

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Educators are currently concentrating on a number of recommendations identified as 21st-century skills; among these are the 4Cs. The 4Cs are a subset of the broader set of 21st century skills, representing key skills that are particularly emphasized due to their significance in the 21st century workforce and society. The concept of the 4Cs refers to ‘critical thinking’, ‘collaboration’, ‘communication’ and ‘creativity’.

However, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of creativity in language education and as educators aim to prepare students for the rapidly changing and increasingly complex world of the 21st century, creativity has emerged as a vital skill that is pivotal in all professions. According to The Future of Jobs Report (2020), creativity is one of the top three skills that employees will need to thrive in the workplace of the future. As Lin and McKay (2004) point out, “It is not what pupils learn that makes the difference, but it is how they learn” (p. 4). Thus, enhancing creativity through teachers’ practices inside the classroom can produce autonomous learners who create original ideas. Therefore, a teacher is supposed to be creative so that new knowledge is absorbed through interactive ways that make students produce valuable outcomes.

In recent years, a new approach to second and foreign language education has emerged, known as the "life syllabus" (Pishghadam et al., 2011), which focuses on enhancing life qualities, such as creativity and emotional intelligence, in language

learning classes. This paradigm shift reflects a broader trend in language education towards incorporating educational and psychological findings in language learning classes. One important area of psychology that can be applied to language education is teacher creativity.

Creativity has gained significant attention in psychology and education due to its importance in the 21st century (Chien & Hui, 2010). The creationistic approach, which posits that everyone is capable of creativity, has been highly valued in contemporary psychology and pedagogy (Lucas, 2016). As creativity is a key competency for the 21st century, experts aim to empower teachers, schools, and educational systems to cultivate this fundamental skill. The need to promote creative thought has led to a revolution of creativity in education (Craft, 2005), and the importance of schooling in cultivating students' creativity is indisputable (Starko, 2014). The classroom environment can either encourage or discourage creativity, depending on teachers' beliefs about creativity education (Chien & Hui, 2010). Teachers may play an important role in determining students' creative potential.

Undeniably, fostering creativity in the educational system creates valuable contributions to societies' future development (Morris, 2006), and this necessitates the urgency for the current study. Despite the growing interest in teaching for creativity, there is a lack of research on how teachers in different contexts integrate creativity through their teaching practices. This is particularly true in the Libyan context, where, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is a dearth of studies on the integration of creativity in English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching. Therefore, the current study

aims to investigate Libyan university EFL teachers' beliefs and practices regarding teaching for creativity in the EFL classroom.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The lack of focus on creativity in Libyan EFL classrooms has been noted in previous studies. For instance, Elabbar (2011) reported that Libyan EFL teachers tend to use traditional teaching methods that prioritize grammar translation, resulting in limited student participation and interaction. The grammar-translation method remains prominent in Libya, as most EFL teachers prefer to employ the same methods and techniques that they were taught (Elgadal, 2017). Similarly, Orafi and Borg (2009) found that most Libyan EFL classrooms were teacher-centred. These findings suggest that creativity may not be a priority in the Libyan EFL context, despite its growing importance in language education.

As there is a scarcity of research on teaching for creativity in the Libyan context, the study addresses a gap in the literature on the integration of creativity in Libyan EFL classrooms and sheds light on the challenges hindering the promotion of creativity in the Libyan EFL context. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate Libyan EFL university teachers' beliefs and practices regarding teaching for creativity in the EFL classroom. With this study, we reply to Saleh's (2019) call for more research on integrating creativity as a 21st century skill in the EFL classroom, specifically exploring teachers' beliefs and practices on the area of exploration.

1.3. Aims of the Study

This study aims to fulfil the following objectives:

1. To identify to what extent the EFL classroom practices reflect creativity in the different educational colleges of the University of Zawia.
2. To explore Libyan EFL university teachers' beliefs towards creativity.
3. To find out whether Libyan EFL university teachers' beliefs about creativity align with their practices of it.

1.4. Research Questions

In light of the foregoing, the researcher formulates her research problem in the following main questions:

1. To what extent do EFL classroom practices reflect creativity in the different educational colleges of the University of Zawia- extracted from students' responses?
2. What beliefs do Libyan EFL university teachers hold toward creativity?
3. Do Libyan EFL university teachers' beliefs about creativity align with their classroom practices?

1.5. Significance of the Study

One of the important skills that should be promoted throughout the educational system is creativity. Fostering creativity in EFL classes has been shown to motivate students to learn (Richards, 2013), improve mastery of student language (Al-Qahtani, 2016), and boost students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Stoller, 2002). Therefore, given the importance of creativity in today's classrooms, Libyan EFL

university teachers should be urged to incorporate creativity into English teaching and learning. Accordingly, the study might inspire teachers to change or modify their teaching methods and strategies and to establish a good rapport with students where students can be in a classroom environment that motivates and encourages them. The findings of the study may also inspire more researchers to explore creativity integration in teaching specific skills rather than exploring it generally.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The topic of creativity is broad enough so it seems better to concentrate on its incorporation into the instruction of some Libyan EFL university teachers. Since this study sheds light on creativity integration in the EFL classroom, it is best to avoid specifying a particular skill in which creativity should be integrated with the four skills, to not expand the area being searched. Therefore, during the academic year of 2022, the study was carried out to probe for EFL university teachers' beliefs and practices about creativity from four educational colleges at the University of Zawia.

1.7. Methodology

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. The triangulation technique helped the researcher to ensure the validity and reliability of the research instruments (Nha, 2021). To collect the data required for this study, a closed-ended questionnaire for students and a semi-structured interview for their teachers were utilized. The research sample included randomly selected 98, 8th-semester EFL students who are involved in the first phase of the study to reveal their feedback on their teachers' integration of creativity in their teaching. Moreover, the second phase sample included 10 Libyan EFL university teachers, selected using purposive sampling,

who were working in different educational colleges across the University of Zawia (Zawia, Abu Issa, Al-Ajailat and Nasser). A closed-ended questionnaire was conducted with the students and its data were analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program and presented in tables; whereas the data gained from the semi-structured interview was analysed by using inductive thematic analysis method.

1.8. Organisation of the Study

The study embraces six chapters. They are structured as follows:

- Chapter One is an introductory chapter which entails the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the aims of the study and the research questions. It also contains the significance of the study followed by the scope, methodology, and organization of the study.
- Chapter Two is devoted to the literature review which begins with definitions of creativity, creativity in language education and higher education. It also covers creativity in the ESL and EFL contexts, promoting creativity in the EFL classroom, teachers' beliefs about creativity, assessing creativity and challenges hindering creativity integration.
- Chapter Three presents the research design, the research methods, the sample, data collection instruments, the pilot study, validity and reliability, ethical considerations and data collection procedures.
- Chapter Four displays the results of the quantitative and qualitative data and the steps of data analysis.
- Chapter Five provides the discussion and interpretations of the research findings.

- Finally, Chapter Six consists of the conclusion, implications, limitations, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

The following chapter is mainly addressed to review related literature.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

Creativity provides enormous benefits for both the individual and society. Hence, developing students' creative abilities has attracted major study focus in recent years (Bereczki & Kárpáti, 2018). As a result, addressing creativity in the classroom has become an essential task for teachers all over the world in order to achieve the desired student outcomes. Additionally, the incorporation of creativity into the classroom is supported by a plethora of research aiming at comprehending, explaining, and evaluating the development of one's creative abilities (Sternberg, 2015). Several studies have shown that creative skills not only can be encouraged through appropriate instruction and guidance (Hennessey, 2004; Isaksen & Treffinger, 2004; Renzulli et al., 2007), but also that the development of such skills is inherently related to learning.

Research has shown that the progress of the implementation of creativity in education has been slowed down by several factors. Among these are teachers' beliefs about creativity and its cultivation (Beghetto, 2010). What teachers' might value, recognize and promote as creative, in reality, might not be so (Skiba et al., 2010). Existing research investigating teachers' beliefs and practices of creativity has produced valuable findings on how teachers conceptualize creativity, their views about creative students and teachers, as well as their beliefs about creativity-fostering learning environments and the classroom practices employed for such encouraging environments. Teachers' perceptions of creativity influence their instructional practices for fostering creativity among students in the classroom. Therefore, due to the growing emphasis on

creativity in education, teachers' beliefs are more susceptible to change and may evolve in time; thus, educators' today might not hold the same beliefs that were highlighted by earlier research. Nevertheless, a review of the literature on EFL teachers' beliefs about creativity and their classroom practices nurturing it is crucial to be carried out.

As a result, this chapter reviews literature on creativity, its definition and its integration in language education. Although creativity embodies every level of education, this review concentrates on higher education focusing on creativity integration in English language teaching (ELT). It also reviews nurturing creativity in the EFL classroom. In addition, it discusses methods of assessment of creativity. Furthermore, it views previous literature on teachers' beliefs and practices of creativity. Ultimately, it investigates the challenges that might face the integration of creativity in ELT.

2.2. Definition of Creativity

There are many definitions of creativity in the literature and the definition may vary from one context to another. Research in educational psychology presents convincing evidence of creativity's relevance to education (Dornyei, 2005). It is seen as a significant factor that influences how well teachers perform and how well learners learn (Ghonsooly & Raeesi, 2012). Dornyei (2005, p. 204) emphasized this stating that there is "some evidence that creativity is a positive correlate of academic performance". Despite this emphasis in the literature, academics and researchers disagree on how to define or describe creativity. For instance, Nedjah and Hamada (2017) claim that it has been challenging to define such a concept in the literature, and Howard (2008) described it as a sophisticated cognitive process.

Creativity has changed from being an unclear idea to a multidimensional construct that can be investigated and evaluated thanks to Guilford's (1950) call for creativity study. For him, the most fundamental divergent thinking skills that influence the notion of creativity are represented by the structures of flexibility, fluency, innovation, synthesis, analysis, rearrangement, redefinition, complexity, and elaboration (Ghonsooly, 2012). Following the same logic, the most influential definition of creative thinking and the most cited is given by the father of creativity; Torrance (1970), the creator of the Torrance Test- a scholastic test of creative thinking, who defines creativity as a problem-solving process that involves generating hypotheses, testing, evaluating and communicating results, and breaking out of the mold. He also confirms that the above-mentioned divergent thinking abilities are the foundation of the creative act.

As claimed by Runco (2003), scholars' definitions of creativity vary depending on how it is perceived, whether as a personality trait (personality characteristics or traits of creative people), a process (mechanism underlying creativity), a product (the result of a creative process), or a place (environments that foster creativity). Such conceptualization falls under The Four Ps creativity approach suggested by Rhode (1961/1987) as cited in Jordanous (2015). Reviewing the previous literature, Daskolia et al. (2012) explored the perceptions of creative thinking in environmental education among Greek secondary teachers. Among the study's findings was that participants see creative thinking as a thinking process that can or should be improved in the context of environmental education. Participants' conceptualizations include all four essential elements found in the literature in definitions of creativity—process, person, product, and context—with process being the most prominent. However, since creative teaching

has become an issue of concern for a large number of researchers, Huang and Lee (2015) addressed this issue by exploring the belief of Hong Kong teachers on creative teaching. Their results show that the beliefs of Hong Kong teachers about creative teaching cover process and product dimensions.

The fact that human creativity is a multifaceted construct with applications in many domains and is viewed from various angles makes it difficult to reduce it to a single precise definition, which is why the term remained ambiguous (Stepanek, 2015). There does appear to be a generally recognized definition of creativity, though, which characterizes the creative act as a process leading to an original, distinctive, and useful output. Because of this, novelty (originality) and value (usefulness, appropriateness) stand for the key characteristics of each creative endeavor (Mayer, 1999 quoted in Jordanous, 2015). However, since original ideas or products can be useless and not have any practical implications, originality is essential for creativity but is not sufficient (Runco & Jaeger, 2012).

Studies exploring the concept of creativity have also found originality as a necessary component of creativity (Aljughaiman & Reynolds, 2005; Eckhoff, 2011; Kamylyis et al., 2009). This indicates that there is a general consensus on the significance of originality in the concept of creativity, which then raises the issue of the quality of originality as not everyone, much alone creative individuals themselves, can consistently come up with original or novel ideas. The level of "originality" and the practice vary from one person to another. 'New ideas' fall into two categories, according to Boden (2004): those that are wholly novel to humankind's evolutionary history and those that are novel solely to the individual who first meets them. Accordingly, the

concept of originality can be labelled to anyone, depending on their level of performance.

Furthermore, Kaufman and Beghetto (2009) developed a four-C model of creativity, separated into Mini-C, Little-C, Pro-C, and Big-C creativity, in a move to bring all of the different interpretations of creativity together. Mini-C creativity is the novel changes in thoughts and ideas that can shift a person's perspectives. Little-C creativity is everyday applications of creativity. Pro-C creativity is the kind used by professionals in a field, while Big-C or eminent creativity is the ground-breaking, brilliant form of creativity that depends on historical and interpersonal judgment of appropriateness and novelty. In general, creativity is also defined by Beghetto and Kaufman (2007) as the aptitude to create high-quality, novel, and appropriate works; the ability to perceive the world in new ways; and the ability to draw connections between seemingly unrelated phenomena in order to generate workable solutions, regardless of level (Mini, Small, Pro, or Big).

According to Boden's (2004) definition of new ideas, psychologists provide a precise criterion for assessing an individual's creativity. They classify creativity definitions into two categories: LCC (Little c creativity) (Craft, 2001), and high creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). High creativity is defined as the creation of something outstanding and novel that has the potential to significantly alter an area of endeavor. This definition of creativity requires an imaginative application of intellect, skill, and effort that leads to becoming recognized as an expert (Jesson, 2012). LCC, in contrast, is ordinary creativity found in everyday life and relates to personal abilities needed in coping, identifying and making decisions (Smolucha, 1992). It is

commonplace creativity found in everyday life. LCC, also known as ‘everyday creativity’, is viewed as self-expression in daily activities, interpersonal styles and problem solving in everyday life (Torrance, 1988). To further illustrate the argument, ‘high creativity’ refers to an individual's capacity to produce novel concepts or items that are fully novel to the community, whereas LCC refers to an individual's capacity to produce novel concepts or items that are novel solely to those who encounter them.

The National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education's (NACCCE) (1999) definition of creativity includes both high and low creativity. Members of NACCCE are practitioners and educational experts in England who offer recommendations for formal and informal education programs for children up to age 16. Although the terminology used by NACCCE to describe "high creativity" and LCC is distinct, the meanings are similar. Sectoral, elite, and democratic definitions are the three categories into which NACCCE divides creativity definitions. The "sectoral" definition is primarily associated with the ‘creative arts’, such as drama, music, art, literature and dance (Chua et al., 2014). The term "creativity" can be used to describe any aspect of daily life, including the sciences, mathematics, politics, technology, business, and education. It is not, however, limited to the arts. The "elite" concept of creativity refers to artistic accomplishments that can only be attained by those with exceptional skills. The creative levels of these accomplishments are at their peak. The third category is the so-called "democratic" concept of creativity, which holds that everyone has the capacity for creativity within their own fields of expertise (Smolucha, 1992). ‘High creativity’ is synonymous with the ‘elite’ definition of creativity, which is

the work of geniuses or exceptionally gifted individuals. The 'democratic' concept of creativity, which sees it as a skill that regular people possess, is similar to LCC (ibid).

Among the aforementioned definitions of creativity, the 'democratic definition' (NACCCE, 1999) and LCC (Craft, 2001) are appropriate to identify teachers' beliefs about creativity and their practices reflecting creativity in this study. According to the democratic theory of creativity, everyone can be creative if they are given the right opportunities, knowledge, and skills. Similar to the 'democratic definition', the concept of LCC differs from the creativity of highly creative acts displayed by artists, scientists, and musicians who have particular abilities. Instead, LCC is a trait that all humans possess. It relates to how people live their lives, how they recognize and handle difficulties, and how they decide what to do to accomplish their goals (Craft, 2001).

With regard to teaching and learning, instructors may encounter instances where they must come up with fresh ideas or deviate from the lesson plan that was previously stated, for example, if the lesson they designed does not go as planned or if something unforeseen or uncontrollable happens. They have to make sure that their students will benefit from their choice of action. In this situation, their creativity is used to handle the unanticipated challenge by coming up with a solution to the problem. According to Smith and Smith (2010, p. 251), "Creativity is often viewed not as an end in itself but as a means towards ends, such as improving problem-solving abilities, engendering motivation, and developing self-regulating abilities." Consequently, the way of adapting, enhancing the teaching learning process and coming up with new ideas can be considered as being creative.

To clarify, the 'democratic' definition and 'LCC' are regarded as being interchangeable, and it is this definition that is employed in this study to identify and comprehend creativity as perceived by EFL teachers. According to the present study, every teacher has the ability to be creative in their particular field, namely in terms of how they manage their classrooms and perform classroom teaching that encourages students' creativity. In order to promote creativity in the EFL classroom, teachers have to also set up a productive learning environment. Accordingly, this study defines creativity in the EFL classroom as the efforts exerted from both the teacher and students to make the best use out of the content learnt. Teachers' efforts to trigger and nurture creativity in their students can be identified in several acts from managing the classroom, to employing interactive teaching methods and strategies that meet students' needs; to creating and adapting the materials slightly above the students' level.

2.3. Creativity in Education

Since creativity has become an increasingly important aspect of education, it is seen as a key skill for success in the 21st century. Dornyei (2005) argues that creativity is essential for language learning, as it allows learners to generate new and original ideas, and to express themselves in unique and interesting ways. Ghonsooly and Raesi (2012) also emphasize the importance of creativity in education, stating that it is critical for developing problem-solving skills, fostering innovation, and promoting lifelong learning.

According to Torrance (1981), the purpose of creative teaching is to create a responsible environment through high teacher enthusiasm and appreciation of individual differences. He also noted several signs that indicate when creative learning occurs,

such as improved motivation, alertness, curiosity, concentration, and achievement. Thus, creative teaching can enhance learning and creativity can thus be related significantly to educational achievement (Fasko, 2001).

Creative teaching is the process leading to creative learning through the implementation of new methods, tools and content which stimulate learners' creative potential. For Horng et al. (2005, p.355), creative learners need creative teachers: "only when teachers are willing to create, will students feel unrestrained and encouraged to be creative in the class". For successful creative thinking instructions, teachers have not only the responsibility to comprise a varied menu of creative practices, but also to establish an appropriate creative classroom climate, one that is positive, open and pleasant. Students should feel comfortable, motivated and free to explore and express their opinions (Birdsell, 2013).

2.3.1. Creative Teaching Practices

Wood and Jeffrey (1996) believe that teaching is primarily a skillful application of technical rules that involves a constant flow of problematic situations. This requires teachers to make judgments about how best to transfer their general educational values into classroom practices. Moreover, Sadykova and Shelestova (2016) asserted that it is the role of the teacher to create an environment that fosters creativity. Likewise, Aschenbrener, et al. (2010) stated that instructors ought to teach for creativity. To foster a creative atmosphere in the classroom, NACCCE (1999) defines creative teaching using two basic categories: teaching creatively and teaching for creativity. This distinction is elaborated below.

2.3.1.1. Teaching Creatively

Teaching creatively mainly focuses on teachers' practices as they develop materials and approaches to make learning more interesting, exciting and effective (Craft, 2005; Simplicio, 2000; Starko, 2014). In this type of teaching, teachers can use imaginative approaches to attract students' interest and motivate their learning (NACCCE, 1999). However, the use of an 'imaginative approach' is difficult to apply and not all of the teaching process requires imaginative approach. Instead of using imaginative activity, teachers can conceptualize "creative teaching as a particular state of mind" (Lucas, 2001, p. 38). Therefore, when teaching creatively the focus is on teachers and the approaches they use neglecting their impact on students.

2.3.1.2. Teaching for Creativity

The second category, teaching for creativity is a form of teaching that is intended to develop learners' own creative thinking and behaviour (Craft, 2005; NACCCE, 1999; Starko, 2014). The main objective of the teaching is learner empowerment (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004). Teaching creatively is a key component of all good teaching, but it does not guarantee when teachers perform teaching creatively, students are learning or developing their own creative potential (Joubert, 2001). NACCCE (1999) believes that teaching creatively and teaching for creativity are interrelated: "the former is inherent in the latter and the former often leads directly to the latter" (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004, p. 84). Teaching for creativity cannot be achieved without teaching creatively because students' creative abilities are most likely to be developed in an atmosphere in which teachers' creative abilities are properly engaged. Therefore, teachers will not be able to develop students' creative abilities if their own creative abilities are suppressed.

2.3.2. Creative Teaching Methods

According to Schoonenboom and Johnson (2017), classroom creativity is generated by the interaction of teachers' and students' energy, with teachers' facilitation as important as students' output. Since there is no specific definition for creativity, one trait that creative teachers must possess is willingness to new ideas. Conformity and narrow-mindedness, according to Hrešć (2016), put an end to creativity because they make it harder to develop fresh thoughts and points of view. Consequently, rather than simply presenting book lessons, creative teachers develop individual teaching techniques by adjusting and adapting the materials they provide to match the needs of their students. Therefore, creative teachers must be familiar with a wide range of teaching techniques and strategies which they call upon when teaching in order to avoid repetition, which kills creativity. Additionally, creative teachers must be risk takers; they have to reduce the use of the laid-down teaching strategies and practices, and innovate and employ methods that are not necessarily presented in the books (Hrešć, 2016).

According to Sternberg (2003) and Richards (2013), creative teachers must be knowledgeable in their subject area to enhance their imaginative capabilities, which is key to understanding creative students and as well to build creative lessons. The implementation of innovative methods of teaching requires a reflective teaching approach that may draw on new ideas and practices that are even more effective in imparting knowledge to their students (Hrešć, 2016). According to Richards (2013), creative teachers need to be able to solve problems, use their imagination, make new connections and meanings with the material they are teaching their students, and have

original ideas for designing and putting into practice creative teaching techniques and strategies. These traits resemble those of creative instructors that Robinson (2006) identified as what he called divergent thinking. Among the studies that investigated divergent thinking as a creativity- fostering strategy are Meyer and Lederman (2013), Shen (2014), Alsahou (2015), and Scott (2015).

The use of creative tasks and texts are a few of the activities that instructors may implement to encourage learners' creativity in language teaching and learning (Burton, 2010). Open-ended problem solving tasks that are tailored to students' skills can be characterized as creative activities (Lubart, 1999). In the classroom, creative exercises may stimulate the creative process and encourage students' enthusiasm about novel concepts like language learning. Hondzel (2013) declares that teachers who want to cultivate students' innovative skills should encourage classroom participation in activities that are predicted to foster creativity growth and reward divergent ideas and problem solutions. Add to this, the development of creative tasks in language learning can be associated with the use of creative texts. Using a range of texts from newspaper articles to poems, which illustrate literary values (narrative, imagination, language pattern) explicitly link with creativity as well as generate creative process (Maley & Peachey, 2015). The teaching focus, however, is on the tasks not on the texts. Teachers could advocate exploration to stimulate creative connection by finding the problem, making justification and clarification.

The use of dialogue in the process of creativity is another way to stimulate learners' creativity. Bakhtin (1987) states that using dialogue is a basic step to enhance students' creativity as this strategy enables students to focus on the joint activity that

requires them to accomplish using the language. Furthermore, in dialogic teaching and learning, language is used as a means; students need to utilize a social mode of thinking to understand the language. The questions in the dialogue are structured to provoke a thoughtful answer, which in turn provokes further questions (Alexander, 2004). The previous two examples are some strategies that teachers can apply to enhance students' creativity in learning, specifically language learning.

2.4. Higher Education Creativity

The importance of teaching for creativity in higher education can be derived from arguments in favor of a focus on student empowerment and employability. 21st century skills are needed for work and, thus the time before graduation should be best devoted to develop such skills. In the face of economic crises, the development of creativity amongst students is not only necessary but essential. Higher education must recognize the importance of creativity in equipping people for an unstable and increasingly complicated world of work, a world which calls for people to use both their creativity and analytical skills. Sternberg and Lubart (1995) argued that in order to be successful, a person must have three types of abilities: analytical abilities (to analyse, assess, criticize, compare and contrast); practical abilities (to apply, use, implement, and activate); and creative abilities (to imagine, investigate, combine, connect, discover, create, and adapt) (cited in Louca et al., 2014).

Technological advancements have altered the way students learn (Redecker, 2008). Today's students are born into a technologically advanced world, accompanied by iPods, iPhones, video games, mobile phones, and other digital media. As a result, instructors are fighting for attention and must develop new techniques to capture

students' interest and attention. This obvious gap between the university and the students' digital environment necessitates the creation of new innovative teaching approaches (Simplicio, 2000) capable of engaging university students in effective and productive ways. Consequently, nurturing "small c" creativity appears to be especially appropriate for the Higher Education field, where the priority shall be to inspire all students to attain and fulfill their highest potential. Hence, each student's creative talent can be both supported and nurtured (Sharp, 2004). Therefore, creativity in education is claimed to be necessary for fostering our students' ability to broaden their knowledge and provide them with the opportunity and capability to produce novel ideas and information.

According to Louca et al. (2014), the EUA (European University Association) Creativity Project in (2007) has identified five major factors that influence creativity and creative thinking in higher education. These factors include the culture of the organization, the characteristics of the students, the learning environment, the methods and techniques used in teaching, and the assessment and recognition of creativity. The project emphasizes the need for a holistic approach that takes into account these factors in order to promote and support creativity in universities. The project recognizes that creativity is a valuable skill for students to possess in order to succeed in a fast-changing world and emphasizes the need for universities to adapt their teaching methods and assessment practices to foster creativity.

The success of educating for creativity in higher education depends on the culture of the organization, students' intrapersonal characteristics, and the learning environment itself (Louca et al., 2014). Kaufman and Beghetto (2013) added that implementing

creativity into a curriculum requires more than just inspired teachers; it requires a holistic approach and the commitment of all stakeholders involved.

Many studies have investigated teaching for creativity in the EFL context in the university level such as the study conducted by Hameed and Jabeen (2022) which aimed to explore the practicality of infographics in Saudi Arabian universities' EFL contexts. The study used a primarily quantitative approach with an experimental study conducted on a controlled group of EFL undergraduate students at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University. The students' perceptions were collected through a questionnaire. The data gathered in the pre-test, post-test, and questionnaires were analysed using statistical methods. The results showed that infographics have the potential to improve students' creative writing skills significantly and that students found them to be an attention-grabbing way to contemplate new ideas. The study suggests that using infographics is an effective strategy for teaching creative writing in EFL contexts.

Another study investigating creativity in higher education was conducted by Zokae et al. (2020) which investigated the correlation between creativity and Language Achievement (LA) among Iranian EFL learners from three different Iranian universities. Learners were invited through census sampling technique to participate in the study. General English questions (adapted from a university entrance exam) and self-report creativity test were employed for collecting data on LA and creativity, respectively. Questionnaires were distributed among the participants during the class hours by prior arrangement with them and their teachers, and were collected a few days later. Overall, 103 learners, aged 18 to 27, returned the questionnaires for analysis. The Pearson

correlation coefficient test revealed no significant correlation between the participants' creativity and their language achievement.

Nowadays, it is crucial more than ever to promote students' creativity in universities in order to prepare them for the work realm. The development of creativity among EFL university students has been the aim of most recent English language programs in the EFL contexts including the Libyan context. However, achieving this important aim in these contexts requires implementing some necessary actions in order to create the appropriate environment for integrating creativity in language teaching and learning.

2.5. Creativity in the ESL and EFL Contexts

Richards (2013) argues that creativity in language teaching has been “linked to levels of attainment in second language learning” (p. 20). Additionally, the ability to bring a creative mentality to language teaching is one quality among many that characterizes effective teachers. Many of the teaching methods educators favor today in a language classroom, such as student-centred, interaction-based, and communicative methods, along with integrating open ended elements, will thrive by integrating creative components. In fact, developing creative capacity in students can greatly benefit students' experience of language learning because it helps them cope with unpredictability. According to Richards (2013), creative qualities must be present in a teacher in order for teachers to successfully employ creative teaching in ESL and EFL contexts. In addition, teachers must put divergent thinking to work in their own teaching practice if they want it mirrored back to them by their students.

Guillén (2011) has found through conducting pedagogical research on creativity, that ESL students better internalize English language patterns when they engage with reading material creatively, perhaps because it becomes more personally meaningful. By shifting focus with her students toward artistic production through creative writing, she found that the students developed more memorable strategies to remember vocabulary because the vocabulary was used by characters they created themselves. In addition, going through different creative phases, which included visualization, movement, drafting, flow chart and interaction, editing, and storytelling, the students “internalized language in an unconscious manner” (Guillén, 2011, p. 43).

Regarding Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), EFL teachers have been increasingly adopting teaching practices that foster creativity in classes (Cimermanová, 2015). Several research investigations have been conducted to determine the significance of creativity in EFL instruction. Creativity in EFL classrooms, according to EFL researchers, enhances EFL learning, supports students to develop their creative skills, and provides students with a personalized EFL experience, which strengthens their comprehension of EFL (Al-Qahtani, 2016; Hofweber & Graham, 2017; Pardede, 2020; Rahmat & Jon, 2023; Richards, 2013; Schoff, 2016). By providing spaces that are safe for creative expression with encouragement and support from both the teacher and their peers, EFL students can gain skills to communicate appropriately and enhance creative thinking (Cimermanová, 2015). Creativity also helps create an environment that allows learners to better comprehend the language (Suwartono, 2017). However, in order to boost students’ creativity in the EFL context, a study by Marashi and Khatami (2017) investigated the effect of collaborative learning

on EFL learners' creativity and motivation. The study's results proved collaborative learning to have a significantly positive effect on students' creativity and motivation and provided further evidence in favor of applying cooperative learning in the ELT environment.

Reviewing the previous related literature, the researcher has noticed that the education system of Saudi Arabia- which is similar to the Libyan education system of nowadays- has traditionally been relied on rote memorization methods rather than creativity and EFL education is no exception. However, there has recently been a surging interest in boosting creativity in EFL courses (Picard, 2018). Some research on the implementation of creative teaching approaches in Saudi EFL educational institutions has focused on technology and social media (Sharma, 2019), such as Facebook (Al-Jarf, 2015), blogging (Roy, 2016), Instagram (AlGhamdi, 2018), and Snapchat (Albawardi & Jones, 2019). Other research has focused on methods that impede the conventional teacher-student hierarchy and provide students with greater autonomy and freedom to express themselves (Alonazi, 2017; Javid, 2018), with certain methods including the advancement of collaboration (Roy, 2016), the use of reading circles (Al-Qahtani, 2016), and the application of flipped classrooms (Al-Ghamdi & Al-Bargi, 2017). However, Chen and Xiao (2022) argue that excessive social media use might result in distractions and less interaction with one another, which can have a negative influence on information sharing.

Furthermore, many other Arabic studies have investigated creativity itself and not just aspects enhancing it in the EFL classroom. One of these, for instance, is the Algerian study of Nedjah and Hamada (2017) which explored teachers' knowledge

about the general concepts of creative thinking and its related skills. The study investigated teachers' perceptions about creativity and its incorporation in the EFL Classroom. It administered a questionnaire to 27 EFL teachers from the English department of Badji Mokhtar University, Algeria. The study findings revealed that although teachers hold positive perceptions about promoting creative thinking in EFL classrooms, they generally regard creativity as a challenging concept with little understanding of its characteristics.

In addition, another Arabic related research is the Moroccan study of Smare and Elfatihi (2022). The study evaluated the extent to which Moroccan EFL high school classrooms encourage the development of creative thinking skills. It explored the match between educational policy documents and their implementation through the textbook and teaching practices. The researchers used a mixed methods approach and employed five research instruments, including document analysis, textbook evaluation, questionnaires, classroom observation, and a semi-structured interview. The results indicated that although policy documents emphasize the importance of creative thinking, teaching practices and the textbook focus on lower-order thinking skills.

2.6. Nurturing Creativity in the EFL Classroom

As some teachers have misconceptions of the concept of creativity, some doubt that it is a skill that can be nurtured or suppressed depending on many factors. Torrance (1963) and Guilford (1967) as cited in Fasko (2001) cleared such doubts years ago and observed that creative thinking abilities could be developed through direct instruction. Moreover, Karnes et al. (1961), asserts that teaching techniques that stimulate both convergent and divergent thinking are important for stimulating creative thinking and

are more challenging to creative students. Individual assignments based on problem solving would also stimulate creativity (Subotnik, 1988). Another technique for developing creativity is the problem solving approach, which is an indirect teaching method.

Davis and Rimm (1985) believed that creative abilities could be strengthened through practice in creative thinking exercises, such as those that promote divergent thinking (e.g., brainstorming). The model of Davis and Rimm suggests that to become a creative person one must (a) increase one's creativity consciousness, (b) understand the topic of creativity, (c) use personal and standard creative thinking techniques, and (d) be self-actualized (cited in Fasko, 2001). Following this reasoning, Gross et al. (2020) revealed that curious individuals ask more open-ended questions while working on a creative design task, which in turn improves the quality of their creative designs. However, according to Torrance (1972), the most effective techniques for stimulating creativity involved both cognitive and affective factors, as well as provided extrinsic motivation and active learning opportunities (cited in Fasko, 2001).

Apart from the methods and strategies boosting creativity in the classroom, there are many educational factors that can promote or hinder the development of creative thinking. What we believe of creative thinking is one of the major factors that influence the development of this skill in the classroom. Having misconceptions and wrong beliefs that do not align with the scientific findings hinders the development of creative thinking (Benedek et al., 2021). Teaching practices have an impact on the growth of creative thinking as well. Traditional teaching practices that are based on passive and rote learning suppress creative thinking (Calavia et al., 2021). Furthermore, the questions that

teachers ask impact the development of the skill. Asking open-ended questions that require thinking differently, making connections between different ideas and between what previous learnt content and the new one. In addition, asking students to solve problems in various ways using unconventional solutions and ideas foster creative thinking in the classroom (Rahimi & Shute, 2021). While solving problems, teachers should encourage students to express opinion and think creatively and also give them enough time to think (Clack, 2017). The approach adopted also plays an essential role in promoting creative thinking in the classroom. Cooperative learning has been shown to increase students' creative ideas (Ibán et al., 2020). Encouraging intrinsic motivation is vital too according to Kaufman (2016). Nonetheless, overemphasizing high-stakes testing hinders the promotion of creative thinking (Jones & Richards, 2016).

Many studies addressed promoting creativity in the EFL classroom and the strategies that might help to do so. One of these studies is the study of Al-Qahtani (2016). He investigated whether or not EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia foster creativity in their classrooms, while also taking into account their perceptions and attitudes regarding this essential subject matter. 45 Saudi EFL teachers and 6 EFL supervisors were included in the sample. A questionnaire and an interview were triangulated. According to the findings, the majority of Saudi EFL teachers exert little effort to develop creativity in their methods of instruction. Also, their attitudes towards creativity seem to be varied. The study identified a number of factors as being responsible for these results, such as the confusing concept of creativity, its inappropriateness in language teaching associating it to subjects like science and math, lack of support for creativity in textbooks, and lack of teacher training in fostering creativity. In the same year,

Dianawati and Mulyono (2016) reported that writing about meaningful communicative situations in real social environments and other activities such as drama, poetry, and storytelling can also promote creativity.

Another related study was by Avila (2015) that studied activities promoting creativity in EFL learning. The findings of Avila's indicated the positive impact of implementing creative activities such as chain games, creative writing and screenwriting on enhancing EFL learners' oral and written fluency and improving their understanding of English grammar and structure. The researcher conducted an experimental teaching using Elliot's action model, which involves planning, acting, observing, and reflecting on the pedagogical experience. The activities included various tasks such as grammar exercises, creative writing, screenwriting, and drawing. Eleven intermediate level students participated in the experiment and were given opportunities to apply their creative potential and implement their knowledge and skills. The students showed high motivation and were able to create their own speeches and activities

Following the same vein, Cho and Kim (2018) conducted a study about promoting creativity through language play in EFL classrooms. They found that applying language play activities can foster students' communicative competence and promote creativity and exploration. It is worth noting that these studies were conducted in EFL classrooms in primary, secondary and higher education and in private English-teaching institutes.

2.7. EFL Teachers' Beliefs about Creativity

Beliefs refer to the cognitive representations or mental constructs that individuals hold about various aspects of the world, including themselves, others, and the

environment. In the context of education, teachers' beliefs encompass their personal theories, values, and assumptions about teaching and learning, which can influence their instructional decisions and classroom practices (Borg, 2003). Teachers' beliefs can be shaped by various factors, such as their educational background, professional experiences, and cultural context. According to Pajares (1992), "Beliefs are assumptions and convictions about reality that are held to be true or real by individuals or groups and that serve as a framework for the way people perceive and interpret the world around them" (p. 312). For the researcher, beliefs are the opinions that one's hold about something and are a result of life experiences and other factors of culture and education.

Teachers hold a set of beliefs about professional practices. These beliefs play a major role in their decision making and practices (Shinde & Karekatti, 2012). Studies on teachers' beliefs have shown that beliefs influence teachers' teaching practices and provide a rationale for what teachers do in the classroom (Devine et al., 2013). In other words, teachers' practices or actions are often a reflection of what they know and believe. Teachers' beliefs are closely associated with their personal and professional experiences in the past which are from different sources: learning experiences, prior teaching experiences and professional development (Fives & Buehl, 2012). These belief sources of reference are built up gradually over time.

The first source of teachers' beliefs can be the way they have been learnt. All teachers have previously been learners, and their learning experiences have significant implications for their classroom practices (Horwitz, 1998). Their beliefs about teaching are often a reflection of how they themselves were taught (Fives & Buehl, 2012). Such a tendency was observed in Kim's study (2011) that explored teachers' beliefs about

teaching and learning English in the Korean university context. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 8 native English speakers. The study found that these teachers used particular methods, approaches or skills learnt from their previous teachers and applied them in their classrooms. Interestingly, when they had unpleasant experiences, they tried to do things differently and only emphasized positive learning experiences. For instance, instead of repetition, they tried to encourage learners' creativity and promote independent learning.

The second indication of teachers' beliefs can be their years of experience in teaching. After teaching for several years, teachers are more comfortable in applying different strategies in their classroom. Their prior teaching experience serves as learnt material that change their beliefs on how to conduct better classroom teaching. They are able to identify and select the approach or strategy that works best for their students (Fitriah, 2017).

The third source of teachers' beliefs can be their professional development, which has also an important effect on teachers' beliefs. Most of what teachers learn about the practices of teaching is learnt in professional teacher education programs (Johnson & Freeman, 2001). Kim's study (2011) reported that participating in any training such as workshops and teacher-training programs has a strong impact on teachers' beliefs. Their experience in attending such professional courses helps teachers figure out the reasoning behind the methods and techniques used in the classroom. However, teachers' knowledge obtained from professional programs can make sense only when it is contextualized by accommodating demands that are specific to the situations they teach in.

Pajares (1992) believes that individuals enact practices based on the beliefs they hold. Supporting this view, many studies included in the present study compared the direct relationship between teachers' espoused beliefs about creativity and their enacted classroom practices (Adams, 2013; Alkhars, 2013; Alsahou, 2015; Shaheen, 2011). Some studies found consistency between teachers' beliefs and their practices, while others found inconsistencies. However, some teachers had positive beliefs about creativity but did not implement practices that fostered creativity. The studies highlight the importance of exploring teachers' beliefs and practices to encourage creativity in the classroom.

Add to the above, some of the studies conducted on EFL teachers' beliefs about creativity in the Arab world has included research in Kuwait (Al-Nouh et al., 2014), Algeria (Nedjah & Hamada, 2017), Palestine (Raba & Herzallah, 2018), and Saudi Arabia (Aldujayn & Alsubhi, 2020; Al-Qahtani, 2016). These studies have found generally positive beliefs about creativity but confusion about how to define and teach creativity. Noteworthy here is the fact that creative features identified in past studies are not directly related to creative materials, but how teachers present or teach materials (knowledge) in creative ways. Therefore, the same strategies can be applied in all areas of education whether it is in general education or in TEFL.

Continuing the review of the previous related literature concerning creativity in the EFL context, the Kuwaiti study of Al-Nouh et al. (2014) was one of many Arabic related literature of the study. It examined primary school EFL teachers' attitudes towards creative thinking and their perceptions of what goes on in the classroom. Participants comprised of 434 female primary school EFL instructors from six

educational regions in Kuwait, chosen at random. The study employed a survey-based descriptive approach with a five-point Likert scale, as well as a focus group interview and an analysis of exam paper samples for data triangulation. Age, nationality, major, degree, educational zone, years of teaching, and in-service training were the independent variables measured. The findings revealed that instructors' perceptions and attitudes were high. Most variables showed significant disparities.

Add to the Arabic related studies, the Saudi Arabian study of Aldujayn and Alsubhi (2020). It investigated Saudi EFL teachers' interpretation toward creativity. The researcher gathered data of attitudes toward creativity from 85 female Saudi EFL instructors using a validated questionnaire derived from Al-Qahtani (2016). The study revealed that the instructors who took part had positive attitudes regarding creativity. However, many were confused about the meaning of creativity and lacked confidence in their use of creative methods.

Among the non-Arabic related studies was Fitriah's (2017) study which investigated the views of Indonesian EFL teachers about creativity in EFL classrooms through interviewing 20 teachers and distributing a questionnaire among 175 teachers. The results showed that the participant teachers hold positive beliefs incorporating creativity in EFL classrooms and they defined it in terms of four categories: 'product', 'process', 'everyday practice' and 'cognition' and considered it as a personal achievement. The results of this study suggest that teachers' creativity is not only essential for engaging learners in classroom activities but also for creating the condition which allow the learners' own creativity to flourish. That is, teaching creatively automatically leads to teaching for creativity.

Fortunately, a much updated study by Esfandiari and Husseini (2023) examined Iranian EFL teachers' beliefs while assessing creativity in EFL learners' writing performance. A misalignment between their beliefs and practices in assessing creativity was also investigated. The researchers followed a descriptive narrative design in which the autobiographical narratives of 7 Iranian EFL teachers and their practices were collected and analysed. Though teachers believed to focus on creative traits such as elaboration, adaptation, novelty, and fluency, the deductive-thematic analysis indicated a discrepancy between their beliefs and practices. They concluded that factors involving teachers' knowledge, their accountability, a lack of fixed rubrics to assess creativity in writing, and teachers' understanding of creativity might be the reasons behind the misalignment between teachers' beliefs and practices when assessing creativity in writing. Similar studies investigating creativity in writing include Sponseller and Wilkins (2015) and Ottoson and Crane (2016) who suggested that unguided freewriting in which students select their own topics facilitates greater writing fluency and thus boosts creativity.

Surprisingly, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, there was not a single research addressing Libyan EFL teachers' neither beliefs nor practices about creativity. Nonetheless, many Libyan studies have investigated other aspects that may trigger or lead to creativity in the EFL context. Among various studies, one study, for example, examined the integration of critical thinking in the EFL classroom (Hadoud, 2020). In addition, Salem (2020) explored EFL university instructors' and students' attitudes towards using group work. In the same vein, a third study investigated Libyan instructors' beliefs and practices of collaborative learning in the EFL classroom

(Abushina, 2022). And the fourth Libyan study was by Saleh (2019) who, in his study of the 4Cs in the EFL classroom, suggested that researchers and educators should begin by approaching the issue of creativity in Libyan EFL classrooms from various perspectives, including examining the beliefs and practices of both teachers and students for integrating creativity into the classroom.

To reiterate, the study of teachers' creativity in language teaching is very important and deserves further investigation especially because what teachers believe about creative teaching is likely to influence their classroom practices. Teachers need to be aware that they must always improve their knowledge and skills to be able to teach creatively and, hence, teach for creativity.

2.8. Assessment of Creativity

Assessing creativity has been as difficult as defining it, due to its intricate nature, as well as limitations in assessment, which make precise evaluation a difficult task. However, Starko (2010) declared that attempts to promote creativity in students will not succeed unless teachers are able to identify and acknowledge it. Assessment aims to shift judgments from "I know it when I see it" to greater consistency and agreement among professionals. Starko (2010) clarifies the point by stating that the goal of assessing or recognizing creativity in schools is not to create labels like "creative" and "non-creative" for students. Instead, it aims to enable educators to acknowledge creativity as it arises and establish conditions that foster its growth. Additionally, it can help teachers identify exceptional students whose outstanding creativity, like any other extraordinary talent, should be encouraged and cultivated in the school setting.

Regardless of the difficulties accompanying creativity assessment, attempts to assess creativity have a rich history (Beattie, 2000; Treffinger et al., 2002). A variety of assessment instruments were available for the improvement of specific traits associated with creativity, such as the use of descriptive rubrics backed with examples (Lindström, 2006), peer assessment, portfolio assessment, mixed methods assessment (Treffinger et al., 2002), and different self-assessment forms.

However, the educational focus has shifted towards results-based learning due to the emphasis on high-stakes testing (Turner, 2013), which has led to a suppression of higher-level thinking and creativity in schools. Teachers may feel pressured to prioritize correct answers over creative responses, and one-size-fits-all instruction may not accommodate exceptional creative abilities (Sternberg, 2006). Sternberg (2006) adds that conventional assessments and tests may not have the necessary range and dimensionality to detect creativity in students. There are two distinct and sometimes overlapping purposes of assessment in education: one is to provide certification of achievement; the other is to facilitate learning (Boud & Falchikov, 2006). Assessment can thus be formative, helping students and teachers improve, or summative, enabling measurement of capability and comparison.

It is worth acknowledging the paradigm shift from a focus on product to one on process in language assessment. Assessment for Learning (AFL) is becoming increasingly prevalent in educational policymaking. It assesses a student's comprehension during the learning and teaching process, while Assessment of Learning (AOL) evaluates a student's understanding at the end of a unit or grading period. AFL is student-centred and encourages learners to take responsibility for their learning process,

whereas AOL is teacher-centred and summarizes students' achievements for evaluation purposes (Assessment Reform Group 2002). There is a growing movement towards using AFL in the classroom, but harmonizing both approaches can yield more effective results.

Based on the notion that creativity can be taught and hence learned (Beghetto & Plucker 2016), the advancement of creativity should be measurable in ways that are beneficial to students as well as educators (Lucas, 2016). Such a shift towards AFL may help enhance creativity and innovation especially in writing as in the study of Lee (2011) which aimed at bringing innovation to EFL writing through a focus on AFL. It investigated how the teachers' determination to implement AFL in writing influenced their instructional and assessment practices and impacted on students' attitudes and beliefs regarding writing. In addition, Bolden and DeLuca (2022) concluded that AFL as an assessment approach can avoid traditional issues connected with creativity assessment due to its emphasis on nurturing creativity through formative guidance from peers and teachers rather than evaluating it.

Assessment for Learning (AFL) integrates students in activities of formative assessment (such as self-, peer-, and teacher feedback) to promote autonomy and metacognition (Black & Wiliam, 2006). However, Eberle and Hobrecht (2021) stated that, in struggling with learner autonomy since many students were not able to cope appropriately, students' self-regulation skills as well as skills to initiate and maintain social contacts for interactive learning activities and for motivational support emerged as crucial aspects. Despite the potential for AFL to support creativity development, its use in creativity-based learning remains underdeveloped. This is due to the troubled

relationship between creativity and assessment in educational contexts. Teachers frequently reject assessing creativity as they consider it to be too subjective to be assessed, they fear assessment may discourage students' self-expression (Lucas et al., 2013), or they have difficulty with defining or understanding creativity and thus are confused how to assess it (Mullet et al., 2016). Therefore, AFL is currently being investigated as an assessment approach that can bypass the conventional concerns connected with creativity assessment due to its emphasis on cultivating creativity through formative direction from instructors and peers rather than evaluation.

However, most of the current ways of assessment in the Libyan EFL context do not provide opportunities for students to showcase their creative abilities. To promote creativity, new assessment methods that focus on creative thinking and expression and value the process more than the product should be incorporated into the curriculum.

2.9. Challenges Hindering Creativity Integration

While stimulating creativity is one of the essential duties of educators in the learning process, some constraints of creativity may arise which stifle creativity in the classroom and hold individuals back from being creative. In reviewing creativity barriers, there are various limitations that need to be considered. One of these is the challenge of terminology (Craft, 2002). Having misconceptions of the concept of creativity or being confused what is creative and what is not can be considered the main obstacle as such beliefs affect teaching practices negatively. Many Arabic EFL studies have reported creativity as a quite confusing concept and have uncertain knowledge about its characteristics; in Kuwait (Al-Nouh et al., 2014), Algeria (Nedjah & Hamada, 2017), Palestine (Raba & Herzallah, 2018), and Saudi Arabia (Aldujayn & Alsubhi,

2020). Lack of teacher training programs is another major barrier to teachers not implementing various interactive methods and, hence not promoting creativity in their students (Al-Nouh et al., 2014; Al-Qahtani, 2016; Cachia & Ferrari, 2010; Masadeh, 2021; Nedjah & Hamada, 2017; Shaheen, 2011). In addition, overloaded curriculum that does not include creativity as a vital component of it and does not leave time for teachers to foster it is a prominent teacher complaint (Aish, 2014; Akyildiz & Çelik, 2020; Al-Nouh et al., 2014; Alsahou, 2015; Cachia & Ferrari, 2010; Cheng, 2010; Fairfield, 2010; Frawley, 2014; Hondzel, 2013; Hong & Kang, 2010; Kampilis et al., 2011; Nedjah & Hamada, 2017; Scott, 2015; Shaheen, 2011; Wang & Kokotsaki, 2018; Zhou et al., 2013).

In a study conducted by Schacter et al. (2006), standardized testing and assessment systems and accountability were stated to limit creativity. Following research has proved this finding to be a great barrier to creativity (Akyildiz & Çelik, 2020; Al-nouh et al., 2014; Nedjah & Hamada, 2017; Shaheen, 2011; Wang & Kokotsaki, 2018). Also, the lack of technological resources to be used in classes and depending too much on textbooks restricts the number of activities used creatively to teach the language communicatively (Leach, 2001). Al- Nouh et al. (2014), Hartley and Plucker (2014), and Shaheen (2011) have reported limited and inadequate materials, resources and facilities to be obstacles to creative thinking. Moreover, according to Dajani and Mclauplin (2009), when students do not get enough attention due to their large number in each class, it leaves them no opportunity to practice the language or communicate in it (Akyildiz & Çelik, 2020; Al-Nouh et al., 2014; Shaheen, 2011; Wang & Kokotsaki, 2018). Hong and Kang (2010) found that in addition to overloaded curriculum, class size

and the assessment of creativity, which were viewed by both American and South Korean teachers as barriers to promoting creativity, South Korean teachers also, mentioned the lack of teachers' own experience with and knowledge about creativity and pressure for student achievement, suggesting further cross-cultural differences. This leads to the fundamental question of how culturally specific creativity is (Craft, 2002). It is important to realize that the understanding of creativity may be different in different countries due to their unique cultures and social values (Kokotsaki & Newton, 2015). Thus, unsupportive social culture impacts creativity integration and promotion in EFL classrooms (Shaheen, 2011; Wang & Kokotsaki, 2018). Furthermore, the expectations of school administrators and parents of high grades and the students' need for rote learning to pass exams limit creativity in the learning environment (Al-nouh et al., 2014).

According to Fasko (2001), adequate time is needed for creativity. Students should be part of the learning process and be grown a new person through creative teaching without any time limitation. In other words, time limitation in the education settings hinders creativity (Feldhusen & Treffinger, 1980). The Algerian study of Ladjini and Benaissi (2021) provided us with extra evidence on time barrier. It aimed at uncovering the possible barriers that hinder creativity and highlighting the strategies that boost it in the classroom. This study was based on the hypothesis that university students can be negatively affected by a number of factors. A questionnaire was distributed to 37 students of English at M'sila University. Findings of the study revealed that the majority of students are not facing obstacles; however, one clearly noticed barrier to creativity was 'time inadequacy'. Many other studies asserted that lack of time in classrooms

suppresses creativity (Akyildiz & Çelik, 2020; Al-Nouh et al., 2014; Nedjah & Hamada, 2017; Shaheen, 2011; Wang & Kokotsaki, 2018).

Reviewing creativity with a specific skill, the Jordanian study of Rababah et al. (2017) focused on creativity in writing. It investigated the barriers that hinder students' creativity in EFL writing. Jordanian EFL secondary school students participated in this qualitative study. Convenience sampling was used to select 8 EFL male students. According to the findings, the low-scoring of the participants can be classified into three themes: improper vocabulary, lack of unity and coherence, and shortage of support. In order to improve students' writing creativity, educators must address the constraints of creativity, such as a lack of vocabulary. Adding to the above, the Palestinian study of Raba and Herzallah (2018) provides another evidence of the barriers to creativity. It investigated Palestinian teachers' views on the factors that limit students' creativity. The researchers used a 20-item questionnaire and a 5-question interview with a sample of 14 male and female teachers (8 teachers of English and (6) teachers of Math. According to the study's findings, the use of creative thinking in schools and curricula is limited and inefficient. In the light of these findings, the researchers recommended divergent methods of teaching, adequate training for teachers and students on different techniques and the inclusion of activities in the curricula to improve students' creative thinking.

Other factors inhibiting teaching for creativity are traditional teaching methods such as lecturing (Al-Nouh et al., 2014; Al-Qahtani, 2016; Shaheen, 2011), students' unwillingness to engage in the learning process (Nedjah & Hamada, 2017), students' attitudes towards English and their level in English (Akyildiz & Çelik, 2020; Wang & Kokotsaki, 2018), and lack of school support (Aldujayn & Alsubhi, 2020). Despite the

fact that creativity is valued by policymakers and by teachers, a number of challenges and shortcomings can contribute to what Makel (2009) refers to as the 'creative gap', 'between the perceived value of creativity and its absence in schools' (Rinkevich, 2011, p.220). However, regarding the Libyan context, it is considered to be in the early phases of education development and with efforts from individuals to competent authorities; the 21st century skills will align with the teaching practices.

2.10. Summary of the Chapter

This chapter reviewed an extensive literature on one of the 21st century skills, which is creativity, through presenting its definitions and its importance in education; let alone EFL higher education. A distinction between teaching creatively and teaching for creativity was debated. Furthermore, promoting creativity through various creative teaching methods was discussed. In addition, EFL teachers' beliefs about creativity, its assessment and the challenges teachers and learners may face that hinder creativity integration were mentioned. Some previous research studies which were relevant to the research topic were included throughout the review of literature.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter addresses the research methodology used in this study. It employed a mixed-method sequential explanatory design, wherein both the initial quantitative phase and subsequent qualitative phase are comprehensively examined. Furthermore, this chapter encompasses a comprehensive discussion of the data collection instruments, including their validation, reliability assessment, and piloting procedures. It also includes a thorough exploration of the study's population and sample, adherence to ethical considerations, and concludes with a concise summary of the chapter.

3.2. Research Design

This research adopts a sequential explanatory design. Creswell (2003) posits that a mixed-method sequential explanatory design follows two-phased approach, involving collection and analysis of quantitative data and followed by collection and analysis of qualitative data to explain or elaborate on the quantitative results. The two phases are connected in the intermediate stage in the study. The rationale for this approach is that the quantitative data results provide a general picture of the research problem. The inclusion of qualitative data collection and analysis becomes imperative to enhance, expand, or elucidate the general understanding. This design can be especially useful when unexpected results arise from the quantitative data (Morse, 1991). Hence, data from the study was collected through a questionnaire, followed by a semi-structured interview.

3.2.1. Quantitative Phase

The goal of the quantitative phase was to identify the extent of which the EFL classroom practices reflect creativity in the different educational colleges of the University of Zawia. The extent of enacting the classroom practices that reflect creativity are extracted from students' responses to a closed-ended questionnaire. Within the realm of scholarly investigation, a particular focus has been drawn on the assessment of teaching through student evaluation specifically concerning its validity and effectiveness as a metric to measure the quality of teaching (Richardson 2005; Marsh 2007; Chan et al., 2014). The inclusion of student surveys serves as a complementary source of data in mixed-method research designs. It allows for triangulation, where researchers compare and contrast student perceptions with other objective measures, such as teacher interviews (Kelle et al., 2019).

In this study, the core survey items formed three-point Likert type scales and reflected general creativity triggering classroom practices. Validity and reliability of the survey scale items were established on content validity, convergent validity and split-half reliability. All participants were 8th semester students, at their last semester in college and their data were analysed using SPSS program.

3.2.2. Qualitative Phase

In the second phase, the study used a qualitative approach to help explain and justify the quantitative data gained in the first phase. In this particular phase of the study, a deliberate and purposive sampling approach was employed to select a cohort of 10 university-level EFL instructors, with the aim of investigating their perspectives and beliefs pertaining to creativity. It is important to note that the participants in this phase

differed from those who participated in the survey component, which comprised the students. To gather qualitative data, the researcher utilized a semi-structured interview format. Creswell and Clark (2018) confirm that employing a different sample in the second phase enables researchers to strengthen the validity of their findings through data triangulation. They add that by comparing and contrasting the results from different samples, researchers can enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of their interpretations.

The questions of the semi-structured interview were seven, yet they were flexible for addition or omission based on the interactions with the interviewees. Validity and reliability of the semi-structured interview and its questions were established on content validity, and piloting for reliability. A panel of Libyan EFL university teachers was used to secure the content validity of the interview questions, such as the survey items. The researcher audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim each interview, and then conducted inductive thematic analysis to analyse the qualitative data.

3.3. Instruments of Data Collection

A closed-ended questionnaire was used as a data collection tool in the first phase of the mixed-methods sequential explanatory research. The rationale for using the questionnaire is to collect quantitative data about the EFL classroom practices reflecting creativity. Using a questionnaire for this study is exceedingly adequate and beneficial. Preston (2009) affirms that by obtaining a large amount of data from a wide sample with an economy in time, effort and expense. According to Dawson (2002), closed-ended questionnaires, which are used to generate statistics in quantitative research, can be

scanned straight into a computer for ease of analysis, and hence, greater numbers can be produced.

Moreover, a semi-structured interview was used in the second qualitative phase of the study to elaborate on the quantitative data and provoke Libyan EFL university teachers' opinions and intakes about creativity. Gay and Airasian (2003, p. 209) define an interview as "a purposeful interaction between two or more people focused on one person trying to get information from the other person". Add to this, interviews are an effective method for data collection when the researcher wants to explore participants' thoughts, feelings and beliefs about a particular topic (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).

3.3.1. The Questionnaire

The data collection process for the initial phase of this study involved the utilization of a questionnaire, which was adapted from the work of Pishghadam et al. (2012) and subsequently modified by the researcher to align with the specific objectives of the current investigation. In fact, Driscoll (2011, p.1) states that when "inquiring about a general trend in people's opinions, experiences, and behavior" and using a questionnaire as a data collection technique proves advantageous to capture the broad overview. The adopted questionnaire contained the most influential factors of creativity. It was of (62) items and then modified by the researcher to end up with (26) items. (36) Questionnaire items were discarded as being seen as repetitive for the researcher. The 26 items questionnaire was revised by 8 expert university EFL teachers and then piloted. Three-point Likert scale (Always, Sometimes, Never) was used. A scale value was assigned to each category from one to three.

Jamieson (2004) explains that a three-point Likert scale is more useful in certain situations. He argues that it simplifies the response process for participants and may reduce the likelihood of response errors. Further, Allen and Seaman (2007) find out that a three-point scale yielded more reliable data than a five-point scale when measuring participants' attitudes towards online learning. In a similar vein, Gefen et al. (2000) conclude that three-point scales are suitable for measuring constructs that are well-understood by participants, as they can evidently distinguish between their opinions. In addition to the above-mentioned reasons for using a three-point scale, the adopted study of Pishghadam et al. (2012) attempt the five-point scale at first; but the three-point scale produced the best indices.

3.3.2. Semi-structured Interview

Interviews are best suited for understanding people's perceptions and experiences (Horton et al., 2004). Alshenqeeti (2014) declares that they are a widespread way of gathering verbal data. Interviews are of three types classified by their position in qualitative researches: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews (Jamshed, 2014). Structured interviews, similar to a questionnaire, are fully controlled by the interviewer and as such, give the interviewee less room to be flexible (Stuckey, 2013). Unlike the structured interviews, semi-structured interviews have no rigid adherence. They fall between structured and unstructured poles, in that many questions or themes will be planned ahead of time (ibid). However, a completely unstructured interview is more like a conversation, though one with a particular focus and purpose (Muylaert et al., 2014).

The current study employs semi-structured interviews in its second phase of data collection. Semi-structured interviews were chosen in order to allow the interviewees a degree of freedom to explain their thoughts and to highlight areas of particular interest and expertise (Horton et al., 2004). This is to enable certain responses from the questionnaire completed in the first phase to be questioned in greater depth. The adoption of semi-structured interviews is justified by the flexibility it offers, which surpasses the limitations imposed on statistical analysis (Smith, 1995). In this light, the study developed the semi-structured interview questions by drawing upon the preliminary results of the quantitative data phase. To ensure the comprehensiveness and relevance of the questions to the current study, they were reviewed and consulted with a panel of eight university teachers. Incorporating their feedback, the interview questions underwent a rigorous revision process, ultimately resulting in a final set of seven questions.

3.4. Validity

One of the criteria utilized to assess the quality of research is validity (Mukherjee, 2019). It focuses on the accuracy of the methods used to measure certain outputs. In other words, validity is concerned with the integrity of the results drawn from a piece of research (Bryman, 2012). Validity tests can be established in several ways: face validity, content validity, concurrent validity, predictive validity, construct validity, and convergent validity (ibid).

Researchers can verify the validity of their research instrument using a variety of validity checks. Despite the effectiveness of all validity types for any research, content validity was more relevant for the study's instruments. Content validity denotes that the

instrument should fairly and thoroughly address the subject of the research (Gass & Mackey, 2007). A good strategy for accounting for the content validity of questionnaires and interviews can be achieved through other academics' reflection on their contents and structures (Bryman, 2008; Gay & Airasian 2003; Gass & Mackey, 2007). An expert panel comprising scholars in the relevant field was engaged to critically evaluate the questionnaire items and interview questions. It provided feedback on the appropriateness and relevance of the statements and questions in relation to the research topic. Further, their expertise was sought to assess the clarity and comprehensibility of the phrasing to ensure that both student participants and teacher interviewees could readily understand and respond to the instruments.

The study's instruments were reviewed by 8 Libyan EFL university teachers from different universities in the West of Libya, providing their opinions and suggestions about the instruments' content and structure and to ensure their scope and appropriateness to the study and that the statements and the questions cover all relevant aspects of the topic. Several discussions were held with these university teachers to thoroughly revise the instruments. Thus, 26 items were prepared to measure the extent by which Libyan EFL university teachers integrate creativity in their classrooms; and 7 questions were organized to explore Libyan EFL university teachers' beliefs toward creativity. The revised questionnaire and interview questions were then used for piloting.

To confirm the validity of the questionnaire, the researcher employed another type of validity called convergent validity which is a type of construct validity. Convergent validity examines the degree to which different items or measures that are expected to be related to each other actually demonstrate a positive correlation

(DeVellis, 2017). It is often assumed that if the value achieves a considerable level, the model has strong convergent validity (Bagozzi et al., 1991). Table (3.1) displays the correlation between each item and the total score of the questionnaire, indicating the degree of association between individual items and the overall construct being measured. All the correlation coefficients were significant either on 0.05 or 0.01 levels of significance. The data analysis demonstrated that each item within the questionnaire contributed significantly to the overall construct being measured, thereby establishing the questionnaire's validity.

Table (3.1): Correlation between Each Item and the Total of the Questionnaire

Items	Correlation	Items	Correlation	Items	Correlation
1	-.367*	10	.490*	19	-.430*
2	.315*	11	.464**	20	-.494**
3	.373*	12	.380*	21	-.460**
4	-.401*	13	.551**	22	.494**
5	.377*	14	.548**	23	.430*
6	.427*	15	.538**	24	.333*
7	.781**	16	.394*	25	.327*
8	.558**	17	.646**	26	.416*
9	-.397*	18	.789**		

***significant on 0.05 ** significant on 0.01**

3.5. Reliability

According to Bryman (2012), stability emerges as one of the important factors that are involved in the consideration of the reliability of a measure. Reliability refers to a measurement that yields consistent outcomes with equal values (Blumberg, et al., 2005). It indicates to whether or not similar results can be gained upon replicating the data collection techniques and data analysis process with the same participants. It is a

fundamental feature in the assessment of measurements of both qualitative and quantitative research (Mukherjee, 2019). The overarching objective of ensuring reliability is to reduce researcher bias and enhance validity (ibid). In quantitative research, if a study was repeated under the same conditions, yet different circumstances, applying the same data collection and analysis process with the same participants and the same results are obtained, it is then reliable (Leung, 2015). Dealing with a stable measure will hopefully bring out similar results. A high degree of stability displays a high degree of reliability, which means the results are repeatable. Hence, the pursuit of reliability serves to bolster the research's validity and mitigate researcher bias. In the context of qualitative research, reliability is characterized by consistency in the researcher's approach across diverse researchers and different projects (Twycross & Shields, 2004).

Several types of reliability can be used in research, that is, test-retest reliability, inter-rater reliability, internal consistency reliability, parallel forms reliability and split-half reliability (Royal & Hecker, 2016). The current study employs split-half reliability with the quantitative instrument. Nath (2013) explains that split-half reliability measures the consistency of scores obtained from splitting a single measurement instrument in half. It is calculated by comparing the scores obtained from one-half of the items on the instrument to the scores obtained from the other half. Even if a test measures more than one factor, reliability is defined (ibid). Split-half was developed to help a tool easily extract internal consistency and reliability estimates from behavioral measures (Parsons, 2021). The qualitative instrument was tested for reliability by piloting 2 Libyan EFL university teachers from Abu Issa College of Education. Their responses were similar

in defining creativity and in the challenges they encountered regarding integrating creativity in the EFL classroom.

To determine the reliability of the questionnaire, the split-half reliability method was used and the correlation coefficient was (.789) which was high and indicated that the instrument was reliable. Moreover, the university teachers' suggestions on the interview questions were taken into account. The next stage before the actual administration of the study instruments on the study's sample is piloting.

3.6. Pilot Study

A pilot study is a small-scale research project conducted before the final full-scale study, which allows researchers to identify any potential problems and deficiencies in the research instruments and refine the research methodology before conducting the final study (Ismail et al., 2018; Mackey & Gass, 2021). It also provides feedback to the researchers that enable them to make any adjustments before conducting the final study. Therefore, piloting has a role in ensuring that research instruments function as a whole (Bryman, 2012).

In this study, the questionnaire and semi-structured interview were piloted to ensure the validity of the statements and questions. The questionnaire was randomly piloted with 20 EFL students in their last semester, 10 were from Nasser College of Education and the other 10 were from Zawia College of Education in May 2022. Their responses indicated the clarity of the statements. The time to fill out the questionnaire did not take more than 7 minutes. The semi-structured interview was piloted in July 2022 to two university EFL teachers from Abu Issa College of Education. The participants' feedback ensured the clarity and appropriateness of the questions. Therefore, although

adjustments were earlier made to the questionnaire and the interview questions according to 8 expert teachers' feedback (validity), no further changes were made to the research instruments and no major issues were discovered.

3.7. Population and Sample of the Study

The target population for this study is compromised Libyan EFL university teachers and their 8th-semester students during the academic year of 2022, at the University of Zawia. Due to the large size of the population and challenges associated with accessibility, the study focused specifically on 8th-semester English major students from the educational colleges of the University of Zawia, along with their corresponding EFL university teachers. As the University of Zawia has only one Art College, the researcher excluded the variable of college in the study. The sample included ninety-eight (98) students who were selected randomly from the four colleges, Table (3.2), in addition to the 10 teachers being purposefully selected from the same colleges. Both samples accepted to voluntarily participate in the study. The participants were selected without looking at their age, gender or experience to prove a general perspective of creativity.

For the first phase of administration, the questionnaire was distributed to the students to reflect on their teachers' classroom practices. They were in their final semester before graduation. Thus, they have greater experience with their teachers. Probability sampling and more specifically, simple random sampling was used in the first phase of the mixed-methods sequential explanatory research. As noted by Kothari (2004), simple random sampling is an effective way to minimize selection bias and increase the external validity of the study. Moreover, Marczyk et al. (2005) claim that

random sampling proves to be a practical method in quantitative research because it attempts to ensure the representativeness of all characteristics of the population - even those that the researcher may not have considered. This helps to minimize potential sampling bias that would prevent making generalizations from the sample to the population.

In the second phase of the mixed method sequential explanatory design, researchers typically collect qualitative data to explain or expand on the findings from the first phase of the study (Creswell, 2009). According to Kumar (2010), non-probability sampling designs are used when the number of participants in a population is either unknown or cannot be individually identified. Consequently, the qualitative sample selected is based on purposive sampling in which participants are selected to provide the best possible information (Merriam, 1998). Morse (2008) elaborates in her book that purposive sampling is a successful strategy for selecting a sample that is most informative for the research question and is representative of a specific population or group. Thus, the selected participants were of a minimum of 5 years of experience in teaching at the University of Zawia. With respect to the determination of the sample size, the researcher adopted a saturation approach, guided by the principle that data collection through interviews would cease once redundancy in ideas and experiences became apparent (Robson, 2011). This indicates that a 'saturation point' is reached, and no new information is being provided by continuing (Dawson, 2002). Therefore, the total number of EFL university teachers was 10 EFL teachers who teach at the four educational colleges of the University of Zawia. They are most likely to provide rich and informative data and expand on data gathered in the first phase.

Table (3.2): Distribution of students' sample in the educational colleges of the University of Zawia

College	Frequency	Per cent
Nasser College of Education	11	11.2
Al-Ajailat College of Education	44	44.9
Zawia College of Education	21	21.4
Abu Issa College of Education	22	22.4
Total	98	100.0

3.8. Data Collection Procedures

The process of collecting the required data for this study was performed in two distinct periods based on the two distinct phases of the research design. The first phase of data collection is quantitative and is performed in July 2022; whereas the second phase of data collection is qualitative and is conducted in November 2022. The researcher met with the heads of the English Department in the four educational colleges at the University of Zawia and gained their approval for conducting the study at the Departments.

For the first phase, the researcher explained the aim of the closed-ended questionnaire and the way it serves the study. After the researcher distributed the questionnaire herself, each statement of the questionnaire was read aloud to the students. Questionnaire statements were clear and straightforward; yet, some statements were translated into the students' first language upon students' request. Students completed the questionnaire in less than 10 minutes.

As for the second phase where qualitative data were collected using semi-structured interviews. All 10 interviews were conducted individually and face-to-face in the teachers' colleges and completed over a period of about a month; each interview lasted approximately 5 to a maximum of 13 minutes. Teachers were informed of the study aims and were asked to express their beliefs as clearly and openly as possible. Lincoln & Guba (2013) encourage to audio-record interviews for the purpose of obtaining quality data that is characterized by fairness, ontological, educative, catalytic and tactical authenticity. The audio-recorded interviews were then transcribed. The interviews consisted of 7 open-ended questions each of which targeted the teachers' beliefs about creativity in the EFL classroom (see Appendix B). Permission was taken from participants to record the interviews.

3.9. Ethical Considerations

Ethics are moral principles that govern the way people think or act in a particular situation. Research ethics subscribe to the way researchers carry out their studies (Maylor & Blackmon, 2005). Ethical issues are one of the most important parts of the research without which the research would fail. To conduct research professionally, the researcher needs to design and choose techniques properly, and also to take into account the ethical implications of research activities. These issues are usually concerned with avoiding harm to participants and gaining informed consent (Bryman, 2008; Bryman and Bell, 2007). Therefore, researchers should consider each ethical concern before doing their research.

As a result, the researcher requested permission from the Master of Arts program coordinator, to conduct this research in the different educational colleges across the

University of Zawia. Legal and ethical concerns are a significant part of contemporary research. In this study, ethical issues were highly considered to protect the participants' rights throughout the process of administering the questionnaire surveys and the interviews. Ethics can become guidelines for the researcher to conduct their study without causing any harm to participants (Anwar, 2015). Participants were explicitly informed that their participation is voluntary and there would be no problem if anyone wants to withdraw from the study at any time. Before collecting data, all the participants who showed willingness to take part in this study were required to show acceptance of participation by saying "I agree to participate" instead of signing an informed consent which would consume time and make participants complain. Verbal informed consent has been widely accepted as a valid method of obtaining informed consent in social research (Emanuel et al., 2004; Flory & Emanuel, 2004). Flory and Emanuel (2004) argue that verbal informed consent can be just as reliable as written consent when appropriate documentation procedures are followed. Another ethical issue that was taken into consideration by the researcher is the participants' privacy. Their names, both in the questionnaire and the interview, were kept anonymous. In addition, all the audio recordings and transcripts of the participants' interviews were securely saved on the researcher's computer with a password and only the researcher can access these files.

3.10. Summary of the Chapter

This chapter provided a detailed discussion of the methodology used in the study. It discussed the research design, samples, and research instruments (questionnaire & semi-structured interview). Further, it delved into crucial topics such as validity, reliability, piloting and ethical considerations.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis

4.1. Introduction

This chapter aims at describing and analysing the data to address the research questions (see 1.4). The data presented in this chapter were gathered through closed-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The obtained data through the questionnaire were organized and presented in Tables according to specific classifications. In addition, the presentation of the interview data was thematically categorised. The analysed data are presented in two sections.

4.2. Quantitative Data Analysis

After the completion of the data collection, quantitative data were analysed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software (SPSS), which is possibly the widest package of computer software used in the analysis of quantitative data for social science (Arkkelin, 2014; Bryman, 2012). Due to its popularity in the academic and business areas, it was used in the analysis of the quantitative data for this study. Moreover, Arkkelin (2014) asserts that this software package is very beneficial in saving a great amount of time and avoiding making any errors in the process of data analysis.

The data obtained from the participants' responses to the questionnaire, aimed at assessing the extent to which teachers' classroom practices reflect creativity, underwent analysis employing frequencies, descriptive statistics, and a t-test. This is in fact to answer the research questions of the study. however, only the results pertaining to the first question were presented in a descriptive manner. The statistical analysis encompassed frequencies, which indicate the occurrence of specific responses,

arithmetic means representing the average of the collected data, and standard deviations, a statistical measure quantifying the dispersion of data relative to its mean (Ali et al., 2019).

4.2.1. Results of the First Research Question

Based on the first research question which reads: “To what extent do EFL classroom practices reflect creativity in the different educational colleges in the University of Zawia- extracted from students’ responses?”, the following are the quantitative results of the study.

Table (4.1): Frequency distribution for students on the extent their teachers’ classroom practices reflect creativity

No	Statement	Always	Sometimes	Never
1	The teacher interrupts us while expressing our ideas.	55 56.1	43 43.9	0 0
2	The teacher asks us to <i>guess</i> the meaning of the new words in the first place.	36 36.7	60 61.2	2 2.0
3	The teacher administers various teaching methods.	37 37.8	49 50.0	12 12.2
4	The teacher becomes uncomfortable because of our numerous questioning.	41 41.8	57 58.2	0 0
5	The teacher uses supplementary books along with the main textbook in the class.	12 12.2	55 56.1	31 31.6
6	The teacher appreciates our wrong responses.	26 26.5	51 52.0	21 21.4
7	The teacher offers us more than a single topic to choose from for each writing task.	49 50.0	40 40.8	9 9.2
8	The teacher encourages class discussions.	50 51.0	35 35.7	13 13.3
9	The teacher talks more than us in the class.	59 60.2	39 39.8	0 0
10	The teacher values our learning more than our grades.	19 19.4	44 44.9	35 35.7
11	The teacher uses methods that require us to walk and move in the class.	15 15.3	58 59.2	25 25.5

12	The teacher accepts our ideas that contradict his/hers.	25 25.5	56 57.1	17 17.3
13	The teacher encourages us to present our novel, original ideas.	38 38.8	54 55.1	6 6.1
14	The teacher requires us to put the learned materials into use.	38 38.8	38 38.8	22 22.4
15	The teacher uses group work with some of the exercises.	29 29.6	60 61.2	9 9.2
16	Before starting a new topic, the teacher reviews our background knowledge.	26 26.5	53 54.1	19 19.4
17	The teacher states the goal for each exam or exercise.	26 26.5	54 55.1	18 18.4
18	The teacher takes our opinions seriously and follows them up.	14 14.3	63 64.3	21 21.4
19	The teacher's behavior in class is predictable.	49 50.0	49 50.0	0 0
20	The teacher asks us repetitive questions.	39 39.8	59 60.2	0 0
21	According to the teacher, questions constantly have one correct answer.	57 58.2	41 41.8	0 0
22	The teacher allows us to talk about our experiences in the class.	35 35.7	51 52.0	12 12.2
23	The teacher leaves some questions unanswered for us to explore.	37 37.8	48 49.0	13 13.2
24	The teacher chooses our favorite topics for class discussions.	10 10.2	42 42.9	46 46.9
25	The teacher keeps the atmosphere of the class happy.	15 15.3	64 65.3	19 19.4
26	After covering each conversation, the teacher expects us to make a change or create a new conversation	21 21.4	47 48.0	30 30.6

In order to investigate the extent to which classroom practices reflect creativity within the different educational colleges in the University of Zawia, ninety-eight English major students of last semester were randomly selected. They were requested to respond to twenty-six items, as presented in Table (4.1), which aimed to assess the incorporation of teaching practices fostering creativity in the EFL classroom on a daily basis. Among the items, there were six negative statements, namely (1, 4, 9, 19, 20, 21) which indicated teaching practices that contradicted integrating creativity in the EFL classroom.

Surprisingly, the participating students emphasized four negative statements that were included in the teachers' teaching practices. In addition, most of the other statements that reflected positive teaching behavior were not common in teachers' teaching practices as most of the students' responses were clustered on "sometimes". Students' responses would have a numerical value that would be used to measure the teaching practices under investigation. These were always 3, sometimes 2, and never 1. Table (4.2) showed the mean and standard deviation for students' responses to the statements. The scores of the negative statements were assigned to the contrary: always 1, sometimes 2, and never 3, as shown in Table (4.1).

Table (4.2): Descriptive statistics for students on the extent their teachers' classroom practices reflect creativity

No	Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	The teacher interrupts us while expressing our ideas.	1.438	0.498
2	The teacher asks us to <i>guess</i> the meaning of the new words in the first place.	2.346	0.519
3	The teacher administers various teaching methods.	2.255	0.662
4	The teacher becomes uncomfortable because of our numerous questioning.	1.581	0.495
5	The teacher uses supplementary books along with the main textbook in the class.	1.806	0.636
6	The teacher appreciates our wrong responses.	2.051	0.694
7	The teacher offers us more than a single topic to choose from for each writing task.	2.408	0.655
8	The teacher encourages class discussions.	2.377	0.710
9	The teacher talks more than us in the class.	1.398	0.491
10	The teacher values our learning more than our grades.	1.836	0.727

11	The teacher uses methods that require us to walk and move in the class.	1.898	0.633
12	The teacher accepts our ideas that contradict his/hers.	2.0816	0.652
13	The teacher encourages us to present our novel, original ideas.	2.32	0.588
14	The teacher requires us to put the learned materials into use.	2.163	0.769
15	The teacher uses group work with some of the exercises.	2.204	0.591
16	Before starting a new topic, the teacher reviews our background knowledge.	2.071	0.677
17	The teacher states the goal for each exam or exercise.	2.081	0.668
18	The teacher takes our opinions seriously and follows them up.	1.928	0.596
19	The teacher's behavior in class is predictable.	1.5	0.502
20	The teacher asks us repetitive questions.	1.602	0.491
21	According to the teacher, questions constantly have one correct answer.	1.418	0.495
22	The teacher allows us to talk about our experiences in class.	2.2347	0.654
23	The teacher leaves some questions unanswered for us to explore.	2.24	0.674
24	The teacher chooses our favorite topics for class discussions.	1.632	0.664
25	The teacher keeps the atmosphere of the class happy.	1.959	0.590
26	After covering each conversation, the teacher expects us to make a change or create a new conversation based on our own situation.	1.908	0.719
Total		1.952	0.210

Based on the data presented in Table (4.2), thirteen statements received mean scores less than (2.0), which was the mid-point of the scale. These low values indicated what students thought about their teachers' teaching practices. Regarding the total mean score on the twenty-six statements (1.952), the mean score was less than (2.0). To investigate the differences between the total mean score on the twenty-six statements

(1.952) and the mid-point score (2.0), the t-test for one sample was used, as shown in Table (4.3).

Table (4.3): One sample t-test between the students’ mean score on the extent their teachers’ classroom practices reflect creativity and the mid-point of the scale

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Difference	t-test	Sig
The extent to which EFL university teachers’ classroom practices reflect creativity	98	1.952	0.210	-0.04788	-2.256**	0.026

Table (4.3) shows the significant differences between the mean score of students rating their English teachers’ classroom practices that reflect creativity and the mid-point of the scale. The value of the t-test (2.256) was significant. Therefore, it can be concluded that English-majored students rated their teachers’ classroom practices that reflect creativity less than the mid-point of the scale. As a consequence, the observed classroom practices of Libyan EFL university teachers, with regards to the manifestation of creativity, exhibited irregularity across the various educational colleges within the University of Zawia. Specifically, the integration of creativity among Libyan EFL university teachers was found to be uncommon based on the analysis of their students' responses.

4.3. Qualitative Data Analysis

To answer the second research question, the qualitative data that obtained through the semi-structured interview instrument was analysed by employing the thematic analysis method. Braun and Clarke (2006) state that "thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (p. 79). It can help to identify patterns and themes within rich and complex data, providing insights into the meaning and significance of participants' experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2019). This method of analysis is appropriate to use when the aim is to understand experiences, thoughts, and beliefs across a set of data (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). Braun and Clarke (2020) argue that inductive thematic analysis is a valuable and widely-used qualitative research method that allows for a flexible and nuanced exploration of data, particularly with semi-structured interviews. Given that this study aimed to investigate Libyan EFL university teachers' beliefs toward creativity, inductive thematic analysis was employed to analyse the qualitative data of this study. In this method, according to Braun and Clarke (2006), the researcher follows six processes: familiarizing oneself with the data, establishing initial codes, developing themes, reviewing themes, defining and labeling themes, and releasing the report (cited in Braun & Clarke, 2020, p. 4).

The researcher transcribed and coded all of the recorded interviews. According to Mackey and Gass (2021), coding involves "making decisions on how to classify or categorize specific parts of the data" (p. 112). In this case, the data were labelled to identify various themes, and the interviewees' responses were categorized into these themes. The resulting themes are presented below based on the participants' answers to the interview questions.

4.3.1. Results of the Second Research Question

Answering the second research question, qualitative data emerged. To investigate the beliefs that Libyan EFL university teachers hold toward creativity, inductive thematic analysis was used. The transcript of the interviews underwent inductive thematic analysis, resulting in categorisation of five themes. The first theme pertained to the definition of creativity, while the second explored the importance of integrating creativity in language teaching and learning. The third theme focused on various aspects of integrating creativity, while the fourth theme was concerned with challenges in integrating creativity. Finally, the fifth theme included the strategies to overcome the challenges. The analysis of the themes is presented in the sections to follow.

4.3.1.1. Defining Creativity

Although all the teachers are from the same region and teach at the same university with different educational colleges, their beliefs on the definition of creativity varied. For instance, teacher E and H defined creativity as “*thinking out of the box*”. Further, teachers B and F defined it as “*generating new ideas*”. Similarly, teachers D and J said that creativity is “*being original*”. The two main synonyms teachers used to define creativity were “*original*” and “*new ideas*”. Teacher I mentioned that creativity can be defined as “*discovering or producing something new and valuable*”. Teacher A stated that “*creativity implies using imagination*”, whereas teacher C defined creativity as “*connecting past knowledge with new information to come up with innovative solutions*”. Although all the above-mentioned definitions varied, they were not contradicted. However, teacher G was the only teacher to consider creativity as an unclear and confusing concept.

4.3.1.2. Importance of Integrating Creativity in Language Teaching and Learning

All interview participants emphasized the importance of integrating creativity in language teaching and learning. They agreed on the value creativity provides for teaching as well as learning. Most teachers dwelt on how important integrating creativity can be by stating that it enhances students' learning, motivation and participation. In the same vein, other teachers explained how effectively integrating creativity in teaching can positively impact learning. For example, teacher G stated that "*It promotes active learning*", whereas teacher H said that such integration would "*enhance critical thinking*". Teacher G added that integrating creativity in language teaching and learning "*creates a fun and positive learning environment*". In addition, teacher J went further on how powerful the impact of integrating creativity in teaching can be on learning by saying "*By integrating creativity in the classroom, we can change the mentality and mindset of learners*".

4.3.1.3. Aspects of Integrating Creativity

The teachers in the study provided various yet similar answers. They reported integrating creativity in different aspects of their teaching. Most interviewees emphasized that teaching methods, classroom activities, and assessment are the aspects where they integrate creativity in the EFL classroom. Add to this, most of them agreed on using discussions, group work, presentations, debates, storytelling, story completion tasks, and role plays in teaching different language skills. Nonetheless, it was notable that group work and discussions emerged as the prominently emphasized approaches. A majority of the interviewed teachers placed significant emphasis on integrating creativity within the productive skills of speaking and writing. This integration was

evident in their use of diverse instructional methods and activities during content delivery, as well as in their assessment practices. Teacher H argues that “*Using technology and social media inside and outside the classroom*” is a way they use to integrate creativity and thus enhances the process of language learning.

Furthermore, half of the interviewees integrate creativity through classroom assessment, especially when assessing productive skills as they claim, by asking open-ended questions. For example, one of the teachers, specifically teacher I, added to creativity assessment and said “*Through comparing students’ answers, if an answer is unique and not repetitive, I consider it to be creative*”. Surprisingly, teacher D claimed that creativity is implicit and they assess it “*according to students’ marks and answers during lectures and in the exams*”. Teacher C declared their integration of creativity in the EFL classroom by “*asking questions that have more than an answer*”. Interestingly, brainstorming was affirmed to be used by more than one participant to combine ideas and generate new thoughts. Although most of the teachers interviewed for this study integrate creativity in the EFL classroom through productive skills, a few reported their integration of creativity in reading classes and other theoretical subjects. For instance, teacher G asks their students “*to guess the meaning from context*” in reading classes, and “*to tell their opinions*” when it comes to theoretical subjects.

4.3.1.4. Challenges in Integrating Creativity

Despite the teachers' reported efforts to integrate creativity in the EFL classroom, all participants encountered challenges in this regard. However, certain challenges received more emphasis than others. Unsurprisingly, the majority of the interviewees complained about students’ unwillingness to actively participate and engage with their

peers during the classroom activities. Some of this majority attributed the reason behind this phenomenon to students' fear of making mistakes, while others attributed it to the lack of intrinsic motivation.

The second major challenge highlighted by university teachers was the lack of time allotted for lectures. For example, teacher J stated "*lack of time for teaching many subjects in crowded classes is a big challenge*". Teacher H also declared that "*time is not enough for big size and mixed ability classes when you are forced to finish the curriculum in that short time*". They linked the insufficient time allotted with large classes and curriculum requirements that need to be met as one of the main reasons leading to a disappointing teaching environment. So much time and effort are put into completing the syllabus neglecting developing students' vital skills of the century and preparing them for the work realm.

Some of the interviewees affirmed that the lack of students' awareness of the concept of creativity and being unfamiliar with how to develop it is a huge challenge. Other teachers reported that the lack of resources and technology limits their teaching for creativity. The last challenge mentioned by teachers is the students' low level of English proficiency. This is reported by teacher C who said "*It is difficult to elicit, assess or even develop creativity when students don't master a quite deal of English*".

4.3.1.5. Strategies to Overcome the Challenges

The interviewees put forth a range of practical strategies aimed at addressing these challenges and fostering a classroom environment conducive to promoting teaching for creativity. One of the strategies affirmed by the majority is avoiding direct correction and criticism so as not to focus on mistakes. Instead, teachers suggest

increasing students' self-confidence by encouraging them to express themselves and *"talk even if they make mistakes"*, as teacher J stated. The analysis also revealed extrinsic motivation as a suggested strategy for enhancing creativity as teacher E declared *"I try to motivate students to make them interact and participate"*. Similarly, teacher F said *"I motivate my students and help them to change their opinions towards the learning process"*. Moreover, using interactive activities that promote peer learning like pair work and group work can help boost creativity in the classroom. In this regard, a number of the interviewees suggested setting students into pairs and groups. Regarding the challenge of some students' low level of English proficiency, teacher C recommended that *"to have the students who have a good deal of English start first to encourage their peers to talk"*. According to the analysis of data, teacher E preferred using peer teaching in the classroom as a strategy for increasing learning in general and creativity in specific, stating that *"This is another way that I use with my students. Because I sometimes find my students don't get the point from me and don't understand me, I depend on their classmates to make it simple for them, and it works. Yes, specific students don't understand me but they understand that point from their peers"*. In addition, teacher D advised to *"relate topics to students' lives"*, while teacher J suggested *"skipping some syllabus content to allocate more time for creativity"*.

4.4. Where Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses Meet

4.4.1. Results of the Third Research Question

The third research question is: "Do Libyan EFL university teachers' beliefs about creativity align with their classroom practices?" To answer the third research question, the researcher compared the results of the first and second research questions. Through

the analysis of the students' questionnaire items and the teachers' responses to the interview questions, it was clear that most of the positive questionnaire items were clustered on "sometimes". Further, the negative statements were highly emphasized, clustered on "always" indicating the low extent of applying classroom practices reflecting creativity. Therefore, most of the teachers' classroom practices are not in alignment with what they believe in. This is because the participating teachers have positive beliefs about creativity despite the challenges they encounter. The teachers participating in this study consistently identified common challenges that they perceive as potential barriers to fostering creativity in the EFL classroom. However, the utilization of quantitative data derived from their students provides support and alignment with the teachers' reported experiences, rather than yielding unexpected or contradictory findings. In other words, the misalignment between teachers' beliefs (derived directly from teachers) and practices (extracted from their students) of creativity only occurs as teachers believe creativity to be a positive 21st-century skill that needs to be enhanced in students' productive and receptive skills. Hence, if both quantitative and qualitative data were about teachers' practices only, results would probably be aligned.

Teachers believe in the importance of developing students' creativity in the classroom, and some claim they use interactive activities that help students to talk and express their thoughts. Nonetheless, for example, more than half of the participating students ticked always to the first item in the questionnaire "*The teacher interrupts us while expressing our ideas*". Another evidence of the incongruence between teachers' beliefs and practices of creativity is laid in item 9 which says "*The teacher talks more than us in the class*". More than 60% of the responses to the previous item were

clustered on “always” indicating a teacher-centred instruction where there is no room for creativity. Students’ responses about their teachers were supported by the challenges stated by the teachers themselves.

The results of the interviews revealed that university teachers hold various beliefs about creativity, its meaning, its importance to language teaching and learning, its integration in the EFL classroom, how to assess it, the challenges accompanying creativity implementation in the classroom and the solutions to the challenges; yet all of the teachers’ beliefs were positive. Despite the positive beliefs, the implementation of creativity in the EFL classroom is considered weak due to the affecting factors mentioned by the teachers from time constraints to teaching large classes, to the lack of technology and lack of intrinsic motivation leading to students’ unwillingness to participate and interact with others alongside their fear of making mistakes. The teachers’ responses highlighted some effective strategies that can be adopted to overcome the challenges raised and nurture students’ creative potential.

4.5. Summary of the Chapter

To conclude, the data collected for this study was both quantitatively and qualitatively analysed. The results of the analysed quantitative data revealed that Libyan EFL university teachers’ classroom practices reflect creativity to a very low extent in the different educational colleges of Nasser, Al-Ajailat, Zawia and Abu Issa at the University of Zawia. In addition, the qualitative data revealed that most of the teachers’ beliefs about teaching for creativity in the EFL classroom were positive; however, highlighting several challenges regarding creativity integration in the classroom.

Therefore, a misalignment between teachers' beliefs and their practices regarding creativity has been spotted.

Chapter Five

Discussion

5.1. Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to provide a detailed discussion and interpretation of the findings obtained from the quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The discussion of these findings concerns the three research questions of the study. The findings of the quantitative data are discussed separately from those of the qualitative data which are presented in five themes. Then, a discussion of whether the practices of Libyan EFL university teachers (the quantitative data) align with their beliefs (the qualitative data).

5.2. Classroom Practices Reflecting Creativity Extracted from Students' Responses

Regarding the first research question, the findings of the quantitative data analysis revealed that more than half of the participating students emphasized four negative statements out of six that were included in the questionnaire on the teachers' teaching practices. The most emphasized negative practice that Libyan EFL university teachers use in the classroom which, unfortunately, may inhibit teaching for creativity is shown in students' responses in the questionnaire item 9, "*The teacher talks more than us in the class*". More than half of the participants, 60.2 %, agreed that always happens to be long teacher talking time (TTT) in their classes. This finding is probably because EFL teachers in Libya may not have received extensive training in student-centred or communicative language teaching approaches. Instead, they may rely on more traditional lecture-based methods, which can result in a higher TTT. This finding supports the studies of Al-Nouh et al. (2014), Al-Qahtani (2016), and Shaheen (2011) who found that

lecturing can reduce students' opportunities to express themselves and contribute to classroom discussions, which can suppress their creativity in EFL classrooms. This finding is also in agreement with the study of Calavia et al. (2021) who concluded that conventional instructional practices that rely on passive and rote learning stifle creativity and imagination. Therefore, Libyan EFL university teachers need to stop lecturing and conducting lengthy talks in the classroom. They should also neglect the grammar-translation method and employ interactive teaching methods where students are most productive and hence, creative.

Furthermore, most of the questionnaire statements that reflected positive teaching behavior were not common in teachers' teaching practices as most of the students' responses were clustered on 'sometimes'. However, out of twenty positive statements, two were more emphasized; they are items 7 and 8. As shown in Table (4.1), item 7: *"The teacher offers us more than a single topic to choose from for each writing task"*, half of the responses were clustered on 'always' indicating that the teacher is providing students with a degree of choice and autonomy in their learning. The other half was clustered between 'sometimes' and 'never'. By offering a range of topics, the teacher is acknowledging that students have different interests and preferences and is allowing them to select a topic that they find engaging and relevant to their lives. The attribution of this finding is relevant to the fact that teaching writing is a contentious issue in Libya. In order to make teaching writing more engaging and to boost students' motivation to write, Libyan teachers often offer their students the element of choice to choose their own writing topics. By doing so, students' interests are given priority. This can help students to produce writing outputs that are more meaningful and authentic and can

indeed promote greater originality and innovation in their writing styles. This finding supports that of Ottoson and Crane (2016) and Sponseller and Wilkins (2015) who suggested that unguided freewriting in which students select their own topics facilitates greater writing fluency which in turn supports greater creativity. Thus, EFL teachers are encouraged to let their students choose the writing topics they prefer so that their interest drives them to be more creative and innovative. However, for those students who prefer some guidance, offering a list of topics could enable them to select from a menu of student-derived topics that have proven popular among their peers at other colleges and universities.

Moreover, 51 % of the participating students agreed on item 8, as shown in Table (4.1): “*The teacher encourages class discussions*”. More than half of the responses were clustered on ‘always’. This may be attributed to the fact that despite the challenges of the Libyan pedagogical system, EFL teachers desire to create a more engaging and interactive learning environment for their students. This finding is in agreement with Marashi and Khatami (2017), whose study proved that collaborative learning has a significantly positive effect on EFL learners’ creativity and motivation. Thus, classroom discussions can greatly trigger and boost creativity. Libyan EFL teachers, hence, should rely on collaborative learning more than ever since it is proved to enhance students’ creativity.

However, based on the data presented in Table (4.1), it is obvious that most of the students’ responses are limited in the ‘sometimes’ column. Therefore, the analysis of the questionnaire revealed that positive teaching practices are not common in the EFL classroom in the educational colleges of the University of Zawia. Students were not used

to most of the practices and this, unfortunately, means that creativity is being enhanced to a very low extent due to the traditional way of teaching. This finding could be attributed to the lack of training and resources among Libyan EFL teachers. It could be also due to the limited time allotted for teaching large classes where it is difficult for the teacher to let their students practice the language. This finding concurred with the Saudi Arabian studies of Aldujayn and Alsubhi (2020) and Al-Qahtani (2016) whose findings revealed that the majority of Saudi EFL teachers exert little effort to develop creativity in their methods of instruction. This indicates that traditional lecture-based methods of teaching are still prevailing in the Arabic context of TEFL. Therefore, Arabic EFL teachers are encouraged to utilise the classroom practices and techniques that trigger students' creativity during classroom activities.

5.3. EFL University Teachers' Beliefs about Creativity

The second research question examines Libyan EFL university teachers' beliefs toward creativity. Answers to this question led to several findings. They come from the qualitative data. These findings revealed several themes related to the definition of creativity, the importance of integrating creativity in language teaching and learning, aspects of integrating creativity, challenges in integrating creativity, and strategies to overcome the challenges.

5.3.1. Definition of Creativity

The interviewees defined creativity in various ways but with some common concepts. Creativity was seen as "*thinking out of the box*" for some teachers, "*generating new ideas*" for others, and "*being original*" for a few. These definitions neglect the concepts of usefulness and value in defining creativity. They align with previous

research on creativity in language teaching and learning, such as the Turkish study of Akyildiz and Çelik (2020) which revealed that the majority of the teachers are not aware of the central philosophy of creativity, considering only novelty as criteria for outlining it. Despite the teachers' provision of such definitions of creativity, numerous aspects of the aspects of the concept were overlooked. Furthermore, only a limited number of teachers in the present study perceived creativity an ambiguous concept. This finding resonates with previous research conducted by Alsahou (2015), Hong and Kang (2010), and Nedjah and Hamada (2017). The latter study concluded that although teachers display favorable attitudes towards fostering creative thinking in the EFL classroom, they generally perceive creativity as a difficult concept with limited understanding of its qualities. Consequently, about the limited understanding of creativity among Libyan EFL university teachers can be attributed to its inadequate recognition and inclusion within curricula. Therefore, policy EFL documents in Libya should incorporate research-based definitions and conceptualizations of creativity that include all curricular areas and education levels. This inclusion aims to improve teachers' understanding and awareness of creativity.

5.3.2. Importance of Integrating Creativity in Language Teaching and Learning

All the interviewees emphasized the importance of integrating creativity in language teaching and learning. They believed that creativity can enhance motivation, lead to active engagement, and promote language development and communication. These findings are consistent with previous research on the benefits of creativity integration in language education. This finding agrees with Richards (2013) who maintains that creativity in language teaching is linked to attainment in language

learning. The interviewees' views also resonate with those of Adams (2013), Hondzel (2013), and Meyer and Lederman (2013) who found that creative language teaching enhances learning performance and students' motivation. It also promotes thinking skills and active learning. Therefore, Libyan EFL teachers are encouraged to be creative and use creativity-provoking activities to trigger and enhance their students' creativity.

5.3.3. Aspects of Integrating Creativity

The qualitative data revealed several aspects of integrating creativity in language teaching and learning. They emphasized the importance of creating a supportive and flexible learning environment that encourages the provision opportunities for student choice and autonomy. Further, this learning environment incorporates diverse teaching methods and activities that allow for multiple perspectives. This finding is in line with studies such as those of Daskolia et al. (2012); Hondzel (2013); and Huang & Lee (2015) who agree that a supportive and flexible learning environment lead to creativity. In such learning surroundings, students are encouraged to take risks and explore new ideas. However, Eberle and Hobrecht (2021) disagree with this finding and argue that providing opportunities for student choice and autonomy may not be effective for all students, particularly those who are struggling or have learning difficulties. In accordance with the aforementioned, the teacher possesses an unparalleled understanding of their students and the most effective approaches tailored to their needs. However, fostering a supportive and interactive learning environment in which students have control over their learning journey always wins to develop creativity.

Most of the teachers also mentioned discussions, group work, presentations and other interactive activities in which they integrated creativity especially when they assess

productive skills. In this regard, Jones and Richards (2016), Pardede (2020), and Rahmat and Jon (2023) agree that integrating interactive and communicative activities, such as discussions, group work, and presentations, can enhance language learning outcomes. This is particularly in developing students' productive skills as it will ultimately boost creativity. Thus, although Libyan EFL teachers reported their use of interactive activities in their classrooms, previous research encourages them to exert more effort on the choice of these activities according to their students' needs and interests.

One teacher contends that “*Using technology and social media inside and outside the classroom*” is a way they use to integrate creativity and thus enhance the process of language learning. The findings of Albawardi and Jones (2019), AlGhamdi (2018), Al-Jarf (2015), Roy (2016), and Sharma (2019) align with the notion that incorporating technology and social media in language teaching can enhance students' motivation and engagement, hence yielding more effective language learning outcomes. On the other hand, Chen and Xiao (2022) present counterargument, contending that while technology and social media can enhance language learning outcomes, they may also introduce distractions and reduce face-to-face interaction and communication among students, which can hinder language learning outcomes in certain contexts. Therefore, a moderate utilisation of technology that facilitates the teaching- learning process is preferable.

Moreover, half of the interviewees integrate creativity through classroom assessment. One teacher added on assessing creativity in the classroom by stating that creativity is implied “*according to their marks and answers during lectures and in the exams*”. Bolden and DeLuca (2022) and Lucas (2016) fall against this finding supporting that creativity cannot be fully assessed through traditional methods, such as exams or

standardized tests. This is because these methods may not capture the full range of creative thinking and problem-solving abilities. Instead, assessment for learning approach (AFL) can avoid traditional issues connected with creativity assessment due to its emphasis on cultivating creativity through formative guidance from instructors and peers rather than judging creativity. To this end, such finding calls for Libyan EFL teachers to focus on process assessment rather than product assessment.

Add to the above, a few interviewees were using brainstorming in the classroom to generate new ideas and hence enhance creativity. One interviewee declared their integration of creativity by “*asking questions that have more than an answer*”. Craft (2005), Gross et al. (2020), and Fasko, (2001) support this strategy by confirming that asking open-ended questions that have more than one answer can enhance creativity by promoting curiosity, exploration, and the generation of new ideas. Ultimately, a few teachers reported their integration of creativity in reading classes and other theoretical subjects, as supported by Al-Qahtani (2016) and Guillén (2011). Therefore, for Libyan EFL teachers to trigger students’ creativity in reading classes, brainstorming can be a good start.

5.3.4. Challenges in Integrating Creativity

The challenges that interviewees experienced when incorporating creativity were predictable because of the Libyan context in which the researcher is part of. All the participating teachers encountered difficulties in integrating creativity and this should be considered a wake-up call. The majority of teachers expressed dissatisfaction with students' inability to interact and engage with their peers during classroom activities. Some of them linked this phenomenon to students' fear of making mistakes, while others

attributed it to a lack of intrinsic motivation. This finding can be attributed to exam-oriented mindset of students , which lead them to prioritize studying for the exam rather than genuine learning. Thus, with such a mindset, students neglect classroom activities that built on interaction. This finding is consistent with Cheng (2010), Shaheen (2011), and Snell (2013) who confirmed that lack of students' engagement presents a significant barrier to fostering creativity. Consequently, one of the solutions to be attempted by the Libyan EFL teachers is to extrinsically motivate their students.

The second significant difficulty identified by university teachers was the short time given for lectures with teaching curriculum to large classes, as expressed by one participant, *"time is not enough for big size and mixed ability classes when you are forced to finish the curriculum in that short time."* Creativity integration is a time-consuming process that provides opportunities for experimentation, and making unconventional connections. This finding may be attributed to the fact that university curriculum designers do not incorporate creativity or time for enhancing it. Therefore, time constraint is considered a fundamental barrier to fostering creativity as many studies support this finding (Aish, 2014; Al-Nouh et al., 2014; Alsahou, 2015; Cheng, 2010; Fairfield, 2010; Frawley, 2014; Hondzel, 2013; Hong & Kang, 2010; Kamyliis et al., 2011; Scott, 2015; Shaheen, 2011; Zhou et al., 2013). As a result, Libyan policy makers are ought to make changes in the curricula to integrate enough time for creativity enhancement.

Some of the participating teachers affirmed that the lack of students' awareness of the concept of creativity is a huge challenge which is aligned with the finding of Hong and Kang, (2010). Others reported that a lack of resources and technology limits their

creative teaching as well as learning. This finding is in agreement with Al- Nouh et al. (2014), Leach, (2001), and Shaheen (2011). However, Starko (2014) disagrees with this stating that technological aids are not essential as there are many “unplugged” approaches to cultivating creativity. Hence, a lack of technological resources is not an excuse for not developing creativity since many “unplugged” activities can play a great role in boosting students’ creativity.

The last challenge reported is students’ low level of English. One teacher said: *“It is difficult to even develop creativity when students don’t master a quite deal of English”*. This finding disagrees with Craft (2005) and Cachia and Ferrari (2010) who claim that fostering students’ creativity is more emphasized in lower grades in many countries as limited English may drive teachers and students to explore more creative alternatives for expression. With this in mind, Libyan EFL teachers are encouraged to assist lower-level students in elevating their proficiency through creativity integration during the classroom activities.

5.3.5. Strategies to Overcome the Challenges

Many strategies have been suggested by the interviewees that may help to overcome the challenges for the sake of a classroom that promotes teaching for creativity. One of the strategies asserted by the majority of teachers is avoiding direct correction and criticism to build self-confidence. This is especially true in EFL contexts where mastering a foreign language through classroom instruction can be a challenging task, creating anxious, hesitant learners. The finding is supported by research showing how anxiety and fear of evaluation can stifle creativity (Lucas et al., 2013). Thus, Libyan

EFL teachers should create a comfortable engaging environment where students do not fear making mistakes.

The analysis also suggested motivation as a strategy for increasing creativity. For example, one interviewee stated: *“Try to motivate students to make them interact and participate”*. Providing students with encouragement and motivation enhances self-efficacy which leads to greater creativity. In addition to extrinsic motivation, teachers also emphasized providing students with opportunities to think and express themselves which taps into intrinsic motivation that is a key for creativity (Fasko, 2001). Thus, motivation holds a key to boosting creativity. This is in fact supported in studies conducted by Birdsell (2013) and Kaufman (2016). Hence, Libyan EFL teachers are expected to motivate their students to trigger their creative potential.

Using interactive activities like group and pair work is another suggested strategy. Pair and group work provides scaffolding, exposure to diverse perspectives, and opportunities for synergy (Huang & Lee, 2015). Such peer interactions motivate learning and creativity. With this in mind, regarding the challenge of some students' low level of English, one teacher recommended: *“to have the students who have a good deal of English start first to encourage their peers to talk”*. This echoes Marashi and Khatami's (2017) results which clarify that collaborative creativity where individuals co-construct and build on each other's ideas leads to greater creativity. Further, one teacher preferred using peer teaching in the classroom. He said: *“... I depend on their classmates to make it simple for them ... specific students don't understand me but they understand that point from their peers”*. Peer teaching and learning are powerful approaches. Students may understand concepts better from each other due to shared experiences and frames of

reference. This finding is in agreement with Adams (2013), Alkhars (2013), and Alshou (2015) who determine that peers can rephrase and reframe in more comprehensible ways, hence, stimulating intrinsic motivation and creativity. Therefore, interactive activities always win to enhance creativity in the EFL classroom.

Furthermore, one interviewee advised to “*relate topics to students' lives*” as making real-world connections also facilitates understanding and ideation (Starko, 2014). However, another participant suggested “*skipping some syllabus content to allocate more time for creativity*” as a practical strategy facing time constraints. Customizing curriculum to students' experiences enhances meaning and motivation for creativity. Further, skipping some content to allow more time for creativity is reasonable for integrating creativity. This finding aligns with Kaufman and Beghetto (2013) and Starko's (2014) results which highlight that while completing the syllabus is important, creativity requires slack time for ideation and open-ended inquiry. Therefore, finding the right balance between content coverage and creative thinking is a key.

5.4. Libyan EFL University Teachers' Beliefs and Practices of Creativity

The findings of the study reveal that there is a gap between Libyan EFL university teachers' beliefs about creativity and their actual practices in the classroom. The incongruence between espoused beliefs and enacted practices is more frequent with newly formed beliefs or those in transition. The interest in creativity in education is relatively recent (Beghetto, 2010); therefore, teachers' conceptualizations of creativity may be still in the process of forming. As with all humans, teachers may simply express beliefs they do not hold. This could be especially true for creativity since it is socially

desirable for teachers to claim they value creativity in the classroom, even if they do not (Shaheen, 2011).

However, this misalignment between beliefs and practices may be attributed to different factors deduced from the challenges raised by the interviewed teachers. Firstly, Libyan EFL university teachers have not received adequate training on how to integrate creativity into their EFL teaching practices. This lack of training may lead to confusion and uncertainty about how to implement creative teaching methods effectively. This result is in line with Aish (2014), Al-Nouh et al. (2014), Alsahou (2015), and Shaheen (2011), yet it contradicts Cachia and Ferrari's (2010) study in which they concluded that no differences were found between trained and non-trained teachers' beliefs in creativity.

Secondly, teachers may be more comfortable with traditional teaching methods that focus on rote learning and knowledge transmission and prioritize rote memorization and grammar drills over creative expression and communication. This in fact may not provide opportunities for creative thinking and expression (Al-Nouh et al., 2014; Cheng, 2010; Fairfield, 2010; Scott, 2015; Shaheen, 2011).

Thirdly, this study reports that teachers face challenges in implementing creativity in the classroom due to the lack of technology, limited time, and large class sizes. These constraints and limited resources may decrease the opportunities for teachers to incorporate creative teaching methods. The studies of Kamylyis et al. (2009), Hong and Kang (2010), and Shaheen (2011) found out that large class sizes can be a real barrier to creativity in the classroom. On the other hand, Hondzel (2013), Zhou et al. (2013), Aish (2014), and Frawley (2014) revealed that lack of time was a barrier. Hartley

and Plucker (2014) and Scott (2015) concluded that lack of technology was a barrier to fostering creativity in the classroom.

The fourth factor may be attributed to students' resistance. The study highlights that students may be unwilling to participate and interact with others because of their fear of making mistakes or lack of intrinsic motivation. This resistance may discourage teachers from teaching for creativity. Cheng (2010), Shaheen (2011), and Snell (2013) agree with this finding and consider lack of engagement as the most significant barrier hindering creativity in the classroom.

Last but not least, different interpretations of creativity can lead to such misalignment between beliefs and practices. Creativity is often seen as a vague and intangible concept, and many teachers may not be sure how to define or measure it. The study found out that teachers hold different beliefs about creativity, its meaning, and its importance to language teaching and learning. These differences in interpretation may lead to confusion and inconsistent implementation of creative teaching methods. Some studies revealed inconsistencies or inadequacies in teachers' self-reported beliefs about the encouragement of creativity. For example, in a case study examining Kuwaiti EFL teachers' attitudes and perceptions of practice regarding creative thinking, Al-Nouh et al. (2014) mentioned that while most teachers had positive attitudes towards creativity and strong perceptions of encouraging it, some of them perceived non-creativity-fostering EFL activities as creative ones. In addition, Nedjah and Hamada (2017) and Aldujayn and Alsubhi (2020) discovered that although teachers hold positive perceptions about promoting creative thinking in the EFL classroom, they generally consider creativity as a quite confusing concept and have uncertain knowledge about its characteristics.

All the above-mentioned factors may negatively influence teachers' beliefs and thus are more likely to lead to creativity-suppressing practices. To bridge the gap between teachers' beliefs and their practices leading to more effective teaching for creativity in EFL classrooms, some recommendations for teachers and suggestions for further research are provided in the next chapter.

5.5. Summary of the Chapter

This chapter discussed the results of the study. The findings of the study were linked to previous studies in the literature. Moreover, some possible interpretations and suggested solutions were provided. Therefore, the three research questions were thoroughly discussed and answered.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the concluding remarks of this study. In addition, based on the findings of the study, some implications for policy makers and some recommendations that should be taken into account by EFL teachers are provided. Finally, the chapter also presents the encountered limitations of the study and suggestions for further research study.

6.2. Conclusion of the Whole Study

With this study, we respond to Saleh's (2019) call for further research on integrating creativity in the EFL classroom, specifically exploring teachers' beliefs and practices of the topic. Promoting creativity in the EFL classroom has been found to be effective in enhancing language learning, improving communication skills, and preparing students for 21st century jobs. Teaching for creativity fosters a positive learning environment where students can express themselves authentically in English, leading to better language proficiency and comprehension. The benefits of promoting creativity in the EFL classroom highlight its importance as a 21st century skill and emphasize the need for educators to incorporate it into their teaching practices.

Although EFL university teachers were confused about how to define creativity and its characteristics, they generally hold positive beliefs about it. Add to this, teachers perceive several barriers to nurturing creativity in the classroom. Most notable barriers are lack of time, teaching large classes, lack of resources, and overloaded curriculum, which can easily outweigh teachers' positive beliefs and prevent the implementation of

creativity in the educational institutions. However, their students seem not to agree with them as they emphasized most of the negative practices in the questionnaire and were unfamiliar with most of the positive classroom practices. Therefore, even if teachers hold positive or adequate beliefs about creativity, these rarely translate into creativity-fostering practices, suggesting that there are a number of internal and external factors that might prevent educators from nurturing creativity in the classroom.

6.3. Implications for Policy Makers

Teacher education should lay special emphasis on supporting teachers to conceptualize, recognize, explicitly teach for and assess creativity across specific subject areas and education levels.

- To improve teachers' understanding of creativity, policy documents should incorporate research-based definitions and conceptualizations of creativity that encompass all curricular areas and education levels.
- There should be modifications made to the curricula to be more challenging and to provide more classroom time for tasks and activities that promote creativity.
- National assessments need to be reviewed to ensure that they align with creativity as a learning goal.
- Guidance documents (as teachers' books) should be aimed to assist with the development and evaluation of creativity in every student and across all areas of the curriculum.
- Education policy should invest in training programs for novice and in-service teachers in order to enhance creativity in education.

6.4. Recommendations

Based on the findings and reached conclusion, the following are some recommendations for Libyan EFL teachers to develop positive classroom practices that enhance teaching for creativity:

- Encourage collaboration and group work to promote social and emotional skills and creativity.
- Provide constructive feedback that focuses on the process rather than just the final product.
- Integrate technology and multimedia resources to enhance creativity and engagement in the classroom.
- Use open-ended questions and prompts that encourage critical thinking and creativity.
- Encourage reflection and self-assessment to help students develop metacognitive skills and recognize their own creative potential.
- Advocate for creativity in education and collaborate with colleagues to share best practices and resources.

6.5. Limitations of the Study

The study was only conducted at the University of Zawia and not on other universities in the region. This was not possible due to time and accessibility concerns. Moreover, classroom observation could be employed for data collection if teachers' willingness were available; thus, alternative data collection instruments were inevitable for this study. Therefore, conclusions are limited to the given population. However, the existence of these limitations does not invalidate any of the findings.

6.6. Suggestions for Further Research

In light of the pedagogical implications of the study's findings, a list of significant recommendations for further research has been put forward as follows:

- The study in hand was conducted using a mixed-methods research approach that involved a closed-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interview, but classroom observation was not included due to time limitations. It is suggested that future research should adopt a qualitative design that incorporates classroom observation as an essential data collection tool.
- Applying this study with a modified or exact form in different EFL environments in Libya with learners of different educational levels (primary, preparatory, secondary, or university level) might make significant contributions to the linguistic theory. Thus, it is recommended that this study be replicated in other Libyan EFL contexts.
- Conducting this study on art colleges as well can lead to comparisons between educational and art colleges on whether EFL university teachers' beliefs and practices regarding creativity would differ.
- Further studies could be done to investigate the effect of creative teaching on improving EFL university students' academic achievement.
- Further evidence on the role of student-related influences on teachers' beliefs and practices of creativity is required.
- Longitudinal and experimental studies examining teachers' changing perspectives and the effects of various interventions on teachers' beliefs about creativity are needed.

- Future research could measure the affecting variables of age, gender, and experience on creativity integration in the classroom.
- Beyond the scope of the current study, another study could be conducted on classroom practices and beliefs of university teachers of different majors other than EFL.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Students' Questionnaire

Teachers' Classroom Practices Extracted from Their Students' responses

Dear Students,

The questionnaire in hand is one of the tools used to collect information for the study entitled “*Teaching for Creativity in the EFL Classroom: Libyan University Teachers' Beliefs and Practices*”. You are kindly invited to complete this anonymous questionnaire to rate your university teachers' classroom practices. Your valuable data will be kept confidential and will be used for the purpose of this research only. It approximately takes five to seven minutes to fill in the questionnaire.

Thank you very much for your kind cooperation.

Please put a (√) in the box to indicate your choice.

No	Statement	Always	Sometimes	Never
1	The teacher interrupts us while expressing our ideas.			
2	The teacher asks us to <i>guess</i> the meaning of the new words in the first place.			
3	The teacher administers various teaching methods.			
4	The teacher becomes uncomfortable because of our numerous questioning.			
5	The teacher uses supplementary books along with the main text book in the class.			
6	The teacher appreciates our wrong responses.			
7	The teacher offers us more than a single topic to choose from for each writing task.			
8	The teacher encourages class discussions.			

9	The teacher talks more than us in the class.			
10	The teacher values our learning more than our grades.			
11	The teacher uses methods that require us to walk and move in the class.			
12	The teacher accepts our ideas that contradict his/hers.			
13	The teacher encourages us to present our novel, original ideas.			
14	The teacher requires us to put the learned materials into use.			
15	The teacher uses group work with some of the exercises.			
16	Before starting a new topic, the teacher reviews our background knowledge.			
17	The teacher states the goal for each exam or exercise.			
18	The teacher takes our opinions seriously and follows them up.			
19	The teacher's behavior in class is predictable.			
20	The teacher asks us repetitive questions.			
21	According to the teacher, questions constantly have one correct answer.			
22	The teacher allows us to talk about our experiences in the class.			
23	The teacher leaves some questions unanswered for us to explore.			
24	The teacher chooses our favorite topics for class discussions.			
25	The teacher keeps the atmosphere of the class happy.			
26	After covering each conversation, the teacher expects us to make a change or create a new conversation based on our own situation.			

Appendix B: Interview Schedule

Teaching for Creativity in the EFL Classroom: Libyan EFL University Teachers' Beliefs and Practices

College: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Interviewee: _____

The interview questions:

1. What is creativity for you?
2. What do you think about integrating creativity in language teaching and learning?
3. In what aspects of your teaching do you integrate creativity?
4. From your experience, what activities do you find useful for promoting creativity among students?
5. How do you assess your students' creativity?
6. What challenges do you face in implementing creativity in your classroom?
7. What strategies do you follow in dealing with the challenges?

Appendix C: Sample of Interview Transcript

Interviewer: What is creativity for you?

Interviewee: Creativity means a person who creates something, gives something new, thinks out of the box, gives something unusual to the people; something hasn't been seen or heard before, something original.

Interviewer: What do you think about integrating creativity in language teaching and learning?

Interviewee: I think it's very important to integrate creativity in language teaching and language learning because this will affect positively on, especially on the students to improve their language skills. If I'm going to talk about language teaching, the teacher should create or find new ways or new techniques or new methods that make their students learn better. So, it is to adapt or to create a method that will help the students to understand specific topics. For example, you may create something to make something difficult to be simple for the students to understand.

Interviewer: So, do you mean the aim is for students to comprehend?

Interviewee: Yes, of course, because as a teacher your aim is when your students understand the lesson that means you achieve your aim, and how you can do that by creating methods, by using new methods to make that lesson or that something simple to them.

Interviewer: In what aspects of your teaching do you integrate creativity?

Interviewee: I think it's included in all the steps or all the aspects of teaching. For example, as I told you, I need to use new methods which will help the students to understand the lesson. And also, in the assessment. When I find a student that he

thought of a sentence that I have never thought of before or read before, this means this student is a creative person and he deserves a high mark.

Interviewer: From your experience, what activities do you find useful for promoting creativity among students?

Interviewee: I always want to motivate my students to talk. I want them to participate in the lecture. I want them to speak, to tell me what they have inside. And when they express their feelings, their meanings, their attitudes towards specific things that means, I think, they will create something new. They have the ability to ... Yes, you find that many students don't have the ability to speak, to think aloud. And I want to give this opportunity to them in their class. Yes. Also, Interactive Learning. This is another way that I use with my students. Because, I sometimes find my students don't get the point from me, don't understand me, so that I depend on their classmates to make it simple for them, and it works. Yes, specific students don't understand me but they understand that point from their peers.

Interviewer: How do you assess your students' creativity?

Interviewee: I assess in writing when I find something new. Also with speaking, sometimes a student tells you a sentence that you don't imagine that the student created.

Interviewer: So you're saying you assess creativity only with the productive skills of speaking and writing?

Interviewee: Yes. Yes, because with the receptive skills it's more difficult.

Interviewer: What challenges do you face in implementing creativity in your classroom?

Interviewee: There are many challenges. Firstly, creativity needs facilities. it needs equipment sometimes. Yes I have many things that I think about them, especially when I'm driving my car to the classroom. I think of what to use inside the classroom what techniques what about other techniques do I say this do I do this. And sometimes the students themselves which they don't interact with you this is the major problem but I try my best to make them participate or interact with their peers or with me.

Interviewer: What strategies do you follow in dealing with the challenges?

Interviewee: I'm trying to motivate the students to make them interact with the specific method I'm using, to participate in this specific activity. This is what I'm trying to do. As I told you, if I get problems to motivate the students, I will try to do it directly by their peers.