterproof jacket, gloves to protect your hands, and a warm fur hat. Without a hat, your head really hurts. Inside, the buildings are warm, and they have windows with three layers of glass to keep the cold out. People stay indoors a lot, which can be unhealthy physically and mentally.

It sounds terrible, but it's not so bad. There are winter sports like skiing and ice-skating, which are great fun, and in summer the snow melts. The country becomes green again, and the lake is warm enough to swim in.'

Grammar: adjectives with *too*, *so* and *enough*

A Study the information in the box. Then complete the analysis of the three patterns.

The three sentences in each group have similar meanings:

A 1 *The ice is so thick that you can drive on it.*
2 *The ice is thick **enough** to drive on.*
3 *The ice is not **too** thin to drive on.*

B 1 *It's so cold that you can't go out.*
2 *It's not warm **enough** to go out.*
3 *It's **too** cold to go out.*

The three patterns are:

1 *so* + adjective + *that*

2 adjective + _____ + infinitive

3 *too* + _____ + _____

B Complete each sentence so that it is similar in meaning to the sentence above it. Use *too, so* or *enough*.

1 The lake is too cold to swim in.
The lake is not warm ...

2 The car is too hot to touch.
The car is ...

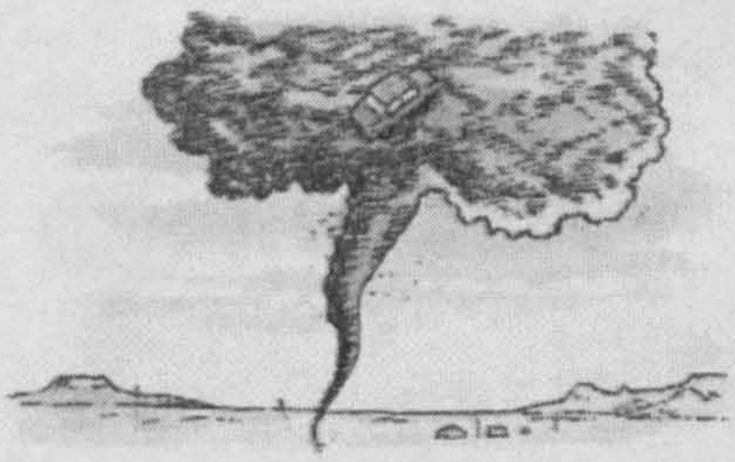
3 The pool was so hot that we couldn't swim in it.
The pool was ...

4 We couldn't walk on the sand because it was too hot.
The sand was ...

5 A hurricane can destroy buildings.
A hurricane is strong ...

6. It's too cloudy to sit on the beach.
It's not sunny ...

7 A tornado is strong enough to pick up a car.
A tornado is ...



C Study the examples and information in th grammar box. Then make four similar sentences about the girl.

1 He is too heavy to walk on the ice.
2 The ice is too thin for him to walk on.
3 He is not light enough to walk on it.
4 It is not thick enough for him to walk o

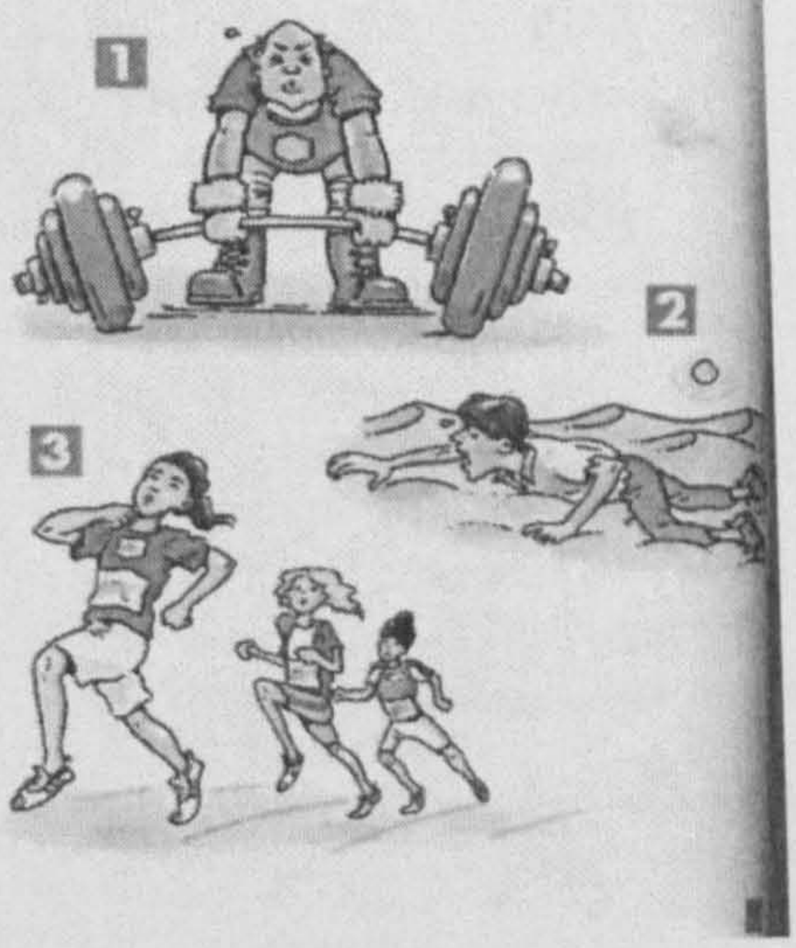
Question: Why is there no *it* at the end of 2 and 4?

Answer: *It* or *The ice* is already there at the beginning, so we should not repeat it.

D All of these sentences are grammatically correct. But one is more factually true than the other three. Which one?

1 The ice is so thick that she can walk on it.
2 The ice is so thin that he can't walk on it.
3 She is so light that she can walk on the ice.
4 He is so heavy that he can't walk on the ice.

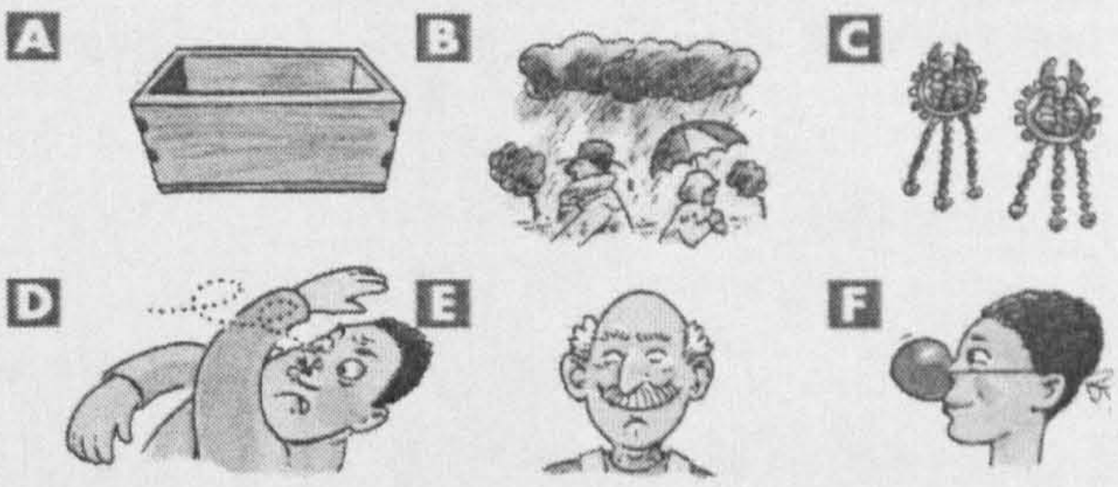
E Make three sentences about each of these pictures. Use *too, so* and *enough*.



1 **Grammar:** order of adjectives

A Match the phrases to the pictures.

1 cold wet weather
2 a nice old man
3 an annoying little insect
4 a rectangular wooden box
5 a red plastic nose
6 Egyptian silver jewelery



B The chart shows the usual order of some common types of adjectives. Write words from A in the correct columns. Then add more words.

opinion	size	age	temperature	humidity	shape	colour	origin	material

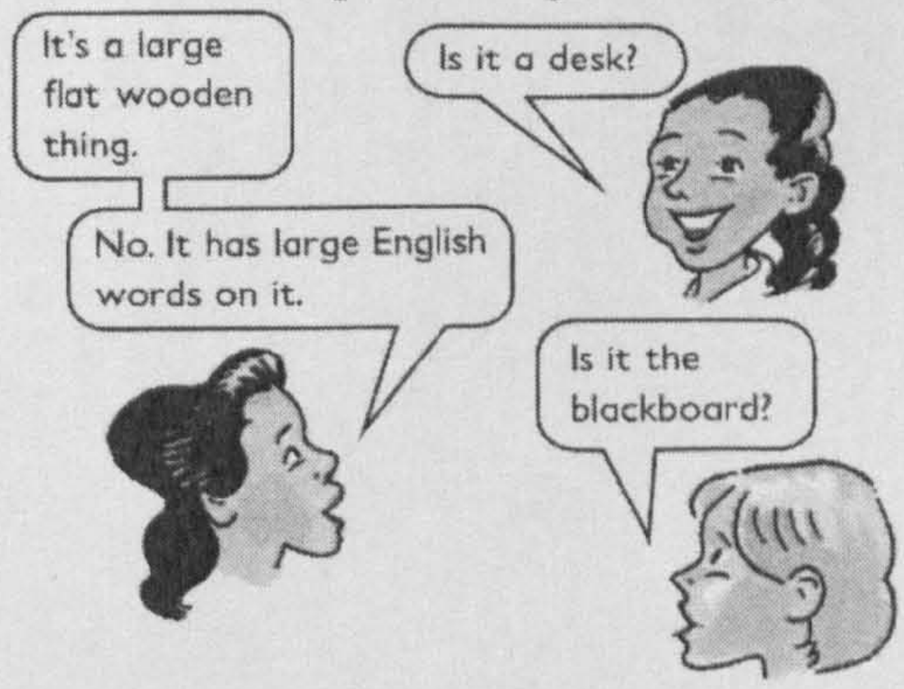
C Make two phrases with each of these words. Use two or three adjectives each time.

cotton	plastic	new	dry
interesting	Chinese	square	

Examples: *a nice, new cotton shirt*
a big, green cotton dress

D Work in pairs. Write a description of an object. Use two or more adjectives.

Read your description to the class. Listen to the other descriptions and guess the objects.



2 **Vocabulary:** prepositions with adjectives

Complete the sentences with the following prepositions:

about	at	for	from	in	of	on	to	with

1 He's interested ____ computers.
2 Some people are afraid ____ flying.
3 I'm not very good _____ Maths.
4 She's worried _____ her exams.
5 He's married _____ my cousin.
6 I felt sorry _____ her when she was in hospital.
7 Hurry up! You'll be late _____ school.
8 They are very kind _____ me.
9 It's very kind _____ you to help me.
10 Salem's very keen _____ football.
11 Be careful _____ that glass. Don't drop it.
12 Watch out _____ him. He's dangerous.
13 The teacher was angry _____ me because I hadn't done the work.
14 Sumaya was absent _____ school yesterday.
15 Are you ready ____ your test tomorrow? ■

Listening

1 Before you listen

Do you know the meaning of these words?

thunderstorm coastal areas snow
flash flood showers

2 While you listen

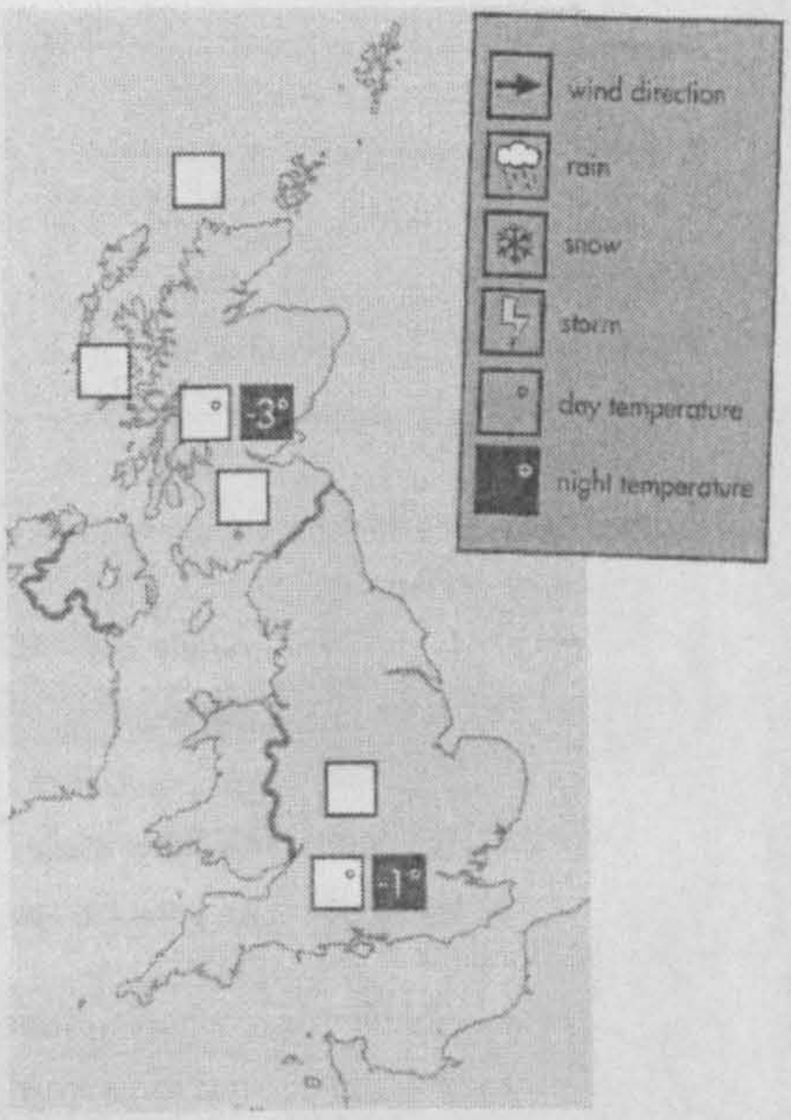
A 🎧 It is winter. A family is listening to the weather forecast for the weekend. Listen to forecast 1. Which place is the forecast for? Choose the correct answer from the list and explain why the others must be wrong.

Libya Oman Britain Italy Alaska

B The family want to go somewhere together tomorrow. Look at the ideas below. Then listen to forecast 1 again. Say why each idea is good or not.

1 Let's go for a walk in the mountains.
2 Let's go to the beach.
3 How about a picnic in a wadi?
4 We could visit our cousins in Sirt. (150 kilometres away)
5 Why don't we do some sailing?

C 🎧 Listen to forecast 2 and complete the weather map for tomorrow's weather.



D Listen to forecast 2 again. What important information does it contain for the followi people?

1 fishermen
2 people who drive in the early morning
3 people who live near rivers

3 After you listen

A Work in pairs. Prepare to give a weather forecast for Libya. Make notes about the likely weather for tomorrow and the outlo for the next few days.

B When you are ready, read your forecast to another pair of students and listen to theirs Are the forecasts similar or different?

4 Pronunciation

🎧 Listen and repeat the phrases that you hear. Use the correct stress and intonation.

1 Oh no!
2 I don't believe it!
3 What a pity!
4 What a surprise!
5 That's not bad!
6 That's a nuisance!
7 How exciting!
8 How annoying!

5 Useful language: responding to news

A Study these patterns and suggest more phrase

Example: *How interesting! What wonderful news!*

How + adjective

What + noun phrase

That's + adjective or noun phrase

B Work in pairs. Tell your partner some news. Respond to your partner's news with phrase from 4 and 5A. Here are some ideas to get you started.

1 It's going to rain all day tomorrow.
2 I've passed my driving test!
3 I can't come to the party on Thursday.
4 Our team has won the match!
5 The school will be closed tomorrow.

Speaking and Writing

1 Speaking

A Look at the newspaper headlines and pictures from various countries. Discuss these questions about each.

1 What has happened, and why?
2 In which part of the world is this country?
3 What do you know about the climate there?

B Work in pairs. Discuss these questions and prepare to tell the class.

1 Which of the problems in 1A have also happened in Libya? Describe what happened.
2 What is the worst weather you have ever experienced? Where and when was it? What happened?

C Discuss the questions in B with the class.

2 Writing

Write a newspaper headline and text (130 words or more) about one of the stories from 1A, B or C.

Appendix 4: Extract from analytic memo generated by observational data

The absence of pair work: Some activities require students to work in pairs. However the teacher did not instruct the students to do the activity in pairs The teacher interacts with the students on an individual basis. What are the teachers' attitudes towards pair work? What is the rationale behind not asking the students to work in pairs?

The use of Arabic: It seems that the teacher has an accepting attitude towards the use of Arabic. It is frequently being used by both the teacher and the students. What are the teachers' attitudes towards the use of Arabic? How does the teacher view the use of Arabic? When the teacher uses Arabic?

Students' English level: Most of the activities are done by the teacher. There is little participation from the students. How does the teacher view the students' level? Does the teacher think that the students' English level hinder his implementation of the curriculum?

The while reading activities: The teacher starts the while reading activity by reading the text aloud. He is reading the text word by word and sentences by sentence and frequently stops at some words to ask the students about these words meaning. What are the teachers' ideas about how to deal with the while reading activities? Why the teacher reads word by word and focuses on word translation? What are the teachers' views regarding the curriculum recommendations of how to teach reading?

The omission of the listening section: The teacher skipped all the activities in the listening section. Why? What are the teachers' attitudes towards the listening section?

Appendix 5: An extract of an interview transcript

Teacher: Munir
Interview: 1 (Introductory interview)
Date of the interview:
Duration of the interview:

Senussi: we start recoding our first interview. I explained to you the purpose of this study, and the goals of the study. The first thing I want to you to talk about your educational background, your work experience, your introduction to the curriculum, your opinion about this curriculum. These are the issues we want to talk about in this interview. So if we start talking about the first issue which is about your educational background. When did you start teaching, and what are your qualifications?

Munir: I graduated from university in 1990. I got a BA from the university of grayouns. I started work as a teacher in the year of 1994. This is my study as a teacher. I graduated in the year of 1990 and started work in the year 1992.

S: Which kinds of curricula you taught during your teaching experiences?

M: I taught first secondary. This was my first start. I taught second secondary. I also taught in the teachers collages. I also taught the old curricula. I taught book one, book two, and book three. These are the old curricula which I taught. I also taught social science students. I also taught Mr Green curricula. I taught this curricula in the first year of social science. These are the kinds of curricula I taught when I started teaching. Then I started teaching the new curricula.

S: Which year you started teaching the new curricula?

M: I started teaching the new curriculum in the year 1999. I taught first year, second year, and fourth year of secondary school. A:I have been teaching this curriculum for about seven years.

S: If we talk about the introduction of the new curriculum. How it was introduced?

M: There were no training sessions for the teacher. The sessions only took one week. We were given a week of how to teach the curriculum. These sessions were given by supervisors. This new curriculum is considered as a modern and new curriculum for us. I think it is even above our level because we do not have an idea about these kinds of curricula. We were used to teach a curriculum which was mostly concentrating on grammar. It deals with one topic from the beginning of the textbook to the end of the

book whereas this curriculum is different. It needs qualified teacher and it needs a student who has good level of English. This curriculum does not concentrate on grammar. It concentrates more on vocabulary. As a teacher I had to change my teaching. We were used to concentrate on memorization of words and grammar, whereas now we have to teach speaking, writing, reading, and writing. we have to teach different skills.

S: When you were asked to teach these new curricula which kink of preparation did you have to teach these curricula?

M: There were no preparations. As I told we had only one week of how to teach. They told us to follow the teachers' book. The teachers' book is not consistent with our circumstances. The time which is allocated to English language teaching is not enough to implement what is in the teachers' book. I cannot implement all what is in the teachers' book. I am always late in my implementation of the curriculum. There are many things in the curriculum which I do not teach such as listening activities.

S: Why you do not teach the listening activities?

M: I tried teaching the listening activities before, but I found myself wasting my time. I waste my time because of the students in front of me. I brought the cassettes to the class and made the students listen to what is in the cassettes, but I found no reactions from the students. I changed my way of teaching listening. I divided the content of the cassettes to see the reaction of the student. I also wrote the content of the cassette on the board so the students can understand the cassette is, I found that this process takes about six classes without any willingness form the students to listen. Why the student does not have willingness to listen? The answer is that because the student is not used to the listening activities from the beginning. He is not used to listen to people talking in English. The student has already been studying English for six year without getting used to the listening activities. When they come to the fourth secondary they find it difficult to do the listening activities. In their previous years, students did not do listening activities. It is difficult to do listening in the fourth secondary when the students never did listening activities in their previous years of learning English. Frankly for these reasons, I cancelled teaching the listening activities.

S: So now you are not teaching listening for the reasons you mentioned. What about other skills in the curriculum?

M: The other skills in the curriculum are good and I have no thing to say about them,

but in my opinion as Libyan students our concentration is always on grammar. We always concentrate on grammar, whereas this curriculum there is not too much concentration on grammar. It is not like the old curriculum where there is too much concentration on grammar. There is grammar in this curriculum but it is not concentrated on it too much, where as in the old curriculum there was clear concentration on grammar. The new curriculum is good because of its various topics. It gives the student vocabulary in various topics such as sport topics, social topics, scientific topics, and cultural topics. It gives the student a large amount of vocabulary in various topics.

S: Lets' talk about how you deal with this curriculum in the classroom.

M: Three difficulties in teaching this curriculum. For me there are some difficulties in teaching this curriculum. I did find any one who can give instructions of how to deal with these difficulties. I try to use my knowledge and my efforts in order to deal with these difficulties.

S: What kinds of difficulties are you talking about?

M: For example, we come to the speaking activities, I find the student have not thing. He does not react to the speaking activities. He cannot do the speaking activities. What is the solution for this dilemma? As a teacher what shall I do in this case? What shall I do?

S: In your opinion why the student is not able to do the speaking activity?

M: I ask this question to the students. I ask the student why you are not able to speak in English. The student says I do not understand any thing. The teacher of the last year did not teach us any thing. Some students say that during the preparatory stage, they did not study any thing. Some students say we did not finish the text book last year. We have this problem. The teachers do not finish the curricula. For example I am required to finish eight units, I can finish eight units. I do not know why teachers do not finish the curriculum. Some teachers are required to finish eight units, but they finish only four units.

S: If we start talking about teaching this curriculum. How do you start the unit?

M: When I start the unit, I usually I start with before you read. Before I start teaching, I get an idea about the students. There are some good students and some weak students. You visited me in two classes and noticed the difference between the two classes. So I

try to make the student get a result from the unit whether I used Arabic or English. I try to make the students understand that English is an important subject and they have to understand that English is the language of this modern age. I start the reading, I read, and I ask the student to read. Also we have another problem which the time allocated for English classes is not suitable for this curriculum. The time is not sufficient for this curriculum. If I want each student to read, I will not finish the curriculum especially if you have thirty or forty students in the class. Every student should read but I cannot give each student a chance to read. I sometimes let the students read alone, and then I ask the students if they are willing to read but I do not have any reaction from the students. I then am forced to read the passage again. Then I ask the students to read, but I do not find students who are willing to read. What is the problem? Actually I do not know the problem. It is the same situation even when you ask the students who is willing to read. It is the same students who usually read. They read today, they read tomorrow, and after tomorrow. It is the same faces.

S: Lets' talk about how you deal with reading activities. There are pre-reading, while reading, and after reading activities. How you deal with these activities?

M: I deal with the activities as it is required by the text book. The purpose of the reading activity for example is to activate the student before we start the unit. The pre-reading is related to the topic which the student will study. It tests the extent of the student's idea about the topic. For example unit two deals with weather. The reading passage is about weather. The information in this unit is about weather. The pre-reading tests the student's vocabulary with regard to weather vocabulary. Does the student have an idea about weather vocabulary? The pre-reading activity is good because it tests the student's ideas and vocabulary about the topic which he will be studying during the unit. The pre-reading is also good for the teacher. I sometimes do not have an idea about the topic of the unit, but the pre-reading gives the ideas and the necessary vocabulary in order to deal with the topic of the unit. Sometimes I do not have information about the topic of the unit. For example, one of the units the speaking activities deals with the geography of the world. At the time I did not have enough information about this topic. I asked some the geography teachers more than one time, but I did not find any results.

S: In your opinion what are the most difficult things that face the students in this curriculum?

M: As I told the listening activity is cancelled. Then we have the speaking activities.

The speaking is also another problem for the students. Whereas the reading and writing is to some extent are ok. In reading the teacher will read for the student, and then the student will read after the teacher. In writing you ask the student to write and then you correct his mistakes. I usually give writing as a home activity. Perhaps the student finds help at home.

S: In general do you think you are implementing the curriculum as it is intended in the textbook or you do not implement it as it is intended?

M: I tell something I try to implement this curriculum but not as exactly as it is in the teachers' book. I think that there are some things in the curriculum which are not appropriate for the Libyan student. I cannot implement these things.

S: What do you mean by these things?

M: For example, one of the notes in the curriculum is that the teacher uses English in his interaction with the class. If you speak in English, no one will understand you. If I want to speak in English for the whole class, there will be no reactions form the students. Even if I use Arabic, I still find some students who do not understand what I am saying. The teachers' book also suggests that I teach lesson one and listen two in one class, but I cannot implement this suggestion. In some classes, I do only one section of the lesson, only one section. I need more time in order to implement what is suggested in the textbook. Also there are some topics in the textbook which are difficult for the teacher. I sometimes cannot understand these topics. I have to look for help from others to explain what these topics are talking about. There are some difficult topics in the textbooks. The exams also are not consistent with this curriculum.

S: Why the exams are not consistent with the curriculum?

M: The exams concentrate on reading perhaps some writing, but no listening and speaking. The exam mostly concentrates on reading. The reading includes vocabulary, and some grammar, but there are no speaking and listening in the exam.

S: Do you think that because the exams do not include listening and speaking therefore you ignore these skills?

A: No I told you and explained to you that I tried to teach listening. I even brought my own tape player to the class. The school does not have tape players, and even. It does not have sockets to use tape players. As for the speaking, I try to implement the speaking activities, but usually I do no find reaction from the students. Therefore, I am

the one who does the speaking activities. So if the student cannot speak then what is the outcome of the speaking activities?

S: Well before we finish this interview, would you like to add anything else in connection to what we have been talking about?

M: I think this curriculum is a good curriculum, but it is not suitable for our circumstances.

S: Can you elaborate more why it is not suitable?

M: Well, for example, my role as it is suggested by this curriculum should be as a guide or as a facilitator for the student, but in reality I am the one who does all things in the class. The student only acts as a listener. The students come to the school only because of the exams. In speaking I do the speaking activities. In reading, I am the one who does the reading. The student is a listener. He does not do any efforts in the class. For example, when I want to use pair work, I do not find any response and cooperation from the students. It is the same thing in the speaking activities. When I ask the students to engage in a discussion, I also find no response from them. I am the one who does the activities more than the students. When I ask the students why they do not engage in the activities, they always blame the previous teachers for not teaching them. In general, I do not think that this curriculum is implemented as it is intended by the people who wrote it. I think the old curriculum is better for these kinks of students.

S: Many thanks for you time.

Appendix 6: An exam sample

المعرفة حق طبيعي لكل انسان

الجماهيرية العربية الليبية الشعبية الاشتراكية العظمى
اللجنة الشعبية العامة

ان الجهل سينتهي عندما يقدم كل شئ على حقيقته

المركز الوطني لتخطيط التعليم — ادارة التقويم والقياس

امتحان اتمام شهادة الثانويات التخصصية (ثانوية العلوم الأساسية) للعام الدراسي 1373 و.ر / 2005 مسيحي

المادة: اللغة الانجليزية (الدور الأول) الزمن: ثلاث ساعات

يجب على الطالب اجابة كل الأسئلة وان يتأكد من عدد الأسئلة (10) وعدد الصفحات (4) الدرجات: 70 درجة

THE GREAT SOCIALIST PEOPLE'S LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA
THE BASIC SCIENCE SECONDARY SCHOOLS EXAM
(1st SESSION 2005)

TOTAL MARKS (70) TIME: 3 HOURS

QUESTION 1A: Read the following passage and answer the questions: -

Nowadays computers are used for creating databases. A computer database is any collection of facts or information which is organized for storage in a computer memory. The data can be in the form of text, numbers or graphics and is organized so that it can be accessed easily by users. There are many computer programs which help to create a database. Computer databases were first used in 1950s. Databases used for government, industrial or military purposes are often very secret and access is limited. However, many databases are on-line, so they are available to the general public. All you need is a computer terminal, a telephone and a modem.

The information can be presented to the user in a number of ways using graphics. If we want to add to, delete or alter information, this can be done in seconds.

Information in a database is usually arranged in either ascending or descending order.

Ascending order means going from the smallest number to the largest, or from the beginning of the alphabet to the end. Descending order means the reverse.

a- What are computers used for?

.....

b- Where is information organized for storage?

.....

c- When were computer databases used for the first time?

.....

d- Why are many computer databases available for all?

.....

e- How is information in a database arranged?

.....

f- How can the information be presented for the user?

.....

g- Does it take a long time to alter information?

.....

h- What is a computer database?

.....

i- Is a telephone directory a kind of database?

.....

j- What is the opposite (descending order) ?

.....

(10 X 1 = 10 marks)

1

Question 1B: Match these definitions with the underlined words or phrases:

a- signs, pictures, diagrams or drawings = ...
b- produce something new = ...
c- cut out, remove = ...
d- connected to the Internet = ...
e- change something to become different = ...
f- means or right of using = ...
g- facts, information = ...
h- an instrument with which computers communicate over a telephone line = ...
.....

(8 X ½ = 4 marks)

Question 2: Mark these sentences (T) for true or (F) for false:

a- Whether an object floats or sinks in water depends on its density. ( )
b- It is so easy to float in the Red Sea. ( )
c- At 0° C, water has a lower density than ice. ( )
d- The density of Helium is high. ( )
e- Mist is thicker than fog. ( )
f- Smog consists of fog, smoke and pollution. ( )
g- Icebergs are formed when sea-water freezes. ( )
h- Submarines are ships which can float and sink. ( )

(8 X ½ = 4 marks)

Question 3: Complete these sentences with these words:

(freeze - sublime - condense - evaporate - melt - sublime)

a- Most solids ..... when they are heated.
b- When they are heated some solids ..... and become gases.
c- Liquids ..... when molecules start to escape from the surface of the liquid.
d- When liquids are cooled they .....
e- When most gases are cooled they .....
f- Some gases ..... directly to solids when they are cooled.

(6 x 1 = 6 marks)

QUESTION 4: Rewrite these sentences using (was / were going to .....but .....) :

a- He forgot to do it.
.....
b- I didn't have time to do it.
.....
c- The teacher told us not to go out.
.....

d- The car broke down so we couldn't go shopping.

.....

e- I would have phoned you if I hadn't lost your number.

.....

f- We had just turned on the TV when our cousins arrived.

.....

(6 x 1½ =9 marks)

QUESTION 5: Rewrite these sentences correctly:

a- Lets ask someone who's / know / likely / to.

.....

b- Excuse me. I'm / to / sorry / trouble you.

.....

c- These instructions / understand / to / difficult / are.

.....

d- It's not necessary for / them / you / to / read.

.....

e- It's kind / to / help us / of / you.

.....

f- I'm / you / to / happy / help.

.....

(6 x 1½ = 9 marks)

QUESTION 6: Underline the best answer then write it in the space:

a- Lasers produce light of a ..... colour. (double / single)
b- Holograms produce ..... images. (two-dimensional / three-dimensional)
c- Lasers ..... used in communication. (are / are not)
d- When people play football ..... of pressure is put on the knees. (a little / a lot)
e- A person who controls matches is a ..... . (player / referee)
f- ..... is good for building muscles. (Weightlifting / swimming)

(6 x ½ = 3 marks)

QUESTION 7: Report these sentences:

a - She said, "Are you coming, Ali?"

.....

b- He said, "Where is the meeting?"

.....

c- He said, "I gave him the money two days ago."

.....

d- She said, "Can you ride a horse, Sami?"

.....

e- Ali said, "I saw a nice film yesterday."

.....

f- She said, "Stay at home, children."

.....

(6 X 1½ = 9 marks)

QUESTION 8: Add (a - an - the) or nothing x)

a. Would you rather be ..... teacher or ..... engineer?
b. Do ..... children in your family watch TV a lot?
c. What is ..... tar used for?
d. Do you know how much ..... pocket of ..... cigarettes costs?
e. What do you usually eat for ..... breakfast?
f. What do you like to do on ..... Fridays?
g. Have you ever been attacked by ..... animal or bitten by ..... snake?
h. Is ..... sun ..... star?

(8 X ½ = 4 marks)

QUESTION 9: Write the correct forms of the verbs:

a- If water ....., it boils. (be heat)
b- Having ..... his homework, he went out. (do)
c- If he had come here ..... him. (see)
d- Have you ever ..... to France? (be) when ..... that? (be)
e- If ..... well, you would answer the question. (think)

(6 x 1 = 6 marks)

QUESTION 10: Do as it is shown between brackets:

a- A hurricane can destroy buildings. (use: enough)
.....
b- The lesson is too difficult to understand. (use... so ....)
.....
c- He is too heavy to walk on the ice. (begin with: The ice .....)
.....
d- It is good for you to read. (use: the gerund)
.....

(4 x 1½ = 6 marks)

(GOOD LUCK FOR ALL)

Appendix 7: Workshop materials used during the training of the inspectors

ENGLISH FOR LIBYA WORKSHOP DAY 1.1

DEVELOPING READING SKILLS (SEC 1 / CB / Unit 2 Lessons 1-2, page 6-7)

Rationale for individual stages

Pre-Reading

1A	Before you read	Introduce the topic Personalization Revision of basic vocabulary
1B	Look at list 1	Personalization (engaging the student)
1C	Look at map	Reading skill: locating - scanning

While-reading

2A	Read and say why	First fast reading: Giving students a reason for reading (comprehension of the gist (main idea of the text)
2B	True / False	Slower, intensive reading
2C	Pairwork	Speaking (integrated skills) (In real life, we often read a text and then talk about it.)

Post-reading

3A	Compass	Vocabulary checking/ teaching
3B	Pairwork	Speaking and vocabulary

Other points:
1 Note the different categories of **Pre- While- and Post-reading tasks.**
2 The lessons cover **language systems** (structure, vocabulary and pronunciation) and **skills** (mainly reading but also writing and listening).
3 What do Ss (students) read? A map, a text and exercises.
4 How fast do Ss read? A fast first reading --> a second slower reading.
5 How do Ss read? Reading running (=continuous) text, locating information / locating words or phrases
6 How much do students read? Reading a text, sentences, phrases, words on a map.
7 Why get students to do the 'True / False' exercise in pairs? Every student has to make an effort. Every pair of students has to find a reason for their answer. The teacher can monitor the activity and see which T/F items are causing difficulties.

Day 1 Summary and Slogans

1 In teaching methodology there are no 'rights' and wrongs', only choices.
2 How should you teach? It all depends .
3 Would you rather live on a fixed prison diet or on a self-service banquet?
4 We train our teachers in the same way that we want them to teach their students.
5 Teacher-centred training comes before student-centred teaching.
6 Teacher-training is helping teachers to make appropriate choices.

ENGLISH FOR LIBYA WORKSHOP **DAY 2.1**

DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS

1 There are two types of speaking:

* Controlled repetition and practice (Accuracy)
* Real atempts at communication (Fluency)

Teachers and pupils need to know which type of speaking they are doing.
Different correction procedures are used for the different types of speaking.

2 Typical teącher problems:

* How to stop good pupils dominating speaking activities.
* How to encourage less proficient students.
* How to motivate students to speak.
* How to monitor pair and group work.
* How much to correct pupils'[mistakes.

3 Demonstration: Prep CB3 Ex 5.1 page 21

1 The teacher provides very little language. The language is provided by the tape. The teacher takes on the role of 'organiser, demonstrator, monitor'.

2 There are 3 possible substitutions in this speaking activity: visitors, plans (in the pictures) and expressions to keep the conversation going.

3 This activity is suitable for mixed ability classes:
- the weaker students can repeat the basic conversations, using one or two substitutions.
- better students can do many more of the substitutions.
- the most proficient students can use their own ideas and all the language that they have learnt so far.

4 The Look - Cover - Speak method encourages students to speak to each other in pairs instead of reading aloud.

5 Repeated practice with a different partner.
Research evidence suggests that a task repeated with a different partner improves when repeated. The speaker tends to use more complicated grammatical structures and a wider range of vocabulary the second time. This may be because of greater confidence.

4 Pair work - the mathematics of student-talking-time

In a class of 45 students, in a 45 minute lesson, without pairwork -
each student can speak for 1 minute maximum , if the teacher does not speak at all.
each student can speak for 30 seconds maximum , if the teacher speaks for half the lesson.
This is not enough to become proficient in speaking.

In a class of 45 students, in a 45 minute lesson, with pairwork -
each student can speak for 1 minute in each 2-minute pair-practice.
If there are 3 of these periods in a lesson,
each student can speak for 3 minutes in a lesson.
Thus pairwork gives more opportunities for speaking to more students for longer periods.

The bigger the class, the greater the need for pair work.

5 Possible teacher objections to pair work, and possible responses.

Q My class is too large to do pair work. I have 70-80 students.
A That is a stronger reason to do pair work. See the 'Mathematics' section.

Q Pair work is noisy. It can disturb other classes.
A Pair work is less noisy than choral drilling.

Q It's a waste of time.
A Pair work often lasts only 2 minutes. The change of activity helps maintain student concentration.

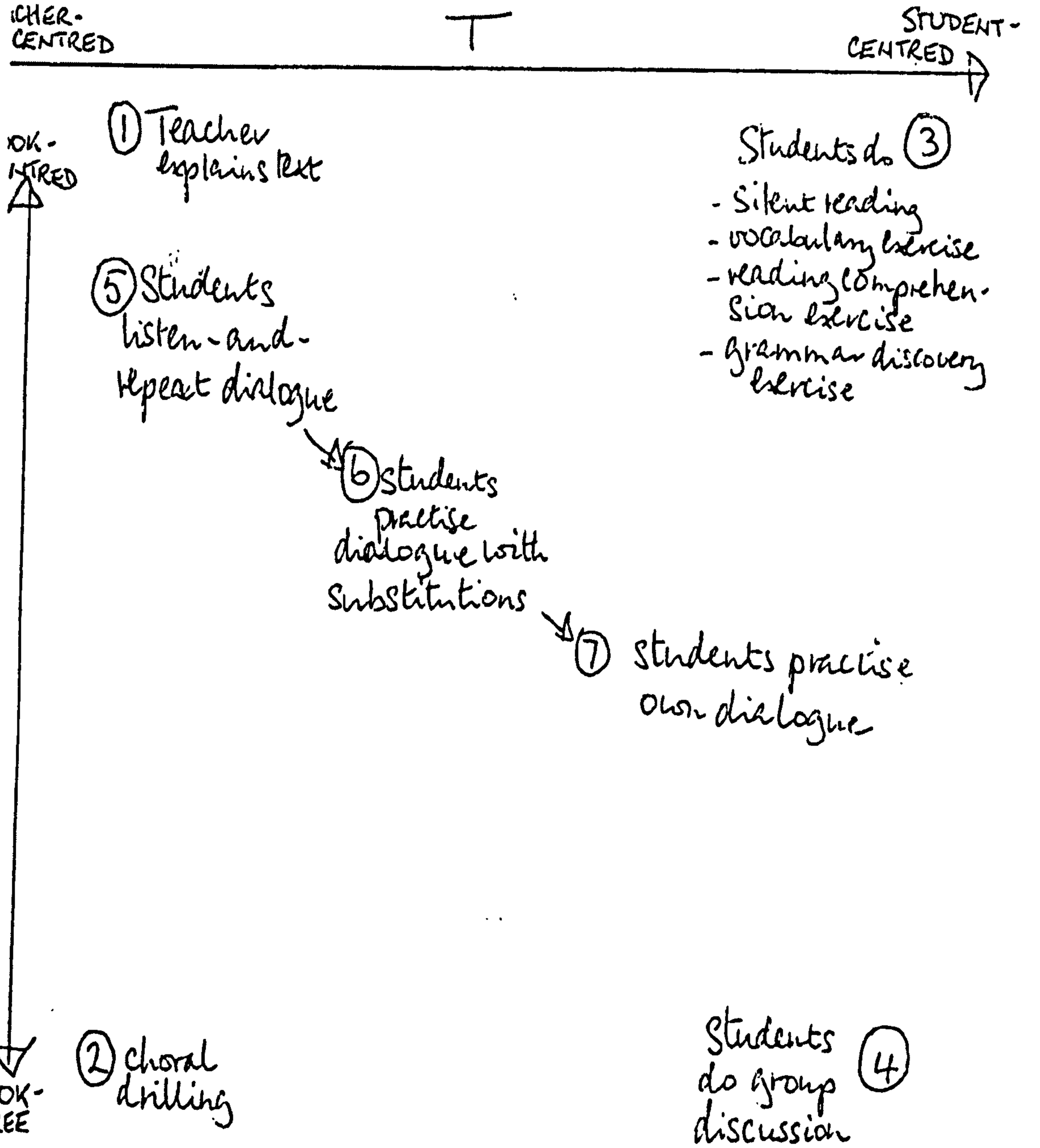
Q Some students won't speak, or will speak in Arabic.
A While the rest of the class is practising, you can help two of these problem pairs. The next time, help a different two pairs.

Q Some students may misbehave.
A Really? More than usual? A short period of nioisiness may help concentration and motivate students. Encourage the students to act and use gestures when they do pair work.

Q I can't hear if they are all using the language correctly.
A Pair work is not a test. It is an opportunity to practise the language. Correct the students at the presentation and controlled practice stages.

2 Helping teachers move towards a more student-centred approach.

1 Look at the diagram below.
The 'B' line shows whether an activity is 'Book-based' or 'Book-free'.
The 'T' line shows whether an activity is 'Teacher-centred or 'Student-centred'.



Appendix 8: Checking the accuracy of the translation

Sample transcript one

Original interview transcript in Arabic

أنا عارفة أن المنهج يقترح على المدرس أن يعمل ملاحظات بالأخطاء التي يعملها الطالب ثم يتعامل مع هذه الأخطاء لاحقا، ولكن عندي ملاحظة حول هذا الموضوع، حيث أنك لا تستطيع أن تعمل ملاحظات حول جميع الأخطاء التي يعملها الطالب، فهي كثيرة، وأنا لست متأكدة أني أستطيع أن أتذكر كل هذه الأخطاء حتى أقوم بتصحيحها لاحقا، وأنا أعتقد أني لا بد أن أصحح الخطأ في نفس الوقت الذي يقع فيه الخطأ

My friend's translation

I am aware that the curriculum suggests to teachers to write down the mistakes done by students and deal with them later on. But as a teacher I don't think I cannote down all the mistakes done by students as they are too many. I am not sure that I can remember all these mistakes and correct them later. I think I have to correct any mistake immediately.

My translation

I know that the curriculum suggests that the teacher makes notes and deals with the mistakes later. However, I have a point of view regarding this aspect. There are many mistakes students make. You cannot make notes of every mistake the student makes. There are too many mistakes and I am not sure that I can remember all the mistakes to correct them later. My belief is that I must correct every mistake students make immediately.

****

Sample transcript two

Original interview transcript in Arabic

أنا أعرف أن المنهج يشجع استخدام اللغة الانجليزية، ولكن هذه الفكرة سوف تضيع وقتي، والطلبة سوف يجدون صعوبة في التحدث باللغة الانجليزية، ومن الأسهل لي أن أتكلم باللغة العربية، فأنا عندي خلفية عن مستوى الطلبة، وسوف أضيع وقتي إذا أنا ركزت على استخدام اللغة الانجليزية في الفصل

My friend's translation

I am aware that the curriculum encourages the use of English for instruction but I believe this idea/method is going to waste my instruction time. Students will find it difficult to speak and interact in English in class. It is much easier for me to use Arabic. I have a good idea about students status/level in English. It is a waste of time to concentrate in using English in class.

My translation

I know the curriculum encourages the use of English inside the class, but this idea will waste my time. Students will find difficulty speaking in English. It is easer for me to use Arabic. I have a background about the students' English language level. I will waste my time if I concentrate on using English inside the class.

Appendix 9: Examples of coding the interview data

The appendix shows sub-categories of the larger category of "beliefs about students" with some illustrative data.

Text: interview data\Fathi interview 2
Weight: 100
Position: 13 - 13
Code: Beliefs about students\students' English level
Pair work is good, but the English background of the majority of the students is weak. If you use pair work, perhaps only one pair or two pairs in who will work in the class. The rest of the class will just wait for the answers and will do nothing.

Text: interview data\Fathi interview 2
Weight: 100
Position: 15 - 15
Code: Beliefs about students\students' English level
The students' English background is weak and as I teacher I have to stimulate them in Arabic in order to take part in the classroom activities.

Text: interview data\Fathi interview 2
Weight: 100
Position: 15 - 15
Code: Beliefs about students\students' expectations
The students just depend on the teacher. They write down every thing the teacher says, and memorize what he writes and says. The students depend totally on the teacher. The teacher does every thing for them.

Text: interview data\Fathi interview 2
Weight: 100
Position: 15 - 15
Code: Beliefs about students\students' prior experience
They just sit silent and write what the teacher says and writes. Of course this is the result of the previous years. During the previous years the students did not study enough English. For example, the teacher is required to teach six units, but he may teach only two or three units.

Text: interview data\Fathi interview 2
Weight: 100
Position: 16 - 16
Code: Beliefs about students\students' expectations
The students do not have a positive attitude towards pair work. They do not understand the significance of pair work.

Text: interview data\Fathi interview 2
Weight: 100
Position: 20 - 20
Code: Beliefs about students\students' English level
As I told the students' background in English is weak. Students need some one to help them.

Text: interview data\Fathi interview 2
Weight: 100
Position: 20 - 20
Code: Beliefs about students\students' English level
If you just speak in English, students will not respond to you in English because their

background is weak in English. Students even do not know how to construct a good sentence in English. They need someone to help them word by word in order to build a sentence.

Text: interview data\Munir interview 1
Weight: 100
Position:17 17
Code: Beliefs about students\students' prior experience
The student is not used to the listening activities from the beginning. He is not used to listen to people talking in English. The student has already been studying English for six year without getting used to the listening activities.

Text: interview data\Munir interview 1
Weight: 100
Position: 19 - 19
Code: Beliefs about students\students' expectations
In my opinion as Libyan students our concentration is always on grammar. We always concentrate on grammar, whereas this curriculum there is not too much concentration on grammar.

Text: interview data\Munir interview 1
Weight: 100
Position: 25 - 25
Code: Beliefs about students\students' English level
I find the student have not thing. He does not react to the speaking activities. He can not do the speaking activities. What is the solution for this dilemma? As a teacher what shall I do in this case? What shall I do?

Text: interview data\Munir interview 1
Weight: 100
Position: 45 - 45
Code: Beliefs about students\students' expectations
My role as it is suggested by this curriculum should be as a guide or as a facilitator for the student, but in reality I am the one who does all things in the class. The student only acts as a listener.

Text: interview data\Munir interview 2
Weight: 100
Position: 49 - 49
Code: Beliefs about students\students' expectations
I do every thing in the class. The student comes to the class only as a listener. Perhaps he writes some notes when I am teaching perhaps he does not write any thing. This is the outcome of teaching English. Even you speak in Arabic or you speak in English, the student considers his role as a listener.

Text: interview data\Munir interview 2
Weight: 100
Position: 49 - 49
Code: Beliefs about students\students' expectations
I do every thing in the class. For example, pair work activities require students to work in pairs, but only limited number of students who do this activity. It is the responsibility of the students to work in the class, but students do not think like this. They think that their role is to sit in the class and listen to what the teacher is saying.