

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETION

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a discussion pertaining to the research questions (see 1.3) is presented. The discussion consists of the following parts: teachers' understanding of CLT and understanding of its implementation, difficulties with implementation, activities and how they are implemented in the classroom, and the differences in teaching experience and major difficulties faced by Libyan teachers in teaching reading comprehension.

6.2 Teachers' understanding of CLT features and its implementation to teach reading comprehension

Identifying teachers' views of their understanding to CLT features and its implementation in teaching reading comprehension was one of the purposes of this study. The outcome of the current study was achieved by analyzing CLT features, and the analysis was developed on the data obtained from the questionnaire. These features were analyzed interactively by observing teachers, their understanding of the major features and practices of this method according to their questionnaire responses, classroom observation and interview responses. The researcher employed observation to analyze how teachers implement CLT activities in the classroom. This examination demonstrated that several features and practices of CLT are clear and understood by teachers, while others are not as clear and understand.

6.2.1 Areas of understanding.

Identifying teachers' views of their understanding to CLT features and its implementation in teaching reading comprehension was one of the purposes of this study. Some CLT features identified in this study reflect teachers' knowledge and understanding of some of the practices and implementations of CLT. Teachers' positive understanding of CLT was reflected in their agreement implied by their responses to the questionnaire items, through their practices in the observed lessons and through the interview. Teachers' positive views of CLT features revealed that they understand the basic features of CLT. These points are explained in the following sections.

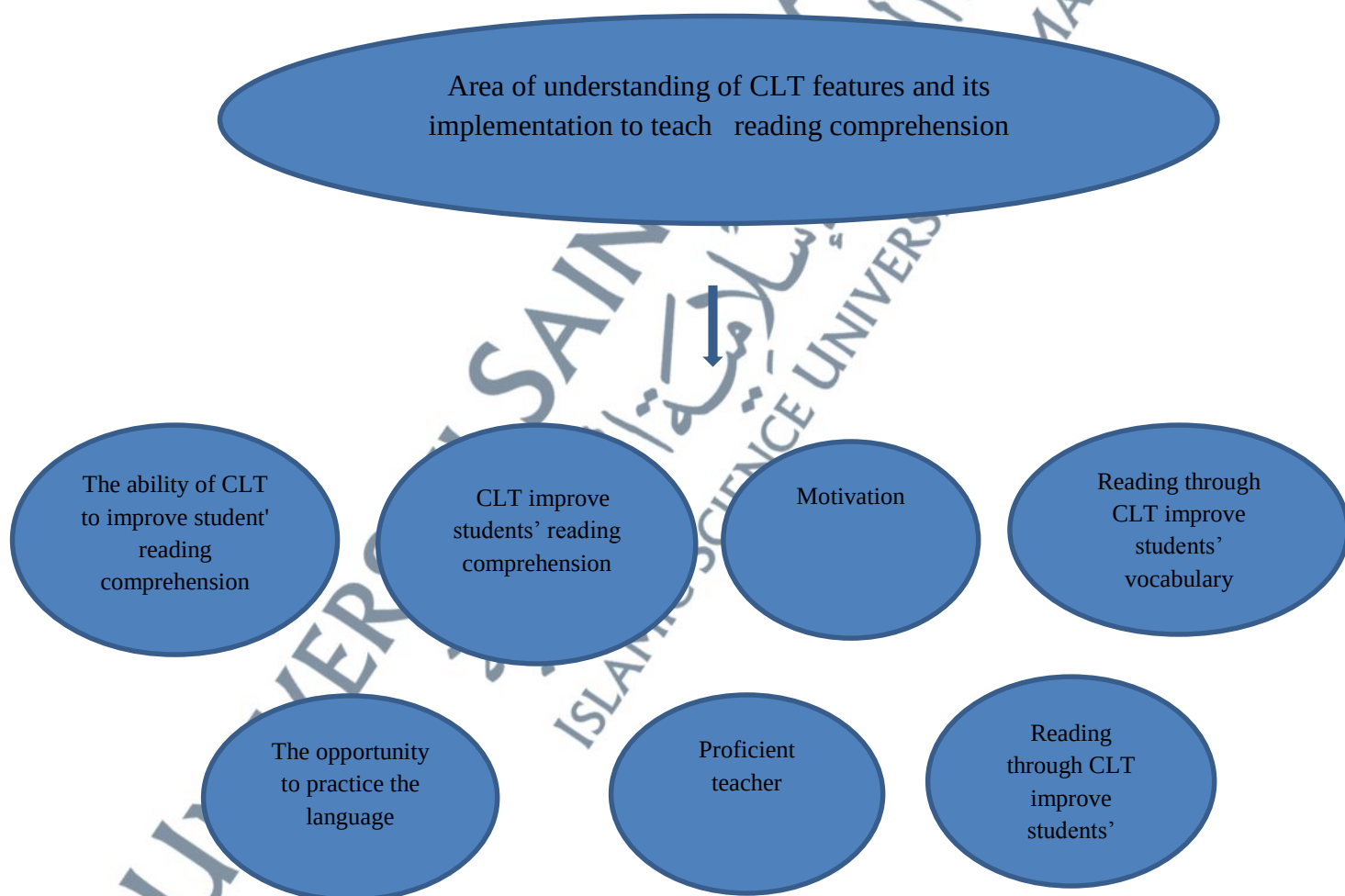


Figure 6.1 Area of understanding of CLT features and its implementation to teach reading comprehension

6.2 .1.1. The ability of CLT to improve student' reading comprehension

In the current study, teachers showed a positive understanding of CLT features and how CLT has the ability to improve students' reading comprehension level. According to the data analysis, teachers realize the importance of CLT in increasing students' reading comprehension capability. Teachers expressed that CLT is different from other methods because it facilitates interaction between students and the text and among students themselves. CLT is successful in improving students' reading ability and reading comprehension level. Teachers accept CLT and how it can help increase students' understanding in reading comprehension. They also realize that CLT is a method with certain features that vary from traditional methods.

According to the theoretical opinion of CLT features, "the communicative approach in language learning is an approach that is used in learning a foreign language that emphasizes on the improvement of communicative ability" (Richard, 1997). According to the current study, teachers tried to improve the communicative ability and develop students' ability to interact and practice the language. They wanted to increase students' vocabulary and improve their pronunciation, thus enhancing students' ability to read. Some teachers used new vocabulary in the lessons to communicate with students until the new words were familiar to students as they read a text. Teachers encouraged their students to practice the new words by using them in complete sentences.

In this study, the data showed that CLT enables students to improve and enhance their ability to read (see section 4.2.1). This is supported by the findings from a study conducted by Rana (2014), which indicated that CLT enhances students' reading comprehension. Another study that supports CLT features in developing students' reading comprehension observed in this study was done by Irmawati (2012). Irmawati found that applying the communicative approach effectively improves students' reading ability. This was noted from the improvement of some aspects, such as reading ability, English vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and communication. The results from the current study thus support Irmawati's findings. Libyan teachers expressed that they benefit from implementing CLT in their classes. Gudepu (2013) asserted that communicative ability is strengthened by reading. Judicious implementation of teaching strategies is successful in guiding students to acquire sound communicative abilities. Gudepu's study further supports the current study in that CLT develops successful reading and guides students to obtain communicative abilities. This was clear from the high teachers' agreement with CLT features (see section 4.2.1) and the CLT capability to enhance and develop students' reading comprehension.

6.2.1.2 The opportunity to practice the language

The findings reported in chapter four revealed that Libyan teachers understand the ability of CLT to offer students opportunities to read. Dewey (1916) emphasized the importance of associating communication with interaction through language (see section 2.2). Teachers believe that CLT helps students to communicate through simple language interaction and provides students the opportunity to focus on the language. Littlewood (2007) explained that CLT introduced in EFL improves students' ability to

use English in real contexts. Libyan teachers realize that the communicative approach to language teaching focuses on the communicative practice of language in order to develop communicative language abilities. Features involve placing students at the center of the learning process to offer them the chance to make their own decisions and choices, develop their ability to read and achieve vocabulary that encourages them to practice the language and participate actively during lessons. CLT is intended to help students make sense of what they read.

Communicative language teaching methodology has the overarching features of focusing on real communication, providing learners with opportunities to try out and practice what they know (Richards, 2006). Emphasized on learning to communicate through practice and that interacting with the target language is one of the main CLT features, as it encourages interactive language learning via the process of real-life communication in a meaningful way (Gray and Klapper, 2009; Richards, 2006 as cited in Nunan, 1990). In the present study, it was observed that some teachers encourage their students to use new vocabulary in different sentences and communicate with each other using this vocabulary in the classroom. Teachers tried to engage students in real communication by practicing vocabulary.

The results of the current study reveal that Libyan teachers believe in the capability of CLT to improve students' ability to practice reading in English. Teachers explained that the main feature of CLT for students is making them the center of the learning process -- a state that enables students to participate during lessons and practice the language. Altaieb (2013) revealed that implementing CLT in teaching English to secondary school

students can improve students' ability to practice the language. The participants in the current study indicated that teachers hold a positive perception towards CLT in improving students' capability to practice reading lessons at the preparatory level. This result is similar to findings from previous studies conducted in a number of EFL countries, whereby the EFL teachers expressed positive perceptions towards CLT (Chung and Huang, 2009; Hawkey, 2006; Rao, 2001; Razmjoo and Riazi, 2006).

The current study indicates that teachers show an interest in CLT practices in class to help students interact actively and acceptably. They expressed that CLT activities such as pair work help students practice and develop their vocabulary and pronunciation. Libyan teachers confessed that practicing the language only in the classroom is not the main way to develop opportunities to achieve the language, but they must practice it outside the classroom as well. However, less language practice outside the classroom is one of the obstacles faced by teachers in developing students' reading comprehension level and English language as a whole. Ozesvik (2010) revealed that using the mother tongue outside and inside the class is one of their students' obstacles to mastering the English language.

6.2.1.3 Proficient teacher

The teacher has a significant role in the implementation of any approach to teaching and learning English. In this study, it was reported that Libyan teachers realize the importance of proficient teachers to teach reading comprehension (see section 4.2.1).

Teachers expressed positive views of the role of capable teachers in implementing CLT to teach reading comprehension. Teachers noticed and explained that they know about

CLT but do not have good knowledge of how to implement it to teach reading comprehension. Teachers recognize the lack of proficient teachers. They expressed they did not attend training programs, travel abroad or have contact with native speakers, so they confirmed low proficiency to teach reading through CLT. This finding is supported by Orafi and Borg (2009), who revealed that implementing CLT in Libyan schools requires proficient teachers with the ability to apply CLT in their classes.

In support of the current study results, Wang and Cheng (2005) expressed that if teachers do not understand the methods to be used and the aims to be accomplished, there will be problems and inevitably, failure. However, if teachers fully understand the method and they believe and are confident in applying it, success will follow. In this study, Libyan teachers expressed through their interview responses that they studied CLT as a teaching method but are not proficient enough to implement it in their classes. Several researchers (Li, 1998; Orafi and Borg, 2009; Yusef, 2014) have reported that proficient teachers is among the major sources of success of CLT implementation in the classroom. In the same vein, teachers in Libya expressed their concerns regarding their ability to implement CLT in secondary schools (Orafi and Borg, 2009). Khoi and Noriko (2012) stated that the success of CLT adaption into EFL classrooms depends on teachers' English proficiency level and teaching facilities available to apply CLT. Yusef (2014) studied and found that the Libyan education system lacks qualified teachers with the ability to teach English accurately. All past studies support the current study in that proficient teachers are one of the components of CLT success in teaching language.

The results from this study demonstrate that Libyan teachers agree with the necessity for proficient teachers to develop CLT implementation in classes (see section 4.2.1). To the researcher's understanding, the teachers' knowledge of CLT implementation to teach reading is limited and they are therefore unable to manage communicative classes. Libyan teachers' oral deficiency is another factor that prevents them from implementing CLT in their classes.

6.2.1.4 Facilitation

Facilitation means helping students understand a foreign language (English). Among most features that indicate teachers' knowledge and understanding, CLT is conceptualized as an approach whereby the teacher acts as a facilitator of students' learning. This concept reflects the holders' belief that focusing on students' learning process would enhance their motivation and promote their autonomy (Roger, 1969). In the current study, teachers expressed their understanding of the facilitation feature while at the same time maintaining their role as controller. This shows that the facilitative and knowledge transmitting roles carried by teachers are conceptualized by these teachers as being two complementary roles of language teachers rather than two separate roles. In the Libyan education system, English teachers regard themselves as the main source of knowledge, with everything having to be discussed in the classroom and no contribution needed from students. Phan (2004) stated that in implementing CLT, Vietnamese teachers need to be facilitators rather than controllers.

In this study, the teachers showed a positive understanding of this CLT feature. They agreed that the role of English language teachers must be as facilitators rather than

controllers during lessons (see section 4.2.2, 6.2.2.3). Libyan teachers seemed to understand the role of facilitation during real observation and the researcher found that teachers helped students to read and grasp the meanings of new vocabulary. However, analyzing the facilitators with reference to Rogers' 1969 model of a person-centered approach indicates that the holders of this conception seem to interpret CLT in their classrooms. As the implementation of this feature requires the existence of what Rogers (1983) described as a 'person-centered' approach (see section 2.2.1), these teachers would not be able to translate this feature into practice in the Libyan context, where the education system is centralized. At the same time, teachers are the main class leaders. Teachers discuss the lessons, and help students to understand and answer questions. Students may not answer or speak until their teachers facilitate the lesson and permit them to answer. Teachers have an effective role in all lesson discussions, while students have a passive role. Students in all classes observed were only listeners to the teachers' discussions. Teachers were dominant in the class, and their controlling and strong personality would not permit students to share ideas in any discussion. Shihiba (2011) supported the findings of the current study. He revealed that Libyan teachers in secondary schools are dominators and transmitters of knowledge to students, holding a stronger role than students. Students are thus passive and only listen to their teachers. Shihiba's (2011) results regarding secondary schools support the current study results on preparatory schools.

According to the triangulated results, teachers expressed that they attempt to adapt this notion in their classrooms by trying to give students a chance to share in the discussion. The researcher noticed that students' low level limited the role of the facilitator during

the teaching process. The word facilitator means shifting the role of the teacher from a controller to a facilitator in the teaching-learning process. Kasanda et al. (2005) recommended that to solve the problems of this shift of responsibilities and role of the teacher to a facilitator, teachers should be educated on the learner-centered approach. Brush and Saye (2000) gave an example of this situation, where a case study teacher faced some challenges in applying student-centered learning due to her lack of understanding of the facilitator role. Orafi and Borg (2009) also revealed a similar finding on the failure to implement English language learner-centered curriculum innovation by three Libyan EFL secondary school teachers. Although the conception of the role and duties of a facilitator by Rogers (1969) does not exclusively involve any traditional teacher duties, he did mention the possibility of considering facilitation and instruction as complementary approaches (Rogers, 1983) (see section 2.3.1).

The current study also supports past studies in that teachers are still affected by old methods such as the teacher-centered approach even when they attempt to implement CLT. The current study revealed that Libyan teachers are familiar with the notion of classroom controller, but the teacher-centered approach is predominant over the student-centered approach. Teachers remain convinced of the appropriateness of old methods to teach preparatory school students. The researcher discovered that teachers believe that the role of facilitator is better than that of controller, but the environment is one of the reasons Libyan teachers continue with the controller character and limit the facilitator role.

6.2.1.5 Motivation

Motivation means encouraging and supporting students to read and practice the language. Teachers' understanding of CLT is implied by their understanding of some democratic ideas in their conceptions of this approach. The teachers' association of this approach with notions of learner cooperative learning motivation and accounting for learners' needs and interests indicates their awareness of these relevant CLT features (see 2.3). Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010) regarded cooperative leaning as a vital learning strategy in learner centered approach. This might reflect their view of the importance of conducting the learning process with a sense of positive cooperation among all concerned in the learning process and the need for the provision of appropriate opportunities to promote democratic communication and interaction among these parts. The motivation feature is embodied in the notions of Dewey (1916) and Roger (1969).

According to the current study findings, Libyan teachers motivate their students to read texts and provide many activities that motivate them to learn the language (see section 4.2.5). It was noted in the real observation how teachers motivated their students; they encouraged them to participate and practice the language but students showed reluctance to participate. Thus, teachers still struggle with these problems in their class activities. Khoi and Noriko (2012) expressed that low learner motivation is one of the constraints in CLT implementation in the EFL context in Vietnam.

The link to the theoretical opinion asserted by Littlewood (1981) is that the communicative approach is a process of teaching and learning English that supports and

motivates learners of a foreign language actively. The questionnaire results of the current study showed that the respondents motivate and encourage their students to read and practice the language. In the real observation lessons, teachers encouraged their students to read and participate in the lessons. In all observed lessons, teachers cultivated student participation, especially the weakest students. They gave them the chance to read and pronounce, although not all the students could participate. The teachers being observed in the classroom stimulated students to participate, even in Arabic; however, teachers relied on Arabic to make students participate and be interested in the lesson. Yusef (2014) supports the current results in that Libyan teachers are obligated to translate to Arabic after ten minutes of class. Yusef expressed that it is due to the lack of students' English proficiency, which requires translation to make them understand and maintain interest in the lesson.

In the current study, one way of developing motivation during the observed lessons was to allow pair answers between students. Another way was to include the opportunity for students to discuss a topic in small groups before they were required to speak in front of the whole class. Not all teachers motivated their students to share and participate in English, but others did so in Arabic. Hossen (2008) asserted that not all teachers motivate their students to practice CLT activities and develop students' interaction in the target language.

The absence of student motivation and their reluctance to take part is considered a major challenge by teachers in implementing communicative activities as part of the curriculum in class. According to the teachers' interview responses, student reluctance

to take part in class may be due to two major reasons. One is their low level of English proficiency. Students feel shy when they are not able to come up with correct sentences and they are embarrassed to say something wrong in front of their peers. Another reason is that students believe that knowledge must come from teachers. Therefore, developing a supportive environment is highly suggested to aid students to avoid anxiety. By encouraging students to share in the classroom, they will become more brave and willing to participate in class activities. Providing learners, the chance to make mistakes and encouraging them with positive feedback have shown to be helpful in increasing class participation (Hung, 2009).

The findings of the current study demonstrate that teachers encourage students to read and participate, but their low proficiency levels prevent students from becoming effective. Thus, teachers resort to using Arabic. Students usually wait until the teacher completes the lesson with all explanations and details. They do not exchange knowledge or information in the classroom; instead, they listen and memorize the lesson so they may use the information again on exams. At the same time, it was discovered in this study that due to the lack of class time, teachers discuss in Arabic to complete the lessons and textbooks before year end.

6.2.1.6 Reading comprehension through CLT improve students' vocabulary

The results of this study revealed that Libyan teachers acknowledge the role of reading comprehension through CLT in developing students' vocabulary. Numerous studies demonstrate the strong relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension (Braze et al., 2007). Alverman, Phelps, and Ridgeway (2007) explained that much

research supports the correlation between reading and improved vocabulary. In the current study, Libyan teachers showed a positive understanding of the important role of CLT in reading to develop students' vocabulary, which was clear from their highly positive agreements. The current study results show that for Libyan teachers to facilitate understanding vocabulary they use two languages (native and target), read aloud, do exercises and implement reading activities that encourage students to practice the target language. One of the studies that support this result was done by Zamzam (2011), they found that reading develops and enriches Libyan students' vocabulary. Rana (2014) concluded that implementing CLT proved superior and more effective than GTM in enhancing students' reading comprehension skills.

6.2.1.7 Reading Comprehension through CLT Improve Students' Pronunciation

Accurate pronunciation is one of the aims of Libyan teachers in every lesson. All teachers observed seemed to focus on pronunciation, since they regard it as one means of achieving and practicing the language. Burgess and Spencer (2000) stated that what most language learners need is to learn how to pronounce the target language sounds. Hence, teachers must teach students correct English pronunciation by modeling English sounds correctly (Harmer, 2001). Orafi (2008) revealed that Libyan teachers still implement traditional methods and focus on accurate pronunciation.

According to the current study, Libyan teachers focus on reading out loud to help students become confident with new word pronunciation. Ninsuwan (2015) expressed that the development of students' ability in terms of reading comprehension is required both reading aloud technique and motivation, reading aloud leads students to focus on

accuracy, listen and try to understand speech on a daily basis, and helps enhance students' control of the English language. Therefore, teachers participating in this study explained that reading aloud is an interesting technique for developing students' pronunciation. Teachers believe that reading aloud is a means to correct pronunciation. Sayneko (N.D) revealed that reading can improve pronunciation and reading accuracy. Teachers observed in this study read the texts many times out loud to make students pronounce the words correctly. They also focused on students understanding the meanings.

6.2.2 Area of misconceptions

According to the questionnaire responses, observations and interviews, teachers apparently lack an understanding of CLT. Basically, teachers are confused about the meaning of this method. A grave misconception of CLT was clearly indicated in three items for this method in terms of 1) the greater efficiency of GTM over CLT to teach reading; 2) CLT neglecting teachers' role as a leader in the classroom; and 3. teachers' control over the classroom. This misunderstanding may relate to teachers' belief that applying this method would affect or lead to them lose authority or control over their classes. Therefore, they emphasized on the concept of the teacher as a class leader. However, CLT reading activities require students to participate and teachers have only the role to guide and facilitate. The current data indicates that these complications negatively affect CLT activity implementation. These features are explained in the following section.

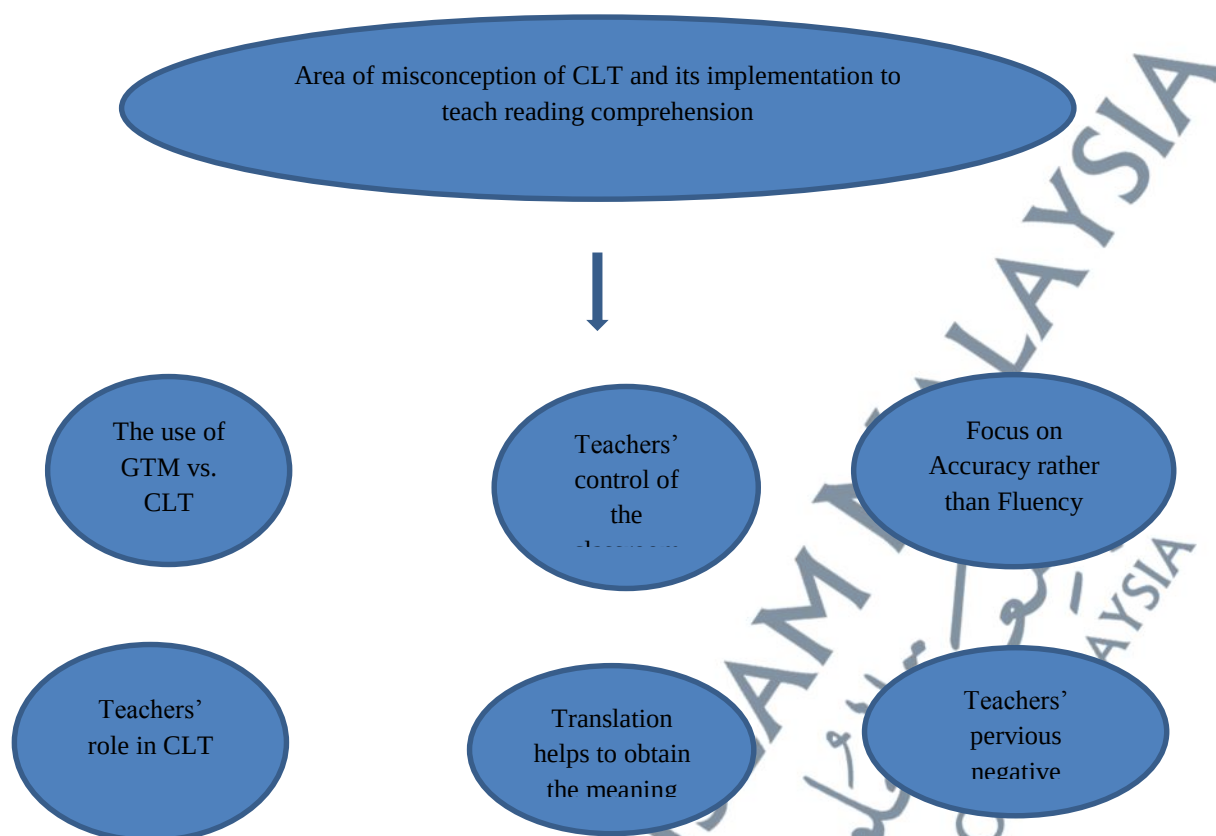


Figure 6.2 Area of misconception of CLT and its implementation.

6.2.2.1 The use of GTM vs. CLT

Grammar translation is one of the traditional methods of teaching English in Libyan schools. Although the school syllabus has shifted from conventional teaching methods toward more communicative teaching in many different EFL contexts, the majority of teachers mainly insist on using conventional methods in class (Karim, 2004). Rogers (1983) explained that the student-centered approach is in sharp contrast with conventional methods like the teacher-centered approach. According to the current study, teachers believe in the efficiency of GTM to teach reading comprehension. The dependence of Libyan teachers on conventional methods of teaching embodies

memorizing, translating and repeating. This reliance makes it harder to practice communicative activities and lessons actively.

One earlier study that supports the present study results was done by Gorsuch, 2000; Gamal and Debra, 2001. They asserted that the majority of the teachers who participated in their study were not willing to employ communicative activities. They favored a teaching method that is more conventional than the communicative teaching method (Gorsuch, 2000; Gamal and Debra, 2001). Therefore, Pusuluri (2012) concluded that teachers should follow learner-centered practices when teaching to enhance students' English language skills. In the current study, Libyan teachers expressed that they still implement the traditional method because they are used to teaching so for many years and it helps them teach reading comprehension. Furthermore, different studies report that teaching in EFL classrooms remains based on traditional approaches (Liao, 2000; Roa, 2002; Nunan, 2003; Littlewood, 2007).

Throughout all lessons observed in the current study, teachers were seen using GTM activities, such as implementing Arabic in reading lesson discussions. Some of the teachers encouraged their students to participate in English by giving the meanings of new words and asking students to put the new words in complete sentences. However, because the students had low English proficiency, teachers returned to using GTM to provide students with Arabic meanings. Saleh (2002) expressed that the language of instruction and presentation in class is English and/or Arabic and the most common forms of interaction were found during English classes. Local research on ELT indicates that Libyan EFL school teachers mostly use old approaches such as GTM with

considerable application of students' native language (Arabic) (Saleh, 2002; Ali, 2008; Aldabbus, 2008; Orafi and Borg, 2009).

This study revealed that Libyan teachers believe more in GTM to teach reading comprehension than in CLT, which is what prevents them from adapting and implementing CLT in their classrooms. Sawani (2009) identified a major factor that affects the implementation of the communicative approach in the Libyan teaching and learning context and makes it difficult to employ it properly. He considered Libyan English teachers' inclination to use silent methods such as the grammar translation method (GLM) as a major factor inhibiting them from successfully employing the communicative approach. Ellis (1996), Brown (1994) and Larsen-Freeman (2000) identified that teachers practicing traditional teacher-centered routines is the main problem in using CLT methodology.

The triangulated findings from this study signify that Libyan teachers' implementation of CLT is limited, because they still implement GTM. Teachers expressed that CLT does not let them translate into Arabic and requires more time. Moreover, teachers explained that GTM helps their students understand the meaning of the text and saves time to complete the lesson. Some teachers felt that they try to implement CLT to teach reading but many constraints make them turn to GTM, such as short time and low student proficiency levels in speaking or understanding English. Altaieb (2013) revealed that the low proficiency of students and limited class time are among the main obstacles to implementing CLT in Libyan schools.

6.2.2.2 Teachers' role in CLT

In the current study, some teachers expressed a positive view of implementing CLT to teach reading and mentioned that they try to implement it in their classrooms. Rogers's conception of the role and tasks of the facilitator does not explicitly include any traditional tasks for the teacher similar to those presented in the questionnaire statements in section B (number 1, item c) (see table 4.2.2), he pointed out the possibility of thinking of facilitation and instruction as complementary approaches (Rogers, 1983, p. 185.).

In contrast, this traditional role for the teacher was explicitly emphasized by Vygotsky (1978, p. 209) (see 3.3.4). The tendency of teachers to think about CLT and the teacher-centered approach as two complementary methods was reported in the findings of Schuh (2004), Nonkukethkong et al. (2006) and Wohlfarth et al. (2008). Teachers participating in the current study believe that through CLT, they should communicate with students and let students communicate with each other. Meanwhile, other teachers have a negative view of their role in CLT. This role is hard for Libyan teachers to accept, because usually in their culture teachers are deemed as the 'knowers' while students are supposed to respect and not challenge them. CLT alerts teachers in Libya to transfer their role as authority figures in the class to that of facilitators of communications (Carless, 1999). As a consequence, in the confusion with culture, it becomes difficult for '... teachers and students to accept any pedagogical practice that tends to put teachers in a par with their students and detracts from teacher authority" (Hu, 2002, p.99).

The teacher continues to teach what feels comfortable and what is culturally admissible (grammar translation and audio-lingual methods), as these methods allow teachers to have full authority over the class and what is being taught and learned (Hu, 2002, p.100). According to the findings in chapter four, teachers interviewed expressed that they cannot leave their role as the main figure and knowledge transmitter. They feel they are used to being the most important part of the class and their students are meant to just receive knowledge. The researcher believes that the teacher role is a state that belongs to the Libyan teachers culturally. Shihiba's (2011) findings are in agreement with this study. He explained that Libyan teachers regard their role as a cultural component.

The Libyan cultural context is one of the things that help teachers be controllers more than facilitators, as Libyan society obligates teachers to implement the teacher-centered approach more than CLT. Libyan teachers appear to feel proud of having control over students. The traditional Confucian education and beliefs in the efficiency of the principal teacher role have made it challenging for teachers and students to embrace and successfully practice CLT.

6.2.2.3 Teachers' control of the classroom during implementation of CLT

According to the results in chapter four, Libyan teachers are strongly attached to having control over their classes, even when implementing CLT in their lessons. The authoritarian perspective of teachers might lead them to resist or reject any proposals for restructuring authority or relationships in classrooms, which represent two major principles of CLT (Rodgers, 1969). They cannot abandon control as they consider it as part of their personality as English language teachers. Theoretically, the active role of

students in CLT in class would most likely give them the opportunity to become more interactive and less quiet or orderly compared to teacher-centered settings. For instance, students may be louder than their teachers during group work activities or group discussions in learner-centered classes (Ellis, 2003).

EFL teachers should fully comprehend that hearing desirable sounds during classes using CLT is quite common and they should tolerate such noise as it is beneficial in encouraging active student participation. However, teachers should be able to differentiate sound between “foreshadowed disciplinary problems and the ones which indicated high levels of involvement” (Carless, 2004, p.643).

In the current study, teachers expressed a negative view of this theoretical side, as they like to discuss lessons with silent students and believe in being masters over their students during reading lessons. This is one of the necessities for teacher personality. The Libyan teachers observed showed they did not let students take part in the lesson discussions. This may be related to their belief that teachers should have complete authority and control over their classrooms, otherwise disciplinary problems or disruptive behaviors of students may not be managed or prevented.

Libyan teachers encourage their students to participate if they do not make noise or raise their voices. It is clear that Libyan teachers misunderstand CLT. They prefer to implement CLT and for students to practice the language, but under the teachers' conditions. Shihiba's (2011) findings support this notion that Libyan teachers misunderstand CLT implementation in classes. Freire (1998, p. 63) emphasized that

“there are moments in which the teacher, as authority, talks to the learners, says what must be done, establishes limits without which the freedom of learners is lost in lawlessness.” This indicates that facilitators can fix certain limits and regulations to control the acts and behaviors of students so the classes will be well-disciplined. However, teachers enforcing these regulations or limits may transform classrooms into a CLT setting.

6.2.2.4 Translation helps to obtain meaning

The traditional perspective on reading assumes that the meaning resides in the text for comprehension, and not in the reader doing the comprehending. In this study, teachers agreed on the role of reading to achieve meaning. In the observed lessons, teachers were encouraging students to provide word meanings. They helped students predict meanings in English, but due to students' low proficiency, not all could grasp the meanings. Libyan teachers focus on the importance of meaning. They provide students the meaning of every word mentioned in class or found in the texts. It is clear in this research that Libyan teachers help students to achieve meanings in the target language, but the difficulty with students' low proficiency limits their implementation of CLT to teach reading. Many studies have proved that Libyan teachers focus on giving their students word meanings (Orafi, 2009; Shihiba, 2011).

Libyan teachers depend on translation to Arabic as one of the main activities in every lesson, which restricts their implementation of CLT to teach reading. This was also confirmed by Turan (2015), who found that the mother tongue is a vital part in language teaching. Students feel they would be unable to understand the target language input

until it has been translated into their L1 (by giving examples and extra explaining to the difficult concepts or ideas). This is supported by Tumbull (2011), who argued that the use of L1 can facilitate the process of teaching vocabulary but cautioned against teachers relying on it too much. Yusef (2012) revealed that Libyan teachers use Arabic in class. The current study results concur that reliance on translating into Arabic is one of the obstacles that limit Libyan teachers' implementation of CLT in class.

6.2.2.5 Focus on accuracy rather than fluency

The main focus of the communicative language teaching method is to help students learn a language so they can use it to communicate meaningfully in any real-life situation. CLT is intended to involve students in real or realistic communication through different activities. In this case, the accuracy of the target language is less important than the successful achievement of communicative tasks (Harmer, 2001). In CLT, language is regarded as a system for expressing meaning, with the main function of language being to permit interaction and communication (Richard, 2001). In addition, the development of fluency is another CLT feature that must be taken into account in language classes. In current study, the results revealed that teachers focus on accuracy rather than fluency (see section 4.2.3).

According to Richard, (2006, p.4), fluency is described as “natural language use occurring when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintains comprehensible and ongoing communication despite limitations in his or her communicative competence.” On the other hand, accuracy emphasizes the creation of grammatically correct sentences that can be produced out of context and without

meaningful communication. Abdallah (2011) explained that Turkish teachers agree that accuracy and fluency complement each other. According to Matsuura (2001), Japanese university students prefer a traditional style of ELT pedagogy, such as focusing on accuracy rather than fluency.

6.2.2.6 Implication of teachers' previous negative experience

A shift from one approach in which teachers act as information givers with full control and authority over the classroom to facilitators of students' learning requires a transitional period, during which the changes implied can be thoroughly explained to the teachers (Dewey, 1916; Rogers, 1969; Freire, 1972). According to Borg's (2003) research, teachers' cognition, including knowledge, participation and way of thinking, has a pivotal role in their teaching career. It is the impact of how teachers learnt themselves that may be reflected in their teaching-learning process. Libyan teachers' knowledge is affected by their experience (see section, 2.9.4.2).

According to past studies, Libyan teachers do not have good knowledge to teach with CLT. They did not receive any training programs to teach with CLT, although they studied CLT in university as they mentioned in the interview. This fact is supported by Ariogul's (2007) argument that background knowledge affects language teachers' practical knowledge and classroom practice. The teachers' lack of knowledge or understanding of CLT could be related to their lack of sufficient training. In Libya, experienced teachers are used to implementing TCA (Saleh, 2002; Al-dabbus, 2008; Orafi and Borg, 2009), which implies different principles and practices from CLT. As the features of old methods could have been firmly internalized in the minds of teachers,

it is difficult for them to shift their conceptions and practices to a learner-centered approach without being exposed to systematic and longer training on this philosophy.

In the observed classes, teachers appeared to lack knowledge and techniques needed to convey certain activities and information to their students. They additionally lack both the awareness and confidence on how to deal with some of the activities, so they ignore them. More significantly, they are not sufficiently familiar with CLT to teach reading comprehension. As a result, if teachers had sufficient knowledge about CLT in teaching reading and CLT implementation, it would demonstrate that they derived this knowledge from different sources, such as previous language learning experience and language teaching experience.

There is further evidence of a relation between teachers' knowledge and experience, and implementing CLT to teach reading. Teachers are affected by their experience with previous teachers, whose knowledge and teaching practices the new teachers follow. This type of relationship between teachers' knowledge and their experience emerged in the current study as teachers were observed in class. Some did not use English to explain new words, although in the interview, teachers stated they know about the effectiveness of using English.

These teachers provided several justifications (see section 4.2.5). Some teachers are opposed to using two languages (Arabic and English) altogether, while others support using Arabic, but only in certain situations. The latter is justified because, for example, students sometimes cannot understand the meaning of new words and vocabulary if

Arabic is not used. This is plausible, because students might lose track and not be able to follow their teachers' lessons if they do not know the meanings of certain words. Shihiba (2011) explained that Libyan teachers are affected by their past knowledge and experience in how they teach English in Libyan secondary schools. In the current study, the researcher found that although Libyan teachers seemed to understand the importance of implementing CLT, it is not enough for successful implementation. Teachers' perception of teaching reading comprehension through CLT is not sufficient to perform it in actual class practice. The distance between what teachers identify and what they apply is vast, and the discrepancy between teachers' perception and actual practice is unique. Many EFL classroom studies, such as studies conducted by Chuang and Huang (2009), Deckert (2004), Rao (2002), and Sato (2002) have shown that teachers who profess a commitment can adhere to CLT more easily. It is clear that perception itself cannot guarantee that CLT implementation will run smoothly in actual practice.

Identifying teachers' view towards the major difficulties that Libyan teachers face in implementing CLT to teach reading comprehension was one of the present study aims. Teachers' views were investigated by analyzing the difficulties with implementing CLT, which emerged from the data obtained on the questionnaire items. These difficulties were analyzed interactively by examining these teachers' views of the major difficulties related to implementing this approach, as implied in their questionnaire responses, observation and interview responses. Observation also served to determine and analyze the major difficulties in implementing CLT in the classroom. This investigation revealed that some of the difficulties with CLT seem to be of major concern to teachers.

6.3 Difficulties in CLT Implementation to teach reading comprehension

The major difficulties that were identified from the questionnaire and supported by the observation and interview indicate they are related to teachers, difficulties faced by students. Also a mismatch in the curriculum, lack of support in the educational system, difficulties with CLT implementation. The difficulties will be discussed in the following sub-sections in relation to their causes.

6.3.1 Difficulties faced by the teachers

The main aim of this study was to identify the major difficulties that Libyan teachers face in implementing CLT to teach reading comprehension as shows in table 6.3.

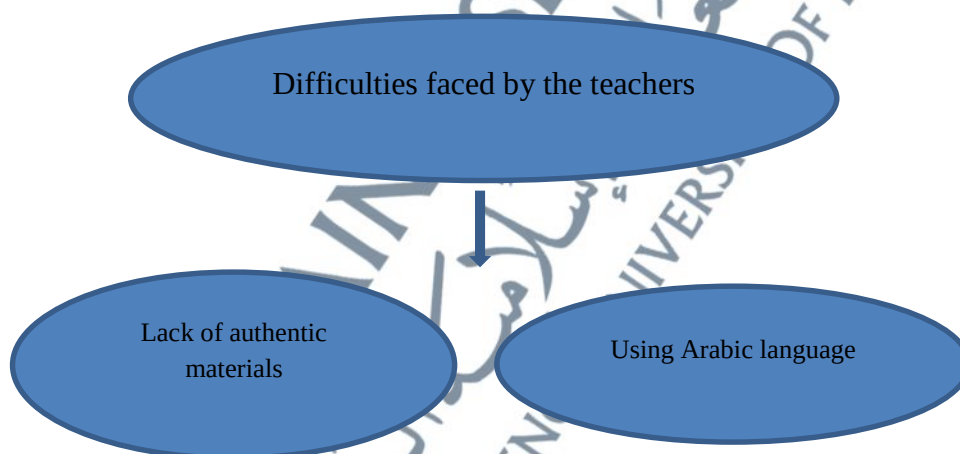


Figure 6.3 Difficulties faced by the teachers

6.3.1.1 Lack of authentic materials

The findings indicate that teachers have few opportunities to use authentic materials, which is one of their difficulties in implementing CLT. During the interview, teachers explained that they must follow the curriculum from the ministry and they cannot use

any other materials besides the textbook. Prescribing textbooks for teachers and students does not provide an appropriate environment for implementing CLT (Rogers' theoretical opinion, 1969) nor offers any flexibility for teachers to develop learning activities or to select appropriate and meaningful materials to account for students' different needs and interests. Rogers' (1969) theoretical opinion is not in line with the Libyan education system.

One of the teachers discussed that authentic materials are refused by the environment, such as the head master, classmates and parents. They think that textbooks are enough for the students. Another teacher complained about the deficiency of authentic resources to create a communicative classroom. He acknowledged that working in preparatory school places teachers at a disadvantage in terms of access to extra resources. Moreover, he explained that teachers have course books with listed activities but do not contain the respective CDs. The school's infrastructure is very bad. There are no LCD projectors, books, DVDs, or such equipment. Nor is there access to any authentic magazines. Teachers even have to pay from their own pocket when they need to make copies for their students.

Ozesvik (2010) agreed with the fact that a lack of authentic materials is one of the barriers preventing the implementation of CLT in Turkey. The failure to use authentic materials is probably attributed to teachers' overdependence on textbooks (Sreeharil, 2012). The present study findings revealed that teachers depend on textbooks as the main source of knowledge and information. During the observed lessons, teachers relied only on textbooks to discuss the lessons. It is clear that Libyan teachers lack authentic

materials and there is no evidence that they use any extra materials that would help create a communicative class.

6.3.1 .2 Using Arabic language

The questionnaire data revealed that Libyan teachers agree that using Arabic in class is one of their major difficulties. The interview participants explained they were worried that one of the difficulties they face in developing English in Libya is the use of Arabic in class. Several past studies agree on this. For instance, Saleh (2002) expressed that depending on Arabic in the classroom is among the problems that hinder English teaching in the Libyan education system for many years. During the interview, one of the teachers explained that teachers' low oral proficiency is a factor in their need to use Arabic in class.

The fact that subjects at university are in Arabic seems to be an influential factor for the teachers' undeveloped speaking and listening skills. This may affect the preparation of student teachers in two ways. First, it can limit the time of exposure to English in class. Second, on account of English examinations, student teachers tend to direct more attention to memorizing content rather than investing effort to develop their communication skills independently (Shihiba, 2011).

Larsen-freeman (2000, p.101-102) explained that “the native language of the students is used in the classroom in order to enhance the security of students, to provide a bridge from the familiar to unfamiliar and to make the meanings of the target language clearly”.

Another reason for using Arabic during lessons is the students' low proficiency.

Teachers observed conducting classes discussed in English first, then repeated by translating the discussion in Arabic to make their students understand the lesson ideas and new words. The researcher perceives that this difficulty has been a big problem for many years and it limits Libyan teachers and students from developing English and adapting CLT successfully. It would thus be possible to provide teachers with up-to-date publications and establish well-equipped libraries and language centers in schools. This would offer teachers the opportunity to utilize a variety of facilities to develop their own proficiency levels.

Teachers' low level is an internal constrain that affects the teaching and learning process (Surafel, 2000). Teachers expressed positive views of the role of capable teachers in implementing CLT to teach reading comprehension. Wang and Cheng (2005) stated that if teachers do not know and understand the methods to be used and their aims, problems will arise and inevitably, failure. However, if teachers fully understand the method and are confident in applying it, success will follow. The current study results revealed that teachers' lack of knowledge on implementing CLT to teach reading is one of the difficulties that limits the successful implementation of CLT.

In the current study, teachers expressed that in university they studied CLT as a new method of teaching English. However, they did not study how to implement CLT in reading comprehension. Teachers expressed that following their graduation, they did not have good knowledge of how to practice CLT in real situation. Shihiba (2011) concurred that Libyan teachers studied CLT in general but not how to practice it in the classroom. In the current study, it was noted there is no relationship between what the

teachers studied on CLT in university and the school textbooks. As one of the effects of not learning about CLT, teachers have poor knowledge of how to practice it during reading lessons. During the observed classes, teachers seemed to be unable to manage CLT activities in reading lessons, so they avoided them. Orafi (2008) also revealed that teachers do not have good knowledge of implementing some CLT activities in the classroom.

The current findings revealed that the effect of GTM limits the implementation of CLT (see section 6.2.2.1). Furthermore, different studies report that teaching in EFL classrooms is still based on traditional approaches (Liao, 2000; Roa, 2002; Nunan, 2003; Littlewood, 2007). Teachers interviewed expressed that the effect of the old method limits their implementation of CLT in their classes. Sawani (2009) identified a major factor that affects the implementation of the communicative approach in the Libyan teaching and learning context and makes it difficult to employ properly. Sawani's (2009) study differs from the current study in that Sawani's study concerned secondary school students whereas the current study concerns preparatory schools.

Another influence of teachers' not having learned about CLT is that teachers resist sharing the lesson discussions with their students. Teachers cannot let go of control and consider it as part of their personality as English language teachers. This difficulty limit teachers and students in adapting CLT in their classes. All local studies (Saleh, 2002; Orafi, 2008; Shihiba, 2011) support these results, in that Libyan teachers do not allow students to share in the lesson discussion (see sections 4.2.2, 6.2.2.3, and 6.2.2.4).

6.3.2. Difficulties faced by the students

The results of the current study demonstrate that students are the second greatest difficulty with CLT implementation in reading comprehension. Teachers believe that students have difficulties such as low English proficiency, explaining the main ideas, and resisting to participate in communicative activities as shows in Figure 6.4.

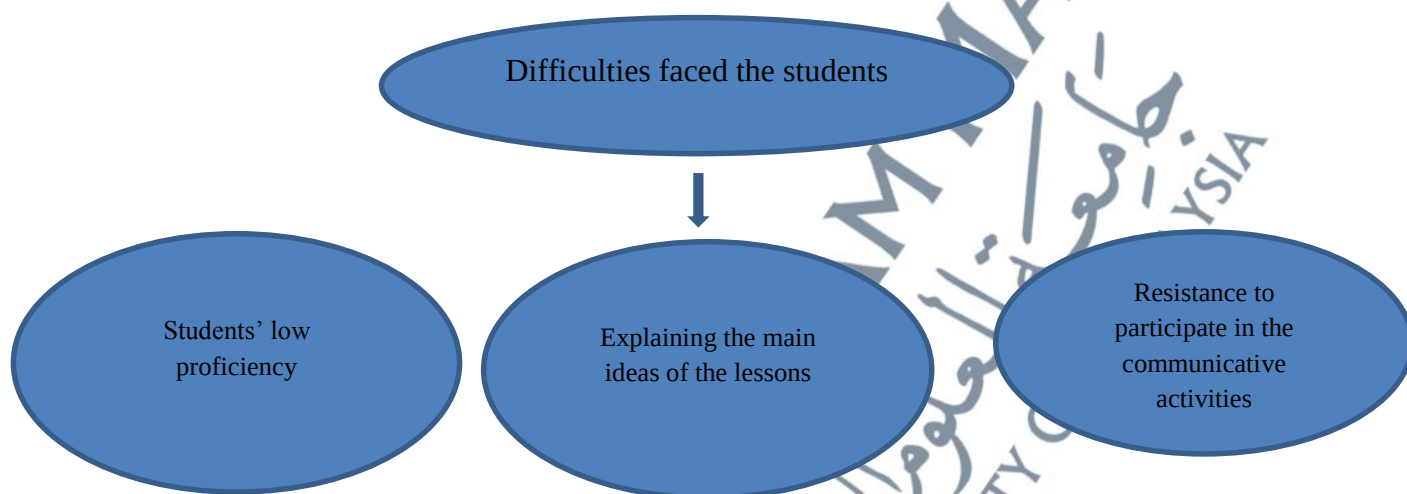


Figure 6.4 Difficulties faced the students

6.3.2.1 Students' low proficiency

CLT emphasizes that students are the core of the learning process and they should participate and be involved in making decisions about all matters related to learning. To realize this aim, students must be perceived as active participants in the learning process and teachers as facilitators of student learning (Weimer, 2002). The questionnaire data demonstrated that students' low English proficiency is one of the principal obstacles preventing teachers from using CLT to teach reading. During the interview, teachers expressed that the latest modifications to the English curriculum are still not sufficient for students to improve their level of language proficiency to be able to read and practice

the language. Teachers also reported that due to the limited hours of instruction per week, students' progress is too slow. The interviewees expressed that students have low proficiency levels because the Libyan society does not encourage language practice (see section 4.3.2).

The teachers often believe that students' low proficiency levels and lack of interest in participating in communication activities are major challenges encountered in their implementation of ELT communicative approaches (Shihiba (2011) reported that students' English deficiency and limited command of English structure creates difficulty for students to carry out communicative tasks, which ultimately leads to frustration on the part of the students. Orafi and Borg (2009) reported that English language teachers could not implement communicative practices of the new English curriculum owing to the students' low English levels, which obstruct their participation in classroom activities. Students' lack of English vocabulary also seems to lead to unwillingness to work in pairs or groups. As Orafi and Borg (2009, p. 249) noted one teacher's comment, "students are very weak in English ... How could these students do the speaking activities when they do not have vocabulary in English? I have to do these activities by myself."

It appears that Libyan students are used to learning with the teacher-centered approach and this experience may also accumulate from other school subject classes that are taught using the same approach. Students' past learning experiences with the teacher-centered approach could affect their way of learning with the new method (Rogers' theory, 1983). It is important to adapt CLT in all Libyan preparatory school subjects,

because exposing students to only one approach could be another reason for their lack of interest in participating in communication teaching style classes. Consistency in the instructional approaches used by all teachers of subjects at Libyan preparatory schools seems to be a necessary condition for the successful implementation of CLT. Therefore, investigating the instruction approaches applied by teachers of other subjects in Libyan preparatory schools might yield significant insight related to CLT implementation in teaching reading comprehension.

6.3.2.2 Explaining the main ideas of the lesson

As a result of students' low proficiency, they have problems explaining the main reading lesson ideas, as observed in this study. They are used to obtaining the main ideas from their teachers and not needing to work with their minds. In the observed classes, students remained silent until the teachers discussed in Arabic, after which they understood and began to share and participate. Teachers consider this an impediment to implementing CLT in reading lessons (see 4.2.2.). Rogers (1969) explained that the role of teacher involves setting the stage of inquiry, creating appropriate conditions for students' cooperative learning and providing them with support and assistance. One of the teachers explained that they encourage their students but they have a low English background, so students do not understand what they read and cannot explain the main ideas without help from their teachers. The questionnaire data demonstrated that teachers agree their students cannot understand what they read. During the observed lessons, students depended on their teachers to read and explain every word in Arabic.

Another challenge students have is bad pronunciation. In the observed lessons, teachers repeated the difficult words many times but students still had difficulties with pronunciation. All teachers agree that this problem is caused by the lack of language practice inside and outside the classroom. Teachers explained that this consequently hinders vocabulary learning and students' progress in the language. As a result of their poor pronunciation, students observed changed the difficult English words into Arabic words. The translation of vocabulary from one language to another is thus another problem that Libyan teachers encounter in implementing CLT in their classrooms. Asker (2014) reported that Libyan students change English vocabulary into Arabic words as a means of memorizing new vocabulary. During the lessons observed in the present study, some teachers encouraged their students to write vocabulary in Arabic. They expressed that they wish to help students recite and memorize new vocabulary.

6.3.2.3 Resistance to participate in the communicative activities

Students' resistance to participate in communicative class activities is reportedly another significant limitation to utilizing CLT in English classes in Libya. During the interview, teachers expressed that students' reluctance to engage in communicative class activities emerged as a serious challenge in their attempts to apply CLT to teach reading comprehension. Zekariya (2010) reported that resistance to participate is one of the biggest challenges in implementing CLT in Turkish schools.

The interviews in the current study demonstrated that the principal reason why students show such resistance against communicative classroom activities is the pressure they feel from the grammar-based entrance examinations. Libyan students learn and

memorize only to pass exams (see section 4.2.4). Teachers mentioned that students are so focused on preparing for the exams because they realize they would not be tested on communicative language skills, that they resist taking part in such communicative class activities. Shihiba (2011) supported the findings of this study in that Libyan students read only to pass exams and not to achieve the language. In classes where CLT is implemented, students must perform many challenging tasks and undertake several responsibilities different from those they are used to in teacher-centered and old method based classes.

In the current study, the questionnaire data demonstrated that Libyan students are not familiar with new teaching methods. The interviewees explained that Libyan students are used to being taught with old methods that focus on memorization and repetition, so it is hard for them to participate in CLT activities that focus on communication and language practice. Students are familiar with teacher-centered approaches, where the main duty of students is to memorize what teachers tell them in class. Nonetheless, students' lack of these qualities or skills also makes the role of the facilitator more complex and demanding. Teachers attribute two other reasons for students' resistance to participate in CLT activities: students' low English proficiency and students' belief that knowledge must be transferred to them from their teachers.

The new CLT curriculum requires student participation while teachers should only guide and facilitate. The current findings indicate that these problems impact curriculum implementation negatively. According to the theoretical opinion to Rogers (1969) and Freire (1972) they emphasized the importance of presenting students the chance for

constructing new knowledge and appropriate meanings from authentic experiences in challenging situations. Building a supportive environment is highly recommended as a way to help students avoid anxiety and thus become less fearful and more willing to participate in class. Giving students opportunities to make erroneous statements and giving positive feedback are proven helpful in encouraging class participation (Hung, 2009). The authoritarian relationship between teachers and students also affects student participation in the classroom. In the case of Libya, students believe that the teacher is the center of the learning process, and everything must be done through the teacher. The respondents in this study perceived students' resistance to participate as a major challenge in implementing communicative activities in the classroom.

6.3.3 A mismatch in the curriculum

The main aim of this study was to identify the major difficulties in implementing CLT to teach reading comprehension. The curriculum is one of the difficulties that Libyan teachers encounter in CLT implementation.

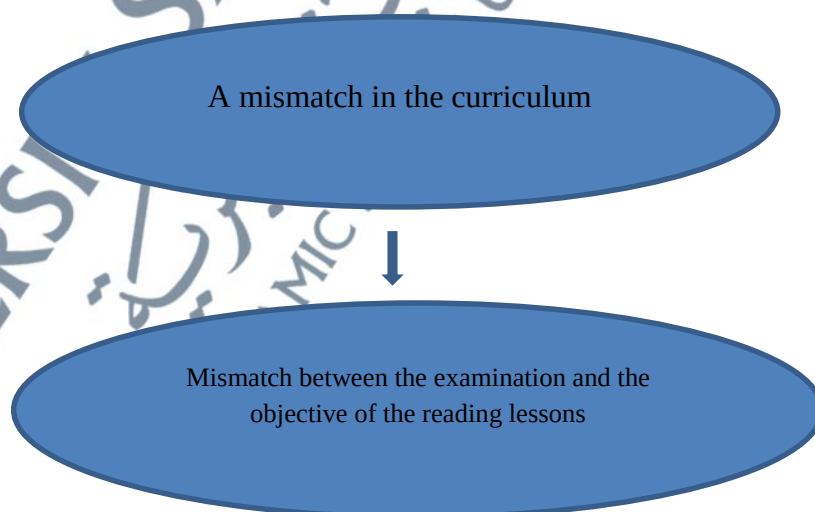


Figure 6.5 A mismatch in the curriculum

6.3.3.1 Mismatch between the examination and the objective of the reading lessons.

Implementing teaching approaches developed for other contexts requires a thorough examination of their suitability for local application contexts (Freire, 1998, p.98). Libyan EFL teachers' accountability for examinations is another major obstacle in the successful implementation of CLT in Libyan preparatory schools. This is due to the significant impact of examination results on students' further education as well as on the teachers' careers. The teachers agreed that this point influences their implementation of CLT in their classes.

During the interview, teachers criticized the examination style of focusing on testing students' memorization of grammar structures and language forms with very little attention to measuring students' communication abilities in addition to vocabulary. In the education system, examinations are a source of tension and pressure for both teachers and students, because their success is often judged in accordance with the results of these examinations. Therefore, much of the teachers' attention and effort is directed to achieving this goal. One of the teachers explained there is a mismatch between what they teach in class and the examination. In class, focus is on reading activities and language practice but examinations stress on grammar structures, which leads students to learn grammar forms rather than practice in communicative language activities. Consequently, the teachers' attention is shifted to teaching the content of these examinations. Similar results were reported by Orafi and Borg (2009) in Libya and Al-Nouh (2008) in Kuwait. Altaieb (2014) revealed that the textbook is not relevant to the Libyan students' level and culture. Memari (2013) also concluded that grammar-

based examinations are one of the challenges of implementing CLT in the Iranian context.

Teachers expressed that the long textbooks and short time allocated in the year presented a difficulty. According to Altaieb (2014), the syllabus is one of the obstacles that teachers face when implementing CLT in their classes. Furthermore, means of evaluating students in reading comprehension is yet another difficulty for Libyan teachers who implement CLT. In this work, teachers explained that they evaluate students as they pronounce and read aloud, as they did not have any other appropriate way of evaluation. Mitigating all these difficulties together could contribute to converting Libyan schools to an appropriate context for implementing CLT in teaching reading comprehension.

6.3.4 Lack of support in the educational system

The results from the current study revealed that the education system poses a major difficulty for Libyan preparatory school teachers in implementing CLT to teach reading comprehension. Teachers believe that problems with limited resources and facilities, administration supported, insufficient training, large classes, limited time and unqualified teachers are the major impediments in using CLT in Libyan preparatory schools.

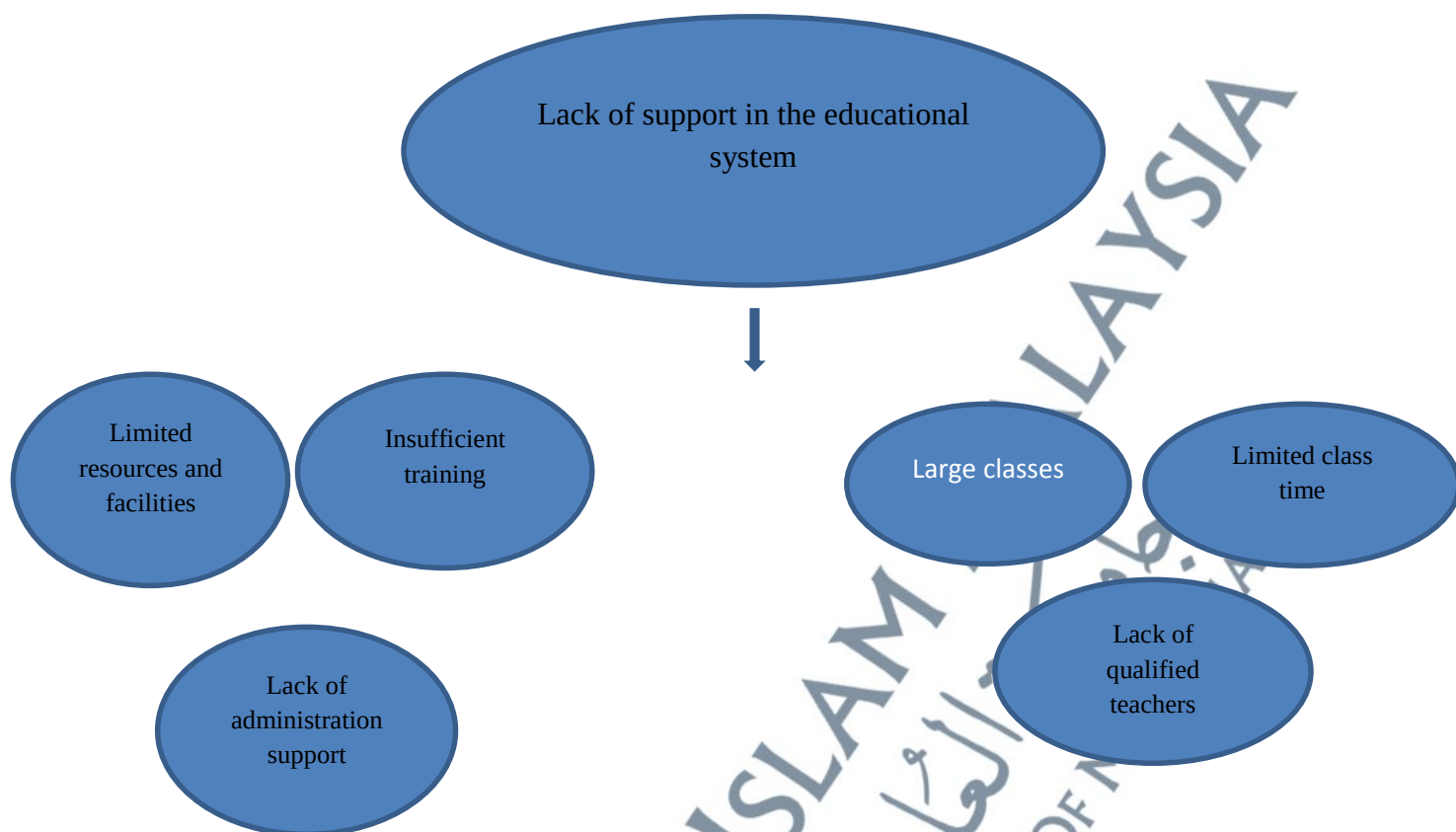


Figure 6.6 Lack of support in the educational system

6.3.4.1 Limited resources and facilities

Providing schools with teaching facilities and learning resources to help teachers implement new methods and encourage independent student learning is a significant factor for promoting the successful implementation of CLT. Rogers (1983, p.141) suggested that in many educational settings “it is not necessary to teach some students, but they do need resources to feed their interest.” The findings of this study present high agreement between teachers on the lack of resources to help them facilitate the teaching process. Libyan teachers suffer from a shortage of resources for reading lessons, such as labs and short stories. The proper implementation of such activities requires classrooms designed in a way that facilitates teacher management of pair and group

work and provides students with self-access to learning materials (Brown, 2001). Therefore, teachers should not have to consider the poor classroom conditions as an excuse for not adapting CLT in instruction. The researchers explained that implementing CLT requires adequate materials, as a lot of communicative activities are involved. Unfortunately, the findings of the present study revealed that most classrooms at the preparatory education level do not have the necessary equipment for sound implementation of CLT: there are no audio-visual materials or any other ready-made tools for speech assessment, nor language laboratories in Libyan preparatory schools. In this situation, teachers should convey their special knowledge and experience to the students clearly and spend the majority of the preparation time making resources available to students.

6.3.4.2 Lack of administration support

The current findings revealed that support from administrators is crucial for an effective implementation process. The data from this study indicates there is a lack of administration support. Teachers require support and encouragement from their administration, but in the Libyan context the circumstance is the opposite. Such support is also presented in literature as an important factor. For example, Altrichter (2005, p. 44) stated that “without support of regional administrators change might happen with individual teachers or single schools but it would most likely remain isolated in some innovative pockets without affecting the broader system.” In the present study interview, teachers explained that one of their major difficulties with implementing CLT in their classes is the administration. The administration requests teachers to speak

in Arabic to help students understand the language; meanwhile, the administration blames teachers if student English scores are low, due to English discussions.

The data also indicates that comprehensive support from administrators is important as it assists teachers to achieve the goals of implementing the new methods. Nonetheless, the close follow-up by administrators should not be discouraging to teachers. Namely, teachers need to be supported in ways that help them implement the new methods effectively and with high quality, and not by putting pressure on them to finish the curriculum within the time allocated regardless of the outcomes. These concerns came up in interviewees' comments and responses to the questions related to difficulties encountered while teaching reading using CLT. The participating teachers were worried that administrators pressured them to focus on the aspect of curriculum quantity and not quality. Most interview respondents confirmed the claim that administration support is necessary to help teachers through the implementation process, whereby if teachers obtain active and positive support in curriculum implementation, the results usually tend to be positive. This point is validated by Altaieb (2013), who revealed that the lack of administration support is one of the barriers to implementing CLT in Libyan secondary schools.

6.3.4.3 Insufficient training

The lack of training programs is perceived as a difficulty in implementing CLT in classrooms as well. The findings of the current study show that teachers are concerned with their professional development. Training teachers for implementing educational innovation is a necessary condition for enhancing their success. Training develops

teachers' understanding of the theoretical and practical assumptions of innovation (Kirkgoz, 2008). New curriculum requires competent teachers (Sawani, 2009) (see section, 2.4.9.1). Most teachers interviewed in the current study believe that their own level of academic knowledge has not been enhanced in the way it should have been if they are required to prepare lessons for the CLT curriculum. Cheung and Wong (2012, p.51) claimed that "teachers should be provided with sufficient professional development training in various ways, especially in critical thinking skills training, learner diversity, and inclusive educations." It is noted from the teachers' responses in the interviews as well as from the questionnaire that teachers lack the appropriate professional development that would enhance their knowledge and help them to implement the curriculum effectively. As indicated by one interviewee, professional development is crucial because it is a facilitating factor to the implementation process. Rogers (1983) believed that institutions undertaking the task of pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes should play a significant role in this process.

According to the present research, teachers' lack of knowledge or understanding of CLT may be related to their lack of sufficient training. In Libya, teachers are used to applying old methods (Saleh, 2002; Al-dabbus, 2008; Orafi and Borg, 2009), which imply different principles and practices of those related to CLT. As the principles of old methods have been firmly internalized in the minds of teachers, it is difficult for them to shift their conceptions and practices toward a learner-centered without exposure to systematic and longer training on this philosophy. The positive views of the majority of teachers on CLT and its appropriateness for teaching reading comprehension in Libyan

preparatory schools might enhance the success of training programs. However, it is important to conduct training on the CLT approach to instruction.

6.3.4.5 Large classes

Yet another problem teachers are facing as a barrier to CLT implementation is class size. In the current study, class size was reportedly one of the biggest problems for teachers implementing CLT in their classes. Dewey's theory (1916) expressed that large numbers of students in classrooms lead teachers to depend on methods like recitation and memorization. The average number of students in a class for teachers who participated in this study seems to be too large to lead; hence, teachers depend on recitation and memorization to avoid implementing communicative activities. The average class size in the schools visited for this study was 38-40 students, and the time allocated for an English class was 45 minutes, 4 times a week. Teachers consider this factor as a serious impediment to their implementation of reading activities in class.

Communicative activities in reading lessons take time and students need to participate. Teachers engaged in such classes expressed their concerns about the difficulty to teach the curriculum to large classes. Moreover, large classes with mixed English learning abilities make effective teaching of the new curriculum hard to achieve. The findings of the current study show that most interviewees expressed a concern about the difficulties of practicing communicative activities in reading lessons with large classes. Their concern stems from the fact that it is unfeasible to have all students participate in such activities. Moreover, it is difficult to monitor and manage large classes when teaching communicative lessons and activities. It is time consuming and labor intensive. The

teachers participating in the current study exhibited concern about class size and its negative impact on their classroom practice. One of the observed teachers stated that he taught reading lessons to a large class. He could not implement the reading activities that are part of the lesson, so he drops some. It is thus very hard to implement CLT reading successfully. Altaieb (2013) and Shihiba (2011) support the fact that many students is one of the factors that prompt teachers to abandon CLT in class.

6.3.4.6 Limited class time

The limited reading class time is another difficulty for teachers implementing reading comprehension through CLT. In the current study, teachers' views of this difficulty were positive. They expressed that the goals of CLT are communication and getting students to practice the language; however, achieving these goals in a classroom full of students is implausible, given the fact that teachers have only 45 minutes allocated for each class. The researcher observed that teachers could not let students participate in the lesson discussion and not even in the activities. The detrimental effect of limited class time is that teachers discuss in Arabic so that students will understand quickly and go to the next lesson. Other teachers drop some activities because they require extra time and teachers must catch the time to cover the curriculum within the allocated timeframe.

The triangulated data signifies that teachers feel they have to develop extra materials and design their own activities in order to use CLT in their classrooms, but they lack the time for developing such materials for communicative lessons, which in turn becomes a constraint for using CLT. Ozsevik (2010) revealed that lack of time is a major problem in implementing CLT in Turkish classes.

6.3.4.7 Lack of Qualified Teachers

The findings of the current study reveal that teachers provided positive views in the questionnaire regarding their understanding of the lack of qualified teachers to teach with CLT. A shift from one approach in which the teacher acts as an information-giver with full control and authority over the classroom to a facilitator of student learning requires a transitional period during which the changes implied in this process could be thoroughly explained for the teachers (Dewey, 1916; Rogers, 1969; Freire, 1972). Nunan (2003) reported that lack of provisions for FL teachers is a major problem for implementing communicative approaches in language teaching in Mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam.

The finding explains the tendency of some teachers to agree more with two other questionnaire items that imply their views of the difficulty of their misconception of CLT and teachers studying the implementation of CLT (see section 4.3.1). This lack of harmony was also reported by Ali (2008). This discussion explains the impact of having teachers unqualified to implement CLT on teachers' approaches to teaching in classrooms (Al-Hazmi, 2003; Wang and Ma, 2009). The majority of them are unable to implement CLT properly due to limitations on the part of the students and the nature of the education system. These findings are consistent with other research findings (Wang, 2009; and Chuang and Huang, 2009).

The researcher perceived that the cause of this difficulty is related to the lack of harmony between university education in Libya and the needs of preparatory schools.

This seems to have a significant impact on CLT implementation to teach reading

comprehension, as teachers appear to not have confidence in their ability to implement this approach, which represents a new experience for them. The findings of this study indicate that the content of these textbooks seems to be beyond the ability of teachers. Therefore, they are not only struggling to shift their conceptions and instructional approaches to CLT but also to deliver the content of these textbooks properly.

The researcher found that Libyan teachers have limited ability to implement CLT in teaching reading because of the lack of preparedness to teach with new methods such as CLT. At the same time, the education system does not help with the facilities, training programs, increasing the number of English classes and good support from the administrators. The researcher also found that Libyan teachers suffer from underdeveloped education programs.

6.3.5 Difficulties with CLT implementation

The results of the current study revealed that CLT itself is the third biggest difficulty in implementing CLT to teach reading comprehension. Teachers believe that challenges are found with limited time and appropriateness of CLT to the Libyan context.

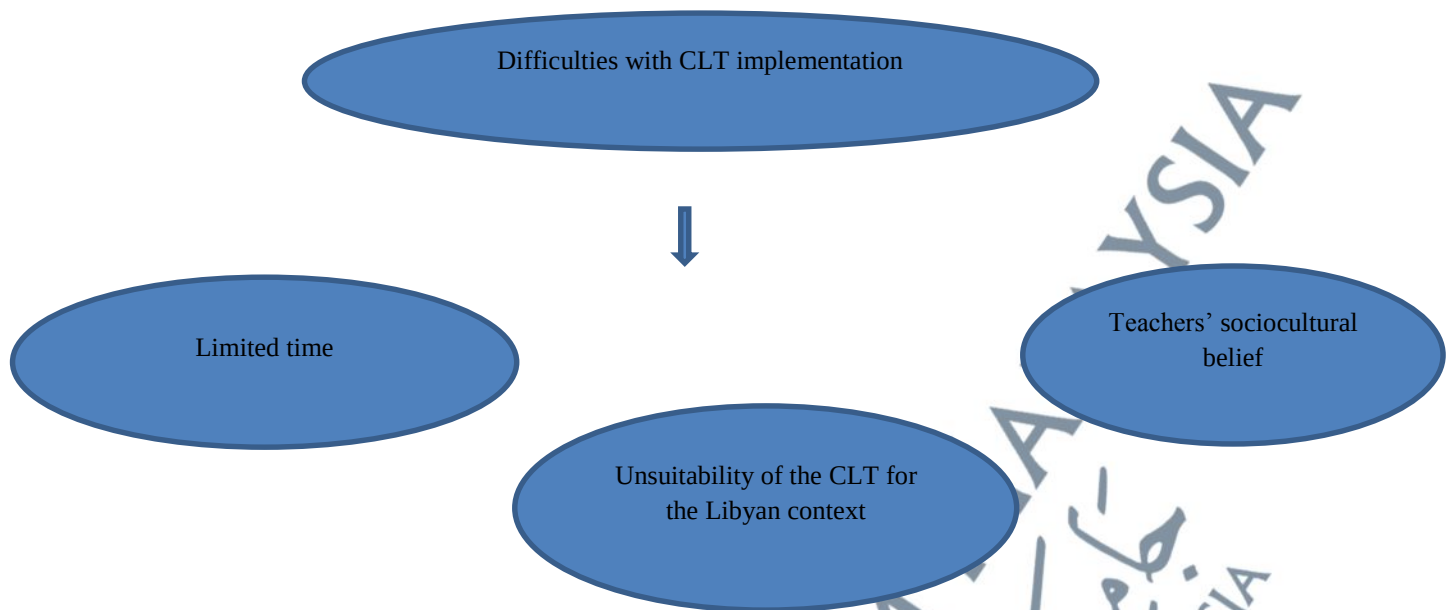


Figure 6.7 Difficulties with CLT implementation

6.3.5.1 Limited time

Teachers' limited time to teach CLT materials ranked as the top barrier in teaching reading lessons. The questionnaire data revealed that the vast majority agree that insufficient time is one of the major difficulties in implementing CLT. The triangulated findings are also supported by the participants' responses in the interviews. The interviewees stated that teachers do not have enough time to practice and teach CLT fully and effectively. Interviewees additionally indicated that teaching the CLT curriculum and adapting communicative methods require time, and every single student should be given opportunities to participate. The teachers expressed that the time for the speaking, writing, reading and grammar activities that must be covered is limited. The time limitation is harder for large classes, in addition to the pressure on teachers from principals and inspectors to cover the whole curriculum in the time allocated. Altieb's (2014) finding are in accord with this study in that implementing a new

curriculum that depends on CLT for secondary school classes necessitates enough time to develop.

Roberto (2004) argued that a traditional teaching method or teacher-centered approach is one where a class activity is centered on the teacher, who serves as the center of knowledge and directs the information. In other words, in the teacher-centered approach, teachers are regarded as knowledge givers while learners act as receivers (Brown, 2001). Most Libyan teachers demonstrated they did not have enough time to prepare CLT teaching materials or activities for their classes because they would need a lot of time. To support this statement, Bangladeshi teachers' perceptions were that CLT is time-consuming in terms of preparing teaching materials and classroom activities (Karim, 2004). Ntirenganya (2015) reported that Rwandan university teachers have the same difficulties in implementing CLT.

6.3 .5.2 Unsuitability of the CLT for the Libyan context

The positive views of the majority of participants in the questionnaire on CLT indicate their disagreement during the interview with the item of sharing their role with students in the classroom (see 4.3.1). Similar views of EFL teachers regarding this approach were reported by Nonkukhetkhong et al. (2006) in Thailand, by Al-Nouh (2008) in Kuwait and by Orafi and Borg (2009) in Libya. Libyan teachers do not like to share their responsibility of discussing the lesson with their students (see section, 2.9.4.2). During the interview, teachers expressed that they refuse to give students a role in their classes and regard it as an incorrect concept.

The notion of communicative language teaching was originally developed in Western contexts, which have certain distinct cultural characteristics compatible with the basic principles of CLM (Brown, 2001). Brown (2001) considered that full understanding of the prevailing practices in classrooms and the wider community is a necessary condition for developing an appropriate ELT methodology. However, the positive views identified in this study cannot be related to successful practical experiences of implementing this approach in reading classes. These positive views might be related to the teachers' personal negative experiences with the old methods, which they consider as a reason for the weakness of their reading comprehension (see section 2.8.4). Hence, teachers feel that CLT is an appropriate method for developing students' reading comprehension.

The findings of this study indicate that in Libya, the cultural attitude towards CLT at the school level seems to vary from the personal teacher level. Although teachers were positive about the implementation of this approach for teaching English and reading comprehension, the current hierarchal structure of the education system in Libya represents a traditional perspective towards teaching and learning (Shihiba 2011). Teachers observed in the current study agreed that CLT does not consider the differences between the Western and non-Western contexts. One of the differences is sharing the teacher role with students in the classroom. During the interview, one teacher explained that he believed that teaching and learning are processes that are only controlled and managed by the teacher. He did not believe in the argument for allowing students to share with the teacher in directing and organizing this process. The teacher also explained that throughout the history of teaching and learning, the role of each has

been clearly defined and questioned if it is possible to ignore the success achieved through this way of teaching so far.

As an Islamic, conservative and developing society, Libyan society is characterized by high respect for religious and social values. These values govern the behaviors of the members of this society and organize the relationships among them (Hutchins et al, 2010). For a persons' behavior to be religiously and societally accepted in Libya, it should be bound to these values. Rees and Althakhri (2008) emphasized the impact of Islamic values of individual' behaviors and practices in Arab countries. Some of the incompatible contextual and cultural aspects with Libya were discussed earlier (see section 1.6) and teachers' extracts from the interview were provided as well (see section 4.3.5, 4.3.6).

To expand on this point, two factors seem to be influential on Libyan EFL teachers' implementation of CLT in the context of the language classroom and teaching reading. Youngsters' high respect for elders appears to highly impact the effective implementation of CLT in Libya. Kasanda et al. (2005) considered this a reason for the inappropriateness of this approach in the non-Western context. Yeung (2009) questioned the possibility of its implementation in Hong Kong for the same reason. According to the present author, children in Libya are brought up with the value of respecting elders to the extent of not questioning what they say (see section 2.2.1). Therefore, these children often maintain the same status for teachers, as elders whose sayings should not be questioned (Alhmali, 2007, p. 173). This could be due to Libyan students' awareness that their behavior in school is often judged in accordance to this

value (how much respect do they accord school elders -- head teachers and teachers?). According to the observed lessons, students respect teachers and do not ask any questions until teachers give them permission, and any information conveyed by teachers must be respected and not argued at all. This is not in line with CLT features that emphasize the sharing role between teachers and students in class and participating in communicative activities. This could increase the strain of shifting students' conceptions of the role of teachers and students in the CLT classroom

Another incompatibility aspect between the culture in Libyan society and CLT is related to the sensitive topic of male-female contact. Such contact is often religiously prohibited and socially sensitive. Metcalfe (2006, 2008) observed this phenomenon in some Arab countries in the Middle East and attributed it to the effect of gender segregation in these areas. Hence, the notion of contact between males and females is relatively sensitive. Consequently, Libyan schools would never represent "community life" (Dewey, 1916. p.358), which is a central principle of CLT. This sensitivity could not foster the implementation of communication activities such as pair and group work, role play and games (see section 2.11.2) that are fundamental pillars of CLT in language classrooms. The effective implementation of such activities requires splitting students in various groups and involving them in doing learning tasks and activities interactively and cooperatively (see section 2.11.2). During the observed lessons, teachers in preparatory schools faced the problem of male students rejecting to work together with female students. Although the teachers could mitigate this problem by allowing students to select their group members, this would not allow comprising random groups, which could have a positive impact on the sociocultural aspect of learning (Livingstone and

Lynch, 2000). In Libya, both male and female teachers should be very careful about how they establish relationships with students of the opposite sex. Moreover, some words that are not related to Libyan society, such as boyfriend and girlfriend, can make students uncomfortable.

6.3.5.3 Teachers' sociocultural belief

One of the main difficulties that Libyan teachers face when implementing CLT is the influence of their beliefs and socio-cultural background. These difficulties were revealed through the process of data collection and analysis. As the participants pointed out, their existing culture, beliefs and views influence their way of teaching, as shown by the agreement in questionnaire responses, observed lessons and interviews.

The participants in this study felt there is an influence from their beliefs on how they teach and implement CLT, and claimed that they follow their own teachers' ways of teaching. Teachers tried to facilitate, but while maintaining their role as controllers (see section 4.2.1). These results triangulated with the observation demonstrate that teachers avoid some reading activities because they are not able to implement them. Latiwish (2003) mentioned that Libyan teachers and students are influenced by a particular belief and culture of learning English. Teachers interviewed expressed that their socio-cultural background guided them as teachers and their students' participation in the classroom (see section, 6.2.2.4). Orafi and Borg (2009) explained that the socio-cultural aspect has an effect on teachers' adaption of CLT in their way of teaching. Inceciay and Inceciay (2009) commented that traditional learning behaviors and styles caused EFL students to be passive in communicative activities. They further argued that it is not easy for

EFL students to forget traditional learning styles and habits, which are full of teacher and book-centered approaches. According to previous literature, Doherty and Singh (2005) concluded that a Western teaching methodology does not suit the EFL setting because it is designed for active, independent, confident and co-constructive classroom interaction and knowledge. EFL students tend to be passive and non-interactive good listeners and observers (Doherty and Singh, 2005).

This illustrates that the culture and beliefs of both teachers and students are in agreement about a suitable way to teach reading. Moreover, some participants clearly showed their consideration for the existing culture of teaching. One teacher mentioned that Libyan students are used to being silent and shy away from any interaction activities. This signifies the effect their teachers' cultural influence has on teaching style. This result was also evident in the interview responses. Alabber (2011) supported this finding in that teachers' beliefs and culture influence how they teach. Littlewood (2000, p.31) provided an example of cultural influence on both students and teachers' behaviors in EFL settings: "culture with a long tradition of unconditional obedience to authority in which the teacher is seen not as a facilitator, but as a fount of knowledge to be delivered and no one wants to voice their opinions and challenge what lectures say."

In terms of culture, one of the teachers explained that "the material was imported from outside Libya, and it was not designed by the Libyan educators. So, some of the topics are not related to our culture. I remember trying to change words like boyfriend, girlfriend. I just say friend, and when they talk about parties, they (Libyans) do not drink wine, I change that to juice or milk." Another teacher's comment indicates that Libyan

teachers teach English according to the Libyan culture and not the English culture. Yousf (2014) presented the same perception.

Therefore, it is evident that teachers and students in preparatory schools are influenced by their beliefs and culture of teaching and learning. This influence consequently limits many of the reading activities. However, some teachers are trying to abandon this cultural influence and have started to look at or tend towards more interactive methods like CLT.

Identifying teachers' view towards the types of CLT activities implemented by Libyan teachers to teach reading comprehension was one of the aims of this study. Teachers' views were investigated by analyzing the types of CLT activities and how they were implemented according to the data gathered from classes and reading lessons. The process of analyzing these types of CLT activities and their implementation was carried out interactively, together with observing teachers' implementation of CLT activities, a questionnaire and interview responses.

6.4 Types of CLT activities to teach reading comprehension in the classroom

With regard to types of CLT activities and how teachers implement them during reading lessons, it was observed that almost all lessons focused on activities under the following three phases.

6.4.1 Before you read phase

Nearly all lessons observed concentrated on the “before you read” phase. Brown, Yang and Cheung (2003) explained that CLT emphasizes purposeful and meaningful activities. Such activities relate to the use of authentic elements and extra materials besides textbook activities. Teachers in the current study presented more attention to the activities found in the textbook to help students start reading text and grasp the meaning before reading the whole text. Monopoli (N.D.) acknowledged that all teachers used the “before you read” activity because it is aimed at activating students’ prior knowledge of the text. In addition, Orafi (2008) explained that Libyan teachers in secondary schools begin reading lessons with the “before you read” phase.

Memorization is one of the most important activities during every reading lesson in the current study. The findings confirm that all teachers focused on memorizing vocabulary by reminding students of the previous lesson. Previous studies support that Libyan teachers highlight memorization as a main activity, e.g. Saleh (2002) and Altaieb (2014). One of the teachers expressed that they concentrate on memorization as a way of achieving the language. They expressed that English is considered as a foreign language to Libyan students and they cannot practice it without memorizing a lot of vocabulary from reading texts.

Another activity in the “before you read” phase involves checking students’ background knowledge of the new lesson, which is also shared by all teachers. Abdallah’s (2011) study supports the findings of the current research about the importance of the “before you read” activity in teaching reading comprehension. Abdallah expressed that students’

background knowledge of a reading topic is activated and helps arouse their interest in the reading text assigned in the “before you read” stage. It also helps students comprehend the text they are going to read (Abdallah, 2011). Orafi (2008) agreed that one of the reading activities with CLT is building students’ knowledge of the lesson through lesson maps or pictures.

Also, the idea that building students’ background knowledge influences reading comprehension implies that meaning does not rely merely in the printed words; rather, the students bring certain knowledge, experience, and cultural background to the reading that affects their comprehension (Brown 2007). Almost all teachers in the current study did this activity and encouraged their students to do it in English, whereas other teachers encouraged students to do it in English or Arabic.

Almost all the teachers helped students predict the meaning of the text and get the main idea of the lesson. Teachers developed their lessons with a meaningful practice of classroom activities, they discussed the content of pictures preceding the texts or asked some questions to prepare students for the reading. The interaction process in the classroom was a teacher-led discussion, which also was noted by Orafi (2008) in a Libyan secondary school. The data in this study shows that teachers attempted to implement “before you read” stage activities, but they did so using old methods. It is clear that teachers are still influenced by the old, teacher-centered methods. For example, teachers focus on building students' background of the lesson by relying on the Arabic language (GTM). The activities do not involve real communication between students, but the teacher controls the activities (teacher-centered approach).

The main activity that was shared by all teachers observed in the current study is translation into Arabic. The teachers translated and discussed in Arabic after noticing their students did not get the meaning in English. Shihiba (2011) explained that Libyan teachers discuss lessons and implement CLT activities in Arabic due to their students' low proficiency. Teachers explained that they use Arabic in the classroom because students did not have a good English background to participate in CLT activities. Teachers also expressed in the interview that the limited time obligated them to discuss in Arabic so that students would understand and they can go on to another activity. Monopoli (N.D.) expressed that time restriction does not allow teachers to deal with all the reading activities in a lesson.

In the "before you read" phase, certain activities are carried out before students engage with the reading text, as suggested by Duck and Person (2002) and Pressley (2002). Teachers utilize activities such as brainstorming and encouraging a discussion about the topic, making predictions by previewing the title, headings, or pictures, and questioning on prior text depending on students' needs and text characteristics.

6.4.2 While you read phase

Reading aloud is the main activity in the "while you read" phase. The collected data revealed that all teachers encourage their students to read aloud. This reading aloud activity is conducted mainly as an exercise for pronunciation and confidence-building. One of the interviewees said that they ask students to read out loud to correct their pronunciation and for other classmates to hear the text several times. This teacher also said that the classroom is the only place where students can hear the English language,

so this exercise help with listening and practicing English more. Orafi (2008) and Shihiba (20011) agreed that Libyan teachers focus on reading aloud as a principal aim of the “while you read” activity.

In reading lessons, almost all teachers asked students to highlight the main ideas found in each paragraph when discussing a text, while other teachers asked students individually. This is the most common activity in the “while you read” phase of a lesson. It was observed that all teachers provided communicative activities, such as pair work or group work. The teachers tried to promote collaborative learning in an effort to reinforce students’ involvement in the reading activity. Various tasks were designed for pair work. It was observed that not all students were actively involved in the discussion and assignment completion. Students who partook in the discussion used and switched between both Arabic and English. It was observed that the majority of students were unable to communicate and interact actively, especially the weak students. Teachers provided students the opportunity to work in pairs, but the work involved reading aloud and translating to Arabic. Orafi’s (2008) findings are similar to the current study, in that secondary school teachers implement pair work but only on reading aloud and translating. Correcting pronunciation and grammar mistakes were shared in the reading aloud activity as well as the highlighting the main idea activity in the reading lessons. Altaieb (2014) also found that Libyan teachers focus on correct pronunciation and grammar mistakes in every lesson.

Giving every student an opportunity to read was one of the most important tasks for all teachers in the current study. Teachers believe that repeating the lessons gives students

a chance to understand the text and memorize pronunciation. Repetition is regarded as a principal activity in reading lessons. Yusef (2014) agreed that repetition is crucial in reading lessons.

According to the discussion above, Libyan teachers implement the “while you read” phase, but with old methods. The communicative activities are led by teachers while, interaction between students is neglected (teacher-centered approach). Despite the fact that these activities are often designed for students’ free practice and independent learning in order to develop their “linguistic and social knowledge and their interactive skills” the availability of the teacher as a recourse for providing students support and assistance is essential (Conelius-White and Harbaugh, 2010). Correcting pronunciation and repetition were identified while highlighting the main idea of the text and reading sentence by sentence (audio-lingual method). It is also clear that Libyan teachers implement CLT activities through old methods.

6.4.3 After you read phase

The findings indicate that the main activity in the “after you read” phase involves giving assignments and briefly explaining what the lesson was about. Teachers were observed to give students individual assignments after discussing the reading passage. Other teachers asked students to work in groups. Group discussion helps and encourages students not to focus on a global understanding of the text, but to also make inferences, appreciate, and evaluate the text ideas. However, the researchers observed that in reading classes only two or three students in a group participated in the discussion. The rest of the group members were rather passive and only listened attentively to the active

students. This unequal participation in discussion may be due to factors like personality, willingness to communicate, cultural beliefs and social identity (Brown, 2007; Morita, 2004). Some teachers ignore this activity completely.

The triangulated findings from the current study revealed teachers implement some CLT activities in teaching reading. They carry out group and pair work activities. The importance of these activities according to experts' views, such as Larsen-Freeman (2000) and Richard and Rodgers (2001), is to enhance students' reading comprehension. In addition, with these activities teachers help facilitate discussions, which make the class livelier. That is, teachers become facilitators to ensure that discussion occurs to stimulate students to express their ideas confidently. As proposed by Richards and Rodgers (2001), a sample compatible with CLT includes information sharing, meaning negotiation and interaction while reading text.

Many thinkers explained that the main purpose of using these activities is to motivate students to comprehend the text, to help them enrich their vocabulary, and to develop students' ability to use the target language appropriately in a varied and authentic cultural setting (Holliday, 2005; Iddings 2006). Several factors affect these activities, such as limited class time, large classes and the low levels of students. The findings from Orafi's study (2008) revealed that secondary school teachers avoid and neglect "after you read" activities completely, which differ from the current study. One of the reasons for this difference is that the context is different, as this study concerns the preparatory level and Orafi' study concerns the secondary level. However, Abdallah (2011) found that teachers in rural schools implement "after you read" activities.

It was noticed that all teachers avoided the role-play activity. The teachers who participated in this study gave different reasons for avoiding to implement role-play, such as insufficient time, large classes, and lack of teaching facilities. However, these factors seem to be mere excuses rather than serious impediments. It appears that the pure communicative nature of role-play activities is what makes teachers lack confidence in their ability to respond to students' inquiries and demands during such activities. These activities need free interaction and practice in class from the students and teacher support and encouragement. Therefore, thinking about the embarrassment teachers would feel if unable to answer a question or provide students with English vocabulary or expressions, could make the notion of such activities represent a serious threat and source of tension for some teachers. EFL teachers' deficiency in spoken English is also reportedly a major problem for the successful implementation of CLT in China (Eslami and Fatahi, 2008). Carless (2003, p.498) warned that EFL teachers' lack of confidence or proficiency would result in their avoidance of "attempting more open-ended task-based activities, and would make the process of implementing the communicative approaches for language teaching very difficult, if not impossible" (Nunan, 2003).

Another factor that leads to teachers' avoidance of role-play activities could be related to students' lack of interest in participating in these communication activities. Alhamali, (2007) explained that students' lack of interest is one of the hinders for implementing CLT activities. The proper implementation of role-play activities requires increasing students' talking time by them asking questions, offering suggestions, requesting things, playing roles of other people, working together to solve problems and giving feedback

on what might happen during their interactions (Ferrman, 2000; Jonson, 2001; Rico, 2008). These demands would make only those students who have appropriate levels of fluency able to be active participants in role-play activities. Unfortunately, all teachers consider students' low oral proficiency as a major challenge for the successful implementation of CLT in Libyan secondary schools. This was also reported by Orafi and Borg (2009).

Students could not participate in explaining briefly what the lesson was about. Their low level prevented them from sharing in this activity. According to data triangulated with interviewees' responses, it is quite difficult for teachers to motivate students to speak. Only a few students responded to these activities well, while the majority were weak and showed resistance to participating in reading class. Thus, the teacher-centered approach is typical of an EFL classroom. The findings of the current study revealed that Libyan students are passive, whereby no one wants to voice out their opinion or challenge what their teachers said. Littlewood (2000) found that Asian students are passive in voicing out their opinions in front of their teachers. Also, Mehark and Frahad (2014) reported that students' attitude towards pair and group work is one of the difficulties that hinder implementing CLT as a whole. The findings of the present questionnaire revealed that teachers have the same opinion that CLT activities in reading comprehension should engage students in meaningful communication, but it was observed that teachers did not provide students the opportunity to engage in real communication. Teachers facilitated when necessary to keep the activities moving and ensure that students were engaged in the reading process.

To triangulate the data in terms of the observation and interview findings on the implementation of CLT activities in the “before you read,” “while you read” and “after you read” stages, it can be concluded that teachers implement CLT activities mostly in the “before you read” stage and partially in the “while you read” and “after you read” stages, all in the traditional (teachers-centered) methods. The preferred choice of method in teaching reading depends on several factors, including the students’ proficiency level, reliance on translating to Arabic, limited time and grammar-based examinations. Thus, the teachers take on a pro-active role to cater to students according to their capability, receptiveness, and social and cultural environment.

The results of the current study reveal that a teacher-centered approach is more evidently implemented than CLT to teach reading. This traditional approach prevails in reading lessons and is well-accepted by students. Teachers’ domination and use of their native language is obvious in instruction and teaching. The triangulation findings indicate that teachers commonly provide individual assignments -- an activity that is often used with a traditional teaching approach, such as GTM and ALM. In other words, the study shows that the teacher-centered and teacher-dominated activities are used more often than CLT activities to teach reading in Libyan preparatory schools. The results of the current study are in agreement with those of Abdallah (2011), in that CLT activities used to teach reading comprehension are often implemented with old methods in rural high schools.

It appears that due to students’ low proficiency levels according to triangulation of the questionnaire with the observation and interview, teachers resort to implementing a

teacher- centered approach because it is quite difficult for them to stimulate students to participate and speak. It means that teachers dominate the class instruction to teach reading. Based on the interview and observation findings, students in these classes do not participate willingly unless called. In these classes, it would be a rare case to find students initiating interaction with teachers. The teachers usually conduct the class, explain the lesson, and give instructions while the students listen and follow. Furthermore, teachers were observed to use both languages. Abdallah's (2011) work supports the findings of the current study. Another factor that prompts teachers to employ teacher-centered approaches is students' confidence. It was observed that a majority of students did not take part in communicative class activities, since the majority of students seem to have average language proficiency levels, as acknowledged by teachers in the interview. Students do not want to get involved in reading activities because they are still struggling at the word and sentence levels.

From triangulating the questionnaire, observation and interview data in this study, it seems another cause for employing a teacher-centered approach is the large class size. Generally, teachers find it difficult to give students individualized attention. Sarwar (2001) reported that many language teachers think that implementing CLT activities through pair and group work in large classes is not possible. Also, Jones (2007) emphasized that the necessity for implementing the LCA in large classes as it can give all the students time to read and speak. The huge number of students beside the limited time make it difficult to benefit from these activities. Teachers expressed that they need more time to reinforce the teaching process, and that understanding can be achieved through activities like pair work and group work. These activities are implemented

through interaction and communication that allow students to understand the texts well. However, such activities and interaction take up a lot of time, which is not feasible in the context of this study.

Another factor that leads to teachers to implement traditional approaches is the limited teacher training on CLT, according to questionnaire and interview findings. Although teachers exhibit a strong desire to change from the teacher-centered approach to the CLT approach, they feel powerless to do so due to their inadequate knowledge of communicative teaching. Brush and Saya (2000) explained the difficulties encountered by teachers in managing groups due to their inability to establish well-defined roles and responsibilities for students. This research found that Libyan teachers in preparatory schools have a basic repertoire of CLT techniques and they implemented few aspects of CLT in their classes. Nevertheless, these teachers indicate a need for more training to develop and implement CLT to teach reading comprehension.

According to the questionnaire items and teachers' interview responses, teachers expressed they are not qualified and have minimal knowledge about the best ways to implement CLT activities to teach reading, and as a result of their low levels they sometimes avoid certain activities. According to the questionnaire data, very grammar-based examinations are yet another factor that causes not only teachers but also students, parents and school administrators to focus on grammar. Abdallah (2011) concurred that limited training, limited class time, grammar-based examinations and large class size are some of the reasons for implementing old methods instead of CLT to teach reading comprehension in rural classes.

According to the mentioned findings, this study indicates that teachers are attempting to implement CLT activities to teach reading comprehension. However, there are contextual factors that directly impact the implementation of a teaching reform policy. This illustrates that what might be appropriate to implement in other global contexts might not be equally successful in particular local situations. The fact is that the policy requires both teachers and students to develop new teaching and learning method but does not equip or support schools with sufficient facilities, resources, learning environments or sufficient teachers trained in CLT. Therefore, this study raises concerns for all stakeholders to take into account when a policy is being implemented in the dissemination stage. Policies cannot be implemented successfully without listening to the teachers' voices, as they are agents of change. If a learning reform policy is to be successful, intensive and consistent teacher development must be well-organized and sufficient resources must be allocated so that all schools can meet the policy objectives.

In explaining the difficulties of applying such an important approach in Libyan preparatory schools, teachers stated that it is extremely difficult to carry out communicative activities that reflect real-life situations. According to Vygotskain' theory (1978), Learning is located in social, cultural and historical context. For instance, in the current study a lesson using Halloween for reading material is difficult for students. Halloween is not part of traditional Libyan culture and it is thus unrealistic to expect Libyan students to be meaningfully involved in the topic and in role play. It is evident there is conflict between Western and non-Western norms and worldwide views

on communicative activities because Western norms might be inconsistent with the values and views of Libyan culture.

One of the other difficulties that Libyan teachers face in implementing teacher-centered approaches is the teaching environment. Students have problems reading in English and understanding without translation due to the lack of English practice inside and outside the classroom. Vygotsky (1978) emphasized that social interaction has a significant role in the learning process (see section 2.3.4). Their exposure is very limited because the community (students) around them speak in Arabic. Another point is that most of the curriculum for seven subjects is in Arabic (see section 1.3).

Investigating the effect of differences in teaching experience length on teachers' views of the major difficulties they face in implementing CLT to teach reading comprehension was one of the aims of this study. Teachers' views were investigated by testing the differences between the teachers' length of experience (1-5 Years; 6-10 Years, and 11-15 Years) using mean scores and standard deviation on the 'Differences' scale using the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Three data gathering procedures were used to answer the research question on identifying the effect of differences in teaching experience on difficulties faced by Libyan teachers in teaching reading through CLT. The instruments were a survey questionnaire, observation and interview.

6.5 Differences of teaching experience on the difficulties in CLT implementation

This question was aimed to investigate the differences in teaching experience length on the major difficulties with implementing CLT to teach reading comprehension. Dewey'

theory (1916) explained that using the past experience can significantly contribute to continue their interest and enhance their present learning. The difficulties investigated teachers', students', curriculum, educational system, CLT and socio-cultural difficulties. The results revealed there are significant differences between teachers' views on difficulties related to students and CLT. The data also revealed there are no significant differences between teachers' views of difficulties related to teachers, curriculum, sociocultural context and the education system.

6.5.1 Significant differences

The results revealed significant differences between participants' views towards difficulties related to students and CLT in implementing CLT to teach reading comprehension. Shihiba (2011) reported that student weakness is one of the difficulties in implementing CLT in secondary schools. Teachers expressed that challenges related to CLT are a difficulty according to different teaching experience lengths. Ntirenganya (2015) reported that Rwandan university teachers also have this difficulty in implementing CLT.

6.5.2 Non-significant differences

The results revealed no significant differences between the participants' views towards major difficulties related to the teachers, curriculum, sociocultural context and education system in terms of teaching experience length in implementing CLT to teach reading comprehension. Researchers on education consider teaching experience very important in developing teaching skills, as it helps teachers master the subject matter they teach. The findings of Orafi and Borg (2009) and Al-Nouh (2008) in Kuwait concur

with the present finding that the failure to implement a CLT curriculum in Libyan secondary schools is caused by less experienced teachers with this method.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter explained the results from three sources of data: questionnaire, observation and interview. Libyan teachers presented a positive understanding of the basic features of CLT implementation. At the same time, the effect of old methods and the sociocultural context are among difficulties that reflect teachers' misconception of implementing CLT. Lack of support from the education system and students' low proficiency limit teachers' implementation of CLT activities to teach reading. The differences in teaching experience significantly affect difficulties related to students and to CLT itself. Libyan teachers realize the importance of CLT in teaching reading and how CLT activities enhance and develop students' practice of the language, but they face difficulties that restrict implementation in a successful way. The next chapter summarizes the main findings in relation to the research questions, notes the limitations of the study, outlines the study contributions, provides suggestions for further research, and discusses educational implications. The next and final chapter concludes with personal reflections of the researcher on this work.